



UNIUNEA EUROPEANĂ



GUVERNUL ROMÂNIEI
MINISTERUL MUNCII, FAMILIEI,
PROTECȚIEI SOCIALE ȘI
PERSOANELOR VÂRSTNICE
AMPOSDRU



Fondul Social European
POSDRU2007-2013



Instrumente Structurale
2007-2013



GUVERNUL ROMÂNIEI
MINISTERUL MUNCII, FAMILIEI,
PROTECȚIEI SOCIALE
ȘI PERSOANELOR VÂRSTNICE
OIRPOSDRU NORD-VEST

Measures for Roma Inclusion in the Labour Market: from organized hypocrisy to real effectiveness

Călin RUS
Oana NEȘTIAN SANDU

Investing in people!

Project co-financed by the European Social Fund through the Sectoral Operational Programme Human Resources Development 2007-2013

Priority axis 6 "Promoting Social Inclusion"

Major area of intervention 6.2 "Improving the access and participation of vulnerable groups on the labour market"

Project title: "Together for a Safe Start!"

Contract Code: POSDRU/96/6.2/S/63444

Material elaborated by the Intercultural Institute Timisoara

Authors:

Călin RUS

Oana NEȘTIAN SANDU

Acest raport este disponibil în limbile română și engleză la www.intercultural.ro.

This report is available in Romanian and English on www.intercultural.ro.

ISBN: 978-606-8311-06-7

Index

Introduction	2
Conceptual benchmarks	4
Inclusion or integration?	4
Racism and discrimination against Roma	5
The glass ceiling effect	7
The bounded rationality model	7
The Golem effect	8
Organized hypocrisy.....	9
Discounting theory.....	9
Normative framework and measures for Roma inclusion in the labour market.....	10
National and European normative framework.....	10
Measures supported through European funds.....	12
Research objectives	13
Research methodology	14
The results of the quantitative analysis	15
The results of the qualitative research	26
Occupations and incomes	26
Racism and discrimination	27
The perception of the possibilities of change	29
Perceptions of employers' requirements	32
Employers' perspective.....	32
Counsellors and social workers' perspective	34
Discussing the results.....	36
The needs and perceptions of different categories of Roma	36
Employment and its alternatives	37
Effects and limitations of the measures for Roma inclusion	39
Information and counselling regarding labour market access	39
Professional training courses	39
Competence certification.....	40
Giving subsidies to employers	41
Conclusions and recommendations.....	42
Bibliography	48

Introduction

This study has been developed by the Intercultural Institute Timisoara within the project “Together for a safe start” (TFSS), coordinated by the Department of Medical and Social Assistance, subordinated to the Local Council of the city of Cluj-Napoca, and financed through the Sectoral Operational Programme Human Resources Development (SOP HRD).

The main objectives of the study were:

- to evaluate the impact and effectiveness of the support measures and interventions offered to people at risk of social exclusion;
- to formulate recommendations for overcoming barriers and increasing the effectiveness and sustainability of the measures directed to the access of people at risk of social exclusion to the labour market.

The data were collected on the basis of several quantitative and qualitative methods in the period October 2013 – March 2014. We analysed the documents generated during the process of information and counselling and data obtained through impact questionnaires targeting all beneficiaries, including those supported with services such as mediation for labour market access, professional training or competence certification. A series of interviews, focus groups and workshops with different categories of beneficiaries, employers, specialists in the field and representatives of relevant public institutions offered us pertinent information regarding the effect of the support measures offered within the project and the access of Roma to the labour market in general.

This study, as the whole of the TFSS project, targeted Roma people as beneficiaries, from different localities, both urban and rural, in the North-West and West regions, but a big part of the aspects identified can also be frequently found across all the area studied, which enables us to consider them relevant at national level.

The analysis of the data obtained also contains references to a conceptual framework taken over from organizational sociology, social psychology and management; one that was very little, if at all, used in this field. Thus, the mechanisms and procedures used in the TFSS project, as well as in the other projects financed through SOP HRD with the same target groups and similar intervention approaches, were analysed from the perspective of the organized hypocrisy concept (Brunsson, 1989) which describes the reactions of an administrative system subjected to contradictory external pressures.

The behaviour and attitudes of the different categories of project beneficiaries can be explained by applying the bounded rationality model (Simon, 1957), the discounting theory (Mellor & Schiff, 1975) and by underlining the manifestations of the glass ceiling effect (Cotter, Hermsen, Ovadia & Vanneman, 2001), while employers' behaviours and attitudes towards Roma are based on a nuanced typology of racism and discrimination (Rus, 2005), as well as the Golem effect (Manzoni & 2007). This conceptual framework is briefly presented in the first part of the study.

The following sections present the methodological aspects connected to data collection and processing and describe the main results obtained, both on the basis of the quantitative analysis and on the basis of the qualitative methods used. The qualitative analysis was organized around the following categories: (1) description of occupations, income sources and work-related experiences; (2) Roma perceptions of racism and discrimination in the context of job searching or professional experiences; (3) perceptions regarding the possibility of change, of overcoming the situation of marginalization and exclusion or of improving the socio-economic status, especially by participating in the labour market; (4) perceptions of employers' requirements and expectations; (5) employers' perspective regarding Roma access to the labour market; (6) the perspective of the counsellors and social workers involved in the project.

In the final part, the results are interpreted from the perspective of the conceptual framework mentioned and a series of conclusions and recommendations are formulated to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the public policies and support measures targeting Roma integration and social inclusion in Romanian society, by adjusting the services and support measures against the backdrop of some necessary improvements at the level of the legislative framework and European fund management.

A series of general recommendations and specific measures for different categories are formulated. These categories include: people without qualification benefiting from the guaranteed minimum income while also carrying out occasional income generating activities which are not officially registered; people who carry out regular income generating activities which are not officially registered; Roma housewives; Roma who did not finish 8 years of education; adults who do not have basic reading and writing competences; people dependent on the guaranteed minimum income and social allowances.

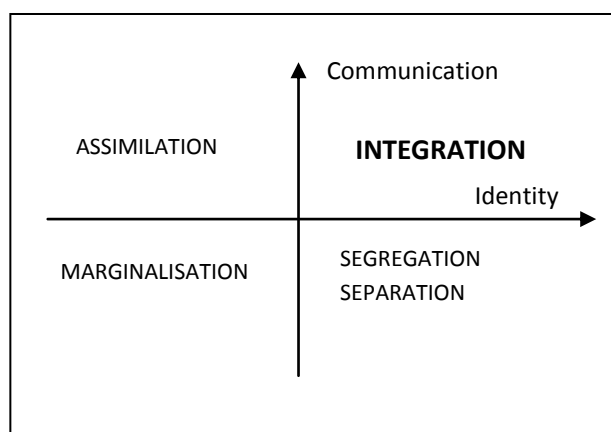
In general, it is important that all categories receive personalized assistance based on a deep analysis of their needs, potential, motivation and preferences and be accompanied throughout the whole process until they achieve a state of economic autonomy and stability, including getting support in overcoming the barriers (objective and subjective) that block their professional development.

We submit these recommendations to the public debate and, if they are considered pertinent, we argue they should be presented to decision-makers with responsibilities in the field and an advocacy campaign should be organized at the level of civil society in order to increase their chances of implementation.

Conceptual benchmarks

Inclusion or integration?

In Romania, Roma have the status of national minority and the use of the term integration is justified from this perspective. In the field of interethnic relations, integration is distinguished from assimilation, marginalisation, separation or segregation, according to the adjacent diagram (Rus, 2006). Thus, integration is seen as the situation in which the members of the minority group maintain, develop and assert, in the public space and in conditions of equality, the



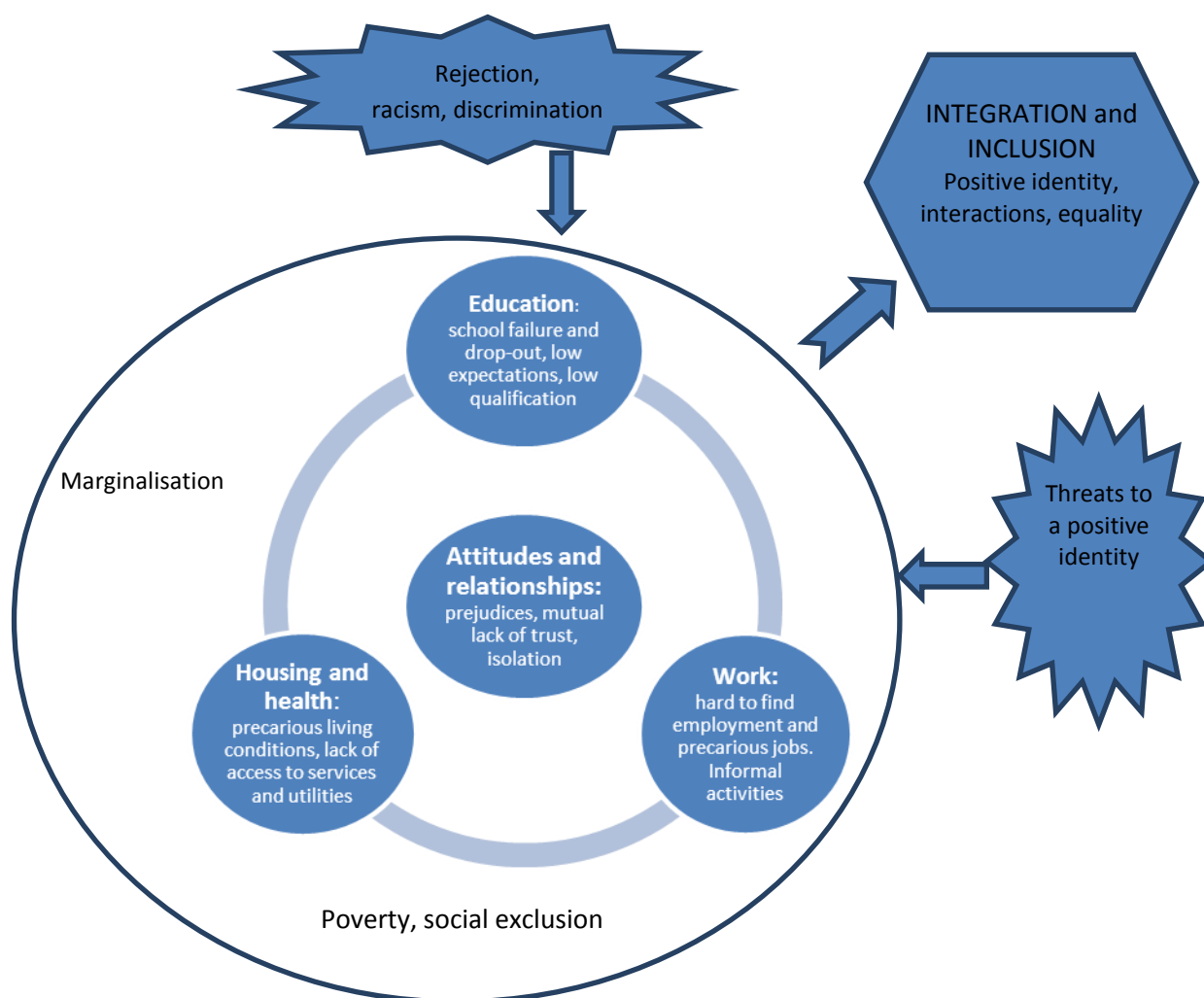
consciousness of a common belonging, together with specific cultural characteristics and practices, while also engaging in communication and cooperation interactions with the rest of society, especially with the members of the majority group. Thus, this is the desirable situation which public policies and the strategies that underlie their development and implementation should tend towards. If we apply this model in order to analyse the situation of Roma in Romania, we can notice that there are people and communities that can be found in all the situations illustrated in the diagram but the most acute and visible problems are those associated with marginalized communities, which are simultaneously affected by extreme poverty and social exclusion.

Social exclusion is defined by Silver (2007) as “a multidimensional process of progressive social rupture, detaching groups and individuals from social relations and institutions and preventing them from full participation in the normal, normatively prescribed activities of the society in which they live”. The notion of social inclusion is defined in opposition with social exclusion.

Thus, as Roma disadvantaged communities are frequently affected by marginalisation, poverty and social exclusion, the remedy of the situation requires integrated measures targeting simultaneously integration and social inclusion. Separate approaches involve important risks. Therefore, on the one hand, if we pay attention exclusively to the social dimension and consider we only have a “culture of poverty” and a vicious circle of exclusion which includes elements connected to education, employment, housing and healthcare, we reject essential phenomena such as those connected to ethnic discrimination and racism, which frequently affect the members of the Roma disadvantaged communities. On the other hand, an approach which attributes an ethnic dimension to situations of social disadvantage does not correspond to reality either; quite the contrary, it sometimes justifies an essentialist perspective, associated with segregationist and exclusionist tendencies or with views which deny the responsibility of the majority society and dispute the opportunity and possibility for corrective intervention.

We consider it necessary to adopt an approach which combines the acknowledgement of ethno-cultural aspects together with the factors which lead to social exclusion, in accordance with the basic principles of Roma inclusion undertaken at European level (EU, 2009).

The diagram below graphically illustrates this perspective regarding the situation of Roma disadvantaged communities:



Racism and discrimination against Roma

Throughout history, different European states, including Romania, have elaborated and implemented policies of exclusion, repression or even annihilation of Roma, as a cultural identity, as an ethnic group or as a way of life. Sociological surveys aimed at measuring the social distance between different ethnic groups have systematically shown a categorical rejection of Roma from all the other ethnic groups, including the majority groups.

Racist prejudices are, without a doubt, some of the most illustrative examples of prejudices as well as some of the prejudices with the greatest negative social impact. Racism can manifest in several different ways. First of all, there is the traditional racism, with deep historical roots in the case of Roma. This is translated into an explicit manifestation of negative attitudes and discriminating

behaviours against Roma in general. Explicit racists attribute to Roma characteristics which make them seem inferior to the other groups in society. Moreover, they see these characteristics as fixed, immutable and specific to all the members of this group. These people believe in the genetic transmission of certain behavioural tendencies and are sceptical about the effectiveness of any educational, socio-economical or other types of measures directed at the improvement of the situation of Roma.

However, a great number of people manifest a hidden racism. This refers to a situation in which there is a discrepancy or even contradiction between discourse and behaviour. Thus, these people/institutions have a discourse in which they state that they treat everybody the same way, but the “objective criteria” applied put Roma at a systematic disadvantage. The motto of this category could be: “I make no difference between Roma and non-Roma, they are all the same to me, but they all must comply with the rules and norms... [established by the majority]”.

The third type of racism manifestation is aversive racism, a much more subtle form, difficult to identify both in others and in one’s own behaviour and, implicitly, much more difficult to combat. This includes people who consider themselves tolerant, without racist tendencies and who can even express opinions that reject and condemn racism. These people unconsciously and unintentionally commit acts of discrimination not so much by disadvantaging Roma but by favouring non-Roma, involuntarily avoiding contact with Roma or by adopting attitudes towards Roma which place them in a position of inferiority. The motto which would correspond best to this manifestation is: “they (Roma) are humans too”.

Legally, at the level of international legislation, racial discrimination is considered “any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life” (UN International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, 1965).

There are three types of discrimination:

- a) Direct discrimination occurs when “someone is treated less favourably than another person if he/she could have been treated in a similar way”. Classic examples of direct discrimination are employment advertisements specifying “Roma excluded”, or posters with similar texts in public places.
- b) In the case of indirect discrimination, “a provision, criterion or practice appears to be neutral, but actually puts certain people at a disadvantage [...] compared with other people”. The typical example of this form of discrimination is the introduction of expensive uniforms in certain schools, which makes children from poor environments seek other schools.
- c) Structural discrimination means the poor representation of certain categories of people in various fields. For instance, statistical data show a very low percentage of minorities in the judicial system.

A specific form of discrimination is when personal dignity is harmed by hate speech or harassment. The public expression of the wish to evacuate the Roma population from the central area of a city

represents such discrimination, as it creates an atmosphere of intimidation for this community (if this particular wish is also “justified” by saying that Roma represent a source of infection, then a hostile, degrading and humiliating atmosphere is also created).

The existence at the social level of tendencies to discriminate against members of a disadvantaged social group, as is the case of Roma, leads to several types of consequences: social, connected to the perpetuation of unequal relationships among groups, economical and psychological. Measures such as non-discriminating legislation, legislation against discrimination and the existence of institutions with responsibilities in combating discrimination are important elements, but not nearly enough, in ensuring the reduction of discrimination against Roma.

Next we present a series of concepts which help us understand better how subjective our interpretation of reality is and what the effects of personal or social beliefs are on a group of people and implicitly on each person identified as belonging to that particular group.

The glass ceiling effect

The glass ceiling effect concept comes from the field of gender equality and refers to the barriers that keep minorities and women from climbing the professional ladder and obtaining high positions. These barriers are, in fact, an unjust system or a set of attitudes that are not directed to an individual, but to a whole group, the Roma in our case. Although officially people have equal employment opportunities, as, theoretically, the selection and promotion processes are based on people’s own worth, the members of the disadvantaged groups face invisible barriers which limit their real possibilities of finding a better position, even if they make the same efforts as the other employees and possess similar competences. These barriers may seem invisible, like a glass ceiling, but they play an important role in maintaining the status-quo. Employers tend to hire people who are culturally similar to them and do not want to “risk” hiring minorities. This is also encouraged by the attitudes of certain people belonging to the majority population, who see the professional ascension of minorities as a direct threat to their own chances of advancement.

Confronted with these invisible barriers, with discrimination in all its forms, including indirect and structural discrimination, and with a lack of models, of examples of people similar to them who have successful professional careers in various fields, many Roma come to internalize the image that they are not capable enough for certain positions and to reject the classical model of success through career advancement, resigning themselves to the inferior position which they are convinced they cannot get out of.

The bounded rationality model

Bounded rationality is the notion according to which decision-making is limited by the information people have at the time, their cognitive limitations and the time they have to make the decision. This model was proposed by Herbert Simon as an alternative to the rational model of decision-

making. Perfectly rational decisions are not possible in practice because of the limited information and abilities people have. Thus, when making decisions, they apply rationality only after they have massively simplified the existing alternatives, choosing the satisfactory solution rather than the optimal one.

That is why the decisions people make may seem, from the outside, irrational to those who have more or less information than the people who made the decision. Most of the times, we find our logic to be the only valid one and cannot understand why certain people make certain decisions. For instance, a person who does not have a job may refuse a job offer, although the salary offered corresponds to that person's level of education, qualification and experience. This can be explained, for instance, by lack of information or failure to consider certain elements: the fact that the person prefers to have a similar, though insecure, income from unregistered occasional activities, without being aware of the fact that an employment contract brings the possibility of a pension, paid holiday and access to healthcare services. That person may also overlook other possible benefits offered by the employer, such as free enrolment of the child in kindergarten or the promotion opportunities offered to people who meet certain conditions (for instance, for those who speak a certain language). On the other hand, this decision of turning down the job offered, which may seem irrational from the outside, could be rationally justified if elements known by the person in questions but unknown by the employer are taken into account (such as the fact that taking that job could lead to a decrease of the real income obtained, due to the loss of access to certain social benefits).

The optimal solution implies the understanding of the causal chain in our actions. However, people do not always have the capacity to understand the effects of certain behaviours in the long run. Many solutions may seem optimal in the short run but with negative effects in the long run: confidence in the benefits of education, in obtaining a degree, implies postponing the moment when financial gain begins in order to build a successful career. But if this strategy proves inefficient – for examples, if many educated people do not have access to a proper job – the confidence in education decreases.

The Golem effect

The Golem effect is a type of self-fulfilling prophecy which refers to the effect of low expectations placed upon a certain person. Thus, studies carried out in the field of education and organisational psychology show that low expectations increase the chances that the person in question will obtain poor results.

Employers can generate “a framework for failure” for certain categories of employees, often without even being aware of it. The great majority of stereotypes about Roma contain negative characteristics. Consequently, when an employer interacts with a Roma person, instead of making the effort to find out which are that person's strengths and weaknesses, he/she is content to just form his/her opinion about that person based on the existing stereotypes. Once reality is filtered through those stereotypes, people see what they expect to see. The information is filtered so that those behaviours that do not correspond to the stereotype may be ignored and those which confirm the stereotype may be given more importance, in order to ensure consistency with the initial belief,

with the stereotype. Employers or bosses label their subordinates and these labels become self-fulfilling prophecies. Studies have shown that, in the case of the people considered to be competent, bosses attribute their success to internal factors and failure to external factors; in the case of the people considered less competent, they do the exact opposite. Thus, the objective results are interpreted in such a way as not to affect the initial label attached to the respective person.

The Golem effect can be avoided only if employers are willing to identify their own stereotypes about certain groups and refrain from basing their analyses on preconceived ideas about the members of a certain group.

Thus, the bounded rationality model, the glass ceiling effect and the Golem effect can give us a better understanding of the reasons for which there still is a large number of Roma who are not interested in a stable job, do not have confidence in their chances of professional evolution and are blocked in developing their potential by the attitudes of employers who anticipate their failure.

Organized hypocrisy

Introduced in 1989 by the Swedish sociologist Nils Brunsson, specialized in organisational analysis, organized hypocrisy is a concept which describes the adaptation and survival mechanisms of the organisations which tend to maintain their positive public image and legitimacy while confronted with divergent requirements from internal and external factors. The most frequent contradiction appears between the need to respond to the needs of the organisation's beneficiaries, in accord with its publicly stated mission, and the need to conform to requirements and norms imposed from the outside.

The systems where organized hypocrisy appears come to respond to the requirements of rationality, effectiveness and correctness through superficial, insubstantial reactions, through mechanisms and actions without a real impact.

Discounting theory

Discounting is a psychological mechanism by which people minimise or maximise an aspect of reality, of themselves or of others. In other words they are not accounting for the reality of the respective aspect. According to a model initially proposed by Mellor and Schiff in 1975 and developed by Macefield & Mellor (2006), there are four levels of discounting:

1. discounting the EXISTENCE of a problem;
2. discounting the SIGNIFICANCE of a problem;
3. discounting the CHANGE POSSIBILITIES;
4. discounting the ABILITY to actually carry out the change.

At each level the discount can be of three types and concerns the stimulus, the problem, or the options available for solving the problem. The Discounting Matrix resulting from the combination of the types and levels of discounting can be a useful tool for diagnosis of where the blockage appears and what needs to be done to overcome it. Discounting leads to several types of negative behaviour

that will not solve the problem: passivity (doing nothing), agitation (mainly make look as if something/a lot is being done), over adaptation (exaggerated attention to the problem but no focus on solution) or violence and rejection. As these are common types of reactions to issues related to Roma communities, we consider this model useful for understanding why and how these issues are or are not addressed.

Normative framework and measures for Roma inclusion in the labour market

National and European normative framework

The development of a normative framework and public policies regarding the improvement of the situation of Roma in Romania started only around the year 2000, after a decade in which the transition to a market economy, without a proper social protection system, and the prejudices towards Roma, deeply rooted in the Romanian society, led to mass unemployment, social marginalization and exclusion for a great number of Roma. In this period, the socio-economic changes were also often associated with school drop-out or non-schooling of a great number of Roma children, which generated additional barriers to decent life and emphasized the discrepancy between Roma and the rest of the population.

The acknowledgement of the need for public policies rectifying the imbalance regarding the position of Roma in the Romanian society, as well as the first actions in this sense were greatly determined by external pressures, especially connected to the requirements of Romania's accession to the European Union. The Roma issue was constantly present in the European Commission's progress reports and was a key aspect pursued in the application of the Copenhagen political criterion.

The first official document adopted in this context in 2001, the Strategy of the Government of Romania for improving the condition of Roma, established two objectives in the chapter on "economy and social security":

1. To increase the effectiveness of the measures destined to Roma inclusion in the labour market;
2. To regulate and promote active measures for the beneficiaries of the guaranteed minimum income, by facilitating the access to professional reorientation courses.

The difficult experience Roma often go through when accessing the labour market due to discrimination which leads to social exclusion, the lack of training, education and information opportunities and the need for a legal framework and effective support measures to combat discrimination at the work place and to facilitate labour market access are also core elements of the Recommendation on improving the economic and employment situation of Roma/Gypsies and Travellers in Europe, adopted in 2001 by the Committee of Ministers within the Council of Europe. The Recommendation also states the importance of introducing income generating measures and projects for Roma.

In the context of the Decade of Roma inclusion 2005-2015, an international initiative that was also joined by Romania, the governments of the participating European countries have committed

themselves to eliminating discrimination against Roma and reducing the unacceptable discrepancies between the Roma and the rest of society, focusing their efforts on four priority areas: education, employment, health and housing. Key aspects such as poverty, discrimination and gender equality were also taken into account.

As the reports analysing the impact of this commitment show, the objectives established initially are far from being achieved. The statistics show that the impact of the measures taken was very limited, not enough to determine a significant improvement. Practically, the main measures taken by the public institutions in the field of employment were: to organize job fairs for Roma, as well as counselling and mediation services related to finding a job and, to a lesser extent, to organize professional qualification courses. The main instruments, the special programs of the National Employment Agency for communities with a great number of Roma, led to the professional qualification and employment of a reduced number of people.

A new impulse in this field came, at least apparently, in 2011 from the European Commission, which adopted a Communication requiring the development of new national strategies for Roma integration, detailing the concrete policies to be adopted. The Communication on the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020 makes reference to the same key areas as those mentioned in the Decade of Roma inclusion, including the reduction of disparities between Roma and the rest of the population in the field of employment.

In 2011 Romania adopted a new strategy for the period 2012-2020, on the basis of the European framework. But in 2013 it had to be reformulated, taking into account the poor quality and inconsistent foundation of the initial document, as well as the need for correlations with elements that appeared later, including the programmes underlying the allocation of European structural and investment funds for the financial period 2014-2020.

In December 2013, the European Council adopted a recommendation on effective Roma integration measures in the Member States, meant to encourage the governments of the EU countries to implement the commitments made in the national strategy.

It is important to underline that, regarding the specific measures in the field of labour and employment, both the national strategy and the recommendation of the European Council consider a broader range of interventions and are not limited to the organization of professional training courses and support in finding a job. Thus, importance is given to personalised guidance, but also to alternatives to the classical professional training courses: on the job training, lifelong learning, validation and certification of competences. Both documents also mention alternatives to employment, respectively self-employment and the development of entrepreneurship, including the social entrepreneurship. They also refer to the fact that, in order to have the desired impact, the measures to support Roma in obtaining incomes that allow them to live a decent life have to be combined with measures to combat discrimination.

The Recommendation of the European Council also supports the employment of adequately trained mediators and the use of mediation as one of the actions that can contribute to the reduction of disparities between Roma and the rest of the population, including in the field of labour and employment.

Measures supported through European funds

If the governmental strategies on Roma issues were, to a great extent, just words on paper and had a modest concrete impact, the National Development Plan for 2007-2013, which included human resources development as well as employment and social inclusion promotion among its six priorities, was conceived in direct connection with the access to European structural funds.

The Operational Programme 'Human Resources Development' 2007-2013 (SOP HRD) within the European Social Fund became, after 2008, the main financial resource for measures destined to improve Roma access to employment and their professional qualification. Thus, SOP HRD priority axis 6, focused on promoting social inclusion, has two areas of intervention for Roma as one of the main target groups. These are: area of intervention 6.1. Developing social economy and area of intervention 6.2. Improving the access and participation of vulnerable groups on the labour market.

One of the indicators of this SOP HRD component refers to the participation of 65,000 Roma in qualification/requalification programmes, out of which 60% complete this process by obtaining a certificate.

The types of operations recommended within the area of intervention 6.2 on improving the access and participation of vulnerable groups on the labour market include:

- Incentives for employers for the labour market (re)integration of vulnerable groups, especially Roma, disabled people and young people over 18 leaving the State Protection System;
- Training programmes to develop basic skills and qualifications for vulnerable groups;
- Accompanying measures to identify and maintain employment (support for dependent family members, assistance services and other associated activities that enable the individual to participate in the labour market);
- Special support for the development of new protected jobs in enterprises.

Research objectives

The research was structured around the following two objectives:

- to evaluate the impact and effectiveness of the support measures and interventions offered to people at risk of social exclusion;
- to formulate recommendations for overcoming barriers and increasing the effectiveness and sustainability of the measures regarding the access of people at risk of social exclusion to the labour market.

Regarding the first objective, the following aspects were taken into account:

- the needs of the target group;
- the attitude towards work of the members of the vulnerable groups targeted by the project;
- their perception regarding the access to the labour market;
- the needs for professional training;
- the employers' perception regarding the access of these vulnerable groups to the labour market and maintenance of their jobs;
- the beneficiaries' perception regarding the support interventions offered.

The first objective had a dimension focused directly on project beneficiaries (what was the concrete impact and effectiveness of the support measures offered within the project) but also more general aspects (connected to the impact of this type of measures, generally supported through SOP HRD, but also of the public policies in the field).

The second objective refers to recommendations that may be taken into account in future projects or in the activities carried out by certain structures such as the Centre for Social Inclusion, created within the project, as well as to recommendations regarding the adjustment of the legal framework and the European fund management and allocation procedures.

Taking into account the specific situation of Roma and considering the scarcity of explanations offered by other studies in the field, an innovative conceptual framework was also supplied, described in the previous chapters.

In order to achieve the above mentioned objectives, besides outlining this conceptual framework, information from various sources was also taken into account:

- national legislation and relevant European documents
- studies and reports on the situation of Roma, labour market inclusion and Roma access to the labour market
- different categories of Roma people
- employers and human resources specialists
- representatives of public institutions with responsibilities in the field
- representatives of nongovernmental organisations with relevant activity

- specialists, including those directly involved in the project.

Research methodology

The data were collected on the basis of several quantitative and qualitative methods in the period October 2013 – March 2014 and refer to beneficiaries, Roma people and employers in the North-West and West regions of Romania.

Thus, the **quantitative** data were obtained from two sources:

- by processing the data available in the forms used throughout and as a result of the information and counselling sessions carried out with the beneficiaries between 2012 and 2014 within the project “Together for a safe start”. The tools used contain information about education, work experience and the job searching process as well as the conclusions and recommendations of the personnel involved in counselling.
- From a questionnaire administered several months after the counselling activity, focused on the current situation and the perception regarding the effectiveness of the support offered through the project.

Out of all project beneficiaries, given the low rate of valid answers, we processed the answers of 1396 Roma people, offered during the counselling activity; respectively 908 Roma people after the counselling activity.

The **qualitative** data was obtained through focus groups with Roma people who were looking for a job, both from urban and rural areas, from different counties, as well as interviews with employers. Interviews and a focus group with the specialists directly involved in the project were also organized.

An important element of the process was the organization of a workshop with employers and personnel of public institutions active in the field in order to discuss and validate both the analysis carried out and the proposals formulated.

The results of the quantitative analysis

The main statistical data presented hereinafter refer to the level of education, paid and unpaid work experience, as well as the motivation to find a job and the fears connected to the job searching process.

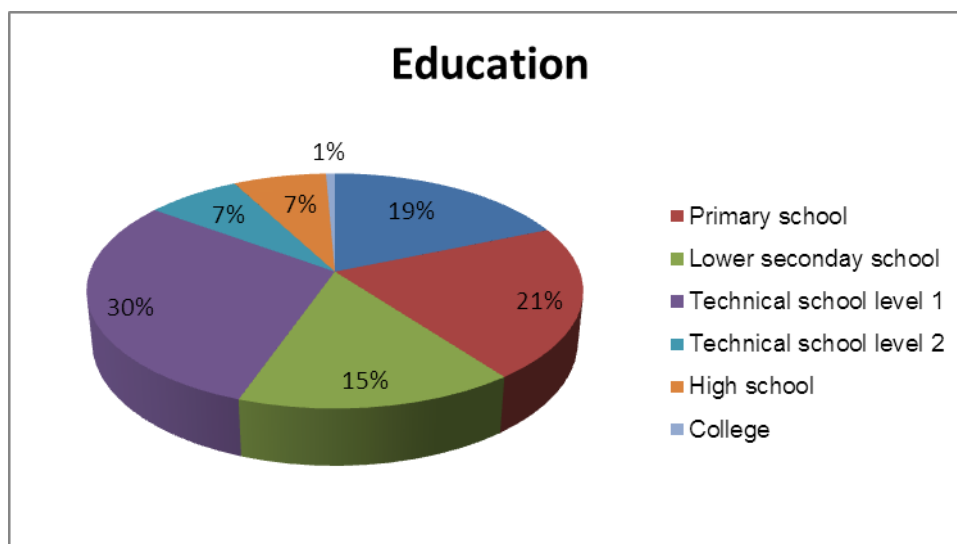


Figure 1. Level of education

According to the 2011 census, the data regarding the level of education of the general population is as follows:

- low level of education (primary, secondary or no formal education): 44.2%
- medium level: 41.4%
- high level: 14.4%

A great discrepancy between the level of education of the general population and that of the Roma beneficiaries of the services offered within the project *Together for a safe start* can be noticed, especially regarding higher education and the high percentage of people with no education. There are no significant differences between men and women regarding the level of education. Thus, the educational profile of the people targeted by the project services corresponds to that of Roma and there is a balance between the genders.

In terms of work experience, a great part of study participants have experience in unpaid work. For this reason, it is important that the skills they have in fields such as: organization of events, working the land, hairdressing, makeup, masonry, painting, sales, child care, cleaning, should be considered on employment. Competences are often evaluated only by taking into account the previous paid work, but this approach loses sight of important elements in competence assessment.



Figure 2.Fields of unpaid work experience

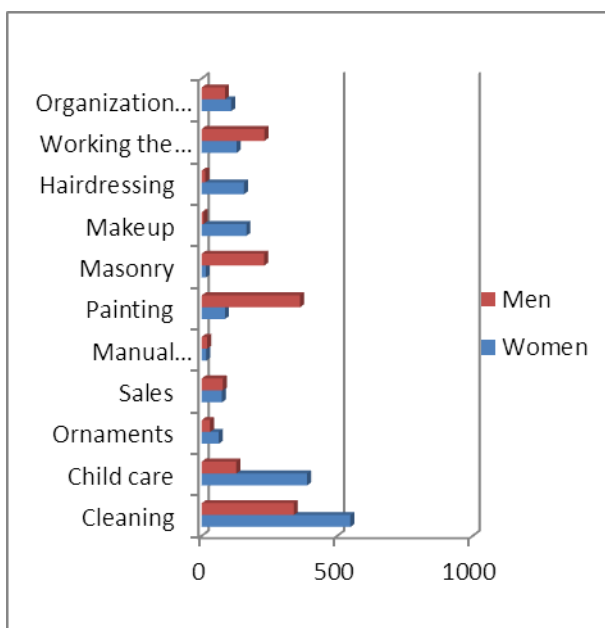
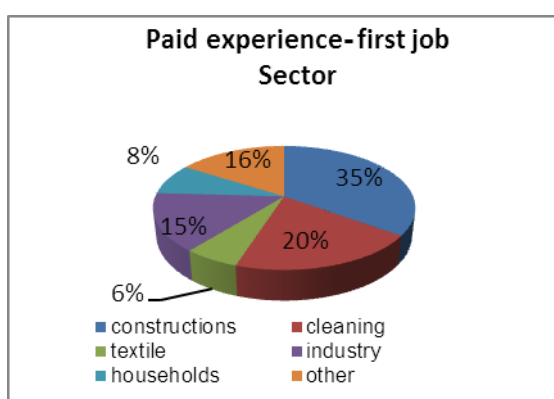


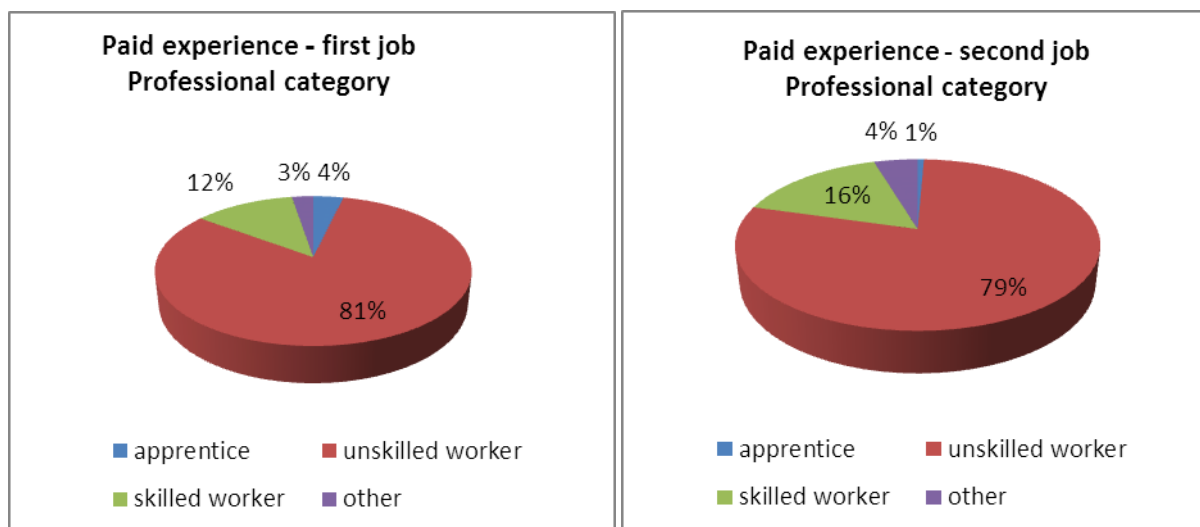
Figure 3. Unpaid work experience by gender

The graphs above show a rather clear distribution of gender roles. Women have more experience in fields such as hairdressing, makeup, child care whereas men have more experience in fields such as masonry, painting, working the land. The field in which the study participants have the greatest experience is cleaning. This experience was acquired by working mainly for the family, but also for employers, friends or others. A high percentage of undeclared work for the employers (15% or more) is registered in the fields of sales, painting, masonry and working the land.



Figures 4-5. Paid work experience by sector – the first and second job

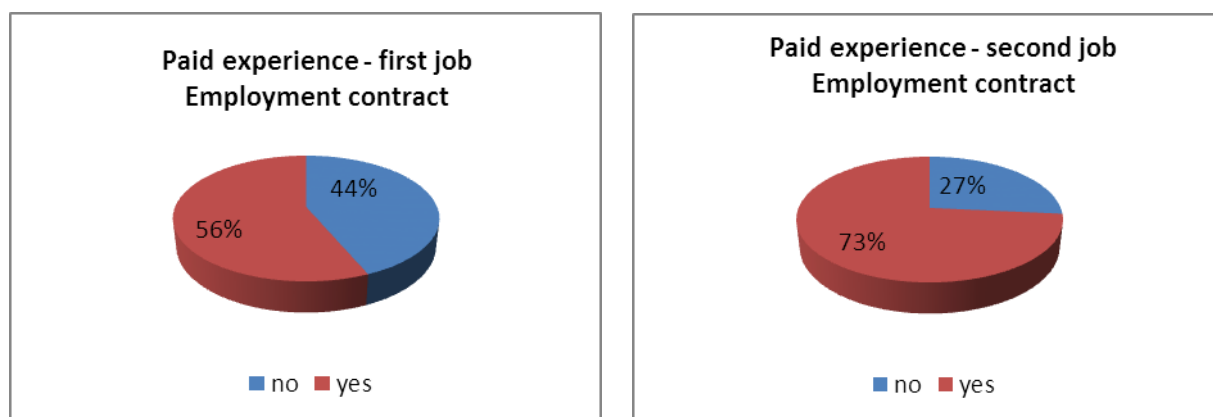
More than half of study participants have paid work experience in constructions (35%) and cleaning (20%) as their first job. Regarding the second job, the percentage is lower in constructions (23%) and higher in industry (19% in comparison with 16%) and other fields (25% in comparison with 16%).



Figures 6-7. Paid work experience by professional category – the first and second job

An overwhelming majority of people with an employment contract were employed as unskilled workers, only 12% being employed as skilled workers. Regarding the second job, even if the percentage of unskilled workers is similar, the percentage of apprentices decreases (from 4% to 1%), while the percentage of skilled workers increases (from 12% to 16%).

Even more discouraging is the graph below, which shows that over half of the people with paid work experience were not employed with an employment contract. Unreported employment has negative effects both on those directly involved and on economy in general. An employment contract does not only mean working legally in terms of tax payment, but also a better protection of workers' rights. The lack of contract makes them more vulnerable to different kinds of abuses.



Figures 8-9. Work experience by employment contract – the first and second job

Almost half of the paid work experience at the first job was gained without having an employment contract.

The percentage of situations in which the paid work experience was gained without having an employment contract decreases from 44% at the first job to 27% at the second job. Thus we can conclude that after the first work experience the employees had a better understanding of how the labour market functioned, what their rights were. At the same time, it is possible that the experience gained may have convinced the employers to offer an employment contract.

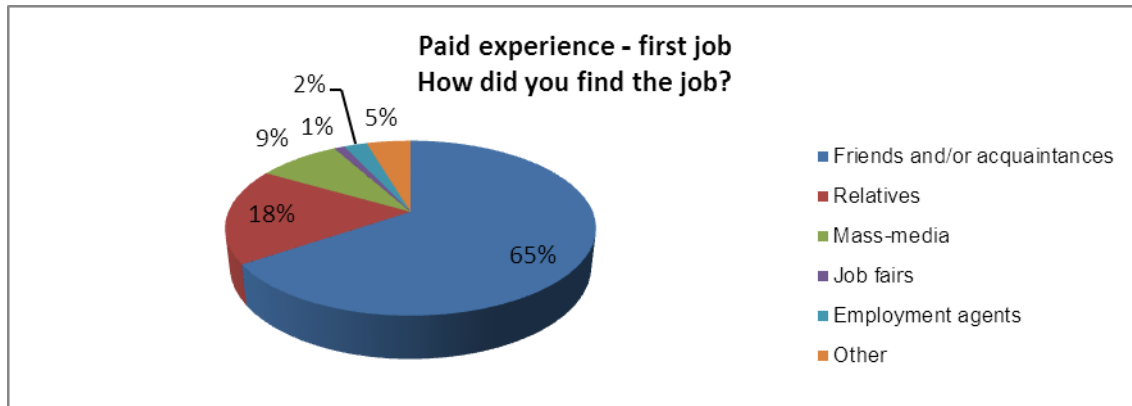


Figure 10. Means of finding the first job

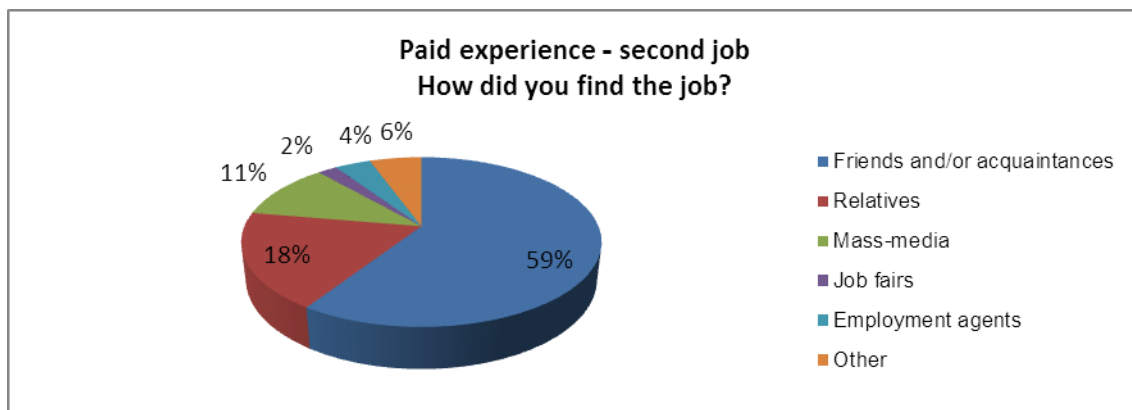


Figure 12. Means of finding the second job

The main means through which Roma found a job was through people close to them (friends and acquaintances – 65%; relatives – 18%). Other means, such as job advertisements in the press, job fairs or employment agent did not have great influence. The data obtained do not show whether these means did not exist at all in their community or they existed but were not efficient. The percentages are similar in the case of the second job, but we can notice a decrease in finding a job through friends and a slight increase in each of the following means: advertisements in the press (11% in comparison with 9% in the case of the first job), job fairs (2% in comparison with 1% in the case of the first job), employment agent (4% in comparison with 2% in the case of the first job). Thus, we can speculate that, once on the labour market, Roma people have more access to other means of information and are more open to using them in order to find a new job.

In the majority of cases, the paid work experience was gained through full-time activities (75%), while in 21% of the cases Roma worked by the hour. Regarding the second job, the situation is similar: 79% full-time job and 17% work by the hour.

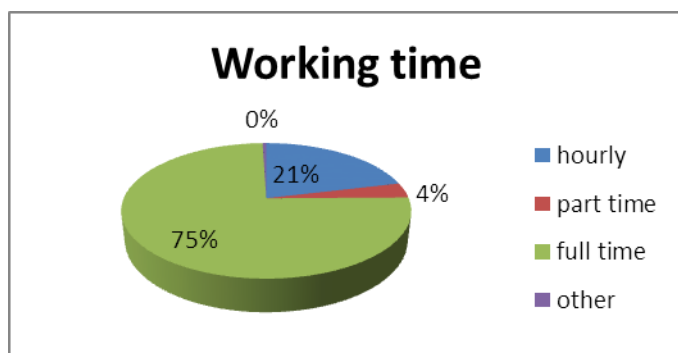


Figure 12. Working time in paid work experience

Half the jobs were lost for reasons related to the employer, such as: layoffs, restructuring, closing the company, but this category also includes cases of employment contract termination for non-compliance with the work schedule by employees, as well as the end of the working period in the case of seasonal activities. Approximately 35% of the jobs were given up by Roma for personal reasons (finding a new job, starting school, moving to another city), family reasons (marriage, child care), or because they left abroad. Only 8% of the people gave up working for reasons related to salary (salary too low or delayed payments of salary).

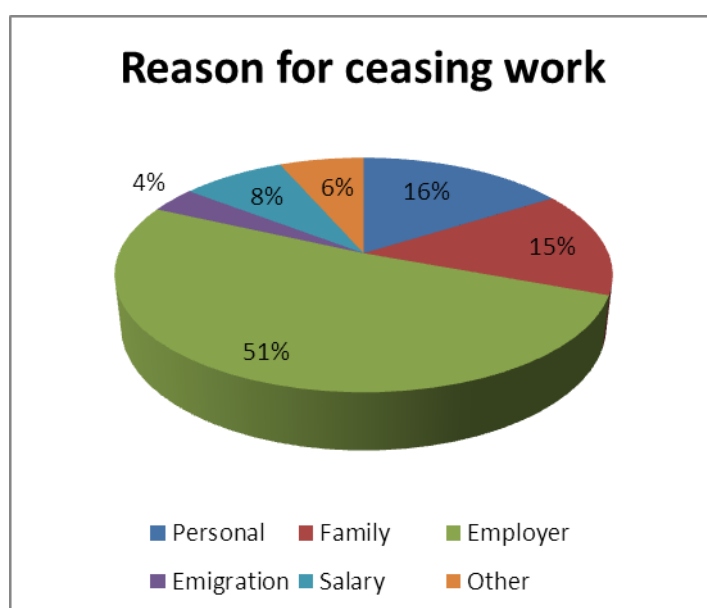


Figure 13. Reason for ceasing work

Regarding the motivation to look for a job, the financial needs are predominant: 68% state that they want to get a job because they need money for the family and in the case of 35% of the respondents the salary associated with the job represents the only source of income. It can be noticed that there is a lack of long-term motivation, such as the wish to have a career or to offer children a better future.

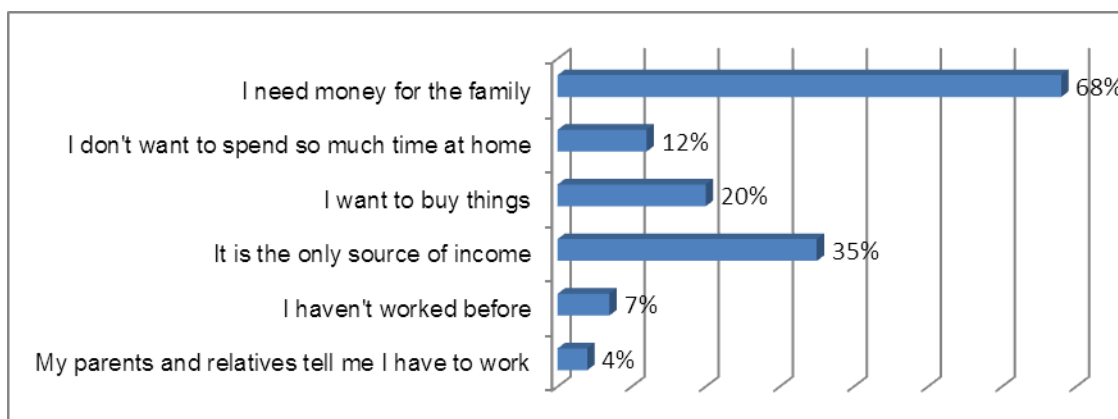


Figure 14. Motivation to look for a job

The main means through which the Roma respondents tried to find a job were mainly personal relationships (54%) and, to a lesser extent, mass-media advertisements (15%). Writing a CV and participating in job interviews were also mentioned (8%). Only a very small percentage of them registered themselves with the County Employment Agency as people looking for a job (4%).

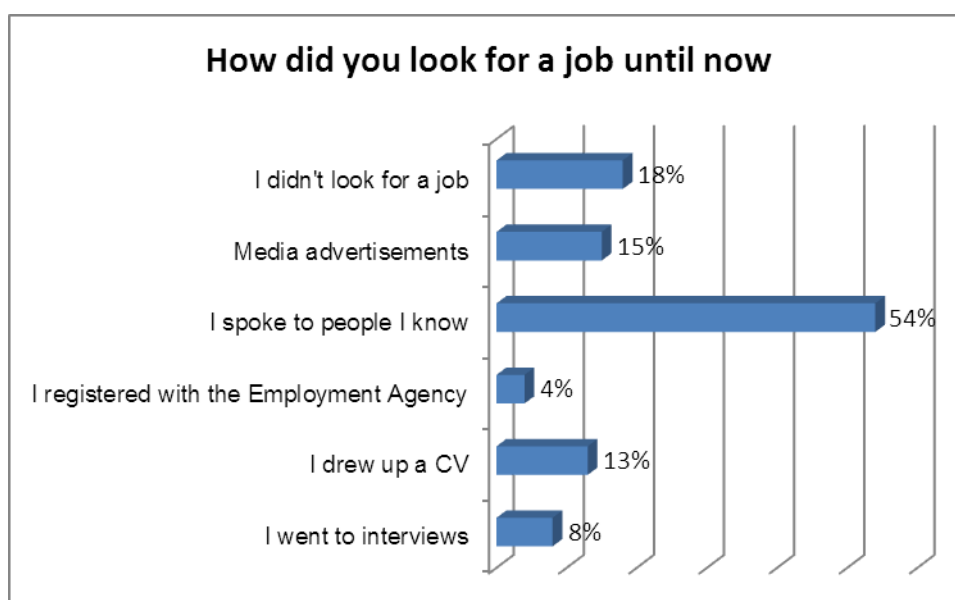


Figure 15. Means of looking for a job

The extremely high proportion of people who rely on a network of acquaintances can be connected with a series of factors specific to the members of Roma disadvantaged communities, such as: the low level of education, fear of discrimination (illustrated more specifically in the qualitative part of the research), as well as the lack of information regarding the institutional framework, possibly associated with a lack of trust in institutions. The reduced percentage of people who write a CV in order to get a job is connected to their low level of education, but may also be determined by the fact that a CV is not much help for the type of job envisaged (often unskilled personnel) and with the type of employers targeted (cleaning companies, small enterprises, agricultural companies).

As the graph below shows, a high proportion of people looking for a job want a full-time job. Nevertheless, the percentage of women who prefer a part-time job is higher than that of men. There

are also differences between men and women regarding physical labour, preferred by men, and outdoor activities, preferred by women. The great number of people who prefer to work with other people, rather than by themselves can also be noticed.

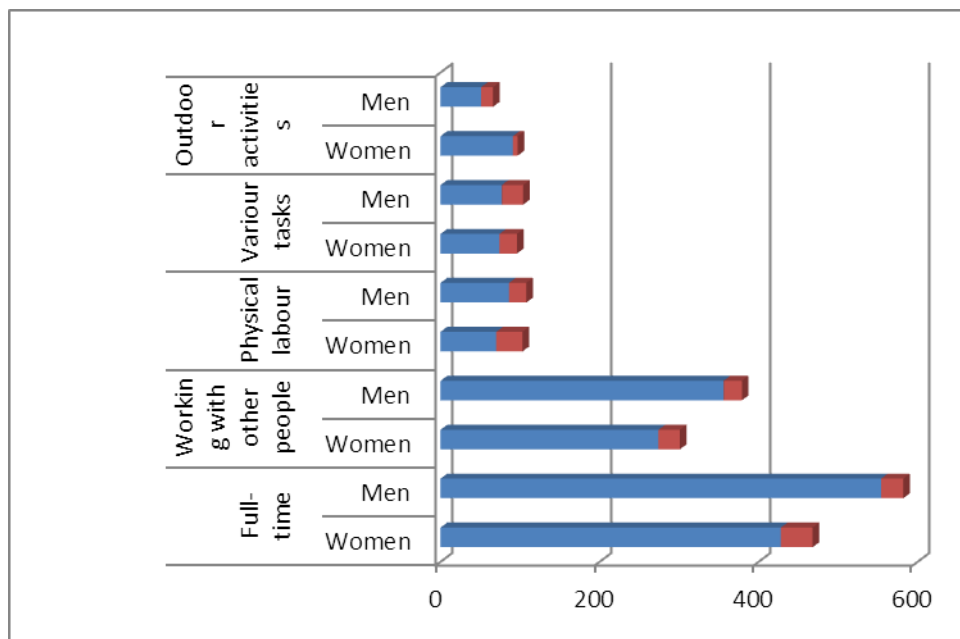


Figure 16. Work preferences

The next two graphs refer to the fears associated to the job searching process.

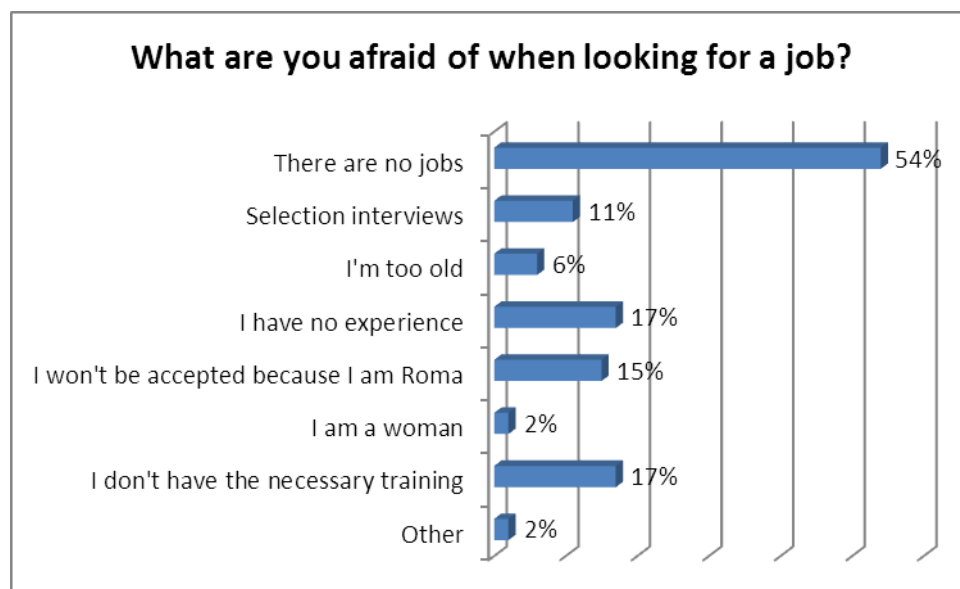


Figure 17. Fears in the job searching process

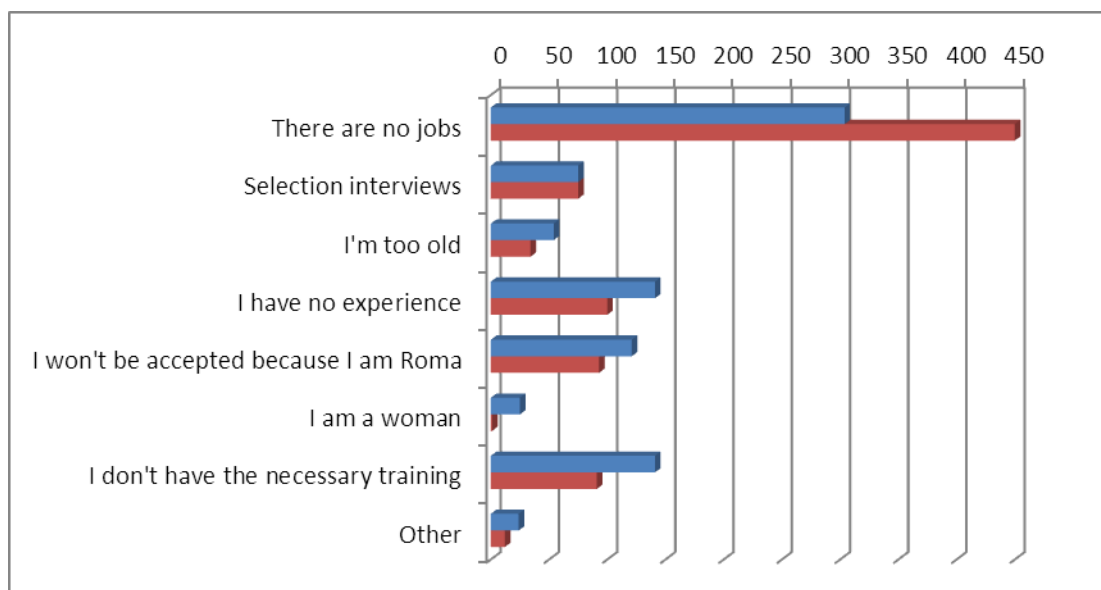


Figure 18. Fears in the job searching process by gender

The majority of those involved in the research and who had tried to get a job recently were discouraged in the job searching process by the fact that they perceived a general lack of jobs. Other factors they considered relevant were: lack of experience and necessary training, as well as ethnic discrimination. All these three factors, with similar percentages 15-17%, are more often encountered in the case of women than in the case of men. Moreover, women are more afraid that they will not be accepted because they are Roma rather than because they are women. 15% of them consider that they were denied a job because they are Roma. A slightly higher percentage (17%) says that they did not get a job because they did not have the experience or training required by the employers. This small difference shows that this is not just a tendency of victimization and artificial justification of the failure by invoking ethnic discrimination. It is even possible, as some qualitative data presented in the next section show, that some Roma underestimate the importance of ethnic discrimination and racism, as well as the cumulated effects of ethnic, social and gender discrimination.

Several months after administering the initial questionnaire and the specific intervention within the project, which consisted of information, counselling, support to find a job, enrolment in qualification courses or organization of competence certification and validation procedures, the subjects were contacted again to give information on the impact of the project upon their access to the labour market.

Resuming contact with the people involved in the activities proved to be a difficult process, due to the fact that certain contact information was no longer valid after several months, but also because some beneficiaries were involved in several such activities and did not remember very well the interaction with the project team. The majority of the people who took part in the programme and could be contacted at its conclusion benefited from counselling sessions (91%) and a small part benefited from training courses, competence certification, employment with a subsidy or just from one of these intervention methods together with employment with a subsidy.

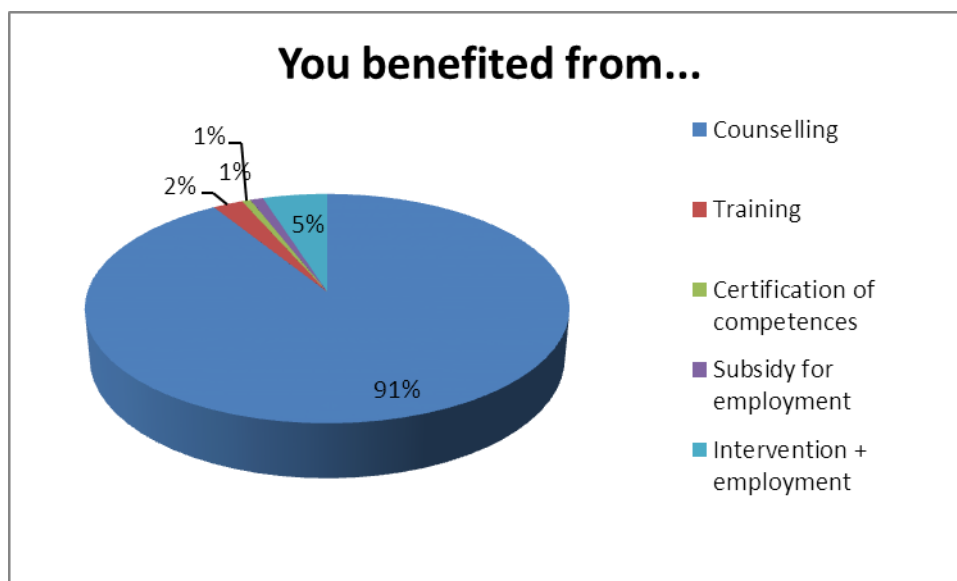


Figure 19.Types of interventions the beneficiaries benefited from

This distribution corresponds relatively well with the project indicators, which specify that only a small proportion of beneficiaries are directly supported in attending professional training courses, in certifying their competences or in getting a job by giving subsidies to employers. The reduced percentage of people in the last categories, though more accessible than the people who only benefited from counselling, is also due to the fact that a great part of the courses and competence certification procedures were organized in the last months of the project and thus an impact evaluation cannot be justified.

The graph below shows how the people who got a job in the meantime perceive what helped them to find a job.

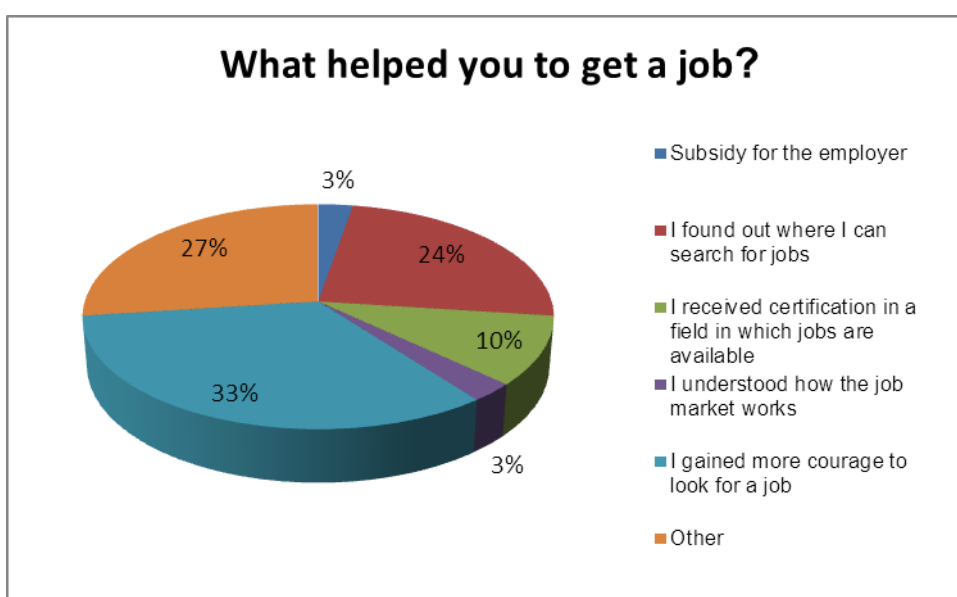


Figure 20.Changes generated by interventions which contributed to finding a job

From the beneficiaries' perspective, the main effect of the information and counselling activities of the project was that they gave them courage to look for a job (33%), as well as the information that is necessary when looking for a job (24%). Part of them managed to get a qualification in a field that needed employees (10%) and, consequently, found a job. A small part of beneficiaries consider that the subsidies for employers contributed to their getting a job (3%) but, of course, just a small part benefited from this type of support.

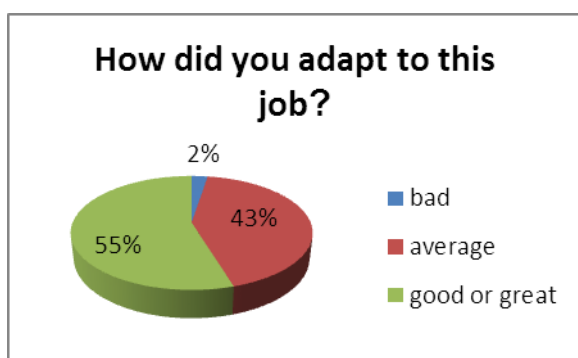


Figure 20. Adapting to the job

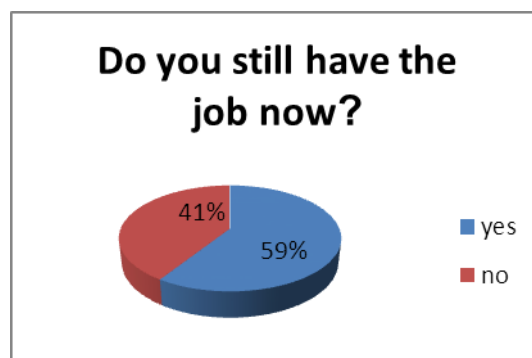


Figure 21. Present situation regarding employment

Although the majority considers that they adapted well or very well to the job (55%) or adequately (43%), almost 60% of the people who managed to get a job as a result of their participation in the programme are no longer employed, which means that the employment was short-term (several months).

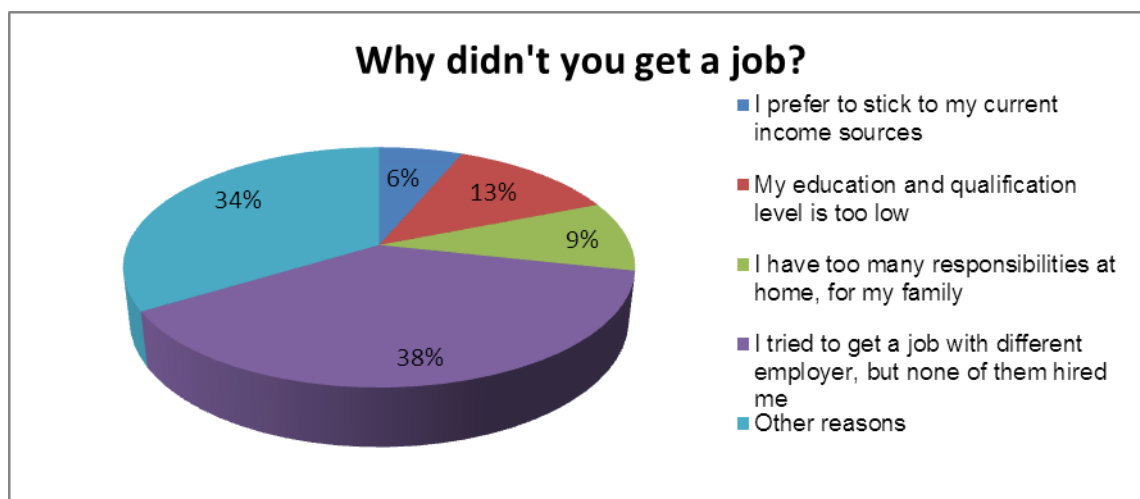
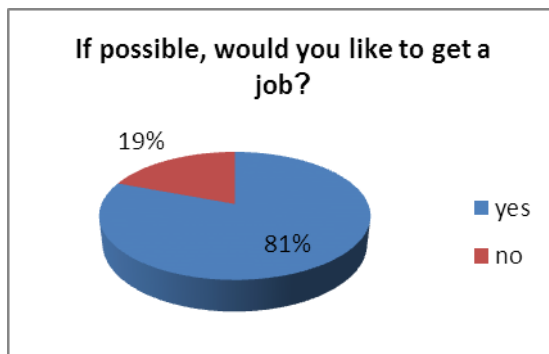


Figure 22. Reasons for which the subjects did not get a job

Part of the people who did not get a job as a result of their participation in the programme tried to get a job but was not successful (38%). The rest did not try to get a job, either because their education or qualification was insufficient (13%) or because they had too many responsibilities at home, for the family (9%), or because they preferred to keep the sources of income they had at the time (4%) or other reasons (34%) such as: their health, continuing their studies, low salary,

commuting over large distances, etc. This list of reasons confirms the theory that such decisions can be well explained through the bounded rationality model, described in a previous section.

Consequently, it is clear that the decision not to get a job is not determined by a lack of desire to work, which is an important element of the prejudices widely spread against Roma, but by the analysis of some limited alternatives, without prioritizing the medium- and long-term impact.



The majority of participants in the study (81%) want to get a job if they have the chance. But there is a pretty high percentage (19%) of people who are not interested in getting a job, even if presented with the opportunity. They also have clear rational reasons for not wanting to get a job, either connected with their family situation, or connected with a simple financial calculation.

Figure 23. Intention to get a job in the future

Thus, it results that, in the short run, the decision to accept a poorly paid job which requires time and taking responsibilities is not convenient in comparison with the current situation. These people find it more convenient to maintain the current situation, which in many cases means having incomes from social benefits and allowances combined with incomes obtained from unreported employment, even occasional.

Thus, we can conclude that the Roma who participated in the project *Together for a safe start* generally have a lower level of education than the average of the population; they have unpaid work experience which can be exploited, as well as paid work experience in various sectors, mainly as unskilled workers. The main means through which they found jobs previously was through relatives or people close to them and the financial motivation tends to predominate in the job searching process. The main fears connected to finding a job refer mainly to the fact that there are no jobs, but also the lack of necessary experience or education, as well as the fact that employers will not accept them because they are Roma.

The project participants benefited from counselling in searching for a job and consider that this process helped them mainly to get the courage to look for a job, to find out where they can find jobs and to get qualification in a field that needs employees.

Although the majority of those who got a job as a result of the counselling process declare that they adapted well or adequately to the job, only half of them are still employed at present.

The results of the qualitative research

The data obtained through qualitative methods are structured hereinafter according to the three types of people they were collected from: Roma, employers and specialists involved in the project. The analysis of the data provided by Roma enabled their organization around four main topics: (1) description of occupations, income sources and work-related experiences; (2) perceptions of racism and discrimination in the context of job searching or professional experiences; (3) perceptions regarding the possibility of change, of overcoming the situation of marginalization and exclusion or of improving the socio-economic status, especially by participating in the labour market; (4) perceptions of employers' requirements and expectations

Occupations and incomes

The work experiences of the Roma participants in the focus groups and interviews are very diverse. Some of them had been employed in the past with an employment contract for indefinite duration but lost their jobs either several years ago, in the restructuring and privatization process of the big industrial units, or more recently, due to the crisis of the last years. A reduced number of participants currently have a fixed-term employment contract or an unsatisfactory situation in terms of salary or work conditions and are looking for a better job.

The people who work on "the black labour market" consider that they do it due to the low level of education and qualification and because they had no other opportunities. Thus, the men in the urban areas often work in constructions and the men in the rural areas do seasonal work in agriculture. In both cases, people work only several months a year. In some places the demand for unskilled work force in agriculture has decreased significantly in recent years due to mechanization. In the areas with vineyards and orchards there is a constant need for unskilled work force, but the work is seasonal.

In some cases, men also work late in the autumn or in winter "in forests" and do not receive money for payment but are compensated with firewood, which they sell. Thus they generate an income of approximately 1000 lei [~ 225 Euro¹] per month during winter, but it is also occasional and insecure: *"One week you have buyers, the next you don't. People don't have money to buy it"*.

Some women also work occasionally, either in agriculture, or cleaning houses, but the main activity is frequently limited to their own household and child care.

Other occupations encountered are: officially unregistered trade (in the market or pedlary), cartage in the market, especially on weekends, or at different stores, when they need to load or unload merchandise, as well as collecting metals.

¹Official minimum salary is around 140 Euro and average salary is around 375 Euro.

Thus, in the majority of cases, the income obtained is a mixture of social benefits (minimum guaranteed income, child allowances, etc.) and unregistered earnings from occasional activities and the total is often higher than the minimum wages.

Some had work experiences abroad, generally seasonal work in agriculture or constructions, but also “pilfering”, handling garbage bins or begging. The most frequently mentioned destination countries are Italy, Spain, France, Germany and England. The justification offered was: “Better to beg and steal than starve to death”.

There are also cases of people who go abroad to get social benefit and who, after several months abroad, come back home to live on the money obtained in this manner. Sometimes, such situations are connected with networks of intermediaries, who ensure transportation, take care of formal proceedings to obtain the social benefits or place people to beg and supervise the process, retaining a significant commission from the proceeds.

Others are afraid to go abroad because they do not know the language or who could help them:

“There is nothing for you to do there without a job. If you don’t have a job (...) you’d better stay in this country”.

“You can’t get any social support abroad if you don’t know anybody or don’t know the language. Where do you go? What door do you knock on? Give me (...) or give me some aid. How do you speak if you don’t know the language? Where do you go? You can’t read, you know nothing. How are you a social case? Say, if you had a job and gave it up or were fired or something, then it’s ok, sir, I had a job, but I no longer have it, help me. Give me some kind of social support, like in our country.”

There are also Roma families who successfully carry out constant income generating activities, for instance trade or handiwork activities, without an official registration. The reasons are connected with the lack of education and qualification (required, for instance, in order to get registered as an authorized natural person), with the additional costs that company registration and management imply, including paying taxes, respectively a lack of information regarding the procedures to follow, the costs and requirements.

Racism and discrimination

The experience of racism and discrimination is signalled by many study participants, both in urban areas and in rural areas. The perception of the school experience is very different. For some of them it was a very positive experience, especially due to an emotional attachment to some teachers: “*the head teacher was like a second mother to me*”. But for others, the childhood and school period were marked by negative attitudes and experiences:

In school I was always told: “Look, gypsies!”. Whatever the other kids did, the blame was on us. At the bus station I hear the same. Because of other people, those who don’t do good things, all the rest of us are gypsies.

The negative attitudes at school also manifest in disinterest from teachers or the formulation of requests that generate indirect discrimination.

Many cases of discrimination on employment were also described:

*„He asked me (on the phone): ‘Sir, are you from (...)?’ Yes ‘Yes... I hope you are not coloured’. And then I said: But I am coloured!. That I don’t have what it takes. Then he calls me back and tells me ‘come on, I will take you, well, you are coloured, but the rest had better not be coloured’. It’s not fair”
“Do you think that discrimination is based on your being Roma or not having education?”
“Sometimes both. There are business owners who are people not animals, sometimes they have the kindness to accept us and not think of this stuff, sometimes they don’t. But, on average, about 75-80% don’t take us”*

“They say if you are Roma you are also a thief. That’s it, what can you say? They beat him and he doesn’t trust anyone anymore. Well, we are not all thieves, we can’t be all thieves, can we? (...)”

Some of the focus group participants also claim incorrect treatment from their employers or bosses: *“not everybody is educated, a boss has the obligation to teach a person who wants to be taught and has the will to work, not to shout, to scream at him... it’s normal that this person is immediately stressed”*. Such cases illustrate the presence of the Golem effect, the employers or bosses indicating through their attitude that they expect the Roma employees to lack the capacity to conform to requirements.

There are cases of people who are offered an employment contract, they sign it, but it is not officially registered: *“If I sign the contract and see that I signed there and then he says that my work is not registered. (...) Probably in order to avoid paying taxes to the government.”* It is important to raise awareness about this kind of situations, as they show that often it is not the Roma who choose to be employed unofficially, but the employers force them in this sense, sometimes without the employees’ knowledge. The respective employees do not have the possibility to check their real status and, even if they realize they do not have an officially registered employment contract, their chances of changing the situation are minimal due to their low socio-educational level, lack of information regarding their own rights and fear of losing their job if they say something.

There are similar cases where employers take advantage of Roma’s limited possibilities to claim their rights and thus deprive them of the benefits associated with the status of employee:

“Everybody had the right to unemployment benefit and he did not pay the social security contributions for us and told us he was not going to pay it and that I could sue him wherever I wanted, that he didn’t give a damn”.

“He told me: ‘You can do whatever you want, you can go to ITM (employment authorities)’. I went to ITM in Petrosani, I asked in Petrosani and they told me to go to ITM Timisoara. Well, do I have the money to wander here and there? Woe is me!”

Another discriminating practice signalled is the drawing up of a fixed-term employment contract for three months which is then renewed, but which does not give the right to unemployment benefits. The contracts for day labourers are similar, with fluctuating activity according to the weather, which does not ensure financial stability and predictability, not even in the short run, because the

respective people *“earn 50-60 lei a day, today they earn it, in the evening they eat it and the second day they start again”*. Thus, these people do not benefit from paid holidays, unemployment benefits or pension. The people employed as day labourers do not have information about their rights or the financial means to pay their contribution directly to the pension fund and thus they find themselves in a precarious situation, without protection when they retire.

However, there are people who do not consider themselves discriminated against: *“I’ve never had this problem. It depends on your behaviour”*.

The perception of the possibilities of change

The majority of the work experiences described referred to discrimination, rejection and job application dismissals. There are people who, based on their own negative experiences or on what they heard from others, do not have the courage to try finding a job, being convinced that they have no chance. Even in the areas with a very low unemployment rate there is the perception among the Roma that there are no jobs available.

The lack of confidence in the fact that something can be changed is widely spread among the people who participated in the research:

“How do you think you can get out of this situation? Because it seems to be a closed circle, they don’t give you work because you are not qualified, so how will you live?”

“The same as before.”

“And how did you live before?”

“With God’s help. If we have the possibility to go abroad, we go abroad.”

The belief that there are no real chances of changing anything is also accentuated by the housing conditions. The only way out perceived is leaving the country:

“For instance, we are 13 people in the house, 4 people have to go abroad in Italy because there is no room in the house, we sleep outside and I’ve applied here for a room and a kitchen [social housing] for three years and it hasn’t been approved.”

The passive attitude to ask “to be given” is extremely widely spread:

Each should receive a little house there, to have a place to live, to have a job if it’s possible and if they want to work, it’s not obligatory to go abroad, but to have a job somewhere, what else can I say?

The responsibility to do something is generally considered to belong mainly to “Mr. Mayor”, which, of course, does not correspond to reality, as the local authorities do not have direct responsibilities related to employment. Some of the participants also expect the nongovernmental organizations to come with concrete measures to “solve their situation”.

This category of people, focused on passivity and resignation, does not believe in the possibility of change and is also reticent to proposals of common actions or projects in which each should take responsibilities and act in order to get out of the current situation. Thus, when asked about their

opinion regarding initiatives focused on the creation of social enterprises within projects with European funding, the participants answer:

"No projects, no such nonsense, there is no point".

"I think differently, I don't know if you agree, I'm 45, if we haven't worked our whole life, we're to work now in a Roma farm, with cows and pigs? I don't know if there will be many to agree with this situation. Because money will also go into other pockets and the construction will not be ready. You'd better make a building for newlyweds, houses or a block of flats, and this is something safe. I don't agree with the farm, some houses are better."

"A good solution would be for us to have a job, to be able to live day to day"

Given that the monthly minimum net salary is around 600 lei [~140 Euro] and over 20% of the Romanian employees are registered with this salary level, some focus group participants have high and unrealistic expectations regarding salaries: people with no education and qualification want a salary of 1500-2000 lei [~350-~450 Euro]. Some young people, although they already have children, *"don't want to work with an employment contract for 1000 lei [~225 Euro], they prefer to leave the country."*

"Nobody wants to work here for little money so, if you want to do the farm project, you do it in vain."

"What do you mean for little money? How much would that be?"

"The way the salary is here, for instance, 10-12 million [~225-270 Euro²] and you work for 8 hours, it is not very lucrative but if you have no choice and don't have bread, you work."

The participants' comments lead to the conclusion that such evaluations are based, on the one hand, on the much higher incomes that can be obtained in other EU countries and, on the other hand, on the fact that, for many uneducated and unqualified people the real income is significantly higher than the minimum salary because their work is entirely unreported or they get additional payments unregistered by the employer.

Besides the attitudes described above, generated by the fear that some negative experiences will repeat themselves, by the glass ceiling effect and discrimination, there are objective factors blocking in some cases the integration in the labour market, even if it is desired.

The problems connected to bank debts also belong to this category as they discourage official employment. Thus, some people had taken a loan in the period when they had been employed and when they lost their job they were no longer able to pay the instalments. In some cases, people are informed that their salary will be transferred onto their card by the employer but it will automatically be taken by the bank to compensate for the accumulated debt. Although the law stipulates that the banks can automatically take a percentage of the salary in the debt account, there were cases in which the bank took the whole salary transferred to the card. That is why people are afraid that this will happen to all those who have debts to the bank, which leaves the only option of unreported employment. The monthly instalments are not generally large, but the arrears are cumulated over several years. Those who are affected by such situations do not have information about the possibility of renegotiating the payment of the debt with the bank or judicial executor once they have a stable job.

²Reference to "old lei", 1 new leu (RON) = 10000 old lei (ROL). The change was done in 2005.

Another important objective factor that blocks many options of overcoming social exclusion is connected to not finishing the basic education. Without at least 8 years (grades) of education completed, the access to any kind of professional qualification courses is blocked. The reduced expectations and the lack of confidence in the chances offered by formal education, as well as the lack of information regarding the blockages generated later by the early school drop-out make people think, even now, that it is enough to complete several years of education and acquire basic competences:

*"Did the children go to school?"
"Yes, of course. Each completed 5-6 grades."*

On the other hand, some participants are aware of their option limitation due to the low level of education:

"This is a problem, sorry, but we cannot, as Roma with 5-6 school grades, work, for instance, in finances and banks. Because we do not have the capacity."

The people who dropped out of school do not consider their going back to school within the *Second Chance* programmes, even after only a few years, a realist alternative. The very idea of going back to school seems difficult to accept as they feel embarrassed in front of other members of the Roma community and are afraid that they will not be able to cope with the requirements.

The people who went to Italy and France to beg or to play the harmonica in the street, respectively to sell newspapers, wish they didn't have to do this any longer (being also aware that, due to the economic crisis, the opportunities in Italy have decreased significantly). Still, their children prefer to live in Romania with their parents' support, with "social support" and incomes derived from occasional activities:

*"The children are here because they don't want to beg, they are ashamed, they are grown up, we work for them."
"Do the grandchildren go to school?"
"The grandchildren are little, 4 years old."
"But will you enrol them in school?"
"Of course we will."*

Negative attitudes are also manifested towards the professional training opportunities offered. Some participants state that they do not have time to attend qualification courses or to participate in other activities that may increase their chances of developing their competences and finding a job.

Many participants appreciate that the advice and recommendations offered during the counselling process cannot really change anything. They want to be given a job and not be suggested how to find one.

Another frequent situation is that of the people who, for various reasons, do not want a job and prefer their current situation to whatever a job paid according to their level of training may offer them. This category also includes many women, who prefer the status of housewife. Young women

who completed only 8 grades do not want a job either, they live with their family and plan to get married.

The people who ignore the signification and consequences of the problems they face, the possibility of change in general and their capacity to overcome the social exclusion are predominant among those involved in the research. However, there is also a significant number of people who want a change and believe that it is possible.

Consequently, there are people who are interested in participating in qualification courses and, of course, prefer the ones that are subsidized. There are also people who show interest in participating in social economy structures, cooperatives (for instance to produce and sell mushrooms). Certainly, they ask for support from NGOs, but they are willing to give their time and take responsibilities, insisting on the need to receive financial resources to initiate the activity.

Some of the women involved in the research also stated that they would really like to have a job in the service sector (hairdressing, manicure-pedicure), or to be involved in activities that they could carry out at home, as in this way they could be close to their family.

Some women expressed their wish to initiate freelance activities, where they would have a flexible schedule, which would enable them to take care of the family. However, they think that without some kind of specialty support they cannot make this wish come true.

Perceptions of employers' requirements

Both men and women are aware that, in order to successfully get and maintain a job, an employee must satisfy a series of expectations that employers are entitled to. Thus, the main qualities mentioned as being required by employers are:

„To be educated, know how to talk, be polite, hard-working, to respect everybody! If you are cheeky... nobody will give you work!”

“You must be civil in this world! Especially because we are gypsies and are thrown aside by the Romanians!...”

“... You must work hard!... You must respect those 8 hours of work.... You must respect the contract!”

It can be seen that these are, basically, general human qualities, attitudes towards others and work and not specific professional competences.

Employers' perspective

On the other hand, employers also consider that the same types of qualities are essential: honesty, desire to work, openness to learning are the qualities employers value the most:

"the person should be open, motivated, hard-working, clean, willing to learn how to work, not ashamed to work and he/she should have experience and references".

The last two conditions, experience and references, though not directly identified by the Roma focus group participants, are also confirmed both by the quantitative data presented in the previous section and, indirectly, by the Roma focus group participants when they described the way in which the majority found a job: through acquaintances, people who could vouch for them and could confirm their reliability.

Consequently, a good correspondence between employers' expectations and Roma perception of these expectations can be noticed, especially in the case of those who had paid work experiences. This match between expectations and perceptions offer important intervention opportunities in order to increase Roma's employment chances.

The interviewed employers expressed a series of complaints connected to the behaviour and attitude of several Roma employees:

- They do not really want to work: "it's a bit difficult to find people who really want to work!" (employer, cleaning service company)
- They give up the job after several days: "there were cases of contracts drawn up for a period of 2 months and they left after 3 days or a week"
- They ask for unreasonably high salaries: many unskilled workers, who also lack experience, expect to receive a net monthly salary of 800-1500 [~180-350 Euro], maybe even food vouchers.

The negative attitudes towards Roma are sometimes justified by situations in which money disappeared and it was proven that the thieves were Roma, who were then fired. Nevertheless, the situations of direct discrimination are most often justified by customers' racism. Here is an example taken from the declaration of an employer specialized in placing personnel in the service sector:

"What would be in your opinion the greatest difficulty in working with Roma people?"

"The problem is that they are not accepted on the labour market, so, many employers, many customers and, as we have certain contracts... the customer tells me clearly: Don't bring me a Roma worker! He may be clean and hard-working but I cannot take him there if the customer doesn't want him!"

"So, I understand that he meets your criteria but in the end..."

"I have to give him up and take someone else, who may not be that good. Even though he is a human being, but the customer doesn't want him, he is reluctant!"

"What do you think is the reason for which the ultimate beneficiary does not accept him? Do you think there are subjective reasons?"

"Yes, there are subjective reasons! (...) There were two girls (...) who came to me for a job but I can't because I have a new business establishment and the customer tells me clearly not to bring them! The girls are really clean and I liked them, they have family, they want to earn some money but they can't!"

Some employers admitted that, for practical reasons, they kept differentiated records, a data base with potential Roma employees (often hetero-identified) who were placed where possible:

Even if he meets the requirements, if the customer says he/she wants no Roma people, under any circumstance, then my hands are tied! I keep him in my database for some contracts where I could take him.

However, the majority of the interviewed employers denies the existence of personal negative attitudes towards Roma and avoids mentioning any negative experience with Roma and blaming others:

“I understand that you also had difficulties with Roma, in the sense that they didn’t comply with the contract, didn’t fulfil their tasks...”

“In general I had no problems with them, I didn’t hear of any problem with them! They did their job, stayed at work for the entire work programme, there was no problem.”

The selection procedures used differ a lot from one company to another, also according to the activity sector. Thus, some companies prefer to place advertisements in the press or with the County Employment Agency and then schedule interviews with those who are interested in order to check first of all if they are “reliable”, hiring the people considered to have the required qualities. Other companies are accustomed to receiving CVs and, when an opening is available, they select the people whose profile corresponds to the requirements and invite them to an interview. In the case of certain companies, when they say that they keep an applicant in their database it really means that there are real chances that at a certain moment that applicant may get a job. For others, this is just a polite way of rejection.

Some employers expressed reservations about hiring people over 40 because they consider them to be less inclined to learn new things. They are not aware that excluding or disadvantaging certain people in the selection process based on their age represents discrimination, the same as the majority considers gender or ethnic discrimination justified.

One of the employers who signalled cases of discrimination against Roma from the customers of his company gave the following answer to the question *What would you recommend to other employers?*: “They should give them a chance on the labour market, this way begging and such would also decrease...”. So, the fact that discrimination is a problem is acknowledged but the arguments against discrimination are pragmatic rather than ethic.

Counsellors and social workers’ perspective

The interviews and focus groups carried out with the personnel directly involved in the project in relation with the target group – counsellors and social workers – outlined a series of problematic aspects connected to the way in which the support system was organized.

A first aspect signalled is connected to the excessive bureaucracy, to the existence of practically unjustified requirements which are however imposed by the procedures of the European Social Fund. Thus, a series of data requested by the programme are considered irrelevant, while others have to be filled in several times in different forms. The perception of the people involved is that of a

pressure to produce files, to fill in forms and not to focus on the needs of the beneficiaries and respond to these needs in an adequate and personalised way.

The second aspect generating frustration is the impossibility of paying enough attention to the cases. Because of the pressure to achieve the quantitative indicators, the job descriptions do not offer the flexibility necessary to support the beneficiaries in the endeavours they decide to get involved in as a result of the recommendations formulated by the specialists. Thus, with the exception of a small number of beneficiaries who were contacted again in order to get enrolled in qualification courses or competence certification procedures and an even smaller number of beneficiaries who were supported to get a job by giving subsidies to employers, the greatest part of the people involved received very little from the project. The meetings with the personnel responsible for information and counselling regarding labour market access were greatly focused on obtaining from the beneficiaries the data necessary to fill in the documents required for the file.

The third problematic aspect considered by the specialists involved is the lack of an integrated approach and of a horizontal collaboration with complementary services or services for specific needs that the project cannot address. Thus, a clear conclusion is that not all Roma without a job need information and counselling services in order to find a job. Some need to finish or continue their studies or to enrol in functional literacy courses. Others find it more useful to get support in order to officially register some income generating activities carried out “on the black market”. And these are just a few examples.

The discussions during the meetings made references to the way similar programmes are carried out in Spain, where the emphasis is on the qualitative dimension and not on the quantitative indicators and long-term multidisciplinary support is provided exclusively for people who really want to find a job.

Some of the specialists interviewed showed that, in order to give sense to the endeavours carried out within the project, they had to perform additional actions on their own to directly or indirectly support certain beneficiaries in putting the recommendations formulated during the counselling process into practice. Such actions included: accompanying the beneficiaries to the offices of the County Employment Agencies, putting them in touch with structures and people within the educational system, involving nongovernmental organisations or supporting the public authorities or small companies in elaborating projects that should contribute to the improvement of the situation of local Roma community members by generating sustainable income sources.

Discussing the results

The needs and perceptions of different categories of Roma

The data analysed show that Roma people who finished at least 8 grades and are looking for a job face the following main problems:

- Lack of information regarding employment and professional training opportunities;
- Ethnic discrimination on employment (with real effect, but difficult to prove);
- Lack of confidence in their own power and the glass ceiling effect (the perception of an invisible barrier in climbing the social ladder).

It is clearly confirmed that Roma people who want to get a job, successfully maintain a job, or advance in their professional career frequently face barriers they cannot overcome by themselves, including negative attitudes, discrimination or denial of certain rights. These generate frustration, discouragement, resignation, low self-esteem and the conviction that things cannot be changed. These are often associated with survival strategies which may seem unacceptable when analysed from the outside but which appear as the only options when seen from the perspective of those concerned.

To be really effective, the support measures must start from the beneficiaries' situation and needs. Besides the people looking for a job, the analysis of the data collected enabled the identification of the following categories of Roma people, on the basis of which the measures targeting inclusion can be nuanced and adapted:

- Roma housewives. Taking into account the responsibilities connected to the household and child care, as well as the habit, lack of confidence in their own qualities and community pressure, many Roma women do not consider having a job, or at least a full-time job with fixed schedule, convenient. Thus, if the women in this category take part in qualification courses, they do it just to benefit from the participation subsidy, without a real interest in obtaining and using the qualification certificate.
- People without qualification, who benefit from the guaranteed minimum income while also carrying out occasional income generating activities which are not officially registered. The people in this category have a real cumulated income that is higher than what they would obtain if they got employed as unqualified workers. That is why, upon a rational analysis of the options, they prefer this situation, even if it is associated with an insecure income, to the rigours of a fixed working schedule, not taking into account the benefits offered by the status of employee (paid holidays, pension, etc.)
- People who carry out income generating activities (such as handiwork, commercial activities) which ensure them a constant income which is not officially registered. The people in this category often face insurmountable bureaucratic barriers even if they start proceedings to register the activities officially. In general, they do not have the competences necessary to

successfully meet the requirements connected to the official management of the activities carried out (accountancy, declarations, taxes, labour legislation, etc.).

A problematic situation is that of Roma who do not have at least eight years of education (8th grade). In this case, the lack of access to professional training, the lack of motivation to enrol in the *Second Chance* programme, the high drop-out rate before finalizing the programme and the low quality of the educational process within this programme urge us to rethink this system. The *Second Chance* programme provides for an adapted curriculum which can be covered in an accelerated way. In spite of this, it is difficult for the adults who have had no connection with the educational system for a long time and who, generally, did not have positive experiences in school, to find the motivation and time to attend the classes, even if, at secondary school level, besides the degree attesting the completion of 8 grades, they also receive a qualification certificate in a profession. Developed within certain schools, with teachers used to teaching children and adolescents, the programme does not offer specialized psycho-sociological support or career orientation activities to assist participants and prevent drop-out.

The adults who lack the basic reading and writing competences need courses adapted to their needs, focused on functional literacy. The people in this category find the idea of going back to school difficult to accept, which is understandable. That is why, functional literacy, which implies the use of learning methods appropriate for adults and which connect at all times the learning content with everyday life and the learners' concrete needs, can represent a viable alternative.

Employment and its alternatives

The TFSS project and the SOP HRD area of intervention 6.2 on improving the access and participation of vulnerable groups on the labour market start from the logical premise that employment is the most appropriate solution for a sustainable exit from marginalization and social exclusion for people in vulnerable groups.

However, the data obtained show clearly that, following some rational decisions based on limited, incomplete information with a short-term vision (according to the bounded rationality model), a significant proportion of Roma without a job at present does not consider it to be the best option. If we make a more in-depth analysis of the different cases identified, we can better understand why some people prefer their dependence on social benefits combined with unreported employment, maintaining household activities combined with occasional activities or carrying out independent activities that are not officially registered.

The situation is very similar to the one illustrated in a well-known joke in which three people were needed to help an old lady cross the street when the lady was actually waiting for the bus without having any intention to cross the street.

Thus, we have a complex support system that is meant to convince beneficiaries to get a job, in contradiction with a series of rational arguments. Why would they accept to limit their freedom and obtain a similar or even lower income just to enjoy the status of employee and, maybe, slightly higher incomes when they retire? In this case, we have the old lady who even gets a small subsidy to cross the street and accept the support offered...

Consequently, it is desirable to offer employment support only to those who really want to get a job and to those who can indeed benefit from this option, while also elaborating a coherent framework of public policies meant to make official employment more attractive than unreported employment and the dependence on social benefits.

The employment support should also take into account the fact that some people, especially women, prefer a part-time job and need support in order to keep a job (for instance, flexible schedule, access to nursing school or kindergarten, support to help the community accept the idea that women can work, etc.).

It is also useful to develop and implement complementary support measures to respond to the needs of those who want to continue or initiate income generating activities, other than the ones implied by the status of employee.

For instance, it is necessary to offer support to the people who could register as self-employed or start a business, including a family enterprise.

Other means for combating social exclusion can also be taken into account. Such options include cooperatives, insertion enterprises and social economy structures in general.

Other options are connected to official registration as day labourers or, for young people, the status of apprentice.

Effects and limitations of the measures for Roma inclusion

Information and counselling regarding labour market access

The data obtained show that the positive effects of the activities in this category are mainly connected to finding the courage to look for a job or to enrol in professional training courses and to obtaining concrete information about the procedures to follow in this sense.

However, many participants think that the advice and recommendations offered during the counselling process are not enough to determine an improvement in their situation. They expect to be given a job and not be advised, hypothetically and abstractly, on how to increase their chances of getting employed. Their passivity and lack of initiative hide, in the majority of cases, a lack of confidence in themselves and in the real possibility of finding a job. The key problem is that an interaction of a few minutes or an hour with a counsellor cannot generate a radical change in perspective. The bounded rationality model, the glass ceiling effect and the discounting theory show us there is a need for an awareness-raising process which can be achieved only through long-term support and, preferably, through involvement in group activities.

The reduced effectiveness of the information and counselling activities is also confirmed by the specialists directly involved in the project, who blame it on bureaucratic pressures, too much focus on quantitative indicators and limitations connected to job responsibilities and the lack of institutionalized horizontal collaborations with specialists in the field of education, social protection or even with law professionals specialized in preventing and combating discrimination.

Professional training courses

Participation in professional training courses has many beneficial effects on participants. Obtaining a qualification certificate opens the perspective of getting a superior status on the labour market and significantly facilitates the possibility of finding a better paid and more stable job. Secondly, the very idea of a learning process, of professional development, is extremely important, given the fact that many Roma people do not have confidence in their own potential, do not believe that they can get out of the marginalization state and do not see the possibility of a change in social status. Thirdly, during the professional training courses the participants have the opportunity to interact with people in similar situations and involved in the same process of development, which can be an important motivating factor for their future evolution and which contributes to the development of certain general skills that are extremely useful in their professional life.

However, the data analysed also show a series of problematic aspects related to the professional training courses. A first aspect is connected to the quality of the courses and the degree of acquisition of the competences envisaged. At the level of SOP HRD indicators, the expectations are realistically formulated: in the case of Roma, “the percentage of participants certified within the

qualification/requalification programmes” is 60%. In practice, however, the administrative financial requirements of the programme make it difficult to justify costs for people who enrol in the course and then drop out or do not pass the final assessment tests of the course. No additional support or re-examination is offered to the participants who did not manage to pass the assessment tests in the first stage. Thus, the tendency is to replace the people who drop out with participants who have the minimal attendance required and over 90% of the people who meet the attendance criterion receive the qualification certificate. Obviously, in many cases, this means a superficial approach, as the certificate obtained by participants does not guarantee they also have the associated competences.

Another problem is connected with the perverted effects of the subsidies given to course participants. The subsidies are conceived as mechanisms meant to cover the costs for people who have to abandon the activities which generate indispensable incomes in order to attend the courses. They also represent a motivation to keep up the effort necessary to go through the courses, respectively an element that should diminish the drop-out risk. In reality, the subsidies often determine certain people to enrol in the courses even if they do not intend to get a job.

Also, the occupations for which the courses are offered are most often chosen according to the existent course offer: they seek participants for the courses offered, not courses for the participants who want a qualification on the basis of the recommendations made during the counselling process. The strict programme requirements regarding the administrative procedures for the procurement of training services and the achievement of quantitative indicators, together with the fear of losing participants if the effort is too great, determine the identification of courses with the lowest level of proficiency possible but which should also make it possible to use the certificates on the labour market (commercial worker, different occupations in the field of constructions, home caregiver).

In this context, less attention is given to the professional training of people who are employed as unskilled workers and who would have a better chance of improving their professional situation and developing an attitude focused on progress and development if they had a qualification certificate.

Competence certification

All the positive and negative aspects identified in the case of the qualification courses are also valid for the competence certification procedures. But these procedures also present some specific additional elements.

First of all, the problem of the limited offer is much more accentuated: there are very few accredited structures which certify competences and the current offer does not correspond to the most common needs and possibilities of Roma.

Another key problem is connected to the fact that, at present, the procedures do not allow the certification of some general competences or groups of competences separately from a certain occupational standard. Basically, only the set of competences needed for a certain occupation, not the respective competences as such, is certified. Also, there is no possibility of providing adapted and flexible courses of complementary training, so that the beneficiaries may fill the gaps they have, for instance at the level of theoretical knowledge, in order to be able to successfully pass the exam.

Giving subsidies to employers

There are several types of measures which include giving subsidies to employers to hire people who would otherwise have little access to the labour market and some of them function adequately. The available data show that such measures of subsidizing employers who hire Roma seem to have predominantly modest effects.

Since the subsidies are managed by project promoters and are in no way connected to certain categories of beneficiaries of other activities developed within these projects, the tendency is to look for employers who intend to hire unskilled personnel anyway and who, in exchange for the subsidy, will accept to give priority to Roma people.

At the end of the contractual period associated to the subsidy, the respective jobs are frequently eliminated and the employees fired.

Furthermore, in the absence of complementary measures to prepare the employees for a real integration in the team and for a good adaptation to the professional requirements of the job, many people employed through such a mechanism give up and go back to the former status.

Conclusions and recommendations

We can conclude that the actions carried out in the framework of the TFSS project fall well within the priorities established by SOP HRD and respond to some real needs. Thus, it is necessary to continue offering such services and support measures in order to help Roma disadvantaged people emerge from the situation of social exclusion or to prevent the risk of exclusion for this category.

Indeed, it can be noticed that the beneficiaries of these services have a significantly disadvantaged status, both from the perspective of the educational profile, with a far inferior level of education in comparison with the average of the population at national level, and from the perspective of the access to the labour market. There is a very high percentage of people who did not finish at least eight years of education, a situation that generates barriers hard to overcome regarding the access to professional training and, implicitly, to better and more stable jobs. A general aspect is connected to the fact that a very high proportion of people cannot manage to find a job by themselves or by using their social capital, often poor. Also, the proportion of people with precarious jobs (unstable, poorly paid, etc.) is high and the majority of them do not see any possibility of changing this situation on their own. Thus, an external specialized intervention is opportune and necessary.

The data presented above also show that the support system set down in the SOP HRD area of intervention 6.2, improving the access and participation of vulnerable groups on the labour market, and applied within the TFSS project has all the characteristics of organized hypocrisy (Brunsson, 1989). This refers to a system subjected to multiple and contradictory pressures. They may come from the structures which monitor and manage its allocated funds, from the beneficiaries, but also from the internal organizational environment of the institutions and organizations involved. This requires institutions submitted to contradictory pressures to find an honourable way out while also preserving a public image of success, even if this means adopting ineffective and senseless behaviours which have no consistency with the objectives and principles undertaken officially.

Although the activities are carried out successfully in spite of many difficulties and are reported according to the administrative requirements, their practical effects are still modest. They do not respond adequately to the real needs of the target group and do not generate sustainable changes at the level of the potential the specialist teams involved can reach.

However, we consider that a more extended and sustainable impact can be achieved by adjusting the services and support measures against the backdrop of some necessary improvements at the level of the legislative framework and European fund management. Below we present a series of recommendations based on the analysis of the data obtained and on consultations with beneficiaries, employers and specialists in the field.

An important conclusion of the study is that the support measures should start from the beneficiaries' needs and situation, which are very diverse. We cannot speak about general needs of Roma but must analyse the specific needs of the different categories identified.

A first useful distinction is the one between several categories of people. First, are those who, due mainly to the social environment and previous experiences, do not have any confidence in the possibility of changing their situation. They can be characterized by dependence, passivity and resignation. Secondly, there are people who seek solutions, are active, flexible and adaptable to new situations. In the case of the former category, it is essential to focus on psychological aspects, on stimulating changes in self-perception, on stimulating their wish for change and on developing the skills necessary to evolve towards an autonomous and dignified life. In the case of the latter category, the practical aspects must take precedence and must be considered in relation to the perspective of those concerned. A simple presentation of the available options is not an effective approach.

The measures established in the TFSS project, which are, in fact, the types of measures financially supported through the SOP HRD component targeting social inclusion, can have a greater impact if the following aspects are taken into account:

- The focus should be mainly on the quality and effect of the services and not on the quantitative aspects. This implies more flexibility and less bureaucracy, so that the specialists involved can concentrate on the relationship with the beneficiaries and not on obtaining the information needed for the report or on filling in forms.
- The information and counselling activities should be carried out transversally, not only with reference to employment. The personnel engaged in information activities should also be able to provide information about aspects connected to the registration as an authorized natural person or the establishment of different types of commercial companies, fiscal responsibilities and the risks associated to unreported employment, employees' responsibilities and rights (for instance rights connected to unemployment, holidays, sick leaves or parental leaves, rights connected to foreclosure as a result of unpaid debts, etc.). Special attention should be given to the aspects connected to discrimination and the actions that can be taken in concrete cases of discrimination. The counselling process should also focus on the beneficiaries' personal development in general, taking into account the person's history, family and community context but also individual preferences. At the same time, the counselling regarding employment should only target the people for whom employment represents a viable and assumed personal project. The information should be presented in a simple language, verifying at all times whether the message was understood.
- Time and human resources should be allocated to follow and support the beneficiaries in the period they need to put the recommendations formulated within the counselling process into practice.
- Complementary activities of personal development, self-knowledge and self-esteem development are necessary to prepare the beneficiaries before attending courses or getting employed. Such activities develop positive attitudes towards self, towards others and towards work and build basic general competences, which are extremely appreciated by employers.
- The support should also take into account solutions other than employment to overcome exclusion, including the development of independent income generating activities which are officially registered, accompanied by measures to ensure the access to healthcare services, pension, etc.
- People who are looking for a job should be offered a service package including:

- free and adapted professional training courses (not necessarily subsidized) according to the beneficiaries' needs and not to the existing offer;
 - support to go through competence certification processes (not just administrative aspects and competence evaluation, but also adapted complementary preparation for examination);
 - counselling and support, including through support groups, after getting a job;
 - informing employers of the fact that the involvement in activities like those described above within projects and activities developed by organisations and institutions can successfully replace references from other employers. Thus, the provision of specialised support before and after getting employed represents an additional guarantee for the employer that the people concerned are serious and motivated.
- The competence certification procedures can be more accessible and useful if they are adjusted and completed to take into account the situation and needs of the beneficiaries, women and men, within Roma communities, as follows:
- dissemination of adapted information, in a simplified and clear language, among the members of Roma communities regarding the benefits of competence certification;
 - inclusion of a preliminary evaluation of competences and awareness raising activities for the beneficiaries regarding the competences they already have and the things they still need to learn in order to obtain certified qualification;
 - the possibility of a separate certification of competences and their gradual exploitation in obtaining the qualification certificates;
 - identification of potential beneficiaries of the support offered for competence certification not only among the Roma who are looking for a job but also among those who work as unskilled workers or carry out occasional activities;
 - involvement of specialized mediators and encouraging the collaboration between structures that initiate and manage projects in this field, accredited competence certification structures and NGOs that can develop field activities to ensure the continuity, sustainability and desired impact, materialized in the effective use of the certificates on the labour market.

Next, we present a set of measures that are recommended for specific categories of beneficiaries.

People without qualification, who benefit from the guaranteed minimum income while also carrying out occasional income generating activities which are not officially registered:

- Collaboration between specialized control bodies (labour authorities, police, etc.), NGOs (which hire mediators), local authorities and other partners for combined measures which should be constructive, not coercive, focussed, among others, on stimulating and supporting the application of the Day Labourer Act (no. 52/2011). Simplifying the administrative procedures regarding the application of the Day Labourer Act, with the involvement of the local authorities.
- Supporting NGOs in carrying out complementary activities to raise awareness about rights and draw attention to the beneficiaries' new status of tax payers.

- Encouraging and supporting competence certification and enrolment in adapted professional training courses.
- In the case of young people, the application of the Apprenticeship Act, including in tripartite partnerships with NGOs.

People who carry out income generating activities (such as commercial activities, handiwork) which ensure them a relatively constant income which is not officially registered:

- Combining the support measures (counselling, adapted training, competence certification, consultancy and supervision) with firm measures to combat tax evasion, unreported employment and the abuses of the social protection system.
- Complete assistance (not just counselling) for professional reorientation in the cases in which the income does not ensure a decent life.

Roma housewives:

- Combined measures including concrete aspects, such as child care services, ensuring child enrolment in kindergarten and/or supporting cooperation initiatives in the community in order to make sure they have enough time to participate in training courses or other professional activities.
- Activities focused on personal development and raising awareness about the existence of alternative life options, carried out by specialized personnel, preferably by involving groups of Roma women and Roma mediators.
- Professional training based on their realistic chances of employment or involvement in income generating activities.

Roma who did not complete at least 8 grades:

- Collaboration between county school inspectorates, county employment agencies and employers and organisation of courses within the *Second Chance* programme in collaboration with employers and, possibly, with the support of NGOs. Thus, the curriculum and schedule of the courses can be connected with the activities at the work place. Specialized school mediators can offer support in this process.

Adults who do not have the basic reading and writing competences:

- Adult education programmes (including functional literacy components) organized at local level by a partnership made up of schools, employers, NGOs, teachers within the educational system trained in this sense, with expenses paid promptly by the local authorities. Creating a national literacy fund, accessible to all local authorities, so that the localities or towns with low incomes to the state budget can also finance this type of courses. The costs at national level would be modest compared to the benefits achieved by involving teachers and local authorities. However, the organisation of training courses or at least the distribution of adequate pedagogical material would be necessary for the teachers to be able to apply the principles of functional adult literacy.

People dependent on the guaranteed minimum income and social allowances:

- Provision by the local authorities in collaboration with NGOs of different ways of completing community service hours by carrying out activities that contribute to professional development and encourage people to overcome the state of dependency and resignation by getting involved in income generating activities. Such activities can also be organized, for instance, within insertion social enterprises, managed by personnel specialized both in the technical aspects of that economic activity and in psycho-sociological aspects and social work.

In general, it is important that all categories receive personalized assistance based on an in-depth analysis of their needs, potential, motivation and preferences, be accompanied throughout the whole process until they achieve a state of economic autonomy and stability and get support in overcoming the barriers (visible and mental) that block their professional development.

Another essential general aspect resulting from the data analysed is connected to the importance of acknowledging the gender dimension. Taking into account the additional specific needs of Roma women and the risks of multiple discrimination they must cope with, it is important that the projects in the field give explicit attention to these aspects. The additional support measures for Roma women are more efficient if they are accompanied by awareness raising measures targeting community members, including Roma men, but also older Roma women, with the help of Roma mediators, as well as by awareness raising measures targeting employers.

The measures targeting employers can also significantly increase the long-term effect of the endeavours aimed at Roma social inclusion. Such measures may include information and awareness raising activities for employers, mediation for labour market access, realized by Roma people, in collaboration with NGOs which should offer adapted activities, monitoring and supervision after getting employed.

As the data analysed in the present study show, an important role in Roma employment without appropriate legal documents is played by employers. It is therefore necessary to develop a set of measures directed at them, in order to combat unreported employment. It has been proven that focusing exclusively on coercive and punitive measures (check-ups resulting in fines or even closure of commercial companies) does not lead to the desired results. In these situations, entrepreneurs will continue with such practices in order to recover the money lost in fines. That is why it is important that warnings should be allowed at the first offence, followed promptly by a remedy of the situation and then only those who fail to comply should be fined.

Offering subsidies to the employers who hire Roma can be a useful practice but only on certain conditions:

- The subsidy should be associated, in the form of a voucher, with the Roma who have obtained good results at the training courses or who show a high level of motivation in finding a job. Thus, the people concerned will have a supplementary advantage and increased chances of being employed where they want.
- The job should be maintained for a period at least equal to the one subsidized, after the subsidy ceases to be paid.

- The team these people are to be part of (colleagues, managers/directors) should be properly prepared.
- Individualized counselling and supervision should be provided for several months after getting employed.
- Support group led by specialized personnel for the people employed in this system.

Implementation of some of these measures is possible immediately, either within structures with activities in the field (such as the Centre for Social Inclusion created in Cluj-Napoca within the TFSS project), or in future projects. Other proposals require either a revision of the existent administrative procedures or adjustment of or additions to the legislative framework. Of course, these endeavours require time and joint efforts of different categories of actors in the field.

We recommend therefore that these proposals be open for debate, both at the level of civil society and within institutional structures with responsibilities in the field so that, if they are considered pertinent, they may be implemented as soon as possible. This way, the resulting benefits can be made visible in the development of programmes for the next financial period of the European Union (2014-2020), but also in the public policies connected to the implementation of the Strategy of the Government of Romania for the inclusion of the Romanian citizens belonging to Roma minority for the period 2012 – 2020.

Bibliography

General references regarding the theoretical and methodological framework

- Bartlett W., Benini R. & Gordon C. (2011). Measures to promote the situation of Roma EU citizens in the European Union. Report for European Parliament's Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs
- Brunsson, N. (1989). The Organization of Hypocrisy: Talk, Decisions and Actions in Organizations. Chichester, England: John Wiley & Sons.
- Călușer M., Dezso I., Pop D., Sălăgean M. & Szabo I. (2008). Ghid de bune practici în implementarea politicilor publice locale. EDRC și CENPO, Cluj-Napoca
- Cotter, D., Hermesen, J., Ovadia, S. & Vanneman, R. (2001). The Glass Ceiling Effect. *Social Forces*, 80(2), 655-682
- CREA Barcelona (2012) INCLUD-ED. Strategies for inclusion and social cohesion in Europe from education REPORT 8: Structural elements, actions of social agents and policies that connect social exclusion/inclusion with educational exclusion/inclusion, University of Barcelona
- Gohard-Radenkovic, A, Mujawamariya, D. & Perez, S. (Eds.) (2003). *Intégration des „minorités” et nouveaux espaces interculturels*. Berne: Peter Lang
- Ionescu M. & Cace S. (2006) Politici publice pentru romi. Evoluții și perspective. București: Editura Expert
- Jones, B. D. (1999) Bounded rationality, *Annual Review of Political Science*. 2:297–321
- Liégeois, J.P. (1994). Rom, Tsiganes, Voyageurs. Strasbourg : Conseil de l'Europe
- Macefield R. & Mellor K. (2006) Awareness – Discounting Matrix. *Transactional Analysis Journal*, vol.35,no1
- Manzoni, J.-F. & Barsoux, J.-L. (1998) Inside the Golem effect: how bosses can kill their subordinates' motivation, INSEAD working paper
- Manzoni, J.-F. & Barsoux, J.-L. (2007) The Set-up-to-fail Syndrome: Overcoming the Undertow of Expectations, Harvard Business Press
- Mellor, K. & Schiff, E. (1975) Discounting. *Transactional Analysis Journal*, 5(3). 295-302
- Montreuil, A. & Bourhis, R.Y. (2004). Acculturation orientations of competing host communities toward valued and devalued immigrants. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 28, 507-532
- Plant, E. & Devine, P. (2009). The active control of prejudice: Unpacking the intentions guiding control efforts. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 96(3), 640-652
- Poledna, R., Ruegg, F. & Rus, C. (Eds) (2002) *Interculturalitate. Cercetări și perspective românești*. Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană
- Reynolds, D. (2007) Restraining Golem and Harnessing Pygmalion in the Classroom: A Laboratory Study of Managerial Expectations and Task Design, *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 6(4), 475–483
- Rus, C (2006). Multicultural versus intercultural approach towards minority rights. In F. Ruegg, R. Poledna & C. Rus (Eds.) *Interculturalism and Discrimination in Romania*. Policies, Practices, Identities and Representations. Berlin: Lit Verlag
- Rus, C. (2007). Problematika romilor și reforma asistenței sociale în România. In A. Muntean *Practici în asistența socială. România și Germania*. Iași: Polirom
- Sava, F.A. (2004). Analiza datelor în cercetarea psihologică. Metode statistice complementare. Cluj-Napoca: ASCR.
- Silver, H. (2007) Social Exclusion: Comparative Analysis of Europe and Middle East Youth, Wolfensohn Centre for Development, Dubai School of Government.
- Simon, H. 1957. Models of Man. social and rational; mathematical essays on rational human behavior in society setting, John Wiley.
- Yzerbyt, V.Y., Shandron, G., Leyens, J-Ph. & Rocher, S. (1994). Social judgeability and the dilution of stereotypes. The impact of the meta-informational cues on the use of stereotypes. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 66, 48-55

Studies and reports regarding Roma issues

- Bădescu G., Grigora V., Rughiniș C., Voicu M. & Voicu O. (2007). Roma inclusion barometer. Open Society Foundation
- Cace, S., Preoteasa A. M., Tomescu C. & Stănescu S. (coord.) (2010). Legal și egal pe piața muncii pentru comunitățile de romi, Fundația Soros România, Ed. Expert
- Chirițoiu, A. & Ivasiuc, A. (2012) Despre noi – 20 de răspunsuri la întrebarea "Ce vrei să te faci când vei fi mare?", Agenția Împreună și UNICEF România
- Comșa M. & Tufiș C., Rughiniș C. (2008) Atitudini față de muncă în România. Opinii, realități, așteptări. Fundația Soros România
- Duminică G., Ivasiuc A. (2010) O Școală pentru toți. Agenția Împreună și UNICEF
- Duminică, G. Preda, M. (2003) Accesul romilor pe piața muncii, ECA, Agenția Împreună
- EU MIDIS (2009) Date în obiectiv. Primul raport: Romii. Agenția pentru drepturi fundamentale a Uniunii Europene
- Fleck G. & Rughiniș C. (ed.). (2008) Vino mai aproape. Incluziunea și excluziunea romilor în societatea românească de azi, Human Dynamics
- Fresno, J.-M. (coord) (2012) Soluții pentru incluziunea romilor în UE. Politici și tipuri de abordări. Comisia Europeană
- Fundația Soros România (2012) Situația romilor în România, 2011. Între incluziune socială și migrație. Raport de țară – România
- Giurca, D. (coord) (2012) Incluziunea romilor din România: politici, instituții, experiențe, Fundația Soros România
- Institutul de Cercetare a Calitatii Vietii (2001). Cercetări cu privire la minoritatea roma.
- Jigău, M. & Surdu, M. (2002) Participarea școlară a copiilor romi: probleme, soluții, actori, Institutul de Științe ale Educației, Institutul de Cercetare a Calității Vieții
- Olivera, M. (2012) Romanes: tradiția integrării la romii gabori din Transilvania, Editura Institutului pentru Studierea Problemelor Minorităților Naționale, Cluj-Napoca
- Preda, M., Duminică, G. & Moisă, F. (2003) "Tânăr rom – caut loc de muncă" Dimensiuni ale participării romilor pe piața muncii - studiu de caz pe municipiul București,
- Raportul societății civile asupra implementării Strategiei Naționale de Integrare a Romilor și a Planului de Acțiune al Deceniului în România (2012) Fundația Secretariatului Deceniului de Incluziune a Romilor
- Romani CRISS (2011). Stereotipuri, prejudecăți și discriminare etnică: Perspectiva romilor. București: Totem Communication
- Rus, C. (2014) Widening Roma women's access to non-formal and informal learning validation systems. European report, Intercultural Institute of Timisoara and members of the ROM-ACT consortium.
- Situația locuirii în România (2011), coord. M. Voicu și A. Dan, Habitat for Humanity Romania și UNDP Romania
- Stoiciu, V. (coord.) (2011). Impactul crizei economice asupra migrației forței de muncă românești. București: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung.
- Stoiciu, V. (coord.) (2011). Impactul crizei economice asupra migrației forței de muncă românești. București: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung.
- Toma S. & Fosztó, L. (2011) Spectrum. Cercetări sociale despre romi. Editura Institutului pentru Studierea Problemelor Minorităților Naționale & Kriterion, Cluj-Napoca

National legislation and documents

- National Education Act (nr 1/2011)
- Decree no. 5735/ 29.12.20105 on the approval of the school curricula for basic education within "The Second Chance" programme – lower secondary education
- Decree no. 1539/ 19.07.2007 on norms of employment and activity for the school mediator
- ACT no.279 of 5 October 2005on apprenticeship at the work place, modified through Act no. 179/2013
- Act no. 52 of 2011 –on the practice of occasional activities carried out by day labourers
- Handicraft Act (bill debated in Parliament) <http://www.cameramestesugarilor.ro/ro/legislatie/legea-mestesugarilor>
- Sectoral Operational Programme Human Resources Development 2007-2013 (SOP HRD), Ministry of Labour, 2007
- National Development Plan (NDP) 2007-2013, Romanian Government, 2006
- Government Ordinance no. 137/2000 on preventing and punishing all forms of discrimination, with subsequent modifications
- Strategy of the Government of Romania for improving the condition of Roma, GD 430/2001
- Strategy of the Government of Romania for the inclusion of the Romanian citizens belonging to Roma minority for the period 2012 – 2020.

International documents relevant to the issue of Roma inclusion

Council of Europe: The White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue, 2008

Council of Europe: Recommendation CM/Rec(2012)9 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on mediation as an effective tool for promoting respect for human rights and social inclusion of Roma

Council of Europe: Strasbourg Declaration on Roma issues, 2010

Council of Europe, Commissioner for Human Rights: Human Rights for Roma and Travellers in Europe, 2011

UNESCO: Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, 2002

EU: Council Directive establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation, 2000

EU: Council Directive implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin, 2000

EU: The 10 Common Basic Principles on Roma Inclusion, 2009

EU, European Commission: Communication on the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020, 2011

EU, European Council: Recommendation on effective Roma integration measures in the Member States, 2013

Documents connected to the implementation of the EU framework for national Roma integration strategies: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/roma/index_en.htm


The project “Together for a Safe Start!”

This study was developed within the project “Together for a safe start”, coordinated by the Department of Medical and Social Assistance, organized as a public service subordinated to the Local Council of the city of Cluj-Napoca, with a duration of three years and financed through the Sectoral Operational Programme Human Resources Development, priority axis 6 “Promoting Social Inclusion”, major area of intervention 6.2 “Improving the access and participation of vulnerable groups on the labour market” (SOP HRD/96/6.2/S/63444).

The aim of the project was to develop an integrated model of social and professional inclusion of Roma and disabled people, by offering information, mediation and professional counselling services to Roma and disabled people, organizing professional training programmes (qualification/requalification) for these people, as well as by informing and raising awareness among the managers in the public and private sectors, NGO representatives and public administration employees regarding the situation of Roma and disabled people.

The partner institutions and organizations within this project were:

- The Department of Medical and Social Assistance (coordinator)
- The Department of Community Assistance and Development Arad
- Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council
- The Intercultural Institute Timisoara
- Caritas Eparchial Greek Catholic Association Cluj



Programme title: Sectoral Operational Programme Human Resources Development
Project title: Together for a Safe Start!
Material editor: Intercultural Institute Timisoara
Publishing date: March 2014

The content of this material does not necessarily represent the official position of the European Union or the Romanian Government.