Needs Assessment Study for the Roma Education Fund
Background Paper

BULGARIA
TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION .................................................................................................................................4

PART ONE: SITUATION ANALYSIS ........................................................................................................5

1. SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC FEATURES OF THE ROMA IN BULGARIA .................................................5
   1.1. Numbers of Roma population .....................................................................................................5
   1.2. Structures by age and gender .....................................................................................................6
   1.3. Educational structure ..................................................................................................................6
   1.4. Socio cultural characteristics ....................................................................................................7

2. SOCIAL-ECONOMIC STATUS OF ROMA POPULATION ......................................................................8
   2.1. Roma poverty ............................................................................................................................8
   2.2. Types and levels of the Roma employment in Bulgaria ..............................................................10
   2.3. The social assistance ................................................................................................................11
   2.4. State of health of the Roma population .....................................................................................11
   2.5. Education – the main factor for the facilitation of the access to employment and for the avoidance of the poverty trap ........................................................................................................12

3. ENROLLMENT, DROPPING OUT AND GRADUATION OF ROMA CHILDREN ..................................13
   3.1. Description of the situation .....................................................................................................13
   3.2. Trends and reasons for the dropouts from schools of the Roma children .................................15

4. QUALITY OF ROMA EDUCATION – DIRECTIONS FOR ITS IMPROVEMENT .................................18

CONCLUSIONS ON PART 1 .....................................................................................................................21

PART TWO: EVALUATION OF POLICIES AND ASSESSMENT OF THE FINANCIAL NEEDS.

PROJECTION OF FINANCIAL NEEDS FOR THE NEAR FUTURE ................................................................23

5. INSTITUTIONS RELATED TO THE EDUCATIONAL POLICIES FOR ROMA ....................................23

6. LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND OF THE POLICIES RELATED TO THE EDUCATION AND QUALIFICATION OF ROMA ........................................................................................................24

7. POLICIES .......................................................................................................................................25
   7.1. Directions and priorities ............................................................................................................25
   7.2. Pending Requirements for the Implementation of the Policies ..................................................27

8. MAIN PROJECTS ON THE EDUCATION OF ROMA .........................................................................28
   8.1. Project for preparing children from disadvantaged families for attending first grade at school .................................................................................................................................28
   8.2. The Desegregation Project .......................................................................................................31
   8.3. Policies for the liquidation of illiteracy and for professional qualification of adults ................34

9. EXPENDITURE ON POLICIES .........................................................................................................36
   9.1. Planned Expenditure on Roma Education for 2004 .................................................................36
   9.2. Additional Expenditure .............................................................................................................39
   9.3. Total expenditure .....................................................................................................................42

CONCLUSIONS ON PART 9 ....................................................................................................................44

PART THREE: LIST OF GENERAL TOPICS FOR ROMA EDUCATION PROJECTS ..............................45

LITERATURE .............................................................................................................................................46

List of the Annexes

Annex 1: Information on situation analysis
Annex 2: List of the NGO that work with Roma population and on its problems
Annex 3: List of the Roma informational centers
Annex 4: Projects on Roma education
Annex 5: Reflections received at the workshop and list of the participants
List of Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EA</td>
<td>Employment Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB</td>
<td>State Budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MES</td>
<td>Ministry of Education and Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MRDPW</td>
<td>Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MLSP</td>
<td>Ministry of Labour and Social Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-governmental Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCEDI</td>
<td>National Council on the Ethnic and Demographic Issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCIC</td>
<td>Regional Cultural and Information Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FO</td>
<td>Fund “Education”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BHC</td>
<td>Bulgarian Helsinki Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>?S?</td>
<td>Agency for Social Analyses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction

At the Roma in Expanding Europe: Challenges for the Future conference that took place in June 2003, the years between 2005 to 2015 were announced a decade for the social inclusion of Roma. Another one of the decisions taken was for the creation of an Educational fund that will sponsor grants for projects, promoted by the public and private sector institutions, for analyses and programs for the improvement of Roma education. The operation of the Fund requires preliminary projections of the priorities in Roma education and of the expenditures to be incurred in Bulgaria and in all the other countries included. In addition, at the stage of the initial distribution of funds, the outlining of the major national priorities and initiatives that are to take place during 2005 - 7 is of particular importance.

In order to facilitate the achievement of this goal, preliminary information has been collected concerning the present situation of the Roma in Bulgaria; the currently applied policies for their education, as well as for the available sources of funding for the planned initiatives. The researches and conclusions will be presented in the current Report, that consists of three parts and Annexes.

The first part presents some basic social-economic characteristics of the Bulgarian Roma. The accent falls on issues, such as poverty, employment, unemployment, health, level of education. Special attention is paid the children who attend kindergartens and schools, to the high dropout rates after grade five and to the overall low levels of educational attainment among the Roma.

Part two presents different organizations, adopted decisions, strategies and plans for initiatives in the field of Roma education. The policies of the Ministry of Education and Science, of the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy and of the Employment Agency in the field of education, literation and the vocational training of the Roma are also explained. Further, the chapter contains a detailed description of the projects for the integration and socialization of the Roma children, as well as for the desegregation of the Roma schools. The positive effects and the shortcomings of the projects are also enumerated.

An assessment of the total amount of funds necessary for the overall resolving of the major problems in the Roma education has also been made.

Part three contains a list of the projects proposed for funding in the coming years by different relevant NGOs.

The team of experts who prepared the Report is as follows:

Pobeda Loukanova: Part I, paragraph 3 and 4;

Part II, paragraph 5, 6, 7, 8 (8.2 and 8.3), 9.

Lilia Dimova: Part I, paragraph 1 and 2.

Nikolaj Kolev: 8.2.
PART ONE: SITUATION ANALYSIS

1. Socio-demographic features of the Roma in Bulgaria

1.1. Numbers of Roma population

According to the last official population Census in 2001, the Roma in Bulgaria are 370,908 and constitute 4.68% of the population. A report of the National Council on Ethnic and Demographic Issues to the Council of Ministers of the Republic Bulgaria dated 15 June 2003 reads that according to expert estimates, Roma are about 350,000. Both cases cover people defining themselves as Roma.

Meanwhile, there is strong evidence that the number of Roma is higher. According to the Police data and a number of expert statements, the Roma population in Bulgaria varies between 550,000 and 800,000, i.e. about 8.10% of the total population.\(^1\) According to unofficial data of the local authorities and the Ministry of Interior, the approximate number of the Roma in Bulgaria by 1990 is 577,000. Jan-Pierre Liegeois points larger number of Roma in our country - 700-800,000 people\(^3\). The same data are indicated also by the Gypsy Research Center in Paris.\(^4\)

The difference of 300-400,000 people results from the unwillingness of certain Roma groups to define themselves as such due to a number of objective and subjective reasons, or due to their Bulgarian, Turkish and Wallachian ethnic self-consciousness. The data defined by Ilona Tomova\(^5\) in sociological manner are very close to the expert data about Roma. According to her study every fifth person defined by other people as Roma claims to be a Turk and to speak Turkish – in other words, these are about 120,000 people (according to expert data they are about 150,000). Every tenth defines himself as an ethnic Bulgarian and speaks only Bulgarian – what makes about 60,000 people (according to expert data – about 100,000). Every twelfth Roma defines himself as Wallachian and speaks old Romanian dialect – about 30,000 people (about 60-80,000 by the expert data). The most serious reason for the reluctance of some Roma to define them as such results from the stereotyped negative image created within non-Roma for ages.

Out of the 370,908 people defining themselves as Roma, 47.3% point that they belong to the group of “Bulgarian Roma” (“dasikane Roma”), 46.2% - to the group of “Turkish Roma” (“horahane Roma”). Both groups are called “yerlii”. 5.1% belong to the group “Wallach Roma” or the so-called “rudari” and only 1.6% to the group of “kardarashi”. These data are also very close to the information provided by experts.\(^6\)

---

\(^1\) Nunev, Y. Desegregation in the education of the Roma community (social-pedagogical aspects). (Library of the Sofia University “St. Climent Ohridski”)

\(^2\) Information for official use. Information on the ethnic composition of Bulgaria population, January 1990.


\(^4\) Gypsy Research Center. Rene Descartes University, Paris, 1994


\(^6\) Nunev, Y. Desegregation in the education of the Roma community (social-pedagogical aspects). (Library of the Sofia University “St. Climent Ohridski”)

---

5
Some Roma leaders claim that Roma in Central and Eastern Europe are far more numerous. Even if they are right, we do not have other official information besides that of the National Statistical Institute (Table 1).

Compared to the 1992 Census, the numbers of Roma have increased by 57,512 people or 18.4%. Their geographic distribution is uneven. The largest numbers of Roma are located in Plovdiv, Stara Zagora, Sliven, Pazardjik and Montana, and the smallest – in the Rhodopian mountains. The ratio urban-rural Roma is almost proportionate - 199,601 (54%) live in towns, and 171,307 (46%) in villages. The urban Roma population is slightly higher.

1.2. Structures by age and gender

Compared to the other large ethnic groups (Bulgarians and Turks) Roma are in favorable position. They have the most significant age potential, and the aging typical for Bulgarians is not characteristic for them (Table 2). The appropriate educational and vocational training could increase the rates of the Roma economic activity. This is the main objective of the National Strategy for the Labor Market in Bulgaria for the period 2004-2010.

Young Roma (up to 20 years of age) are twice as numerous as the Bulgarians and 1.5 times as many as the Turk from the same category. The number of Roma children up to 10 years of age is almost 3 times higher than the number of Bulgarian children and twice higher than are the Turkish children. Within the Roma community, 15.2% fall in the NSI category “children” (almost every seventh!), while for Bulgarians children are hardly 5.1%, and for the Turks – only 8.4%. This is not surprising. Children come on second place in the Roma value systems, after freedom (“Roma liberty”). Roma families consider children to be the real renewals of kin and family tradition, and every child has their position depending on gender, education and contribution to earning money.  

*The high place of children in the value systems suggests that the education of these same children will also be highly evaluated, of course, in case they benefit from it.*

1.3. Educational structure

Despite the favorable age structure, the Roma community is comparatively the least educated. Education differences are so significant and form ethno-gaps between Roma and non-Roma, and *frequently among Roma*. They deepen in the years of global transformations, the Roma educational attainment decreasing. 1992 Census results indicate that illiterate Roma are about 8.5%. In 2001 they are by 4% more (Table 3).

The approximate number of children from the Roma community between 6 and 16 years of age that should obligatorily attend schools is about 91,000. According to calculations of the Ministry of Education and Science (MES) made in 2001 on the basis of primary information from education inspectorates, the number of pupils from first to thirteenth grade is 1,007,544.

Educational structures within the Roma community by gender and age however indicate that obligatory education is “not so obligatory” for considerable part of Roma.

---

(Table 4). Every seventh Roma between 10 and 19 years and every tenth between 20 and 29 years falls in the groups of the illiterate. Despite the methodological uncertainty of the NSI when defining the category, “illiterate” means that the person has either basic or no literacy.\footnote{This is also unequivocally evidence by the ASA survey Roma'2003.}

In an international plan, the educational level of the Roma in Bulgaria is assessed as “most dramatic example” in comparison with Hungary and Romania. Nearly 90% of the Roma in Bulgaria have primary or lower education, against 10% with secondary (Table 5) education. The comparison of the indicators with those for the non-Roma population and with the other two countries is a very strong evidence for the dire need for special measures. The foreign donors should consider this quite unfavorable structure of Roma in Bulgaria when allocating funds for programs and other actions. Bulgaria could be placed at the same level as countries, where Roma population is the most numerous in Europe.

The presented main socio-demographic features of the Roma population are validated by those specified for Roma of over 16 years of age during the ASA national representative survey Roma’2003\footnote{Dimova L. et al, 2004, The Roma: the new challenges, Sofia: ASA.} (Table 6).

Certain differences are observed also within the community in terms of educational level. (Table 3) According to the ASA Roma’2003 survey illiterate Roma women are twice more than illiterate Roma men, and the women having secondary education are four times less than the men having the same level of education. The education of the Roma women, and particularly of the young women, is a very serious problem for the Roma in Bulgaria, and also an independent gender problem.

The age distribution also discloses a very alarming situation. According to survey data, every sixth Roma between 16 and 25 years is illiterate (17.2%), and has not completed even elementary education. Every tenth Roma in working age is also illiterate (Table 7).

*The low level of education of Roma and the high illiteracy rates leaves the adult education and training without any alternative.*

1.4. Socio cultural characteristics

Recent studies indicate that in a socio-cultural aspect Roma are not a uniform, homogeneous community. The differences usually are due to religion, mother tongue, cultural identity and customs. The main groups according to the study of Marushakova and Popov are the following:\footnote{Marushakova E and Popov V., Gypsies in Bulgaria, S.,1993; Marushakova E., The gypsy groups in Bulgaria and their ethnic self-consciousness, Bulgarian Ethnography magazine, issue 1, 1992.}

1. The *yerlii (settled gypsies)*\footnote{Conditional designation.} - the most numerous and varied meta-group community. They are the descendants of the first gypsies, who gave up more or less the nomad way of life and stayed on the Balkans during the period of the Ottoman Empire. This community is divided into two main groups: *dasikane Roma* (Christian or Bulgarian gypsies) and *horohane/horahane Roma* (Muslim or Turkish Roma).

2. *Kardarashi (kaldarashi)* – former nomads, forced to put up in 1958. They mainly live in villages and small towns, much rarely in large towns, and form small groups within the surrounding population, without making neighborhoods. They are
descendants of the groups resettled in Wallachia, Moldova and Transilvania during the so-called “large calderary invasion”.

Two major groups of kaldarashi exist in Bulgaria: “lovari” mainly dealing with trade (men) and fortune telling (women); “calderary” or “German”, “Hungarian” or “Austrian” gypsies – tinsmiths, living mainly in North Bulgaria.

The gypsies from the “kardarashi” community differ from all the rest of the gypsies. Besides, they are strictly endogamous within the entire “kardarashi” community.

3. Rudari (often called “Wallach” or “Wallach gypsies” by their neighbors). They substantially differ from the other two groups. The rudari speak an old dialect of the Romanian language.

Another sound classification of Roma population is offered by Ilona Tomova after the carrying out of the empirical sociological survey by the International Center of Ethnic Problems and Cultural Interactions. The ethno-social structure is simplified and built on the basis of respondents’ self-identification. According to their ethnicity, more than one-fifth (22%) define themselves as Turks and Turkish is their mother tongue. One-tenth defines themselves as Bulgarians. They are the best educated and integrated in the society in comparison with the other Roma. One-twentieth define themselves as Wallach. Two-thirds of the respondents define themselves as Roma.

This classification of the Roma is suitable and is used when discussing the problems with education in their mother tongue – to overcome bilingualism as a reason the irregular going to school. Studies have proven that about 61% of “Turkish” gypsies communicate among themselves in Turkish; 84% of Wallach – in Romanian; 14% of Roma speak Bulgarian. The latter group has mainly Bulgarian ethnic self-consciousness. (Table 8)

Just bout one-fifth of the Roma children starting school (grade I) speak Bulgarian – this substantial language barrier is an obstacle for their normal training and development. Therefore – the pre-school training of Roma children should be further spread out.

2. Social-economic status of Roma population

The studies directly or indirectly targeting the Roma in Bulgaria offer convincing empirical arguments that the Roma are the most appreciably marginalized ethnic group, with the highest risk of poverty and with limited internal potential for improvement of their living standards. Although some of the country richest citizens are to be found in the Roma community, Roma, in general, are usually and justifiably associated with the poorest, outsider stratum of the society structure.

2.1. Roma poverty

The Roma population impoverishment takes place within the mass, general impoverishment of the Bulgarian population. All results of surveys on the changes in the Bulgarian society during 1990-2002 indicate that the changes in the material status of the households for all the ethnic groups point at one and the same direction – its

systematic decrease. Thus, in the distribution of respondents according to their income, the minority ethnic groups form the main relative share in the “bottom” group with incomes of up to BGN 100 (approximately 50 Euro). The unemployed, the persons with low or no education at all, and those living in villages are the poorest respondents.

According to initial data, 1,113 mln. Bulgarians (14% from the total number) live below the poverty line.\(^6\) The analysis of the consumption structure of the households proves that the Roma population is the most threatened by the poverty.

The international comparative analyses indicate that this is not a phenomenon that is typical solely for Bulgaria. Roma more and more live in spatially segregated zones and the intergenerational transfer of poverty is a frequent phenomenon among Roma (Seleni, 2002).\(^7\) This finding is supported by the study “Social-economic status of the Roma community in Bulgaria and measures in the domain of employment and the social sphere targeting that community” (2003).\(^8\) According to it, in mid 2003, 14 years after the beginning of the transformations in the Bulgarian society, over 70% of the persons feel threatened by falling in and/or permanently remaining in the poverty trap. This is very serious signal for the scale of the impoverishment. However, even against this general background, the threat of living in poverty has much greater dimensions and is of tangibly larger scale for the smaller ethnic groups (Roma and Turks) than for Bulgarians.

According to the ASA study on Roma, the three leading, most serious problems form the group of the THREE “Bs” \(\text{\textit{in Bulgarian the following three words start with the letter “b”}}\) – Poverty, Unemployment and Future for children. Over 80% of the Roma households are pressed mostly by these problems. The Roma suffer the most from the crisis. (Table 10)

The poverty trap is comparatively the most widely spread among the Roma, no matter of the methodology used for measuring the poverty level. This is clearly illustrated by the data in Table 11, obtained as a result of a series of calculations based on the three most widely applied criteria for measuring of poverty – income, consumption and subjective self-evaluations.\(^9\)

The poor living with the lowest incomes and suffering from the severest deprivations are predominantly persons without any or with low education, unemployed, in older age groups, social assistance beneficiaries, residing in small towns, living alone.

\(^6\) ????????? ?? ????????? ??????????? ?? ????????? ??????. 2004 ?.  
\(^8\) The research project “Social-economic status of the Roma community in Bulgaria and of the existing measures in the employment area and the social sphere targeting that community” was implemented by the Agency for Social Analysis (ASA), after winning a tender of the Foundation “Partners–Bulgaria” with the financial support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). 1888 persons were surveyed in the mid 2003 by using recent quantitative and qualitative methods – over 800 of them with Roma ethnic identity and self-consciousness in 150 settlements throughout the country. The comparisons by the main demographic factors and the methodology of the survey ensure national representativeness for the Roma, Turkish and Bulgarian ethnic groups in compliance with the 2001 census results. There is methodological and statistical evidence to claim that the survey results are representative for the entire 18+ population, and for the Roma community. Further on, the survey is referred to as ASA Roma 2003 - ???.  
\(^9\) The data in part 2 comes from the already cited survey ASA Roma’2003, if another was not mentioned.  
\(^9\) We formed 2 main groups of persons separately for the three proposed methodologies (income, consumption and subjective evaluations) and designated them conditionally poor and non-poor, i.e. below and over the poverty threshold according to the respective criteria.
(Table 12). The Roma, again with the ethno-clusterization of the society, are at the bottom – the poor Roma are two times more than the poor Bulgarians, the non-poor Roma are 17 times less than are Bulgarians who belong to the same category. They have lower living standards than the Turks, though the differences are not so impressive. The Roma comparatively widely suffer from basic material and immaterial deprivations (Table 13).

Referring to the material status of the Roma households, to the property and durable goods they possess, the data indicate some interesting paradoxes (Table 14). Over 80% of the Roma in the country, according to their words, have own lodgings. This fact raises the questions of “the type” of lodging they have, and whether they have notary acts certifying the ownership. Usually the Roma regard the lodging as a “roof over their head”, a place where they can live, a shelter. Therefore, the declarations for own lodging should be treated with caution.

It seems that the most widely spread conveniences for the Roma are the lodging (even if it may be argued whether it is a lodging according to simple construction and hygiene standards and if it is legally their own), the refrigerator and the TV set. Most of the Roma have them for years, but now they cannot afford to replace them with new ones.

Similar to their parents, the Roma children are the most suffering from deprivations compared to the children from the other ethnic groups in the country. The Table 15 data legitimately discloses that over half of Roma children are undernourished, have shabby clothes and shoes and their parents have serious financial problems in relation to their health and education. Every third Roma household faces financial problems when sending their children to school. This is one of the most worrying features of the Roma poverty.

2.2. Types and levels of the Roma employment in Bulgaria

Compared to Bulgarians, the employed Roma are two times less, and the unemployed – three times more. The Roma also have the most unfavorable characteristics in the labor market (Table 16). Out of the surveyed working Roma (legally), 70% are full-time employed, 7% - half-time and 23% - seasonally. As many as 58% work in the public sector, 35% - in the private, and only 7% have own business. Hardly 1.9% of the surveyed Roma have managing functions at work – they are 5 times less than the Bulgarians occupying the same types of positions. As a whole, every fifth Roma in working age is unemployed and relies on non-labor income.

The share of those who have never worked is, again, comparatively the largest for the Roma – almost every third. These are mainly young people, with low educational level, living in villages. Three-fourths of the young Roma between 16 and 25 years (74.4%) and every fourth aged 26-39 (25.0%) have never worked. 40.9% of the unemployed, 31.6% of the women and 24.6% of the men are in a similar position. Even among the Roma with secondary education, 15.6% also have never had a paid job. Many receive social assistance benefits. It is disturbing that many Roma, even before starting work, join the group of social assistance beneficiaries.

The problem of the employment of youths is one of the most serious in the labor market. Although it affects all ethnic groups, it remains the most acute for the Roma. Therefore, the programs and measures applied in the labor market for stimulating employers to hire youths and for facilitating the transition from the educational
institution to employment should be expanded and complemented by new alternatives.

The main sources of income for the Roma are the *passive* ones – social benefits, family allowances for children, pensions, and unemployment benefits. Comparatively small part of the Roma live on legally „earned” money. The differences in the weight of the various income sources are considerable and depend on the Roma place of residence (Table 17).

The Roma from Sofia, unlike those living outside the capital city, rely on incomes from salaries. In villages, the Roma mostly rely on state assistance and incomes from the household plots (mainly incomes in kind).

According to the available data, the average spell of unemployment among Roma population is 5 years and 2 months. This lengthy period calls for the active involvement of the Roma in motivation and vocational training courses organized by the labor offices, for regular provision with information about the job offers and facilitation of the access to such information.

**2.3. The social assistance**

The Roma are comparatively widely covered by the social assistance system – in 2003, almost every second Roma family is a client of the social services, and every third – almost fully relies on benefits. For nearly half of the Roma the social assistance benefits are among the main means for survival, although that if they could choose, 90% declare they prefer to have job rather than to receive social benefits.

For the period June 2002 – June 2003, 71.8% of the surveyed Roma have been receiving monthly social benefits (Table 18). The Roma people regard the monthly social benefits as “salaries for the poor” which the state is obliged to provide. Such a perception carries serious risks for asserting the culture of dependence. These risks are apprehended also by the Roma – every fifth is convinced that the continuous assistance for one and the same people creates unwillingness for taking of independent decisions.

In Bulgaria, the parents of children in school age have to submit at the social assistance offices a documents certifying that their child (children) regularly attend classes. It has to be signed by the principal of the respective school. In the interviews taken, the principals of schools at Roma ghettos say that this requirement is one of just formal nature.

**2.4. State of health of the Roma population**

About two thirds of the Roma population in working age consider their state of health as very good, however, 30,2% suffer from a chronic disease. Over 90% of them have their own General Practitioner. Every third visits him/her only if the worst comes and the problem cannot be solved within the home. Generally, the access of the Roma to health services proved to be one of the very most problems. (Table 19)

The main reasons, for not visiting the general practitioner are not related to the sustenance of bad attitudes towards them. Over 70% are satisfied with their general practitioners. Their financial situation is the most serious obstacle before the access to health services – every third of the Roma population in working age has no money to pay his/her medical examination fee, no matter that this is just a token payment, and every second can not afford to buy medicines when they are needed. Quite
reasonably, here comes the question about the extent to which the Roma are able to take advantage from the clinical paths and other services, covered by the healthcare system, when even the medical check up is a problem for them.

Large parts of the Roma population do not use the services offered by healthcare system even when their own children’s health is threatened. Only 16% of the Roma have not experienced financial difficulties when seeking medical help for their children in the period June 2002 – June 2003. Every second parent (55.5%) has frequently faced the impossibility to provide medical treatment to his/her child because he/she could not pay for the service. As much as 26.7% of the Roma experienced this several times during the period in question.

If the Roma healthcare can be defined as having serious faults, the situation of their dental treatment is disastrous. Only 0.2% of the Roma in working age regularly visit their dentist or go for dental examinations. The prevailing part (64.6% of Roma between 16 and 60 years and 79.3% over 60 years) cannot afford a visit to the dentist. As much as 21% of Roma in working age and 12% of Roma above the working age seek dental services only in urgent cases. Here, the reasons are again financial - the low living standard of the Roma population explains their exclusion from dental treatment and seriously embarrasses their access to health services. Alarmingly, this exclusion relates to their children as well.

It could be presumed that the provision and easy access to health care services in the schools with desegregated classes will be a strong motivator for the Roma parents to regularly send their children to school. The provision of free dental care services and of psychological help will also be useful. The requirement for a psychological advisor in desegregated schools could also seriously facilitate the desegregation process itself.

2.5. Education – the main factor for the facilitation of the access to employment and for the avoidance of the poverty trap

The survey on the social changes indicates that, overall, the employment status is primarily dependent on the educational attainment and the vocational training. Only 30% of the interviewed Bulgarians have primary education while this share reaches 57-58% for the people of Turkish origin and 72% for the Roma. During the observed period, those who have lost their jobs are mainly the people without profession and/or those from the ethnic minorities.

The importance of the educational status requires a more detailed analysis of its impact power. Of this factor was needed. The rich information from the ASA- Roma 2003 survey allowed for an accurate analysis of the poverty risks and of the impact power of the main factors that influence the Roma access to employment. The logical regression method was applied.

The main conclusion from the more detailed analysis indicates that the level of completed education is the strongest factor for access to employment both at the national level and, in particular, within the Roma society. When the educational level increases by one “unit”, the chances for changing of the labor status increase three times, both for Roma and non-Roma. In other words, the Roma without any education have three times lower chances for finding a job compared even to those who have

---

20 A detailed description of the methodology for development of logical regression methods can be reviewed from L. Dimova et al, 2004, Roma: between the assistance dependence and the freedom of employment, Sofia, USAID.
completed only primary education. The same association is maintained for the higher categories – every higher educational level provides three times bigger chances for finding a paid job in comparison to the lower one. Although the high educational attainment does not guarantee employment, it increases the employability. The finding that educational attainment and qualification are the major determinants for the increase in the Roma employability is, we consider, very important and should be taken into consideration in the development of Roma employment programs and measures.

Education proved to be the most significant factor for the poverty risks, as well. The more detailed analysis of the specific values of the regression coefficients once again outlined that the degree of completed education is the most significant factor for entering the group of the poor – both at the national level and for each of the three ethnic groups (Bulgarians, Turks and Roma). If illiterate Roma complete at least elementary education, the possibility to avoid falling into poverty increases by 62%.

The second factor by weight, which significantly influences the poverty risk is the ethnic identity. Here, the dependence is one-way – the non-Bulgarians are more strongly poverty threatened than are the Bulgarians. It could be considered that, to a very large extent, Roma are under a serious poverty risk and are threatened by the formation of a cultural model of the intergenerational transfer of poverty.

The urban Roma are under the strongest poverty threat. In general, in the cities the contrast between the various ethnic groups is the most prominent. P.E. Mitev (2002) draws a similar conclusion in his analysis of urban and rural poverty. The poverty of urban Roma is close to anomie, to permanent and lasting misery, which is very difficult to exit from. It is not by accident that the “ghettovization” is mainly referred to the urban environment, and the phenomena itself is outlined as a tendency.

*The analysis of the importance of the educational factor confirms its significance for the Roma employment, for exit from poverty and for the potential positive changes in their social status, all other things equal.*

3. Enrollment, dropping out and graduation of Roma children

3.1. Description of the situation

The total number of enrolled students falls due to the overall birth rate decrease. While in 1990/01 in all grades of the secondary education the net coefficients of enrollment of the population were improving, in 2003-4, the coefficient for pre-school education reaches 74,6% (a 14,9% increase compared to 1994/5); for elementary education (grade I – IV, ISCED - 1) – 100,3% (+ 7,5%); for primary education (grade V – VIII, ISCED – 2A) – 84,2% (+5,2%); for secondary education (grade IX – XII, ISCED-3A, 3C) – 77,1% (+15,7%); and for higher education (ISCED-5B) – 24,1% (+5,3%)\(^{21}\).

As already mentioned, the overall trend for the decrease in the birth rates does not concern the Roma. Recent research shows that the average fertility rate for a Roma woman is 2,3%, which is three times higher than are the rates for the ethnic Bulgarian women (0,7%)\(^{22}\). According to a research carried out by ASA – M agency, 70% of the

\(^{21}\) According to NSI data.

\(^{22}\) According to NSI data.
births in 2003 are of children whose parents belong to an ethnic minority or are foreigners in Bulgaria. The biggest share in these births belongs to the Roma mothers. In this way, it could be expected that the increase in the net coefficients of enrollment into schools is due to the increasing numbers of Roma children (or of their better coverage by the educational system).

The information on the Roma children collected by the National Inspectorates on Education in 2001 shows that in grades I to XII there are 106 171 Roma students enrolled. Their ethnicity is determined by the teachers.

As mentioned in the beginning, the children who have identified themselves as Roma in the Census (2001) are around 91 000. The comparison between the two numbers is another proof for the satisfactory coverage of the Roma children in the age of secondary education. Regrettably, the real situation is different.

There are still some children who are not covered by the statistics and are, thus, not known to the school authorities. This is typical particularly for the poor Roma families living in the villages and for the unsettled Roma. In fact, there are no unsettled Roma in Bulgaria. Temporary changes in their place of residence occur only in connection to seasonal employment.

A rare, although existing practice is the enrollment of Roma children who do not have mental problems into schools for mentally retarded children. Representatives of Roma organizations say that the main reasons for this practice are the lack of information among the parents for the type of the school where the children are being sent and the speculations of the directors and teachers with this state of disinformation. The parents are not informed for the negative consequences from the stay of their children at such schools. The instruction at these schools is carried out under specialized curricula and the primary education degree that they issue (after the completion of grade VIII) does not allow for the further continuation of the education.

Still, it should be pointed out that the legislation that regulates the functioning of the specialized schools for mentally retarded children has never allowed or favored the enrollment of Roma children. MES experts say that after the last revisions that were introduced in 2002, the admission of children to these schools is possible only after going through medical examinations that are serious and detailed enough in order not to allow for the enrollment of healthy children.

Of particular importance for the Roma children is the pre-school preparation/training. To a large extent it is decisive for their successful performance in grades I to III. The opinion that a maximum number of Roma children should be included in the pre-school trainings at least 1 year prior to their enrollment in grade I is unanimous among the expert-pedagogues, representatives of Roma organizations. Further, according to most of the opinions, the pre-school training should amount to 2 or more years of instruction, so that special habits for attending kindergarten and, afterwards.

---

24 Due to the different way for the identification of the Roma, the comparison is conditional.
26 According to experts in Roma ethnic issues, in Bulgaria there are no unsettled Roma (tchergari).
27 According to a survey published in 1995, every third child in the specialized schools is of Roma origin. For reference see Tomova I., Roma in the Period of Transition, Sofia, 1995. At the specialized schools from the boarding type, the children are provided with free meals.
school could be created. The increasing share of the children covered by these programs is an important precondition for the increase in the enrollment rates of the Roma children to schools. The last revision (2002) of the Law on Education also follows this line of thought – it stipulates that the 1 year pre-school education is obligatory for all children.

There are no precise and reliable data on the enrolment of Roma in Universities or Colleges. According to the opinions of the interviewed experts, the rates are rather low. Still, the positive effects form the activities organized by the educated Roma should not remain underestimated.

B. Other research shows that the dropout rates in Bulgaria are rather high. This is one among the most serious problems for the country.

The administrative statistics of MES show that the highest rates of dropouts from school are observed in Dobrich (2,5%), Kustendil (2,1%), Razgrad (2,1%), Blagoevgrad (1,7%) and Vidin (1,6%). In the same time, the share of the Roma enrolled in schools to the numbers of those living in the locality is relatively the highest in the districts of Montana (26,9%), Haskovo (20,6%), Sliven (19,1%) and Pernik (18,9%) (Table 20). Evidently, the higher dropout rates do not correlate with the numbers of Roma living in the respective districts and cannot be explained with the more numerous drop outs of the students of Roma origin.

It is particularly because of the consideration of the dropouts as a national problem that MES does not lead separate statistics for the Roma on this indicator.

What is the scope of the dropouts for the Roma students? According to the ASA research, in mid 2003, every fifth Roma child at the age of between 7 and 15 years (20%) does not attend school at all. 8,7% attend classes irregularly. Around 5% of the young Roma are illiterate.

According to another approach for calculation (just for the purposes of comparison), around 32% of all the children in school age drop out from school, for the ethnic Turks this share is 6% and for the Bulgarians – 8%.

For example, at Primary School No 75, that also hosts a secondary vocational school and is located in the Roma estate of Faculteta (Sofia), usually there are 6 to 8 first grade classes formed each year. On the average, grade 8 is completed by about 2 to 3 classes. A maximum of 16-17 youths graduate from grade XIII. For the last year, nobody from all those who tried to continue their education was accepted into a university. Experts say that this scenario is typical for most of the schools where the numbers of Roma students are prevailing.

3.2. Trends and reasons for the dropouts from schools of the Roma children

National statistics on the dropouts from school read that, overall, the highest are the dropout rates in grade I and II – 1,3%, followed by grade V – 1,4% and grade IX – 1,2%. For the remaining grades I to IX, the dropout rates are between 0,8% and 1,0% and after grade IX – between 0,5% and 0,3% (Table 21). These trends can be interpreted as pointing out the major problem areas that are to be taken into consideration when working with the Roma children. Evidently, good pre-school


29 The information has been received through interviews with experts.
preparation is needed in order to allow the overcoming of the crisis in grades I and II. Later, the efforts should be directed towards retaining the children at the schools after graduation from grade V and IX.

Another national representative research on the reasons for the dropouts from school shows that for 2001-02, a total of 21 thousand students abandoned school, 18 thousand of them being in the age of primary education. The major group of reasons for these rates are the family reasons (35.2%) and the personal unwillingness to study (31.0%). Both types of cited reasons are connected with poverty and with the necessity for participation in the bread earning for the family.

MES experts comment that the reasons are as follows:

1. Social-economic:
   - high poverty rates;
   - the big distances between the places of residence and the settlements with schools;
   - poor social dialogue on the questions for the keeping of the children at schools. It is said to be due to the inefficient distribution of the responsibilities between the schools, the families and society;
   - lack of interest on behalf of the parents as to the education and the development of their own children;
   - unfavorable family atmosphere for the children whose parents are separated;
   - social isolation of the Roma children enrolled in grade I due to the language barrier;
   - involvement of students into family business activities.

The unfavorable social and economic situation of the Roma families contributes to the sustenance of negative opinions, among the Roma children, regarding the schools and to the creation of feelings of shame and humiliation because of the shortage of schooling aids, clothes and shoes. Further, the labor market also operates in a rather unfavorable economic environment, which encourages migration. The children in the families that migrated are threatened by school dropouts because of the unavoidable discomfort that they feel during the period of adaptation to the new schools.

2. Health-related:
   - disturbances in the psychical and mental development of the children;
   - health problems that do not allow attending school during the regular hours.

3. Pedagogical:
   - unattractive methods of teaching;
   - unattractiveness of the schools for the youngsters;
   - difficulties in covering the state requirements for educational achievement for the children with slight disabilities;
   - insufficient Bulgarian language skills among the students from the ethnic minorities and the lack of motivation in their parents to insist on the continuation of their education.

All of the cited reasons lead to the following negative impacts – lack of interest for the educational process and of motives for inclusion into the educational and

---

30 According to NSI data.
31 The classification is suggested by Mrs. Ofelia Krumova, senior expert in sector Cultural Integration of the Minorities, at the MES.
upbringing activities; discouragement of the young people during the socialization process.

Additional reasons have been drawn from the conducted interviews. Among them are the poor relationship between the contents of the educational process and the requirements of the employers; the low motivation of the parents for sending their offspring to school and for requiring the completion of their homework. All these last reasons are of a rather common nature and are typical for the non-Roma families, as well.

During the last years, it seems that the reserved or even negative attitudes towards the benefits that are to be drawn from good education are being reproduced among the younger generations. In the same time, it should not be considered that education is excluded from their value systems. The qualitative surveys (made as part of the ASA study) showed the incidence of quite some cases when the mothers declared willingness to accept many deprivations in order to be able to guarantee that their children will graduate from school. Most often, these mothers were explaining their stance with the fact that they, themselves, regret that they have not had the chance to study.

Another problem that is typical for the Roma is the equal access to education. It is determined by reasons, such as the:

- high opportunity cost of attending school.

The relative prices of the textbooks, notebooks and of other schooling aids are high for the Roma population. The additional costs for buying clothes, shoes and for covering of the transportation costs of the students further increase the “price” of having a child who goes to school. The families that are unable to cover these costs are left only with the alternative of enrolling their children in the local ghetto school or in the boarding or semi-boarding schools.

In addition, misery and poverty quite frequently serve as a vindication, as a ”learned excuse” about why Roma children do not go to school. As Yosif Nunev says in his analysis of the Roma child and their family environment, good education is not within the values of the marginalized part32 of the Roma people. According to Nunev education is of high value only for untraditional Roma families, whose share in the Roma community is insignificant.

- negative attitudes towards the Roma children in schools

The ASA Roma’2003 study indicates that only 3,8% of the parents of children aged between 7 and 15 years point out that their children do not want to attend school because their fellows have demonstrated the negative attitudes towards them. However, in case this happens, both the parents and the child feel discomfort.

According to Christo Kjuchukov the racist views of some pedagogues and their conviction that the Roma children intellectual abilities are lower is demonstrated through neglectful attitudes and behavior. This explains why some Roma children consider the school environment hostile.

32 Nunev, J. 1998, Roma child and his/her family environment, Sofia: IMIR.
• some shortcomings in the legislation, which are by now repaired

Till recently, the unequal access to education was also grounded by the insufficiently precise formulations in the legislation. Article 35, par 2 of the Regulation for Implementation of the Education Law was amended after the Bulgarian Helsinki Committee initiated the conduct of legal proceedings. This article provided for advantage in the enrolment into schools for children with certain particular places of residence. The purpose of this text was to facilitate the commuting parents. Some school directors, however, used this prescription as an excuse for not admitting children of Roma origin unless they lived within the school area. Thus, this text of the Regulation was used for deepening of the segregation of Roma students. Children who did not want to go to the ghetto Roma school had limited options to change their school. Although these children were few in number, the important issue is that the approved amendment presently ensures entirely neutral legal environment and does not permit segregation elements even in a passive mode.

• The UNDP extensive and comparative study on “Roma in Central and Eastern Europe” (2003) \textsuperscript{33} points out that the other groups of reasons for dropouts from school are the early marriages and child-births; the collapse of the education system in the transition period; the socialization opportunities typical for the 1990ies; and the ethnical self-determination and consciousness in the educational institutions (including bilingual education). These reasons are still valid for Bulgaria.

Roma in Bulgaria get married at the age of between 14 and 20 years\textsuperscript{34}. The average Bulgarian male marries at 28.4 years and the average female at 25.2 years.\textsuperscript{35} Besides, for the Roma, a marriage is equivalent to termination of the education. This is typical behavior not only for the Roma ethnic group, but also for all other ethnic minorities. This problem should be addressed by proper initiatives at the level of adult education.

It is interesting to mention that according to the above study, the problems of the insufficient knowledge of the official national language are, in fact, overestimated. It turns out that the Roma language is not used that often even at home, as were the preliminary assumptions. The hypothesis for the need for using Roma language as a training instrument was not confirmed. According to the parents, Roma language is not crucial for the children for comprehending of instructions. Instead, the major strategy should be the mastering of the dominant languages.

4. Quality of Roma education – directions for its improvement

Recently, many general studies of the quality of education have been carried out in Bulgaria. All the ethnic groups have been covered and this is the reason why an overall expert assessment of the directions for improving the quality of Roma education in particular cannot be presented. In the same time, it should be mentioned that partial inspections and surveys of NGOs and of other Roma organizations have been carried out with specific purposes.

\textsuperscript{33} Roma in Central and Eastern Europe, 2003, p. 55.
\textsuperscript{34} Roma in Central and Eastern Europe, 2003, p. UNDP p. 27.
\textsuperscript{35} According to NSI data.
The study of Christo Kjuchukov on the writing skills of bilingual students deserves attention\(^{36}\). In was carried out in three school years starting from 1995–96. The survey results are compared to the results of the students who are ethnic Bulgarians. It is indicated that the fifth grade is essential for acquiring good language training both by the ethnic Bulgarians and Roma children. When writing compositions and doing other tests, Roma children perform much worse than Bulgarians.

The quality of the education for Roma children is dependent on the traditional factors that account for the quality of any other education.

First - there is a definite need of well-trained Roma teachers. Presently, the teaching of Roma children is carried out with the participation of assistants to the teachers. In the opinion of the experts, this is a damaging practice that should to be changed immediately. Roma children should be taught by experts that have higher educational background. The Veliko Tarnovo University already has a Roma language department. It will support the training of teachers of Roma origin.

Assistants to the teachers are usually included in the education of Roma children. According to the opinions of experts, this is a practice that should be altered in the nearest future. The Roma children should be educated by professional pedagogues who have a higher education degree.

Second – the insurance of obligatory pre-school training for the Roma children before proceeding to grade I. This requirement is being stressed by all the pedagogues who work with Roma children. Of special value is the proposal for the introduction of round-day organization of the teaching process in the mixed schools\(^ {37}\). In this way, the experts consider, the conditions for the instruction of the children will improve considerably.

Third – the poor quality of the school facilities is a common problem for all schools in Bulgaria. It is especially well manifested in ghetto schools or schools with prevailing share of Roma children. In such schools in the large towns education at the 1\(^{st}\)-3\(^{rd}\) grade is usually delivered in two or three shifts.

Fourth – there is a well recognized need to work with Roma parents. They have to be motivated to change the stereotype of disregarding the education of their children. As already indicated, Roma parents, as a by rule, pay little attention to the educational attainment of their children. Keeping in mind the reasons for this ignorance, the possible counteractions are mainly through training of mothers, and more generally, of Roma parents. In this respect, the delivery of “family training”\(^ {38}\) is an useful suggestion. It can be also regarded as a direction for the implementation of the integrated approach for Roma education. There are grounds to insist that the implementation of programs and initiatives for training of students’ parents should take priority.

Fifth - the Roma culture, history, language, and customs will have to be included in the school curricula (as an optional subject). This is an issue of easy overcoming of the cultural barrier among ethnicity groups and generally accepted life models.


\(^{38}\) For the first time the term is used by Gerganov ?, and Chr. Kjuchukov in: Educational adjustments of Roma in Bulgaria, S., Tilia. 1999.
Sixth - the necessity to promote the positive example of the successful Roma – professionals. A large-scale national campaign should be organized. The Roma society should be motivated to require good education for their children. Of course, the realization of this requirement is not easy and cannot be achieved within a short time horizon. It is linked to other general factors, such as the improvement of the economic conditions of Roma life; raising the status of the talented Roma, overcoming the pessimism within the society; accepting and having a positive attitude towards the example of those who have been successful in their professional careers.

Considering the problems of Roma education, as they have been outlined so far, three main groups of actions for their solving can be determined:

- desegregation of Roma or prevailingly Roma schools. Along with this process, initiatives for the improvement of the quality of education in village schools with high numbers of Roma students has to be performed;
- improving the preparation of Roma children for enrollment into grade I. In this way they take equal starting positions;
- transferring the Roma without disabilities from the special schools for mentally retarded children to other schools.

Desegregation is an important direction and a powerful instrument for improving the quality of Roma education. This conclusion has been realized and accepted by the Roma themselves (Table 22). The prevailing opinion (shared by 76,7% of surveyed Roma) is that the prevention of the separation of schools into “ethnic” and “mixed” is beneficial for the children from the ethnic minorities, as well as for the entire community. Only 8,3% hold the opposite opinion.

A definite position against segregation is taken mostly by the people in active age, between 26 and 39 years, people with secondary education and those who do not receive social benefits. It can be assumed that this is the opinion of groups of Roma that are in a leading positions with respect to cultural development and material status, and should be encouraged.

Following this logic, is it possible to claim that the Bulgarian society is ready to accept desegregation of Roma education? No special surveys have been carried out to answer this question. Information, however, can be gathered from the study, cited above, on the changes in our society after 1990. The respondents were asked the question: “Which are the groups of people you would like to have nothing to do with? The provided answers in 2002 are as follows: 86% want to have nothing to do with people with criminal background; 52% - with drug addicted; 23% - with politicians; 19 % - with Roma; 13 % - with rich people. The remaining groups like the poor, those

[39] Both Roma and generally the population in Bulgaria are characterized by strong pessimism and even passive attitude. Its formation anatomy is as follows:

"...A basic obstacle before every long-term action, ...is the fact that society sees the resources of its national identity and integrity only in the past, in the memories, in the rituals and not in setting of a common objective. Therefore the public solidarity is mainly demonstrated as empathy of past events and ‘victims’ and not as organization of common action for a specific purpose. This also has a share in the social pessimism and disintegrity"

Quoted from: Changes in society, p. 36.

[40] The desegregation policy is reviewed in detail below.

[41] See: Status of Society, p. 48-50
leaving Bulgaria, journalists, Turks, Jews are not accepted by 3% to 5% from the interviewed. Only 0.5% want to have nothing to do with Bulgarians.

It turns out that Roma is the only ethnic group that accumulated social distance and negative attitude in the public conscience. This could stimulate some resistance against the desegregation of Roma education. It is important to mention, however, that despite this distance, *the society does not consider “isolation” as a means for solving of the existing social problems.* Only 4% of the interviewed answered that things would change if drug-addicts, Roma, etc. are isolated. This is an important result indicating that, in case the desegregation of Roma children education is implemented through reliable mechanisms, that will not affect the quality of education, it will enjoy the broad public support.

The consideration of all the data presented above allows concluding that, at present, the need for the desegregation of the Roma schools is realized both within the Roma communities and by the entire population.

According to the opinions of MES experts (also supported by us), the opportunities for integration of Roma children through mixing them with other children at the same age within the same settlement, could be applied only in 105 schools in different towns of the country, provided that the percentage of these children is lower than 30-35%. The schools can be specified by their name and location - 23 of them are elementary, 40 are primary, 5 are secondary schools and 37 are preschools.

**Conclusions on Part 1**

According to official data, Roma in Bulgaria are about 370,908. The unofficial data and expert estimates show that they are around 350,000 in number. Compared to the Bulgarians, their age structure is favorable - the high share of the young generations is very high. The number of Roma living in towns and villages is almost equal. Major areas of Roma concentration are: Sliven, Stara Zagora, Plovdiv, Pazardjik, Bourgas Dobrich and Sofia.

About 91,000 children and youths aged between 7 and 16 years (2004) have to be covered by the obligatory education. Compared to the other ethnic groups, the educational levels among the Roma community are the lowest. The education differences are so significant that they form ethno-gaps between the Roma and non-Roma. The educational structure of the Roma aged 16 or more remains poor.

Adult Roma need both training and professional qualification. Especially problematic is the group of the Roma women. After appropriately training them, the Roma could become important “resources” for increasing the economic activity rates of the Bulgarian population.

Roma speak Roma, Turkish, Wallachian and Bulgarian languages. The main Roma dialects are yerliyiski, vlashichki, drandarski and kalderashki. Bulgarian is rarely spoken in families. There is a language barrier for the education.

Roma are poor or very poor. Over half of the Roma children are under-nourished, poorly dressed; and their parents face serious financial difficulties. Every third Roma

---

42 Analysis is of the current situation of schools in which study Roma children, J. Nunev, Perspectives Magazine, 2002., special issue.
household experiences permanent financial difficulties for send their children to school.

Roma employment rates are low and, overall, their employment is of unsatisfactory quality. Roma are hired as unqualified workers, seasonal workers and under other schemes for temporary employment. Unemployment among Roma is of sustainable and long-term character. This is the main reason for the intergenerational transfer of their poverty.

Roma are massively covered by the social assistance system – in 2003 almost every second Roma household is a social services client. For nearly half of the Roma people the social benefits are among the main sources of income.

About two thirds of the Roma in working age assess their state of health as quite good. The main reasons due to which almost half of Roma do not visit their general practitioners are not related to bad attitude towards them.

The level educational attainment is the major factor that affects the access of the Roma to employment and their chances for overcoming of poverty. This important conclusion, derived on the basis of the statistical analysis, indicates that the improvement of Roma educational level is not a political task, but an activity assisting their spiritual and physical survival.

It can be assumed (with a certain degree of caution), that the number of students dropping out from the secondary schools in 2003 is about 41 500 or almost half of the children aged between 7 and 16 years.

The general tendency in Bulgaria after 2000 is towards increasing the number of dropouts from schools. This is attributed to economic reasons - the young people are forced to start working after completing grade VIII. There is evidence that this tendency is much more characteristic of the Roma students.

Among the major problems encountered are the preparation for enrollment into grade I, the successful completion of the grade III and the continuation of the education into grade IV.

The high percentage of dropping out from school of Roma children is again linked to poverty and the need for sending them to work. There are, however, other reasons that are related to the educational process, the slow desegregation of Roma education and the limited opportunities for education of adult Roma, who have to make their decisions fast.

The Bulgarian community has accumulated negativism towards the Roma, but does not consider that the solution of the problems connected to Roma are to be sought through their isolation.

The quality of Roma education is low and unsatisfactory. Significant improvement could come from the training of teachers who work with Roma children. The directions for overcoming it are popular large-scale activities, the implementation of which is only possible through the adoption of the integral and strategic approaches.
5. Institutions related to the educational policies for Roma

State institutions, super-institutional councils and NGO representatives are engaged in the education of Roma. The Ministry of Education and Science (MES) understandably plays the leading role. Along with the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy (MLSP) and the Employment Agency (EA), it is engaged, mostly, in the elaboration of educational policies for the adolescent, as well as in the determination of the contents of the educational policies for adults. The EA organizes and conducts professional qualification and literation courses for Roma and for representatives of other groups in disadvantaged position on the labor market.

In 2003 MES established the Consulting Council on the Education of Children and Students from Ethnic Minority Communities. The main function of this Council is to consult the Minister as to the: drafting and implementation of the national Strategy on education, regarding the integration of students from the minority communities; proposing measures for the integration of Roma children with their fellows from other ethnic communities in the locality; drafting and proposing educational policies for supplementing the educational curriculum with knowledge for the traditional ethnic communities in the country; coordination of the educational efforts in this area with the NGO sector; creation of database of the educational initiatives of NGOs and other educational institutions.

The National Council on Ethnic and Demographic Issues (NCEDI) is a super-institutional public authority, that is responsible for the ethnic minorities, as well as for Bulgarians abroad. The main functions of the Council are to facilitate the contacts and the cooperation between the Government structures and the NGO sector for achieving better results in the implementation of the state policy on ethnic and demographic issues including emigration. (Constitution of NCEDI, Article 1).

In practice, NCEDI acts as an intermediary between the Government and the Roma community during the negotiations, drafting and adopting of the Framework Program for Equal Integration of Roma in Bulgarian Society.

A significant number of other NGOs are presently involved in the Roma education and other areas of activity, such as human rights, culture and folklore development, etc (Appendix 2).

---

44 http://www.ncedi.government.bg
45 It has been adopted with and agreement signed by 75 Roma organizations and a Government representative on 7. 04. 1999 and a subsequent decision of the Council of Ministers of 22 April 1999. (Record ? 18, point 14).
6. Legislative background of the policies related to the education and qualification of Roma

According to the Constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria everyone is entitled to education, while the school education till the age of 16 years is obligatory. The primary and secondary education in the state and municipal schools is free of charge. (Article 53).

The Constitution also regulates that the citizens whose mother tongue is not Bulgarian have the right to study and use their own mother language besides the obligatory study of Bulgarian. The state is a major guarantor of this right (article 8 paragraph 2 of the Education Law).

Article 4 of the Education Law stipulates that the citizens not only have the right to education, but that they are also able to continue their education and qualification without interruption. The legislation ensures these rights for everybody, regardless of his race, nationality, gender, ethnic or social origin, religious denomination or social position.

The Law on the Educational Degree, the Education Minimum and Curriculum sets the principles on which the general education is based (Article 8 paragraph 2). These are the basic human rights, the rights of the children, the traditions in Bulgarian culture and education, the accomplishments of the world culture, the values of civil society, the freedom of conscience and thought.

An amendment to the Education Law was adopted in September 2002. According to it, and starting from 2003-2004 school year: “The preparation of children for school one year prior to their enrollment into first grade is obligatory and is performed in preparatory groups or in preparatory classes at the schools as the parents or guardians are exempt from the payment of fees.” This is an important political decision, which facilitates the integration of Roma children in the first grade education process, as well as the easier learning of the school material.

A Regulation for educating children with special educational needs and/or chronic diseases was approved by the Minister of Education in August 2002. It allows decreasing the relatively high share of Roma children who are admitted to schools for mentally retarded children. According to leaders of Roma organizations some of the Roma children enrolled in such schools do not have mental disabilities. The diagnostic committees to the Educational Inspectorates are obliged to provide precise diagnostics and an interpreter for the children who do not speak Bulgarian by that moment.

According to the Law on Employment Promotion (enforced on 1.1.2002) the people who actively seek jobs and are registered in the Labor Offices, should be professionally informed, consulted and oriented. They could be guided towards appropriate professional and motivation training. Further, this Law, entitles the employers who provide vocational training and/or internships to different benefits. Special programs and measures are envisaged for the people in disadvantaged position and for those with low employability.

7. Policies

7.1. Directions and priorities

The *Framework Program for Equal Integration of Roma in Bulgarian Society (1999)* is the first important document expressing the political will for the overall and comprehensive solution of the problems particularly for the Roma. The major goal of the Program is the full involvement of Roma at all levels of the state institutions. The fulfillment of this objective relies also on the initiative of the Roma themselves, who are encouraged not to remain passive “objects” of influence but to become active partners in the public sphere. The contents of the present programs and particular actions for education and professional qualification (and employment) of Roma follow the major directions outlined in this Framework Program.

An *Action Plan for the implementation of the Program* in the period 2003 – 2004 was developed after the adoption of the Program (with a delay of 4 years). The document stipulates more precise priorities and impact areas, poses the deadlines and names the institutions that are to fulfill the measures set. Section one of the Program states: “The elimination of the unequal treatment of the Roma in Bulgarian society is a strategic goal. The condition for fulfillment of this goal is the building and application of state mechanisms, which should neutralize the effects from the prior discrimination. In this respect the Program outlines the elimination of the discrimination of the Roma as one of the major political priorities of Bulgarian state.”

The Program envisages 10 years long efforts and action in eight major directions, namely: education (including protection from discrimination), economic development, health care, urban planning of Roma neighborhoods, protection of Roma ethnic specifics and culture, presence of Roma in the national media, and the Roma women rights. With respect to education and for the purpose of overcoming the lagging behind of Roma children, the Program postulates the following measures (that will, in fact, determine the contents of the policies to be adopted for the following 10 years):

1. **Desegregation of Roma schools** – presupposes the development of a long-term strategy for the full elimination of separated schools in the Roma neighborhoods of the bigger towns; active measures for ensuring free access of Roma children to the education with high quality; non-allowance of segregation of Roma children in segregated classes.

   • Alongside with the desegregation, different efforts and action that aim at the improvement of the quality of the education are envisaged (i.e. the abandonment of the early vocational training);
   
   • Encouragement of the employment of teachers and tutors who possess the necessary qualifications and specialization and the dismissal of the teachers who do not have university or college degrees;
   
   • Introduction and provision of qualification to the assistants to the teachers from the Roma community, who should participate in the Roma children educational process;
   
   • Extension of the access to information and to the different forms of public advocacy;
• Counteraction against any acts of racial discrimination at school. MES should develop programs for building of ethnic tolerance skills among the teachers. Special training programs against the acts of racial discrimination at schools (both from the side of teachers and of students) should be started at all levels of the educational process. All real acts of discrimination should be sanctioned.

2. Ensuring the opportunity for learning Roma language at school. The following actions are envisaged:

• Increasing of the classes in Roma language within the optional curriculum;
• Training of teachers in Roma language in the higher pedagogical institutes.

3. Training of staff with university degree – the lack of highly qualified specialists among the Roma community in many different professions is emphasized here. The following actions are needed for overcoming of these negative consequences from the Roma discrimination in education:

• Ensuring conditions for admission of Roma to Universities, such as organizing of preparatory courses for Roma candidate-students, etc.
• The need for improvement of the access and spread of information regarding the conditions and the order for receiving university education stipends among the Roma community has also been underlined and taken into consideration.

4. Programs for literation and qualification of adult Roma

The Program's contents fully reflect the present problems of Roma education and outline the appropriate directions for making efforts to resolve them. Thus, according to the experts’ opinion, within the coming decade, the Program can be used for designing joint initiatives with the Roma Education Fund.

In the beginning of 2003, the Ministry of Education and Science elaborated and presented for discussion a Strategy for the Integration of Children and Students from the Ethnic Minorities. The Regulation was approved in June 2004.

The Strategy defines the common problems for all the ethnic minorities and the specific ones for each of them. The most numerous and serious seem to be the problems of the Roma children. Alongside the well-known issues, such as the isolation; language difficulties; adaptation problems; etc., certain problems of the educational process are also specified. These are, for example, poverty, the illiteracy of the adults; the lack of mechanisms for the prevention of school dropout cases; the lack of textbooks and teaching aids in Roma languages.

The overall strategic goals and directions for action are: guaranteeing equal access to quality education of children and students from the ethnic minorities; preserving and developing of their cultural identity; successful socialization; turning the cultural diversity into a source and a factor for the mutual acquaintance and spiritual development of the adolescent and for the creation of atmosphere of mutual respect, tolerance and understanding; building of appropriate social-psychological climate favoring the realization of the Strategy.
The priorities of the Strategy are as follows:

- Full integration of Roma children and students through desegregation of kindergartens and schools in separated Roma neighborhoods and creation of conditions for equal access to quality education outside of them;
- Optimization of the school network in municipalities with small and dispersed settlements, including by supporting the centrally located schools for ensuring the quality of education.

The analyses of the quality of the education of Roma (made in Part I) and of the contents of the existing strategic regulations and documents show that the main priority for action for the coming 10 years is the desegregation of the education of Roma.

With the purpose of facilitating the attainment of the above goals, a National Action Plan for the period between the school years 2004/05 – 2008/09 has been developed. In addition, financing for each activity has been ensured. The sources of funding are the state budget, the municipalities (for opening semi-boarding educational forms in the Roma hosting schools, transport etc.), a Fund for Educational Integration of Children and Students from the Ethnic Minorities, EU programs and other international programs, donations and other aids from private entities and organizations. The efforts for the approval by Parliament of the Law on the Fund for Educational Integration of Children and Students from the Ethnic Minorities are being finalized.

7.2. Pending Requirements for the Implementation of the Policies

First: The levels of coverage of Roma, as they are prescribed in the Millennium Development Goals for Bulgaria in the field of education\(^{48}\), should be achieved during 2005-2015. They include: 100% coverage in basic education (grade I - IV); 95% of coverage in primary education (grade V - VIII) and 85% coverage in secondary education (grade IX - XII).

Second: the desegregated education of Roma students and of children at the age of secondary and pre-school education should be implemented under the radical and comprehensive improvement of the conditions at the hosting schools and of the qualifications of the teachers in intercultural education, human rights, civil society principles and values. The desegregation will, obviously, be a long-term process that requires good planning throughout the coming 10 years. Its duration and complexity should not be considered obstacles for the delaying of radical reforms.

Third: the overcoming of the illiteracy (90%) among the economically active Roma population should take place alongside with the provision of training for mastering of basic working skills and qualifications that are in-line with the existing labour demand. The large-scale improvement of the employability of the Roma should be done together with the provision of vocational counseling and information; motivation trainings; acquisition of vocational skills and learning of professions.

Fourth: several very important conditions for the successful implementation of the Roma educational policies are the: provision of information, assurance of transparency, the monitoring and the assessment of the undertaken action.

\(^{48}\) Millennium Development Goals – Bulgaria, UNDP, Sofia, 2003, p. 17
Fifth: of crucial importance is also the organization of PR campaigns for informing the society for the contents and the results of the implemented Programs on the Roma education.

8. Main Projects on the Education of Roma

8.1. Project for preparing children from disadvantaged families for attending first grade at school

All the projects to be reviewed are performed as actions under Component 3, section 1 “Development of Children from Disadvantaged Communities” of the “Child Welfare Improvement Reform Project in Bulgaria”. The macro-project is being implemented by the MLSP. The funding is provided as a donation from the Japanese Social Development Fund.

The main goal of the project is the provision of support for activities for the development and the social integration of children from disadvantaged ethnic minorities by overcoming the lagging behind in their knowledge of Bulgarian language.

These activities are expected to:

- Provide conditions for equal access to development of the children from the disadvantaged ethnic communities;
- Keep the children from these communities in school and in family;
- Change the parents’ attitudes regarding the development opportunities and the future social integration of their children.

The funds are invested in the establishment and development of programs for kindergartens and pre-school preparation of children from disadvantaged ethnic minorities. The programs should help in overcoming of the lagging behind in the knowledge of Bulgarian language and for preparing these children for attending school. Additional activities, such as provision of health care services and funding of the kindergarten fees for the children from the poorest families are also planned. The purpose of the auxiliary activities is to help achieving the main goal – to avoid the school dropouts of children from disadvantaged ethnic communities.

The local NGOs working with the disadvantaged ethnic groups are defined as the subjects for performing the projects. They should cooperate with the local governments and institutions.

It is planned that the project would be performed in 9 pilot municipalities starting with Plovdiv, Rousse, Shumen, Sliven, Stara Zagora and Varna and including Pazardjik, Bourgas and Targoviste at a subsequent stage. Later on Sofia will also be included in the project. There, the duration of the projects are the shortest around – 3 months.
Table II. 1. Main results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>First stage June – October 2002*</th>
<th>Second stage Dec. 2002 – August 2003**</th>
<th>Only for summer education (June-August) 2003</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total number of sub-projects in the municipalities</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of children</td>
<td>4102</td>
<td>1335</td>
<td>1873</td>
<td>894</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of children, who successfully completed the projects</td>
<td>4102</td>
<td>1335</td>
<td>1873</td>
<td>894</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total sum of donation (Euro)</td>
<td>2022422</td>
<td>595072</td>
<td>955354</td>
<td>211996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average expenditures per project</td>
<td>36115</td>
<td>31320</td>
<td>34120</td>
<td>23555</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average expenditures per child involved in the project</td>
<td>493</td>
<td>446</td>
<td>510</td>
<td>237</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Plovdiv, Stara Zagora, Sliven, Varna, Rousse and Shumen.

**Pazardjik, Bourgas and Targoviste have also been included. The stage includes an extension of 3 months.

The average monthly sum spent per child was BGN 493 or 308 USD for both stages of the project (16 months). The average monthly allowance per child was USD 30.8.

The positive results from the projects are multi-aspect and reflect on the programs’ beneficiaries, as well as on the programs’ performers. The effects registered by the research team concern: the children participating in the projects, their parents, the Roma community in the relevant settlement, the teachers and the assistant-teachers participating in the projects and the NGOs performing the projects.

The following concrete results for the children have been registered:

- Increasing the knowledge in Bulgarian language;
- Acquiring of main habits and discipline needed for the regular performance during the subsequent educational process. The children learn to maintain discipline, to consider rules set and to work with schooling aids;
- The children acquired hygienic habits, which most, of them have not had previously;
- The children acquire basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics;
- The children have access to games and entertainment that have not been known to them previously;
- The children are engaged in a process, which is useful for them. The project substitutes idling and/or the engagement in socially unacceptable activities;
- The participation in the project detaches the children from the harmful influence of the street and the ghetto during the summer months;
The children develop the feeling of belongingness to a special group that is different from the ethnic one. Communication and behavior skills are developed. The incidents of aggressive behavior towards the others are reduced;

- The skills learned during the project allow the better adaptation to the first grade school environment;
- The children develop an affinity towards the educational process. They enjoy attending classes;
- The children receive schooling aids which their parents are not always able to provide;
- The children’s Project is particularly successful when the NGO is also engaged in the elaboration of a desegregation project. The subsequent involvement of the children in it is a particularly successful practice because it reduces to minimum the stress that occurs with the enrollment in a school with heterogeneous ethnic composition.

The main result from the participation of the parents into cultural and school activities is the increase of their involvement into the educational process. In this way, although attracted primarily by the financial benefits to be received, they start realizing the value and importance of education. This is an important predisposition that might shift their attitudes to investing in the education of their offspring.

The key figures in the success of the project are the teachers. Their qualifications, motivation and skills for working with children are the determinants of the final result. The advantages for the teachers from the participation in the project are expressed in:

- Improving the qualification. They attend courses for work in multi-ethnic environment;
- They gain experience in working with Roma children;

The involvement of assistants to the teachers and their work are unanimously pointed as another major success factor. The NGOs engaged in the projects are also benefited, among others through the:

- Enrichment the organization’s experience. The staff acquires skills for activity planning and development, preparation of application documentation, etc;
- The networking with other NGOs and with local government representatives extends and strengthens the contacts and the useful practices for the exchange of experience and ideas.

**Shortcomings and disadvantages of the projects**

The short duration of the performed projects can be outlined as their major disadvantage. This gives grounds for predicting that the effects will not be long-term and sustainable, which is even more possible considering the multi-aspect nature of the problems related to Roma education.

Other important problems are the irregularity of the implemented projects and their independence from other initiatives oriented towards the facilitation of first-grade
school attendance. Occasionally, even after attending the project’s curriculum, the children do not start attending first-grade classes. The most frequently cited reason by their parents is the lack of funds.

Still another disadvantage of the project is the unclear future status of the assistants to the teachers. In most of the cases, after completing the project they again find themselves on the labour market.

Other problems concern the involvement of the parents. The lack of interest for the activities offered is typical for a considerable part of them. However, although all the enumerated difficulties which are unavoidable when working with children from the ethnic minorities and when implementing innovative approaches, it can be claimed that the overall effects from the projects are positive. This finding proves the appropriateness of the pre-school education for the children from the ethnic minorities. This initial preparation contributes to solving some of the major problems of the Roma children and helps in overcoming the major obstacles for the acquisition of higher education degrees.

8. 2. The Desegregation Project

The Framework Program for Equal Integration of Roma in Bulgarian Society envisages desegregation in Roma schools⁴⁹. Meanwhile the practical actions in this direction are, for the time being, undertaken by the NGOs working on the Roma issues.

The desegregation of Roma children in Bulgaria started in Vidin. The local Roma NGO “Organizatsia Drom” initiated desegregation in the 2000-2001 school year by enrolling Roma children in other schools in the town. During the next school year the process spread in five other Bulgarian cities - Pleven, Montana, Sliven, Haskovo and Stara Zagora. The Roma Participation Program of the Open Society Institute in Budapest supported all these projects. In 2004 the Program is also being implemented in Samokov, Kjustendil and Sofia.

The general and long-term goal of the desegregation of Roma schools is to introduce innovations, not only in the education of Roma children, but also in the overall life of the community, through the improvement of their social perspectives. The immediate objectives are to equalize the educational opportunities for the Bulgarian and Roma children by educating them in schools that offer the same quality of education.

The desegregation is based on the free choice of the Roma parents and does not have the purpose of changing the ethnic identity of the Roma children. In supporting this principle it is necessary to point out that the desegregation idea and programs have been discussed with representatives of the Roma organizations, who accepted them in general before the starting of the project (April 1999).

The desegregated education is important for increasing the mutual familiarization with and socialization perspectives between both communities. It supports the creation of common communication space for parents, children and teachers. It could be expected that this space will be preserved and that it will help for overcoming the social prejudice and distances.

The desegregation Project includes the implementation of all the necessary prerequisites and actions for taking the Roma children out of the schools in the ghettos and educating them in ethnically mixed classes in schools with better conditions. The prerequisites and actions in the first school year of the Project’s implementation had been defined according to the specific needs of the particular region. Most often, the Roma children were transported to the hosting schools; they received free textbooks and schooling aids. The poorest of them also received free food, clothing and shoes. The assistants to the teachers tutored the children with the poorest performance. If needed, during the summer vacation months additional classes were organized for the children.

The separation of Roma children in different classes upon enrollment is forbidden. The application of this practice has shown the same shortcomings as those typical for the segregated schools.

In every city, the project is backed up with pedagogical management consisting of teachers hired especially for the purpose. They define the appropriate actions; determine the enrollment strategy, the need for additional pedagogical work and the forms of extra-curriculum work; and supervise the work of the mentors.

The teachers who will participate in the project are additionally trained for working with children from different ethnic and cultural environments with emphasis on the multi-cultural education.

Preliminary project lobbying is performed at the local level. It ensures the political and public support to the project by the leading figures from the education sector, the Roma community, the NGOs, the local political powers and educational authorities; the municipal administrations; the media, etc. The support of these local structures is crucial for the positive results of the project.

The project is assigned for implementation to one particular local Roma NGO. It plays the important role of being an intermediary between the various project stakeholders. The prestige of the implementing NGO and its leader are decisive for the popularity of the project among the Roma and the other people in the settlement.

The projects in all the six cities have very good results. At the end of the first year they can be described with the following indicators:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table II. 2: General data for the projects *</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children, who completed the school year on the project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children participating in the project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of drop-outs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average results of the graduates (without those who were deferred)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Roma children enrolled in the project, who attended non-Roma schools before the project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of additional lessons in the hosting schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relative share of students in the elementary education including in kindergartens(%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of members in the project team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of teachers in the team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of mentors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ratio of the staff to the number students who completed the school year on the project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total budget of the project for 2001–2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average allowance per completed student (in USD)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The First Steps, page 135.

Evidently, the projects are successful. It can be supposed that they also have significant additional social and cultural positive effects, which cannot be measured by numbers.
On the average, additional USD 216.2 was spent per student. For comparison, for the same year the total budget per student in secondary education (grade IX-XII) amounted to BGN 808.0 (USD 518), in primary education to BGN 561 (USD 316) and for in pre-school training – BGN 871 (USD 558.3).

The data from Table II. 3 above do not allow neither for the detailed analysis of the efficiency of the utilization of funds, nor for making of comparisons with previous years. The most important indicator that can be calculated – the ratio of the total budget to the number of children completing the program, falls within the wide interval of between USD 85.6 to USD 472.8. It could be speculated that the differences are due to the different numbers of additional classes, of students covered and of participants in the project’s teams. However, there should be other factors accountable, since the most effective projects are those implemented in Vidin and Sliven, where both the numbers of the children covered and of the additional classes offered are the highest. Although of all differences, it should be pointed out that the realized economies of funds are not a proper criterion for the overall evaluation of desegregation (or of any other social activity). Instead, a differentiated approach, based on the assessment of needs should be applied.

The conclusions and recommendations for the continuation of the desegregation process are presented in detail in the publications, cited after the first stage of the project. They are directed towards three groups of participants – the NGOs and their donors; the State and the European Union. The pilot projects of the six NGOs form a promising beginning. With the major contribution and the leading role of the participating pedagogical staff, the NGOs working with Roma proved that they do have the capacity to implement the projects.

8. 3. Policies for the liquidation of illiteracy and for professional qualification of adults

As already pointed out, the Framework Program for Equal Integration of Roma in Bulgarian Society envisages training and qualification of adults and elimination of the discrimination on the labor market. The measures undertaken by the State are related to the development and implementation of programs for qualification and employment and correspond to the labor market demand, to the specifics of some traditional labor and professional attitudes in the relevant Roma groups, as well as to the need for their literation.

Different programs for liquidation of illiteracy, qualification and employment are being implemented under the National Program From Social Benefits to Employment. Obviously, they aim at raising the educational and qualification level of unemployed people from illiterate or low-literate ethnic groups and at providing employment.

50 Bulgaria – Public Finance Matters and Directions for Reform, World Bank, 2002, p. 110
51 The beneficiaries of the national Program From Social Benefits to Employment are: the long-term unemployed in working age subjects to monthly social assistance; unemployed people in working age who continuously care for disabled or seriously ill people; up to 20% of the people involved are long-term unemployed qualified workers not receiving social benefits. The Program aims at raising the suitability for employment and social and labor integration of long-term unemployed, who could hardly find realization in the real sector.
In 2003, 294 people have been involved in various literacy and qualifications programs, and BGN 36,831 (EUR 1879.1) have been spent. The average allowance for a trained adult person is BGN 125.3 (EUR 64). In 2004 and in 2005, the National Program From Social Benefits to Employment envisages the involvement of 6000 people.

The Ministry of Labor and Social Policy (MLSP) in cooperation with the Ministry of Culture and the National Council on Ethnic and Demographic Issues (NCEDI) implemented a project under PHARE BG 0102.06 Roma Integration – Social Integration: A) “Establishment of 12 Roma cultural and information centers”; B) “Creation of jobs for Roma, other ethnic minorities and groups in unequal position”.

60% of the funds will be directed towards the Roma minority. The main goal is to alleviate the social and economic integration of Roma, of other ethnic minorities, of disabled people and of other disadvantaged groups on the labor market. Development of measures for training, employment and entrepreneurship is also intended for raising the literacy levels and for improving the competencies of the target groups.

The plans for 2004 are that 4500 Roma people will be trained within 300 programs for writing and calculating. The establishment of 12 Roma Information and Cultural Centers is envisaged. (Appendix 3)

MLSP as a project implementation unit has a budget of EUR 392,171.

The business centers within the project Employment through Business Support (JOBS) provide the Roma community clients with the full package of services – training; development of business plans and projects (including the financial leasing schemes and renting of premises in the business incubator); support of Roma NGOs and of joint activities.

In 2003, 16 Roma families from Resen, Elena and Veliko Turnovo participated in the training under the Program Starting of Own Agricultural Business for cultivation of herbs. The trained families planted chamomile and garden tea, which provided them with incomes.

Other training of Roma have been organized under the Starting of Own Business Program and include the cultivation of lavender, breeding of goats and trainings in dressmakers’ skills.

Computer literacy training is also conducted in regular groups. 46 children (age 10-15 years) have been trained in courses for primary computer literacy.

Summary for Parts 6, 7 and 8

The necessary legal and institutional preconditions for increasing the scope of the education for Roma and for the improvement of its quality are already created. Further, the strategic documents, plans and programs that contain the aims, priorities and directions for the development of Roma education are also prepared. The State is carrying out purposive and financially backed policies for their implementation.

Different programs and projects directed at the groups in disadvantaged position are also being implemented. In their main part, these are policies for the provision of assistance to the poor and to those who have troubles in finding employment, i.e. to the groups having characteristics close to those typical for the Roma communities.
Currently, in relation to their scope and importance, three groups of actions (programs) should be mentioned – for the full coverage of Roma children for pre-school training; for desegregation of the Roma schools and kindergartens; and for the literacy, vocational qualification and the provision of information to Roma with low employability. Special accent is placed on desegregation.

The contents of the adopted policy priorities and of the already implemented programs are adequate to the problems of the education integration of Roma. The policies that are to be implemented are a good example for the performance of the State’s social role.

The policies at this, still preliminary, stage include traditional and well-known practical approaches and actions. They have general purposes; are of national importance; and their beneficiaries are mainly the larger Roma groups. The recommendations for the future include the further expansion of the application of the differentiated approach and of the regionalization of the policies for the educational integration of the Roma. Overall, all other things equal, these approaches improve the targeting of those who are in need, allow the effective monitoring and control and increase the social and economic efficiency.

The National Plan for the implementation of the Strategy for the Educational Integration of the Roma contains several strategic goals. We suggest amending them with the goal of “mobilizing all institutions for the provision of equal access to education for the Roma”. This will improve the possibilities for coordination and harmonization of the actions in the domains of education, the labour market, culture, etc.

The activities for achieving the first strategic goal - guaranteeing of equal access to quality education of the children and students from the ethnic minorities - should be supplemented with initiatives for the creation of new and the renovation of existing educational premises and facilities. At this stage, the Plan does not include such action. Particular attention should be paid to the hosting schools (premises and facilities) and to the facilities for the vocational training. Their current state is unsatisfactory.

9. Expenditure on Policies

9.1. Planned Expenditure on Roma Education for 2004

All expenditure on Roma education are calculated in accordance with the Action Plan for the implementation of the Framework Program for the Equal Integration of Roma in Bulgarian Society (2003-2004); the 2004 National Plan for Overcoming Poverty and Social Isolation, the National Action Plan on the implementation of the Strategy for the Equal Educational Integration of the Ethnic Minorities’ Children and Students (2004/5 – 2008/9); the National Plan on Employment for 2004, as well as on the basis of forecasted and reported indicators for the financing of education and of programs for literation and professional qualification.

The Plan for the implementation of the Framework Program was elaborated after the expenditure ceilings and the National Budget for 2004-2006 had been approved. The

---

52 The Plan is approved with Resolution 33 of the Council of Ministers, 19.01.2004
planned funding is supposed to come from the National Budget, as well as from foreign donors.

Table II. 3 below presents the activities that are related to the education of Roma and for which funding is available.

**Table II. 3. Plan for the Implementation of the Framework Program for the Equal Integration of Roma in the Bulgarian Society**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>CENTRAL GOVERNMENT AND MUNICIPALITIES (THOUSAND BGN)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Educational programs</td>
<td>Registering the position “Assistant to the teacher” in the Register of positions and its inclusion in the staffing plan of integrated schools</td>
<td>1200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Free text books for the poor students in second grade</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Training of teachers in the hosting schools to work with Roma children; of the parents and of the assistants to the teachers (in working under the conditions of multi-ethnical environment)</td>
<td>377.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assisting children and students from Roma families in need and improving the facilities of integrated kindergartens and schools</td>
<td>666.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increasing the effectiveness of the work in schools and kindergartens for mentally retarded</td>
<td>Introduction and implementation of training on curriculum of general educational schools in 9 schools for mentally retarded under the Program “Step by step”</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development and popularization of alternative forms of caring and social services for Roma children</td>
<td>Training of teachers on the specialty “Elementary school teacher, knowing Roma language”</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program “Children of Bulgaria” additional (out of school) lessons (The National Palace of Children)</td>
<td>Introduction of active and differenciated policies according to the needs of educational services Introduction of Roma folklore as an optional subject</td>
<td>469</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating conditions for learning the Roma culture and conduction of intercultural training in schools</td>
<td>Development of bilingual audio products based on Roma tales</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project: “Second Chance for vocational training in vocational schools for the early dropped out students</td>
<td>Education and vocational training for 440 drop-out youngsters from the secondary schools</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevention against early dropping out of students and establishment of favorable multi-cultural environments in host schools</td>
<td>Individual work with drop out children and with children threatened by drop out, and with their parents. Training of teachers, holding of seminars, provision of educational materials</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivery of information to Roma youths in relation to their education and employment</td>
<td>Implementation of the project “Roma Youth Club for Information and Consultation” under the EU Youth Programme</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training of experts and volunteers to work with multi-ethnical groups</td>
<td>Training of social workers from the Social Assistance Directorates to work in multiethnic environment</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Development of a special module and methodical materials for training of social workers from the child protection departments</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Delivery of 5 training courses to social workers from the child protection departments</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher education of teachers on Roma language, development of special curricula and of text books</td>
<td>Students in the VelikoTurnovo University</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PFARE project BG 0104.04.01: Component 1: Integration of the Roma population</td>
<td>a) Training of teachers and of the assistants to the teachers Training of Roma representatives to work in public administration; Promotion of the Roma culture and history.</td>
<td>325,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b) Purchase of 700 computers and equipment of 100.</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c) 900 computers donated by private foundation “Balkanski”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total for education</td>
<td>6717,2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programs on the labour market</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stimulating the social-economic integration of Roma through training measures, employment and entrepreneurship</td>
<td>Establishment of 12 Roma cultural and information Centers; 4500 illiterate Roma; 300 Roma trained in courses on entrepreneurship</td>
<td>2052</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensuring employment and the social integration for unemployed people</td>
<td>Implementation of the National Program From Social Benefits to Employment</td>
<td>217,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increasing the educational and qualification level of disadvantaged</td>
<td>Implementation of regional programs for literacy, vocational</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table: Roma Employment and Education Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity Description</th>
<th>Training and Employment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed people and ensuring employment</td>
<td>Providing loans for entrepreneurship (self-employed and employed) to people having skills in the traditional crafts. Training in entrepreneurship and in skills for bank credit utilization. Training in traditional crafts and stimulating the employment of youths of Roma origin, including from social institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensuring Roma employment in regions with the highest unemployment rate</td>
<td>348</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total for programs on labour market | 2867.2 |
| Total for education and programs on labour market | 9584.4 |

As seen from Table II.3, the planned expenditure for 2004 on Roma education and vocational training amounts to **BGN 9584.4 thous.**, or **USD 5990.25 thous.**

### 9. 2. Additional Expenditure

The calculations to be presented below are not exhaustive and are conditional. They do not contradict, but supplement the forecasts for the expenditures on policies on the education of Roma.

#### 9. 2. 1. Expenditure for the coverage of Roma children and students

*The expenditure is estimated in accordance with the Millennium Development Goals for Bulgaria.*

The number of Roma students is estimated on the basis of the information for their average number in 2001 (Table 21, Appendix 1) and under the assumption that the coverage of children in basic education (grade I - IV) and pre-school age is 100%; for the primary education age (grade V - VIII) - 95% and for the secondary education (grade IX - XII) - 85%. The predications are as follows:

- About 18,000 children will be enrolled in grade I;
- The basic education (grade I-IV) age stage will cover about 72,000 Roma students (18,000 x 4 = 72,000);
- Under 95% coverage of the students in primary education age (grade V-VIII), the number of students will reach 68,400;
- Under the 85% coverage in the secondary education age (grade IX-XII), the number of Roma Students will be about 58,140

Thus, in 2015, the total number of Roma students in grade I to XII will reach 198,540 (106,171 in 2001).

There is no data available on the number of children covered by pre-school training programs in 2004. In the case of full coverage, their number should be equal to the
number of those enrolled in grade I, that is, to 18 000. In case these children are added to the students, the total number of Roma students will reach 216 540.

In this way, it could be considered that, on the average and under the coverage requirements, the number of Roma children and students in secondary education age (grade I - XII) in 2015 will not be lower than 220 000 – 230 000 people.

Compared to 2001 (106 171 students in grade I-XII), the number of Roma students in 2015 will increase by at least 100 000 people. That means that for the next 10 years, the expenditure on education will double, without accounting for inflation or for any additional costs for the improvement of the quality of the education or for the preschool training of the children.

The achievement of the National Millennium Development Goals in education, including those concerning the coverage of Roma children will require increasing the overall share of GDP expenditure on education. At present it seems to be rather low, 4.17% in 2004. The average allowance per student in secondary (grade IXII) and higher education is BGN 785 or USD 50353.

For the coming 10 years, under the steady increase in the number of Roma students, the necessary additional expenditure for the allowances of the covered children will amount to USD 5 030 000 per year (USD 503 x 10 000 students). The calculations do not account for inflation or for any possible increases in the allowances.

9. 2. 2. Expenditure for stipends for higher education, including for the instruction of pedagogues who will be working in multicultural and ethnically diversified environments

The size of the estimated stipend for the students who will be working with children of non-Bulgarian ethnicity, including Roma children and students, is USD 600 per year. For the initial five years of the 2005 – 2015 period, the stipends could be granted on competitive basis to pedagogues who will be working with the Roma minority only. For the following five years, the stipends could be awarded to Roma students in different majors.

The amount of the stipends (USD 600) is estimated on the basis of expert opinions. It is also predicted that each year, 200 Bachelor students (four years of higher education) will be awarded such grants. Thus, the total amount of the expenditure for stipends will be USD 4 800 000 (USD 600x 4 years of education x200 students per year for 10 years = USD 4 800 000).

Average yearly expenditure = USD 480 000.

9. 2. 3. Expenditure for renovation of the schools, the purchase of materials and equipment, teaching aids and kits, etc.

Usually, these types of expenditures have the lowest share in the total structure of expenditure on education until now. The proper estimation of the necessary funds will be possible only after the carrying out of a separate study for the assessment of the needs of both secondary and pre-school education. The desegregation requirements

53 Source: Ministry of Finance
and the necessity for the optimization of the school network should also be taken into account.

As already mentioned, the desegregation measures and initiatives will cover 68 schools and 37 kindergartens. According to conditional estimations, BGN 80 000 will be necessary for the renovation of each of the buildings.

In addition, the costs for the purchasing of computers and teaching aids are estimated at about BGN 15 000 to 20 000.

The expenditures on the renovation of the facilities to be used for vocational training are the hardest to estimate. They vary in accordance with the type of the necessary equipment. For the time being they will not be accounted for.

The estimated amount of funds necessary for the renovation of hosting schools is BGN 10 500 000 or USD 6 562 500.

The renovation of the buildings and the facilities of the hosting schools should be completed till the end of the planned desegregation period (5 years). Thus, the average yearly expenditure amounts to BGN 2 100 000 or USD 1 312 500.

9.2.4. Expenditure for the desegregated education of Roma students and for the pre-school training of children

According to the consultant’s plans, the desegregation process should be completed until 2010. However, MES experts consider that the deadline is very optimistic.

The available data on the additional costs incurred under the programs for desegregation of schools and kindergartens shows that the additional average monthly desegregation costs per Roma child in pre-school and school age are USD 30 and USD 200, respectively.

As already pointed out, according to the same research of MES (2004) the number of Roma children attending segregated kindergartens is 2325. On the average, each year 465 children will be moved to hosting kindergartens. The yearly expenditure will be as follows:

435 x USD 30 x 12 months = USD 167 400.

The total expenditure for moving the children to desegregated kindergartens for the 1 year in the 5 year period (2005 – 2010) is USD 837 000 (167 400 x 5 years).

Further, the same research shows that the total number of students attending segregated schools in 2004 is 27 541. The desegregation will require USD 5 508 200 (27 541 students x USD 200), or USD 1 101 640 per year for the period 2005 – 2010.


Total expenditure on students per 5 years: USD 5 508 200

The desegregation expenditures will be covered by funds from the National and the municipal budgets and by donations from foreign donors and programs.

The total amount of funds necessary for the desegregation of children and students is, according to preliminary calculations, USD 6 345 200 for a period of 5 years, or USD 1 269 040 per year.
9. 2. 5. Liquidation of illiteracy and mastering of basic working skills (according to the labour market demand) of the economically active Roma population

The preliminary prognoses anticipate that the problem with the illiteracy of the Roma should be solved during 2005 – 2010. The literacy courses offered are combined with training for mastering of basic working skills. In addition to these initiatives, it is also necessary to involve the Roma into vocational trainings for acquiring of professional qualification. The estimations of the expenditure on the literation of the Roma and on their vocational training are based on the financial parameters set by the National Plan on Employment (2004). These determine the maximum amount of funds to be spent from the National Budget per participant in each of the different types of training. The fixed expenditure are as follows:

Expenditure per participant in:

Motivation training course: BGN 60;
Literacy and mastering of basic working skills: BGN 360 (for literacy: BGN 125);
For training into a particular profession: BGN 450;
Stipend for the duration of the literation course: BGN 2.50 daily;
Stipend for vocational training course: BGN 3.00 daily.

As mentioned earlier, the total number of illiterate Roma is 31 535 persons (8.5% of a total of 371 000 Roma). For simplicity, it will be assumed that the number of the illiterate is 32 000. They are supposed to attend motivation training, courses for literation and mastering of basic working skills, as well as vocational training (20 days).

The total amount for courses and stipends per person is BGN 980.

For all the 32 000 Roma that are to be trained, the total expenditure will amount to BGN 31 360 000 or USD 20 102 564. In case the training lasts for 6 years, the average annual expenses will be BGN 5 226 667.

The statistics of the Employment Agency do not contain separate data on the Roma who have attended/completed vocational trainings. For this reason, the estimation of this type of expenditure is impossible.

9. 3. Total expenditure

The following table contains the total expenditures on education, literation and initial training of Roma per year. The funds are already in the plans for 2004, the estimations being made by experts. The second “group” of expenditures are average annual estimations for 2005 – 2015. The data are conditional and rounded.
Table II.4: Expenditure on Roma Education, Literacy and Initial Training in 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>USD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Officially planned expenditure, total</td>
<td>5990.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Additional expenditure*:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Enrollment (students 1-12 grade and children in kindergartens)</td>
<td>5030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Fellowships</td>
<td>480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Refurbishment, computers, learning materials</td>
<td>1312.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Desegregation (total), incl.:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- desegregation of children</td>
<td>1269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- desegregation of students</td>
<td>167.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Literacy and initial training of adults</td>
<td>5226.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total additional:</strong></td>
<td>13318.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total planned and additional expenditure</strong></td>
<td>19308.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The expenditures thus estimated — USD 19,308.5 thousand per year correspond to a rather optimistic forecast, which assumes that the Roma demand for educational services will be high, that the financial resources are ample and that their dislocation is efficient.

Without going into details, it should be pointed out that the available information on the Roma demand for educational services is insufficient. Regular monitoring should be introduced for the correct estimation of the scope and directions for development of this demand. As the donor programs sponsor particularly needs development, such research could also be utilized for increasing the efficiency of the dislocation of the funds originating from such sources.

The resources of the National and the municipal budgets are scarce. One obvious consequence from this is the highly limited overall spending on education (and health care). It seems reasonable to assume that these shortages will affect the scope of funding of initiatives for the education of Roma.

Overall, the Roma population are rather poor, thus it cannot be expected that they will be willing to buy educational services.

Certain real possibilities for additional funding of the Roma education integration could come from the overall optimization of the expenditures on education.

In 2003/04 the average student/teacher ratio for all levels of education (ISCED-97) in Bulgaria is 11.8 and in 1990/91 — 12.9. It is lower than the minimum permissible class sizes and the ratios in developed countries. The conclusion that many exceptions are made in composing smaller class sizes than are allowed under the minimum class size norm; and that teaching staff are inefficiently deployed across and within schools, so that many teachers receive a full salary but teach less than full time, is still valid. For a more efficient dislocation of the resources, the underemployed teachers will have to be involved in the education of the additionally enrolled Roma students.

The already introduced plans and programs for attrition and rationalization of

---

54 Includes kindergartens (ISED-0)
teaching staff and for the consolidation of the schools will have to be amended in view of the prospects for the increasing number of Roma students and desegregation.

The foreign aid funds are always limited. Their dislocation and utilization are subjected to certain common rules and requirements, such as capacity of the local institutions for management of funds; higher number of beneficiaries; innovativeness and social significance of the sponsored initiatives; sustainability of the initiative after the completion of the project, etc. In this connection, presently, of prior importance is the enhancement of the capacities for the utilization of funds for the education of Roma from both the public institutions and the NGOs.

Conclusions on Part 9

The comprehensive resolving of the Roma educational problems requires spending of considerable fund that should be utilized at maximum efficiency. Because of the incomplete information, at this stage it is difficult to make a precise estimation for the needs from educational services. Even the estimations outlined above, although all the efforts of the consultant, might prove to be incomplete or incorrect.

Without underestimating the importance of the approach that is adopted for the projection of the expenditure on education and on educational institutions, we suggest that it should be supplemented with a research on the size and structure of the consumption in the Roma households and of educational, qualification and socio-cultural services, in particular.
**PART THREE: LIST OF GENERAL TOPICS FOR ROMA EDUCATION PROJECTS**

The following list contains topics that have been suggested by Roma organizations’ representatives and by experts working on Roma issues. Regrettfully, very few organizations offered such topics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of the Project</th>
<th>Organization that proposed it</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Training of teachers for work in intercultural environments and with classes, composed of ethnically diversified children</td>
<td>Diversity Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programs for health training and education of children in several specific domains – sexual education and family planning, protection from AIDS; drugs abuse prevention; hygiene habits cultivation, etc.</td>
<td>Diversity Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment protection education</td>
<td>Diversity Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programs for dropped out students for attaining an educational degree and for learning of profession</td>
<td>Club Economika 2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programs for literation and for mastering of work skills in specific professions, for which the current labor market demand is high</td>
<td>Club Economika 2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conducting a survey on the Roma needs for education; stimulating and development of these needs</td>
<td>Club Economika 2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision of equal access to schools in cities with compact population (desegregation): institutional support for the enumerated NGO in terms of the implementation of the project</td>
<td>Equal Access Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campaign for Roma candidate University students; 4-5 month candidate University students instruction prior to the admission exams in three cities: Sofia, Plovdiv and Varna. The subjects of the trainings should be: Bulgarian language and literature; history; geography; English language, mathematics;</td>
<td>Equal Access Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stipends for Roma students in particular universities.</td>
<td>Equal Access Foundation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Literature**

Bulgaria – Public Finance Matters and Directions for Reform, World Bank, 2002


Marushakova E. and Popov V., Gypsies in Bulgaria, S.,1993; Marushakova E., The gypsy groups in Bulgaria and their ethnic self-consciousness,Bulgarian Ethnography magazine, issue 1, 1992


Millennium Development Goals – Bulgaria, UNDP, Sofia, 2003;

Nunev, Y. Desegregation in the education of the Roma community (social-pedagogical aspects). (Library of the Sofia University “St. Climent Ohridski”);

Nunev, Y., Analysis of the current situation of schools in which study Roma children, Perspectives Magazine, 2002., special issue;


Roma in Central and Eastern Europe, 2003, p. UNDP;

Seleni, Ivan Post-communist poverty, Sofia, East-West, 2002

