

REGIONAL BRIEF

[UNDP and Roma Survey]



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THE REGIONAL SURVEY ON THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC POSITION OF ROMA

Of the estimated 10-12 million Roma living in Europe, around one million live in the Western Balkans and 0.5 to 2.5 million live in Turkey. Their socio-economic position has been the subject of intense debate in the Western Balkans for more than a decade.

The Regional Survey on the Socio-Economic Position of Roma, carried out in the Western Balkans and Turkey, will make a major contribution to filling the gap in the availability of up-to-date data needed to monitor and inform policies aimed at the social inclusion of Roma. It will also inform the EU's and enlargement countries' commitment to achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development agenda, through the design, implementation, and monitoring of policies preventing and curbing social exclusion and inequalities.

Why a survey?

To narrow the gap in multi-dimensional poverty and access to socio-economic rights between marginalized Roma and non-Roma population in Western Balkans and Turkey, collected data will allow facts-based decision making and more informed and focused policy and programming for Roma inclusion.

The project builds on UNDP's [first major data collection](#) exercise on Roma living standards, carried out in 2004, which provided baseline data for the Decade of Roma Inclusion, and the second round of the regional Roma survey [carried out in 2011](#), in partnership with other organizations. These previous surveys provided unique

and invaluable data, which have been used to measure progress in Roma inclusion policies over time, both within and between countries.

As the EU launched its new Roma Integration 2020 programme, there were serious concerns regarding the situation of Roma in enlargement and potential candidate countries. A third survey is needed because national governments' and statistical offices' capacity for data collection is still not at a sufficient level to ensure effective policy planning and analysis, and qualitative monitoring is still mostly neglected.

Qualitative analysis is crucial to shed light on data stemming from quantitative analysis, explain the underlying causes for certain, sometimes surprising data or data showing persistent disadvantage and helping to explain what works and doesn't work in Roma inclusion.

What are we doing?

The **quantitative survey** covers employment, education, access to health and education services, income, living conditions, personal documentation and access to it, migration/return, and values and norms.

The **qualitative studies** look at the position of Roma returning to Western Balkans from EU: non-visible Roma (without personal documentation); employment and labour market discrimination; exposure to environmental risks; gender roles, domestic violence, and factors resulting in early marriages.

The data provided will:

- track progress regarding the socio-economic integration of Roma in/at risk of poverty,

marginalisation, and exclusion (covering the key dimensions of exclusion, namely income poverty, education, employment, health, housing, political and civic participation, and discrimination);

- fill (at least partially) the data gap on civil status (e.g. personal documentation);
- assess migration-related issues (returnees and plans to move to another country); and
- provide baseline data for the five year programming actions proposed under Roma Integration 2020.

Quantitative Survey

The current survey is modelled on the 2011 regional survey, with an expanded set of questions related to civil documentation, migration, and returnees. Conducted among Roma and non-Roma living in their vicinity, the survey will yield information on:

Characteristics of the households shared by all its members (characteristics of the dwelling, possession of different amenities, access to infrastructures, distance from basic services providers etc.)

Basic individual characteristics of each household member (composition of the household, demographic characteristics of its members, possession of personal documentation, information about experience with migration and plans to migrate, experience of return, education status, incidence of disability, activity status, sources of income etc.)

Perception data on behavioral aspects and individual attitudes, values and norms.

Qualitative studies

Contextualized studies will give more detailed information about achievements and perceptions of on-going inclusion:

The position of Roma returning to Western Balkans from EU: The situation of returning Roma migrants is currently of great interest to DG Near, as it relates to pre-accession assistance.

UNDP is using “micronarratives” as a qualitative data collection method to explore community level barriers for integration of returnees tapping into experiences of both returning Roma and local community members. Micronarratives will look into different processes enabling and impeding integration and will be complemented by an analysis of institutional barriers to integration.

Documentation / Registration related issues: Lack of legal, personal documentation can have a profound

effect in many areas, resulting in statelessness, limiting access to education, labour market, limiting mobility, depriving Roma of property rights. processes.

Perceptions and experience of discrimination: The quantitative survey will show us trends in perceptions of discrimination. But, these perceptions depend on a number of factors such as educational level, awareness about rights, national legal frameworks. The links between those factors cannot be fully captured by quantitative survey.

Employment preferences and experience with labour market discrimination: unemployment of Roma is usually almost twice as high as unemployment of their non-Roma neighbours (among whom unemployment is already higher than national averages). In terms of employment, Roma often feel they are not in control of their situation. Instead, external factors – mainly institutions and societal setup – are the factors determining their employment outcome.

Exposure to environmental risks: Roma settlements are often located on the edges of communities, with low-quality housing, no access to modern fuel, lack of proper waste management, and with a disproportionate risk of natural disasters. In addition, Roma themselves are often employed in informal waste processing, which is a hazardous type of work.

Gender roles and position of women in Roma communities: This would allow insight into the position of women in family (what are their specific tasks and how their time is used); the involvement of women in decision-making; the situation with early marriages/long-term unions; what influences their decisions to participate in labour markets; what are the intra-community mechanisms supporting/impeding women’s emancipation.

Partnerships

This project is one of the Roma-related projects being supported by the European Commission in the ‘Technical Assistance for Roma integration at community level –TARO’ initiative. Other projects are implemented in parallel by the Council of Europe, ROMACTED, Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) -Roma Integration 2020 and the World Bank.

Roma Integration 2020 project, implemented by the RCC, will work with national counterparts to use data produced through this survey as baselines for monitoring national Roma inclusion strategies.

The survey runs from 1 November 2016 to 30 May 2018 and covers Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, FYR Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Kosovo*, and Turkey.

*References to Kosovo on this text shall be understood to be in the context of the UN Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999)