Needs Assessment Study for the Roma Education Fund
Background Paper

CROATIA
GENERAL INFORMATION

Territory: 56,538 km²
Inhabitants: 4,437,460
Ethnic structure: Croats (89.63%), Serbs (4.54%), Bosnians (0.47%), Italians (0.44%), Hungarians (0.37%), Slovenians (0.3%), other ethnic groups (4.25%)
Number of Roma: 9,463 (0.21%)
GDP per capita: 6,377.40 US$
Inflation (2003): 2.1%
Official level of registered unemployment (2003): 18%
Level of unemployment (Labor Force Survey – 2002): 14.8%
Currency: Croatian Kuna (HRK)
1 US$ = 6,11 HRK

ABBREVIATIONS

ONM – Office for National Minorities
MoES – Ministry of Education and Sport of the Republic of Croatia¹
MoSES – Ministry of Science, Education and Sport of the Republic of Croatia²
MoFWVIS – Ministry of Family, War Veterans and Intergenerational Solidarity
MoLSW – Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare³
SIPoFMY – State Institute for the Protection of Family, Maternity and Youth⁴
OSI – Open Society Institute – Croatia
NPfR – The National Program for the Roma
NPfPoGE - National Policies for the Promotion of Gender Equality
OG – Official Gazette (of the Republic of Croatia)
CboS – Croatian Bureau of Statistics

¹ Acted as a separate body of the executive by January 2004.
² Exists since January 2004 due to the merging of the Ministry of Education and Sport and the Ministry of Science and Technology
³ After the restructuring of bodies of the executive in January 2004, it no longer exists as a separate entity, but within the Ministry of Family, War Veterans and Intergenerational Solidarity and the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare
⁴ After the restructuring of bodies of the executive in January 2004, it no longer exists as a separate entity, but within the Ministry of Family, War Veterans and Intergenerational Solidarity
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This document on the condition of Roma in Croatia with special emphasis on the field of education, was produced as part of the study on assessment of the condition of education of the Roma ethnic minority in Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Macedonia, Romania, Poland, Serbia and Montenegro and Slovakia. In the Decade of Roma Inclusion from 2005-2015, the World Bank and the Open Society Institute will set up the Roma Education Fund.

The issues discussed by this document are: the current socio-demographic, socio-economic and educational situation of Roma in Croatia, the policy and financial assessment of the field of Roma education. The document finally recommends certain guidelines intended for the financing of particular measures by the Roma Education Fund.

Because of lack of data in report are combine information from a literature review, government policy and other documents.

In the drafting of this study, the following people and institutions were of exceptional assistance with their consultations, information, data and advice: Milena Klajner (Office for National Minorities of the Republic of Croatia), Jagoda Novak (Open Society Institute – Croatia), Ivanka Huljev (Ministry of Science, Education and Sport), State Bureau of Statistics, offices of the Medimurje county and the City of Zagreb, and the Roma nongovernmental organizations.

The portion of this document dealing with the financial assessment was authored by Domagoj Racic, while the rest of the text was drafted by Petra Hoblaj.

All of the stated opinions and arguments used in this report are the sole responsibility of the authors, because they might not necessarily be the official attitudes of all the organizations and individuals dealing with the issue of Roma education in Croatia.
The Croatian society has mostly expressed a negative attitude toward the Roma: from a paternalistic interest for the unusual strangers, benevolent inactivity and ignoring, over despotism and radical actions to radical «solutions». The Roma reaction to that had changed from socially desirable and acceptable contents and activities, to them avoiding any interaction with the authorities. However, in spite of all that, almost everywhere where they had stayed for a shorter or longer period of time, they were at the margins of society, and the antagonism between the non-Roma and the Roma population continues to exist. Thus, we may speak of a multi-marginalized population.

Although there is no reason to speak about a total social discrimination of Roma, certain forms of social labeling or stigmatizing does exist same as certain cases of segregation. Namely, cases of segregation regard the field of education. So, one really can speak about the marginalization of Roma in Croatia. To be more specific, the marginality of Roma is visible in several important dimensions: economic, spatial, cultural and political dimension.

However, Roma, as an integral part of the Croatian society through more than six centuries of living together had not, by the beginning of the 21st century, constructed or structured their national community, nor realized most of their minority rights. The declaratory assurance of the same minority rights in the past period, did not mean their realization in the political life, the culture, the media, the publishing activity, the use of language and script, nor the education for the Roma.

Historically speaking, the Roma in Croatia represent an autochthonous ethnic minority with a specific tradition and a special cultural identity. The number of Roma increases from year to year. According to the 1971 census there were 1.257 Roma living in Croatia, in 1981 there were 3.658 of then, in 1991 6.695 Roma lived in Croatia, while, according to the 2001 census, there is 9.463 Roma in Croatia, representing 0.21% of the total Croatian population. However, this figure does not correspond to the real number of the population. Since the assessments of the number of Roma in Europe vary from two to almost 14 million, Croatia is no exception in this regard. Specifically, according to certain estimates by the Council of Europe, some claim there is around 40.000 Roma living in Croatia, while some activists from Roma organizations, probably exaggerating, mention 100-150.000 Roma in Croatia.

According to the population census (2001), the Roma population is extremely young - 33.38% of the population is younger than 9 years of age, and the school population (aged 5 to 19) represents more than a half (55.37%) of the total Roma population. To be more specific, due to poor living conditions and extreme poverty, only 6.9% of Roma is older than 50.

The Roma in Croatia are not a homogenous population. Namely, the differences between particular Roma groups are significant considering the lingual, socio-economic and religious affiliation. Regarding the language heterogeneity, we need to mention that there are two great lingual groups of Roma in Croatia: Roma of the ljimba d' bjaš language area, or the and the Roma of the Romani Chib language area.

Even though most Roma have Croatian citizenship, often the condition for gaining political, civic, social and other rights, a part of the Roma population, even though they have been
living at the territory of the Republic of Croatia for a longer period of time, still do not have a regulated citizen status.

Out of a number of socio-structural factors influencing the social position of Roma, or those that produce or reproduce social endangerment and the poverty of the Roma population, the role and function of the family prevails. Primarily, Roma, congruent to their tradition, enter marriage much earlier than the rest of the population (girls sometimes marry at the age of 14).

In the past the Roma population worked in traditional occupations, but in time replaced that mono-professional tribal structure with different poorly-paid occupations. Specifically, the greatest number of Roma in Croatia today do the “traditional Roma work” – the gathering and trading of secondary raw-materials, crafts and trade and, unfortunately, begging in the streets. So, those are the most common sources of income for the Roma population. Considering the fact that most Roma in Croatia are not familiar with the language, and have a low level of education, most often the work they do is based on self-taught skills, and not on formally obtained knowledge and skills necessary for their competitiveness at the labor market.

According to the available data, the assessments of the percentage of absolutely poor people are mostly around 10% (World Bank, 2000) of the entire population. Even though it turned out that there is relatively little extreme poverty in Croatia, one can assume that a part of the extremely poor belongs to the Roma community – especially taking into consideration not only household incomes, but the living standard or the quality of life in general. This is visible from the data about the beneficiaries of social help transfers and other forms of social care, where the Roma have a disproportionate share. Considering the socio-economic position of the Roma, one should accent the extremely present phenomenon of their social exclusion.

From the Census (2001) data on the educational status of the Roma population, we can indirectly, among other things and with certain other factors, interpret the inadequacy of the existing educational system. In other words, the educational profile of the Roma population in Croatia is quite poor, if not devastating in the age we are living in. Even though the Roma, just as other national minority members, have a legal right to education in the national minority language and script, the members of the Roma ethnic minority are not systematically included in any model of schooling in their own language, unlike other minorities. To be more specific, the very poor educational status of the Roma population is usually blamed on the insufficient knowledge of the Croatian language at the moment of entrance into the first grade of primary school.

Regarding the legal regulations of the Republic of Croatia, according to which, there are no records by the criterion of national affiliation neither in the educational system nor in other areas, the MoSES estimates there were 1.900 Roma children included in the educational system in the 2002/2003 school year. From that number, 1.700 children are included in the primary (compulsory) education (almost 1.000 of which are in the Medimurje county), while 200 children attend a secondary school. Also, the Ministry in charge estimates that around 5.000 Roma children have never been included in any form of education.

5 The real traditional occupations (horse-trading, musicians, production of musical instruments, basket-making, through-making, blacksmiths, etc.)
6 According to the international methodology used by the World Bank on the countries in transition (4,3 US$ per day per purchase power parity), the level of poverty in Croatia is relatively small and amounts to 4.8%.
7 This right is regulated by the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia, the Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities and the Act on the Education in the Language and Script of National Minorities.
Based on the current situation, MoSES, has initiated a preschool program for Roma children meant for the preparation of Roma children for attending school. The two most common types of preschools for Roma are: (1) preschools organized by state or local authorities and (2) preschools organized by nongovernmental Roma organizations. The purpose of these programs is learning the Croatian language and acquiring social skills and basic hygiene habits, with the goal of re-socialization and preparation for entering the primary education system.

The Constitution of the Republic of Croatia and legislative regulations guarantee the right to primary (compulsory) education to all children. According to the data of the Ministry of Science, Education and Sport, the primary education level included around 1,500 Roma children, in about 30 schools in the 2002/2003 school year. One of the greatest “problems” regarding Roma education is the formation of special classes attended only by Roma pupils. Although it is a fact that such situations exist, they are not common. As the greatest problem with the inclusion of Roma in the primary education system is the absence of knowledge of the Croatian language.

Unfortunately, since the highest percent of the enrolled children does not finish the primary (compulsory) education program, the number of Roma attending secondary schools is very small. It is estimated there were about 200 of them in the 2002/2003 school year. In order to increase that number the MoSES and local authorities in charge is implementing the scholarship program and finances the accommodation of students in dormitories. The same situation is in a higher level of education.

Coordinated by the MoSES the Roma organizations and institutions dealing with adult education conduct programs of adult education and literacy for Roma (especially female population). Adult education regards the realization of the “second chance”, that is, the completion of primary education, the basic functional vocational education, secondary vocational education, additional training, re-training from surplus vocations into deficit vocation.

Even though there are no exact data on the number of Roma dropping out of the educational system without finishing primary (compulsory) education, we can claim with certainty that from the total number of drop-outs the greatest share belongs to the Roma population.

In a filed of legal regulation equality is guaranteed to members of all national minorities in the Republic of Croatia, and freedom, equal rights, national equality and gender equality, social justice and respect for human rights are among the highest values of its the constitutional order (Articles 13 and 15 of the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia). The Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities and the system of legislation in the Republic of Croatia which protects human rights and rights of national minorities are based on these constitutional guidelines.

As for legal regulations in the field of education of national minorities, the education in languages and scripts of national minorities in the Republic of Croatia has been implemented since 1979, that is, since the first Act on educational work in ethnic languages was adopted. The education of national minorities continued after Croatia gained independence as well, based on the provisions of the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia, on the Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities, the Act on Preschool Education, the Act on Primary Education, the Act on Secondary Education, the European Charter on Regional and Minority Languages and the Act on Education in the Languages and Scripts of National Minorities.

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8 Preschool education is not obligatory in Croatia.
On a policy and financial level in the issue of the Roma National Program for Roma is in the center of discussions. By accepting the National program for the Roma in October 2003 - a strategic and implementation document obligating the Government and the Ministries to conduct concrete measures aiming to improve the life conditions of the Roma population and the integration of Roma into the society. The realization of the National Program provides for the implementation and the allocation of financial resources through ministries and the offices of the Government, as well as the financial and organizational participation of local authorities, international donors and the institutions of civil society.

Key institutions through which the measures are to be implemented and the National Program for the Roma and other forms of state support for the Roma are financed – especially in the areas of education, employment and the preservation of the Roma traditional culture. Those institutions are: the Office for National Minorities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia, the Committee for National Minorities, and the Ministry of Science, Education and Sport. The implementation of the Program should be systematically monitored, and if necessary, changes and amendments should be recommended. That is the task of the Committee for the monitoring of the implementation of the National Program for the Roma.

National Program for Roma recommends 26 measures in the field of education
There are also other bodies in Croatia, whose work is directly and/or indirectly related to the Roma national minority education issues, and they are: the Office for Human Rights of the Government of the Republic of Croatia, the Committee on Human and National Minority Rights, The Committee on the Family, Youth and Sports and the Education, Science and Culture Committee.

The Roma and non-Roma nongovernmental organizations dealing with Roma education have also contributed to the development of the civil society in Croatia, to the sensitizing of the Roma and to the start of resolving their problems. However, a characteristic of the Roma organizations is the fact that they are often family businesses, and that, out of the total of 37 registered organizations, only a few are actually active.

In the conditions of budgetary restraints for social transfers, imposed by the high deficit of the state budget, the realization of measures and goals set by the National Program for the Roma is in question. This is especially confirmed by the (incomplete) data about the resources foreseen in 2004 for Roma programs within the key state institutions in charge of the National Program for the Roma implementation. All of them indicate that the ambitious agenda of the foreseen measures is not backed by budgetary resources.

Taking into consideration all the things mentioned in this document, from the situation analysis, to the analysis of documents, programs and measures of public policy, as well as finances related to those programs, we recommend the following educational measures for Roma.

In a filed of preschool education we recommend organizing and financing of preschool institutions for Roma children in the duration of 12-18 months prior to the primary school enrollment and kindergarten institutions.

Due to poor living conditions, the bad infrastructure of the Roma households (no electricity, water supplies, etc.), as well as the inexistence of expert help in the performing of school

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9 One of the largest donors monitoring and issuing financial support to programs dealing with Roma is the Open Society Institute – Croatia.
obligations, we recommend the organization and financing of daycare for all Roma national minority children.

In a field of teacher education, since there is no education for the specific work with Roma children we recommend: (1) organizing the teacher education of the Roma and non-Roma population specialized in work with the Roma at the pre-service and in-service training and (2) creating models of education for Roma assistants for work at preschools and primary schools and a system of inclusion of Roma assistants into the formal system of tertiary education. But we also recommend introducing a subject about the Roma and the intercultural education into teacher studies in order to increase the level of knowledge and degree of information of teachers on the subject of Roma and the concept of intercultural education.

We recommend stimulating and creating a system of scholarships for the Roma secondary school population as well as tertiary education population according to the criteria of educational achievement and the socio-economic status of the parents.

Individual or group professional orientation for Roma students should be established and some institution should assist in the linking of students and employers (in apprenticeship, employment, etc.)

In a field of extra-institutional measures we recommend some non-formal education for Roma. For example, for young Roma because of the poor or no activity of youth in the community there should be organization of programs for «Youth Leadership», aiming at the creation of a network of young Roma and their more active inclusion into community life. We recommend organizing workshops aimed at information and computer literacy of Roma, at informing and educating about health in general, reproductive health, civil rights and obligations, environmental protection, etc. Considering the high number of Roma dropping out of the educational system, we recommend organization of education for completion of school or obtaining a vocation is necessary, with the goal of returning Roma into the education system or obtaining a vocation needed for employment.

Since there are a lot of illiterate persons in the Roma population, for adults we recommend organizing courses in writing and reading aimed at improving adult literacy (especially include the largest possible number of women), workshops and lectures on responsible parenthood, health, self-employment, family violence, alcoholism, etc. Considering the deprived social, economic and educational position of Roma women, it is necessary to initiate different activities aimed at gender equality and emancipation of women.

In order to alleviate the pressure put on parents by the educational system, due to their poor socio-economic status, we recommend the financing of textbooks and school material. We also recommend developing publishing activity (publishing teaching material, books, dictionaries, etc. As there are no comprehensive researches on Roma in Croatia, we recommend conducting a research on a representative sample of the entire population.

At the end, we have to express our hope that projects which will be financed by Roma Education Fund will help to promote and integrate Roma in Croatian society and that at the end (in 2015) Decade of Roma Inclusion could become a term of that means success for all (for Roma and non-Roma society).
PART ONE

SITUATION ANALYSIS

1. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS
The Roma as a Multi-Marginalized Population

The Croatian society has mostly expressed a negative attitude toward the Roma: from a paternalistic interest for the unusual strangers, benevolent inactivity and ignoring, over despotism and radical actions to radical «solutions». The Roma reaction to that had changed from socially desirable and acceptable contents and activities, to them avoiding any interaction with the authorities. However, in spite of all that, almost everywhere where they had stayed for a shorter or longer period of time, they were at the margins of society, and the antagonism between the non-Roma and the Roma population continues to exist. Thus, we may speak of a multi-marginalized population.

Although there is no reason to speak about a total social discrimination of Roma, certain forms of social labeling or stigmatizing does exist same as certain cases of segregation. Namely, cases of segregation regard the field of education and will be the object of analysis in chapter 4. So, one really can speak about the marginalization of Roma in Croatia. Specifically, the concept of marginalization relates to those social groups with no significant influence on social processes and relationships, or, portraying the social structure in spatial terms, the marginal social group is at the periphery of such an imaginary space. In other words, the position of the Roma and the conditions of their life have for years been at the margins of social interest, contributing to the considerable lagging in the quality of their living conditions in comparison to the average quality of life of the majority population.

To be more specific, the marginality of Roma is visible in several important dimensions: economic, spatial, cultural and political dimension. The economic marginalization relates to the low socio-economic status, the inclination toward certain professions and a low level of inclusion into official forms of labor. The socio-economic marginalization of Roma is also linked with their participation in the educational system. Namely, «a large number of Roma ethnic group members had stayed outside the division of labor, and they especially had no chance of competing for higher social positions because of their alienation from the educational institutions».

The spatial marginalization relates to the spatial segregation and the undeveloped utility infrastructure. «Big waste depots alongside the cities and trash depots»

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10 Namely, since social discrimination is most often defined as the formal or informal keeping of specific social groups considered to be «lower» compared to the dominant population in a subordinate position, which is mostly visible in the prohibition of inhabiting certain parts of regions or settlements, the prohibition of access to some places (coffee shops, hotels, institutions), the prohibition of education, performing some work and so on, the Roma population in Croatia in general, cannot be considered as socially discriminated.
11 Stigmatization represents the negative labeling of individuals or groups in the social, political and cultural life, or the labeling of those who should be excluded.
12 The concept of segregation constitutes the different validation of individuals or groups in the social aspect (living conditions) and their exclusion based on class, national, religious or some other attribute.
containers in the cities seem to be the base of Roma economic activity. This authorities cannot sever this «economic relationship» – even if they wanted to – nor could they dislocate the Roma from the depots, nor would the Roma want to be dislocated.»

The political marginalization is, on the other side, related to poor political participation. So, the poor educational and unfavorable socio-professional structure, of the majority of Roma, belong to the important determinants of the social marginalization of this ethnic group.

The political marginalization of Roma relates to the fact that they were not included in the decision-making process. However, the Constitutional Act on Rights of National Minorities Rights (OG, 155/2002) from December 2002 enables Roma, as well as members of other national minorities to participate in the political decision-making processes through the Councils of national minorities, which enabled the representation of Roma in the legislative bodies of the local and regional levels, and the ability to choose special representative of national minorities in the Croatian Parliament. Thus, we can begin talking about the initiation of the political de-marginalization of the Roma. But, the Roma still do not have equal access to certain areas (such as education, employment, etc.) mostly due to their marginalization (in practice).

Since the Roma commonly use social distance in their «communication» with the non-Roma environment, they had in a certain manner managed to preserve their specifics and their cultural identity from the processes of assimilation. However, this is exactly the attitude that aggravates delays and slows down their integration into society. Considering the fact that the concept of integration represents «accepting and inclusion and the usual processes that go on in a particular degree of civilization», it is necessary to mention that some Roma leaders sometimes consider integration itself as cultural assimilation. But, when talking about integration, we must define the concept of integration. Specifically, when discussing different identities (ethnic, cultural, etc.), that is minority and dominant cultures, the concept of integration is opposite to the concept of assimilation and signifies the «ability of immigrants and the host-county to equally compare and share values, norms and patterns of behavior».

However, Roma, as an integral part of the Croatian society through more than six centuries of living together had not, by the beginning of the 21st century, constructed or structured their

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17 Although there is no consensus on the arrival of Roma, the most prevailing opinion claims that the first Croatian Roma came as a part of the most numerous group which came to Europe between the 14th and 15th century from Asia Minor and Southeastern Europe. The first written document mentioning the Roma originates from 1362 - Dubrovnik. Ten or so years later (1373) the Roma are also mentioned in Zagreb, where they were tradesmen, tailors and butchers. In Dubrovnik the Roma (Jedupi) lived in Gruž and already at the end of the 14th and in the 15th centuries they had formed national associations dealing with traditional Roma crafts and music. In the Middle Ages the Roma population was tied to the towns. In 1497 there was a priest called Dominik Ciganin working in Pula, and in 1500 the Roma were mentioned in the suburbs of Šibenik. There is very little information on the actual number and position of the Roma in Croatia during the 16th and 17th centuries. Gypsy "šipuši" musicians were mentioned in Croatia in 1671. In Medimurje Roma were mentioned in 1688 when in Legrad (which at that time came under the administration of Medimurje) the child of the “Gypsy” Duke Ivan was christened, and in the 18th century the feudal rulers of Medimurje permitted the immigration of the Roma Koritars. It is important to mention that a large portion of the Roma population of the period, belonged to the
national community, nor realized most of their minority rights. The declaratory assurance of the same minority rights in the past period, did not mean their realization in the political life, the culture, the media, the publishing activity, the use of language and script, nor the education for the Roma.

2. THE SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC ATTRIBUTES OF THE ROMA POPULATION

Historically speaking, the Roma in Croatia represent an autochthonous ethnic minority with a specific tradition and a special cultural identity. As is visible from Tables 1 and 2 in Annex 1, the number of Roma increases from year to year. According to the 1971 census there were 1,257 Roma living in Croatia, in 1981 there were 3,658 of them, in 1991 6,695 Roma lived in Croatia, while, according to the 2001 census, there is 9,463 Roma in Croatia, representing 0.21% of the total Croatian population. However, this figure does not correspond to the real number of the population. Since the assessments of the number of Roma in Europe vary from two to almost 14 million, Croatia is no exception in this regard. Specifically, according to certain estimates by the Council of Europe, some claim there is around 40,000 Roma living in Croatia, while some activists from Roma organizations, probably exaggerating, mention 100-150,000 Roma in Croatia.

Estimates we are talking about are especially difficult due to the fact that the Roma had, during their migrations – even though they had for many centuries and in many places been ?????a??? (athigganoi), meaning «untouchable» in Byzantine-Greek – still mixed with the majority population of the countries they were simply passing through or had stayed in for shorter or longer periods of time, so some of them were assimilated (truly losing awareness about their ethnic origin), and some just «mimicked», that is, started to present themselves as members of the majority nation, even though they kept many important characteristics of the community they had originated from.
The Roma belong to «a particular non-territorial people with its own history, language and culture»\(^{19}\) and with its specific transnational identity represents a special historical minority. Reliable demographic data about the Roma are absent due to frequent migrations, specific regulations about the census data gathering\(^{20}\), but also because of some objective and subjective reasons that make Roma not declare themselves as Roma. Namely, due to suffering in the past and the social distance of the majority population, mostly based on stereotypes and prejudice,\(^{21}\) a part of the Roma population refuses to declare and identify as members of the Roma national community.

Due to lack of data, and a certain partial existence of data, this document will also use the data from the only three scientific research projects about the Roma in the Republic of Croatia: (1) research by the Institute for Social Research in Zagreb in 1982, whose results were published under the title “The Social Position of the Roma in the Socialist Republic of Croatia”; (2) research by the Ivo Pilar Institute for Social Sciences in 1988, entitled “The Social and Developmental Position of the Roma in Croatia”; and (3) the State Institute for the Family, Maternity and Youth research in 2002, under the title “The Structure of Roma Families and the Concept of Parenthood in them”.

### 2.1. STRUCTURE BY AGE AND GENDER

According to the population census (2001), the Roma population is extremely young. As is visible in Table 4 (Annex 1) 33.38% of the population is younger than 9 years of age, and the school population (aged 5 to 19) represents more than a half (55.37%) of the total Roma population. To be more specific, due to poor living conditions and extreme poverty, only 6.9% of Roma is older than 50.

Regarding the gender structure, the Roma population is similar to the majority population – from the total number of those declaring themselves as Roma, 4,686 are female, and 4,777 are male.

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\(^{20}\) According to the *Act on the Population, Houses and Apartment Census* from 2000 (Official Gazette, 64/2000), art. 5 allows persons the right not to declare their national and religious affiliation. «The census-takers wrote in exactly the answer a person had declared, and if the person had not wanted to declare himself/herself, the census-taker had to write «Undeclared».» (Statistical yearbook, 2003: 82) As the Act provided, the answer about national identity of children of up to 15 years of age, was to be given by one of the parents, adoptive parents or guardians.

\(^{21}\) Specifically, a research conducted in 1995 on a representative sample of secondary school students in Croatia (N=2715) examined the level of acceptance or refusal of certain ethnic groups (Previšić, 1996 and Posavec/Hrvatic, 2000). Out of 13 ethnic groups, the Roma had been (aside from the members of Serbian and Montenegrin nation, who were at war with the members of the majority Croatian population at the time) positioned the lowest levels on most of the 7 attributes from the Bogardus scale. With the item «close relation by marriage», the Roma members take up the 12th position in this research, and with the item «friendship», «neighbor», «student in your class», «citizen of the Republic of Croatia» and «excluded from the Republic of Croatia», they take up the 11th place.
2.2. MIGRATIONS, RURAL-URBAN AFFILIATION AND LANGUAGE HETEROGENEITY

The Roma represent a socially dynamic, respectable autochthonous national community in Croatia, which had, regardless of the contemporary social processes, retained its specifics related to the nomadic (or semi-nomadic) way of life, and the tribal and economic structure of the community. Large Roma groups had migrated to Croatia during the 19th century from Romania. They belong to the Roma group of Koritars, and inhabit the Medimurje and Podravina areas, and make the core of today's Roma population in Croatia along with the already present Kalderasi and Lovari.

According to the data in Table 5 (Annex 1) it is visible that the number of Roma had increased by almost 50% in certain counties from 1991 to 2001, while in other counties (mostly those influenced by war) their numbers has decreased.

According to the results of the research project «The Structure of Roma Families and the Concept of Parenthood in them» conducted in 2002 by the State Institute for the Protection of Family, Maternity and Youth, 51% of Roma in Croatia belong to the «indigenous» population, 17% of them have migrated within Croatia, while the other 32% are immigrants that have migrated from the states of the former Yugoslavia during the last ten years (most commonly Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Kosovo).

The territorial stationing and the weakening of the traditional nomadic lifestyle conditioned changes in the economic structure of certain tribal groups, since the need for some specific Roma crafts, products and services ceases (such as minute blacksmith work, cauldron mending, through-making and the like), the Roma become unemployed, impoverished and spatially excluded.

Even though this spatial exclusion, except in the city of Zagreb, began back in the process of transition from nomadic to the stationary lifestyle, it is preserved to this day. Specifically, all the Roma settlements appeared spontaneously without any urban planning. The land Roma used to build those settlements are the ownership of municipalities and towns, and are sometimes private property.

Most Roma in Croatian territory, except in the city of Zagreb, live in ethnically homogenous, most often illegally built settlements, on the margins of cities and municipalities. The Roma settlements in the Medimurje County, where almost more than 30% of the total Roma population lives, have a relatively developed infrastructure (all the settlements have electricity and phone lines. Almost 75% of the settlements have public water-supply lines, while there are no gas or sewage networks). Public roads lead to all the settlements, but there are very few asphalt-covered streets in them. However, this is not the infrastructural situation of all Roma settlements. In other words, the situation is exactly opposite in most other settlements.

As is visible from the data in Tables 5, 6 and 7 in Annex 1, Roma inhabit the entire Croatian territory, so that they are not organized or established as a more numerous and recognizable community in areas other than the Medimurje county.
But, the Roma communities are differentiated, so issues related to the problem of Roma, nor the Roma population attributes cannot be generalized, and besides, the position of Roma communities is different from region to region.

The Roma in Croatia are not a homogenous population. Namely, the differences between particular Roma groups are significant considering the lingual, socio-economic and religious affiliation. Regarding the language heterogeneity, we need to mention that there are two great lingual groups of Roma in Croatia: Roma of the Bayan language area, or the ljimba d’bjaš (one of the Romanian dialects – vlax-dialects) and the Roma of the Romani Chib language area. Romani chib has no unique or written standard; it is a dialect-system with over 60 dialects, so it is much mentioned as «the language of the illiterate».

This fact is often used as the reason for the inexistence of a greater number of reading-books, beginner-books and similar teaching material in the Roma language.

The results of the research mentioned by the State Institute for the Protection of Family, Maternity and the Youth show that the Roma language is predominately spoken in Roma families (78.9%), or any of the dialects of the Roma language (romani chiba is spoken by 42.4% of the subjects, and ljimba d’bjaš is spoken by 36.5%), Albanian is spoken by 11% of the subjects, and the Croatian language is spoken in only 6% of families, while 4% of the subjects expressly called the language of their every day communication Rumanian.

2.3. CITIZENSHIP STATUS

Even though most Roma have Croatian citizenship, often the condition for gaining political, civic, social and other rights, a part of the Roma population, even though they have been living at the territory of the Republic of Croatia for a longer period of time, still do not have a regulated citizen status.

According to certain opinions by the experts «the members of the Roma national minority in most cases do not fulfill their legal obligation to register their residence in the Republic of Croatia, and they do not fulfill all the legal conditions to obtain Croatian citizenship. The documents used by members of the Roma national minority to prove their identity are often deficient. Their request therefore includes formal insufficiencies, which prevents action being taken on it. Since the Roma mainly do not register the birth of a child to the responsible body, the child does not possess any birth certificate. Moreover the procedure for obtaining Croatian citizenship for minors in some cases is initiated by persons who are not authorized to do so, since they appear as legal representatives of children born out of wedlock, although no recognition proceedings have taken place previously, or there has been no determination of paternity. Furthermore, some of the members of the Roma national minority have never submitted requests for issuance of identity documents or they own identity documents from the former Yugoslavia, from which their present citizenship is not clear, and it is not possible to determine this with any certainty on the basis of the information available. This particularly relates to people who are resident abroad and who are citizens of one of the republics of the former Yugoslavia but who were resident in the Republic of Croatia for a certain period of time.». (NPfR, 2003:23)
According to the data from the 2002 research, about the issues of status as citizens, the possession of personal identification and the permanent residence documents, which are a precondition for the regulation of a number of personal rights (employment, health and retirement insurance, etc.), the obtained results show that 90% of the examinees are Croatian citizens, that have documents and permanent residence. Along with 6-7% of foreign citizens (some of which also have a Croatian personal identification card, but the one meant for «foreigners»), only 3% of them are without citizenship (and without documents).

A measure of the NPiR regarding the foundation of mobile teams made up of representatives of the competent ministries, the offices of state administration, the centers for social welfare, Roma nongovernmental organizations and representatives of the Roma, had begun with implementation. These teams ascertain the situation in the areas settled by the Roma, for each case individually, and instruct the inhabitants of that area of ways of solving the issue of status, especially the registration of residency, and obtaining Croatian citizenship, and are particularly trained to implement these measures.

3. THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF ROMA IN CROATIA

3.1. THE INTERNAL STRATIFICATION OF ROMA COMMUNITIES

Out of a number of socio-structural factors influencing the social position of Roma, or those that produce or reproduce social endangerment and the poverty of the Roma population, the role and function of the family prevails.

Primarily, Roma, congruent to their tradition, enter marriage much earlier than the rest of the population (girls sometimes marry at the age of 14). In the past marriages were exclusively endogamous, because the members that broke that rule were even excluded from the community. However, today there is a lot more ethnically heterogeneous marriages, although much less when compared to other ethnic groups. The manner of entering marriage still has, although much less than in the past, elements of archaic habits where the parents of the groom and bride agree on the price for the girl. Otherwise, the wedding is for the Roma basically more a social than an individual act, and is based on magic, religion and mythology where the fundamental goal of the marriage is reproduction. The Roma families are most often numerous.

Since Roma enter marriage early, considering they have no employment or separate living accommodation, they are forced to live in the same community with their parents (usually the groom's parents). Such, so-called expanded families, are a characteristic of not only patriarchal societies, but also of poorer classes of society. In is characteristic for this family that there is an authority of the household pater familias (the oldest family member, usually the father), so the other members de facto are without possibility for direct participation or influence on the content of their life together. This pater familias usually represents a model of behavior for other male members of the community, one that they will in time inherit, accepting the reproduced model with small or no changes in the patterns of behavior toward their descendants (for example, the position of women in the family, family violence, etc.). The position of women in the Roma community, as the ethnologists emphasize, is determined by «ethnic law» (habit), according to which they are, by the very fact they are bought, submitted to exploitation. But, we need to mention that there are indications of the process of
emancipation of the Roma women, who are helped by early nongovernmental Roma and non-Roma organizations dealing with the emancipation of women. Also, the «National Program for Gender Equality» emphasizes the need for a more equal and active position of women in the national minority communities in Croatia.

The basic determinant of the position of Roma family members is the providing of means for living. Namely, providing the means for living determines the division of roles within a household. The man, as the «provider», has monopoly on decision-making in the family, while the woman is left with the role of mother, her biological role, and the responsibility for raising children. This classical concept of a patriarchal family is represented in almost all of its elements in the Roma community. It is almost completely, regardless of the quick social changes and the globalization process, untouched by outside influence, at least regarding the basic relationships both in the family, and in the community.

This specific inner stratification of the Roma community, as well as the structure of the Roma households and families, and with them the specific understanding of the concepts and content of parenthood, the attitudes of parents about the education of their children, as well as other socio-demographic attributes, leaves as a consequence the aggravated social integration and promotion of their children and calls for a systematic expert, and wide social help.

For the mentioned reasons the State Institute for the Protection of Family, Maternity and Youth has in 2002 conducted the research project «The Structure of Roma Families and the Parenthood Concept in them» aimed at detecting patterns in the structure of a typical contemporary Roma family in Croatia and patterns in the understanding of the content of parenthood in the family, as the basis for the projection of efficient assistance measures for the family in its successful parenthood function and the general social affirmation.

The research was conducted on a sample of 800 examinees from the Zagreb, Medimurje, Banija, Baranja, Slavonski brod and Rijeka areas. According to data obtained through this research, the most typical characteristic of Roma families is extreme poverty, that is, unfavorable material and living conditions, the high level of unemployment and the extremely low level of education of the parents. All of these factors actually mostly and most negatively affect the integration of Roma children. Furthermore, only somewhat more than 10% of the total number of households has up to three members, while almost one half has four or more members. Only one family lives in 72.8% of the households, two families live in 21.8%, while 5.4% households accommodate three families. In the households with more families, the power, as well as other aspects of responsibility, belongs to one married couple with children. As was mentioned earlier, the Roma family is patriarchal. In other words, the main decisions in a great majority of the Roma families are made by the man/husband, while, according to the data from this research, the woman/wife has an important role along with the man in an insignificant number of families. As with other so-called traditional families, the woman in most Roma families is in charge of typical «female work» – tidying the apartment/house, preparation of food, as well as child care and providing household necessities. However, the results of the research show that only in «the relationship with the authorities/state» the male

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22 This institution, functioning within the Ministry for Social Care, was abolished after the constitution of the new Government in 2004 and after the restructuring of the ministries.
23 The unpublished elaboration of the research «The Structure of Roma Families and the Parenthood Concept in them».
24 Those are the areas with the highest number of Roma in Croatia.
domination is less accented, because it is usually the responsibility of both. Regarding gender (in)equality, we need to mention that 82.1% of the examinees prefer neither sons nor daughters, while those preferring sons are more numerous than those preferring daughters (12.5%).

As for children, the data show how 8% of the examinees describe the characteristics of a good parent by a negative definition, that is, that he/she «does not present a bad example»; «does not drink», «does not teach children bad behavior», and so on. 52.1% of the examinees claim that the parental care for children and other household members is what they should do in order to be respected and obeyed. Only 20% of them are in favor of such a relationship of parents and children, where they behave «friendly», «understanding» and so on toward the children. Furthermore, almost half of the examinees do not (37.8%) or mostly do not (11.3%) consider physical punishment to help in the upbringing of children.\(^{25}\) Even though, due to the economic status of the Roma, children often have to participate in the provision of material resources (which more than sometimes prevents them from attending school or causes their absence from class), more than a half of the examinees believe children should be spared from the obligation of providing for the family at least until they have turned 18 years of age, and sometimes even longer.

Although one of the more problematic characteristics of Roma is early marriage but only 11% of girls and 6% of boys think they should enter marriage before having turned 18.

Since we could not obtain a data base on the structure of Roma families from the official statistics, the portrayed data is the only information that allows for the presentation of the structure of a typical Roma family, as well as certain other indicators related to Roma families, based on the relevant statistics.

### 3.2. TYPE AND LEVEL OF EMPLOYMENT

In the past the Roma population worked in traditional occupations, but in time replaced that mono-professional tribal structure with different poorly-paid occupations. The real traditional occupations (horse-trading, musicians, production of musical instruments, basket-making, through-making, blacksmiths, etc.) were replaced by new ones, labeled afterwards as typical traditional Roma occupation. Specifically, the greatest number of Roma in Croatia today do the “traditional Roma work” – the gathering and trading of secondary raw-materials, crafts and trade and, unfortunately, begging in the streets. So, those are the most common sources of income for the Roma population.

Considering the fact that most Roma in Croatia are not familiar with the language, and have a low level of education, most often the work they do is based on self-taught skills, and not on formally obtained knowledge and skills necessary for their competitiveness at the labor market.

The Roma usually work on jobs with the smallest wages, and are in a very poor position on the labor market. Very often, those are the jobs nobody else wants to do. Additional barriers to

\(^{25}\) Although there are no statistical data on family violence in the Roma population, it is assumed that child molesting, as well as violence against women, are present in that population, as well as in the majority population.
the employment of Roma are the high level of unemployment and the general economic situation, both creating a poverty trap that is difficult to escape.

As is typical for a socially endangered population, the Roma are, compared to the socially endangered majority population, different regarding the level of education, as well as regarding the employment according to gender. By the data of the Croatian Bureau of Statistics, portrayed in Table 8 (Annex 1), out of the total of 922 employed Roma, only about 190 (20.61%) are women, while the other 79.39% are men. Even though most Roma are employed in activities related to wholesale or retail sale trading, the repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles and objects for personal use and households, there are still several Roma working as leaders of legislative bodies, organizations and institutions (three of them), there are six who are directors of trading companies, while 35 are directors of small companies and institutions (seven of which are women).

According to the research data from 2000, 57.3% of the examinees are unemployed and registered at the Croatian Employment Service, 18.1% of them «neither works nor seeks employment», 10.4% occasionally «moonlights», while 6.5% of the examined population has permanent employment.

The paradox, when speaking about Roma employment and poverty is that they are unemployed because they are poor, and poor because they are unemployed or doing the least paid work, and are often part of the grey economy. Specifically, the depots by their settlements represent the base for their economic activities.

3.3. POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION

The Roma are an extremely marginalized, and sometimes even completely excluded population in Croatia. This social exclusion is closely related to the lack of necessary competence, knowledge and skills needed for a particular activity that would provide income and economic means for life, on the one side, and connected with limitations related to social care services, on the other. In other words, the social exclusion is related to the small probability for improvement of the social and economic life conditions.

Even though there is no correct information on the birth rate in the Roma community, it is assumed to be considerably higher than the Croatian average. In other words, while the majority population is experiencing a tendency of decrease of the birth rate, this rate is on the increase each year when it comes to Roma. So the number of children, along with all the previously mentioned indicators, significantly influences the poverty of the Roma community.

Although there has not been enough research in Croatia about the economic participation and the socio-economic status of the Roma, based on the available data, one can state that most members of the Roma community belongs to the poorer classes of the population. The living standard of most Croatian Roma is extremely low, which is reflected through the insufficient availability of health care, low educational levels, life in very poor conditions, the low level of employment, etc. (NPfR, 2003)
The data from the research of the State Institute for the Protection of Family, Maternity and Youth about the fact 89% of the examined households do not have a single member with a permanent source of income, speaks in favor of the poor socio-economic status of the Roma.

There is still no official poverty line in Croatia. The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare uses a number of thresholds in determining the right to social transfers, but it is done arbitrarily, that is, in accordance with financial capacity. According to the available data, the assessments of the percentage of absolutely poor people are mostly around 10% (World Bank, 2000) of the entire population. Speaking of the national poverty line, it amounted to 15,474 HRK per the so-called «adult equivalent» in 1998. At that, the annual amount sufficient for satisfying the minimal nutritional needs was taken into account, after the satisfaction of necessary non-nutritional costs (UNDP, 2003). Using the same logic, that amount can, taking into consideration the inflation, today be approximated to 20,000 HRK, a figure that surmounts the income of most Roma in Croatia. Also, even though it turned out that there is relatively little extreme poverty in Croatia, one can assume that a part of the extremely poor belongs to the Roma community – especially taking into consideration not only household incomes, but the living standard or the quality of life in general. This is visible from the data about the beneficiaries of social help transfers and other forms of social care, where the Roma have a disproportionate share.

Some measures for the reduction of poverty were defined in the strategic development documents (The Strategy of Development of the Republic of Croatia: Croatia in the 21st Century; The Program of Fight against Poverty and Social Exclusion in Croatia and the National Program of Action for Children) and the Millennium Goals for Development in Croatia. Unfortunately, the measures in those documents had not been realized, probably due to the economic situation in Croatia.

Key factors linked to poverty in Croatia are low educational levels (at the most, a primary school degree), unemployment and age (older people are at an above-average risk of being poor). The Roma poverty fits into this image: low educational levels and an orientation toward informal economy are linked to a low socio-economic status. Older age as a poverty factor does not play such a significant role with the Roma due to the under-average duration of their life, that is, high mortality rates.

Considering the socio-economic position of the Roma, one should accent the extremely present phenomenon of their social exclusion. Exclusion mostly implies cases in which individuals or groups, due to certain circumstances, loose their place in the society and fall out of different nets of social relationships.

Exclusion in Croatia is connected with several groups, out of which, Roma should be singled out, along with the unemployed and a part of the young population. The Roma exclusion is multiple, and they can be considered the national minority most significantly affected by that

26 Considering the social care allowance, the threshold for an adult capable of working is 400 Kuna a month.
27 According to the international methodology used by the World Bank on the countries in transition (4,3 US$ per day per purchase power parity), the level of poverty in Croatia is relatively small and amounts to 4.8%.
28 Poverty mostly implies the privation of material resources, that can be affected by employment and/or the reallocation of economic resources to the benefit of the poorer population. Opposite to that, social exclusion consists of economic, political, social, symbolic and other dimensions. Activity against exclusion thus presupposes a better approach to institutions, sources and mechanisms of integration (UNDP, 2003).
problem. The exclusion of Roma is often related to the problems of marginalization and discrimination. The Roma are for the large part excluded from the key spheres of the social life, such as economy, housing, education, culture and politics. The prevalence of illegal construction in the Roma settlements and the nonexistence of adequate infrastructure (water supplies and the sewage system, electricity, phone lines and so on). The living standard of the Roma is far from average, and the level of participation in the educational system and the formal economy is extremely low. Even though the Roma activities in informal economy are high, they receive low income and live in financial uncertainty (UNDP, 2003).

On the other side, the increased attention of state bodies, international institutions and nongovernmental organization toward Roma issues, followed by financial resources, have not resulted to a sufficient degree in integration processes which would bring the Roma population closer to the majority population. This is partially true due to internal stratification of the Roma population, which often causes persons, whose relative position within the Roma community is already above average, to have disproportionate benefits from outside interventions and donations.

### 3.4. SOCIAL AND HEALTH CARE SYSTEMS

According to the data of the former Ministry of Work and Social Welfare, used in the drafting of the National Program for the Roma, 7,127 singles and families in the Republic of Croatia used their right to social help in 2003, compared to 21,381 persons of Roma nationality. Although, there are 9,463 persons of Roma nationality according to the census, it is common knowledge that their numbers are considerably higher. The use of social help and other rights from the social care system (such as a family allowance) belong to the rare areas of social life where the presence of Roma is visible, that is, where it is obvious that the assimilation (let alone the integration) processes have not even close to the level suggested by the census data. The share of Roma beneficiaries of social help in the total number of beneficiaries of such help is extremely high and amounts to 13.56%. Taking into account the assessed number of 30-40,000 Roma in the Republic of Croatia, it is obvious that over a half of them live off social help; it has been observed that social help is often the main or even the only source of income in families. This indicates that most members of the Roma community belong to the poorer or to the extremely poor classes of society. A large number of beneficiaries of social help might be explained through the low educational levels and low levels of economic activity (that is, employment), in spite of the fact that most of them are younger persons capable for work.

The appropriate social care services have noticed the non-purposeful spending of social help transfers, which are primarily intended for the satisfaction of basic life needs (NPIR, 2003). Cases have been observed where a part of social help transfers have been seized by Roma of a

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29 According to the Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities of December 2002, the Roma can participate in the process of political decision-making, as members of one of the national minorities in Croatia. The elections for national minorities councils held in May 2003 demonstrated the high awareness of the Roma of the need to participate in elections, because the turnout of the Roma voters in the municipalities was over 38%, which is a higher percentage than the turnout of many other national minorities. Since the Council members elected are mostly men, it is expected that the measures foreseen by the National Program for Gender Equality might improve the inclusion of women in the Croatian social and political life.
higher status, in accord with the tribal hierarchy. Problems also arise because of alcoholism, and other forms of socially unacceptable behavior (juvenile delinquency, prostitution, gambling, homicide, offences against sexual freedoms and sexual morality and so on); which particularly escalate at the time social help is transferred. Because of this, certain social care centers give Roma social help in kind, in accordance with the law. Along with the right to social help, taking into consideration their needs, the Roma also have the right to non-repetitive help, help in fuel and firewood, and help in obtaining school books.

Considering the rights of persons with disabilities (help and care allowance, personal disability allowance, care out of the family and unemployment allowance), they are used to a very small degree by the Roma population. The key reason for this is the neglect of persons with such rights by other family members, who do not know how to ask for such help or, sometimes, even do not want to. Only 73 Roma people have used personal disability allowance in 2003, and the right to help and care allowance was used by 265 of them. The Roma, due to their own customs, express aversion or even resistance to placement out of the family, which mostly applies to older Roma citizens. Thus, the right to care out of the family is used by 294 persons of Roma nationality, out of which 134 persons are in a replacement family, and 160 are in a social care institution (NPfR, 2003).

In the opinion of the social services, it is common in the Roma population to find cases of non-purposeful use of child and family allowances (it serves adults as additional income for their needs, instead of the needs of children intended for):

Specifically, these are the rights based on the Social Welfare Act (subsistence allowance, non-repetitive help, personal disability allowance, help and care allowance) that are given in money, and only exceptionally in kind. The right to care out of the family is also based on the Social Welfare Act.

Considering that most Roma families survive on social welfare, we can talk about a population whose way and style of life is mere survival. Annex 5 brings a review of the state of the Roma national minority users of social care.

However, regarding the health condition and health protection of Roma, it is impossible to determine any data, because health and other information in the health system are not monitored by nationality. Thus, neither the Croatian National Institute of Public Health nor the Croatian Institute for Health Insurance, gather nor analyze the statistics on health according to national or ethnic affiliation.

The rights to health care in accordance to the provisions of the Health Protection Act and the Health Insurance Act, are realized by Roma with the status of citizens in the Republic of Croatia in the same way and under the same conditions as all other citizens. For those without a regulated citizenship status, the conditions and ways of realization of health protection are

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30 In the Medimurje county area, support allowance is approved in kind as well (a certain amount of the allowance consists of articles in grocery stores, limiting non-purposeful spending).

31 Along with Social Welfare Act, the Roma, as other citizens of the Republic of Croatia, are guaranteed the protection based on family law and guardianship law from the Family Law (OG, 116/03), and the number of users evidenced with behavioral disorders relates to the juvenile delinquents, the legal basis for which is the Juvenile Courts Act (OG, 111/97). These are not rights that can be realized through some material gain, but measures taken toward to parents, children or adults for the protection of their interests.
determined by the Health Protection of Foreigners Act. Due to the high level of unemployment, a very small number of Roma capable of work has active health insurance. A certain number of Roma without health insurance realizes the health protection through the counties, at the expense of the budget, according to the provisions of the Health Insurance Act, based on the «Regulation of propositions and procedure for determining incapability for independent life and work, and the lack of means for caring for persons with permanent residence in the Republic of Croatia, who have no other basis of health insurance». (NPiR, 2003: 40).

Due to poor conditions of life in Roma settlements, public health activities are regularly implemented, including: epidemiology, microbiology, immunization, social medicine and health statistics, health education aiming at the promotion of health and prevention of illness, school medicine, prevention of addiction, sanitation, health econogy and toxicology.

One of the most common problems in the health care field is immunization. It is a legal obligation of all Croatian citizens and persons without Croatian citizenship, who are in the territory of the Republic of Croatia, regardless of whether they have health insurance or not. The right and duty of immunization are optimally realized through by way of the chosen family doctor (pediatric specialists, general/family medicine specialists), enabling the person to receive the foreseen immunizations at optimal time spans and to the smallest burden of the health care system. But, in many counties with a greater number of the Roma population, there is a problem arising when parents from Roma communities do not respond to the compulsory immunization of children. There are legally foreseen sanctions for the parents, guardians or caretakers who do not bring children to the required immunizations. Of course, taking into consideration the specifics of the Roma population, it is understandable that positive effects will not be achieved simply through the activation of the legally imposed penal measures. For this reason, the public health institutes periodically examine the immunization status of the Roma population and give additional immunization when necessary. An example of this type of campaign was the demand of the Croatian Public Health Institute in the spring of 2001, that all epidemiologists check the immunization status of Roma children in their area, with special emphasis on immunization against poliomyelitis, and to give extra immunization to all the children who had not received adequate immunization. The school medicine specialists from county public health institutes conduct the health control of school children, so most of the children are immunized, but one cannot disregard the problem of children leaving the primary education early. (NPiR, 2003: 39). This is why the inclusion of the Roma population into the public health system is the main goal of the public health protection in the NPiR, and especially the compulsory immunization of Roma children. The expected effect in the first five years is the increase of the number of immunized Roma children, with the aim of achieving a all the children obligated to immunization.

4. EDUCATION OF ROMA IN CROATIA

4.1. CONCEPTUAL REMARKS REGARDING ROMA EDUCATION

From the Census (2001) data on the educational status of the Roma population, we can indirectly, among other things and with certain other factors, interpret the inadequacy of the existing educational system. So, it is to be expected that based on the recommended «Project
of the Croatian Educational System for the 21st Century», the «National Program for the Roma» and the set Millennium Goals in the area of education, the image of Roma education will have changed. In other words, the educational profile of the Roma population in Croatia is quite poor, if not devastating in the age we are living in.

Based on the Act on Education in Languages and Scripts of National Minorities there are three basic educational models of national minorities:

- **Model A** – teaching in national minority languages and script: Croatian programs are translated into minority languages and supplemented by topics related to special characteristics of that national minority;
- **Model B** – teaching in two languages: humanities are lectured in the national minority language, natural sciences in the Croatian language; educational program as in model A;
- **Model C** – special care for mother tongue and culture: five additional hours per week in the language and script of a particular minority; programs related to the special character of a minority are implemented by five subjects: national minority language and literature, history, geography, music and visual art.

Even though the Roma, just as other national minority members, have a legal right to education in the national minority language and script\(^\text{32}\), the members of the Roma ethnic minority are not systematically included in any model of schooling in their own language, unlike other minorities. However, there are several reasons for this situation. Primarily, there are the ambiguous wishes of the Roma community itself. Namely, while some experts and a part of the Roma activists, consider it better and more desirable their children get educated in the Croatian language, believing it to be the key to their integration into the society, others thing Roma children should never the less receive education in their mother (Roma) tongue.\(^\text{33}\). Along with these two opinions, another position has recently appeared, favoring the bilingual concept of Roma education. Since the Roma community has so far not officially demanded the education of Roma in their own language, the entire Roma school population is included in the regular educational system of the Republic of Croatia in the Croatian language.

To be more specific, the very poor educational status of the Roma population is usually blamed on the insufficient knowledge of the Croatian language at the moment of entrance into the first grade of primary school. However, there are other factors influencing the educational image of the Roma, the influence of which is more visible during the process of education, and those factors are the social deprivation of the population, poverty, poor living conditions (from economy to health and hygiene), parents without education, and sometimes with insufficient motivation for the education of their children. Namely, it is common for parents not to send their children to school, because they need help in the house (taking care of younger siblings) or in the providing of material life conditions (begging, collecting secondary raw-materials, etc.). At that, it is important to mention that the state authorities in charge of supervision do not implement, according to the law, measures and sanctions foreseen for this manner of «child neglect».

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\(^{32}\) This right is regulated by the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia, the Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities and the Act on the Education in the Language and Script of National Minorities.

\(^{33}\) However, the problem arises in the attempt to define and specify the Roma language – whether it is romani chiba or ljimba d’ bjaš.
Regarding the legal regulations of the Republic of Croatia, according to which, there are no records by the criterion of national affiliation neither in the educational system nor in other areas, the MoSES estimates there were 1,900 Roma children included in the educational system in the 2002/2003 school year. From that number, 1,700 children are included in the primary (compulsory) education (almost 1,000 of which are in the Medimurje county), while 200 children attend a secondary school. Also, the Ministry in charge estimates that around 5,000 Roma children have never been included in any form of education.

It is interesting to mention that Croatia is country in Europe where Roma are not sent to special needs schools, presumably because of the highly profiled profession of defectology, due to which there is a clear distinction between insufficient knowledge of the Croatian language and poor social skills of the Roma from the difficulties in development of the special needs’ population.

It is certainly necessary to mention that there are informal types of Roma education. Specifically, the Office for National Minorities of the Republic of Croatia has, due to the insufficient socio-political inclusion of young Roma – organized seminars after which, it plans to pick out two best course-takers in order to give them scholarships for the study at the University of Sorbonne, Department of Romology, and Romania, for the study of the Roma language.

The only available data about Roma education, or their educational profile are those of the Croatian Bureau of Statistics. As is visible from Table 9, and according to the Census from 2001, 3,860 members of the Roma ethnic minority aged 15 or more, that is – 40.97% of the total Roma population, did not finish the primary educational level, which is compulsory in Croatia. The gender (in)equality context is obvious at the levels of primary, secondary and tertiary education. Specifically, out of 308 Roma with a secondary school degree, only 76 of them (24.68%) are women, 80.26% of which had received a vocational secondary school lasting 1-3 years or a school for qualified and highly qualified workers. Only 14 Roma (or 0.15% of the total declared Roma population) have a college or university degree, out of which only two Roma women have a degree from a college, an art academy or a university study.

4.2. PRESCHOOL EDUCATION

The preschool education in Croatia is conducted from the age of six months to the start of primary school, and is regulated by the «Law on Preschool Education» (Official Gazette, 10/97). Early education is conducted in nurseries, kindergartens, playrooms, kindergartens in primary schools and the so-called «preschools», which is a form of preparation for primary schools. Even though it is a very significant phase in child development (the satisfaction of individual and social needs and the self-actualization of children), preschool education is not compulsory in Croatia, nor is attending a preschool a condition for enrollment in a primary school. The founders of preschools are local self-governance authorities (municipalities and

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34 It is necessary to emphasize that, aside from the formal education, there are informal programs of Roma education being realized in Croatia. This is how the first Summer school of Roma children was held in Zagreb in July 1994, as an additional national school for members of the Roma community. The organizers were the Union of Croatian Roma Associations, the Committee for the Roma Pastoral – Croatian Bishop Conference, supported by the MoES.
tions of preschool education for ethnic minority members are also organized in Croatia. Specifically, the MoSES, based on the current situation, has initiated a preschool program for Roma children meant for the preparation of Roma children for attending school. So the Ministry verified more types of preschool programs including Roma children. Aside from inclusion into regular kindergartens with other children, it also verified: the program congruent to the regular kindergartens for Roma children, shorter programs lasting up to three hours a day, programs including Roma children a year before enrollment in primary schools and the like. These programs are conducted by kindergartens, Roma kindergartens, primary schools, Roma and other organizations.

The two most common types of preschools for Roma are: (1) preschools organized by state or local authorities, usually within schools themselves and (2) preschools organized by nongovernmental Roma organizations. The purpose of these programs is learning the Croatian language and acquiring social skills and basic hygiene habits, with the goal of re-socialization and preparation for entering the primary education system.

According to the latest report of the Third Working Group of the Committee for Implementation Monitoring of the Roma National Program, the preschool education is taking place in ten primary schools in six classroom groups organized by the Roma organizations in cooperation with schools, state administration and local self-government. There are five more groups in preparation, for whose programs the Ministry of Science, Education and Sport has given permission and planned 1.200.000 HRK for the year 2004 for the preschool education and 200.000 HRK for the preschool education programs.

According to the data of the MoSES, the preschool education program is attended by 95% of the total population of children in Croatia before their enrollment in primary school. However, the number of Roma children attending preschools is unknown. For example, the City Office for Education and Sport of the City of Zagreb claims there is no special evidence in the kindergartens of the city about the number of Roma children included in regular daycare or semi-daycare programs of preschool education and preschool programs in the year before attending primary school. The same or similar argument is used by other local authorities. 326 pupils of the Roma ethnic minority were included in regular primary schools in the 2003/2004 school year, receiving help through the co-financing of food for pupils of primary schools, according to the criteria set by the City Hall of the City of Zagreb, that is, the City Assembly of the City of Zagreb, and in the program of training for non-swimmers.

There are two preschool institutions at the territory of the Medimurje County, organized by nongovernmental Roma organizations and three preschool programs in primary schools where the Ministry of Education and Sport of the Republic of Croatia had conducted the «Intervention three-month pilot preschool program for Roma children» from May to August

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35 The preschool education in Croatia is realized through regular programs in the duration of 5 to 10 hours a day.
36 The first preschool centre “Ceferino Jimenez Malla” was founded in the Kozari putovi – a part of Zagreb – in 1996
37 According to the World Bank data, the gross percentage of enrolment of children in preschool education in 2001 (age 3 to 5) was 36.1%, in the primary educational system (age 7-14) 96.5%, in secondary education (age 15-18) 79.7%, while 27.3% of the total population in Croatia was enrolled into tertiary education (age 19-24). (Berryman and Drabek, 2002)
38 “Pirgo” kindergarten (Romi for Rome in Croatia) and “Loncarevo” kindergarten (Medimurje – Cakovec Roma Organization)
2003, and the Open Society Institute – Croatia, joined the implementation of the program through monitoring and evaluation of the Intervention preschool program and through the education of preschool and primary school teachers and expert services in the three schools the Intervention preschool program was organized in («Step-by-Step» program and «Croatian as a second language» education). It included four groups, or 77 children in total. The sample was homogenous by the age structure, and heterogenous by gender. Specifically, there were 44 boys, meaning 57.14% of the group, and 33 girls (42.86%) attended the program.

The evaluation of the intervention program has shown the program resulted in small, but important progress in development of language competence, while the development of social skills demonstrated a somewhat better effect. However, since the evaluation was conducted at the entire population of Roma children participating in the Intervention preschool program (experimental group), and on a group attending a Roma preschool in Cakovec, who were included into a preschool semi-structured program of the kindergarten for Roma from Kuršaneč »Pirgo» for 11 months (control group) with the purpose of comparison of the program's success, there were significant differences between the two programs. Namely, as important factors of better results achieved by children from the «Pirgo» kindergarten, the most important are the duration of the program, better infrastructural supply and higher motivation and education level of the teachers.

Thus, it is necessary to emphasize in conclusion that, regardless of the current situation, there has been a small improvement in the early education of Roma, in comparison to other levels of education, although it is still insufficient.

### 4.3. PRIMARY (COMPULSORY) EDUCATION

Primary education represents the base of the educational system in Croatia and is compulsory for all children aged 6,5 (or 7) to the age of 15. Primary education is structured into two levels each containing four grades: (1) classroom instructions taught by one teacher, and (2) subject instructions, taught by more teachers, depending on the number of subjects. The Constitution of the Republic of Croatia and legislative regulations guarantee the right to primary (compulsory) education to all children. According to the data of the Ministry of Science, Education and Sport, the primary education level included around 1.500 Roma children, in about 30 schools in the 2002/2003 school year.

One of the greatest “problems” regarding Roma education is the formation of special classes attended only by Roma pupils. Although it is a fact that such situations exist, they are not common. Namely, the examples where there is a large concentration of Roma in one locality, so that their children might represent most of a generation of pupils, are rare, but there are still some villages in Medimurje where Roma classes are organized. This is sometimes backed by the argument about the large number of Roma pupils and the need to form classes according to the pupils' previous knowledge, but sometimes there is no valid reason for this form of segregation. As is visible from Table 11 (Annex 1), some schools organize the so-called «clean classes» (nationally homogenous) regardless of whether the

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39 See: Annex 1
40 However, common or not, the Human Rights Center warns that, from the position of human rights and based on UN standards, the reasons for the formation of separate classes are not important, because such classes simply should not be formed.
number of non-Roma children is sufficient to organize the so-called «mixed classes» (nationally heterogeneous). It is necessary to mention that there is a discussion in Croatia about these two types of classes. Specifically, the clean classes appear in schools with a large number of Roma children and in situations where the differences in previous knowledge and language competence between the Roma and the non-Roma population, are large. There had been cases of media reporting about the segregation of Roma, when there was actually room to speak about the discrimination of the non-Roma population which was the minority in those cases. So, it is necessary to be careful when classifying educational segregation. However, these situations point to the need for a maximum integration of Roma children in preschool institutions, in order to avoid similar cases and dilemmas in other levels of education.

As the greatest problem with the inclusion of Roma in the primary education system is the absence of knowledge of the Croatian language, Roma-assistants familiar with the Roma language spoken by the Roma children in the school are introduced into schools as aid to the teacher of classroom instructions. The Roma-assistants work with groups of pupils of the Roma ethnic minority, from the first to the fourth grade of primary school, in order to assist the pupils in the process of socialization and comprehension of the regular curriculum. However, the Roma assistants often serve as simple interpreters, which on the one side helps the teacher in his/her work, and on the other side seems to slow down the learning of the Croatian language.

### 4.4. SECONDARY AND TERTIARY EDUCATION

Unfortunately, since the highest percent of the enrolled children does not finish the primary (compulsory) education program, the number of Roma attending secondary schools is very small. It is estimated there were about 200 of them in the 2002/2003 school year. In order to increase that number the MoSES and local authorities in charge is implementing the scholarship program and finances the accommodation of students in dormitories. In the 2002/2003 school year, scholarships were received by 20 students in the dormitory in Cakovec, and nine students in other secondary schools located in Zagreb, Bjelovar and Cakovec. Unfortunately, there are no data on the type of secondary schools the Roma attend, nor data on the student profiles (gender, regional affiliation, socio-economic status, profile of parents and so on).

Although there are no exact data on the number of Roma students, by taking into consideration the very small number of those graduating from secondary schools, we can assume that the number of tertiary Roma students is very small. However, in order to increase the level of the educational status of the Roma population on the one side, and decrease the number of Roma dropping out of the educational system on the other, the Ministry of Science, Education and Sport has an organized system of student scholarship, and some local authorities also plan on joining the system of Roma scholarships. Scholarship are usually related to the students enrolling into Teaching academies and some other tertiary educational programs in the field of education (such as pedagogy, etc.). The Ministry of Science,

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41 Regardless of the principle favoring of either clean or mixed classes, the high birth rate of the Roma population and the low birth rate of the majority population, will eventually cause more and more clean classes in certain places the Roma inhabit.
Education and Sport has given scholarships to 15 Roma students in the 2002/2004 school year.

Some Roma women's organizations are extremely in favor of giving scholarships the secondary school population, especially the female population. Furthermore, it is necessary to accent that both state and local authorities help in the form of direct interventions to some Roma students in order to enroll them into the colleges of their choice.

4.5. ADULT EDUCATION

The Croatian educational authorities base the concept of adult education on the UNESCO's definition of adult education as «a corps of educational processes of all content, levels and methods (formal and others), regardless of whether the adults are continuing or substituting the initiated schooling or apprenticing, regardless of whether an adult is developing his/her abilities, expanding his/her knowledge, improving technical or vocational qualifications or redirecting them and leading to the change in his/her attitudes or behaviors in the autonomous social, economic and cultural development». (Recommendation on Adult Education, 1977.)

Coordinated by the Ministry of Science, Education and Sport the Roma organizations and institutions dealing with adult education conduct programs of adult education and literacy. In that education, like in other levels of educational processes, the emphasis is on the stimulation of education of the female population. Adult education regards the realization of the “second chance”, that is, the completion of primary education, the basic functional vocational education, secondary vocational education, additional training, re-training from surplus vocations into deficit vocation.

4.6. THE DROP-OUT PROBLEM

Even though there are no exact data on the number of Roma dropping out of the educational system without finishing primary (compulsory) education, we can claim with certainty that from the total number of drop-outs the greatest share belongs to the Roma population. This fact is partially visible from the data in Table 11, Annex 1, even though the sample consists of only four schools with the highest number of Roma pupils. Specifically, it is obvious that the transition from classroom-based to subject-based education is the moment most Roma children drop out. For example, in «Dr. Ivan Novak» primary school in Macinec, 82 Roma children enrolled into first grade, while only six of them reached seventh, and two of them reached eight grade.

The research «The Structure of Roma Families and the Parenthood Concept in them» conducted by the State Institute for the Protection of Family, Maternity and Youth has shown that children who do not attend school regularly or those that started but failed to continue their education come relatively more often from families in which the parents are divorced or widows/widowers. Also, the research results demonstrate that considerably more children started but discontinued their education if their parents living in extra-marital arrangements, in comparison to children living in formal marriage. To be more specific, there are much more children with more than six grades of primary school in the families who no longer live or have never lived in an extra-marital arrangement, than those whose parents live in such
arrangements. The research has shown that the relation of the number of female children starting and then dropping out of the educational system is equal to that of the male children. Furthermore, the percentage of children dropping out of the educational system and those occasionally avoiding class is much higher in the families with three or more male children of primary school age.

Finally, it is necessary to mention that, when talking about drop-outs, the tolerance and non-sanctioning of parents for their children, younger than 15, leaving school is against the law, because those children are, according to regulations, obligated to go to school.42

4.7. PARENTS AND ROMA EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS

As the engagement of parents is of great significance for educational achievement we can observe certain key components of the parental care for the education of their children, as well as their functions, based on the data of the research «The Structure of Roma Families and the Concept of Parenthood in them» conducted by the State Institute for the Protection of Family, Maternity and Youth. The data show that, even if the responsibility for regular school attendance is shared by both families in the Roma families, most children with irregular attendance of school come from families with two children younger than 7, or from families with a greater number of children. Specifically, the care about education in the families with children younger than 7 is mostly shared by both parents or is taken up only by the mother, while the fathers take care of education far above the average in families with three or more children under the age of 7. Similarly to school attendance, the care for school success is shared in most of the examined population, or it is mostly the mother’s task. The research data show that the children of parents in favor of physical punishment as an educational method, attend school less regularly than the children whose parents discard physical punishment as an educational method.

Speaking about the aspirations of parents, we can observe a differentiation according to regional affiliation. Specifically, the Roma from the city of Zagreb, as the most urbanized environment, have above average aspirations about the degree of education of their children. There are more of those believing their daughters should finish tertiary education, and the most numerous of that group are the Roma from Baranja and Banija. But, the lowest aspirations regarding the education of children belong to parents from the Medimurje area.

The level of education of the parents themselves turned out to be another important factor of aspirations in this research. Namely, the illiterate parents, or those without education believe it sufficient their children be educated by the age of 15, while the examinees with a secondary school degree consider it more desirable if their children attend school until they turn 18 (secondary vocational education degree), or 22 years of age. However, since the greatest share in the Roma population belongs to the illiterate or the semi-literate, those are exactly the parents that expect their children to achieve a primary educational degree. Also, the parents whose concern for their children is evaluated as low, prefer a shorter duration of education for children, than the parents whose concern is evaluated with higher grades.

42 The regulations are not implemented, nor are the sanctions, regarding parents who fail to enrol children into school, or when their children attend school irregularly.
43 The examinees without education are illiterate, while the semi-literate are the examinees with only a few grades of primary school.
5. CONCLUDING REMARKS ON ROMA EDUCATION

In spite of the fact that free primary (compulsory) education is proclaimed, the problem of Roma education is of a financial nature as well. For example, the need to buy textbooks, school material (notebooks, writing and drawing equipment, sports equipment) and paying for additional costs of food for children when in school or spending time outside of the home due to school obligations. Of course, there are also the costs parents need to cover regarding footwear and clothing. According to rough assessments, the books and school equipment for one child in the first grades of primary school, the parents need to set aside around 1,000 HRK (150 USD). Here, we must mention that the MoSES, the local authorities and some schools assist certain categories of children by donating free textbooks and school equipment.

The factor influencing Roma educational achievement is the intrinsic motivation of children, which in itself is a great relief and incentive for the parents to assist them in the realization of their right and need for. To be more specific, most parents of Roma children have no primary education degree, and are thus limited in assisting and motivating their children regarding the execution of school obligations.

According to the 2002 research results, in the opinion of the examinees, the factors inhibiting education are: the child does not want to go to school or runs away from school and from home. Similarly, the statement of one father (aged 40, four children, unemployed, less than four grades of primary school) is picturesque: «Educating children is a waste of time – it is enough if they learn how to work».

Primary school in Croatia is still based on a semi-daycare in school, where learning and studying at home, or the independent performing of certain tasks in extra-class and extra-school time, is expected. The children manage to perform these tasks if they have a motivating environment: parents who understand those school assignments and adequate conditions regarding hygiene and accommodation (electricity in the house, sufficient space and so on). On the other side, there is only small and insufficient progress in the organization of daycare and additional help for students in schools.

The data from the research and from this analysis, indicate the factors contributing to the education of Roma children and the factors aggravating that education in the opinion of Roma and the majority population. The most common contributing factors mentioned were as follow: good knowledge of the Croatian language, equality of children in schools and additional help in studying. The factors aggravating education are the discrimination of Roma children, bullying by other children, the intolerance of some teachers toward Roma children.

44 The statements of the examinees about runaway children deserve discussion! The text will deal with the reasons for running away later, but they deserve to be commented here – if the family situation is complicated and disordered (recurring arguments and violence between adults, the physical punishment of children, poverty), children will run away. If a child hears of poverty every day (and of the lack of money for basic life needs), and sees adults spending money on alcohol and cigarettes, it will try to find a solution through child reasoning. It is good if the solution is school, but, unfortunately, it is not always so, and they have to choose between different inappropriate solutions outside of school. (Elaboration of the research project “The Structure of Roma Families and the Concept of Parenthood in them”, 2003)

45 According to the opinions of some experts dealing with the Roma issue, there are indications that classroom teachers (grades 1 through 4) working with Roma children, receive that role as a “punishment”.

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Poor knowledge of the Croatian language, teachers insulting Roma children and programs that are too difficult for Roma children.

Children run away from the environment not inclined toward them, or the one they do not feel pleasant in. One of the discomforts facing the Roma children is the poor knowledge of the Croatian language. This is the most important factor of school failure. Firstly, the Roma children do not understand the teacher when he/she explains or examines, and secondly, they have a difficult time expressing themselves (verbal insufficiency) and always get lower grades even though their intellectual capabilities are equal to those of the other children. So, they are already deprived in everyday communication and, unfortunately, do not always receive enough understanding nor expert support from primary school teachers. Their problems at this level are multiplied in the higher grades of primary schools, when they are taught by several subject teachers, who are not adequately pedagogically qualified to solve the developmental problems of this population.

Here are some more statements on the factors contributing to or aggravating the education of Roma children according to the opinion of Roma themselves. Factors contributing to the education: while the children are in school, I can do something at home; everything is easier when at least one of the parents is employed; daycare and a warm meal in school are helpful; family harmony; when children are at school, there is more space in the house; I am happy my eldest son learned easily, and the younger ones had his books; he associates more with other children and learns something from them; it is good if they are included in a kindergarten or playschool before primary school.

Factors aggravating education in the opinion of Roma are: there is no kindergarten in the settlement; I sometimes cannot show them how to write their homework; my son never had new schoolbooks; bad company at schools; running away from school; boys also start to run away from home early; unemployed parents; permanent arguments in the family; children that are ill; physical violence in the family.46

Some interesting statements of the examinees: «Children do not go to school because neither they nor their parents see the point, having no work themselves», «It is enough if the children know how to read and write». The statements show that some parents of Roma children see school as a neat place to empty the living space («while the children are at school, I can do things at home») or as a social welfare institution («the daycare and a warm meal at school are helpful»). They are aware that their children have a difficult time studying in conditions where everyday arguments and physical violence are something normal, and some of them forget about their children by way of alcohol and cigarettes. Their perception of school is still far in the past: «It is enough if the children know how to read and write.»
PART TWO

ASSESSMENT OF PUBLIC POLICIES AND FINANCING

1. STATE INSTITUTIONS AND THE FINANCING OF ROMA EDUCATION

The realization and the financing of the national policy for the Roma is predominantly done through state institutions and is funded from the state budget of the Republic of Croatia, with a certain participation of foreign and domestic donors. By accepting the National program for the Roma in October 2003, the Croatian government is obliged to additional investments in order to improve the socio-economic status of the Roma minority. The realization of the National Program provides for the implementation and the allocation of financial resources through ministries and the offices of the Government, as well as the financial and organizational participation of local authorities, international donors and the institutions of civil society. The role of the stated partners will in time become more significant – as for the budget restraints which will condition the financial capacity of the central state, as well as for the complexity of the problem, the solving of which requires a partnership of a larger number of actors.

The report will continue to analyze the role of key institutions through which the measures are to be implemented and the National Program for the Roma and other forms of state support for the Roma are financed – especially in the areas of education, employment and the preservation of the Roma traditional culture. Those institutions are: the Office for National Minorities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia, the Committee for National Minorities, and the Ministry of Science, Education and Sport. The implementation of the Program should be systematically monitored, and if necessary, changes and amendments should be recommended. That is the task of the Committee for the monitoring of the implementation of the National Program for the Roma.


The Office for National Minorities is a central state institution taking care of the realization of the policy of national minorities' equality. In the 2004 state budget, within the Office for National Minorities, there are special programs for the Roma, with the total budget of 934,197 HRK. 534,197 HRK from that figure are liquid donations in cash, meant for institutions of civil society working with the Roma population. The rest of the financial resources was planned for intellectual and personal services, the propaganda and information services and other collateral costs.

Prior to the adoption of the NPfR a «Special Program for the Roma» was adopted, aiming to integrate Roma children into the education system. The review of funding allocated within that program (1998-2002) is in Annex 4.

47 One of the largest donors monitoring and issuing financial support to programs dealing with Roma is the Open Society Institute – Croatia (see: Annex 3).
Council for National Minorities: Donations to Institutions and Organizations

National minorities’ members realize a significant portion of their ethnic rights through the regular institutions of the Republic of Croatia. Aside from that, there is continuity in the allocation of financial resources for the support of program activities of national minorities’ institutions and organizations, in which the Roma participate as well. Based on the Constitutional Act on Minority Rights (OG, 155/2002), the decision-making about the transfer of financial means from the state budget is the duty of the Council for National Minorities.

From 2000 to 2003, 4,668,500 HRK have been allocated from the state budget of the Republic of Croatia for the financing of Roma institutions and organizations (annual average of 1,167,125 HRK). That is 6.02% of a total of 77,534,076 HRK allocated for the financing of all national minorities' program sin the stated period of time. In spite of special needs, arising from the unfavorable socio-economic status of the Roma, the share of allocated means for the programs of the Roma institutions and organizations is smaller than the relative share of Roma in the total number of national minorities population. According to the 2001 census, the share of Roma in the number of national minorities population is 7.47 percent, and if relevant assessments of the size of the Roma population are taken into account, that share is approximately three times larger. It is important to emphasize that the financial resources indented for the Roma have increased by 10%.

In spite of the increase of total financial means for national minorities’ programs, the resources for Roma have tended to stagnate in the past years, which was confirmed by the decision about the resource allocation for 2004 (OG, 57/2004). The Roma organizations received 1,080,200 HRK, which is less than the average amount in the period from 2000 to 2003. But, additional means have been approved based on the National Program for the Roma, the realization of which includes several state institutions.

The Ministry of Science, Education and Sport

The Ministry of Science, Education and Sport is implementing the Program of Education for National Minorities in 2004, with a total budget of 3.6 million HRK. The Program includes incentives for the education of national minorities (2.7 million HRK) and scholarships for national minorities' members (900,000 HRK). Also, as part of the preschool education, the MoSES is financing the education of the ethnic and national communities' members, with the total amount of 1.5 million HRK. The specific amounts (co)financing the education of members of the Roma national minority are not available.

But, it is obvious that the scope of activities and the means for their financing lag considerably behind the provisions of the National program for the Roma, where 2.6 million HRK were foreseen in 2004 for preschool education, 1.18 million for primary (compulsory) education, 650,000 HRK for secondary education and at least 300,000 HRK for tertiary education. The Ministry of Science, Education and Sport was not supposed to ensure all the stated financial resources – the role of local and regional authorities, the Roma and other organizations, the open university extensions, etc. was foreseen - but their role was to be pivotal in the financial as well as the organizational sense. The realization of the Program is questionable in the present conditions. To be more specific, according to the budget
revision,\footnote{Adopted one day prior to the closing of this document.} no financial means have been foreseen by the end of 2004 for national minorities. According to some indication, this is an administrative failure of the MoSES.

Regulation on the manner of dispensing means of the State Budget and the propositions of co-financing of preschool education programs (Official Gazette, 133/97) MoSES have to co-financed preschool programs for national minorities for children age of form six months to six years (entering the school). The finance recourse are based on monthly level per child: 5 hours primary program - 25.00 HRK, 6-7 hours primary program - 50.00 HRK and for 8-10 hours primary program 75.00 HRK.

### The Office for Human Rights of the Government of the Republic of Croatia

According to the Decree on the Office for Human Rights (OG, 22/2001), the office creates a comprehensive system of protection and promotion of human rights in the Republic of Croatia and monitors its efficiency; creates the National Program for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights in the Republic of Croatia and monitors its implementation; considers the condition of specific human rights in the Republic of Croatia and the harmonization of the domestic legislation with the provisions of the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia, the Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities and international instruments from the human rights field.

Aimed at improving the national standards of protection and promotion of human rights, the Office cooperates with the international community and the international regional organizations; and in doing so it cooperates with the Human Rights Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; keeps track of international instruments and initiates the ratification of certain instruments; monitors the implementation of international obligations of the Republic of Croatia in the human rights field; monitors the reports of international organizations on the condition of human rights and freedoms in the Republic of Croatia; organizes international conferences and international seminars in cooperation with the Human Rights Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Office performs other activities in the human rights field, entrusted to it by the Government of the Republic of Croatia.

There are three parliamentary working bodies in Croatia, whose work is directly and/or indirectly related to the Roma national minority education issues, and they are:

1. **The Committee on Human and National Minority Rights** is a committee of the Parliament whose jurisdiction includes the establishment and monitoring of the implementation of policy; and in the process of enacting the legislation and other regulations it has the rights and duties of the competent working body in matters pertaining to: (1) the implementation of ratified international treaties that regulate the protection of human rights; (2) matters of principle, proposals and opinions related to the application of the provisions of the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia dealing with human rights and fundamental freedoms; (3) the exercise and protection of human rights and freedoms; (4) the exercise of the rights of national minorities established by the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia and laws, and the proposal of measures to exercise these rights; (5) the legal and actual position of Croatian minorities in neighboring countries and the proposal of measures to improve overall
co-operation in order to preserve their national identity; (6) international treaties and programs of international cultural, educational and other cooperation when this is of interest to individual national minorities; (7) the financing of specific needs of national minorities and other activities. The Committee on Human and National Minority Rights cooperates with scholarly and professional, governmental and nongovernmental organizations that operate in the field of the protection of human and ethnic rights, with the relevant working bodies of parliaments in other countries and with foreign and international bodies that operate in the field of the protection of human and ethnic rights. The Committee on Human and National Minority Rights cooperates with working bodies entrusted with petitions and appeals and with other parliamentary working bodies and may additionally consider matters under the competence of these working bodies if it assesses that they are of significance to the protection of human and ethnic rights.

(2) The Committee on the Family, Youth and Sports is a committee of the Parliament whose jurisdiction includes the establishment and monitoring of the implementation of policy; and in procedures to enact legislation and other regulations it has the rights and duties of the competent working body in matters pertaining to: (1) marriage, the family and guardianship, and special protection of children, motherhood and youth; (2) the quality life of youth and their participation in all societal activities; (3) protection of children and adolescents from all forms of addiction; (4) occupational safety for women; (5) family planning and demographic renewal and (6) sports.

(3) The Education, Science and Culture Committee is a committee of the Parliament whose jurisdiction includes the establishment and monitoring of the implementation of policy, and in procedures to enact legislation and other regulations it has the rights and duties of the competent working body in matters pertaining to: (1) pre-school education, primary, secondary and higher education; (2) science, culture and technical culture; (3) international scientific and technical/technological co-operation; (4) protection and utilization of cultural resources, historical materials and heritage, archives and archival materials, and the commemoration of historical events and persons; (4) co-operation with religious communities; (5) information technology and other matters of education, science and culture.

2. LEGAL REGULATIONS

Equality is guaranteed to members of all national minorities in the Republic of Croatia, and freedom, equal rights, national equality and gender equality, social justice and respect for human rights are among the highest values of its the constitutional order (Articles 13 and 15 of the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia). Article 14 of the Constitution prescribes that «Everyone in the Republic of Croatia shall enjoy rights and freedoms, regardless of race, color, gender, language, religion, political or other belief, national or social origin, property, birth, education, social status or other characteristics. All shall be equal before the law.» The Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities and the system of legislation in the Republic of Croatia which protects human rights and rights of national minorities are based on these constitutional guidelines.

Aside from Croatian legal acts, the Republic of Croatia is obliged to protect and implement rights regulated by international contracts, in accordance with article 140 of the Constitution.
of the Republic of Croatia.\footnote{International agreements concluded and ratified in accordance with the Constitution and made public, and which are in force, shall be part of the internal legal order of the Republic of Croatia and shall be above law in terms of legal effects. Their provisions may be changed or repealed only under conditions and in the way specified in them or in accordance with the general rules of international law.} The following international treaties and documents are especially significant for the realization of the rights of the Roma:

**Documents of the United Nations**

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948);
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) and the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966);
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966);
- International Convention on Abolishment of All Forms of Discrimination (1965);
- Convention on Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979) and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1999);
- Declaration on the Rights of Members of National or Ethnic, Religious or Language Minorities (1992).

**Documents of the Council of Europe**

- Convention on the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (the "European Convention on Human Rights"), (1951) and the Additional Protocols thereto;
- Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (1995);
- The European Charter on Regional or Minority Languages (1992);
- Recommendation of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) on Combating Racism and Intolerance against Roma/Gypsies (1998);
- Recommendation No R (2000) 4 - of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the education of Roma/Gypsy children in Europe;
- Recommendation Rec (2001)17 on improving the economic and employment situation of Roma/Gypsies and Travelers in Europe (2001);
- Second Report on Croatia CRI (2001) 34 by the European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI);
- Resolution ResCMN (2002)1 on the implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities by Croatia (2002);

**Legal regulations in the education of national minorities**

As for legal regulations in the field of education of national minorities, the education in languages and scripts of national minorities in the Republic of Croatia has been implemented since 1979, that is, since the first Act on educational work in ethnic languages was adopted.

The education of national minorities continued after Croatia gained independence as well, based on the provisions of the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia, on the Constitutional
Act on the Rights of National Minorities, the Act on Preschool Education, the Act on Primary Education, the Act on Secondary Education, the European Charter on Regional and Minority Languages and the Act on Education in the Languages and Scripts of National Minorities.

Based on this legal framework, the members of all national minorities in the Republic of Croatia have the right to recommend and choose a model and program themselves, in accordance to existing laws and their abilities to realize the program. Considering the fact that some minorities are territorially dispersed (like Roma) and without systematic organization, the right to education guaranteed by the mentioned laws, can be realized through special forms of education of language and culture of the national minority.

As the Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities emphasizes in art. 11, all members of national minorities have the right to education in the language and script they are using, at the preschool, primary school and secondary school levels as well as other forms of education (seminars, summer/winter schools, etc.), while the curriculum, along with the general compulsory part, also consists of a part whose content is related to the specifics of the national minority (mother tongue, literature, history, geography and the cultural heritage of the national minority). However, along with everything mentioned, the students have the right and obligation to learn the Croatian language and the Latin script along with their own. The educational activity, according to the Constitutional Act, is done teachers from the national minority in question or teachers with fluent knowledge of the language and script of the national minority they are teaching. Furthermore, the universities are obliged, according to the Constitutional Act, to implement a program of education of preschool, primary and secondary school teachers in order to work in education in the language and script of a national minority in the part related to the content dealing with the specifics of the minority.

Based on the Act on Education in the Language and Script of National Minorities (OG, 51/2000), if there are no conditions for the founding of special national minority schools, education can be organized in classes with a smaller number of students than the average number in other classes in Croatian schools.

Finally, it is possible to conclude that the legal framework is completely correct and open, and that the Roma minority must create the conditions and preposition and to demand, if they want to, the education in Roma language and script based on the previously mentioned laws.51

Legal regulations in the social welfare system

The social welfare system is defined by the Social Welfare Act (OG, 73/97, 27/01, 59/01, 82/01 and 103/03) as the basic law regulating the way social welfare activities are enacted and financed, regulating the users, the rights, the procedure for the procurement of those rights, and other issues significant for this activity. The relatively frequent changes of this act are the result of an attempt to satisfy the increasingly numerous and complicated needs of the users with the available financial and other means, and the harmonization of the social welfare system with the initiated reforms and changes in the field of social policy.

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50 The models of national minority education are described in Part One, Chapter 4.
51 These legal regulations were used the most by the members of the Serbian, Italian, Hungarian, Check and Slovakian national minorities, which have their own preschool and primary school institutions, while the German and the Austrian minority have bilingual classes; the Ucranian-Ruthenian national minority has five hours per week of nurturing of mother tongue and culture, while the Roma minority only has its preschool institutions.
The amount of assistance is determined in a certain degree from the base-sum specified by the Government of the Republic of Croatia according to the provision of the Social Welfare Act. The base-sum determined by the decision of the Government from April 2003 is 400,00 HRK.

3. NATIONAL PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS FOR ROMA EDUCATION

Croatia has recognized education in its transitional period as one of the key elements of national development. Even though only minor changes have been made in the change of the educational system, there are signs that this, so far an important system only at a declaratory level, will soon see changes of some of its segments. The document presenting recommendations for change is the “Project for the Croatian Education System in the 21st Century”\(^2\), which gives guidelines for the creation of an open, democratic, Europe-oriented and inclusive curriculum in the part dedicated to the development of new educational programs. This is exactly the characteristic of the new curriculum that should in its content and realization ensure and appreciate the educational differences and interests of national minorities in Croatia. Furthermore, the document emphasizes on the principle of equality in education, which implies the equality of chances and the responsibility of the individual for his/her education, where the “community should provide full support to his/her efforts” in the context of the principles of “accessibility, pass ability, flexibility, individualization, and counseling, developing a supportive school atmosphere and the financial support of economically underprivileged pupils and students”. (ibid., p. 19) Also, the document accentsthe concept of lifelong learning/education with the “accessibility of all levels of education to all members of the society regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, socio-economic position, …” (ibid., p. 19).

Based on the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia, the Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities and the Act on the Education in the Language and Script of National Minorities, as well as on the document previously mentioned, there are several adopted national programs which specify certain measures regarding Roma education in Croatia.

The National Program for the Roma

The Government of the Republic of Croatia, in cooperation with the ministries in charge and coordinated by the Office for National Minorities has issued the National Program for the Roma in October 2003 – a strategic and implementation document obligating the Government and the Ministries to conduct concrete measures aiming to improve the life conditions of the Roma population and the integration of Roma into the society. The introduction of the NPfR states that «deeming that the Roma cannot overcome the existing gap on their own, and determinately striving to change the existing situation, with a view to exercising the rights guaranteed by the Constitution and the legal system of the Republic of Croatia, and removing all the forms of discrimination, the Government of the Republic of Croatia is adopting the National Program for the Roma … based on the provisions contained in international documents on human rights and the rights of national minorities to which the Republic of

\(^2\) Since there were two documents in Croatia with the recommendations of changes in the education system, the text from October 2002 was made through the harmonization of the two prepositions: the «Conception of changes of the educational system in Croatia» (Vladimir Strugar (ed), Ministry of Education and Sport, 2002) and «Education: The white paper on Croatian education» (project task manager: Nikola Pastuovic, Office for the Development Strategy of the Republic of Croatia, 2001).
Croatia is a party. The experience of other countries which are resolving the problems of Roma in a systematic manner has been taken into account. The Roma, without whose acceptance and assumption of responsibility the changes would not be possible, have themselves participated in the creation of the Program.» (NPfR, 2003:3)

Ministries and other state bodies competent for this subject matter, councils of the Roma national minority, representatives of Roma associations, Members of Parliament representing national minorities, local and regional self-government, associations for the protection of human rights and international organizations and institutions participated in the drafting of the text of the NPfR. Prior to the drafting of the text, there were topical seminars and consultative meetings with the representatives of the Roma, the domestic and foreign experts and the competent bodies of the counties in which the Roma live. The bodies of state administration, local and regional self-government, other governmental and nongovernmental institutions, both domestic and foreign and foreign associations, international organizations, the Roma and Roma associations as well as other interested citizens of Croatia are to participate in the implementation of the Program.

Having in mind the fact that it is common practice in Croatia for such programs to end up being just ink on paper, that is – to be realized only partially or never – the Committee for the Monitoring of Implementation of the NPfR (OG, 187/2003, 20/2004) was founded, consisting of 22 members representing the ministries in charge, the ONM, the Office for Human Rights, the Međimurje County, the City of Zagreb, the nongovernmental organizations active in the human rights' field and the representatives of Roma organizations and councils. The Vice Prime Minister of the Government of the Republic of Croatia, Ms. Jadranka Kosor is the President of the Committee. The Committee's task is to monitor systematically the implementation of the NPfR and to recommend changes and amendments it deems necessary.

Croatia is also included in the realization of the “Roma Decade” program, and has for that reason adopted an action plan (Annex 6).

Since this document is based on the analysis of Roma education, it will present only those measures regarding the filed of education.

The measures to be implemented in 2004 and later by the Ministry of Education and Sport, the local and regional authorities and the Roma and other organizations are measures 1 through 5.

(1) **Encouraging the inclusion of as many Romany children as possible in regular programs in kindergartens with other children.** Romany children up to five years of age who have not been included in kindergarten should be included in preschool programs, with the aim of developing all their potential and abilities appropriate to their age, and in this way increase their possibility for success and advancement in the regular educational system. (a total of 1.600.000,00 HRK was set aside for this measure in 2004)

(2) **Testing the linguistic, psychological and physical status of Roma children before inclusion in the preschool program.** To this end a mobile team of experts should be founded made up of a pedagogue, a psychologist, a special education expert, a social worker and a doctor, who will carry out this testing, suggest individual programs of exercises and the organization of groups of children depending on the results attained. With Roma children
there will be more intensive work on the intellectual, emotional, oral, psycho-motor developmental level, and specific compensatory intervention and other programs of preschool education will be intensified. One preschool teacher with a Roma assistant will work with small groups. (a total of 100,000,00 HRK was set aside for this measure in 2004)

(3) Provision of one free meal to children included in the preschool program and transport where necessary. (a total of 500,000,00 HRK was set aside for this measure in 2004)

(4) Organization of additional education of teachers for work with children from socially or economically deprived environments, and a Romany assistant teacher with high school education to aid the teacher in understanding the Romany language. (a total of 300,000,00 HRK was set aside for this measure in 2004)

(5) Monthly thematic lectures for parents in Roma settlements, with the emphasis on psychosocial aid. These lectures will be held once a month by a mobile team of experts including a pedagogue, psychologist, a special education expert, a social worker and a doctor, and the children’s teacher and assistant will organize weekly meetings with the parents of preschool children relating to the subject of parenthood and raising children. (a total of 100,000,00 HRK was set aside for this measure in 2004)

The body responsible for the (6) evaluation of the work and implementation of the preschool program and, depending on the results achieved, for the evaluation of the proposal and implementation of appropriate measures is the Ministry of Education and Sport, with the time frame in 2004 and continuing, while no financial means were set aside, because they are deemed unnecessary.

For Roma children who were not included in preschool programs and/or do not know sufficient Croatian, the measure foreseen is (7) the organization of classes and/or groups appropriate to the Roma children’s previous knowledge. The Ministry of Education and Sport and the primary school in question will draw up a curriculum and program and organize its implementation adjusted to the specific circumstances (the number of Roma children, their previous knowledge, the space available, staffing and other possibilities offered by the school etc.). For Roma children who were included in preschool programs and/or speak the Croatian language well, mixed classes are organized. The time frame for this measure was set for 2004 and continuing, with no financial means.

Also, the Ministry of Education and Sport and the primary school in question should in 2004 (with 50,000,00 HRK) and later ensure the (8) organization of all-day school or other forms of additional classes for Roma children who need it. The aim of all day school and additional classes is the provision of the space and other conditions for writing homework and study by Roma children who do not have suitable conditions in their own home and the offer of help to enable them to get on better, to learn the Croatian language and to learn the lesson material.

The measures to be implemented in 2004 and later by the primary schools in question, the local and regional authorities and the nongovernmental organizations are measures 9 through 11.
(9) Encourage the inclusion of Roma children in free extra-curricular activities (such as sports, amateur school and out of school clubs etc.) and encourage, monitor and develop gifted children where this is felt to be useful. Train Roma pupils in extracurricular programs to use new information technology. (a total of 30.000,00 HRK was set aside for this measure in 2004)

(10) Provide food in schools during teaching hours and the all day school for Roma children from deprived homes. (a total of 150.000,00 HRK was set aside for this measure in 2004)

(11) Organize free time activities in elementary schools for Roma children who wish to cultivate their Roma culture, customs and traditions. (a total of 50.000,00 HRK was set aside for this measure in 2004)

The Ministry of Science and Technology, universities, polytechnics and local and regional authorities are to (12) motivate and return to primary education Roma children who have left primary school for some reason, and include Roma who have reached 15 years of age and who have not finished primary school or who are illiterate, in the Republic of Croatia Government program “For Croatia literacy: the path to a better future,” aimed at teaching adults to read and learn a trade, in 2004 and later with 600.000,00 HRK.

(13) Print a Roma-Croatian picture dictionary for children. Produce or translate picture books in the Roma language. Produce textbooks and dictionaries, didactic tools and working materials to make it easier to learn the Croatian standard language and linguistic material. The bodies responsible for this measure are the Ministry of Science and Technology, local and regional authorities, the institutions implementing the preschool-program, the Roma and non-Roma organizations, and its time frame is 2004 and continued, financed by 300.000,00 HRK in the first year.

The Ministry of Education and Sport, schools, Roma and other associations should in 2004 and later (14) encourage the enrolment of Roma pupils in secondary schools by organizing preparation for enrolment and help in studying and learning course content. (a total of 50.000,00 HRK was set aside for this measure in 2004)

The body responsible for (15) scholarships for Roma pupils who need them is the Ministry of Education and Sports with the time frame from 2004 and continued, with 300.000,00 HRK set aside for the first year.

The Ministry of Education and Sport, schools, Roma and other associations should in 2004 and later ensure the (16) financing of accommodation in pupils’ residences for Roma pupils who need it. (a total of 50.000,00 HRK was set aside for this measure in 2004)

The bodies that are to (17) encourage Roma pupils to gain higher or university education and organize and finance preparations for taking the entrance examinations the Ministry of Science and Technology, universities, polytechnics and colleges, with the time frame from 2004 and continued, with 100.000,00 HRK set aside for the first year.

(18) Recognition of additional points for Roma students for the social and economic conditions in which they live, for accommodation in students’ residences. The bodies
responsible for this measure are the Ministry of Science and Technology, universities, polytechnics and colleges, student centers. The time frame is 2004 and continued, while there are no financial means set aside because they are deemed unnecessary.

Furthermore, the Ministry of Science and Technology, universities, polytechnics and colleges and nongovernmental organizations are to ensure (19) scholarships for Roma students who need them. The time frame is 2004 and continued with 200,000,00 HRK set aside per year.

The bodies responsible for (20) introduction of the Roma language and culture as an elective course at the teachers’ academy and other institutions of higher education are the Ministry of Science and Technology, universities, polytechnics and colleges. The time frame is 2004 and continued, while the financial means have yet to be determined.

Since education and training in human rights is an essential part of the local, national and global strategy seeking to provide effective development of individuals, nations as well as the world as a whole the Program foresees the (21) organization of human rights education in all educational institutions, should cover both the Roma and the majority population. The bodies responsible for the Ministry of Education and Sport, the Council for Education on Human Rights of the Government of the Republic of Croatia, the Office for Human Rights, the Ministry of Science and Technology, Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges, nongovernmental organizations and other institutions, with the time frame being 2004 and continued, while there are no financial means set aside because they were deemed unnecessary.

The Office for National Minorities is in charge of (22) enabling Roma representatives, especially women and young people, to take part in decision-making processes, exercise their rights and increase their inclusion in social life, through organizing classes for Roma representatives, and the representatives of the majority population and publishing promotion materials and other appropriate forms of communication and encouraging cooperation of Roma from Croatia with Roma representatives from other countries and with international institutions and associations. (a total of 200,000,00 HRK was to be raised from associations and donations in 2004)

Measures 23 through 25 deal with the preservation of Roma culture and traditional heritage.

(23) Organization of courses of traditional Roma music and for their preservation by the Roma folk societies. The Office for National Minorities, counties, towns and municipalities where Roma live, Roma associations, the Ministry of Culture and the MoES are to implement the measure in 2004 and later with 100,000.00 HRK foreseen for the first year.

MoES, the Ministry of Culture, the Office for National Minorities, cultural institutions and the media are suppose to contribute to the (24) affirmation of the Roma culture, rights and customs through the media, and education and training during 2003 and later with 300,000.00 HRK in 2004.

(25) The training and education of Roma for participation and employment in the media is to be achieved by the Office for National Minorities, in cooperation with the Ministry of Science and Technology, the Faculty of Political Sciences in Zagreb, the employment services and Roma associations in 2004 and later 100,000.00 HRK in the first year.
The last measure is aimed at the \textit{(26) health education and training of Roma, especially Roma women} (e.g. personal hygiene, family planning, and environmental hygiene, etc.), to be implemented by the counties (county administrative departments) in cooperation with the Ministry of Health, county institutes for public health in cooperation with the Croatian Institute for Public Health and community health center sin 2004 with 190.000,00 HRK of financial means.

\begin{table}[h]
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\textbf{The National Program of Action for Youth} & \\
\hline
The Government of the Republic of Croatia has in January 2003 adopted the National Program of Action for Youth, which sets up priority strategic goals for the activity of all policy actors toward the young population in 2003 – 2008 period. The coordinator in the drafting of the Program was the State Institute for the Protection of Family, Maternity and Youth.\textsuperscript{53} \\
Considering the fact that the National Program recommends 25 measures in the field of education, we will only mention the six that relate to the Roma population. \\
\textit{(1) To provide for the implementation of the system of equal opportunities for access to education.} There is an intention to draft expert analyses of the accessibility of secondary education in the positive legal framework for secondary schools, in 2005, with a comparison of that accessibility to all social groups of youth depending on the place of birth and residence, material and social status of the family, gender, special healthcare needs, etc. The elaboration of recommendations for ensuring special programs for funding of educational costs of different groups of youth, depends on the indicators of special financial needs for the continuation of secondary education. The financial means for this measure are 60.000 HRK. The adoption of implementation regulations (or a proposition of a legal act) by the Minister of education about the set-up of a funding program for the costs of education, is foreseen in 2006 when the indicators of the expert analysis and depending on the model of funding, determine the financial means. The body responsible for this measure is the Ministry of Education and Sport in cooperation with the Institute of Education of the Republic of Croatia, the Croatian Employment Service, the Croatian National Institute of Public Health, the Croatian Bureau of Statistics, and the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare. \\
For the \textit{(2) programs for an active promotion and assistance to young Roma in completing primary school, and for inclusion into the secondary school} there are no explicit activities, responsible bodies, nor financial means mentioned in the National Program. \\
\textit{(3) To provide adequate support to young people who have not, for different reasons, enrolled into secondary schools or have dropped-out, in order to ease their inclusion in some form of education and to reduce social risks.} According the National Program, this measure is to be realized through the following sub-measures: \\
1. \textit{To provide material conditions and support for return of young persons, who have dropped out of school, to the system of formal education.} by continually ensuring the material conditions for the implementation of the free primary education program, for the
\end{tabular}
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\textsuperscript{53} According to unofficial information, this National Program has been stopped due to lack of financial means, the abolition of the State Institute for the Protection of Family, Maternity and Youth and other priorities of the new Government.
young that cannot be included into the regular educational system (adult education) with 500,000 HRK by the end of 2005. Also by the end of 2005, there is a need to elaborate the preconditions and set up a scholarship system for youth (of up to 29 years of age) re-entering the secondary education system along with the inclusion of interested companies as providers of the first employment, the financial means of which depend on the number of scholarships. The body responsible for this measure is the Ministry of Education and Sport in cooperation with the Croatian Employment Service, the Croatian Employer’s Association and Entrepreneurship centers.

2. To monitor systematically the number of young persons leaving regular education, and those who have entered adult education system. The body responsible is the Ministry of Education and Sport in cooperation with the County Offices for Education and the Croatian Employment Service, and 20,000 HRK are assigned for the expert set-up of a data base. The time frame for this measure was June 2004. However, this measure was not implemented by the drafting of this document.

(4) To create and provide for the implementation of a program of educational workshops for the support of young Roma who are not included in the formal educational system. This measure is the responsibility of the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare in cooperation with the Office for National Minorities and organizations dealing with programs aimed at humanitarian activities. In 2004 it is supposed to give support to programs offering workshops, aimed at teaching communication and social skills to young Roma not included in the formal educational system, in its yearly tender for the financing of projects of humanitarian organizations. During 2006 the Program is foreseeing the monitoring of the implementation of the financed projects and the formulation of recommendations to local authorities for giving financial support from local budgets. For the financing of this measure, 400,000 HRK have been assigned aiming at a more active inclusion of young Roma into available projects.

(5) To implement constantly the training, additional training and retraining programs for young Roma in order increase their employment. The body responsible for this measure is the Croatian Employment Service, while other factors, such as cooperators, financial means and their sources and the time frame, were not included in the National Program.

The bodies responsible for (6) providing for the systematic education of mentors for work with Roma communities is the Ministry of Education and Sport, while there are no other data about the realization of this measure.

The National Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality 2001 – 2005

Based on the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action, the Government of the Republic of Croatia had founded in 2003 the Government Office for Gender Equality, as a state expert body in charge of implementing the Gender Equality Act and the National Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality (NPfPGE) as well as implementing the Millennium goal 3 from the Outcome of the Twenty Third Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

Among other measures, the NPfPGE recommends activities aimed at the protection and promotion of human rights of the particularly sensitive groups of women, part of which are the female members of national minorities (NPfPGE, 2002:71)
As is visible from the situation analysis, the Roma women are a multiply marginalized or deprived population, both in the social stratification of the Roma community itself, and in the areas of education, employment, health, etc. So the measures foreseen by the NPfPGE are very important for the Roma women and for the entire Roma population.

4. NONGOVERNMENTAL SCENE FOR ROMA EDUCATION

The Roma and non-Roma nongovernmental organizations dealing with Roma education have also contributed to the development of the civil society in Croatia, to the sensitizing of the Roma and to the start of resolving their problems. However, a characteristic of the Roma organizations is the fact that they are often family businesses, and that, out of the total of 37 registered organizations, only a few are actually active.

At the initiative of the Government of the Republic of Croatia and with the goal of Roma associations and creating unity among the Roma, two umbrella-organizations, or networks of Roma organizations have been formed. The first network is the Council of Roma organizations in Croatia, founded in 2000, and the second is the Roma Organizational Network created in 2001. However, according to opinions of some Roma leaders, this project failed, creating an even greater gap between Roma organizations.

In this report we will describe just those NGO’s which are the most active.

**Roma for Roma Organization** was founded in 1998, and is one of the most active nongovernmental organizations, whose program is aimed at Roma education. Within this education program, the Organization organized the «Pirgo» kindergarten in Cakovec for children from Kuršanec and a preschool program for 25 children at the Ban Josip Jelacic primary school in Zagreb, with two playschools based on the preparation of children for school. The program is conducted by a pedagog, a preschool teacher and a Roma-assistant. Within the program which is free of charge for the parents, the children also get one meal a day. There were four «Healthy Community) playschools organized (two in Zagreb, and two in Medimurje). 54

**The Roma Organization “Zlatna Kobra”** is a nongovernmental organization including a shorter preschool education program – the playschool “Happy Roma” with 45 children of a preschool age, is held for three hours a day during the school year in the Zagreb settlement III. Kozari put, whose users are children coming from Kozari putevi and Zitnjak. The Program is implemented by a preschool teacher and two Roma-assistants, and ensures one meal a day, being free of charge for the children’s parents.

**Croatian Roma Union** is a nongovernmental organization founded in 1996, with the mission of preserving the ethnic-national identity of Roma, through the fight for the respect and realization of their rights and through humanitarian and other assistance to the Roma community. That organization founded a kindergarten for the Roma children from a Zagreb suburb in the very first year of its existence, which is still in function. The priorities of the

54 According to the data of the City Education Office of the City of Zagreb, financial means from the city budget were ensured for 2003, amounting to 35,500,00 HRK, with a plan to continue the financing from the city budget in 2004.
organization in the area of education is the literacy program aimed at children, youth and adults, the perfecting of the Roma language, culture and Roma heritage and assistance with problems Roma are faced with. During the eight years of their work, 126 children went through their preschool center and kindergarten “Cefferino Jimenez Malla”. That is a semi-daycare preschool education program with 25-30 preschool age children and a preschool program with 20-30 school age children. The users of the program are also children from the Zagreb settlements Kozari putesevi and Dubrava. The program is implemented by a pedagogue, a preschool teacher, a school teacher and two Roma-assistants. The organization published the “First Roma beginner-textbook – Romani angluni alfabea”. 55

Medimurje Roma Organization is the most active Roma association in the Medimurje area, and it was founded in 1998 aiming at assisting in the improvement of life conditions of Roma (from education to infrastructure). The Organization organized the preschool education of children in the settlement, where adult education is also being implemented (usually directed at literacy programs for women).

Organization of Roma Women «A Better Future», is a nongovernmental organization whose program is directed toward actions contributing to the improvement of the economic and social status of Roma women and their rights, and which functions as group support for women. The goal of the organizations is to provide information and legal advice to Roma women regarding their rights and duties. The Programs of the organizations are aimed at the issues of health care, female reproductive health and planned parenthood, prevention of family violence and the organization of cultural activities and practical workshops for handwork.

Organization of Roma from Zagreb and Zagreb County is a nongovernmental, non-profit organization founded in 1993 at the initiative of Roma national minority members, aiming at the improvement of their quality of life and inclusion and participation in the entire society. The goals of the Organization according to its Constitution are the improvement of education and motivation of young Roma and Roma in general, the improvement of the realization of all Roma national minority members, especially the right to nurture the Roma language and culture, cooperation with authorized bodies and officials in the City of Zagreb, with international Roma organizations and Roma organizations in Croatia, the satisfaction of cultural, economic and social need Roma. The Organization has been publishing the “Romengo Cacipe» magazine for eight years, and also deals with information-giving within the social program, the promotion of human rights, the nurturing of Roma culture and is aiming to prepare the publishing of the Croatian-Roma dictionary.

Croatian Roma Youth Club is a nongovernmental, non-profitable organization, founded at the initiative of the Roma national minority youth within the Croatian Roma Youth Organization. The goal of the Club is to gather Roma youth with the purpose of education, assistance to endangered individuals and families and improvement of the quality of life. The basic content of the activity of the Club is to provide educational, recreational and sporting content to the Roma and other children and youth in the Club area, and to support the set-up of Roma youth clubs in other parts of the Croatian territory. The users of the Club activities

55 According to the data of the City Education Office of the City of Zagreb, financial means from the city budget were ensured for 2003, amounting to 500,000,00 HRK, with a plan to continue the financing from the city budget in 2004 (it is possible that the program might extend to the opening of a playschool in Soot).
are the young members of the Roma national minority from the Zagreb area, and the Club has 100 members. During its work, the Club has organized many sports activities, participated in different events, participates in activities aimed at the publishing of the «Romengo Cacipe» magazine. The Club has a daycare or semi-daycare for children after regular school classes are over, where it is possible to organize lectures and working courses led by experts.
5. INSTEAD OF A CONCLUSION

In the conditions of budgetary restraints for social transfers, imposed by the high deficit of the state budget, the realization of measures and goals set by the National Program for the Roma is in question. This is especially confirmed by the (incomplete) data about the resources foreseen in 2004 for Roma programs within the key state institutions in charge of the National Program for the Roma implementation. All of them indicate that the ambitious agenda of the foreseen measures is not backed by budgetary resources. A part of those measures can surely be financed from the regular activity of certain bodies of state administration, but the significant data point to the fact that the state administration in the 2004 budget had not to a sufficient level planned the resources for the implementation of measures not included in their regular activities.

It is to be expected that similar trends will be continued in the future years. So the need arises for a more intensive communication and partnership between the central state government, the local and regional authorities, the international donors and the institutions of civil society. Unfortunately, the National Program for the Roma does not define mutual obligations and responsibilities of institutions for the realization of the set measures and the means for financial and organizational coordination of activities in its implementation. Progress in that area is one of the most important prepositions of at least a partial realization of the National Program for the Roma.

Thus, a discussion on the organizational and financial coordination of the existing and future measures and programs should be initiated. Principally speaking, the evaluation of successfulness and the recommendation of changes and adjustments of the measures from the National Program for the Roma are in the jurisdiction of the previously mentioned Commission for the monitoring of its implementation, done with the help of the Office for National Minorities. The stated bodies might ensure a better quality of communication with the donors, international and nongovernmental organizations, and realize an organizational coordination.

When dealing with the coordination of the financial dimension of programs focused on the Roma, one should concentrate on the allocation of resources, as well as the control of their purposeful spending. We recommend considering the possibility of partial centralization of resource spending. Along with the recommended Roma Education Fund, the National Fund for the Development of Civil Society might have a certain role in Croatia. Where it is possible and justified, the direct allocation of the total amount for the realization of a certain project to the account of a specific organization should be avoided, and, instead, the money should be transferred directly to the supplier.

Also, a more efficient and effective implementation of measures foreseen by the National Program for the Roma could be stimulated by a more realistic budget plan, by focusing on key measures which might have synergic or multiplicative effects, by quality monitoring by the trusteeship in charge and by the necessary adjustments in harmony with the results of results of specific measures, projects and programs.
PART THREE

1. RECOMMENDATIONS OF EDUCATIONAL MEASURES FOR ROMA

Taking into consideration all the things mentioned in this document, from the situation analysis, to the analysis of documents, programs and measures of public policy, as well as finances related to those programs, we recommend the following:

EARLY EDUCATION

- Due to the insufficient number of preschool institutions, and regarding the needs and the insufficient financial resources by the state and local authorities, we recommend organizing and financing of preschool institutions for Roma children in the duration of 12-18 months prior to the primary school enrollment and kindergarten institutions.
- Specifically, the Roma children need to be included the preschool education system that will emphasize the targeted teaching of the Croatian language, as early and as long as possible. Namely, the period from the third to the sixth year of life is crucial for the development of linguistic abilities, the adoption of basic concepts, the psycho-locomotive and cognitive development, the creation of self-awareness, the emotional development and the early learning of social skills.

PRIMARY EDUCATION

- Due to poor living conditions, the bad infrastructure of the Roma households (no electricity, water supplies, etc.), as well as the inexistence of expert help in the performing of school obligations, we recommend the organization and financing of daycare for all Roma national minority children in the lower grades (from 1 to 4), and if possible, in the higher grades of primary school as well (from 5 to 8), aimed at extending professional help with studying and writing homework, whether in schools or in settlements.

TEACHER EDUCATION

- Since there is no education for the specific work with Roma children the MoSES would, in cooperation with the University of Zagreb and the High Teacher School in Cakovec, should organize the teacher education of the Roma and non-Roma population specialized in work with the Roma at the pre-service and in-service training.
- Create models of education for Roma assistants for work at preschools and primary schools and a system of inclusion of Roma assistants into the formal system of tertiary education. To be specific, the Roma assistants should be observed in the context of transitional costs of the inclusion of Roma children into the schooling system.
SECONDARY EDUCATION

- To stimulate and create a system of scholarships for the Roma secondary school population according to the criteria of educational achievement and the socio-economic status of the parents.
- MoSES should, in cooperation with the Croatian Employment Service, the Chamber of Economy and the Croatian Employers’ Association, organize the individual or group professional orientation for Roma students and assist in the linking of students and employers (in apprenticeship, employment, etc.)

TERTIARY EDUCATION

- To stimulate and create a system of scholarships for the Roma tertiary education population according to the criteria of educational achievement and the socio-economic status of the parents. We recommend giving preference to educational occupations and social care studies. Considering that the selection was so far done at the recommendations of nongovernmental organizations, we recommend the allocation of scholarships be based on public tenders according to the criteria of socio-economic status, educational achievement and area of study. This system would primarily enable the increase of the educational status of the Roma population, the alleviation of communication with the Roma children, the realization of the legal right of education in the language and script of a national minority and the steady development of bilingualism in the educational system. It would be especially important to stimulate and finance the Roma-assistants to enroll and complete a teacher training study.
- To introduce a subject about the Roma and the intercultural education into teacher studies (Cakovec, Zagreb, Osijek) in order to increase the level of knowledge and degree of information of teachers on the subject of Roma and the concept of intercultural education.

EXTRA-INSTITUTIONAL EDUCATIONAL MEASURES

(1) YOUTH

- Regarding the poor or no activity of youth in the community (wider and narrower) there should be an organization of programs for «Youth Leadership», aiming at the creation of a network of young Roma and their more active inclusion into community life.
- Organizing workshops aimed at information and computer literacy of Roma.
- Organizing workshops and lectures aimed at informing and educating about health in general, reproductive health, civil rights and obligations, environmental protection, etc.
- Considering the high number of Roma dropping out of the educational system, the organization of education for completion of school or obtaining a vocation is necessary, with the goal of returning Roma into the education system or obtaining a vocation needed for employment.
(2) ADULTS

- Since there are a lot of illiterate persons in the Roma population, it is necessary to organize courses in writing and reading aimed at improving adult literacy. It is especially important carefully include the largest possible number of women into this program.
- Workshops and lectures on responsible parenthood, health, self-employment, family violence, alcoholism and etc.
- Considering the deprived social, economic and educational position of Roma women, it is necessary to initiate different activities aimed at gender equality and emancipation of women.

INFRASPACTURAL MEASURES IN ROMA EDUCATION

- In order to alleviate the pressure put on parents by the educational system, due to their poor socio-economic status, we recommend the financial assistance in obtaining of textbooks and school material.
- The existence of different languages Roma use and the mostly verbal literature, point to the need to standardize the language and script, and their consistent use in books, the media, the press, and especially at school, and the need to develop publishing activity and to publish teaching material.
- Since one of the main elements of integration is language, and in order to resolve the language barrier aiming at educational, economic and social integration and improvement of life conditions, we recommend the publishing of a dictionary.
- Roma are not a homogenous group. The inner differences make it difficult for them to define their own national identity and preserve the traditional culture. So, special attention should be given to the original Roma culture, traditional customs, art and language through publishing books and organizing presentations (festivals) of Roma culture, aimed at the preservation of cultural heritage and at informing and sensitizing the majority population to the Roma culture. Cherishing the traditionally present gift of the Roma for music and dance and the presentation of their art through the media, might change the stereotypes of the Roma environment and contribute to their affirmation.
- As there are no comprehensive researches on Roma in Croatia, we recommend conducting a research on a representative sample of the entire population.

EVALUATION

Considering the fact we are witnesses to significant financial investments into the area of Roma education in Croatia (both by the state and by the international organizations), without adequate progress, we recommend an evaluation of the entire decade to, hopefully, evident a significant improvement in the realization of the desire for the complete integration of Roma into society, and the reduction of deprivation of most Roma in the 2005-2015 period. So, we are recommending pre-testing and post-testing of the decade, of particular projects, and of the measures themselves.
2. ASSUMPTIONS OF THE FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

1. The number of Roma in Croatia was estimated to 30,000

   The assumption that the data on the number of Roma in Croatia obtained through the 2001 census is considerably lower than the real situation generally is accepted, which is explained by the marginalization of Roma. Even though legal provisions limit or prohibit the gathering and publishing of data by state authorities, according to the national or ethnic affiliation criterion, even the publicized data from certain activities (such as social welfare) indicate that there is a need for the correction of the number of Roma used in the financial analysis. This does not put into question the right of every person to declare nationality according to his/her convictions, but is an attempt to initiate a more adequate program planning within Roma Education Fund and other initiatives directed at Roma.

   Since the estimate of 30 to 40,000 Roma living in Croatia is considered the most relevant, it is taken as an initial basis. And because the financial analysis is led by the principle of efficiency, and the analysis is based on conservative assumptions if there are no relevant indications to do otherwise, the lower estimated figure (30 thousand) was taken as relevant.

2. The age structure is assumed to be identical to the one in the 2001 census

   There is no reliable data indicating that the differences between the declared national or ethnical affiliation to the Roma population and the socio-economic membership in the Roma community (according to which the program scales are planned) are significantly different. So the analysis retains the age structure observed in the 2001 census. If it is demonstrated that the target population, that is – the number of people interested in participating in some of the recommended programs, is larger than expected, the way the measures were designed enables certain flexibility with minimal additional costs.

3. The stability of the size of the Roma population and the target populations for individual measures

   Roma are characterized by an above average birth rate (compared to the total population), implicating the growth of the number of Roma community members. But, they are also characterized by above average mortality rates and a mobility of the population, acting in the opposite direction regarding the number of Roma. The available data are insufficient for more precise evaluations. Thus, the analysis uses a conservative assumption about the stability of the size of the Roma population in Croatia – including the target population for individual recommended measures. If the need arises for a minor adjustment of the number of participants the way the measures were designed enables certain flexibility with minimal additional costs (e.g. by a minor increase of the number of members in a group where an educational activity is being implemented). On the other side, since the recommended measures include the conducting of a comprehensive research about the Roma, the possible future adjustments of the recommended measures will be possible to plan based on more precise data.

4. The stability of prices and the USD/HRK currency rate

   It is assumed that the key macroeconomic indicators – including prices and the currency rate of the US dollar and the Croatian Kuna – shall mostly be stable. Even the case that prices expressed in HRK rise, the stability of prices expressed in USD is expected. Since the USD is momentarily at a relatively low level, this enables the projections a certain reserve that might absorb the possible growth of prices expressed in Kuna.
5. The use of financial standards for educational institutions and other relevant information
Wherever it was possible, the estimated amounts for individual measures reflect the real costs. In order to ensure a better quality of comparison between the results of the financial analysis and the activities of state authorities in the area of education of Roma community members, and since the precise assessment of all costs included in the financial analysis is still not possible, we have used, where necessary, approximate assessments based on positive regulations and other relevant sources, stated in the list of references.
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