In the Official Gazette, part 1, no. 6 bis, dated January 4th, 2012 was published the document regarding the approval of Romanian Government’s Strategy of Inclusion of the Romanian Citizens belonging to Romani Minority for 2012-2020.

A multidisciplinary team of the Agency of Community Development Împreună has elaborated an analysis of this document of public policies intended for the social inclusion of Romani population.

1. General Analysis of the Strategy

The analysis in this section shows our perspective regarding the strong and weak points of the Romanian Government’s Strategy of Inclusion of the Romanian Citizens Belonging to Romani Minority.

I. Strong Points

• The process of elaboration of the Strategy had a nucleus of consultation with the civil society, which mobilised establishing the Coalition for the National Strategy of Inclusion of Romani Population and organising a series of work meetings in order to analyse the documents proposed initially and to elaborate a set of recommendations for their improvement. Despite this, we mention in section II of the document a few shortcomings concerning the results of the consultation process which Romani civil society attended.

• It is the first strategy of the government regarding the social inclusion of Romani population based on certain statistic data. We mention that the Strategy for 2001-2010 did not contain references to statistic data regarding the situation of Romani population at that moment. Therefore, the effort of the present strategy’s initiators to base it on an analysis of the situation regarding the social inclusion of Romani population is to be appreciated, even though many of the data used are before 2009. We will return to this aspect in detail in part II of the general analysis.

• The process of Strategy Elaboration was coordinated by the vice-prime minister, which denotes an additional political will compared with the process of elaboration of the former strategy, which was coordinated by a state secretary.

• The effort of establishing a major intervention domain specifically dedicated to Romani population and their social inclusion within the next financial scheduling from the European Social Fund is to be appreciated.
• Period of the strategy – up to 2020 – superposes with the financial schedule 2014-2020, which allows, at least in principle, the correlation between the measures of the strategy and the objectives of the new financial schedule.

• Also there is a great potential of correlating the national strategy with the European strategy of inclusion of Romani population which is established up to 2020 as well as with the strategy Europe 2020.

• Within the strategy there are some gender and equal chances promoting measures although this matter is approached superficially and the gender mainstreaming is not approached in an integrated manner.

• There are certain indicators of result based on which is possible to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the strategy.

• It is mentioned the necessity of an integrated approach although this matter is not enough developed within the plans of the sectorial measures.

• It is mentioned that the social inclusion has to be reflected also in the activity of the other players such as the local public authorities and at central level.

• It is mentioned the necessity of the partnership with the civil society.

• The strategy is based on clear principles, such as participation and equal chances although this is not always reflected within the plans of measures.

• The innovative measures such as the establishment of a Romani Theatre and a Museum of Romani culture are to be appreciated.

II. Week points

• The analysis resulted after a consultation process susceptible of being formal. Although the legal framework regarding the process of consultation with the civil society was observed. The recommendations from this area did not benefit of a serious analysis, the fact that none were not included in the strategy standing as a proof for this.

• The Strategy for Romani population 2001-2010 did not benefit from a quantitative and qualitative impact analysis of the measures implemented in this period. Also, there wasn’t any previous analysis to indicate the present stage of the Romani minority social inclusion process. Therefore, the new strategy of inclusion of the Romanian citizens belonging to Romani minority is not based on actual data and lessons learned from the implementation of the strategy between 2001 and 2010. This fact has two consequences for the new strategy:

  - There is a risk that the measures included in the new strategy will not be correlated with the real necessities of Romani minorities;

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- There is a risk that the mistakes from the implementation of the strategy 2001-2010, mentioned in different studies and reports, to be repeated also in the period 2011-2020.

- **The data** used for defining the problems are taken from the report “Risks and social inequities” drawn up by the Presidential Commission and only for the education field are proved by the internal reports of the Ministry of Education. For this strategy the priority should be represented by the annual or biannual reports of the local and central authorities about the strategy implementation as well as the annual evaluation of National Agency for Romani on it.

- Starting with the fact that at the base of the strategy there is no previous analysis, the monitoring process of the strategy implementation is impossible because **there are no basic indicators** to start with. Likewise, the intermediary and final evaluation of the degree of implementation is hindered if not made impossible in what concerns certain indicators. For instance, it was mentioned that the expected results cannot be measured where there are no basic indicators.

- Within the strategy the risks related with **the effects of the economic crisis** on Romani minority are not evaluated. Although different studies launched the hypothesis that the vulnerable groups among which Romani population have been affected in a greater extent by the effects of the economic crisis, the strategy does not include the analysis from this perspective of the Romani population, neither additional support measures for those affected by crisis. The sectorial measures don’t take into consideration the possible risks related with the new possible reductions of the personnel hired in the public sector or the loss of attractiveness from a financial perspective of some positions such as school or sanitary mediators in the context of budgetary reduction.

- Although within the European Framework for the national strategies of Romani integration until 2020 is mentioned the necessity of **an integrated approach** in what concerns the social inclusion of Romani, the sectorial directions of action are not correlated thus, perpetuating a fragmented and inefficient approach. Only a few cases show the preoccupation to correlate measures from different areas for an integrated approach.

- The analysis of the approached fields where specific measured are proposed for Romani women shows us that the current strategy is deaf to gender mainstreaming, their simple mentioning being insufficient. Within section 2 we have discussed for each area **the gender mainstreaming**, showing the shortcomings of the strategy in what concerns the representation of the interests of Romani women. Although the equality of chances is presented as a directing and transverse principle, this is not reflected in the plans of sectorial measures.

- Although the Government benefited in 2009 of an analysis of **the implementation mechanism** of the former strategy for Romani, the report becoming public in January 2010 (“The Government’s Strategy of Improving Romani Situation of 2001-2010: a voice of the communities”, elaborated by Împreună Agency), the present strategy is based on the same mechanism of implementation which proved to be inefficient. The structures of the strategy implementation, either the County Offices for Romani, Joint Work Groups or the experts on Romani problems don’t have the capacity neither to implement the strategy measures nor to monitor their implementation.

- Another weak point of the strategy implementation mechanism is the fact that **the position of the County Offices for Romani is ambiguous**. They function under the internal administration being subordinated to the
In what concerns the **financing of the strategy measures from the Structural Funds**, two problematic aspects stand out:

- Although a lot of measures included in the sectorial plans attached to the strategy could be generically financed from OSPDHR budgets for different MDIs (for example measures for sanitary education, campaigns of awareness, financing the local support groups, entrepreneurship courses for the support of Romanian citizens of Romani origin, the active measures for hiring Romani people, the simulation of the employers to hire people belonging to vulnerable groups, including amongst Romani population, etc.), this option not being possible anymore currently because the financial resources allocated for those MDIs have been exhausted until the end of the programming period in 2013. **In principle, all the measures detailed in the sectorial action plans for Employment and Education could be financed from OSPDHR, if the financial resources would have been available on the priority axes 1, 3, 4, 5 and 6 of this Sectorial Operational Plan.** In case in the future the financial resources will be available due to the over-budgeted projects which reach the end of the implementation without finishing the assigned budget, it would be recommendable the inclusion in the applicant’s guide for each application for projects of some amounts explicitly and exclusively assigned to the projects aiming to implement the measures assumed by the Government through the Romanian Government’s Strategy of Inclusion of the Romanian Citizens belonging to Romani Population. Thus, although the activities and the measures included in the mentioned appendixes are eligible and appropriate for OSPDHR financing in the current configuration, and although almost in each measure included in the above mentioned appendixes the “structural funds” are mentioned as financial resource, we will have to wait the next programming period in order to ensure the necessary financing.

- Most of the MDIs of OSPDHR don’t specifically mention the people belonging to Romani minority as target group; an exception is the Priority Axis 6 – Promotion of Social Inclusion; the consequence of this fact was that the projects submitted on other priority axis no. 6 and which had as target group exclusively the people belonging to Romani minority, have been rejected by the evaluators as being discriminatory. This aspect however could be fixed, so as to be able to finance the measures included in the Strategy, by explicitly mentioning, in the Applicant’s Guides for the next projects appeals, of the persons belonging to Romani minority as explicit or exclusive target group. **The Management Authority has the right to focus some OSPDHR interventions, as long as MDI doesn’t forbid them, to certain categories of target groups, moreover if this kind of intervention is already regulated by the Strategy approved by the Government.**

- Generally, the strategy does not offer solutions for ensuring the **sustainability** of the measures. For example, it is uncertain how the mediators, for whom training sessions are mentioned, will be hired, or how the health personnel shall be maintained on long term in the rural under-privileged areas. Also, in the field of employment **The position of the Agency for Community Development – Împreună on Romanian Government’s Strategy Of Inclusion Of The Romanian Citizens Belonging To Romani Minority for 2012-2020**

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is mentioned the awarding of facilities for employers that integrate Romani people as their employees, but is not certain how the stability of the positions created will be maintained.

- Another aspect totally missing from the strategy is the development of the IT field, by digital alphabetisation, extension of the IT equipments in the areas inhabited by Romani population and the training of human resources in this field. Since the strategy Europe 2020 is based on the economy based on knowledge, and since a recent report\(^1\) forecasts that in 2015 90% of the jobs will require minimum IT knowledge, the absence of any concern in this field proves a lack of correlation of the strategy with the requirements of the labour market.

- Another weakness of the Strategy is the uniform approach it advocates towards the Roma minority as a whole, disregarding the fact that within the minority there are significant differences. Alongside the integrated approach, policies need to adopt an "individualised" approach, with measures adapted to the diverse needs of Roma communities, which are not the same everywhere. The supplementary risk of the uniform approach advocated by the Strategy is that it perpetuates the stereotypes regarding generalisations, as if all the Roma were poor, illiterate etc. On the other side, the positive examples of communities where the level of socio-economic development has improved in the last decades should be put to good use; this can be done in two ways: identifying the success factors and replicating in other communities what brought a positive change, and using the human resource as development promoters in other communities. In light of this weakness, the necessity of conducting more in-depth research becomes, once more, obvious. The "poverty map" of 2005 (Comunitatile de Romi din România. O harta a saraciei comunitare prin sondajul PROROMI, Banca Mondiala, 2005) has set a first step towards establishing typologies of Roma communities. However, the data collection methodology has been criticised; mapping Roma communities with a valid data collection process and establishing typologies is a necessary step for data-driven, relevant and individualised policies for the diverse Roma communities.

2. Punctual comments and recommendations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The text from the document of the Strategy</th>
<th>Comments / Recommendations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>I. Introduction</strong></td>
<td>The strategy needs to be updated considering also the results of the 2010 census, which shall be made public in 2012-2013. The data may represent basic indicators which may stand as starting point for establishing the sectorial plans of action, their objectives and measures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p. 5: Depending on the evolution at national and European level, The Government’s Strategy shall be modified, adapted and completed at the end of 2013, the plans of specific measures following to be updated basis the results and recommendations mentioned in the process of evaluation</td>
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</table>

II. Relevant general information

**EDUCATION**

p. 6: Following the application of the Order of the Ministry of Education, Research and Youth no. 1504/2007, the number of the complaints addressed to the National Council for Fighting against Discrimination (NCFAD) and the petitions addressed to MERYS, regarding the situations of segregation in education of the children belonging to Romani minority have decreased reported to previous years.

Despite all these, there are studies continuing to signal the existence of the situation of school segregation of Romani people, either in the cases of residential segregation or non-residential. It is necessary a deep (not only basis the declaration of the school administrators) ex-ante analysis in this field, in order to evaluate the number of the existing cases of current school segregation and the factors acting as obstacles in front of desegregation.

Also, there have been signals of numerous cases when the desegregation of some schools residentially segregated caused adverse effects such as school abandonment, absenteeism and the reduction of participation to education of the children who had their schools closed. It is necessary to identify all the cases of this type, to analyse them and take customised measures depending on the distinctiveness of each community.

The impact of these measures and actions has not been evaluated before the drawing of the new strategy. It is necessary an analysis of the success and failure factors for each measure, as well as the insertion of the lessons learned and the intensification of the measures with a positive impact. **The measure’s impact** has to be evaluated in relation with:

- the efficiency of assigning special places and the way this thing influenced the educational path of the beneficiaries to the higher education stage. In what concerns the affirmative policy of the places offered to the young Romani population, we also bring into attention the following aspects:
  - The necessity of a national evaluation of the affirmative policy 20 years after the beginning of their application;
  - establishment of joint monitoring indicators for the places assigned to young Romani people;
  - the necessity of signing protocols between the universities and the Ministry of Education so as to allow that the distribution of the places to be correlated with the actual request for these places, as well as for creating coherent programs of monitoring the evolution of the youth during the years of study;
  - The outline of some coherent strategies of promotion of the places assigned for the target group (Romani youth), as well as the general public, for a better understanding of the necessity of applying this kind of measures;

- the activity of the school inspectors for the educational problems of Romani children:
  - application of affirmative measures in the field of education such as the allocation of special places for Romani candidates to high schools, vocational schools and university entrance;
  - creating a network of school inspectors for the educational problems of Romani population;
  - establishing a network of school mediators;
  - training and hiring teachers of Romani language;
  - implementing the curriculum for Romani language;
  - identifying the problem of school segregation as a case of discrimination and taking the first measures of school desegregation;
  - Creating the legal base, the

p. 7: in the field of education there were implemented a complex of measures and actions with a positive impact on the school participation and increase of the quality of education of Romani children:

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methodology and curriculum for the programme “The second chance”. and its impact, with emphasize on the failure factors which reduce the impact of the network activity;

- the activity of the network of school mediators, emphasizing the adverse effects noticed in certain schools (the gap between the school and the community and the excessive responsabilisation of the school mediators in the detriment of a real involvement of the teachers);

- the quality of the Romani language courses and of the educational materials elaborated;

- school desegregation, with emphasize on the adverse effects signalled in numerous communities where the schools residentially segregated have been closed without applying alternative measures, and with accent on the encountered obstacles;

- the impact of the programme A second chance in what concerns the level of education of the beneficiaries and the facilitation of their actual access on the labour market.

Also, the Strategy needs to be based on actual data in what concerns these measures. Basic quantitative indicators are necessary such as:

- the number of persons who benefited of special places and the number of graduates resulted after applying this measure;

- the number of school mediators effectively involved and the number of school mediators trained but unemployed;

- the number of Romani language teachers actually employed and the number of Romani teachers trained but unemployed;

- the number of children benefiting of Romani language courses;

- the number of schools where the segregation is still present;

- the number of programs A second chance actually implemented and the number of beneficiaries of this programme.

Also, The Ministry of Education, should develop a series of programmes to include the exchange between Romani youth and the youth from other countries, to develop programmes such as „Erasmus” and to finance the attendance to these programme of the young Romani coming from families with a poor financial situation.

Gender mainstreaming The gender mainstreaming does not exist and if it hasn’t been introduced

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especially in this field, the measures adopted further would not be able to interfere and treat a systemic problem but they can only offer a reminder of it. For example it is mentioned the collection of data without discussing about the gender mainstreaming, although one of the problems identified is the school abandonment of Romani girls because of the traditional environment. We may conclude that some of the problems identified do not bring proofs researched and analysed but only reflect perceptions. The activity of NAR or MERY for the evaluation of the educational state of traditional Romani community is not known.

**EMPLOYMENT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The data needs to be updated because the negative effects of the economic crisis have been amplified after 2009.</th>
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<tr>
<td>The basic indicators don’t need to be measured before 2011.</td>
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</table>

**p. 7:** the Report „Social Risks and Inequities” – elaborated by the Presidential Committee for Social and Demographic Risks Analysis (PCSDRA) in September 2009

**The year which the data refers to is not mentioned.**

**p. 7:** In accordance with the Survey of family budgets of the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Protection - MLFSP, they represented 20.6% of the total persons living in absolute poverty, 35.2% of those in severe poverty and 44.4% of those in food poverty.

**The impact of these measures and actions has not been evaluated before the drawing up of the new Strategy. An analysis of the success and failure factors is necessary for each measure, as well as is the inclusion of the learned lessons and intensification of the measures that had a positive impact.**

Also, the following basic indicators need to be measured:

- degree of employment of Romani population, with data divided on gender, age category, incomes, residential environment and level of education;
- degree of qualification of Romani population, with data divided in accordance with the above mentioned criteria;

The quantitative data need to be supplemented by a qualitative analysis of the success and failure factors in what concerns the measures taken in the field of employment in the past decade, with emphasize on the lessons...
information and counselling of the people searching for a job) in order to increase their efficiency learned;

Gender mainstreaming

In what concerns the employment field, it was not provided information from NAEWF which elaborates annually reports and collects data on the gender mainstream, so as to correlate the qualifications requests with the offer on the labour market. The only measure explicitly mentioning women is measure 1 “Identifying labour opportunities based on flexicurity for the vulnerable groups, especially for the women belonging to Romani minority (flexible work places but with the social securities paid), income generating activities and small family businesses, apprenticeship and mentorship programmes at the same time with ensuring the support for the access to education and caring services: nurseries and “school after school” kindergartens. Although the measure seems promising, aiming to solve also the situation of the work places, to offer fiscal facilities and child care services (nurseries and kindergartens), this measure is not mentioned under the education field nor planned to be given or given under the responsibility of a ministry.

i.e. Child protection mentions only the sensibilisation campaigns, and the granting of fiscal facilities to Romani population does not mention an application method and the budget involved.

Romani women are mentioned again under measure 8 “Starting a microcredit scheme for the under-privileged groups, including for Romani population, in order to support the start up of a business with emphasize on Romani women”. Education and qualification are strongly connected. The fact that the women are mentioned under small businesses shows again a perception which is not based on a report / study/evaluation made by the Government NAR. It is an attempt of anchorage in the social realities without considering the statistic proofs.

HEALTH

p. 7: The report „Social risks and inequities in Romania” elaborated by the Presidential Committee for the Analysis of Social and Demographic Risks (PCASDR) in September 2009

The data needs to be updated.

p. 8: The programme of health mediators represents a positive practice of Romania.

This needs to be justified through an impact analysis, with quantitative information regarding the results of the health mediators’ activities and qualitative data regarding the identified success and failure factors.
p. 8: The action plan encloses measures which contribute to:
- Attracting medical personnel in the economically under-privileged areas (in the case of important Romani communities);
- Granting separate amounts for the uninsured persons and social cases (the Romani population falls under this profile.
- Establish national health programmes to respond to the public health problems and the needs of vulnerable groups;
- Reducing the impact of the diseases and the impact of chronic diseases especially for vulnerable groups.

| It is not clear whether the paragraph refers to previously implemented measures or the action plan from the new strategy. |
| Same as in the case of the previous domains, it is necessary the **measurement of the basic indicators** such as: |
| - the number of uninsured persons with data divided on gender, age category, income, residential environment and education level; |
| - the number of persons not registered to a family doctor with data divided on gender, age category, income, residential environment and education level; |
| - the number of persons with chronic diseases with data divided on gender, age category, income, residential environment and education level and also disease type; |
| - the number of compact Romani communities which have access to health services; |
| The number of persons which do not use any contraception measure with data divided on gender, age category, income, residential environment and education level. |
| Also, a qualitative analysis has to be made in what concerns the impact of the previously implemented measures with emphasise on the success and failure factors. |
| Basis some protocols between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health, the campaigns of prevention and those offering medical services to the drug addicted youngsters should be encouraged. |

The health area is surprisingly targeted on the health campaigns specifically carried on all the health related aspects. If in the strategy 2004 -2008 the health mediators were mentioned (see Ch. Education the fact that school mediators are mentioned) as the main factors which ensure the access to health in the Romani community, in the current strategy are listed a series of actions related to vaccination, feeding, diseases, sanitary hygiene. **The mechanism** itself ensuring this system is totally taken out of the context without having a measure which ensures the continuous professional training of the mediators or the final settlement of the aspects related to safety at the work place. There is no measure mentioning the development of a community medical assistance infrastructure not only that of the health...
### HABITATION AND SMALL INFRASTRUCTURE

p. 8: According to Romani Inclusion Barometer 2006

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<th>The data needs to be updated</th>
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p. 8-9: **In the field of habitation**, the programmes of social houses building include:

- the construction of social houses for the vulnerable categories;

Financial support for the local programmes and the programmes aiming to ensure normal life conditions in the urban and rural environment for the vulnerable categories;  
- Total or partial support for the rehabilitation of the houses or the projects for houses building in the under-privileged communities (including Romani communities).

It is not clear whether the paragraph refers to previously implemented measures or the action plan from the new strategy.

As well as in the case of previous fields, it is necessary the **measurement of the basic indicators**, such as:

- The number of compact Romani communities with short infrastructure (impracticable roads in adverse weather conditions, the lack of access to electricity, gas, water, sewage networks, lack of public street lighting, sanitation services and the lack of a potable water source);

- the number of communities that show ghetto indicators (natural or built obstacles, the presence of life or health threatening elements, deficiency of the living spaces, hindered access to services, etc.);

- the number of the communities which are not included in the General City Plan of the local public authorities;

- the number of houses which are not in accordance with the indicators of proper habitation, established by the law;

- the number of social house the Romani people benefits of;

- the number of houses without property documents;

Also, it is necessary a **qualitative analysis of the impact** the previously implemented measures had with emphasize on the failure and success factors.

### CULTURE

p. 9: For this purpose it was built in 2003 The National Centre of Romani Culture under the subordination of the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage with main activity object the conservation and promotion of Romani traditional culture.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>It has to be elaborated an <strong>analysis of this Centre’s activity</strong> emphasising the success and failure factors in what concerns the promotion of Romani culture.</th>
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</table>
### PREVENTION AND FIGHTING AGAINST DISCRIMINATION

The data needs to be updated

### V. STRATEGY’S PURPOSES AND OBJECTIVES

p. 14: objectives

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<table>
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<tr>
<td>Including an objective regarding the <strong>revision of the social assistance system</strong>, in order to support the idea of integrated approach of the cases of assisted families and persons, as well as an increased emphasis on the measures meant to break the vicious circle of self-exclusion and passiveness.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Including an objective regarding the <strong>means of convincing the local public authorities to accept responsibility</strong> and the increase of its transparency in what concerns the local development with emphasize on the compact Romani communities. These may be achieved through measures regarding partnerships with these structures and monitoring the local agenda.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Including an objective regarding the <strong>stimulation of the public participation of Romani population</strong> at local level and community mobilisation. In support of this idea community mobilisation measures may be applied identified as positive practices in other countries and absorbed by the public policies (especially by the United States of America and Canada). Among these measures may be introduced elements such as training and transfer of public participation and influence of the local agenda through initiative groups consisting of elected representatives of Romani communities. Under the same objective may also be included measures meant to stimulate the Romani civil society at local level.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Including an objective regarding the <strong>electoral education of Romani population</strong>, in order to stimulate a democratic electoral behaviour and to fight against and prevent the phenomenon of electoral bribery.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adding the objective of education in the health field, for the <strong>prevention of chronic diseases but also for the use of contraception measures</strong>. Also it should be highlighted the awareness especially of the youth and women on this matter.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adding the objective of <strong>fighting against the phenomenon of turning into</strong></td>
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local authorities and the social partners of decent living conditions in the economical and social under-privileged communities as well as ensuring the access to public services and small infrastructure.

**VI. PRINCIPLES**

1. **p. 15: The principle of equal chances and awareness of gender mainstreaming** – The Government’s strategy for the inclusion of Romani minority emphasises the central responsibility of the women which have an important role inside the family and the community itself, by increasing their level of education and qualification and as well as of the employment rate by involvement in children education and other activities ensuring the increase of the families well-being level, family cohesion and the development of future generations.

| ghettos of the Romani compact communities, especially in the urban area. |
| Emphasize on the women role in the education and raise of children risks to perpetuate the gender roles and to undermine the increase of qualification and employment degree of women in the formal economy. |

| VII. COURSES OF ACTIONS | Adding a course of action regarding the development of a mechanism of early warning for the risk of school abandonment, in order to early prevent this phenomenon (and not to fight against it after the child already abandoned the school), mechanism involving psychologists and properly trained educational advisers in the fields of school abandonment. |
| | Adding a course of action regarding the stimulation of the participation to education, at all levels, of Romani girls, in order to reduce the existing gap between the genders. |
| | Adding a course of action regarding the stimulation, monitoring and improvement of the functioning method of the commissions against discrimination mentioned by law 1/2011. |
| | Adding a course of action regarding the collection of data on ethnicity criteria concerning the participation of Romani children to the education system and their continuous monitoring. |
| | Adding a course of action regarding the improvement of the attractiveness of the schools with an important percent of Romani children, by increasing |

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the quality of material endowments and the qualified human resources and their turning into magnet-schools which maintain the school personnel qualified and motivated and to increase the level of scholar results.

Adding a course of action regarding the improvement of the functioning of the school mediators’ network and correction and prevention of the adverse effects of this policy. It may also be adopted the idea proposed in the health field of establishing a unit of the Ministry of Education named “Unit of Technical assistance for the coordination, monitoring and evaluation of school mediators”.

Adding a course of action regarding the stimulation of hiring school psychologists and advisers in the schools with a significant percent of Romani children and their training in the field of inclusive education.

Adding a course of action regarding the insurance of the representation of Romani population in the parents committees and children commissions.

Adding a course of action regarding the stimulation of awarding social scholarships to the students from the under-privileged families (with both parents unemployed, with single parents or with big families).

Adding a course of action regarding the monitoring of the percent of Romani children from the special schools and the criteria basis which they were integrated in the special education system.

B. EMPLOYMENT

p. 18:
(4) Granting, in accordance with the law, facilities for the entrepreneurs and companies hiring persons belonging to Romani minority.

(10) Creating mechanisms to attract employers’ interest, including possible local facilities for the entrepreneurs hiring people belonging to Romani minority, especially those from families with many children and lacking the means of subsistence.

p. 18: Adjusting the legal framework impacting the professional insertion of the vulnerable groups, including of the

The two directions are partially superimposing.

It is not mentioned the direction of adjustment of the legal framework and which is the mechanism through which a strategy may plan to adjust a public policy (?).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>p. 18-19</th>
<th>Adding a course of action regarding the <strong>identification of the multiple causes of the difficult access to the formal labour market</strong>, with actual data and by favouring an <strong>integrated approach</strong> in the analysis.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>p. 18-19</td>
<td>Although the document of EU Framework for the national strategies of integration of Romani population until 2020 mentions the necessity of an <strong>integrated approach</strong>, the directions of actions mentioned in the present strategy under the chapter employment are not correlated with other courses of action in the other fields. The approach is based on sectorial and does not take into consideration the factors which lead to the exclusion of some Romani people from the formal labour market.</td>
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<tr>
<td>C. HEALTH</td>
<td>Adding a course of action regarding the <strong>improvement of the infrastructure of the health services in the rural environment</strong> (building/ rehabilitation and endowment of the medical offices including the dentistry ones).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p. 19-20</td>
<td>Adding a course of action regarding the <strong>identification of the communities where the ambulance service doesn't have an access infrastructure</strong> and the stimulation of the development / rehabilitation of the roads identified as being problematic, with priority, within the habitation and small infrastructure field of the current strategy.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adding a course of action regarding the <strong>prevention and fighting against discrimination of Romani population in maternities, hospitals and clinics</strong> especially the prevention and fight against segregation in the hospital institutions.</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Adding a course of action regarding the introduction in the compulsory curricula of the faculties of medicine and dentistry of the <strong>education against discrimination</strong> and the increase of the degree of awareness of the medical personnel in the field of the legislation concerning the fight against discrimination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. HABITATION AND SMALL INFRASTRUCTURE</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------</td>
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</table>
| **p. 19:** The pilot programme “Social houses for Romani communities” established together with the National Agency for Houses in accordance with Government’s Decision no. 1237 from 2008 aiming to build 300 houses | The stage of this program is not clear (in was approved in 2008).  
**Evaluation of the needs in the habitation field,** and the identification of the communities with the worst problems in order to build social houses.  
A pilot program for building 300 houses is a disproportionately small project compared with the current needs and the duration of the current strategy. How would they ensure the **continuation** of the programme?  
|  
| **p. 20:** the rehabilitation programme of the cultural establishments in the rural or small urban places where they don’t exist. Accomplishing a pilot project Social Community Centre for permanent inclusion and education as a means of increasing the trust in joint communities. | This priority belongs to the field of social infrastructure not the habitation one.  
To be rephrased the expression “the rehabilitation of the cultural establishments in the places where they don’t exist”: one cannot rehabilitate buildings that do not exist.  
Don’t mix measures / policies with projects.  
|  
| **p. 19-20:** the priorities established by MRDT | These two priorities do not consider the most acute **needs** in the field of habitation in the compact Romani communities.  
|  
| **p. 21:** Rehabilitation of some buildings under the administration of the local communities using also the work force, qualified or unqualified, of the future beneficiaries in order to ensure a house in a determined period, until the persons in difficulty, including the citizens belonging to Romani minority will enter the labour market and will have a proper income in order to rent or buy their own houses (our underlining) | What does determined period means? It shall be previously established or effectively until the persons shall enter the labour market? How would these persons be supported in order to facilitate their access on the labour market and to stable work places?  
|  
| **p. 21** | Adding a course of action regarding the **collection of data regarding** the habitation and infrastructure conditions from the Romani communities through which to be elaborated an analysis of their needs and priorities. It is also recommended the taking into consideration of the elements which may signal the existence of some ghettos (natural or build obstacles, restricted access to services, the existence of elements that endanger the life and |
Adding a course of action regarding the identification and solving of the cases of illegal walls building around compact communities of Romani population in accordance with law 137 regarding the fighting against all types of discrimination (Baia Mare, Târlungeni, Satu Mare etc.); monitoring the risks of building such enclosures and their prevention through legal means.

Adding a course of action regarding the identification and solving the problems related to the lack of property documents for the houses and lands within the Romani communities.

Adding a course of action regarding the development of the road infrastructure, where to have priority the communities where the access to the ambulance and fire fighting services is difficult or impossible in adverse meteorological conditions.

Adding a course of action regarding the insurance of local transportation to Romani communities from the city borders, for distances higher than 1 km from the public services of education, health etc.

Adding a course of action regarding the stimulation of the submission of projects by the local authorities in the field of infrastructure and the insurance that these projects will be for the benefit of the Romani community.

This course of action has to concentrate also on the inclusion in the General City Plan of the Romani communities that are outside it. Also the areas with Romani communities have to be included in the local development plans in the field of habitation and infrastructure.

Adding a course of action regarding the stimulation of Romani literature publishing, in Romani language and / or translation, as well as the dissemination of some cultural products of high culture (literature, theatre, traditional fiddler music), besides the popularisation of some other forms of cultural expression (costumes, habits, specific objects, etc.).

Adding a course of action regarding the dissemination of Romani culture to the majority population in order to facilitate the knowledge of Romani culture and to help the intercultural dialogue.

Adding a course of action regarding the elaboration of teaching and interactive materials for the dissemination of Romani culture, materials
that may be used during the classes of Romani language from the primary, secondary and high school systems, the classes of intercultural education from the curricula at the decision of the school of the secondary school as well as for the training of teachers, medical personnel etc. in the field of interculturality and fighting against discrimination.

Also, are recommended actions such as the introduction of some chapters concerning Romani history, especially in the manuals of Romanian history as well as the proposal of optional courses of Romani history in schools and universities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>F. SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>F1. Children protection</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Adding a course of action regarding the training of the personnel from the General Directorates of Social Assistance and Child Protection in Romani matters, for fighting against and prevention of discrimination based on ethnic criteria also in Romani language where there are Romani speaking communities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adding a course of action regarding the identification of the networks of human trafficking where Romani children are included and fighting this phenomenon through legal means.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Again it may be noticed that the courses of actions in the field of children protection don’t benefit of an integrated approach. For example, the phenomenon that may cause the separation of the child from the family are highly related first of the level of poverty, which cannot be solved through awareness campaign. The social interventions need to have the family and the entire community as target as well as all the strategy’s courses of action.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

| **F2. Justice and public order** |
| Adding a course of action regarding the fight against and prevention of the phenomenon of discrimination on ethnic criteria in the legal field. This may consist in training the personnel of the Ministry of Interior with reference to the Romani problems, the current legislation in the field of preventing and fighting against discrimination etc. |
| Adding a course of action regarding the prevention and fighting against the human trafficking from Romani communities. |
| Adding a course of action regarding the monitoring of the cases of traditional communities where the traditional judging practices are still used, in order to avoid the abuses against women. |
| Adding a course of action regarding the prevention and fighting against the domestic violence domain. More precisely, it is necessary an analysis of the incidence of this phenomenon and of the most efficient means of preventing
and fighting against it which to include also the analysis of the awareness degree of the women regarding their rights and the procedures they may follow in case of domestic violence. Also is necessary the evaluation of the access to the shelters for the women affected by domestic violence. Another necessary measure is starting awareness campaigns against the phenomenon, its negative effects both on the women and children as well as the rights of the victims of domestic violence.

F3. Community administration and development

Adding a course of action regarding the stimulation of the public participation of Romani population at local level, in order to monitor and influence the decisional process at community level. This may be achieved by stimulating the establishment of initiative groups, transferring the participation methods of community development to them and their mentoring in order to obtain a higher degree of empowerment and turn them into dialogue partners of the local public authorities. In accordance with the principal of equal chances it has to be equally stimulated the public participation of Romani women and training leaders amongst them.

TO BE INCLUDED

Adding a distinctive chapter regarding the increase of the absorption level of the available funds, especially the European ones allocated for the social inclusion programmes where Romani population is either specifically targeted either represents one of the target groups over-represented in the category of vulnerable groups.

VIII. THE RESULTS AND INDICATORS OF THE PROPOSED ACTIONS

In the column „results”, under 2 and 4 there are no basic indicator therefore their increase in percents cannot be measured.

The results and indicators are not correlated with the courses of actions.

IX. BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS

In accordance with the rough calendar for launching the project’s requests for OSPDHR in 2012, published by AMOSPDHR in January 2012, during this year shall be launched projects only for the following Major Intervention Fields (MIF):

1. **2.1** Transition from school to active life – grant projects(maxim 500.000 Euro grant)

2. **2.2** Prevention and correction of early school leaving – grant projects(maximum 500.000 Euro grant)

3. **2.3** Access and participation to FPC – grant projects (maximum
4. **6.4 Trans-national initiatives for an inclusive labour market – strategic projects (maximum 5.000.000 Euro grant)**

The amount granted for these launches for **MIF 2.1 and 2.2** depend on the approval of a budgetary reallocation from other **MIFs launched previously**.

The amount allocated for **MIF 6.4** is of **Euro 25.000.000**.

For the projects requests related to **MIF 2.3** it is expected a budgetary allocation of 200.000.000 Euro, which would mean the financing of minimum 400 grant projects, but this appeal of projects shall not be focused on the identification of the projects aiming the Romani minority as target.

It also may be noticed that the plans of sectorial measures have implementation deadlines between 2012-2015, thus entering within the next programming period for which there are not yet established and agreed with EC the main financing fields in what concerns the development of human resources and social inclusion. These means that for the elaboration of the next operational programme and its negotiation with EC there should be considered and followed with priority the measures regulated by the current Strategy and created the specific mechanisms of monitoring their accomplishment.

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**X. THE MECHANISM OF MONITORING AND EVALUATING THE GOVERNMENT’S STRATEGY**

The data concerning the **basic indicators** are missing in many cases making impossible both the monitoring as well as the evaluation of the degree of implementation of the present strategy. This comes from the lack of an ex-ante analysis for measuring the basis indicators from which it starts.

Also, the strategy’s monitoring and evaluation mechanism lacks a **system of early warning** regarding the difficulties that may be encountered by the different structures involved in the implementation. This system has to be organised on sectorial level but also from an integrated perspective, allowing the identification of the obstacles in the implementation that come from the very complex problematic of the social exclusion.

As the study “The Government’s Strategy of Improving the situation of Romani Population for 2001-2010: the voice of the communities”, elaborated by Împreună Agency showed that, **BJR doesn’t have the capacity to measure the social inclusion indicators**: the human resources are enough and sometimes they don’t benefit from trainings for monitoring and
supplied by the County Offices for Romani.

evaluation or in the field of data collection.

That is why it is necessary a supplementation of the personnel and its training for data collection, monitoring and evaluation as well as their training for using M&E instruments which will be used. The monitoring and evaluation system has to have clear instruments of data collection together with instructions as well as periodical reports and has to involve specialists which to coordinate the M&E activity at regional level.

XII. FURTHER STAGES AND RESPONSIBLE INSTITUTIONS

Implementation mechanism of the present strategy is not different of the one for 2001-2010, although there have been reports and studies which have critically analysed its efficiency, the communication gaps between the structures both vertically and horizontally.

Lately, a growing number of Western European states have started to pressurize Central and Eastern European governments to undertake coherent measures towards the socio-economic inclusion of the Roma. There are discussions towards elaborating a new European Strategy for the Roma to provide for the support necessary for the implementation of national strategies; there are ongoing debates between advocates of national versus European responsibility in the social inclusion of Roma; last, but not least, the Roma themselves are asked to be part of the decision making process.

A few questions arise however, demanding for prompt answers which in turn can be materialised in concrete actions:

- Is the Roma civil society in Romania prepared to play an active role within the challenges launched by the EU to the members states, regarding the socio-economic inclusion of the Roma minority?
- Are the current financing mechanisms tailored so as to permit the implementation of projects with sufficient impact on the structural causes of current situations in Roma communities?
- What should be the priorities for the next programatic interval – 2014-2020, in order for the Roma to benefit from the investments necessary to their socio-economic development?

**The Roma civil society in Romania**

Even though the number of Roma nongovernmental organisations legally registered is sufficiently high (estimates of “Împreună” Agency indicate over 300 such organisations), the truly active ones – which have relatively continuous activities implemented by a minimum number of staff members – does not exceed 10%. Collaboration between these organisations is almost non-existent, and activities meant to contribute to the development of civil society are sporadic and not very well articulated. Networking is often no more than a slogan without fundament in reality. Almost all mechanisms of collaboration either have failed or are currently in the middle of a consolidation process. A striking example is the Roma NGO Platform for Structural Funds – a mechanism meant to coagulate the common voice of Roma NGOs in dealings with the Management Authority of the Sectorial Operational Programme.
Human Resource Development (further in the text, SOPHRD), which has failed due to the lack of cohesion among Roma organisations.

Roma NGOs in Romania tend to act on the spur of the moment, without aiming for the strategic planning of a set of common actions meant to strengthen the voice of the civil society. In my opinion, in Romania – and more largely, in Europe – we cannot speak of a “Roma civil society” (adopting here Gellner's definition²), but merely of a few nongovernmental organisations, situated at various stages of organisational development, which act unrelated to one another, uncoordinated and, too often, excessively oriented towards internal competition.

Perhaps this is also why the representation of Roma interests is often limited to protest letters and the elaboration of various reports. There is a clear lack of social dialogue, an essential ingredient to building a vision which can contribute to introducing Roma priorities in strategic documents supporting the implementation of measures until 2015³, as well as the ones preparing the 2014-2020 financial programming.

The Roma human resource capable of taking part into the implementation process of projects financially supported through European Social Funds is too scarce and generally located in Bucharest. Among other things, this has lead to the relatively low number of projects aiming at improving the situation of the Roma: out of the 2006 projects approved until March 31st 2011 within SOPHRD, around 50 had this specific objective.⁴

Generally, the organisations implementing projects are the same ones, localised in big cities (Bucharest, Cluj, Timisoara), whereas the poorest areas of Romania (such as the North-East region) are seriously underrepresented on the map of structural projects beneficiaries. This reality causes two reactions:

a) The perception according to which the “power”⁵ is concentrated in Bucharest, and that “central” organisations wish to maintain local organisations in a “state of vassality”, so that they do not enter in competition with them

b) The allocation of financial resources is often made within partnerships which lack transparency, based rather on friendship ties between leaders of organisations than on the real needs and potential of target communities.

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² “Civil Society is that set of diverse non-governmental institutions which is strong enough to counterbalance the state and, while not preventing the state from fulfilling its role of keeper of peace and arbitrator between major interests, can nevertheless prevent it from dominating and atomizing the rest of society.” (Gellner, Ernest, Conditions of Liberty: Civil Society and its Rivals).

³ The first financial programing available to Romania is 2007-2013, to which we have applied the N+2 rule:

⁴ The complete list of projects, in Romanian, can be found at http://www.fseromania.ro/images/download/lista_contracte_posdru_31032011.pdf.

⁵ By “power” we mean the access to resources (financial, human, etc.) as well as the participation in the process of negotiation / consultation with governmental institutions. Oftentimes, the organisations from Bucharest are “accused” for not disseminating information towards organisations from other areas, and for “making projects from the office” for communities in which local Roma NGOs are active without real consultation or partnership.
One of the adverse effects of the fact that large and active organisations are managing projects financed through structural funds is the fact that the representation of Roma interests through militant actions has witnessed a real decline in the last years. The orientation towards structural projects entailing the provision of services (educational, employment related services, etc.), measured by means of clear-cut indicators (X persons have received professional training, etc.), doubled by the (excessive) bureaucracy necessary in the managing process have led to the consequence that activism⁶ in the last few years reaches one of the lowest levels in the last 20 years. This paradigm shift has ensured the survival of a number of Roma organisations in the current context.

However, the lack of collaboration and communication between Roma NGOs has sometimes led to ridiculous – nevertheless extremely dangerous – situations. I will only mention three such examples:

a) organisations implementing projects in the same community, having the same target group, but without having knowledge of each other's activities and without trying to establish cooperation with each other;

b) excessive competition for one of the European financial instruments only (SOPHRD), without attempts to access financing from the European Regional Development Fund or Cohesion Fund (up to date we don't know of any projects from these Funds aimed at Roma communities);

c) there is no underlying strategy for the sustainability of activities implemented through the projects, which entails very often that once the external financing ceases, the entire development process of target communities comes to an end.

So, what are the risks we are currently facing?

- The local impact of projects will be much below expectations. Approximately 200 million euro⁷ are allocated to Romania, only through SOPHRD, for projects aiming at improving the situation of Roma, which equals the double of the amounts available between 1990-2007. However, the vast majority of projects will not succeed in absorbing the total financial resources, which will amount to recognising the weak capacity of implementation. All this will lead to a possible situation of “avoidance” of projects proposed by Roma implementors in the near future and diminishing the amounts allocated for projects aimed at improving the situation of Roma in the next financial programming period.

- A lot of organisations without experience in managing EU Funds have received financing within SOPHRD, some of the projects even amounting to 5 million euro, with an implementing period of 3 years. There is the major risk that these organisations collapse at the first serious difficulty (situation redeemed more than possible, seen that there are some organisations which have not received the pre-financing yet – 6 months from the start of the project, or the application for reimbursement has not been honored 120 days from the submission date. Should

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⁶ By “activism” we understand “a policy of taking direct and often militant action to achieve an end, especially a political or social one” - Collins English Dictionary - Complete & Unabridged 10th Edition, 2009.

⁷ Within the conference “The Contribution of EU funds to the Integration of Roma”, organised in Bucharest in October 2010, the Managing Authority of SOPHRD reported 31 projects in implementation, amounting to 100 million (http://www.fseromania.ro/images/downdocs/prezentare_12102010.pdf). Since then, at least another 20 contracts have been signed.

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this happen, all Roma organisations will have to suffer in terms of image and credibility, not to mention the danger entailed by the reduction of the number of active organisations. Last, but not least, the community based organisations cannot afford to manage such projects, for the lack of either human or financial resources necessary to implement these kinds of projects or to ensure a normal cash-flow, under the circumstances of the difficult conditions in which financial transfers take place between the contracting authority and the beneficiaries.

- The greatest danger deriving from the above is that the funds allocated to projects aiming at Roma issues be seriously diminished, due to the weak capacity of absorption of funds by Roma organisations.

I. The current financing mechanisms do not privilege quality, especially when the projects are financed through grants below 500,000 euro, for which there has been considerable demand. The rule of “first come, first serve” has to be modified so that the evaluation is made on basis of the quality of project proposals, not on basis of the order in which they arrive. There have been numerous cases when projects awarded, let’s say, 90 points (out of the total of 100) have not received financing because they were preceded by proposals evaluated for less points but sent one day before.

Also, the excessive bureaucracy imposed by the Contracting Authorities transforms beneficiaries of Structural Funds into “paper producing facilities”, thus diverting their efforts from the real beneficiaries, people. Just one example: an intermediary report for 4 months of activity, corresponding to a spent amount of 400,000 euro, had not less than 16,000 pages, which had to be delivered both in scanned and hard copy formats. One can imagine the amount of time spent only on scanning those 16,000 pages, as well as the resources necessary for producing the report. The Contracting Authority systematically issues solicitations of “clarification” or “modification / addendum” for reports, which generates the necessity of producing more papers, taking away from the time dedicated to direct work with the person one is supposed to “serve”. Unfortunately, “Investing in people”, the slogan of SOPHRD in Romania, seems to mean more “Investing in papers”, because these seem to be in the focus of the evaluation, and not the impact at the level of the final beneficiary.

I do not wish to enter at this point into technical details regarding, for example, the recovery of VAT (yet unclear and inefficient), the major delays in cashing in the pre-financing and the validation and payment corresponding to the application for reimbursement; I only wish to draw attention on the fact that the mechanism of management of Structural Funds in Romania makes it almost impossible to implement a project under normal circumstances. And this can be fatal for an NGO, be it Roma or non-Roma, which is not very solid from an institutional point of view.

II. What should our priorities be, for the next programming period?

8 Through “beneficiary” we understand the organisation which signed the financing contract with the Managing Authority.

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Starting the second half of 2011, the documents which will underpin the next programming period are be subject to discussions. It is imperative that Roma organisations bring a major input so that systemic changes within communities become reality. The positive aspects realised within the first programming period need to continue, and the lessons need to be learnt.

**Strengthening civil society and promoting cooperation networks with local communities** is an essential condition. We cannot develop good projects without a human resource able to meet the implementation process of a EU-funded project.

**Forming Local Action Groups** following the model developed through the Rural Development Fund\(^9\), which would include representatives of local authorities, communities, universities, employers' organisations, trade unions, etc. These Groups should assume a strategic vision regarding the socio-economic inclusion of local Roma communities; as such, they represent a European model which hasn't yet been exploited within projects of Roma NGOs.

It would be important that within the next programming period a percentage of allocated resources be RESERVED and granted outside competition and through simplified procedures to success projects aimed at the Roma, so they can continue for another round. This should be limited to projects aiming at direct and concrete measures which have proven successful and had a real impact at the community level, rather than to projects aiming at sketching strategies and plans which would end up in the implementators' drawers.

The key message which I am trying to convey is that standard measures such as awareness raising campaigns and the social inclusion of Roma need to be backed up by multiplied efforts to develop communities from within. The access to a quality education, modern professional training, medical services, etc., singled out in separate actions (measures currently promoted through the priority axes of SOPHRD\(^10\)) cannot ensure the integrated and sustainable approach so necessary to poor communities, like the majority of Roma communities. Programmes which would combine trainings for professional conversion, financial incentives for employers and measures which would facilitate the access of the children of targeted beneficiaries to a quality education are much more desirable than projects aiming at enhancing the access to education for children without supporting their parents in accessing well-paid jobs.

The priority of stakeholders in the area of the social inclusion of Roma must be to develop a strategic vision which would use, in an integrated way, the resources offered by the European Regional Development Fund and the Cohesion Fund. Integrated projects aimed at complex actions in the fields of education, employment, housing and health are the ones which will make a difference and are likely to close the development gap between Roma and non-Roma communities. It is more than obvious that achieving this goal takes a strong, real will both from Romania and from the EU.

Enough talking, let's start the action!

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\(^9\) [http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/rur/leaderplus/faq_en.htm#188](http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/rur/leaderplus/faq_en.htm#188)  
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