

**SRDA / PAL project Training for Trainers – online course  
Economic Empowerment and Employment**

**Reference material**

[I.http://www.neujobs.eu/sites/default/files/publication/2014/04/D19.4\\_policybrief\\_review%20\(1\).pdf](http://www.neujobs.eu/sites/default/files/publication/2014/04/D19.4_policybrief_review%20(1).pdf)

**„Abstract: This Policy Brief summarises the outcome of the research conducted over an 18 month period on Roma employment and labour market policies aimed at the Roma unemployed in five EU member states (Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia and Spain). It builds on three phases of Work Package 19 of the FP7-funded NEUJOBS project, entitled Policy puzzles with Roma employment. The aim of the research, as well as the present Policy Brief was to look at labour market policies – their targeting, outreach, design and functioning in the local arena – that try to improve labour market opportunities for the Roma population and analyse them against the most important causes that determine low employment of this population group.” (quote on slide X)**

**„A crucial constraint to Roma employment is the generally low educational attainment. It is important to understand that economic structures of the post-transition economies continue to determine the educational composition of the labour demand to which the supply side (and the school system determining the labour force composition) has not adapted. Therefore the lack of highly educated and the oversupply of low-skilled workforce can't be tackled within the framework of labour market policies but should primarily be addressed through the system of public education. Labour market programmes are equipped to make minor adjustments and corrections in terms of training in specific areas, in which a local disequilibrium of demand and supply in the short and medium term appears. ALMPs, however, cannot replace or correct basic deficiencies of the public education system, meaning that a sizeable population remains illiterate and leaves education without acquiring the most essential skills needed for participation in society and the labour market. **Our research – which focused on labour market policies – identified a few instances in which countries have tried to deal with low educational levels of unemployed Roma:** in Hungary, public employment schemes have an educational element, providing the opportunity to reenter second-chance schooling for those unemployed who have not completed primary school (ISCED 2). In Spain, in the framework of Personal Itinerary of Integration (INI) the employment office (EO) offers training and job orientation in collaboration with companies, primarily for young unemployed youth, who receive personalised professional orientation and training. However, due to poor design of the programme and the lack of tuition, this programme element remained weak in Hungary. **In all of the countries, EOs organise occupational training courses but very often companies indicate that training does not coincide with the HR needs of the local economy.** The research found evidence for the EOs or NGOs organising training courses specifically for Roma in which traditional crafts attributed to Gypsies**

were trained (i.e. basketwork, flower banding, woodwork, tinwork, etc.). Such initiatives typically do not consider that there is no market for such skills. The best practice of how to match training courses to local labour market need was found in Hungary, where EOs made significant efforts to nurture close contacts with local companies, surveyed local employers regularly about their HR plans in terms of the size and character of their demand for labour and accommodated ALMP training courses to the needs of the local companies.

**Discrimination is a substantial barrier to Roma employment and one that would legitimise ethnic targeting of public policies.** The overview of labour market policies in the five countries, however, reveals that such an approach is largely absent. Although relevant legal safeguards against racial discrimination as well as an institutional framework for addressing complaints of discrimination existed in all of the countries, this did not stop employers (and also several stakeholders) from discriminating against Roma individuals. Our research found that ethnic targeting of employment programmes is rare, usually of a local scope, and, with the exception of the Spanish ACCEDER, is project-based and therefore irregular and not PATTERNS OF ROMA EMPLOYMENT IN EUROPE | 11 susceptible to measurement. Moreover, the few ethnically targeted 'Roma employment programmes' did not ensure that the actual beneficiaries were Roma. Even in Spain, where a part of ALMP funds are directed explicitly to Roma NGOs, e.g. Fundació Secretariado Gitano (FSG), implementing agencies do not collect any information on the ethnic background of programme (ACCEDER) beneficiaries. A further important drawback of such programmes is that they do not challenge discriminatory attitudes and decisions of employers.

**Anti-discrimination and affirmative action is another approach applicable in the sphere of employment.** The policy research as well as the empirical case studies found that there is hardly anything happening in this respect beyond the mere legal regulations required by the European Union.

**Regional development. Due to the fact that a significant share of Roma live in economically disadvantaged areas, complex regional development policies may have an important influence on Roma's labour market inclusion.** Based on the Slovakian and Hungarian experiences, the impact of development programmes on Roma employment could increase if they would put a greater emphasis on the employment element and include ethnicity as a horizontal aspect in their design and implementation. It is essential that the implementation of the programmes ensure that funds reach out to the most vulnerable population groups and their distribution does not reflect local power relations. It is also essential that local Roma communities are involved in the design and monitoring of development programmes in regions, where the population share of Roma exceeds the national average. A good practice in this respect is the shadow reporting produced by Roma and pro-Roma NGOs about the implementation of the Roma Integration Strategies and Decade Action Plans in Hungary.

**Economic regulation. Low-skilled unemployed may find their way to provide subsistence by establishing small family businesses.** This is the case in Spain but not in Central European countries. One reason behind this difference may be the extremely high costs (both financial and

administrative ones) to establish and run small business in these countries. Therefore easing the administrative and financial burden of establishing a family business or one-person enterprise could potentially enhance legal employment of low-skilled unemployed, including Roma. Governments, therefore, should provide schemes of simplified employment for certain – vulnerable – groups of people. Another important obstacle to formal employment of low-skilled workers in some of the countries under scrutiny in this report is the high cost of employment and the fact that productivity of such workers does not cover the labour costs. Therefore, reducing minimum wage and/or the costs burdening low wages (contributions and taxes) of low-educated people could potentially increase the willingness of employers to employ the vulnerable unemployed.”

II. <https://www.eurodiaconia.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Policy-paper-Social-Inclusion-of-Roma.pdf>

**„Eurodiaconia is convinced that any strategy for Roma inclusion must have a long-term perspective and long-term sustainability. To expect significant results in a relatively short time may not be realistic as generations of Roma have grown up with segregation. Certainly, access to social and health services as well as education needs to be and can be improved more speedily. Integration, however, implies participation and a two-way process in societies, which requires a change in attitudes. Changing attitudes takes much longer, and patience may be required on the side of all stakeholders in this process.” (quote on slide X)**

**„Employment - Roma communities also face considerable exclusion from the labour market, suffering from high unemployment rates and systematic barriers to accessing the labour markets for reasons already mentioned such as residential segregation, unequal access to quality education, and direct or indirect racial discrimination by employers. Employment is one of the most effective means to help people lift themselves out of poverty and further social inclusion, therefore Eurodiaconia firmly believes that the EU and Member States need to do more to systematically improve labour integration of Roma through the monitoring and the implementation of the NRIS and the RED. Specifically, the EU should monitor whether Member States are effectively implementing the principle of inclusive labour markets as one of the main pillars of the Active Inclusion Strategy. National governments and local authorities should also develop and implement education and employment interventions and schemes that better support Roma EU citizens in the local labour market. Work integrating social enterprises in particular can play a key role in integrating Roma facing discrimination and should be promoted and supported by the EU. Our recommendations The EU should • Ensure that Member States implement inclusive labour market policies as stated in the Recommendation on Active Inclusion. • Prioritise a social market economy and invest in social enterprises, particularly those that aim to engage unemployed and disadvantaged Roma The Member States should 8 <http://www.errc.org> (The RED and the Framework Employment Directive prohibit discrimination in the labour market on the grounds of race and ethnicity). Page 7 of 8 • Develop**

**and implement intervention that supports Roma EU citizens in the local labour market<sup>10</sup> including local level social enterprises • Carry out best practice sharing on labour market integration for Roma at regular national level meetings.”**

III. <http://serco-project.eu/serco-deliverables-list/#1467322231332-259589e8-e36f>

**“(…) the SERCo project-- aims to address the problem of social and economic inclusion of Roma communities in the partner countries by applying the concept of social economy as an innovative solution to reducing the risk of poverty and to enhancing entrepreneurship.”**

“Major conclusions Finally, **Roma community has an important representativeness within Roma organizations and an active role into political spaces of dialoguing between policy makers and Roma stakeholders. Thanks to the European Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies adopted by the European Commission the past 5th of April, 2011, the countries have developed their Roma inclusion strategy to focus on the four areas: education, health, employment and housing.** Although there are lots of initiatives to improve Roma social conditions, there are lots of barriers which make these improvements difficult, for instance: social prejudices, Roma discrimination and anti-gipsy’s attitudes. **In order to fight against discrimination, Roma advocacy organizations and Roma community leaders are contributing to denounce discrimination actions and to make Roma culture visible. Moreover, they are hardly working together with Public Administration to offer Roma Community better access to health, education, employment and housing.** Beyond this measures, the idea is to promote quality of life and welfare within Roma communities, but in particular, to all those who are in the limit of poverty. **Fostering Education should be one of the priorities to promote social equality. Better education may contribute to better grades of social participation, better success into the labour market, better relationships with Administration and better knowledge of one’s rights. In addition, employment is largely on occasional or seasonal-basis and is mostly concentrated in the fields of trading, scrap dealing and agricultural labouring.** Poverty and social exclusion also affect their health situation as they have an average life expectancy that 10-25 years lower than that of the general population, high infant mortality rates and a limited access to national health services. Furthermore, in Romania there are a number of excluded social groups and exclusion processes evident. The Roma ethnic group suffers serious processes of exclusion It is just one of these social segments but is probably the hardest hit. There are not one but several factors causing social exclusion. If we look at nature their notice that, unless this labor market can be determined by conditions in the local community and the country, have a determining causative factors mainly individual and to some extent cultural (or even in the community meaning cultural community), involving auto exclusion a great extent. The fact that 3.1% of Roma have no identity document excludes approximately 47,000 people (half of whom children) of all rights of citizens of the Romanian state: the education and health services free of allowance for children, emergency aid, other rights of social assistance and social insurance. They will not be able to be literate, to work legally or to be sure; They do not vote, can not This publication has been

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50 become members of Marginalizations or be elected into leadership positions. They can not even come 30 or make them legally married IDs future children. Excluded or selfexcluded from the labor market not covered by insurance system social, 75% of heads of Roma families believe that they and their families would be therefore entitled / should receive social assistance. There is still need to develop appropriate mechanisms to collect data since there is absence of sufficient and accurate statistics regarding the Roma community in all of the partner countries. The national legislation should also be amended, in order to offer more protection to self-employed immigrants and fight against exploitation, undeclared work and discrimination in the workplace. It is also necessary to develop an action plan with detailed measures and establish precise and achievable goals for an effective policy framework. Finally, we also need to regularly monitor the progress that is being made, in order to evaluate the impact of each project. Regarding the 6 NRIS priority fields, deterioration occurred in 3 of them (housing, health care, anti-discrimination), the situation remained the same in 2 others (employment and culture) while improvement was observed only in the field of education. The overall public environment also deteriorated: 2015 marked significant raise of anti-Roma rhetoric and stereotypes as well in most of the partnering countries. Unfavourable (for the social inclusion in general) mainstream developments in the fields of healthcare and education formed significant additional challenge that would disturb the Roma integration policy in the near future. The biggest success factor in 2015 was the engagement of two ESF co-funded programs (Science and Education for Smart Growth OP and Human Resources Development OP) as well as of EEA Grants and Swiss Contribution with funding the NRIS implementation in Bulgaria. It brings possibilities for fostering NRIS implementation at local level and for engaging broader set of stakeholders. Nevertheless, much more success factors are necessary to overcome the stagnation in Roma integration policy. **The SERCo project should be geared up towards paving a way for addressing almost all the above issues, at least for its end-users, either directly or indirectly: • Active participation in vocational education through its training programme • Provision of employment opportunities through social entrepreneurships • Achieve a long-term future impact of reducing social isolation and discrimination for the target group through vocational education and increased employment • Indirectly improve the health situation of the target group through all the above.**"