

An ILO Resource Guide



International
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**PROMOTING DECENT WORK
OPPORTUNITIES FOR ROMA
YOUTH IN CENTRAL AND
EASTERN EUROPE**



Decent Work Technical Support Team
and Country Office for Central and Eastern Europe

Promoting Decent Work Opportunities for Roma Youth in Central and Eastern Europe. An ILO Resource Guide



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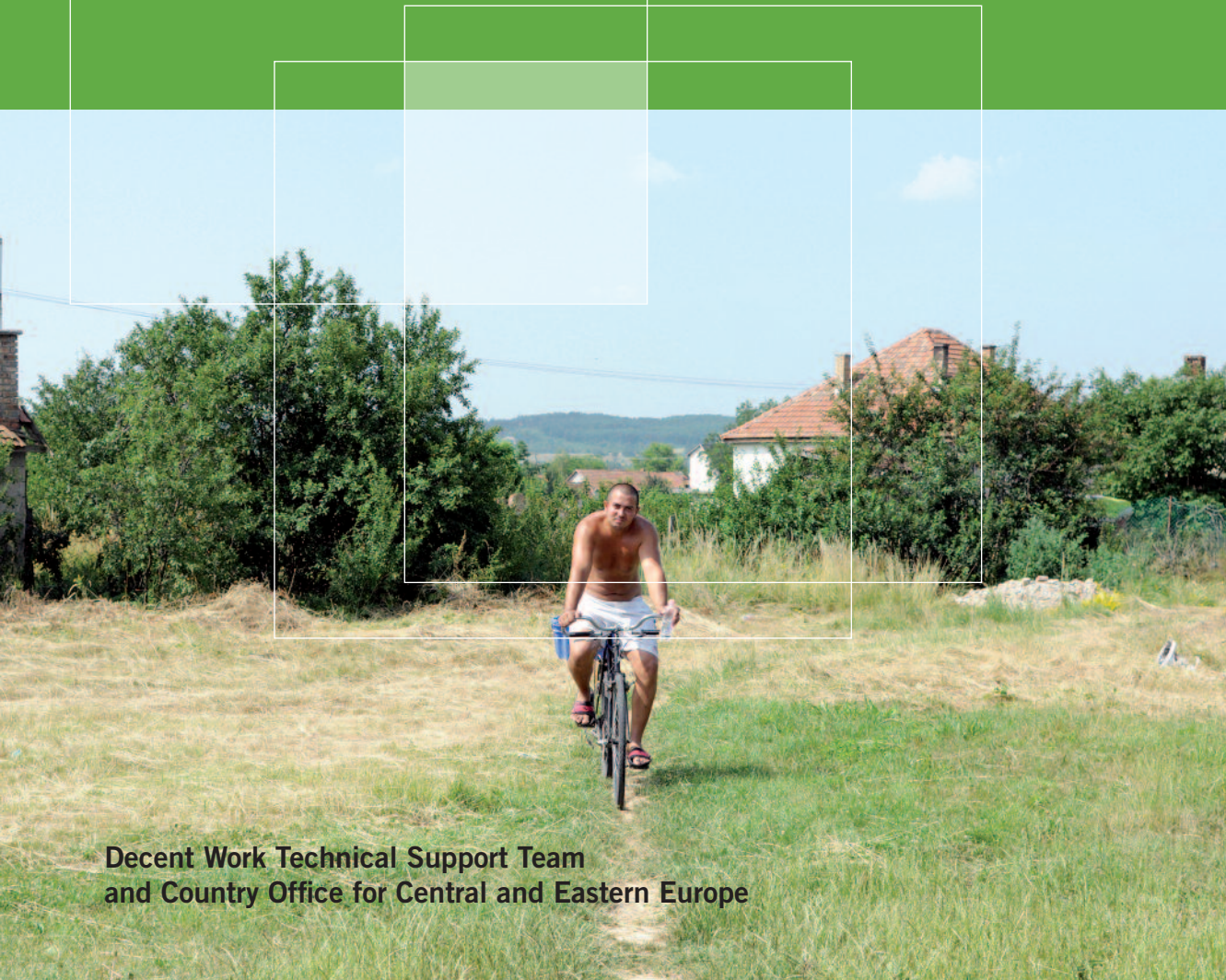
Decent Work Technical Support Team
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1 INTRODUCTION



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IMPRINT

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FOREWORD

Roma discrimination in the labour market harms everyone, not just Roma. Equality of opportunity and treatment in employment is part of the fundamental principles and rights at work that are the foundation of social justice, and are therefore an integral part of the ILO's Decent Work Agenda.

Promoting decent work for Roma and non-Roma youth alike, and for specific groups among Roma youth such as women and girls or young people with disabilities, signals hope for a better future, breaking poverty cycles and avoiding squandering precious human capital. Harnessing the creativity and energy of all youth and fully utilizing their skills and talents can only boost future economic growth and prosperity for all.

Many initiatives have focused on Roma inclusion and non-discrimination over the last decades. The overall balance of these initiatives highlights the need for further systematizing approaches to address the underlying factors that impair Roma youth in their labour market integration and access to decent employment.

With this Resource Guide, the ILO would like to enhance knowledge and understanding of all stakeholders of the situation of Roma in the labour market in terms of discrimination, marginalization, and lack of access to resources and services. The Resource Guide brings together relevant international instruments and experiences which can guide and assist European tripartite partners and all other interested partners in their efforts to combat widespread institutional and labour market discrimination, as well as poverty amongst Roma.

The Resource Guide can be used in a number of ways

- As an information resource on Roma and labour markets
- As an advocacy and awareness raising tool
- As a basis for capacity building, through the development of training materials, which could be tailored to specific stakeholders including Roma organizations or youth organizations, trade unions, employers' organizations, policy makers, media, public employment services, microfinance providers, local authorities, skills institutions, among others.

It is my hope that the wealth of information and references to further experiences in this Resource Guide will provide governments, employers' and workers' organizations, as well as those in the wider community committed to Roma rights, with ideas, strategies and practical measures that will inspire them to continue working toward the elimination of the pernicious gaps in rights of Roma in the world of work.

Antonio Graziosi

Director

ILO Decent Work Technical Support Team and

Country Office for Central and Eastern Europe, Budapest

HOW TO READ AND USE THE RESOURCE GUIDE

This Resource Guide presents relevant international instruments, good practices, resources, and lessons learned in the field of labour market inclusion of young people, and specifically of Roma, resulting from activities of the ILO or its national and international partners and other actors.

With this Resource Guide, the ILO hopes to

- enhance knowledge and understanding of all stakeholders of the situation of Roma in the labour market in terms of discrimination, marginalization and lack of access to resources and services
- support tripartite partners in policy development, as well as civil society organizations working on Roma issues, as well as community leaders in advocating for the promotion of decent work for Roma youth
- contribute to the adaptation of experiences and good practices to promote the labour market inclusion of young people to Roma communities in Central and Eastern Europe.

Each booklet of the Resource Guide presents an overview of main issues and challenges in a key area for promoting decent work for Roma youth, followed by a presentation of approaches and good practices to address these challenges. Recommendations for government action are presented. Each booklet contains a section on tools and resources that can help all interested actors develop effective policies and programmes.

There is considerable overlap in the issues presented in the Resource Guide, since challenges and policies converge and impact on one another. Many of the issues highlighted in individual booklets are repetitive, because discrimination in education, social exclusion, labour market marginalization, inadequate social protection and limited control over economic resources are linked, and effective policy solutions need to address numerous challenges simultaneously. Also, the weakness of data and the absence of monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes addressed at Roma limits policy development in different sectors. While some readers may want to focus on specific booklets, other may gain inspiration from reading several or all booklets like chapters of a book.

It is also important to note that the Roma - Europe's largest minority – are not a homogeneous group. The labour market marginalization of Roma youth is shaped by numerous social, cultural, or economic factors. Thus, the impact of policies varies considerably in different contexts. By outlining key issues and pointing out good practice examples, tools and strategies, the Resource Guide provides a starting point for the development of policies and programmes, which, however, should be adapted to the particular contexts and needs of specific target groups.

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The content of the Resource Guide is based on a background paper prepared by Susan Divald. The initial text was drafted by Sriani Ameratunga Kring and Joanna Kostka (social security). Editing was done by Anita Grace and Elaine Fultz. Some of the good practice examples are contributions from experts and practitioners from relevant organizations, namely Ágnes Kelemen (Autonomia Foundation), Belén Sánchez-Rubio (Fundación Segretariado Gitano), Alexandra Dinu (Romano ButiQ), Melinda Kassai (Pro-Cserehát Association), Károly Káló (Bhim Rao Association), and Gordana Bošković (Centre for Vocational Education and Training) with Ana Maraš (Montenegrin Employers Federation).

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Heiko von Schrenk layouted the Guide, and Csaba Csóka and Roland Bangó captured the different work-related realities of Roma youth in Hungary with their cameras. Norma Nardi and her colleagues from Visuality helped to visualize the complexity and interconnectedness of the challenges in graphic form in the enclosed infographic.

We hope the Resource Guide will stimulate interesting exchanges and continued programme and policy development toward the promotion of decent work for Roma youth in Central and Eastern Europe.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ALMPs	Active labour market policies
BDS	Business Development Service
CBP	Common Basic Principles for Roma Inclusion
CCT	Conditional cash transfers
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women
CEE	Central and Eastern European
CERD	Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
CSW	Centre for Social Work
EC	European Commission
EIIP	ILO's Employment Intensive Investment Programme
ERRC	European Roma Rights Centre
ESF	European Social Fund
EU	European Union
FRA	European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights
FSG	Fundación Secretariado Gitano
FYR	Former Yugoslav Republic
GDP	Gross domestic product
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICERD	International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOE	International Organisation of Employers
IPEC	ILO's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour
IT	Information technology
JCP	Jobcentre Plus
KAB	ILO's Know About Business Programme
LED	Local economic development
MBQ	Meşteshukar ButiQ
NEET	Neither in employment, education, or training
NEP	National employment policy
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PES	Public employment services
RHM	Roma health mediator
SIYB	Start and Improve Your Business
SME	Small and medium sized enterprises

SWTS	School to Work Transition Survey
TEU	Treaty on the European Union
TFEU	Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union
TREE	ILO's Training for Rural Economic Empowerment package
TUC	UK Trades Union Congress
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Emergency Fund
USA	United States of America
VET	Vocational education and training
WB	World Bank
WED	Women's Entrepreneurship Development
YEI	European Union Youth Employment Initiative
YEP	ILO's Youth Employment Programme

CHAPTER ONE

OVERVIEW

Roma constitute Europe's largest minority group, with a population estimated at 10 to 12 million.¹ Although present in virtually every European country, Roma are concentrated in Central and Eastern Europe – with over 3 million living in Romania, Bulgaria, and Hungary alone – and in the Western Balkans, where they number as many as 600,000 in Serbia.² In addition to large size, several other aspects of Roma demography make their situation special. The Roma are not simply the largest minority group in Europe; they outnumber the populations of half Europe's countries. Unlike many of other population groups, however, the Roma lack a homeland dominated by their ethnic kin, who provide a cultural, linguistic, and political anchor. The high decentralization and geographic dispersion of Roma within European countries make cooperative action difficult and costly. Unlike other minority groups in Europe and elsewhere that have been able to organize to advance their struggle for recognition and social justice, dispersion undermines collective action by Roma and for Roma to contest discrimination and marginalization. It will be incumbent on those who seek social justice on their behalf to fill much of that void.

According to a major survey of 11 EU Member States carried out in 2011, only one in three Roma was in paid employment, nine in 10 lived below the national poverty line, and approximately five in 10 reported experiencing ethnic discrimination.³ In addition, in contrast with the ageing European general population, the Roma population is young: Roma of working age are on average 25 years old, compared to the EU's average of 40, and Roma youth represent 10–20 per cent of new labour market entrants. However, as of 2011, only 15 per cent of the young Roma population had completed upper-secondary education and almost 60 per cent of those between 16 and 24 were not in employment, education or training.⁴ These disadvantages, coupled with the decent work deficits experienced by the Roma population as a whole, make the challenge of labour market integration of Roma youth both weighty and urgent.

¹ As it is most commonly used in European policy documents and discussions, the term “Roma” refers to a variety of groups who describe themselves not only as Roma but also as Gypsies, Travellers, Manouches, Ashkali, Sinti and other titles. This document will use this term as a convenient shorthand, while recognizing the rich diversity of the people and cultures that it includes.

² European Commission: *Roma integration – 2014 Commission assessment: Questions and answers*, Memo prepared by Support Team of the Special Representative of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe for Roma Issues, Brussels, 4 Apr. 2014.

³ European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA): *The situation of Roma in 11 EU Member States – Survey results at a glance* (Luxembourg, 2012), p.12.

⁴ World Bank: *Brief: Roma, 24 Feb. 2015*; European Commission: *EU framework for national Roma strategies: Frequently asked questions*, Strasbourg, 5 Apr. 2011; FRA: *The situation of Roma*, op. cit., p. 12.

Box 1: Who are the Roma?

For more than a thousand years, Roma people, including Travellers, Gypsies, Manouches, Ashkali, Sinti, and other groups, have been part of the European population. The term “Roma” was first chosen at the Inaugural World Romani Congress held in London in 1971, and is now widely used as a generic and pragmatic description of a diverse range of communities. In Central and South Eastern Europe, Roma suffered disproportionately during the transition to market economies. A historical perspective helps to cast light on the low levels of employment, high poverty, and widespread social exclusion that Roma communities continue to experience today.⁵ For centuries, Roma were integrated into the local economies near their areas of residence through their provision of services such as blacksmithing and care of horses (“horse healing”). Industrialization and post-industrialization in the 19th–20th centuries and the declining demand for the services typically provided by Roma, in combination with the consolidation of nation-states, led most Roma to give up migration and settle in one locale. During state socialism, Roma often held positions as unskilled workers in heavy industries. For a while, Roma standards of living improved and many Roma had access to housing, education, and health care. The transition to market economies, however, caused Roma populations great hardship. The dysfunction and collapse of large state-owned enterprises led to a decline in formal, low-skilled employment. Policies of land restoration, as well as the decline of cooperate farming, led many Roma to migrate from rural areas to towns and cities. In the Western Balkans, these difficulties were compounded by civil war, leading to large-scale displacement of Roma communities and their outmigration to countries of the European Union.⁶

⁵ FRA: *The situation of Roma*, *ibid.*, pp. 13–17.

⁶ S. Muller and Z. Jovanovic: *Pathways to progress? The European Union and Roma inclusion in the Western Balkans* (Budapest, Open Society Institute, 2010), p. 17.

OVERVIEW OF KEY CHALLENGES

Roma communities in Europe today face enormous challenges to social and economic inclusion: high rates of poverty; poor housing, often in remote areas with limited infrastructure; disproportionate health problems; lack of access to, and poor quality of, education; unemployment or employment of poor quality; and discrimination.⁷ Compared to non-Roma living near Roma communities, they are significantly worse off in terms of paid work and other social indicators. In general, Roma exclusion is more severe in Western Balkan countries than in Central and Eastern Europe.⁸

Roma women and girls tend to fare worse than Roma men and boys in education, employment, and health. Their more limited educational success, combined with general residential segregation and discrimination, imposes gender-specific barriers to employment.⁹ Traditional gender role divisions and the lack of infrastructure reinforce these barriers, resulting in a disproportionate burden of unpaid care and household work being performed by Roma women. In many marginalized Roma communities, women have virtually no access to childcare.

While multiple obstacles stand in the way of Roma labour market inclusion, Roma youth also face particular challenges common to young people. Youth are most likely to be in part-time, temporary, and seasonal employment, and to work in the informal economy without access to social protection. They are more vulnerable to the business cycle, often the “last-hired, first-fired.” Youth have also been harder hit by the economic downturn in Europe, as evidenced by general youth unemployment figures – for example, 53.2 per cent in Spain in 2014, and 39.3 per cent in FYR Macedonia in 2014.¹⁰ In addition, a growing number of young people have become discouraged and are therefore not actively seeking employment although they are, in principle, available and willing to work.¹¹

Overall, the participation of young Roma women and men (aged 15–24) in education has risen substantially over the last decade. Yet while more Roma are in upper secondary and tertiary education, the gap in educational achievement remains large, and gains in education have not significantly boosted either employment rates or wage levels.¹²

In 2011, the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) cooperated with the UNDP and World Bank in a large and comprehensive survey of Roma in 11 EU Member States and neighbouring European countries. The surveys, which shared core components, yielded robust comparative data on the employment and social status of Roma. These results provide a baseline for evaluating progress in combatting entrenched discrimination. (→ see Box 2)

⁷ FRA: *The situation of Roma*, op. cit., p.12.

⁸ FRA: *Poverty and unemployment: The situation of Roma in 11 EU Member States – Roma survey data in focus* (Luxembourg, 2014), p. 31.

⁹ FRA: *The situation of Roma*, op. cit., pp. 9, 17.

¹⁰ For Spain: Eurostat: *Unemployment rate by age group, aged 15–24, Spain*, 2015; for former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: ILO: *School-to-work transition survey, Macedonia* 2014.

¹¹ S. Elder et al.: *Labour market transitions of young women and men in Eastern Europe and Central Asia* (Geneva, ILO, 2015), p. 20, discouraged youth, para. 45–6.

¹² N. O’Higgins: *Roma and non-Roma in the labour market in Central and South Eastern Europe*, Roma Inclusion Working Papers (Bratislava, United Nations Development Programme, 2012), p. 49.

Box 2: Baseline of key indicators for Roma, 2011

Poverty

- About 90 per cent of Roma had income below the national poverty threshold.
- About 40 per cent of Roma children lived in households where someone had to go to bed hungry or could not afford to buy food during the last month.

Education

- Only 15 per cent of young Roma adults had completed upper-secondary general or vocational education. Young Roma women showed lower educational achievement than young men.
- On average, only one out of two Roma children attended pre-school or kindergarten, with much lower attendance in some locations.

Informality

- Only about a third of survey respondents had paid work. Of these, 23 per cent held ad hoc jobs, 21 per cent were self-employed, and 9 per cent were employed part-time.
- Roma women, if they worked for pay, were more likely than men to work in the informal economy.
- On average, 19 per cent of Roma in paid work said that they did not have medical insurance, and every third Roma respondent aged 45 and above did not receive or expect to receive a pension (in most countries, negative expectations on the part of non-Roma were half the Roma percentage).

Not in employment, education or training

- 58 per cent of young Roma were neither in employment, nor education, nor training (the NEET category), compared to 13 per cent of EU youth.

Unemployment

- One-third of surveyed Roma were unemployed, of which 74 per cent said they were looking for paid work.
- Youth aged 16 to 24 had the lowest employment rates among the Roma, 24 per cent.
- Only 28 per cent of Roma aged 16 and above, compared to 45 per cent of non-Roma living nearby, indicated that paid work was their main activity.

Social Protection

- Roma were less likely to have health insurance and pension benefits than the non-Roma population in their vicinity.
- Roma women reported worse health and more limited access to health care than non-Roma women, and were more reliant on social benefits than Roma men.

Discrimination

- In Spain, Romania, and Portugal, 38–40 per cent of surveyed Roma said they had experienced labour market discrimination in the last five years. In Italy, Greece, and the Czech Republic, the figures were between 66 and 74 per cent. Many also said that they had experienced discriminatory treatment at work, for example, in the Czech Republic, 41 per cent, and in Greece, 33 per cent.

Gender gaps

- 65 per cent of young Roma women, compared to 52 per cent of young Roma men, were not in employment, education or training.
- Gender gaps in educational achievement and the prevalent unequal division of unpaid care work, in combination with the limited access to childcare services, contribute to women's labour market vulnerability.

■ Source: FRA 2011 Survey, <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2012/situation-roma-11-eu-member-states-survey-results-glance>

THE ILO APPROACH TO DISCRIMINATION AND INCLUSION



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Various national, European, and international institutions have been actively promoting Roma inclusion and non-discrimination in recent decades. While the International Labour Organization (ILO) has so far not systematically addressed Roma inclusion, much less specifically focused on Roma youth, it has longstanding experience in promoting decent work, which includes addressing the social and economic vulnerability and discrimination faced by individuals and groups disadvantaged in the labour market.

The principle of equality and non-discrimination is reflected in the ILO Constitution, the 1998 Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, and the 2008 Social Justice Declaration. It is set out in detail in ILO Conventions on equality and non-discrimination, namely Convention Nos. 100 and 111, and contained in key instruments such as Convention No. 122. ILO supervisory bodies assess the application of ILO standards and provide related guidance to member States. In its examination of reports on the application of the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111), the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations has on several occasions issued observations and direct requests focusing on the need to address the discrimination of Roma in education, employment, and occupation, and to combat prejudices and stereotypes against the Roma, particularly in Central and Eastern Europe. As a normative organization, the ILO not only develops and monitors the application of international standards, it also assists its constituents – governments and employers’ and workers’ organizations – in translating these standards into effective national laws with solid systems of enforcement.

Promoting decent work is a strategic entry point for inclusion and the realization of equal opportunities. The Decent Work Agenda developed by the ILO and its constituents recognizes the importance of promoting social justice through four interrelated strategic objectives, all of which are key for inclusion of Roma women and men in the labour market: promotion of rights at work; promotion of

employment; expansion of social protection, and promotion social dialogue. The promotion of equal opportunities and non-discrimination cuts across all strategic objectives.

The ILO's approach to decent work includes research and advocacy, technical assistance and advisory services, project development, and dissemination of international good practices. A variety of tools and approaches have been developed and tested to enhance employment creation and equal opportunities. These include public policies to tackle discrimination and promote inclusion, empowerment of affected groups and communities, and pilot testing of innovative experiences. The ILO's Global Employment Agenda also has a range of employment tools to support employment creation, including macro-economic strategies for job-rich and inclusive growth, skills development, microfinance, and local economic development.

Enabling negotiation and discussion at tripartite and bipartite (employers and workers) levels is essential for democratic good governance in the labour market, and for the achievement of consensus and avoidance of industrial conflict. Enhancing social protection is critical for mitigating risks. Ironically, the poorest who are most in need of social protection are often the least protected. Extending social protection, including to those currently found in informal economic arrangements, is therefore key to promoting social inclusion of Roma communities.

In recognition of gender-specific risks and challenges, and of the fact that women often experience greater and more compounded disadvantages in the labour market, the ILO advocates for equality of opportunities and treatment of women and men. The ILO also brings to the table a wealth of experience in addressing youth employment. It is a key partner in the UN-World Bank-ILO International Youth Employment programme, and has its own dedicated programme that has been very active in the last decade as a response to the global crisis in youth unemployment.

THE ILO APPROACH TO YOUTH EMPLOYMENT



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Today, over 40 per cent of the world's youth are either unemployed or have a job but live in poverty. Over 73 million young women and men worldwide are looking for a job and more than one-third of those working in developing economies lives on less than US\$2 a day. At its 101st International Labour Conference in June 2012, the ILO adopted a Resolution calling for immediate, targeted and renewed action to tackle the youth employment crisis. The ILO call for action on youth employment calls on governments and the social partners:

- To foster pro-employment growth and decent job creation through macroeconomic policies, employability, labour market policies, youth entrepreneurship and rights to tackle the social consequences of the crisis, while ensuring financial and fiscal sustainability.
- To promote macroeconomic policies and fiscal incentives that support employment and stronger aggregate demand, improve access to finance and increase productive investment – taking account of different economic situations in countries.
- To adopt fiscally sustainable and targeted measures, such as countercyclical policies and demand-side interventions, public employment programmes, employment guarantee schemes, labour-intensive infrastructure programmes, wage and training subsidies and other specific youth employment interventions. Such programmes should ensure equal treatment for young workers.

EUROPEAN UNION APPROACHES AND STRATEGIES ON ROMA INCLUSION

While a great amount of political attention has been focused on addressing Roma inclusion at the European level over the past 10–15 years, today such inclusion remains largely an unrealized objective. In 2005, the Decade for Roma Inclusion (2005–2015) was promoted by the Open Society Foundation with the active engagement of the World Bank and the support of intergovernmental and civil society organizations. It was initially launched in eight countries, subsequently expanded to 12. The public commitment of several governments to systematically reduce gaps between Roma and non-Roma in education, employment, health, and housing was an extraordinary development. Yet while there was great hope and enthusiasm at its launch, the Decade encountered many obstacles. Assessments carried out following its closure show that progress was very limited.¹³ One close observer noted,

As long as Roma do not become citizens – I am talking about ... effective citizens – our democracies won't be able to call themselves democracies. This is the litmus test for democracy, what determines the mental and psychological health of a given society.¹⁴

The EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies, adopted in 2011, has built on the experiences of EU Member States, including those participating in the Decade. Under the EU Framework (endorsed by the European Council), all EU Member States are called on to develop National Roma Integration Strategies with a targeted and integrated approach in the four key areas: education, employment, health care, and housing.¹⁵ The European Commission subsequently extended the initiative to all Member States and the political commitment period up to 2020, and established links with the broader Europe 2020 Strategy and the National Reform Programs. The latter are particularly relevant for Member States with sizeable Roma populations. This process has led to the creation of a specific investment priority under the European Structural Fund, dedicated to “socio-economic integration of marginalised communities such as the Roma.”

Supporting more effective policy development

In June 2009, the EU Council of Ministers of Social Affairs invited Member States to take into account Common Basic Principles for Roma Inclusion (CBP) when formulating and implementing plans, policies, and actions for Roma inclusion. The CBP were designed based on past and present experiences with Roma policies and in consultation with experts and civil society. The CBP provide interrelated, internally consistent guidance on effective policy development for Roma inclusion.

¹³ Decade of Roma Inclusion Secretariat Foundation: *Roma inclusion index* (Budapest, 2015).

¹⁴ J. Feffer: *Democracy without Democrats in Hungary*, *The World Post*, 12 July 2014.

¹⁵ European Commission: *EU Roma framework*, 23 Mar. 2016.

Box 3: Common Basic Principles for Roma inclusion in the EU

Principle No. 1: Constructive, pragmatic and non-discriminatory policies

Policies aiming at the inclusion of Roma people should respect and realize core EU values: human rights and dignity, non-discrimination, and equality of opportunity as well as economic development. Roma inclusion policies should be integrated with mainstream policies, particularly in education, employment, social affairs, housing, health, and security.

Principle No. 2: Explicit but not exclusive targeting

Roma people should be targeted but not to the exclusion of other people in similar socio-economic circumstances. This approach should not separate Roma-focused interventions from broader policy initiatives. It should, however, consider the impact of broader policies on the social inclusion of Roma people.

Principle No. 3: Inter-cultural approach

There is a need to involve Roma with people from different ethnic backgrounds. Inter-cultural learning and skills should be promoted while combating prejudices and stereotypes.

Principle No. 4: Aiming for the mainstream

All inclusion policies should aim to insert Roma in the mainstream of society (including educational institutions, jobs, and housing). Where partially or entirely segregated education or housing still exist, Roma inclusion policies should aim to overcome this legacy. The development of artificial and separate “Roma” labour markets is to be avoided.

Principle No. 5: Awareness of the gender dimension

Initiatives need to take account of the needs and circumstances of Roma women. They must address multi-dimensional discrimination, barriers to accessing health care and child support, and domestic violence and exploitation.

Principle No. 6: Transfer of evidence-based policies

It is essential that Member States learn from their own initiatives and share their experiences with other Member States. Development, implementation and monitoring of Roma inclusion policies require a good base of regularly collected socio-economic data. Social inclusion policies targeted toward other vulnerable groups should be taken into account.

Principle No 7: Use of community instruments

It is crucial that Member States make full use of community instruments in efforts for Roma inclusion, including legal instruments (Race Equality Directive, Framework, Decision on Racism and Xenophobia), financial instruments (European Social Fund, European Regional Development Fund, European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development, Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance) and coordination instruments (Open Methods of Coordination). Member States should ensure that use of financial instruments accords with the Common Basic Principles and make use of the expertise within the European Commission with respect to the evaluation of policies and projects. Peer review and the transfer of good practices are facilitated by EURoma (European Network on Social Inclusion and Roma under the Structural Funds).

Principle No. 8: Involvement of regional and local authorities

Member States need to design, develop, implement, and evaluate Roma inclusion policy initiatives in close cooperation with regional and local authorities, who play a key role in shaping practical outcomes.

Principle No. 9: Involvement of civil society

Member States need to design, develop, implement, and evaluate Roma inclusion policy initiatives in close cooperation with civil society actors such as non-governmental organizations, social partners, and academics/researchers. This is vital both for the mobilization of expertise and dissemination of knowledge required for public debate and accountability.

Principle No. 10: Active participation of the Roma

The involvement of Roma people at every stage of a process enhances policy effectiveness. Roma involvement should take place at both national and European levels through input from Roma experts and civil servants, as well as consultation with a range of Roma stakeholders in the design, implementation, and evaluation of policy initiatives. Inclusion policies should be based on openness and transparency and tackle difficult or taboo subjects in an appropriate and effective manner. Support for the full participation of Roma people in public life, stimulation of their active citizenship, and development of their human resources are also essential.

■ Source: http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/youth/Source/Resources/Documents/2011_10_Common_Basic_Principles_Roma_Inclusion.pdf

Often neglected in the past, principle 10 is of particular importance to the success of any Roma policy. Roma associations and communities play a crucial role in raising awareness and encouraging broad participation. Their involvement can help to ensure the relevance of the intervention design, ownership amongst Roma, and the sustainability of interventions. Capacity building of Roma organizations to engage effectively in policy development, implementation, and monitoring should be built into interventions, as well as the establishment of relevant platforms, networks, and means of accessing resources for increased exchange of knowledge and experience.

CROSS-CUTTING IMPACTS ON POLICYMAKING

Policies and programmes targeted to Roma communities

The egregious socio-economic marginalization of Roma communities provides a compelling rationale for policies and programmes targeted specifically to them. However, it is quite obvious that there cannot be one “best” form of reaching out to Roma given the heterogeneity of the Roma population in terms of labour market participation and levels of social inclusion. Institutional and policy frameworks, as well as social environments, also vary substantially between and even within countries.

One important challenge in targeting Roma communities is the choice of criteria for their identification. While self-identification is an option, it runs the risk of under-participation since some Roma decline to specify their ethnicity, especially in front of any state authorities, due to prejudice, lack of confidence, or fear.¹⁶ Moreover, self-identification raises the possibility for free riding by non-Roma. Where Roma are targeted explicitly, there is a further risk of increased hostility by non-Roma and stigmatizing of Roma, especially in contexts where anti-Roma attitudes and discrimination are widespread. This is particularly likely where poverty and social exclusion characterize the non-Roma population.

Alternatively, Roma identity can be assumed based on proxies, for example, residence in a known Roma settlement. Experience shows that where Roma are not explicitly targeted, they are often bypassed or given only marginal roles in the development and implementation of programmes, thus perpetuating structures of discrimination and disadvantage. Explicit efforts to spread information about non-ethnically targeted programmes among Roma, and support for Roma to overcome barriers to participate and remain in support programmes, for example, through mentors that accompany Roma participants, have proven to increase Roma participation. Mentoring programmes for Roma have therefore proliferated in Central and Eastern Europe, yet those that focus primarily on employment are still few in numbers.

Explicit ethnically targeted programs in the area of employment are rare in Central and Eastern European countries, and where they exist they tend to function locally. They are typically small-scale but complex programs implemented in individual communities with the partnership of or by local Roma or pro-Roma civil society organizations. Such projects tend to be multi-faceted and pay special attention to ensuring Roma outreach and inclusion. However, sustainability of financing tends to be a common problem. It is also difficult to scale up such programmes as they are linked to specific characteristics of a local community or of certain dynamic leaders.¹⁷

¹⁶ European Commission, “For Roma, with Roma,” Newsletter No. 2, Apr. 2016, p. 3.

¹⁷ V. Messing: *Active labor market policies with an impact potential on Roma employment in five countries of the EU*, NEUJOBS working paper, No. 19.2, Budapest, Central European University, 4 June 2013.

Several studies analysing targeting methods of active labour market policies (ALMPs) found that multidimensional targeting is the most likely way to reach out to the most vulnerable groups.¹⁸ Such targeting recognizes that the most vulnerable population experiences multiple disadvantages in the labour market. However, multidimensional targeting is rarely implemented because of the complex design, implementation, and monitoring that is required.

Lack of data and impact evaluation

Data is crucial to develop and implement evidence-based policies and programmes, and to monitor and evaluate their impact. Effective policy development on Roma, and Roma youth in particular, is hampered by the weakness of ethnically disaggregated data. Two parallel and complementary surveys were carried out in 2011 in an effort to map the situation of Roma in the EU and neighbouring countries, one focusing on social and economic development aspects carried out by UNDP and the World Bank, and one focusing on the fulfilment of fundamental rights, as well as education, employment, and housing carried out by the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA). Yet beyond these two very useful data pools, solid data on the situation of Roma communities remains limited in all countries with Roma populations. On the basis of EuroStat data, and with support from EU Structural Funds, the Spanish non-governmental organization *Fundación Secretariado Gitano* managed to develop an innovative methodology to compare the situation of the Roma population in Spain with respect to employment and social inclusion in 2005 and 2011.¹⁹

Given the importance of data on Roma, there have been calls on governments in Eastern and Central Europe to collect data on ethnicity, but this has so far not occurred.²⁰ This results in part from established practices that restrict collection of labour market indicators by ethnicity for reasons of data protection. Studies have shown, however, that national legal frameworks are overwhelmingly in line with international data protection standards that permit the collection of data on ethnicity under specified conditions.²¹ In a 2007 report, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance emphasized that the collection of “ethnic” data must “satisfy three main conditions: there must be explicit consent, collection must be in the public interest, or it must be a legal obligation.” The Commission added “it would seem both possible and necessary to reconcile effective protection of privacy and public liberties with collection of the data needed to combat racial discrimination.”²² In 2014, however, the Commission recognized that the collection of ethnic data will become feasible only with effective measures in place to combat widespread discrimination against Roma. Its 2014 *Roma Health Report* states that, “To successfully collect ethnically disaggregated data, the fear and pervasive discrimination evident in countries in health, housing, education, employment, police, media and by the public needs to be addressed first.”²³

¹⁸ K. Subbarao et al.: Public works as a safety net: Design, evidence, and implementation (Washington, D.C., World Bank, 2013); V. Messing and G. Fleck: “Transformation of Roma employment policies” in K. Fazekas, A. Lovász, Á. Telegdy (eds.): *The Hungarian labour market, 2010: Review and analysis* (Budapest, Institute of Economics, HAS – National Employment Foundation, 2010), pp. 83–98.

¹⁹ For more information, see https://www.gitanos.org/que-hacemos/areas/employment/en_cifras.html

²⁰ The United Kingdom is one of the few countries where ethnic data collection has become a key part of public policy making. The British approach is that the collection of data on race or ethnic origin is not considered discriminatory (the data is rendered anonymous in any case) and that it serves to implement and verify equality policies.

²¹ C. McDonald and K. Negrin: *No data – no progress: Country findings* (Budapest, Open Society Foundations, Roma Initiatives Office, 2010).

²² P. Simon: “Ethnic” statistics and data protection in the Council of Europe countries – Study report (Strasbourg, Council of Europe and European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance, Oct. 2007).

²³ Matrix and European Commission: *Roma Health Report: Health Statistics of the Roma Population and Data Collection in the Member States of the European Union* (Aug. 2014), p. 112.

In connection with highlighting the weakness of data, researchers have emphasized the dearth of impact evaluations of programmes targeted at Roma, for example those under the Roma Decade.²⁴ Even where efforts are invested in monitoring and data collection, the data may not be suitable for measuring impact, due to a lack of awareness on the importance of counterfactual impact assessment or expertise in evaluation methods.²⁵ The identification and development of successful approaches, and the replication of the most effective ones, relies on rigorous impact evaluation, a practice that is still far from common. To strengthen results measurement and evidence-based policies and programmes on youth employment policies and programmes, the ILO has engaged in a regional initiative in the Middle East and North Africa, Taqem (“evaluation” in Arabic).²⁶

Gender issues and women’s empowerment

Multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination shape the reality of Roma women and girls in Europe. Not only do Roma women face poorer employment and wage outcomes in the labour market than non-Roma women, in most countries of Central and Southeast Europe the gaps in labour market opportunities between Roma women and Roma men are greater than the corresponding gender gaps amongst non-Roma.²⁷

Roma women have worse outcomes compared to Roma men in the areas of education, employment, and health. The FRA survey showed that across all EU Member States surveyed, fewer Roma women (37 per cent) than men (50 per cent) aged 16–24 years were reported as remaining in education after the age of 16.²⁸ Roma women’s presence in the formal labour market is weak: on average, across the EU Member States, 21 per cent of Roma women were reported in paid work, compared to 35 per cent of Roma men.²⁹ Roma men were more frequently reported as self-employed (25 per cent) or in ad hoc jobs (28 per cent) than Roma women (13 per cent and 15 per cent respectively).³⁰ A larger share of women works informally, the most frequent activities being day labour in agriculture and work as informal household employees.³¹

In addition to general residential segregation and the low socio-economic status of Roma households, young Roma women’s barriers to employment include industrial and occupational segregation, lower qualifications, and traditional gender roles in the division of household and childcare responsibilities.³² Roma households tend to be larger than non-Roma households, and Roma women tend to have more children than the general population. Given the limited access to childcare facilities, this is often a severe constraint on women’s employment. Roma tend to marry at a younger age and marriage also affects activity patterns, particularly in education. Only 6 per cent of Roma women aged 16–17 surveyed in EU member States who were married or cohabiting were in education, compared to 36 per cent of non-Roma women in this age group. Roma women aged 16–17 who were married

²⁴ N. O’Higgins: *Roma and non-Roma*, op. cit.

²⁵ For more information and resources on impact evaluation, see <http://www.3ieimpact.org/en/evaluation/resources/impact-evaluation-resources/>

²⁶ For more information and resources, see <http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/youth-employment/projects/evaluation/about/lang—en/index.htm>

²⁷ European Parliament, Committee on Foreign Affairs: *Report on the Annual Report on Human Rights in the World 2012 and the European Union’s policy on the matter*, 29 Nov. 2013, A7, 0418/2013.

²⁸ FRA: *Analysis of FRA Roma survey results by gender* (Vienna, 2013), p. 7.

²⁹ FRA: *Analysis of FRA Roma survey results by gender*, *ibid.*, p. 9.

³⁰ FRA: *Analysis of FRA Roma survey results by gender*, *ibid.*, p. 1.

³¹ FRA: *The situation of Roma*, op. cit.; Messing, V.: “Kettévágott munkapiac, szétforgácsolt társadalom” [Labour market cut in two, disintegrated society], in I. Kovách et al (eds.): *Társadalmi integráció a jelenkori Magyarországon [Social integration in contemporary Hungary]* (Budapest, Argumentum Publ., 2012).

³² FRA: *Poverty and unemployment*, op. cit., pp. 9,17.

or cohabiting were more often full-time homemakers in comparison to single Roma women of the same age group (42 and 16 per cent respectively).³³ Young Roma women – much like non-Roma young women – experience additional labour market discrimination in recruitment, for example where they are denied employment because they might become pregnant in the near future, or when they are required to undergo pregnancy testing.

While the labour market situation and the experience of discrimination against Roma women have obvious impacts on the overall socio-economic situation of households, there are also consequences at individual and intra-household levels. Evidence from around the world indicates that the lack of empowerment of women has multiple impacts on the situation of children and is a major cause of inter-generational cycles of poverty. In many Roma families, women's limited household bargaining and decision-making power denies them personal choices and choices as mothers, i.e., control of their fertility, free mobility in the community, and access to political, economic, and social rights.

Distrust towards public administration and state bodies

Many Roma have experienced discrimination in their interaction with state institutions such as schools, employment offices, or central or local administrative bodies. Such experiences contribute to a widespread impression among Roma that they are excluded from the principle of equality before the law. This, in addition to the very low representation of Roma in elected political bodies, adversely affects Roma faith in public authorities and erodes their trust that they will actually benefit from state programmes – with negative impacts in the area of labour market policies and programmes.

Access to rights is also affected by many Roma's lack of awareness of legally ensured protection against discrimination, or the absence of legal assistance to lodge claims or complaints. This is serious, since awareness of human rights, of how discriminatory policies can be resisted and combated, and of how rights can be claimed and asserted are important prerequisites for their effective realization. Roma cannot be expected to report discrimination unless they are aware of their rights and trust the agency that is responsible for pursuing their complaint. Roma themselves have seldom been involved in the analysis of problems that affect their communities, or of the measures needed to alter their situation. Where recognized Roma self-governing authorities exist, their potential to catalyse positive change for larger communities is often weak and their democratic legitimation is questioned, both from within and outside the community. The local administration of labour market programmes has suffered from such weaknesses in the past, reinforcing the low expectations and low level of trust of Roma communities toward the state.

The fraught relationship between Roma and state authorities and legal systems is an important factor explaining the continued discrimination against Roma, their limited access to employment, and their prolonged socio-economic marginalization. It also contributes to the limited impact of inclusion policies which are often not developed with the participation of the affected communities.

³³ FRA: *Poverty and unemployment*, *ibid.*, p. 16.



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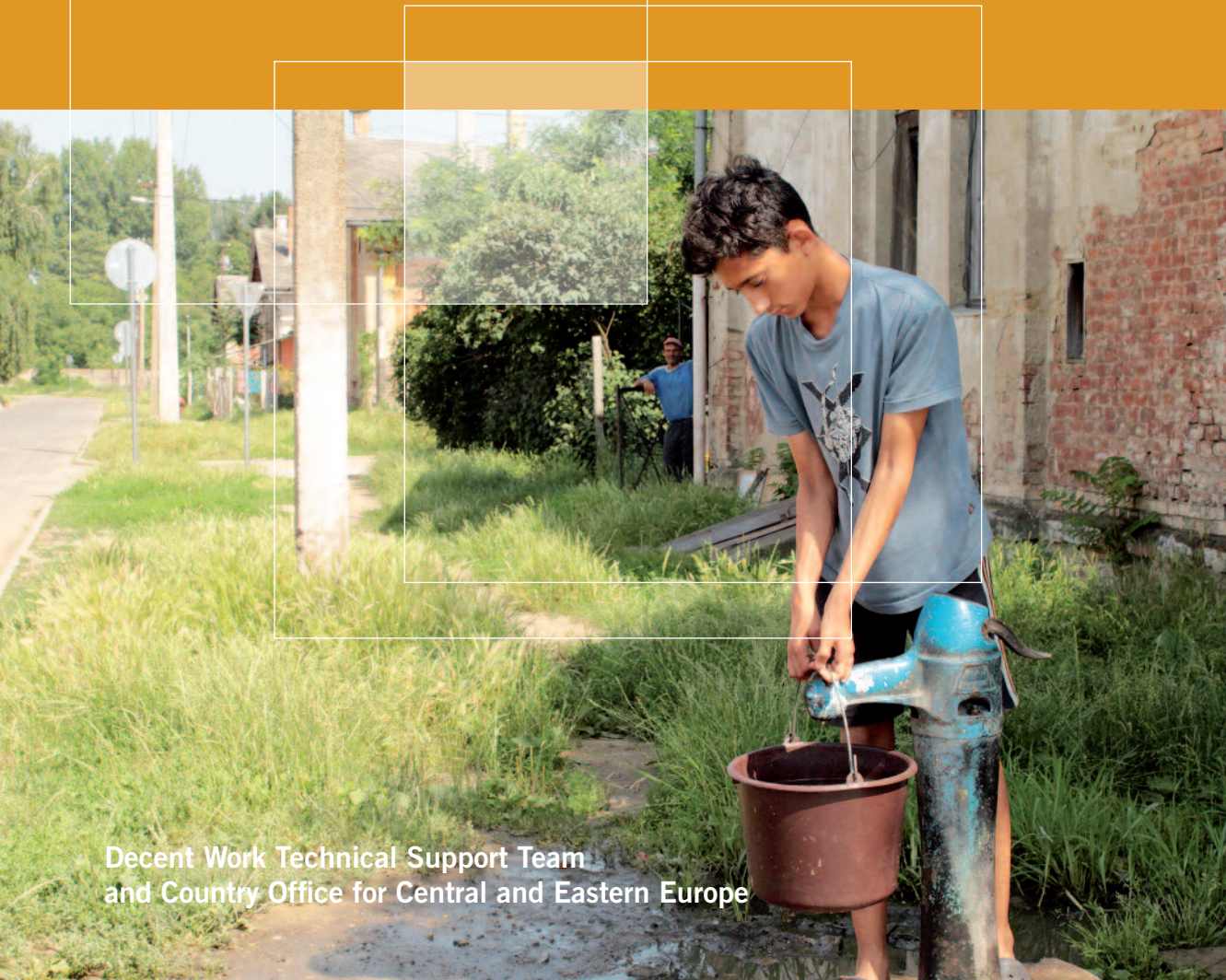
Promoting Decent Work
Opportunities for Roma Youth
in Central and Eastern Europe
An ILO Resource Guide



International
Labour
Organization

2

LEGAL INSTRUMENTS AND APPROACHES TO DISCRIMINATION



Decent Work Technical Support Team
and Country Office for Central and Eastern Europe

IMPRINT

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CHAPTER TWO OVERVIEW

Countries are required by international legal instruments, including ILO Conventions, to have in place national equality and non-discrimination legislation. Member States of the European Union are obligated to apply important legislation on equality of opportunity and treatment. However, the protective reach of such legislation is limited by challenges related to awareness, interpretation, enforcement, and implementation. Legal instruments prohibiting discrimination are not, in and of themselves, sufficient to overcome discrimination against Roma. A vigilant stance with respect to equal opportunity on the part of public authorities and engagement at the individual and community level on the part of all those seeking justice for Roma are indispensable. The key to achieving social transformation lies in mainstreaming Roma issues, that is, in framing the key contents and shaping the procedures of policy actions in principles of non-discrimination and social inclusion.¹

In addition, positive action aiming explicitly at generating equal opportunity for people from disadvantaged or discriminated groups may be necessary to achieve a level playing field for these groups to access public institutions, resources, and benefits.² The strongest form of such equal opportunity actions is preferential treatment or affirmative action. Targeted programs for specific groups to remove the barriers from equal access and participation could also be implemented. While such interventions are viewed as temporary measures, they often require sustained efforts over time due to the nature of accumulated disadvantages.

¹ A. Kocze et al: *Programming the structural funds for Roma inclusion 2012–20: Making the most of EU funds for Roma (MtM) program*, Toolkit (Budapest, Open Society Foundations, 2014).

² A. Kocze et al: *Programming the structural funds for Roma inclusion 2012–20*, *ibid.*

WHAT IS DISCRIMINATION?

Labour market discrimination is defined as “any distinction, exclusion or preference” that impairs or nullifies equality of opportunity and treatment in employment and occupation. Such unequal treatment is unrelated to a person’s competencies or the inherent requirements of the job. The ILO Convention on Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) 1958 (No.111) (→ see Box 1) prohibits discrimination in employment and occupation on the basis of a person’s sex, race, skin colour, religion, national extraction, political opinion, or social origin, as well as any additional grounds that member States specify after consultations with workers’ and employers’ organizations and, where such exist, other appropriate bodies. Individual countries have adopted equality or non-discrimination legislation covering other grounds such as disability, age, or HIV status. European Union (EU) law on equal opportunities and treatment includes racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age, sexual orientation, and sex as prohibited grounds of discrimination.³

Discrimination can be direct or indirect. Direct discrimination occurs when laws, rules, or practices explicitly cite a particular ground such as sex or race to deny equal opportunities and equal treatment. Indirect discrimination occurs where rules or practices appear to be neutral, but in practice lead to exclusions or impair equality of opportunity or treatment (Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No.111), Article 1 (1)(a)). While significant progress has been achieved in defining direct discrimination in national legislation, defining indirect discrimination remains challenging, especially in cases where ethnic discrimination frequently intersects with discrimination based on gender, religion, social origin, or health status (disability).

Eliminating discrimination requires dismantling barriers to equal access to society’s roles and resources: to services, training, and quality education, and to ownership and use of land and credit. It requires, as well, a level playing field for setting up and running enterprises: for hiring, assignment of tasks, working conditions, pay, benefits, promotions, lay-offs, and termination of employment.⁴ Equal treatment at work means that all individuals should be accorded equal opportunities to develop fully the knowledge, skills, and competencies that are relevant to the career path they wish to pursue, while the principle of equal remuneration is respected (see ILO Equal Remuneration Convention 1951 (No.100)).

³ The EU has promulgated three related Directives: the Racial Equality Directive (Directive 2000/43/EC), the Employment Framework Directive (Directive 2000/78/EC), and the Directive on Sex Discrimination in Employment (Directive 2006/54/EC). See European Commission: *Tackling discrimination*, 23 Mar. 2016.

⁴ ILO: *Declaration of fundamental principles and rights at work: Elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation* (No Year).



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Box 1: The ILO Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention 1959 (No. 111)

The Convention defines discrimination in Article 1 (1) as:

- a) any distinction, exclusion or preference made on the basis of race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, national extraction or social origin, which has the effect of nullifying or impairing equality of opportunity or treatment in employment or occupation;
- b) such other distinction, exclusion or preference which has the effect of nullifying or impairing equality of opportunity or treatment in employment or occupation as may be determined by the Member concerned after consultation with representative employers' and workers' organizations, where such exist, and with other appropriate bodies.

In the terms of the Convention, employment and occupation include access to vocational training, employment, and particular occupations, as well as terms and conditions of employment (Article 1(3)).

The Convention calls for a national policy to eliminate discrimination in access to employment, training and working conditions, on grounds of race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, national extraction or social origin and to promote equality of opportunity and treatment in this regard (Article 2).

■ For the full text see: <http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12000:0::NO::>

KEY CHALLENGES

Discrimination in education and employment

The educational paths of many Roma children reflect existing patterns of discrimination and lay the ground for continued discrimination in the world of work. Many Roma children attend poor quality, segregated schools. Some are placed in special needs school for the mentally impaired, although they are not disabled. The Roma Inclusion Index has measured that between 2005 and 2015 in Slovakia, segregation of Roma children in schools for the mentally disabled has increased from 31 to 51 per cent. In Serbia, the number of Roma placed in schools for mentally disabled is 36 times the rate of non-Roma.⁵ In mainstream schools, Roma students are targets of discrimination by educators and other students. Some children are denied access to education because of administrative requirements to provide official documentation such as a birth certificate or proof of residence.

Many Roma youth do not make the transition into secondary and tertiary schooling. Girls and young women, and young Roma with disabilities, experience the greatest challenges. Limited education relegates Roma to unskilled jobs in the informal economy or at the bottom of the formal labour market. Public Employment Services (PESs) provide little assistance to Roma job-seekers beyond public works schemes which typically offer no training. Despite anti-discrimination legislation in countries with substantial Roma populations, discrimination by employers is endemic.⁶

There is evidence of discrimination in all aspects of employment: in pre-recruitment and recruitment; in conditions of work, including wages; in skill development; and in advancement, promotion, and career progression. Where the “glass ceiling” is often used to describe barriers to senior jobs for women, for Roma, a “glass box” blocks access to all aspects of employment. Despite increasing levels of education, Roma graduates often find work only in Roma-related areas, such as service delivery to other Roma, or Roma policy related employment. In Slovakia, where a higher incidence of university educated Roma was reported than in other countries, nearly all are employed in Roma-related work, such as Roma social workers, or in the office of government specializing in Roma issues.⁷

Entrenched structural and cultural patterns of discrimination lead to blaming the victim. Thus, despite considerable evidence that Roma value gainful employment, their exclusion from the labour market is often characterized as a problem of their own making.⁸

⁵ Decade of Roma Inclusion Secretariat Foundation. Roma Inclusion Index 2015 (Budapest, 2015).

⁶ European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC): *The glass box: The exclusion of Roma from employment* (Budapest, Westimprim bt., 2007).

⁷ ERRC: *The glass box*, op. cit.

⁸ N. O’Higgins and A. Ivanov: “Education and employment opportunities for Roma”, in *Comparative Economic Studies* (2006, Vol 48, No. 1), pp. 6–19.

Weak enforcement of legislation

Under international legal instruments, including ILO Conventions and European Union law, governments are obligated to put in place national non-discrimination legislation. However, existing laws are often not fully implemented, and lack of awareness of discrimination is common. In some countries, anti-discrimination legislation focuses on individual cases, which means that widespread structural inequality is left untouched. In some cases too, there is lack of compliance by the public sector. While the public sector is often one of the largest employers, Roma are rarely found in public employment. Also, despite the recent policy push for inclusion of Roma, mandatory anti-discrimination training for staff in public institutions is rare. There is no consensus on the use of temporary special measures regulating the employment of Roma in the public service.

Limited awareness of rights

In the European Agency for Fundamental Rights survey of 2011, almost half of the Roma surveyed reported experiencing discrimination, with an average of 11 incidents over the previous 12 months.⁹ At the same time, few Roma were aware of their rights as guaranteed by laws. In EU Member States, only 35 per cent of Roma women and 45 per cent of Roma men were aware of laws against discrimination that apply to them when they seek employment.¹⁰

Restricted access to justice

Limited awareness of their rights is, of course, by no means the principal source of Roma vulnerability. The European Roma Rights Centre emphasizes the wide range of barriers to bringing a case before the courts and receiving a prompt and just resolution. These barriers “include factual restraints such as the lack of appropriate laws to define the crime or permit civil redress, reluctant prosecutors or investigators, immunities protecting certain individuals or institutions from lawsuits, and procedural restrictions, as well as practical constraints such as a lack of funds or access to a lawyer.”¹¹ In addition, justice suffers where heavy caseloads or ill-prepared judges prevent adequate jurisprudence. Where investigators, prosecutors, and judges have preconceived notions, biases, and prejudices with regard to Roma, fairness of proceedings is jeopardized.

Intersecting forms of discrimination

Various grounds for discrimination, such as discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity and gender, or ethnicity and age, or ethnicity, gender and age, or disability, operate in closely interrelated ways. Roma women and girls may be faced with intersecting forms of discrimination by gender and ethnicity. For example, they are typically responsible for a larger share of unpaid reproductive work (care and household duties), with very limited access to childcare services, even while striving to generate an income from work outside the household. Responding to intersecting forms of discrimination remains a major challenge for both policy and jurisprudence.

⁹ European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA): *European Union minorities and discrimination survey (EU MIDIS): Data in focus report – The Roma* (Budapest, 2009).

¹⁰ FRA: *Poverty and unemployment: The situation of Roma in 11 EU member states – Roma survey data in focus* (Luxembourg, 2014).

¹¹ ERRC: *An obstructed path: Roma and access to justice*, 10 Apr. 2001.

APPROACHES AND GOOD PRACTICES

Given the pervasive nature of discrimination, the struggle against it can be effective only if fought on different levels and with various tools: legislation and judicial action, public policy and programmes such as awareness raising, affirmative action and compensation for individuals and groups suffering from discrimination, and active engagement of social groups such as social partners or civil society organizations.

Moreover, effective action cannot focus exclusively on the grounds for discrimination; it must also take into account the social context and the realities of individual lives. With regard to Roma, it may be difficult to agree on an encompassing definition of the affected social group, given the diversity of living conditions, cultural practices, languages, economic status, and other characteristics throughout Europe. Yet the experience of discrimination is real, as is the need for action.

Combat discrimination on multiple fronts: the ILO's approach

The legal foundation of ILO action on discrimination rests in international Conventions and Recommendations (→ see Box 1 and section on ILO Legal Instruments), which focus on equality and non-discrimination in the world of work. The ILO emphasizes four components in the struggle against discrimination:¹²

- strengthening laws and promoting effective enforcement;
- promoting gender equality through integrated and coordinated global action;
- mainstreaming non-discrimination and equality into national policies and ILO decent work country programmes; and
- better equipping workers and employers with the tools to promote equality in the workplace.

Recognizing that discrimination represents a major barrier to the attainment of decent work, the ILO is implementing a wide range of technical cooperation activities with governments and social partners, and developing a variety of tools aimed at promoting non-discrimination in employment and occupation.

Guidance from EU anti-discrimination legislation and bodies

EU Member States are bound by three Directives: the Racial Equality Directive (Directive 2000/43/EC), the Employment Framework Directive (Directive 2000/78/EC) and the Directive on Sex Discrimination in Employment (Directive 2006/54/EC) (see section on Legal Instruments), as well as by the Union's commitment to fight discrimination. While legally binding only in EU Member States, EU law and practice on discrimination exert influence throughout Europe.

At the national level, Equal Treatment Bodies deal with discrimination cases, although with

¹² ILO: *Equality at work: Tackling the challenges – Global report under the follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work*, Report of the Director General, International Labour Conference, 96th Session, Geneva, 2007.

varying degrees of efficacy. In a 2011 report, for example, the Swedish Equality Ombudsman acknowledges the widespread discrimination and marginalization of Roma in the country. However, the report also acknowledges that Roma rarely report instances of discrimination because they lack trust in authorities.¹³

In January 2014, the European Commission, assessing the application of the EU’s anti-discrimination directives, concluded that Roma-specific problems often derive from how the legislation is applied at the regional or local level. The Commission therefore stepped up efforts, including those at the local level, to ensure the correct application of anti-discrimination legislation. The Commission assesses issues coming to its attention that may reflect a breach of the Directive. In this context, a number of investigations on discrimination against Roma concerning access to education or housing are underway.¹⁴

Awareness raising and the facilitation of access to justice

Legal literacy and rights awareness are essential preconditions that must be met for Roma to be able to realize their rights under the law. Government measures to promote rights awareness and enhance legal literacy can take various forms. (→ See Box 2)

However, most efforts to raise rights awareness and facilitate access to justice are carried out by civil society organizations. Their activities include awareness raising campaigns and information sessions, law clinics offering pro-bono legal advice, as well as strategic litigation accompanied by public awareness and information dissemination. Not much experience has been gained so far with strategic litigation on employment related discrimination against Roma, however.

Box 2: Government efforts to promote rights and legal literacy among Roma

- Albania’s National Roma Integration Strategy includes a provision calling for information and training programmes for leaders of the Roma community, public institutions, and NGOs, focusing on anti-discrimination and rights elaborated in labour legislation.¹⁵
- In Portugal, an online mechanism has been developed called “Racism on the Internet”, which allows citizens to file complaints on racial discrimination.¹⁶
- In Hungary, the Ministry of Justice and Law Enforcement, along with several other ministries, has set up the Roma Anti-Discrimination Customer Service Network with the purpose of providing free legal assistance to Roma.¹⁷

¹³ Swedish Equality Ombudsman: *Roma rights: Discrimination, paths of redress and how the law can improve the situation of Roma* (Ödeshög, DanagardLITHO, 2011).

¹⁴ European Commission: *Report on the implementation of the EU framework for national Roma integration strategies* (Brussels, European Union, 2014).

¹⁵ European Commission: Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: *Report on the implementation of the EU framework for national Roma integration strategies*, Brussels, 17 June 2015, COM (2015) 299.

¹⁶ European Commission: *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament*, *ibid.*

¹⁷ ILO: *Equality at Work: Tackling the challenges*, *op. cit.*



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Capacity development on anti-discrimination and diversity for public officials

Anti-discrimination training is one of the most important means of improving the self-awareness, knowledge, and skills of people who are in positions to influence the opportunities of others. It has the potential to raise consciousness about discriminatory practices and to challenge attitudes that have allowed direct and indirect discrimination. All public institutions could benefit from capacity development on Roma issues, as well as from practices promoting non-discrimination, equality, inclusion, and diversity. Some European governments have made such training mandatory for all government officials. (→ See Box 3) However, in countries with the largest Roma populations, such training is rare.

Box 3: Capacity development on anti-discrimination for public officials

- In the United Kingdom, Ireland, the Netherlands, and Sweden, anti-discrimination training is compulsory for all government officials, with an emphasis on those working in direct service delivery and those involved in human resource management and recruitment.
- In Portugal, the High Commission for Migration established a team of 30 trainers who undertake awareness raising. Portugal has also developed training and recommendations for the media on addressing ethnicity, migration, and religion.¹⁸

¹⁸ European Commission: *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament*, op. cit.

- In Sweden, the Commission against anti-Gypsyism has produced educational materials for schools to combat racism and discrimination.¹⁹
- In Italy, Portugal, Spain, and Romania, the transnational NET-KARD project has developed a series of practical guides on fighting anti-Roma discrimination for lawyers, the police service, Roma associations, and media professionals.²⁰

Access to services and proactive approaches to equality

As has been stressed, legislation must be reinforced by other measures to combat discrimination effectively. Recognizing this necessity, ILO Convention No. 111 requires member States to adopt and implement a national policy on equality of opportunity and treatment with a view to eliminating discrimination. They must establish a multi-faceted policy, including not only the elimination of discriminatory law and practices but also cooperation with social partners and relevant bodies, active positive measures, awareness raising, and coordination of anti-discrimination efforts across various public policies. In some cases, specific government institutions and agencies have been created to address discrimination against Roma and other minorities. This is the case in the Czech Republic through its Agency for Social Inclusion, as well as Romania's Ministerial Commission for Roma. In the UK, the positive duty to promote racial equality applies broadly to public authorities. (→ See Box 4)

Box 4: The UK's Race Relations Act in 2000

In the United Kingdom, amendments to the Race Relations Act in 2000 established a positive duty for specified public authorities to promote racial equality. The Act requires them to exercise due regard for the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination; and
- promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups.

The Act also assigns specific duties to public authorities, including mandatory practical steps toward fulfilling their general duty. These include, for example, preparing and publishing a Race Equality Scheme which explains how the authority is planning to meet its general duty, or implementing methods of ethnic monitoring and prevent discriminatory practice by employers.

By assigning a positive duty to public bodies, the Act requires them to take race inequalities into account when developing policy, delivering services, setting targets, and measuring performance. It also requires that audit and inspection bodies consider race inequality when they monitor programme delivery. In practice, this means that the listed public authorities must make consideration of racial equality an integral part of their day-to-day work.²¹

¹⁹ European Commission: *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament*, ibid.

²⁰ Fundacion Secretariado Gitano: *NET-KARD Project* (No Year).

²¹ ERRC: *Equality principles: Examples of good practices outside Southeastern and Central Europe*, 2007.

Numerous non-governmental initiatives focus on supporting the participation of Roma children in school, as well as on promoting their success at all levels of the education system. One outstanding example is the Roma Education Fund, which has provided funds in 14 countries to increase Roma participation in all levels of education. The Fund also contributes to curriculum reform processes, improvements in the quality of schooling, and support for education desegregation.

Discrimination awareness among employers

Enterprises must play a central role in eliminating employment discrimination against young Roma women and men. By adopting fair hiring policies and affirmative action, employers not only provide opportunities for individuals, they also help to combat negative stereotypes. However, employers, like other social players, are not immune to pervasive discrimination in the societies in which they operate. Thus, the first step in enlisting employers' support for non-discrimination is to raise their awareness. Governments, employers' associations, and NGOs all have important roles to play.

Box 5: Initiatives to enlist employers in ensuring fairness for Roma

In the Czech Republic, the Brno-based NGO IQ Roma Service created a project to combat employment discrimination against Roma and other ethnic minorities. The project, which operated during 2007–2013, awarded the title “Ethnic Friendly Employer” to those who embraced the principle of equal treatment and who did not discriminate against job applicants and employees on the basis of their ethnic origin.²² The project gave Roma a clear signal that there were employers who would give them a fair chance. It targeted both non-profit and private sectors, as well as government employers, and included measures for improving employability of Roma and supporting their job searches.

In Finland, several employers signed a Diversity Charter, a model for monitoring discrimination that has been tested in the workplace. Part of this effort included the distribution of awareness raising material (such as the “*Would I Employ a Roma?*” handbook).²³

Lead by example: public institutions as role models

Governments should be called on to practice the same hiring policies that they encourage private enterprises to follow. By doing so, governments can take the lead on equal treatment and make public institutions role models for anti-discrimination. Establishing employment targets and quotas for vulnerable groups has been shown to help overcome entrenched disadvantage in specific contexts. Diversity audits of state bodies can detect hidden biases and, if conducted in a participatory manner, help to initiate a process of change in the organization. Governments in Central and Eastern Europe have not fully assumed their function as role models for Roma inclusion so far.

Governments can also foster greater inclusion through public procurement. Requiring and enforcing equality provisions in contracts for all companies that apply for government tenders creates

²² IQ Roma Servis: <http://www.iqrs.cz/en> (No Year).

²³ European Commission: *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament*, op. cit.; Finnish Business Society (FIBS): *Diversity charter Finland* (No Year).

powerful incentives for the adoption of active non-discrimination policies. Experience from the USA and UK has shown this to be an effective mechanism for assuring that only those companies that can prove they comply with principles of fair and equal treatment gain access to public resources.²⁴

Equality Bodies

Equality bodies can help to address discrimination if they have adequate budgetary resources, staff, and tools such as incentives and sanctions. (→ See Box 6)

Box 6: The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland

The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (formerly the Fair Employment Agency) has broad authority to investigate, offer incentives, and impose sanctions to tackle employer discrimination. Using a combination of financial incentives and moral persuasion, it enlisted employers in ensuring equal treatment and put in place well-defined procedures for monitoring compliance. These measures helped to promote changes in attitudes of both public- and private-sector employers.²⁵

A number of equality bodies have developed Codes of Practice to assist employers in developing equal employment opportunity policies in workplaces.²⁶ These codes cover issues such as recruitment and selection, training, promotion, disciplinary procedures for racial harassment, dismissal and redundancy, and accommodation of cultural and religious needs. Such proactive benchmarks help to create environments where employers recognize the obligation to implement equal employment policies.

²⁴ ERRC: *Equality Principles*, op. cit.

²⁵ ERRC: *Equality Principles*, ibid.

²⁶ ILO: *Equality at Work: Tackling the challenges*, op. cit.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Governments should:

- **Enforce the international standards on non-discrimination and equal treatment provisions** of relevant ILO and Council of Europe standards, incorporating their requirements into national law and formulating a national program to achieve compliance, including quantitative targets and timelines.
- **Identify well-connected local Roma and Pro-Roma organizations and commission them to provide legal training / assistance for Roma populations**, focusing on statutory rights and access to justice through individual and collective action.
- **Hire, train, and promote young Roma women and men, thereby redressing Roma underrepresentation in government jobs.** Governments should shoulder the positive duty of state bodies to promote equity and non-discrimination by leading by example, that is, practicing the same policies that governments encourage private enterprises to practice. Approaches include:
 - Redress the effects of past discrimination through the use of hiring targets, quotas, or preferences to give Roma an edge in competition for public employment; and
 - Combat negative stereotypes by giving Roma visible roles in the implementation of public programs, such as public works, and in the delivery of health and social services, in particular in programs of special relevance for Roma populations, such as mediators, caseworkers, teachers' aides, and teachers.
- **Create a culture of non-discrimination within government agencies.**
 - Formulate, post, and publicize codes of conduct that require non-discrimination and equal treatment, including both ethnicity and gender.
 - Provide mandatory training to agency employees on putting these values into practice.
 - Regularly implement diversity assessments of policies and agencies (the ILO Participatory Gender Audit provides a model for such assessments).
 - Regularly measure beneficiaries' satisfaction with public programs, with particular outreach to Roma populations.
 - Make non-discrimination and equal treatment key criteria in agency staff evaluations.
- **Call on employers to recruit, train, and promote Roma.**
 - Define non-discrimination in hiring and promotion as Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).
 - Create incentives for employers to hire Roma, such as subsidies, tax credits, quotas, and procurement rules.
 - Provide positive recognition for employers who practice equal treatment and disclose the identity of those with a track record of discrimination ("name, blame, shame").
- **Identify, analyze, and disseminate instances of successful legal action to address discrimination.**

TOOLS AND RESOURCES



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ILO Legal Instruments

International labour standards are legal instruments drawn up by the ILO's constituents (governments, employers' and workers' organizations). They set out basic principles and rights at work. They may take the form either of Conventions, which are legally binding, international treaties once ratified by member States, or Recommendations, which serve as non-binding guidelines providing more detailed guidance on a Convention's application. Recommendations can also be stand-alone instruments not linked to any convention.

The ILO's Governing Body has identified eight Conventions as fundamental, given that they cover fundamental principles and rights at work: freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining; the elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour; the effective abolition of child labour; and the elimination of discrimination in respect to employment and occupation.²⁷ Many labour standards can be useful in supporting Roma integration; indeed many instruments make specific references and provisions for vulnerable groups in the labour market.

The Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100)

The Equal Remuneration Convention requires member states to promote and ensure the application to all workers of the principle of equal remuneration for men and women workers for equal work and work of equal value. Rates of remuneration are to be established without discrimination based on sex.

²⁷ The eight fundamental ILO Conventions are: 1. Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87); 2. Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98); 3. Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29); 4. Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105); 5. Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138); 6. Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182); 7. Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100); 8. Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111).

The concept of equal remuneration for work of equal value requires a means of measuring and comparing different jobs on the basis of objective criteria, such as skills, working conditions, responsibilities, and effort.

The Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1959 (No. 111)

The purpose of Convention No. 111 is to protect all persons against discrimination in employment and occupation on the basis of race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, national extraction, and social origin, with the possibility of extending its protection to discrimination on the basis of other grounds. (→ see Box 1) No provision in the Convention limits its scope as regards individuals or branches of activity.

The Convention covers both direct and indirect discrimination. It covers all workers, whether public- or private-sector workers, who work in the formal or informal economy. It also covers the self-employed. It covers all aspects of employment and occupation, including access to employment and vocational training and to particular occupations, as well as terms and conditions of employment.

The Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No. 122)

This instrument establishes full, productive, and freely chosen employment as an active policy and a major goal of ILO member States. Employment policy should aim to provide work for those who are available and seeking work (such as by creating employment opportunities), and allow workers to freely choose their employment and have the opportunity for a job irrespective of race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, national extraction, or social origin.

The Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138)

This Convention sets 18 as the minimum age in which a person can engage in work or employment that could jeopardize their health, safety, or morals. If the work or employment protects the health, safety, or morals of a young person, and provides that person with adequate instruction or vocational training, then governments, in consultation with employers' and workers' organizations, can set the limit at 16 years. Otherwise the minimum age is not less than 15 years, or in particular cases where the country's education institutions and economy are underdeveloped, it can be set at 14 years.

The Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182)

This Convention applies to children under the age of 18 and prohibits forms of labour that include slavery, trafficking, prostitution or production of pornography, trafficking in drugs, and work that is harmful for the health, safety, and morals of the child.

Transition from the informal to formal economy Recommendation, 2015 (No. 204)

This Recommendation acknowledges that most people enter the informal economy not by choice but due to a lack of opportunities in the formal economy and an absence of any other means of livelihood. The labour standard provides strategies and practical guidance on policies and measures that facilitate the transition to the formal economy, and calls for integrated approaches across a range of policy areas.

United Nations Instruments

United Nations Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), 1966

The ICCPR commits state parties to respect the civil and political rights of individuals. It is monitored by the United Nations Human Rights Committee, which is a separate body of the United Nations Human Rights Council. States must report initially one year after acceding to the Covenant, and then whenever the Committee requests (usually every four years).

Article 27 is particularly important for Roma: “In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practice their own religion, or to use their own language.”

United Nations Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), 1966

The ICESCR commits state parties to progressively work toward the granting of economic, social and cultural rights, including labour rights, the right to health and to education, as well as the right to an adequate standard of living. It is monitored by the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Article 6 of the Covenant recognizes the right to work, defined as the right of everyone to the opportunity to gain their living by freely chosen or accepted work. Parties must guarantee equal access to employment and protect workers from being unfairly deprived of employment. They must prevent discrimination in the workplace and ensure access for the disadvantaged.

The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), 1969

This Convention commits its members to the elimination of racial discrimination and the promotion of understanding among all races. It is monitored by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD). Article 1 of the Convention defines “racial discrimination” as “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”.

Article 2 of the Convention condemns racial discrimination and obliges parties to “undertake to pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating racial discrimination in all its forms.” It also obliges parties to promote understanding among all races. To achieve this, the Convention requires that signatories:

- not practice racial discrimination in public institutions
- not “sponsor, defend, or support” racial discrimination
- review existing policies, and amend or revoke those that cause or perpetuate racial discrimination
- prohibit “by all appropriate means, including legislation”, racial discrimination by individuals and organizations within their jurisdictions
- encourage groups, movements, and other means that eliminate barriers between races, and discourage racial division



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Parties are obliged “when the circumstances so warrant” to use affirmative action policies for specific racial groups to guarantee “the full and equal enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms”. However, these measures must be finite, and “shall in no case entail as a consequence the maintenance of unequal or separate rights for different racial groups after the objectives for which they were taken have been achieved”.

Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), 1979

This Convention defines discrimination against women as “any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field.”

Regarding the intersection of gender-based discrimination with discrimination on other grounds, the CEDAW conclusions from its 45th session note: “There has been growing recognition that various types of discrimination do not always affect women and men in the same way. Moreover, gender discrimination may be intensified and facilitated by all other forms of discrimination. It has been increasingly recognized that without gender analysis of all forms of discrimination, including multiple forms of discrimination, and, in particular, in this context, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, violations of the human rights of women might escape detection and remedies to address racism may also fail to meet the needs of women and girls. It is also important that efforts to address gender discrimination incorporate approaches to the elimination of all forms of discrimination, including racial discrimination.”

Instruments and Resources of the Council of Europe

European Charter on Regional and Minority Languages, 1992

This Charter aims to protect and promote historical, regional, or minority languages in Europe, to maintain and develop Europe's cultural traditions and heritage, and to respect the right to use a regional and minority language in private and public life.

Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, 1995

This Convention provides legal guidelines for States on the protection of minorities. Article 4 affirms the right of equality before the law for national minorities and prohibits any form of discrimination. It also states that full and effective equality should be promoted in all areas of economic, social, political, public, and cultural life. Evaluation of the implementation is the responsibility of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, which is assisted by the Advisory Committee. In their evaluations the Committee often engages in visits to the country and meets with civil society and political authorities.

Roma youth participation: good practices, from the local to the European level

The publication of the Roma Youth Action Plan of the Youth Department of the Council of Europe aims to provide examples of Roma youth participation with the aim of challenging existing and widespread preconceptions related to Roma participation.

The publication can be used as a tool for youth policy makers in further creating spaces and support for new initiatives that develop Roma young people's creativity and willingness to take an active stand to promote their identity as young people, as Roma, and as citizens. It can also be an inspiration for many youth workers, activists and leaders to begin or continue their work on social inclusion and combating discrimination.

■ <http://www.coe.int/en/web/youth-roma/roma-youth-participation-in-action>

European Union Instruments

EU Primary Law

Primary sources, or primary law, come mainly from the founding Treaties of the EU, namely the Treaty on the EU and the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU. EU primary law contains numerous bans on discrimination which, in specific circumstances, address particular aspects of the general principle of equality. Examples include the prohibition of any discrimination on grounds of nationality (Article 18 TFEU) and of differential treatment on the grounds of gender, race, ethnic origin, religion or beliefs, disability, age or sexual orientation (Article 10 TFEU).

Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, 2007 (originally the Treaty of Rome 1958)

The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (2007) is one of two primary Treaties of the European Union, alongside the Treaty on European Union (TEU). Originating as the Treaty of Rome, the TFEU forms the detailed basis of EU law by setting out the scope of the EU's authority to legislate

and the principles of law in those areas where EU law operates. Article 2 of this Treaty upholds equality as a founding value of the European Union. Article 10 prohibits discrimination based on racial or ethnic origin. Article 19 allows the Council to engage in appropriate action to combat discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age, or sexual orientation.

Treaty of Lisbon 2009

The Treaty of Lisbon stresses the EU founding values of respect for human dignity, equality, and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities, in accordance with human rights instruments. When the Treaty of Lisbon entered into force in 2009, it altered the status of the Charter of Fundamental Rights to make it a legally binding document. The Treaty strengthens the commitment of the EU to social progress and social rights. Among the new social objectives of the EU are the wellbeing of its people, full employment and social progress, the fight against social exclusion and discrimination, the promotion of justice, and the eradication of poverty.

Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union 2000

This Charter enshrines certain political, social, and economic rights for EU citizens and residents. It came into full legal effect with the entry into force of the Treaty of Rome 2009. The Charter mentions six categories of rights and freedoms: dignity, freedom, equality, solidarity, citizens' rights, and justice. Article 21 (1) prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, or membership of a national minority. According to Article 51, "The provisions of [the] Charter are addressed to the institutions, bodies, offices and agencies of the Union (...) and to the Member States only when they are implementing Union law ... The Charter does not extend the field of application of Union law beyond the powers of the Union or establish any new power or task for the Union."

EU Directives

Racial Equality Directive 2000/43/EC

This Directive requires that national laws be passed outlawing both direct and indirect discrimination on grounds of racial and ethnic origin. The burden of proof is placed on the accused party, and the scope of the legislation encompasses employment, education, health care, and access to vital goods and services. It also calls on States to create special agencies with observatory, investigative, and consultative functions.

Employment Equality Directive 2000/78/EC

This Directive sets out minimum requirements for the prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion and belief, age, disability and sexual orientation. It covers the fields of employment and occupation, vocational training and membership of employer and employee organizations.

Directive on equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women employment and occupation, Directive 2006/54/EC

This Directive regulates the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation.

Other instruments

Council Recommendation on Effective Roma Integration Measures in Member States 2013

This is the first EU soft law instrument on Roma and covers their social and economic integration to overcome the gaps between Roma and non-Roma. Fighting discrimination is a key horizontal measure under the Recommendation. It provides guidance on effective measures to be enacted in several areas such as education, employment, housing, and health care. For education, policies that end segregation, reduce early school leaving, provide inclusive and tailor-made teaching methods, and widen second chance are listed among others. In terms of employment, proposed measures include support for first-work experience and vocational training; equal access to mainstream public services, self-employment and entrepreneurship; and the elimination of discrimination. Other areas mentioned in the Recommendation are empowerment, poverty reduction, and protection of Roma women and children.

■ [http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32013H1224\(01\)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32013H1224(01))

Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: Assessing the implementation of the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies and the Council Recommendation on effective Roma integration measures in the Member States – 2016. COM (2016) 424, 27 June 2016

This Communication reports on the overall conclusions regarding progress in implementing the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies. It also reviews Roma integration measures put in place under the Council Recommendation on effective Roma integration measures in the Member States.

■ http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/files/roma-report-2016_en.pdf

Promoting Decent Work
Opportunities for Roma Youth
in Central and Eastern Europe
An ILO Resource Guide



International
Labour
Organization

3 SOCIAL SECURITY
AND DECENT WORK



Decent Work Technical Support Team
and Country Office for Central and Eastern Europe

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CHAPTER THREE

OVERVIEW

Social security provides members of a society protection against economic distress due to contingencies such as old age, employment injury, unemployment, and maternity. Social security includes both poverty alleviation schemes that are funded from general revenues (social assistance) and are often means-tested, and schemes that are funded from contributions and designed to replace lost wages (social insurance). Social security systems also provide access to basic health care, based on need and/or insured status. By helping to ensure the well-being of workers and their families, social security promotes social stability and economic productivity. In Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries, rapid population aging is placing social security systems under financial stress. The young Roma population represents an increasingly large share of new labour market entrants and potential contributors to social security.

In practice, high levels of unemployment and informal employment exclude most Roma from contributory social insurance schemes. At the same time, their access to non-contributory social assistance is restricted by complicated administrative procedures and discrimination at the service delivery level, as well as by the low literacy, lack of information and inability to produce required documents characteristic of many Roma families. Given the positive role of social security in boosting national productivity, the exclusion from social security is also detrimental to economic development.

In CEE countries, Roma are often assumed to be the primary beneficiaries of social assistance. Yet while Roma households are disproportionately poor, most poor households are not Roma. In Hungary, for example, Roma constitute approximately one quarter of the poor and in Romania and Bulgaria, around 40 per cent.¹ Thus, the extension of social security to all needy households is an issue on which Roma organizations and their advocates can usefully join larger coalitions.

¹ Z. Ferge, K. Tausz, and A. Darvas: *Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion: Volume 1* (Budapest, International Labour Office, 2002); Rural Poverty Portal: *Rural poverty in Europe* (No Year).

WHAT IS SOCIAL SECURITY?

Social security is the protection that a society provides its members against poverty (social assistance) and loss of wages, whether for unemployment, sickness, maternity, old age, invalidity, work injury, or loss of a breadwinner (social insurance). As reflected in the Declaration of Philadelphia (1944) and in the Income Security Recommendation (1944, No. 67), the member States of the ILO have concurred that social security is both a social and economic necessity and a human right. This view is additionally asserted in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966). In recent years, this conviction was reaffirmed and consolidated by the International Labour Conference's 2011 Resolution and Conclusions that recognize the closing of social security coverage gaps as a priority for equitable economic growth, social cohesion, and decent work for all women and men.² As a consequence, a year later, the Conference adopted a new international social security standard, the Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202), which provides “guidance to member States in building Social Protection Floors within comprehensive social security systems” that provide basic protection to each and every resident.

Box 1: Social protection floors

Social protection floors are nationally defined sets of basic social security guarantees aimed at preventing or alleviating poverty, vulnerability, and social exclusion. National social protection floors should be provided to all residents and all children, as defined in national laws and regulations, and comprise at least the following four social security guarantees, as defined at the national level:

- a) access to essential health care, including maternity care;
- b) basic income security for children, providing access to nutrition, education, care and any other necessary goods and services;
- c) basic income security for persons in active age who are unable to earn sufficient income, in particular in cases of sickness, unemployment, maternity and disability; and
- d) basic income security for older persons.

² International Labour Organization (ILO): *Resolution concerning the recurrent discussion on social protection (social security)*, International Labour Conference, 100th Session, Geneva, 2011; ILO: *Sixth item on the agenda: A recurrent discussion on the strategic objective of social protection (social security) under the follow-up to the 2008 ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization*, Report of the Committee for the Recurrent Discussion on Social Protection, Provisional Record No. 24, International Labour Conference, 100 Session, Geneva, 2011 and reproduced in Part I of this publication. The resolution and conclusions were adopted after the discussion of the ILO: *Recurrent discussion on social protection (social security) under the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization*, Report VI, International Labour Conference, 100th Session, Geneva, 2011.

KEY CHALLENGES

Barriers in programme design and eligibility criteria

Low levels of formal employment preclude participation by Roma in national pension and health insurance schemes where eligibility is contingent on contributions. In EU Member States, Roma report themselves as eligible for contributory retirement pensions at much lower rates than others.³ The greatest differences are in Bulgaria (36 per cent versus 58 per cent), Romania (27 per cent versus 76 per cent), Greece (29 per cent versus 76 per cent), Italy (38 per cent versus 76 per cent) and France (38 per cent versus 91 per cent). In terms of health insurance, fewer than 40 per cent of Roma are covered in Albania, Romania, and Moldova.⁴

Restrictive eligibility criteria for non-contributory cash transfers exclude many needy Roma applicants and families.⁵ Some Western Balkan countries exclude applicants who own any immobile or mobile assets, participate in any gainful employment whatsoever, or receive remittances. Requirements for a permanent address and citizenship status are also barriers, effectively excluding refugees and internally displaced persons. Such criteria disproportionately affect Roma who reside in unregulated dwellings and who are part of the displaced diaspora that resulted from the Balkan conflicts.⁶ Roma residence in remote, segregated settlements with poor access to essential services (public offices, transport, hospitals) further limits access.

If social assistance cannot be combined with income from employment, individuals may be discouraged from seeking formal work, particularly if they work in minimum-wage or part-time jobs.⁷ For those with weak labour-market positions, the need to register may lead them to conceal informal activities.

³ European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA): *Roma pilot survey*, 2011. In addition, almost 80 per cent of internally displaced Roma in Serbia did not apply for pensions, compared to 45 per cent of non-internally displaced Roma. Idzerda, I. et al: "Access to primary healthcare services for Roma population in Serbia: A secondary data analysis", in *BMC International Health Human Rights* (Vol. 11, 2011).

⁴ UNDP, World Bank, European Commission: *Roma regional survey*, 2011.

⁵ World Bank: *Social safety nets in the Western Balkans: Design, implementation, and performance*, 2011, Report No. 54396-ECA.

⁶ In 2007, there were 22,457 Roma IDPs registered. However, the United Nations Development Programme estimates that the real number of IDP Roma is probably closer to 50,000. While a small number of IDPs end up in government-run or "unofficial" collective centres, the majority of Roma IDPs find accommodation in Roma settlements. Roma IDPs are in a very difficult position and live in far worse conditions than the majority domicile population, worse even than the domicile Roma in Serbia. See S. Cvejić: *Assessment of the Needs of Internally Displaced Roma in Serbia* (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, May 2015).

⁷ In most of the Western Balkan countries, unemployment status (obtained by registration with the public employment service) is required for access to social assistance. In Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia, and Albania, unemployment status is taken as confirmation that a potential beneficiary for social assistance receives no formal income. Registration as unemployed also indicates that able-bodied recipients of social assistance can be offered public works jobs or active labour market programmes. C.R. Laderchi and S. Savastano: *Poverty and exclusion in the Western Balkans: New directions in measurement and policy* (New York, Springer, 2013).

Inadequate social assistance benefits

Given their high rates of unemployment, many Roma families relied on non-contributory social assistance in the last decade; reliance on non-contributory social assistance ranged from 16 per cent in Romania and the Czech Republic to 44 per cent in Slovak Republic.⁸ If old age pensions are included as part of the minimum state benefits, the rate of dependency increases to 24 per cent and 55 per cent. Not much has changed since the 2002 report, and there is little evidence that social assistance is effective in mitigating the poverty and marginalization of Roma communities. Instead, several studies in the past decades have shown that the financial situation of most poor Roma communities remains basically unaltered or is deteriorating.

Abuses in health care implementation

An array of human rights abuses in health care settings, including outright denial of medical services and provision of substandard health care, has been documented. Roma patients' right to medical information, privacy, and informed consent are often not respected, and Roma women and men routinely experience degrading treatment in health care facilities. In Macedonia, Roma have reported being forced to pay for free services or being detained if they prove unable to do so. In Romania, the segregation of Roma in hospital settings is an increasingly common phenomenon.⁹

Social security for Roma women and gender inequality

Although gender equality mechanisms have been established across Central and Eastern Europe, policymakers rarely use gender as a lens for understanding poor people's exposure to risk and vulnerability and for designing social protection measures.¹⁰ Poorly designed or inequitably applied social security programmes can exacerbate women's socio-economic disadvantages and perpetuate gender inequality at the level of households and society.

Roma women, because of their position at the margins of the labour market, both when compared to non Roma as well as when compared to Roma men, are also at the margins of contributory social security schemes. The common gender gap is exacerbated for Roma women. For example, there is a gender gap of close to 40 per cent in pension entitlements across Europe. Roma women, whose income and participation in the formal labour market is typically much lower than that of Roma men, are unlikely to acquire their own pensions. They are also unlikely to get adequate spousal or widow's pensions given the low entitlements of Roma men.

Roma activists from across Europe point to the barriers to reproductive health and rights, the violation of Roma women's reproductive rights, and the weak development of culturally sensitive health programmes. In Bulgaria, almost one-third of Roma women over the age of 15 do not have any social health protection, resulting, for example in medically unassisted births outside hospitals.¹¹ The European Roma Rights Centre in 2004 documented numerous instances of segregated maternity wards – the so-called Gypsy rooms (Hungary).¹² The United Nations Development Programme/World

⁸ UNDP: Avoiding the dependency trap: *The Roma human development report* (Bratislava, 2002).

⁹ Open Society Public Health Programme: *Roma health rights in Macedonia, Romania, and Serbia: A baseline for legal advocacy* (Open Society Foundations, June 2013).

¹⁰ I. Petričević: *Women's rights in the Western Balkans in the context of European integration: Institutional mechanisms for gender equality* (2012).

¹¹ T. Krumova and M. Ilieva: *The health status of Roma women in Bulgaria* (Veliko Turnovo, Center for Interethnic Dialogue and Tolerance (AMALIPE), 2008).

¹² For Hungary, see R. Izsak: "'Gypsy rooms' and other discriminatory treatment against Romani women in Hungarian hospitals", in *Roma Rights Journal* 15 Dec. 2004.



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Bank/European Commission 2011 regional Roma survey documents the extent of unmet health needs among Roma populations. In addition, entitlement criteria for social security benefits may also be indirectly discriminatory against Roma women. For example, Hungary has tied its Birth Grant (worth approximately 222 Euros) to a requirement that the mother have at least four pre-natal check-ups.¹³ However, since it is more difficult for Roma to access health care, this condition de facto excludes many Roma women.

¹³ Given the lack of data disaggregated by ethnicity, it is difficult to account for the number of Roma beneficiaries.

APPROACHES AND GOOD PRACTICES

Integrated assistance

While program linkages, referrals, and one-stop shops for integrated social assistance are not common in Central Europe, some governments are now moving in this direction. Some of the services provide integrated assistance especially addressed at Roma households. In The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Roma Information Centres (operating since 2007) are mandated to serve as one-stop shops to provide Roma with information and access to social protection services, employment, health, housing, education, and legal documentation. Serbia's Employment Strategy 2011–2020 identifies social assistance recipients as a particularly vulnerable group in need of integrated services, and it links their eligibility for cash support with priority placement in active labour market programmes. Such strategies can constructively target the long-term unemployed, both Roma and non-Roma. Box 3 provides some examples of integrated services in Western and Central European countries.

Box 3: Integrating public employment services and social welfare – the United Kingdom, Germany, and the Czech Republic

In the United Kingdom, Jobcentre Plus (JCP) combines services of placement and benefit administration, previously separate, into a one-stop shop for employment service and income support. In focusing on inactive and unemployed clients, the JCP's service includes social work functions to address the multiple social needs of marginalized job seekers. Initial evaluations found that service integration in the JCP had a positive impact on job entry, a neutral effect on client services (speed, accuracy, proactivity), but a negative impact on benefit processing accuracy.

Germany has built organizational linkages between the federal labour offices and the municipal social welfare departments that manage social assistance benefits, thereby targeting available services more directly to individuals outside, or at the margins, of the labour market.

The Czech Agency for Social Inclusion fosters the cooperation between employment and social services at the local level, in the areas of social services and programmes for support of employment, education and development of social housing.

¹² ILO: *Equality at work: Tackling the challenges* – Global report under the follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, Report of the Director General, International Labour Conference, 96th Session, Geneva, 2007.

Inclusion in social insurance

As discussed above, a large number of Roma are excluded from social insurance because their work is informal. Promoting labour market integration and supporting the formalization of informal economic activities are therefore key to extending social insurance coverage. A focus on young Roma, i.e., labour market entrants, is of critical importance, as building up one's contribution history is necessary for adequate benefit levels in later years. A focus on young women is important so that they build up own social security entitlements rather than being dependent on derived benefits (through their husbands).

In addition, several CEE governments are seeking to extend social insurance coverage by making registration easier and more attractive for small, informal businesses, i.e., lowering contributions rates, carrying out campaigns on the advantages of social insurance, and creating special incentives for farmers to register.¹⁴ Though these efforts do not target Roma specifically, as they belong to the larger group of excluded workers, Roma will benefit from extended social insurance coverage.

Conditional cash transfers

Conditional cash transfers (CCT) are non-contributory cash benefits paid to recipients who meet defined behavioural conditions such as health check-ups, regular school attendance, or school promotion. These benefits have become increasingly popular in low- and middle-income countries of Latin America, Africa, and Asia. Programmes that entail different types of behavioural conditions have also been implemented in various European states.

Schooling-related criteria are common requirements in the new conditional cash transfer (CCT) programmes in Europe. Bulgaria, Slovakia, Romania, and Hungary have made certain social allowances for the family conditional on school attendance of the children, and withdraw or reduce benefits in case of non-compliance. CCT programmes can also set positive incentives, such as for post-compulsory schooling. For example, in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Poland, and Slovenia, eligibility for family cash benefits is extended if children above the upper age limit of standard eligibility are still enrolled in fulltime education. Slovakia and Hungary also apply an age extension to the universal child benefit. Similarly, Hungary, Romania, and The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia operate scholarship programmes for students from disadvantaged families in post-compulsory education.

So far, there is no strong evidence of the impact of CCTs on Roma communities. In principle, cash transfers, if paid in adequate amounts, could be of great importance in reducing high Roma poverty rates. CCTs, if well designed, can also enhance educational success or contribute to women's empowerment by placing household income directly into women's hands. However, the transfers must be designed so as not to exclude or punish the most vulnerable households. Without major improvements in the schools available to Roma children, making eligibility for a cash transfer contingent on school attendance could not reasonably be expected to help these children escape poverty. On the contrary, denying some families basic cash assistance if children do not attend schools (regardless of the quality of education provided) could reinforce their poverty and exclusion.

Service mediation

Initiated by local NGOs, and often supported by European Structural Funds or other Roma integration programmes, a new professional role for Roma residents has emerged over the last ten years: the

¹⁴ ILO: *Extending social security to the informal economy: The cases of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republic of Moldova* (Budapest, in draft).

Roma mediator. This is a professional who mediates between Roma communities and various institutions, particularly in areas of social service delivery, education, health care, and labour market services. Mediators, a large share of them women, promote equal opportunities and facilitate access to public services for Roma. They provide information to Roma communities, intervene in conflicts between service providers and clients, and encourage interaction between communities and service providers.

Roma health mediator (RHM) programmes are frequently used to improve access to basic health services (i.e., health insurance and vaccinations) among excluded Roma communities. In the Western Balkans, RHM programmes help Roma clients obtain documents, complete medical forms, and interact with relevant offices. Although they typically require continuing education, RHMs quickly become well-versed in the regulations and requirements for obtaining documents and insurance. Some proactively search for people in the community who may lack documents or insurance.

Box 4: Outreach through mediators

In Moldova, the Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family developed a Framework Regulation on the organization of community mediators' activities, approved by Government Decision 557 of 17 July 2013. The Ministry also created a Community Mediator Service.

In The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy implemented specific activities targeting Roma population (i.e., birth registration) with the assistance of mediators supported by the Council of Europe.

In Southern Serbia, a project supported by the Social Innovation Fund piloted approaches for reaching poor Roma households.¹⁵ Volunteers, most of them from the communities, trained advocates to work within Roma settlements. The project aimed to facilitate the cooperation between the volunteers and social workers in CSWs, and to alleviate the heavy workload of the social workers. Volunteers and social workers collaborated to ensure that the clients obtained the personal documents (identity cards, health cards, etc.) required for accessing services. Sometimes volunteers accompanied clients to other service agencies, such as municipal or health care agencies. A small fund was made available for the payments for documentation. The most important lesson of the project was that outreach programmes can be tailored to the needs of specific communities and can facilitate the delivery of social services and benefits.

Despite these successes, Roma Mediator programmes continue to face challenges. Mediators tend to earn low salaries and have limited professional development opportunities. They also lack adequate supervision and support. There are some documented cases of mediators having been chosen on the basis of political connections, leading to poor results. In some mediation programmes the absence of

¹⁵ The Association for the Improvement of Roma Settlements implemented the project in partnership with Centers for Social Work (CWS) in Lebane, Vladicin Han, and Bela Palanka municipalities.

sustained financing results in contract insecurity for mediators and lower motivation of participants. Thus, to ensure success, it is indispensable to institutionalize mediator programmes and provide career paths for mediators. (→ See Box 5)

While special outreach efforts toward Roma are crucial to promote their inclusion into social services and benefits, at the same time, it is necessary to recognize that mediation for Roma can only be a medium-term solution. In the long term, health and social services should be equally accessible, and of equal quality, for all residents of a country.

Box 5: Developing professional qualifications to support the integration of the Roma and Egyptian population in Montenegro

In 2013, the Centre for Vocational Education and Training (VET Centre) in cooperation with the Institute for Social Inclusion of Roma and Egyptians started to develop two professional qualifications aimed at supporting the social integration of the Roma and Egyptian population:

- *Associate in Social Inclusion of Roma and Egyptians, and*
- *Organizer of Social Inclusion of Roma and Egyptians*

Training programmes for the two professions were adopted by the National Council for Education, thereby granting them national recognition. Two years later, the organization HELP and the Ministry of Health collaborated to facilitate trainings and employment of Roma mediators in health care institutions all over the country. This experience showed that specific skills and knowledge are required from Roma outreach workers in the health care system, as well as in the education, employment and social protection systems. Therefore, the Qualification Council of Montenegro decided to break down the professional qualification *Associate in Social Inclusion of Roma and Egyptians* into four specializations: education, health care, social protection and employment.

In cooperation with HELP and the Roma Education Fund, the VET Centre is now developing these four professional qualifications. The first training sessions of professionals are expected to be carried out in 2016 and 2017.

The initiatives demonstrate national support for the integration of the Roma and Egyptian population in Montenegro into the national system of recognized professional qualifications, and contribute to their empowerment by giving them opportunities to gain the necessary skills to support their own communities.

- Gordana Boskovic (Centre for Vocational Education and Training)
- Translation: Ana Maraš (Montenegrin Employers Federation)

RECOMMENDATIONS

Governments should:

- **Establish a minimum level of income and health protection for all residents, including persons who are undocumented, internally displaced without residency registration, or living in informal settlements.**
 - Identify gaps in existing social security coverage by obtaining or developing population statistics that are disaggregated by gender, ethnicity, age, place of residence, and income.
 - Build on the principles of non-discrimination and gender equality laid out in ILO Recommendation 202 (Social Protection Floors) to design benefit expansions to address gaps in coverage.
 - If cash transfers are conditional, formulate conditions that do not interfere with recipients' income generation, that facilitate their access to training and employment opportunities, and that empower women, including provisions for childcare, and benefits that couple any requirement for girl's and boy's school attendance with assured access to quality education.
- **Expand the range and availability of community-based social services.**
 - Carry out surveys to determine communities' most pressing needs and priorities.
 - Identify and reach out to eligible households relying on mediators.
 - Identify models of good practice to combat discrimination and gender inequality in delivering social services.¹⁶
 - Develop partnerships with civil society organizations, including those serving Roma, and Roma or Pro-Roma organizations, as well as youth organizations, to deliver services.
 - Integrate social services with employment services through program linkages, referrals, and one-stop shops. Services should be sensitive to the specific needs of Roma communities and be youth-friendly.
- **Raise awareness of the role of social insurance in providing workers and families with economic security.**
 - Carry out campaigns, in Roma neighborhoods and elsewhere, on the advantages of contributing to social insurance.
 - Simplify procedures for registration and contribution by small firms and self-employed workers.
- **Promote democratic governance of social security schemes.**
 - Give stakeholders, including workers, employers, and representatives of beneficiary groups, positions on scheme governing boards and representation in advisory groups; include Roma and youth representatives and ensure gender balance in the governing boards and advisory groups.

¹⁶ For example, E. Fultz and M. Tracy: *Good Practices in Social Service Delivery in South Eastern Europe* (Budapest, International Labour Office, 2004).

- Develop gender-sensitive standards for quality service delivery, use them to monitor scheme performance regularly, and involve beneficiaries in program evaluations, with concerted outreach to Roma populations.
- Establish formal mechanisms for obtaining beneficiary feedback, enabling applicants and beneficiaries to lodge complaints, and maintain a transparent process for adjudicating appeals.
- Provide career paths within institutions that rely on Roma mediators for their professional advancement. Ensure that young Roma women and men benefit from new career opportunities.

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TOOLS AND RESOURCES

ILO (2010) Extending Social Security to All: A Guide through Challenges and Options

This book outlines basic concepts such as the social protection floor and the social security staircase, analyses the affordability of various approaches, and examines the results of practices around the world, especially in low- and middle-income countries.

■ http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@dgreports/@dcomm/@publ/documents/publication/wcms_146616.pdf

ILO (2010) World Social Security Report 2010/11: Providing Coverage in Times of Crisis and Beyond

This report looks at the scale of countries' investments in social security and the effectiveness and efficiency of social security systems in reaching various national social policy objectives. It analyses the scope, level, and quality of coverage by various social security branches.

■ http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@dgreports/@dcomm/@publ/documents/publication/wcms_146566.pdf

ILO (2014) World Social Protection Report 2014-15: Building Economic Recovery, Inclusive Development and Social Justice

This report presents recent social security trends and provides information on social protection systems, coverage, benefits, and expenditures in more than 190 countries. It follows a life-cycle approach, starting with social protection for children, followed by schemes for women and men in working age, and closing with pensions and support for older persons. It assesses progress towards universal coverage in health. The report also analyses trends and recent policies, such as the negative impacts of fiscal consolidation and adjustment measures.

■ http://www.ilo.org/global/research/global-reports/world-social-security-report/2014/WCMS_245201/lang-en/index.htm

Laderchi and Savastano (2013) Poverty and Exclusion in the Western Balkans: New Directions in Measurement and Policy

This book presents a selection of papers from the first Western Balkans Poverty and Inclusion conference held in Brussels in December 2010, which brought together policymakers, leading academics and researchers from the Western Balkans, European member states, and international organizations. The book's focus is poverty and social exclusion. It examines approaches to the measurement and analysis of poverty and exclusion adopted by EU Member States and their potential to serve as blueprints for the Western Balkan region. It investigates the design, implementation, and performance of the existing social safety nets in the Western Balkan countries. It also focuses on the way social security schemes can best be utilized by impoverished and marginalized groups.

TARKI Social Research Institute (2014) Study on Conditional Cash Transfers and Their Impact on Children

This study investigates how the EU can best promote investment in children, and what policy instruments can help break the intergenerational transmission of poverty. In particular, the study aims to explore the extent to which conditionality introduced into social systems can help improve the reach of human capital investment at an early phase of the life cycle, according to the practices of the various Member States.

The World Bank (2011) Social Safety Nets in the Western Balkans: Design, Implementation, and Performance.

This report provides a comparative perspective on the design, implementation, financing, and performance of the non-contributory cash transfer programmes across the six countries in the Western Balkan region, and benchmarks their performance against similar programmes in other countries in Central and Eastern Europe. The primary focus of the analysis is the means-tested, last-resort social assistance programmes in all six Western Balkan countries. The report analyses them in the context of their ability to mitigate risks causing chronic and transient poverty, and also in the context of their links to social care and employment services.

The World Bank (2016) Being Fair, Faring Better: Promoting Equality of Opportunity for Marginalized Roma

This book provides a unifying framework centered on the notion of promoting equality of opportunity and on the set of policies that could help level the playing field between Roma and non-Roma. It focuses on directions for policy linked to the key three areas of education, jobs, and living conditions, while drawing connections to complementary interventions (including access to health and social security).

Web platform: Social Protection and Human Rights

This website provides a space to convene leading thinkers around the complex challenges of implementing social protection from a rights perspective, as well as practical guidance for policymakers and practitioners. The platform's main objective is to provide tools to challenge assumptions about approaches in both the human rights and social protection fields. It also aims to provide policymakers and practitioners with examples of jurisprudence, best practices, and innovative solutions.

■ <http://socialprotection-humanrights.org>

Web Platform: Social Protection: Building Social Protection Floors and Comprehensive Social Security Systems

This website provides various resources and tools (including assessment, evaluation, best practices, and recommendations) to policymakers and practitioners for construction of social protection floors and comprehensive social security systems.

■ <http://www.social-protection.org/gimi/gess/>

Promoting Decent Work
Opportunities for Roma Youth
in Central and Eastern Europe
An ILO Resource Guide



International
Labour
Organization

4 SKILLS DEVELOPMENT
AND THE SCHOOL TO
WORK TRANSITION

A photograph of two young girls, likely Roma, smiling and looking towards the camera. The girl in the foreground is wearing a pink shirt, and the girl behind her is wearing a dark top. The image is partially overlaid by a white grid pattern.

Decent Work Technical Support Team
and Country Office for Central and Eastern Europe

IMPRINT

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CHAPTER FOUR

OVERVIEW

Roma youth have much lower levels of education and skills than young people generally, despite the fact that the participation of young Roma (aged 15–24) in upper secondary and tertiary education has risen substantially over the last decade. Furthermore, their gains in education have not resulted in significant gains in employment and wages.¹ The combined effects of prejudice and spatial segregation; institutional or policy failures to address their marginalization; inferior education; more limited skills training; and more restricted access to other services still block labour market integration.² Continuing high levels of direct and indirect discrimination reinforce these barriers.

At the same time, structural problems characterize the labour markets in post-socialist Central and Eastern Europe. Typical post-socialist economies entered into the economic transition with a relatively large proportion of low skilled workers and traditional education systems that continued to produce poorly skilled youth after 1990, while the new jobs created since the 1990s required higher skills. While these factors apply to the skills development and labour market integration of all youth, the educational paths of most young Roma perpetuate long-standing and structural problems.³

A clear understanding of the difficulties of the school to work transition for Roma youth is essential for addressing their labour market exclusion and developing suitable opportunities for skills development. Roma youth can benefit most from training in demand-driven technical and vocational skills, employability skills, and remedial education, where relevant. Intensive post-training support and job search guidance are essential to ensure smooth and successful transitions. Gender-responsive skills development can promote young Roma women's employment and soften occupational gender segregation.

¹ N. O'Higgins: *Roma and non-Roma in the labour market in Central and South Eastern Europe*, Roma Inclusion Working Papers (Bratislava, United Nations Development Programme, 2012), p. 49.

² N. O'Higgins: "Ethnicity and gender in the labour market in Central and South East Europe", in *Cambridge Journal of Economics* (2015, Vol. 39), pp. 631–654.

³ J. Köllő: *Workplace Literacy Requirements and Unskilled Employment in East-Central and Western Europe: Evidence from the International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS)*, Budapest Working Papers on the Labour Market, 2006/7, (Institute of Economics, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 2006). A. Kocze et al: *Programming the structural funds for Roma inclusion 2012-20: Making the most of EU funds for Roma (MtM) program*, Toolkit (Budapest, Open Society Foundations, 2014), p. 48.

WHAT IS THE SCHOOL TO WORK TRANSITION?

The journey that all young people undertake from schooling to work has become longer and more complex. Those who experience multiple disadvantages, such as those rooted in ethnicity, gender, or disability, have the most uncertain and protracted transitions. Some poor, rural youth may find employment quickly, but it is typically in low-quality jobs that lead to a lifetime trajectory of informality and poverty. Unemployment is thus not the only consequence of poor transitions to work. Others include under-employment, informal employment, and out-migration. Illustrating the latter, young Roma are a sizeable group of labour market migrants from the Western Balkans into the European Union.

Understanding the transition from education to the world of work is of primary importance to policymakers and other stakeholders because it helps identify the barriers young people face in gaining employment. The severity of the youth unemployment crisis in Europe adds urgency to the need for policy development for young people.

The ILO's concern in the field of school to work transition is not transition to any job, but to a decent job that provides stability, economic security, and satisfaction. The ILO has developed a specific survey instrument, the School to Work Transition Survey (SWTS), to analyse the risk factors and determinants of labour market disadvantage for young people. This tool has proven useful in developing effective policy responses to youth unemployment. (→ see Box 1)

Box 1: The ILO's School to Work Transition Survey (SWTS)

This multi-purpose survey instrument can –

- detect the individual characteristics that determine labour market disadvantage. This is key to developing policy measures to prevent the emergence of risk factors, as well as removing barriers to decent work;
- identify demands of the labour market that are relevant for young people, thus helping to determine mismatches that can be addressed by policy interventions;
- in countries where labour market information is not well developed, serve as an instrument to generate reliable data for policy making; and
- in countries with a reasonably developed labour market information system, shed light on areas usually not captured by household surveys, such as young peoples' conditions of work, wages and earnings; engagement in the informal economy; access to financial products; and difficulties experienced in running their businesses.

■ For more details see ILO School to Work Transition surveys webpage: http://www.ilo.org/employment/areas/youth-employment/work-for-youth/WCMS_191853/lang-en/index.htm

KEY CHALLENGES

Low achievement in school

Skills development is most feasible for youth who have acquired basic literacy in reading, math, and computers and who have experience meeting the expectations of educational institutions. Roma children face much greater difficulties acquiring these prerequisites. As is well known, the quality of instruction is lower in schools in poor areas, segregated neighbourhoods, and special schools for the disabled, where many Roma are incorrectly placed.

When asked, Roma students and their families often describe the inability of parents to finance school supplies and other necessary equipment and clothing for school as a key reason why youth do not attend or do not continue to attend school.⁴ In addition, school environments are considered unwelcoming, even threatening, to Roma children due to the prejudices of teachers and peers, failure to offer support for learning in Roma languages, and exclusion of Roma cultural topics from school curricula. Children from families who lack registration for citizenship, residence, or birth even face barriers to school entry.

Child labour

A child who is not working has a better chance of acquiring the basic competencies (reading, math, computer skills, socialization to school environments) needed for subsequent development of work skills. Unsurprisingly, youth who engage in child labour tend to have particularly severe deficits in these essential prerequisites. (→ see Box 2) Existing evidence, though spotty, suggests that in CEE countries, child labour is more frequent in Roma families than in non-Roma families, and that the work performed by Roma children and youth tends to be of the more damaging kinds.⁵ Helping Roma youth who have been removed from child labour catch up educationally poses major challenges, since such efforts must take into account the same factors that caused the young person to drop out of school: poverty, poor schools, and unwelcoming school environments.

⁴ Roma Youth Organisation: “Walk with us – Phiren amenca”. Perception and Needs Assessment of Romani Secondary School Students (Podgorica, 2014).

⁵ Albania's *National Study on Children in Street Situation* (2010) found that 74.3 per cent of street children were from Roma and Egyptian communities. The EU FRA survey on *The situation of Roma in 11 EU Member States* (2012) found that more than 10 per cent of Roma children were working in Greece and Romania and about 6 per cent in France, Italy, and Bulgaria. The most frequently reported types of work were begging and collecting objects for resale or recycling.

Box 2: ILO Conventions on Child Labour

ILO Minimum Age Convention, 1972 (No. 138)

Convention 138 set a minimum age for admission to employment at 15 years (13 years for light work). For dangerous work, the Convention sets the bar for admission to employment at 18 years (16 years under certain conditions). The Convention allows developing countries, whose economy and educational facilities are insufficiently developed, to temporarily set the minimum age for admission to employment at 14 years.

ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182)

Convention 182 applies to all girls and boys under the age of 18 and calls for “immediate and effective measures to prohibit and eliminate of the worst forms of child labour as a matter of urgency.” The worst forms comprise:

- (a) slavery and forced labour, including child trafficking and forced recruitment for armed conflict;
- (b) child prostitution and pornography;
- (c) production and trafficking of drugs; and
- (d) work likely to harm the health, safety, or morals of children.

States are required to prioritize the design and implementation of programmes of action to eliminate the worst forms of child labour, and to establish or designate appropriate monitoring mechanisms. Measures should be taken to prevent child labour; provide support for the removal of children from the worst forms of child labour, and for their rehabilitation; ensure access to free basic education or vocational training for all children removed from the worst forms of child labour; identify children at special risk; and take account of the particular vulnerabilities of girls.

■ For details of the Conventions and Recommendations see <http://www.ilo.org/global/standards/introduction-to-international-labour-standards/conventions-and-recommendations/lang--en/index.htm>

Inadequate skills training

Vocational training programmes are often poorly equipped to prepare youth, including Roma youth, adequately for employment. Courses may be limited to narrow specializations, or may be overly theoretical and lengthy. Facilities, equipment, and learning materials may be of poor quality. Active labour market policies (ALMPs) that involve skills training may not reflect employers’ needs. Training programmes in technical and vocational institutions, as well as in schools, rarely incorporate skills that could enhance employability and wages, such as communication and language skills, IT skills, teamwork and problem-solving skills, and openness to learning. The spatial segregation of Roma communities often poses an additional obstacle in the access to skills training.

Technical training can contribute to the labour market integration and empowerment of young Roma women by offering them access to skills that society commonly considers “male”. Yet skills training that is available to women too often conforms to gender stereotypes, focusing on occupations such as cooking and tailoring. Similarly, skills training could facilitate the labour market integration of other groups with special needs, for example young Roma with disabilities, yet such programmes are virtually non-existent.⁶

⁶ M. Szporluk: *Not even in the margins: Where are Roma with disabilities?* ECMI Study No. 8 (European Center for Minority Issues, 2016).



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While the lack of gender-responsive, demand-driven skills training is a challenge for non-Roma as well as for Roma youth, the combination of skill mismatches and discrimination exacerbates the labour market exclusion of Roma youth, often resulting in demotivation and further loss of confidence.

Data deficits

As discussed earlier, the lack of reliable data is a barrier to policy development for Roma youth as their specific disadvantages are not made fully evident. Traditional labour market indicators may be inadequate to identify particular barriers for youth. For example, the traditional indicator on unemployment does not take into account workers who have become discouraged or those seeking work while in school. The SWTS framework provides a new “in transition” indicator which includes these categories. It also accounts for those who are employed but not in work of good quality, and those who are working but wish to change jobs. However, neither traditional indicators nor in-depth indicators of the SWTS are currently available in countries with sizeable young Roma populations, thus making it difficult to assess the specific transition challenges of Roma youth, develop targeted programmes, or assess the impact of policy interventions on Roma youth.

APPROACHES AND GOOD PRACTICES

Initiatives to improve basic and advanced schooling

While not an easy order, improving the quality of schooling for Roma children is a fundamental prerequisite for their success in acquiring work skills and decent employment. In recent years, EU Member States have made more concerted efforts to combat educational discrimination and segregation through their National Roma Integration Strategies, backed by resources from EU Structural and Investment Funds. However, progress to date is limited, and Roma school segregation may have actually increased in some countries.⁷

There are, however, important local initiatives. In Slovakia, a school engaged with the Roma community is developing cultural projects to help reduce tensions and stereotyping. The results included an increased rate of secondary school completion for Roma youth.⁸ The Latvian government has begun to recruit Roma teaching assistants who, along with Roma mediators, are helping to expand the use of Roma languages and to bring Roma cultural topics into school curricula.⁹ In Albania, Save the Children commissioned a day centre to identify vulnerable children and their families and provide services including birth and civil registration, medical care, and school enrolment.¹⁰ The Roma Education Fund's Scholarship Programme, active in 16 countries, awards scholarships to increase Roma school attendance and supports policies and programmes which ensure quality education for Roma, including the desegregation of education systems.¹¹

Second-chance, non-formal and transitional education

While Roma youth's access to and retention in regular schools are essential, there should also be opportunities for those who have left school early to reintegrate. Aside from technical content, remedial education programmes provide important pathways to employability and autonomy by providing core work skills and life skills, and by enabling the participants to make informed decisions regarding education, health, conflict resolution, family formation, and risky behaviours. Non-formal education can be offered outside traditional classroom settings for those reluctant to return to formal education.

In many countries, programmes to reduce child labour like the ILO's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) promote transitional education, including "bridge schools" to help working children catch up on what they have missed; liaison between non-formal education providers and local school systems to help smooth reintegration; special academic support for children

⁷ Decade of Roma Inclusion Secretariat Foundation: *Roma Inclusion index* (Budapest, 2015).

⁸ Council of Europe: *Good practice 24: The primary school in Spišský Hrhov: An example of inclusive education*, Good Practices and Policies, 19 Nov. 2012.

⁹ Council of Europe: *Good practice 15: Latvia – Teaching assistants of Roma origin and other activities facilitating Roma education*, Good Practices and Policies, 21 Nov. 2011.

¹⁰ Council of Europe: *Good Practice 53: Albania – Protection and integration of street children in Tirana*, Good Practices and Policies, Good Practices and Policies, 9 Dec. 2013.

¹¹ E. Friedman et al.: *Assessing conditional cash transfers as a tool for reducing the gap in educational outcomes between Roma and non-Roma*, Roma Education Fund Working Paper (Roma Education Fund, 2011).

making the transition to formal schooling; and establishment of community learning centres that provide non-formal education for high risk groups, including street children and those exploited in prostitution or pornography. (→ see Box 3)

Box 3: Good practices in non-formal, transitional education

In India, the ILO's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) supported the MV Foundation in implementing a model that involves three phases. First, literate youth carry out surveys to identify out-of-school children and encourage parents to enrol them in non-formal education. Second, camps, held in schools, are organized for the children during summer holidays. The final phase involves the transition from the camps to a hostel and full-time formal education.¹²

Save the Children in Iasi County, Romania, targeted street children who did not have access to education. Mobile schools offered them interactive forms of education, including role-play, socialization games, brainstorming, and debates. More traditional lectures were also part of the mobile curriculum. In these ways, children learned reading, writing, and basic numeracy, as well as various skills related to the dangers of living in the streets. They also received information on their legal rights as children.¹³

Apprenticeships, work/training opportunities, and practical skills

Apprenticeships are a valuable way to transmit skills and work experience, thus easing the school to work transition. They provide formal work opportunities, typically with a contract and wages. In some cases, it may be advisable to offer young Roma pre-training support, including in remedial education and core work skills.

Box 4: Preparing disadvantaged youth to enter the labour market in Hungary

The Hungarian Bhim Rao Association works with Roma and non-Roma youth with multiple disadvantages in the Edeleny sub-region of Northern Hungary, one of the most deprived areas of the country. It provides education, skills training, mentoring, and conflict management to prepare youth for entering the labour market. So far, 32 unemployed people received and completed technical training in two specialities, mushroom growing and welding. The training courses, which are 1,000–1,200 hours, are accredited and thus nationally recognized. The recent establishment of a mushroom factory provides additional local employment opportunities.

■ Károly Káló (Bhim Rao Association)

¹² ILO, International Program on the elimination of child labour (IPEC): *Child labour and education – an IPEC perspective* (2013).

¹³ C. Azzini: *Organizatia Salvati Copii – Save the Children Romania* (Children Left Behind, Aug, 2011).

Apprenticeships can open up opportunities for young women to enter non-traditional professions, but such efforts will need to be accompanied by intensive Roma community involvement and buy-in.

The ILO's Training for Rural Economic Empowerment (TREE) package may be relevant for Roma in rural and segregated settings. This package has been used to build the capacity of local governments and NGOs to plan, design, and implement community-based training and support programmes. Training is demand driven, such that it is based on the identification and assessment of community needs and local economic opportunities. Beneficiaries gain skills as well as small-business training and post-training support, including access to credit schemes.¹⁴

Training programmes and apprenticeships can also be designed in ways that recognize and further develop skills that participants have gained informally, but which are not yet certified. (→ see Box 5)

Box 5: Certification of informally gained skills for Roma workers in France

The Certification of Competence project in France facilitated the certification of experience and competencies that adult Roma had gained via experience and family transmission. This project provided training for Roma construction workers, organized to meet their needs and schedules. At the end of the training, graduates received a diploma. It resulted in improved employment, mobility within the construction sector, and access to professional insurance.

■ Source: Council of Europe: Good practice 28: France – Certification of competences from experience, Database of Policies and Good Practices, 19 Sept 2012.

Work-based learning

Many countries have sought to increase the labour market relevance of schooling by blending practical and vocational content. This may be effective in preventing young Roma from dropping out of school when they do not perceive the curriculum as relevant. Work-based learning as part of the school curriculum has expanded in a number of Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries. In Sweden, vocational studies involve unpaid internships in structured work placements, comprising 15 per cent of students' time.¹⁵ In Germany, a dual system has built bridges between school and work, and is developing integration mechanisms for youth with especially vulnerable labour market status. The system has strong links with employers' organizations and combines part-time schooling with work and apprenticeships.

¹⁴ For more details see http://www.ilo.org/skills/projects/WCMS_103528/lang-en/index.htm

¹⁵ A. Adams: *The role of youth skills development in the transition to work: A global review* (Washington DC, World Bank, 2007).



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Improved data collection through school-to-work surveys

Overcoming data gaps is vital for the development of policies responsive to Roma youth. However, thus far labour market data collection on young people provides only limited information about the situation of Roma youth. Many countries have used the ILO's SWTS instrument to shed light on the range of challenges youth face in their labour market journey and to develop effective policy responses.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To support Roma youth in successful transitions from schooling to work, governments should:

- **Improve inputs for policymaking related to skills development** by adapting national labour market surveys to capture the experience of youth and by making use of the ILO School to Work Transition Survey. Where necessary, instruments such as surveys should be adapted to better capture the specific situation of Roma youth and to be gender-responsive.
- **Reshape vocational training to meet the needs of young Roma women and men.**
 - Make acquisition of generic skills needed in learning to learn – communication, teamwork, and problem solving – an integral part of all vocational training and active labour market policies.
 - Enlist worker and employer organizations to develop mentoring, apprenticeships, and workplace coaching geared to giving young Roma experiences that strengthen their prospects for long-term employment.
 - Involve Roma organizations, in particular youth organizations, in the development of outreach and mentoring schemes and support academic advisors for young Roma in secondary school or out of work in their contact with local public employment services.
 - Ensure that vocational training institutions receive regular input from key stakeholders, including employers, worker organizations, and Roma or Pro-Roma organizations by –
 - Establishing governing boards and advisory groups with diverse representation, including Roma women and men; and
 - Periodically surveying employers to determine their needs for technical skills.
 - Document outcomes and identify successful practices.
 - Assess the relevance of interventions, using test scores, questionnaires, focus groups, and end-of-training interviews.
 - Follow up with trainees to determine subsequent employment outcomes.
 - Use these findings to identify practices that are more and less successful with Roma youth.
- **Reorient school programs to:**
 - Test school readiness in a child's mother tongue, including Roma languages.
 - Stress inclusion and diversity, including Roma language and culture, and train school personnel on non-discrimination. Intensify efforts for school-desegregation.
 - Proactively encourage girls to stay in school, including, if relevant, through conditional cash transfers, scholarships, quotas, or in-kind supports such as food support.
 - Proactively address barriers to school attendance caused by lack of registration or personal documents.
 - Include remedial education for youth who left school or were removed from child labour, providing practical curricula, flexible schedules, and more individualized instruction stressing the generic skills involved in learning to learn.
 - Engage employed Roma and Roma organizations in initiatives to provide school-age Roma youth and their parents with information on relevant employment options and to encourage continuing education and skills development.

- **Ensure that programmes to combat child labour include a focus on Roma youth.**
 - Include Roma representatives in social dialogue on child labour.
 - Make child labour a key priority for labour inspectorates and provide inspectors with culturally sensitive training in detection.
 - Establish Child Labour Monitoring Committees that include Roma representatives along with trade unions, employer organizations, and other stakeholders.



TOOLS AND RESOURCES

ILO (2016) Rights@Work 4 Youth: Decent work for young people

The aim of this learning package is to support trade unions, employment services, education and training institutions, as well as youth organizations, in their initiatives aimed at raising young people's awareness of their rights at work. The package consists of a guide for facilitators and toolkit that provide hands-on examples of recruitment practices and workplace situations.

■ http://www.ilo.org/employment/Whatwedo/Instructionmaterials/WCMS_310206/lang--en/index.htm

ILO (2013) Surfing the labour market: Job search skills for young people

This tool has been developed on the basis of the experience gained by the ILO through the implementation of several technical assistance programmes on youth employment in countries of Central and Eastern Europe, North and West Africa, and Asia. Many of these programmes included job-skills training activities as part of comprehensive youth employment programmes.

■ http://www.ilo.org/employment/Whatwedo/Instructionmaterials/WCMS_231722/lang--en/index.htm

ILO (2013) Enhancing Youth Employability: What? Why? and How? Guide to Core Work Skills

This guide illustrates various ways of integrating employability skills into core academic content and vocational training. An ILO review of teaching methodologies and training techniques reveals that acquiring employability skills requires innovative ways of delivering training that combine the acquisition of core and technical skills.

■ http://www.ilo.org/skills/pubs/WCMS_213452/lang--en/index.htm

ILO (2015) Assessing skills in the Informal Economy: A Resource Guide for Small Industry and Community Organizations

Learning and working in the informal economy remain realities for millions of women and men around the world. Safeguarding and improving the quality of training, products, and services can greatly contribute to higher productivity, development of local markets, better working conditions and career prospects, transition to the formal economy, consumer protection, and social cohesion in communities. This resource guide is based on nine case studies from Africa, Asia, and Latin America and demonstrates that bottom-up skills assessments are feasible and yield multiple benefits.

■ http://www.ilo.org/global/docs/WCMS_343183/lang--en/index.htm

ILO (2008) Improving Skills and Productivity of Disadvantaged Youth

This paper focuses on the relation between skills development and early labour market success for young people, as well as on their ability to realize their long-term potential for productive and gainful work. One of its key findings is that effective policies and programmes tend to address specific sources

of disadvantage. In some cases, this requires comprehensive rather than narrowly targeted programmes in order to respond to the multiple and coupled sources of disadvantage.

■ http://www.ilo.org/employment/Whatwedo/Publications/working-papers/WCMS_103982/lang--en/index.htm

ILO (2009) Rural Skills Training - A Generic Manual on Training for Rural Economic Empowerment (TREE)

This Manual is a source of information and a guide to designing, planning and implementing a national programme related to the processes of the TREE methodology. The ILO's TREE Programme assists those working in largely informal economies to build the skills and abilities needed to generate additional income. TREE programmes aim to systematically identify employment and income generating opportunities at the community level; design and deliver appropriate training programmes with local training providers, or through mobile training arrangements; and provide the necessary post-training support, for example, facilitating access to markets and credit. By linking training directly to community-determined economic opportunities, TREE programmes ensure that skills delivered are relevant.

■ http://www.ilo.org/skills/projects/WCMS_469456/lang--en/index.htm

A. Adams (2007) The Role of Youth Skills Development in the Transition to Work: A Global Review

This report examines the role of skills development in schools and workplaces, as well as its impact on youth transition to work in advanced and developing countries. It offers advice to policymakers and development partners on employment and earnings outcomes associated with different pathways to skills. It highlights what many countries are doing to provide effective bridges from schooling to work. New models of technical and vocational education and apprenticeship are reviewed along with programmes providing second chances for youth who lacked adequate opportunities for education and training.

■ <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTCY/Resources/395766-1187899515414/RoleofYouthSkills.pdf>

ILO (2013) Implementing the Roadmap for Achieving the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour by 2016: Training guide for policy makers

ILO developed this training guide for policymakers and facilitators in government, workers' and employers' organizations, and in international and non-governmental organizations. It is aimed at assisting in the development, refinement, and renewal of existing national responses to the worst forms of child labour.

The Training Guide can be used in self-study or in dedicated national level training courses as part of long-term processes to develop coordinated national action against the worst forms of child labour. Various exercises are provided to offer the basic building blocks for a national action plan, or an update thereof.

■ http://www.ilo.org/ipecc/Informationresources/WCMS_202336/lang--en/index.htm

ILO – IOC (2015) Child Labour Guidance Tool for Business

These guidelines aim to improve global supply chain governance, due diligence, and remediation processes in order to advance the progressive elimination of child labour. They draw on ILO's experience in collaborating with employers from a range of sectors and geographies.

■ http://www.ilo.org/ipecc/Informationresources/WCMS_IPEC_PUB_27555/lang--en/index.htm

OECD Skills Outlook 2015: Youth, Skills and Employability (OECD Publishing 2015)

As young people around the world are struggling to enter the labour market, the OECD Skills Outlook 2015 shows how improving the employability of youth requires a comprehensive approach. Fostering young people's skills and employability, smoothing the transition from school to work, and removing barriers to entrepreneurship are among the topics addressed.

■ <http://www.oecd.org/edu/oecd-skills-outlook-2015-9789264234178-en.htm>

Roma Education Fund (2015) Desegregation Toolkit

This toolkit provides an analysis of the causes and consequences of segregated schools for Roma. It includes a series of recommendations to eliminate the problem of segregation. It also provides good practices in inclusive education for Roma.

■ http://www.romaeducationfund.hu/sites/default/files/publications/desegregation_toolkit__2015_web.pdf

Guide for Working with Roma Families towards Achieving the Success of their Children at School: A transnational methodological proposal for professionals

This guide is available in English as well as in Bulgarian, Hungarian, Romanian and Spanish. It aims to provide guidance for professionals working on the ground to involve Roma families in the educational processes of their children. It includes aspects such as the working phases, strategies, key messages, warnings, and examples of good practices and the profile and competences needed for professionals, among others.

■ https://www.gitanos.org/que-hacemos/areas/international/roma_families_get_involved.html



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Promoting Decent Work
Opportunities for Roma Youth
in Central and Eastern Europe
An ILO Resource Guide



International
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5 ACTIVE LABOUR
MARKET POLICIES
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SERVICES



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CHAPTER FIVE

OVERVIEW



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Government labour-market interventions are usually classified into two broad categories: passive and active. The first provides financial support for job seekers (e.g. unemployment compensation) that is not contingent on performing work. The latter – termed Active Labour Market Policies or ALMPs – includes measures such as training, job placement, coaching, apprenticeships, and public works programmes. ALMPs are normally administered by a country’s Public Employment Service (PES), which may deliver services directly or via contracts with private employers or NGOs. This chapter examines ALMPs as a tool for assisting Roma youth in preparing for and securing employment.

In principle, Roma youth may benefit greatly if ALMPs are structured to take into account their particular situations and needs. In practice, the PESs are often constrained by inadequate resources and weak administration, including limited geographical outreach and an absence of current information about labour market demands. In recent years, some promising practices to improve outreach to Roma communities are developing in countries with large Roma populations, particularly with regard to the European Union’s Youth Guarantee program. These include targeting measures, profiling job seekers, relying on Roma mediators and mobile employment services to reach Roma youth, as well as developing integrated support packages that address Roma’s multiple employment disadvantages.

WHAT ARE ACTIVE LABOUR MARKET POLICIES (ALMPs)?

Active Labour Market Policies aim to assist workers and improve labour market performance by:

- matching jobs to job seekers (e.g. through Public Employment Services (PESs) and the provision of labour market information);
- enhancing skills, capacities and employability (e.g. training for a known employer, training for a change in employment, and first-job programmes);
- creating jobs (e.g. public works programmes, entrepreneurship development, and self-employment); and
- promoting the employment of disadvantaged groups (e.g. employment subsidies for target groups).¹

Governments may deliver ALMPs directly or under contract with private or non-profit organizations.

There are several well-known design pitfalls of ALMPs, including deadweight loss (the same result would have been realized without the programme), substitution effects (subsidized participants may take jobs from others), displacements (output of subsidized activities may displace that of non-subsidized outputs), and creaming (targeting only those who are easiest to assist).² The effectiveness of ALMPs also varies considerably depending on national context: ILO simulations show that increasing spending by 0.5 per cent of GDP can be expected to boost employment by between 0.2 to 1.2 per cent, depending on the national context, over the medium term.³

What is the European Youth Guarantee programme?

Recognizing the severity of the crisis facing young people, in April 2013, the European Commission put forward a recommendation for National Youth Guarantee schemes which all Member States endorsed. (→ see Box 1) The European Commission has since assisted Member States in developing and implementing National Implementation Plans. In many cases, funding has been provided by the European Union Youth Employment Initiative (YEI), which directs funds to regions with youth unemployment levels above 25 per cent.

¹ ILO, Committee on Employment and Social Policy (ESP): *Active labour market policies*, Governing Body, 288th Session, Geneva, Nov. 2003, GB.288/ESP/2.

² ILO: *The youth employment crisis: A call for action*, International Labour Conference, 101st Session, Geneva, 2012.

³ ILO and International Institute for Labour Studies (ILLS): *World of work report: Making markets work for jobs* (Geneva, ILLS, 2011).

Box 1: The European Union Youth Guarantee Programme

This programme aims to ensure that all young people under 25 years of age – whether registered with employment services or not – receive a concrete offer of a job of good quality within four months of leaving formal education or becoming unemployed. The offer can also be for an apprenticeship, traineeship, or continued education, and should be adapted to each individual's need and situation.

Funding is provided from national resources as well as by the Youth Employment Initiative and the European Social Fund (ESF). By December 2013, all EU Member States had proposed National Implementation Plans, and a number of good practices had begun to emerge. (→ see *Approaches and Good Practices*)

The programme is intended not only to provide youth with job or training opportunities but also to facilitate structural reforms of systems for training, job search, and education. Public employment services are being strengthened, and training institutions are being adapted to provide relevant skills.

Importantly, for groups like Roma youth who face major labour market barriers, Member States are also required to identify and support young people who have been inactive (NEET category), irrespective of whether or not they are registered as job searchers. This creates a need for new tools and strategies, such as coupling of employment services with social services and basic education, and partnering with Roma associations to reach youth in need of support.

■ Source: European Union Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion: Youth Guarantee webpage, <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1079>

For Roma youth in EU Member States, the National Youth Guarantee programmes represent important opportunities to develop skills and find employment. However, these opportunities may be missed if National Implementation Plans do not include vigorous and committed outreach to Roma communities. (→ see *Key Challenges*)

KEY CHALLENGES

Roma youth face dual disadvantages with respect to ALMPs, including, first, general weaknesses in program administration that impede clients' access and, second, specific omissions and lapses that pose particular disadvantages for Roma youth. In addition, the interaction between service providers and Roma clients may be influenced by prevalent stereotypes and prejudices.

General weaknesses in ALMP administration

Disconnect between ALMPs and current labour market demand

To ensure that young people have access to decent jobs with long-term prospects, the PESs that administer ALMPs must know what technical skills are in demand. Yet, as previously discussed (Chapter 4), many such institutions lack the human and financial resources to keep abreast of the latest market developments, or fail to consult regularly with employers about their current and anticipated needs. As a result, the support does not match the labour markets it is supposed to service.

Gender disparities in ALMPs

To promote the labour market inclusion of young women, ALMPs need to take account of the fact that young women may have limited access to education and may be called on to perform household tasks beginning at an early age, particularly if they are members of disadvantaged groups. ALMPs must be designed to appeal to women's interests or preferences, while avoiding gender stereotypes. In Europe, specific programmes to include young women in the labour market are rare. Furthermore, ALMPs often lack tools such as transport allowances and childcare options that have proven to be effective in facilitating young women's participation in employment programmes.⁴

Weaknesses in ALMP administration with particular application to Roma youth

Lack of data disaggregated by ethnicity

In countries with large Roma populations, programme data are often available by sex and age, but not by ethnicity. The absence of reliable data on ethnicity makes it difficult to monitor and evaluate the policy impacts of ALMPs on Roma. A recent study of ALMPs in five countries (Bulgaria, Hungary, Spain, Slovakia and Romania) was unable to assess the benefit that Roma derive from participation because none of the countries collected information on the ethnic background of the beneficiaries, nor did they invite self-declarations.⁵ Even the few existing Roma-targeted employment programs do not have actual data on the ethnic composition of participants; participants are simply identified as

⁴ S. Ameratunga Kring & M. Kawar. Guidelines on gender in employment policies: Information resource book (Geneva, ILO, 2009): http://www.ilo.org/employment/Whatwedo/Instructionmaterials/WCMS_103611/lang-en/index.htm.

⁵ V. Messing: *Patterns of Roma employment in Europe*, Neujobs Policy Brief No.19.4, Mar. (Budapest, Central European University, 2014).

Roma by virtue of the fact that the priority target group is Roma, or because the implementing agency is an organization that works in Roma communities.⁶ Given the reluctance of many Roma to declare their identities, ethnic data, even if available, would be unlikely to provide an accurate picture of Roma participation.⁷

Lack of outreach to Roma youth

Today few European ALMPs target Roma youth specifically, particularly youth who have been out of work or who lack work experience, or young Roma women. Without implicit or explicit targeting, there is a real risk that Roma youth will fail to benefit from ALMPs, in particular from the National Youth Guarantee that is now operating in all EU Member States. Furthermore, some mainstream ALMPs assume a level of education among beneficiaries that automatically excludes young Roma who have not attended school or have dropped out early. (→ see Box 2)

Box 2: Limited outreach to Roma in National Youth Guarantee schemes

While the National Youth Guarantee schemes are designed to provide youth, including Roma, with job placement or training opportunities, few National Implementation Plans mention Roma youth. Given the multiplicity of problems facing the Roma, an absence of targeting poses the risk that they will be excluded or poorly served. For example, the Croatian Plan suggests an entry point for intervention to support Roma youth, albeit under the section to support disabled students. This is of concern given the segregation of Roma without disabilities into schools for mentally disabled in many countries in the region.⁸ The Greek Plan proposes integrated and specialized actions for Roma youth, though the application process is not spelled out. The Hungarian Plan is more detailed, calling for the inclusion of Roma in steering committees as well as scholarship and mentoring programmes, but the monitoring of such practices is not ensured.

Limited effectiveness of public works programmes for Roma youth

Direct job creation in the form of public works programmes for Roma is common in CEE countries.⁹ However, these programs, while absorbing a significant amount of funds, risk trapping participants in poverty because they fail to provide skills or support needed for entering the open labour market. Research indicates that in most public works schemes there is little or no connection between work in the scheme and regular full-time employment, and no obvious route into the formal labour market

⁶ World Bank: *Being fair, faring better: Promoting equality of opportunity for marginalized Roma* (Washington, DC, 2016), p. 127.

⁷ For example, the 1992 Bulgarian census reported 313,326 Roma, in contrast with the Bulgarian Ministry of Interior's 1989 estimate of 577,000. Similarly the 1991 Slovak Census estimated 80,627 Roma, while the 1989 Slovak Survey of Municipalities reported 254,000 and the 1980 Slovak Census reported 199,853. See D. Ringold: *Roma and the Transition in Central and Eastern Europe: Trends and Challenges* (Washington, D.C., World Bank, 2000).

⁸ Republic of Croatia, Ministry of Labour and Pension System: *Youth guarantee implementation plan*, Apr. (Zagreb, 2014), Area 16.

⁹ V. Messing: *Patterns of Roma employment in Europe*, op. cit.

on completion of the programme.¹⁰ Public works commonly carry a stigma and thus contribute to reinforcing widespread prejudices against Roma. Moreover, heavy reliance on public works is costly for governments and, where a public works programme's scope is large, can distort local labour markets.

¹⁰ European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC): *The glass box: The exclusion of Roma from employment* (Budapest, Westimprim bt., 2007).

APPROACHES AND GOOD PRACTICES

Reaching out to Roma

Some CEE governments target Roma communities in ALMPs. In Croatia, unemployed Roma are entitled to subsidized employment or training upon registration with an employment service. During 2014-2016, the Croatian government is testing strategies for mentoring young Roma and placing them with employers – yet the mentoring measures are considered under assistance for students with disabilities.¹¹ In Hungary, the PES operates one mobile employment office with regular hours in Roma settlements.¹² In addition, different ALMPs funded by EU sources have specifically targeted groups at the margins of the labour market. An evaluation showed that such programmes are able to support Roma employment if strictly targeted at persons with at most elementary education.¹³ However, the overwhelming majority of Roma participants in ALMPs in Hungary (84 per cent) were in public works programmes rather than in training or wage subsidy programmes.¹⁴

A number of European countries use Roma mediators to facilitate access to ALMPs. As already discussed (Chapter 3), mediators help with communication and share knowledge and information, thus engendering trust. They can enhance access where young Roma have experienced discrimination and disrespectful treatment by the PES, or where its administrative procedures create barriers. In Slovakia, Roma mediators have provided personalized counselling to Roma job seekers, resulting in increased numbers of Roma using employment services. In Hungary, Bulgaria, and Spain, PES initiatives to reach out to Roma through mediators have worked well in cases where mediators belong to the local community and have appropriate professional backgrounds.¹⁵

The latter finding is significant. Effective mediators must not only be of Roma background, but competent and committed individuals.¹⁶ Moreover, they should not be seen as exclusively responsible for serving Roma clients, as that could “ghettoise” their role and clients.¹⁷ While reliance on mediators is a helpful tool for engaging Roma, it is not a long-term solution. The quality of PES services remains of critical importance, and mediators must be able to connect with other PES workers in forming a unified team.

¹¹ Republic of Croatia, Ministry of Labour and Pension System: *Youth guarantee implementation plan*, op. cit.

¹² V. Messing: *Active labour market policies with an impact potential on Roma employment in five countries of the EU*, Neujobs Working Paper No. 19.2 (Central European University, 2013).

¹³ Adamecz, A., B. Czafit, K. Bördös, E. Nagy, P. Lévy, Á. Scharle: *Roma inclusion and impact evaluation of two mainstream EU-funded active labour market programmes* (Budapest, Budapest Institute, 2013).

¹⁴ J. Csoba and Z. Nagy: “The evaluation of training, wage subsidy and public work programs in Hungary”, in K. Fazekas and G. Kézdi (eds) *The Hungarian Labour Market 2011* (Budapest, MTA KTK, OFA, 2012).

¹⁵ V. Messing: *Patterns of Roma employment in Europe*, op. cit.

¹⁶ Experiences were mixed. In Hungary, the mediator worked well and built trust. In Bulgaria, the mediator, a political appointee without skills or motivation, had no effect whatsoever. In Spain, the mediator succeeded in building community trust but also inappropriately selected candidates who had a greater chance of remaining in the program. V. Messing: *From benefits to brooms: Case studies of the implementation of active labour market policies at the local level*, Neujobs Policy Brief No.19.3, December (Budapest, Central European University, 2013), p. 7.

¹⁷ V. Messing: *Patterns of Roma employment in Europe*, op. cit.



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Non-governmental training and employment programmes that specifically target Roma youth can test innovative approaches, thus providing models for government action. Hungary's Integrom project is an innovative example of a three-way, non-governmental partnership that could become such a model. (→ see Box 3)

Box 3: Hungary's Integrom programme: Supporting employment access for educated Roma

Hungary's Integrom programme targets young Roma with at least secondary school education to facilitate their access to quality employment and long-term career options.

The pilot programme was initiated in 2013 through a cooperative effort of the Budapest office of the Boston Consulting Group and the Autonomia Foundation. It facilitates the access of young Roma with secondary or post-secondary education to quality, white-collar jobs at leading companies typically not accessible to Roma. While other Roma employment programmes target the less educated, long-term unemployed, Integrom contributes to the strengthening of a Roma middle-class, to a more inclusive society with decreasing prejudices and anti-Roma attitudes, and to responsive employment practices. It also raises awareness of the added value of education in Roma communities by providing examples of young Roma who attain successful careers through higher education.

The programme has several innovative elements:

- It targets a relatively small but important sub-group of the Roma community – those with at least secondary education – a group largely neglected previously by mainstream

employment policy. It responds to the increase in numbers of young Roma who, despite the generally low level of education of Roma in Hungary, are enrolled in secondary or post-secondary educational programmes. Considered relatively successful and less disadvantaged, this group falls outside the focus of the major state employment initiatives, even though in reality they face serious problems when entering the labour-market.

- It targets existing, quality employment opportunities in the primary labour market. In contrast, other programmes create new job opportunities that are rarely sustainable and often not integrated into the mainstream economy.
- It uses complex tools to address a complex problem. The programme treats integration as a process with two interfacing agents: Roma seeking employment and companies aiming to diversify their workforce. It takes aim at both young Roma as well as at prospective employers. It also treats weak Roma access to jobs as a problem of weak networks and limited social capital, as well as one of prejudice or discrimination in the labour market.
- The programme supports young Roma by providing information about job opportunities, helping with the application process, offering career guidance, and connecting young Roma directly with employers with relevant openings. Participants have access to a range of training options, including communication and information technology (IT) skills, as well as mentoring support during employment.
- As for the corporate partners, Integrom helps them implement their diversity policies. Most of these partners already have established diversity practices, typically much more advanced in relation to other vulnerable groups – e.g., people living with a disability or women with young children – than to Roma youth. The cooperating firms chose Integrom because they want to expand further the diversity of their workforce, but need guidance and support in reaching out to Roma communities to learn their needs, develop relevant affirmative action, and create an inclusive working environment.

Integrom thus brings together a diverse set of stakeholders – Roma and pro-Roma civil organizations, large multinational companies, and training and consultancy firms – in a broad collaboration.

■ Ágnes Kelemen (Autonomia Foundation)

■ <http://autonomia.hu/en/programs/integrom-program>

Profiling

Profiling is a tool for differentiating among jobseekers those who need intensive support, those who need only modest help, and those who could obtain assistance via Internet-based or self-service systems. The profiling of jobseekers is typically done with checklists, which take into account factors such as age, length of unemployment, education, language skills, ethnicity, disability, literacy and numeracy, and family status. From jobseekers' first interview, different support services are targeted to different groups with the goal of improved matches with employment opportunities. Thus, profiling increases efficiency in the use of scarce resources, allowing hard-to-place groups, such as young Roma, to benefit from greater staff time and attention.

Profiling facilitates the development of individualized activation plans aimed toward employment — plans that involve training, core skills, confidence building, and work experience. The plans should be adapted to individual needs and priorities and regularly reviewed in a partnership between

the participant and the PES officer. Such individual activation plans have the potential to address the specific challenges to labour market inclusion of young Roma, provided that both the PES and the job seekers are committed to their implementation and the plans are not used or perceived as instruments of control.

Adapting good practices to Roma youth

In EU Member States, national Youth Guarantee programmes have developed a number of good practices that are, in principle, applicable to Roma youth. However, relatively little has been done so far to ensure that Roma youth benefit. These positive practices can be replicated to target Roma youth, possibly with more intensive supports to address the depth of Roma marginalization in the labour market. (→ see Box 4)

Box 4: Successful examples of youth guarantees in Europe

Personalized plans

One of the precursors to the National Youth Guarantee programme is a comprehensive programme developed in Finland that relies heavily on personalized plans for young people. This programme resulted in 83.5 per cent of jobseekers receiving an offer within three months of registering as unemployed. It is credited with a reduction in the national rate of youth unemployment in Finland.

Youth centres targeting NEET

The government of Romania has set up over 25 Youth Centres to identify young persons who are not in employment, education, or training (NEET) and offer them integrated packages of services.

The government of Belgium has also set up a dedicated service (ACTIRIS) to provide young people with help in finding internships and jobs.

Targeted hiring and employer incentives

The government of Poland introduced exemptions from social insurance contributions for workers under the age of 30.

The Netherlands government adopted a tax rebate for employers hiring young people who were receiving unemployment benefits or social assistance.

The Spanish government is putting in place non-wage recruitment subsidies and training contracts specifically addressed to those registered in the Youth Guarantee.

Reforming vocational education and training to make it more demand driven

The Romanian government has introduced a subsidy for the early months of work for higher education graduates. The government of Sweden is expanding its apprenticeship programme, and Portugal has created a vocational centres network and developed new vocational courses in basic and secondary education. France is increasing support for apprenticeships for those with few qualifications.

■ Source: Youth Guarantee website, European Union Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1079>

Increasing the gender responsiveness of ALMPs

International experience shows that, even in countries where gender norms are restrictive, it is possible to engage young women in employment-intensive infrastructure development, public works, training, and private employment. Measures to address young women's more disadvantaged position and their specific constraints can significantly alter the gender equality outcomes of ALMPs. In India's National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA), for example, one third of places have been allocated for women. When transportation and on-site childcare are provided, the numbers of women participating increases substantially.¹⁸

An ILO evaluation of Employment Intensive Investment Programmes (EIIP) in 30 countries identified measures with positive impacts on women's participation.¹⁹ These included setting quotas for women's participation; providing transport allowances and childcare; and developing gender sensitive community assets which alleviate women's household burdens (for example sanitation and roads). Involving women in discussions on what community assets are developed is critical, as is engaging with communities with restrictive gender relations to build awareness and support for women's participation prior to programme implementation. Such dialogue can help transform gender relations in the community, as well as facilitate the movement of women into non-traditional activities. Providing equal pay for work of equal value and developing gender sensitive indicators of achievement should be obvious components.²⁰

Transforming Public Works Programmes into activation measures

To enhance the employability of young Roma, public works programmes need to be re-designed to facilitate participants' job search on the primary labour market by including tailored training, personalized mentoring, and job search support. PES administrators should also structure projects to generate community assets and services that are in demand.²¹

Addressing multiple disadvantages

As has been discussed, there is a need for comprehensive packages to address young Roma's multiple disadvantages when seeking employment. The needed elements include vocational and technical training, entrepreneurship development, opportunities to put basic skills to work, apprenticeships, job placement, mentoring, and counselling. Private sector engagement is essential for enhancing dialogue and opportunities. Ideally Roma organizations as well as youth organizations, for example National Youth Councils where they exist, should be involved and should have a role in monitoring programme implementation. During the design stage, it is important to choose measurable indicators that can quantify Roma participation, including involvement of young Roma women. Given the absence of disaggregated data, this will require innovation on the part of PES staff. The ACCEDER in Spain, one of the most successful examples of support for Roma jobseekers, showcases how an integrated approach works in practice.

¹⁸ The NREGA law requires rudimentary childcare at worksites but not transportation. If the women employed at the site together bring five or more children below the age of six, one woman must be assigned to care for them and paid the going wage. In practice, this requirement is rarely met. E. Fultz and J. Francis: *Cash transfer programmes, poverty reduction, and empowerment of women: A comparative analysis, Experiences from Brazil, Chile, India, Mexico, and South Africa*, Gender Equality and Diversity Branch Working Paper 4 (Geneva, ILO, 2013), p. 11.

¹⁹ N. Tanzarn and M.T. Gutierrez: *Public works programmes: A strategy for poverty alleviation*, ILO Employment Policy Working Paper No.194 (Geneva, ILO, 2015).

²⁰ N. Otope. Resource guide on gender issues in employment and labour market policies (Geneva, ILO, 2014): http://www.ilo.org/employment/Whatwedo/Instructionmaterials/WCMS_243015/lang-en/index.htm.

²¹ V. Messing: *Patterns of Roma employment in Europe*, op. cit.

Box 5: Promoting the labour inclusion of Roma in Spain: the Acceder Programme

The Acceder programme is a national programme aimed at elevating the labour inclusion of Roma in Spain to the level of the rest of the Spanish population. It is managed by the Fundación Secretariado Gitano (FSG) and has been funded by the European Social Fund since 2000. It has served as a model across Europe.

The FSG decided to promote salaried employment as a gateway for social inclusion of the Roma community. This approach represented a shift from the conventional employment measures for Roma, which focused on traditional occupations, to an integrated approach which opens up new alternatives, mainly for young Roma. In addition to developing employment measures, the programme is active in combating discrimination; promoting social inclusion; awareness-raising; and promoting more effective policies in different sectors including education, health and housing. The use of European Structural Funds allows for large-scale (national) implementation with a long-term perspective.

The programme has several key characteristics.

- Individual pathways: The programme offers individualized and tailored support, training, counselling and guidance adapted to the needs of participants to improve their competences and overall employability. It provides intensive accompaniment throughout the whole process, including on-the-job follow-up.
- The wide range of training initiatives is fully oriented towards real job opportunities and always adapted and developed in close cooperation with companies.
- While the individual component is methodologically essential, a community based approach (family involvement) is also a key element to assure successful employment processes.
- Intercultural and multidimensional approach: Although the programme focuses primarily on Roma, it also works with non-Roma to foster mutual knowledge and a cohesive society. Teams are made of Roma and non-Roma workers and include both professionals working directly with Roma participants (mediators, counsellors) as well as professionals working directly with companies (enterprise intermediators). The combination of different professional profiles enables the full alignment of individual employability processes with the requirements of the labour market.
- The programme has created a close public-private partnership: a strategic alliance between the bodies of public administration at all levels (which co-finance and are closely involved in the programme); the business and the non-profit sector.
- The programme's one-to-one relationship with companies and the established relationships of trust are essential to overcoming discriminatory attitudes.
- Combination of targeted actions and mainstreaming: Although the development of targeted measures was considered necessary to ensure Roma access, the programme has a clear mandate towards non-segregation. It promotes the participation of Roma in existing training and employment resources and services open to all citizens.

The Acceder programme has demonstrated that it is both profitable and socially beneficial to invest in the inclusion of the Roma community. Thus far, nearly 90,000 participants have taken part in the programme; nearly 24,000 have accessed a job (24 per cent being first work experiences); over 62,000 employment contracts were facilitated; and



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more than 27,000 people trained in 3,340 courses. All this has been achieved through the collaboration with 20,924 companies. Out of the total number of participants since 2000, 25 per cent have been non-Roma and nearly 40 per cent were young people under 30 years of age, 52 per cent were women. The programme has, therefore, a clear focus on Roma youth, and considers the investment in them key for social change and for breaking down the intergenerational poverty and exclusion cycle.

Overall, the programme has had a direct impact on the living conditions of the whole Roma community and has seen a change in mentality regarding employment, especially among women and young people. Perceptions and expectations of companies and public administrative bodies towards programmes directed at the Roma have also been changed.

- Belén Sánchez-Rubio (Fundación Secretariado Gitano)
- <https://www.gitanos.org>

RECOMMENDATIONS

To make Active Labour Market Policies relevant and accessible to Roma and other vulnerable youth, governments should:

- Review the full range of ALMPs, including, if applicable, the National Youth Guarantee, to identify gaps in information and indicators of achievement for Roma and other vulnerable youth.
- In dialogue with Roma civil society, youth and women's groups, develop measures within ALMPs to ensure young Roma women's participation.
- Pilot and monitor programmes, scaling up successful ones. Facilitate Roma access to ALMPs, and include roles for Roma mediators chosen for their qualifications and community links. Ensure the sustainability of effective mediator programs.
- Develop and strengthen a culture of equal treatment and non-discrimination within the PES through devising, as appropriate, staff training, mission statements, codes of conduct, and staff evaluations that signal the commitment of top management to equal treatment and make it costly to discriminate.
- Establish paths to long-term employment for participants in public works projects by making training an integral project component; certifying the skills and achievements of successful participants; and calling on employers to commit to hire Roma, provide internships, and offer technical training.
- Put in place a system for profiling PES clients according to the barriers that they face (age, social, geographic, educational, skills) to formal employment.
- To tackle multiple, inter-related labour market barriers to the employment of young Roma, devise linkages between the PES and providers of other services (income support, child care, rehabilitation), through referrals, one-stop shops, and systems of individual case management.
- Strengthen linkages between the PES and private sector employers so as to ensure that ALMPs are relevant to employer needs.

TOOLS AND RESOURCES

ILO (2012) Guide to the Formulation of National Employment Policies

This guide has been prepared as a capacity building tool for ILO's tripartite constituents, ILO technical staff, and a variety of national stakeholders engaged in the development and implementation of national employment policies (NEP). It provides practical guidance and a clear, value-based framework in which to develop NEPs adapted to local contexts and conditions. It draws on practical experience gained through the ILO's policy advisory work in some 60 countries from 2006 to 2011, as well as on the most recent policy research and analysis regarding employment and labour markets. This guide also provides a roadmap and framework for developing a coherent and integrated NEP through policy dialogue.

■ http://www.ilo.org/emppolicy/pubs/WCMS_188048/lang--en/index.htm

ILO (2015) Decent Work for Youth: A Training Package

This Training Guide is a tool for capacity building and policy advice to constituents. It was developed with the objective of supporting the design of a framework for the development of a youth employment policy and its implementation. The Guide covers a number of policy areas related to the youth employment policy development process (including economic policies; education, training and skills; labour market policies and institutions; entrepreneurship and self-employment; and rights at work for young people), as well as the generation of policy options, implementation mechanisms, and monitoring and evaluation of youth employment programmes including the mainstreaming of gender issues.

European Commission, Employment and Social Affairs and Inclusion (2015) Electronic Toolkit to Reach Non-Registered Young Unemployed

This electronic toolkit offers concepts, products, and visuals covering pilot outreach and awareness raising activities on the Youth Guarantee that were developed in Finland, Latvia, Portugal and Romania with the goal of encouraging young people to register with their local Youth Guarantee providers. The tools and resources from the toolkit can be used by national, regional, and local public authorities in EU Member States to support the implementation of the Youth Guarantee.

■ <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=89&langId=en&newsId=2247&furtherNews=yes>

ILO (2006) Career Guidance: A resource Handbook for Low- and Middle-Income Countries

This is an essential guide for developing effective career guidance systems and career information, organizing service delivery and staff development, and improving governance and coordination. In addition, it provides a detailed users' guide to career guidance sites on the Internet, which will be invaluable to policy-makers and professionals looking for interviewing guides, vocational assessment tools, competency standards for counsellors, and much more.

ILO (2007) Minute Guide for Young Jobseekers

This is a self-help resource written specifically for young jobseekers. It is intended to support youth in making informed decisions about their career prospects and job options by providing user-friendly access to information about the job search process.

■ http://www.ilo.org/skills/pubs/WCMS_154446/lang-en/index.htm

EU and ILO (2015) The Role of Employment Service Providers: A guide to anticipating and matching skills and jobs

This is part of a compendium of guides on anticipating and matching skills supply and demand. This guide examines the challenges facing employment service providers and includes a range of policy innovations and case studies from around the world that detail effective uses of employment services resources to align demand and supply.

■ http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---emp_policy/---cepol/documents/webpage/wcms_445932.pdf

European Commission Toolkit for PES: PES Approaches to Low-Skilled Adults and Young People: Work-first or train-first? (2013)

The paper summarizes discussions about the two different activation strategies applied by Public Employment Services to reach the target groups of adults and young people in light of the differences in their levels of skills, work experience, motivation and family circumstances as well as the core PES service concepts which are required to achieve sustainable integration.

■ <http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=10931&langId=en>



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Promoting Decent Work
Opportunities for Roma Youth
in Central and Eastern Europe
An ILO Resource Guide



International
Labour
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6 ENTREPRENEURSHIP
PROMOTION AND THE
GREEN ECONOMY



Decent Work Technical Support Team
and Country Office for Central and Eastern Europe

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CHAPTER SIX OVERVIEW

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The development of entrepreneurial skills and attitudes is an increasingly appealing strategy for promoting labour force participation among the young and breaking down the segmentation that disadvantages Roma youth. This interest has been reinforced by the steady decline in new job creation in the formal economy. As a consequence, much new employment has been in small enterprises and self-employment. Under globalization, and with continued slow growth on the horizon, this trend will likely continue.

An important starting point for development of entrepreneurial skills and attitudes is early exposure to entrepreneurial culture and concepts. In addition, introducing entrepreneurial education in schools, including those in predominantly Roma neighbourhoods, has the potential to promote traits such as resourcefulness, confidence, and resilience that will be of value whether or not a young person ultimately starts a business.

The green economy offers important potential for job growth, improved job quality, and the social inclusion of vulnerable communities such as Roma because of its combined focus on advancing economic, environmental and social well-being. Targeting young Roma through training in green skills and preferential access to productive resources, while engaging them through Active Labour Market Policies (ALMPs) that emphasize green industries, will give them a stake in the global green transformation. It may help them overcome marginalization, or at least reduce its bite.

WHAT IS ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION?



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Entrepreneurial education provides practical information about the skills and characteristics needed to recognize entrepreneurial opportunities, respond to challenges, and launch a business. Young women and men also gain an understanding of the roles that they can play as socially and environmentally responsible actors in the green economy.

Entrepreneurship education has high potential for Roma youth. It develops skills and confidence by drawing and building on individual talents and creativity. It contributes to developing resilience in the face of labour market discrimination and enables Roma youth to help their families and communities overcome their marginalized positions. As it offers practical guidance directed at successful income generation, entrepreneurial education, if introduced early enough, may also help Roma continue their schooling.

KEY CHALLENGES

Weak entrepreneurial culture

In countries that have shifted from a planned to a market economy, entrepreneurship is still relatively new and an entrepreneurial culture not yet fully developed. Thus, many young people remain wary of starting an enterprise. Entrepreneurship is rarely embedded in the school curriculum or, if so, only at higher education levels where their higher rate of attrition means that the Roma are less likely to still be in school.

Restricted access to finance

Young entrepreneurs and women entrepreneurs typically lack collateral, a major barrier to accessing credit. In CEE countries, micro-finance suppliers, where they exist, often decline to serve Roma communities.¹ The average amounts borrowed by Roma households fall far below the threshold commonly used to define micro-finance (25,000 Euros).² According to a recent World Bank study, many Roma are interested in becoming entrepreneurs but face major financial barriers.³ Typically the only sources of credit within their reach are small-scale, often pilot, programmes.⁴

Limited understanding of business administration

The legal and administrative processes for registering and starting a business are often complex, which makes them particularly challenging for early school leavers. A Needs Assessment conducted by the UNDP in selected regions of Albania found that most working-age Roma, while interested in starting a business, were unaware of the administrative and financial complications that they would have to confront.⁵

Forming a cooperative would be an alternative to individually owned enterprises. In CEE countries, cooperatives are often wrongly assumed to be dated vestiges of state socialism. There is little awareness of their principles of operation or their strong track record in overcoming social exclusion and economic marginalization. (→ See Box 1) Thus, young Roma living in CEE countries may be ill-prepared to consider this form of business organization or to take on the required managerial and leadership roles.

¹ Microfinance sectors are unevenly developed across countries with large Roma populations. In Bulgaria, Hungary, and Romania, microcredit developed relatively fast, but it lagged behind in the Slovak Republic and Czech Republic. World Bank: *Reducing vulnerability and promoting the self-employment of Roma in Eastern Europe through financial inclusion* (Washington, D.C., 2012), p. 40.

² Roma households on average borrowed between 1,672 Euros in Romania and 7,500 Euros in Hungary. World Bank: *Reducing vulnerability*, op. cit., p. 41.

³ World Bank: *Being fair, faring better: Promoting equality of opportunity for marginalized Roma* (Washington D.C., 2016.).

⁴ World Bank: *Reducing vulnerability*, op. cit., p. 56.

⁵ K. Hakaj: *Needs assessment of Roma and Egyptian individuals on employment and entrepreneurship in the regions of Korca, Berat, and Vlora* (UNDP, No Year).

Box 1: Seven principles of cooperative identity

- Voluntary and open membership
- Democratic member control
- Member economic participation
- Autonomy and independence
- Education, training, and information sharing
- Cooperation among cooperatives
- Concern for community

■ Source: International Cooperative Alliance website www.ica.coop

The predominance of the informal economy

Young Roma entrepreneurs typically operate in the informal economy with poor working conditions, low productivity, poor remuneration, and little prospect of improvement and growth. They also have limited access to training, market information, technology, or social networks. As a result of the spatial segregation of their communities, infrastructure is often weak and service delivery poor or non-existent, creating high barriers to entrepreneurial activity.

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APPROACHES AND GOOD PRACTICES

Increasing entrepreneurship support

Entrepreneurship is gaining policy attention as a potential source of employment growth for disadvantaged groups, particularly in the countries of South East Europe. The National Action Plans developed during the Decade of Roma Inclusion call for support services for Roma entrepreneurs and participants in income generation programmes, such as training on business management, business plan development, accounting, legal procedures, and marketing. For example, the Serbian government's Strategy for Improvement of the Status of Roma and the Bulgarian government's National Roma Strategy both call for development of small and medium-sized enterprises, as well as entrepreneurship training, access to microcredit, support for family-owned businesses, and support for the transition to formal employment. The Serbian plan also sets goals regarding Roma's exercise of labour rights and access to health care, particularly for those involved in waste recycling.⁶

Yet while these are important developments, actual progress is slow. In its 2014 progress report on Member States' implementation of National Roma Integration Strategies, the European Commission concluded: "the potential for job creation for Roma through self-employment, social entrepreneurship, and innovative financial instruments has hardly been exploited."⁷

Adapting entrepreneurship education to Roma youth

Governments that are seeking to introduce entrepreneurship education for Roma communities will need to review existing materials and tools to identify those that can be adapted to specific needs and circumstances of marginalized communities. Especially relevant in the CEE context are materials on cooperatives – their structure, operating principles, and suitability for social enterprises. The ILO's Know About Business (KAB) programme is a useful resource. (→ See Box 2) To deliver training in Roma communities, governments will need to identify potential partners in the private sector and amongst civil society organizations.

⁶ Government of Serbia: *Strategy for the improvement of the status of Roma in the Republic of Serbia* (Belgrade, 2010). Government of Bulgaria: *National Roma integration strategy of the Republic of Bulgaria (2010-2020)* (Draft).

⁷ European Commission: *Report on the implementation of the EU framework for national Roma integration strategies* (Brussels, 2014), p. 5.

Box 2: ILO entrepreneurship education and business development training packages

Know About Business (KAB)

This ILO programme is designed to help create an enterprising culture among young women and men by encouraging qualities such as initiative, creativity, and risk taking. It recognizes that the development of entrepreneurial skills in schools can contribute to the ability of youth to compete successfully for employment opportunities when jobs are scarce. By receiving early initiation into entrepreneurship, young people are more likely to become entrepreneurs out of interest rather than necessity. The KAB programme aims to raise young people's awareness of the opportunities and challenges of entrepreneurship and self-employment, and gives them an understanding of the role entrepreneurship can play in shaping their futures.

The KAB package is for teachers and students in public and private secondary schools, vocational and technical training institutions, and universities. Typical students are 15 to 18 years old. The package, which provides materials for a 120-hour, nine-module course, consists of a Facilitator's Guide and a Learner's Workbook. Participatory teaching methods include role-play in risk taking, teamwork, and business games. There is also an option for students to gain experience running a business within the framework of a school or social enterprise.

■ Source: http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_emp/@emp_ent/@ifp_seed/documents/publication/wcms_175469.pdf

Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB)

The ILO's SIYB programme is the largest global management training system for support to micro and small enterprises. It has an estimated outreach of six million trainees and a continuously growing network of more than 17,000 trainers and 200 master trainers in 2,500 partner institutions. It has been introduced in more than 100 countries. It goes beyond entrepreneurship education to provide a step-by-step approach to actually starting a business. Its aims are to:

- Enable local Business Development Service (BDS) providers to effectively and independently implement business start-up and improvement training.
- Enable potential and existing small entrepreneurs, through training in BDS organizations, to start a viable business, increase the viability of existing enterprises, and create quality employment for others in the process.

■ Source: <http://www.ilo.org/empent/areas/start-and-improve-your-business/lang--en/index.htm>

Making credit available

Today across Central Europe important small-scale initiatives are providing Roma with financial literacy training, helping them open bank accounts, and providing them with credit. One example is the Kiút Programme in Hungary, which combines microcredit with counselling and training. (→ See Box 3) While such programmes have accumulated deep knowledge and expertise, they still have very limited reach and resources. By scaling them up, governments can make credit available more widely among Roma and other vulnerable communities. One promising option is to promote cooperation between NGOs and financial institutions. While the latter have limited motivation to develop

programmes in Roma communities, NGOs with deep connections can bridge this gap, acting as intermediaries between banks and communities and assisting Roma in opening bank accounts and applying for credit. Banks and NGOs are, however, unlikely to join forces without encouragement. Governments can provide such encouragement by creating platforms for their engagement. A good example of such collaboration is the “Bank on San Francisco” initiative. (→ See Box 4)

Box 3: Making credit available to Roma and other disadvantaged groups

In Hungary, the Polgár Foundation, in collaboration with the Raiffeisen Bank, implemented the Kiút Programme, a two-year microcredit pilot project (2010–2012). Its purpose was to enable poor households, mainly Roma, to become self-employed through microcredit, with the goal of providing 300 loans by 2012. When the project was launched in mid-2010, its field offices reached out to potential entrepreneurs in poor communities, offering small, unsecured loans of up to EUR 3,500 for periods of six to 18 months. The loans were provided to groups of three to six members. The pilot also assisted entrepreneurs in registering their businesses. Midway through the project, many businesses experienced difficulties, resulting in an increase in late payments or non-payments of loan installments. The project managers then decided to become more selective in choosing candidates, even if it meant fewer project participants. They also decided to provide counselling and training to accompany the loan in a more formal manner. As a result of these changes, Kiút reached more than 100 borrowers while achieving high repayment rates.

■ Source: R. Petra and V. Balázs: *Evaluation of Hungarian microfinance program: Kiút program executive summary*, Dec. (Budapest, Budapest Institute for Policy Analysis, 2011).

Box 4: Scaling up financial inclusion: “Bank on San Francisco”

The project “Bank on San Francisco” aimed to bring 10,000 of the city’s estimated 50,000 residents without a bank account into the financial mainstream. It involved collaboration between several government agencies – the Mayor’s office, the Treasurer’s office of the city and county of San Francisco, and the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco – with a local NGO known as EARN (Earned Assets Resource Network). They worked together to:

- develop a basic starter bank account that all participating financial institutions were required to offer;
- raise awareness among the target population of the benefits of having a bank account and encourage them to open one; and
- make financial literacy education more available to low-income city residents.

■ Source: Open Society Foundations: *Financial Inclusion for the Roma: Banking as a Key to Social Progress*, Open Society Roma Initiatives Policy Brief (2012).

Creating integrated support packages

The depth of exclusion of Roma communities creates a need for a comprehensive and integrated approach to employment promotion, one targeting not only access to credit but also entrepreneurship training, mentoring, assistance with market assessment, and even second-chance education for those who left school early. Recognition of the need for such integrated support is growing in CEE countries, such as in a network of cooperatives and craftspeople in Romania. (→ See Box 5)

Box 5: Integrated entrepreneurial support through a network of cooperatives and craftspeople: Meștешukar ButiQ (MBQ), in Romania

Meștешukar ButiQ (MBQ) in Romania is an initiative to support Roma traditional crafts by reviving traditional products and objects through contemporary design. The initiative started as part of the Romano Cher project which created a series of cooperatives with Roma craftspeople to revalorize Roma traditional crafts. MBQ built upon this first step by creating a brand and new product development processes and by ensuring sales, promotion and distribution.

The initiative brings together Roma craftsmen, designers, activists and business experts in order to promote Roma cultural heritage, create new jobs in Roma communities, and market new handcrafted quality products. Currently, over 20 craftsmen and women are engaged in a network of over 10 cooperatives/workshops. In addition, MBQ is operating four stores (one online, one fixed in Bucharest, and two mobile stores), a design workshop, two sewing and tailoring workshops, and one Romani restaurant.

The sharing of production expertise, and the collaboration with national and international designers in the development of new products, ensures that MBQ's products are high-value-added, premium-quality, desirable and competitive, thus bringing higher returns to the producers. The craftspeople use traditional manufacturing techniques and a variety of Roma cultural influences, making each product authentic and unique. All the products are united under a limited portfolio entitled MBQ100 which receives periodical updates based on sales results and customer feedback.

Job security and fair compensation are a priority and the revenue-generating capabilities of MBQ are being continuously developed. Funding opportunities are actively sought in order to develop the network through innovative promotion, capacity-building, professional help, and investments in tools, equipment and necessary resources.

By encouraging direct communication and cooperation between underprivileged groups and society through collaborators, customers, or the media showcasing the traditions of Roma identity, MBQ contributes to increasing cultural diversity and promoting a society free of prejudice and discrimination. The project has been initiated by Roma and it targets both Roma women and men of diverse age groups. Young Roma are either being encouraged to carry on traditional crafts or they are being involving in other business areas, for example as store assistants or production coordinators.

■ Alexandra Dinu (Romano ButiQ), mbq.ro

Mentoring

Mentors provide young entrepreneurs with business advice as well as personal support and encouragement. They can help motivate young people, assist them in addressing challenges as they emerge, and strengthen their community connections. Mentoring schemes are proliferating around the world to support young entrepreneurs. Futurpreneur in Canada, for example, matches volunteer mentors with young business people.⁸ Another example is MicroMentor, a free social network that allows entrepreneurs and volunteer business mentors to connect.⁹ Such practices and networks can be an invaluable support to young Roma women and men.

Supporting women's entrepreneurship

As a group, women from disadvantaged communities have a great need for training in vocational and technical areas. They may also benefit from support in developing business ideas other than in traditional “female” occupations such as cooking, tailoring, and hairdressing, where there is often market saturation and little opportunity for viable incomes.¹⁰

Interventions for Roma women's entrepreneurship exist in a number of European countries. For example, a recent initiative, “Romona”, is developing a business incubator for women in Kuršanec, Croatia to support local women engaging with cooperatives or starting a business.¹¹

Through its Women's Entrepreneurship Development (WED) programme, the ILO has been working to support women entrepreneurs and to develop disadvantaged women's capacities for growing and sustaining enterprises. Such experience lends itself to adaptation in the context of Roma women.

Creating an enabling environment for entrepreneurship

Governments seeking to encourage entrepreneurship among Roma and other disadvantaged groups need to initiate action at the macro level to create more enabling environments. Action is needed on three fronts: to support formalization of informal enterprises; to initiate local economic development (LED) projects in disadvantaged communities; and to encourage the development of innovative, environmentally sound (green) products and services.

Supporting formalization

The majority of Roma enterprises operate in the informal economy. This restricts their potential to grow and increase income, upgrade working conditions, and mitigate risks. It also deprives local and national economies of tax revenue, which could be redistributed through social protection and public goods. In Latin America, some governments have achieved significant reductions in informality through measures such as progressive taxation for enterprises, reduced social security contributions, adequate minimum wages, regulatory reform to close gaps in labour law coverage of certain groups, and extension of social protection to the poorest families. In South Eastern Europe, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia recently acknowledged the importance of supporting formalization in its Strategy for Roma 2014–2020. This strategy document highlights a range of incentives to encourage transition out of informality, including minimal and progressive taxation for enterprises,

⁸ Futurpreneur Canada: <http://www.futurpreneur.ca/en/>

⁹ MicroMentor: <https://www.micromentor.org/>

¹⁰ ILO, Women's Entrepreneurship Development (WED): *The effectiveness of entrepreneurship development interventions for women entrepreneurs* (Geneva, 2014).

¹¹ UNDP: “Roma communities find employment through cooperatives” 14 Feb. 2014.

incentive grants, phased payments for obligations, and a gradual approach towards registration. Reflecting the large body of experience accumulated in recent years, the ILO, in 2015, adopted a new international instrument on transitioning out of informality. (→ See Box 6)

Box 6: ILO Transition from Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation, 2015 (No. 204)

Currently the informal economy absorbs more than half the global workforce and includes more than 90 per cent of small and medium-sized enterprises – a number that does not take into account the myriad micro-enterprises. Millions of people lack rights at work, have inadequate social protection, suffer from poor working conditions, earn meagre incomes, and are engaged in poor quality work characterized by low productivity.

As a response, ILO constituents at the 2015 International Labour Conference negotiated and adopted a new instrument to provide guidance in transitioning towards decent work. The Recommendation highlights the need to create paths from the informal to the formal economy; to promote enterprises and decent jobs in the formal economy; and to prevent the informalization of formal jobs.

A comprehensive approach across multiple policy areas is needed. These areas include:

- legal and policy frameworks;
- employment policies;
- rights and social protection;
- incentives, compliance and enforcement;
- freedom of association, social dialogue and the role of workers' and employers' organizations; and
- data collection and monitoring.

■ For details of the Recommendation see: http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:R204

Promoting local economic development (LED) in marginal communities

Governments can make starting businesses in marginalized communities more feasible through local economic development (LED) projects. By producing new infrastructure and services, LED helps link marginal communities to the regional and national economy and fosters partnerships between private and public stakeholders of a defined territory, enabling the joint design and implementation of development strategies. When implemented within an inclusive growth framework, LED makes marginalized communities active agents in the development process. Ensuring the participation of youth organizations can be an instrument for the social inclusion and democratic development of young people.

However, LED processes are not without challenges. Local authorities do not always have a clear vision about how to engage with Roma communities, and they may confuse assimilation with integration. Both Roma and non-Roma leaders may have limited capacities to develop and implement a coherent strategy. In communities where prejudice and segregation are entrenched, facilitating cooperation and productivity poses major challenges. Civil society organizations can assist in overcoming these obstacles. (→ See Box 7)

Box 7: LED through organic agriculture in Hungary: The Pro Ratatouille programme

The Pro Ratatouille programme is a community-based organic agriculture programme for Roma and non-Roma in disadvantaged rural neighbourhoods. It was initiated and designed by Butterfly Development and has been implemented since 2012 by the same NGO. The grassroots initiative responds to rural poverty in disadvantaged regions in Hungary, which are characterized by low levels of education, high unemployment rates, a lack of infrastructure and development capacities, and frequent segregation of the Roma population. It uses a problem solving approach and crosscutting methodology that addresses different development needs, including poverty reduction, economic activity, sustainable rural development, human capacity building, and the integration of Roma and non-Roma people.

The programme facilitates the establishment of community and individual gardens, which are not only a place of production, but also of learning and local empowerment. Participants and communities are provided with a livelihood within a few weeks after the start of the project, which enhances motivation and learning capacity of the participants. Strong emphasis is placed on investing in relational aspects of the communities, empowerment, experience-based learning and peer education.

The first years of implementation have already proven that the concept is working and the programme has gained a good reputation among the different stakeholders in the region. The participatory development approach has proven to work not only with the general population of the villages, but also with local decision makers (e.g. mayors), and has enabled the creation of partnerships and fostered cooperation within the Pro Ratatouille village network. Currently (in 2016), the programme is operating in eight villages in north-eastern Hungary.

In the mid- and long term, Butterfly Development is aiming to scale up the programme's activities by introducing a Pro Ratatouille label, obtaining organic certification of Pro Ratatouille vegetables, and setting up small-scale social business-like projects. Knowledge increase at stakeholder and policy level about the links between sustainable development, poverty reduction, and Roma integration is also among the targets of the programme.

■ Melinda Kassai, Butterfly Development (Pro-Cserehát Association)

■ <http://www.bffd.hu/pro-rataouille-program/about-pro-ratatouille>

Promoting green enterprises

In CEE countries, investments in green technology are still too low to exert a substantial impact on unemployment and underemployment. Moreover, where there are initiatives to increase green jobs, these tend not to target Roma, youth, or women. Thus, there is a need for well-planned interventions that enable Roma, in particular young labour market entrants, to benefit from training and skills development for new “green collar” jobs. Low-skilled workers, and those who already experience labour market discrimination, cannot easily compete for new jobs. Targeting young Roma through green skills training and preferential access to productive resources, and engaging them with active labour market policies and opportunities for green entrepreneurship, can give them a greater stake in the green transformation.

**Box 8: Initiatives to develop green enterprises in Brazil:
Waste management cooperatives**

Brazil has the world's largest national waste pickers' movement. A mix of policies has been put in place by the Brazilian government over the past decade, including legal recognition, entrepreneurial development, municipal government contracts and facilities (sorting stations), modern recycling methods, skills development, and occupational health and safety measures, as well as strategies to prevent child labour. With the self-organization of the waste workers, these measures have triggered large-scale improvements in recycling efficiency, working conditions, and incomes. The income of its approximately 60,000 members is three to five times higher than that of unorganized waste pickers.

■ Sources: S.M. Dias: *Overview of the legal framework for inclusion of informal recyclers in solid waste management in Brazil*, WIEGO Urban Policies Briefing Note No. 8 (Cambridge, MA, WIEGO, 2011); S.M. Dias and F.C.G. Alves: *Integration of the informal recycling sector in solid waste management in Brazil*, GTZ (2008).

In CEE, sectors that are particularly important for investment in green growth include agriculture, construction, energy, and waste management. Agriculture, the world's largest employer, is also one of the worst polluters and contributors of greenhouse gases. Given current levels of socioeconomic marginalization, to support entrepreneurship in the Roma community in these sectors, young Roma may need preferential access to productive assets such as credit, technology, market access support, as well as training opportunities in specific technical green skills and business skills. An enabling environment for cooperatives, as discussed, is also important, since the social economy can play a major role in ensuring social inclusion and a just, green transition to formal employment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Given the multiple barriers to entrepreneurship that confront young Roma women and men, governments should create integrated support packages that combine:

→ **Entrepreneurship promotion, training, and support**

- Identify partners in the private sector and among civil society organizations that are well positioned to reach out to Roma communities and partner with them to promote entrepreneurship by disseminating information, providing training, and matching young Roma with mentors.
- Establish slots for Roma, or a Roma sub-component, within existing entrepreneurship programmes, including slots for young women. At the same time, make entrepreneurship a key component of Roma-specific initiatives.
- Design, or adapt, training materials on entrepreneurship, using ILO materials such as Start and Improve Your Business as a reference point. In doing so, seek inputs from Roma entrepreneurs and pre-test with Roma participants.
- Highlight new developments in green technology, including upgrading of waste management.
- Promote cooperatives by raising awareness of their objectives, structure, and operations; developing examples of success and good practice; and enlisting members of successful cooperatives in mentoring interested Roma individuals and groups.

→ **Access to credit**

- Make financial literacy a key component of training on entrepreneurship, highlighting the distinction between financial support that must be repaid and grants.
- Make credit available to Roma and other financially excluded groups by scaling up successful microcredit and pilot projects. Strategies include:
 - Facilitating partnerships among financial institutions to reach Roma communities;
 - Incentives (subsidies, tax credits, positive public recognition) and regulatory requirements to ensure the availability of credit and to encourage providers to market financial products in Roma communities.
- For the most marginalized, consider an incremental approach that focuses initially on training in financial literacy and savings, then facilitates access to credit.

TOOLS AND RESOURCES

Resources on Entrepreneurship Training and Development, including Cooperatives

ILO (2014) Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) Implementation Guide

This is a practical tool to support the implementation of SIYB activities at the country level. It provides step-by-step guidance in areas such as assessing the market for SIYB, selecting partner organizations, developing Trainers and Master Trainers, accessing and adapting materials, monitoring evaluation, and sustainability.

■ <http://www.ilo.org/empent/areas/start-and-improve-your-business/lang--en/index.htm>

ILO (2007) Biz-up: Self-employment skills for young people - User's guide

This promotional tool is geared to assisting employment counsellors and facilitators in the design and delivery of workshops that aim at developing a better understanding in young people of the basic concepts related to setting up an enterprise. It is a short induction training module that helps young people make informed decisions about their future employment, consider self-employment as a possible career option and, eventually, follow a fully-fledged entrepreneurship training programme.

■ http://www.ilo.org/employment/Whatwedo/Instructionmaterials/WCMS_119346/lang--en/index.htm

ILO Know About Business

This is a training package on entrepreneurship education that has been rolled out in 56 countries. It covers 10 modules, including skills training, entrepreneurship, gender, environmental responsibility, cooperatives, disability, and social entrepreneurship. The package is targeted towards teachers in secondary education, trainers in vocational and technical institutions, and higher education professors.

■ www.knowaboutbusiness.org; www.ilo.org/seed

ILO GET Ahead: Gender and entrepreneurship together

This training tool supports entrepreneurship for low-income women. It provides practical information on income generation activities and is designed to build women's capacity in business and management skills.

■ http://www.ilo.org/global/docs/WCMS_248085/lang--en/index.htm

ILO (2012) My.Coop

My.Coop is a training programme and package on the management of agricultural cooperatives. The training package consists of four modules, a trainer's manual, and a mobile learning toolkit. There is an additional online learning environment and platform (www.agriculture-my.coop) through which users, trainers, and My.COOP partners can network and share resources.

■ http://moodle.itcilo.org/mycoop/pluginfile.php/2/course/section/2/MyCOOP_flyer.pdf

Resources on the Green Economy

ILO (2011) Skills for Green Jobs: A global view

This volume showcases the experiences of 21 industrialized, transition, and developing countries in adjusting their training provision to meet the new demands of a greener economy. The report recommends that countries devise strategies based on social dialogue and coordination among ministries, and between employers and training providers.

■ http://www.ilo.org/global/publications/ilo-bookstore/order-online/books/WCMS_159585/lang--en/index.htm

ILO (2012) BEL (Built Environment and Labour): Formulating projects and studies concerning labour issues in greening the sectors of the built environment

This manual provides guidelines for labour in green construction and the built environment, with a focus on working conditions, occupational health and safety, and skills. It provides relevant background data to inform the preparation of studies and projects and also provides a step-by-step guide to the development of such initiatives.

■ http://www.ilo.org/sector/Resources/training-materials/WCMS_190918/lang--en/index.htm

ILO (2015) Decent Work, Climate Change and the Sustainable Economy

This report discusses the challenges and opportunities of building a sustainable and low-carbon economy. It argues that green jobs can be a key economic driver and highlights the roles of governments, workers, and employers as agents of change. The book highlights solutions that the world of work offers for policy and practice to tackle climate change and achieve environmental sustainability.

■ http://www.ilo.org/global/publications/books/WCMS_373209/lang--en/index.htm

ILO (2015) Gender Equality and Green Jobs

This policy brief discusses how gender equality can become an integral part of green economy strategies and how equal access for women and men to green, decent jobs can be enhanced. The brief is targeted towards policy-makers, social partners, and practitioners working on green jobs.

■ http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/green-jobs/publications/WCMS_360572/lang--en/index.htm

ILO (2015) Outcome of the Tripartite Meeting of Experts on Sustainable Development, Decent Work and Green Jobs

This document contains the adopted guidelines for a just transition toward environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all and the recommendations by the experts for follow-up.

■ http://www.ilo.org/gb/GBSessions/GB325/pol/WCMS_420286/lang--en/index.htm

ILO and UNEP (2012) Working towards Sustainable Development: Opportunities for decent work and social inclusion in a green economy

This joint ILO/UNEP study shows that, if accompanied by the right policy mix, a green economy can create more and better jobs, lift people out of poverty, and promote social inclusion. It also demonstrates that employment and social inclusion must be an integral part of any sustainable development strategy.

■ http://www.ilo.org/global/publications/ilo-bookstore/order-online/books/WCMS_181836/lang--en/index.htm

OECD (2013), A Toolkit of Policy Options to Support Inclusive Green Growth

This resource provides an overview of some of the key tools (such as policy instruments, methodologies, and approaches) that specifically address the challenges raised in making growth green and inclusive. Quick technical descriptions of these tools are offered along with suggested sources for further details.

■ <http://www.oecd.org/greengrowth/toolkit.pdf>

Resources on Social Finance and Local Economic Development**Making Microfinance Work (MMW)**

This flagship training programme, developed jointly by the ILO's Social Finance Programme and the International Training Centre, targets middle and senior managers in banks, microfinance institutions, and credit unions. It is designed to strengthen their ability to provide financial, and perhaps non-financial, services to more small businesses. Since its introduction in 2005, MMW has reached over 2,000 participants from more than 500 FSPs and has received very positive feedback about the appropriateness of the content and the effectiveness of its learning methodologies. More than 100 trainers are certified to offer this programme, which is available in eight languages.

■ <http://mmw.itcilo.org/en/home/what-is-mmw>

ILO (2015), Training manuals on financial education

This series of manuals covers financial education for workers, families, youth, and vulnerable households, as well as trade unions. The manuals can be used in capacity development on managing money, loans and household and enterprise finance, all of which are prerequisites for access to financial services.

■ http://www.ilo.org/empent/areas/social-finance/WCMS_396578/lang--en/index.htm

ILO Training Programme: Inclusive Finance for Workers

This training toolkit has been developed for workers organizations interested in improving financial inclusion to their members. It aims to ensure financial service institutions observe and promote decent work. The long-term objective of this resource toolkit is to enhance the financial inclusion of workers, which it is expected will lead to increased income, better risk management, and potentially the formalization of informal workers. The toolkit also aims to empower trade unions to provide additional services to members and potential members, thus increasing their constituency's benefits. Access to finance can be facilitated either directly by the trade union or in cooperation with financial institutions.

■ http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/employment-promotion/social-finance/WCMS_206150/lang--en/index.htm

ILO (2006) Local Development and Decent Work Resource Kit

This resource kit for local development planners and practitioners aims to provide tools on how to promote LED through an integrated decent work approach. It is a collection of practical and easy-to-use tools that are designed to enable local planners, decision-makers, and development practitioners to implement LED related actions. Resources are based on local development knowledge and practices in the Philippines and other countries. The purpose of the kit is to add value to current planning frameworks, particularly at local levels, by addressing key challenges that confront local decision-makers, local governments, communities, and their organizations.

■ http://www.ilo.org/empent/Publications/WCMS_112255/lang--en/index.htm



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European Dialogue in association with the East Anglian Gypsy Council (2005) Promoting Roma Integration at the Local Level: Practical guidance for NGOs and public authorities.

This manual provides practical guidance for public authorities and NGOs on methods for promoting integration of Roma at the local level in Europe, especially in countries in Central and Eastern Europe. The guidance is based on the experience of the Roma Rights and Access to Justice in Europe Programme and relates to four key areas: minority empowerment, partnership building, the development and implementation of integrated local strategies, and mainstreaming institutional change.

■ <http://www.coe.int/t/congress/Sessions/Alliance/RrAJE-Manual.pdf>

World Bank (2014) Handbook for improving the living conditions of Roma

This handbook was developed to help prepare and implement effective interventions for improving the living conditions of disadvantaged Roma at the local level, using European, national, or local funds.

■ <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/426791468030548664/Handbook-for-improving-the-living-conditions-of-Roma>

Promoting Decent Work
Opportunities for Roma Youth
in Central and Eastern Europe
An ILO Resource Guide



International
Labour
Organization

7 SOCIAL PARTNERS AND SOCIAL DIALOGUE ON ROMA YOUTH EMPLOYMENT



Decent Work Technical Support Team
and Country Office for Central and Eastern Europe

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CHAPTER SEVEN OVERVIEW

Trade unions and employers' associations are well positioned to seek greater social justice for Roma populations, through engagement with their own members, with each other, with governments, with civil society organizations, and with the public generally. International experience provides examples of employers' organizations that have affirmatively hired Roma and provided training, apprenticeships, and mentoring. Trade unions have also audited workplaces to detect hidden discrimination and carried out public campaigns against pejorative Roma stereotypes. With political will, trade unions and employers' organizations can use their influence to lobby for enforcement of equal opportunity statutes and affirmative action. As prejudice against Roma is endemic in Europe, assuming such leadership roles will require promoting attitudinal change from within. An important starting point is the initiation of social dialogue on labour and social issues with Roma representatives.

WHAT IS SOCIAL DIALOGUE?

Social dialogue, as defined by the ILO, includes all types of negotiation, consultation, or exchange of information between or among representatives of governments, employers, and workers on issues of common interest relating to economic and social policy. The main goal of social dialogue is to promote consensus and democratic engagement of the main stakeholders in the world of work. Social dialogue processes can be informal or institutionalized, and often are a combination of the two. They can take place at the national, regional, or enterprise level, and they can be inter-professional, sectoral, or a combination of these. Social dialogue can help resolve important economic and social issues, encourage good governance, advance social and industrial peace and stability, and boost economic growth. International instruments provide guidance for the proper functioning of social dialogue among social partners.

Box 1: Essential instruments for social dialogue

Although ILO Conventions and Recommendations in general provide a strong role for social partners, two Conventions are particularly pertinent.

ILO Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize Convention, 1948 (No. 87) stipulates that workers and employers have the right to create organizations and to join them freely. Similarly, workers' and employers' organizations have the right to organize without interference. Both types of organizations have the right to constitute federations and confederations and to affiliate with them. In turn, these can affiliate with international workers' and employers' organizations.

ILO Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98) stipulates that workers must enjoy protection against anti-union discrimination, such as demands not to affiliate with a union or dismissal because of trade union membership. Workers' and employers' organizations must enjoy protection from each other against any act of interference, for example, the constitution of a workers' organization controlled by an employer or employers' organization, or the control by employers or employers' organizations through financial or other means. The Convention also calls for measures to foster the development of negotiation procedures between workers' and employers' organizations and to regulate employment conditions by means of collective bargaining.

■ For further details see <http://www.ilo.org/global/standards/introduction-to-international-labour-standards/conventions-and-recommendations/lang--en/index.htm>

Social partners are well positioned to work for equity in labour markets. With effort and political will, they can become powerful allies in the struggle to overcome discrimination and achieve labour market integration for Roma and other vulnerable youth.

KEY CHALLENGES



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Low membership of Roma in labour market organizations

Data on Roma membership is hard to come by, as European trade unions and employers' organizations do not generally record or keep information on the ethnicity of members. Nonetheless, the dire employment situation of Roma is prima facie evidence that their involvement in these organizations is modest. The main reasons include:

- Prejudice and disadvantage; few Roma are employed in the formal economy where these organizations figure most prominently.
- Roma enterprises are often too small and survivalist to be taken in as members by employers' organizations.
- As prejudice against Roma is pervasive in European societies, workers' and employers' organizations are affected by it.
- Roma, possibly mistrustful or lacking a sense of possible benefits, may not be interested in joining workers' and employers' organizations.

Barriers for women and youth

Young Roma, like young people everywhere, are less likely than their adult counterparts to be members of social partners' organizations. The reasons include high mobility; high rates of informal work, inactivity, and unemployment; and young people's own perceptions that these organizations lack relevance to their needs.

As a result of their lower rate of employment, itself the result of discrimination, and gender norms in their communities which constrain them at an early age with household responsibilities, young Roma women are even less likely to be found among the ranks of trade unionists, or among members of employers' organizations.

APPROACHES AND GOOD PRACTICES

Social dialogue and collective bargaining

In some European countries, social partners have used their influence to have diversity and equality provisions included in labour market regulatory frameworks. Trade unions have been actively engaged in building their own capacity to support equality and non-discrimination. For example, in 2001 the UK Trade Union Congress (TUC) introduced a rule change committing the TUC and its affiliated trade unions to regular equality audits. External evaluation of the first TUC Equality Audit concluded that “overall, the process of auditing union structures and equality work had been a valuable one for most unions. Many said that it had helped to unify the union’s equality and negotiating agendas and a majority felt it had brought to light gaps in union policy and action on equality which they planned to rectify.”¹

Codes of practice and corporate social responsibility

Codes of conduct and corporate social responsibility initiatives have proved to be a useful means for employers’ organizations to promote Roma recruitment and raise awareness on discrimination among their members. For example, Hungary’s Integrom project relied heavily on active engagement with the corporate sector. (→ see Chapter 5, Box 3) Employers’ organizations have also engaged in mentoring young entrepreneurs by providing business advice, market support, and guidance to start-up entrepreneurs. Some associations have established mentorship programmes, which bring together experienced business people to guide and support young entrepreneurs.

Campaigns, awareness raising, and education

Across Europe, prejudice against Roma runs deep. There is a widespread misconception that Roma take advantage of the social security system at the expense of the majority, or that Roma do not want to work.² Readily available statistics refute these perceptions. In Bulgaria, for instance, in 2011, only 16 per cent of Roma received social welfare benefits, and data from the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights’ survey showed that 74 per cent of the self-reported unemployed Roma were actively looking for work.³ Trade unions and employers’ organizations have an important role to play in making their members and the general public aware of the realities of Roma life and the importance of equal opportunities and treatment in employment.

¹ European Commission, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities Unit G.4: *Trade union practices on anti-discrimination and diversity: European trade union anti-discrimination and diversity study: innovative and significant practices in fighting discrimination and promoting diversity* (Luxembourg, 2010).

² A. Ivanov and J. Kagin: *Roma poverty from a human development perspective*, Roma Inclusion Working Papers (Istanbul, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 2014).

³ UNDP, World Bank, European Commission: *Roma Regional Household Survey* (2011).

Box 2: Workers' organizations' campaigns against discrimination

The International Trade Union Confederation launched a global campaign against racism and xenophobia, targeting trade union membership, the labour market, and the general public. The Confederation targeted training, awareness raising, information, and communication on diversity and equality in the workplace at the global trade union level, national affiliate level, and local trade union level.

The European Trade Union Confederation has actively countered discrimination against Roma in the workplace, defending the fundamental social and employment rights of Roma at a Summit in 2008.

The Confederation of Independent Trade Unions of Bulgaria carried out a national campaign for the protection of fundamental human rights in the workplace, which included the elimination of both direct and indirect discrimination in enterprises. During the last five years of the campaign, a large number of companies were visited and inspected following reports of violations and discriminatory actions. Meetings with employees, employers, and trade union members were organized as well. The campaign revealed that discrimination and the violation of fundamental rights at the workplace were widespread.⁴

In Italy, the Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro (Italian General Confederation of Labour) developed a number of campaigns such as 'Same blood, same rights', based on the principle that all are equal, regardless of ethnic origin. It also organized a large number of events with NGOs and developed networks to organize resistance to attacks on ethnic minority workers. The union subsequently reported an increasing number of migrants and young workers among its members.⁵

In France, civil society organizations and trade unions, particularly the Confédération Générale du Travail, the country's second largest trade union confederation, jointly organized demonstrations in 2010 against expulsions of thousands of Roma to Romania and Bulgaria.⁶

Some trade unions provide adult education for those who would otherwise not have the opportunity for further learning and skills development. In the UK, the Trade Union Congress established Unionlearn as a network to support workplace learning and skills development.⁷ It has been especially successful in engaging learners from groups traditionally under-represented in adult learning. Unionlearn opens nearly 90 per cent of its courses to working people who are not union members, and more than two in five projects target a specific ethnic minority or migrant worker group.⁸ Its representatives provide information and advice and encourage employers to sign up to a "skills pledge" that commits them to train their staff to a specific level of qualification.

⁴ N. Daskalova, A. Zhelyazkova, and V. Angelova: *Challenging Racism at Work (CRAW): Bulgarian national situation report* (European Commission and International Center for Minority Studies and Intercultural Relations (IMIR), 2013).

⁵ European Commission, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities Unit G.4: Trade union practices on anti-discrimination and diversity, op. cit.

⁶ BBC News: "Protests held in France against Roma Expulsions", 4 Sept. 2010.

⁷ Unionlearn: <https://www.unionlearn.org.uk/>

⁸ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and Local Economic and Employment Development (LEED): *Tackling long term unemployment amongst vulnerable groups*, June (OECD, 2013).

In some cases trade unions have worked directly with marginalized communities to support adult education, employability, and skills development. A case in point is the UK Communication Workers Union, which has been working for several years with a local Sikh temple in Wolverhampton to provide adult learning options to workers, their families, and the broader community. A learning centre was established within the temple that offers instruction in such areas as English, mathematics, information technology, health, and safety.⁹

Employers' organizations provide work experience opportunities such as internships for young Roma, as well as vocational education and training opportunities, and are in a position to ensure that skills development is demand-led and relevant to Roma communities. They can build the capacity of their members to provide equal opportunities and treatment and stress the importance of defining corporate social responsibility to reflect these commitments. Importantly, employers' organizations can strive to ensure the representation of Roma in their institutional structures.

Box 2: Employers' organizations support demand-led training of vulnerable groups

The Bridge with Business Programme in Bulgaria illustrates the importance of employers partnering to support placement of Roma youth. With support from the Open Society Foundation Sofia, young Roma were placed as interns with companies after a period of intensive individual training, mediation with businesses, business counselling, and mentoring. Training encouraged the development of self-esteem and promoted soft skills in communication, time and project management, and interview presentation.

Employers played a similarly important role in Gloucester Works in the UK, a programme that targeted long-term unemployed and those with low skills from disadvantaged communities. Gloucester Works worked with employers and provided a range of intensive pre-recruitment support, from basic literacy and numeracy to leadership and management training. Following recruitment, workers continued to receive on-going support and mentoring. Participants who were not initially hired received guidance on finding a new job and support for further skills development. An engagement team linked employers to the scheme, examined their needs, and trained potential employees.

■ Source: OECD: Tackling long term unemployment amongst vulnerable groups, LEED programme, 2013. http://www.oecd.org/cfe/leed/Tackling%20Long_Term%20unemployment_%20WP_covers.pdf

⁹ OECD and LEED: *Tackling long term unemployment*, *ibid.*

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Lead by example.** Through their internal human resource policies, trade unions and employers' organizations should:
 - Make a formal declaration of non-discrimination in hiring, training, and promotions; advertise the policy, monitor it regularly, and enforce its provisions; and make equal treatment part of staff training and performance evaluations.
 - Through outreach to Roma organizations and communities, identify and recruit qualified Roma.
 - Provide training for young Roma youth through mentoring, internships, and apprenticeships, ensuring gender balance in selection and participation.
- **Call on members to practice non-discrimination and equal treatment.**
 - Employers' organizations should:
 - Define non-discrimination and equal treatment as key elements of corporate social responsibility and include training on these topics in services offered to members.
 - Encourage member enterprises to hire Roma youth and publicly recognize members who do so as good employers.
 - Call on member financial institutions to engage in outreach to Roma and other excluded minorities in extending credit.
 - Trade unions should:
 - Raise awareness of discrimination and the need for remedial action among members, with training that includes examples of good practice by other trade unions within and beyond Central Europe.
 - Encourage members to speak out against discrimination.
 - Monitor workplaces for hidden ethnic and gender discrimination, conduct audits, publicize results, and formulate recommendations.
 - Carry out public campaigns to encourage informal businesses to register their operations, emphasizing the enhanced economic security that comes from participation in social insurance.
- **Call on governments to provide greater social justice for Roma.**
 - Engage Roma representatives in social dialogue with governments on employment issues (job creation, training, entrepreneurship, and public employment).
 - As members of governing boards of labour market institutions (PES, social insurance schemes), press for non-discrimination and affirmative action for Roma and other vulnerable groups.
- **Use leadership positions to speak out publicly against discrimination.**
 - Formulate simple messages for dissemination through TV, print, and the Internet.
 - Call attention to the social value of work performed by Roma and their potential to make greater contributions under more equitable social conditions.
 - Highlight the potential of, and need for, young Roma women and men to fill current and projected labour shortages associated with national aging.

TOOLS AND RESOURCES

ILO (2008) Reaching Out to Small and Medium Sized Enterprises: An electronic toolkit for employers' organizations

Small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) make up more than 90 per cent of enterprises in most countries around the world, yet often employers' organizations do not fully represent them. This toolkit offers an array of materials highlighting the particular concerns and interests of SMEs and explains how employers' organizations can better assist them. It includes case studies demonstrating ways employers' organizations can reach out to SMEs, as well as detailed guidance on providing services, seeking board approval, and strengthening representation and advocacy.

■ <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/dialogue/actemp/whatwedo/projects/reachingout.htm>

ILO (2011) Making it Happen: An electronic toolkit for employers' organizations

This electronic resource tool, in use since 2008, is designed to strengthen the capacity of employers' organizations to engage in youth employment, especially in developing and transition countries. Sections cover youth employment and the ILO, practices on policy-making and advocacy, skills development and training, and self-employment and entrepreneurship

■ <http://www.ilo.org/youthmakingithappen/>

ILO (2011) The Effective Employers' Organization

This is a series of practical modules on building and managing employers' organizations strategically and effectively. Modules include governance, management, communications, strategy, revenue building, and advocacy.

■ http://www.ilo.org/public/english/dialogue/actemp/downloads/publications/services_guide57_en.pdf

ILO (2013) Meeting the Challenge of Precarious Work: A workers agenda

This volume provides a review of the growth of precarious work and trade union responses from around the world. It provides guidance to trade unions on how to address the phenomenon.

■ http://www.ilo.org/actrav/info/international-journal-labour-research/WCMS_216282/lang--en/index.htm

ILO (2014) An Enabling Environment for Sustainable Enterprises

This is a toolkit resource for employers' organizations and other business membership organizations to assess the environment in which businesses start up and grow. It has been designed to guide and support organizations in their efforts to better understand the environment and to enhance their contribution to government reform efforts through advocacy and dialogue. It is built around the 17 pillars of sustainable enterprise environment: peace and political stability, good governance, social dialogue, respect for human rights and labour standards, entrepreneurial culture, macroeconomic policy, trade, legal environment, rule of law and property rights, fair competition, access to financial

services, physical infrastructure, information and communication technology, education and training, social justice and social inclusion, social protection, and responsible stewardship of the environment.

■ <http://eese-toolkit.itcilo.org/>

ILO (2015) Educating for Union Strength

This handbook emphasizes the importance of training educators, and focuses on educating the union educator, to implement activities that are learner focused and based on the principles of solidarity and collectivism. It recognizes that education is a vital part of union strategy and action plans because it encourages the involvement and boosts the confidence of workers to play a role in the union, strengthening negotiations, representation, and campaigns.

■ http://www.ilo.org/actrav/info/pubs/WCMS_382787/lang--en/index.htm

ILO (2015) National Employment Policies: A guide for workers' organizations

This resource guides workers through the process of developing national employment policies, including the dialogue mechanisms, the policy cycle, analysis of labour market data, macroeconomic policies, informal economy, labour market institutions, and social protection. It is essential reading to enable trade unions to engage effectively in the development of national employment policies.

■ http://www.ilo.org/employment/Whatwedo/Publications/WCMS_334890/lang--en/index.htm

ITC-ACTRAV Training Programmes for Workers' Organizations

This is the largest international labour education programme in the world and offers training opportunities to leaders, senior activists, and technical staff of workers' organizations. A variety of courses is available, including international labour standards, development and poverty alleviation, gender, collective bargaining, occupational health and safety, and social dialogue. Some scholarships to attend these courses are available.

■ <http://www.itcilo.org/en/the-centre/programmes/workers-activities>

About the photographers

Roland Bangó

I am a Roma photographer and video maker. I studied Communications and Media Studies at Peter Pázmány Catholic University. For the past three and a half years, I have been working for the Chance for Children Foundation as a video maker and fieldworker. I am the first in my family to complete higher education. My father has been doing hard physical work for 40 years, my mother is a housewife.

Csaba Csóka

I grew up in a small village called Szomolya. Born in a cave house, I spent my childhood without access to electricity, running water or other modern conveniences. My father died a long time ago, my mother had to bring me and my three brothers alone. As a child I wanted to become a football player, but because of a knee injury I had to give up this dream and become a mason in order to support my family. Later I completed a 4 year long high school program in only 3 years and continued my education at Eger College to become a movie maker and director. I am the first – and up to now the only – degree holder in the history of my village.

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Promoting Decent Work Opportunities for Roma Youth in Central and Eastern Europe. An ILO Resource Guide



International
Labour
Organization

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Decent Work Technical Support Team
and Country Office for Central and Eastern Europe