

Bulgaria

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Roma population	Estimate in the document	325 343 (January 2011 census), i.e. 4.9% of the population
	<i>Council of Europe estimates</i>	<i>approximately 750 000 i.e. 10.33 % of the population</i>
Approach		National strategy

	KEY ELEMENTS	IDENTIFIED GAPS
Education	<p>The strategy includes in particular the following positive elements:</p> <p>School dropout correctly identified as a key problem that needs to be addressed.</p> <p>Focal and whole day schools, where children receive a meal and extracurricular activities.</p> <p>Training of teachers on multiculturalism.</p> <p>Measures to step up parental involvement</p>	<p><i>Segregation in primary and secondary education could have been more appropriately addressed. More attention should be paid to higher education. Indicators are mentioned, but goals are not quantified. The scope of the envisaged intervention is limited by the planned funding. Monitoring and data collection on the share of Roma within overall early school leavers would be necessary.</i></p>
Employment	<p>The strategy includes in particular the following positive elements:</p> <p>Training courses for the unemployed, for labour office staff on the Roma, on entrepreneurship and management.</p> <p>Subsidised employment for vulnerable groups.</p> <p>Appointment of Roma representatives in the employment agencies in regions with predominant Roma population.</p>	<p><i>More measures to improve Roma employment in rural areas could have been envisaged. Effectiveness of public works programmes to provide (re)qualification and lead to sustainable employment should be examined. Appropriate funding (both national and EU) should be indicated.</i></p>
Health	<p>The strategy includes in particular the following positive elements:</p> <p>Focus on increase of qualified Roma in the healthcare system, promotion of health mediators and mobile health units.</p> <p>Family planning support.</p> <p>Immunisation campaigns.</p> <p>Information campaigns.</p> <p>Training and informing health professionals on the Roma culture.</p>	<p><i>The lack of health insurance coverage is a key problem for a large percentage of the Roma population and needs to be addressed in more detail. Other further work should include development of preventive services including immunisation, creating healthy living conditions via an integrated approach including social assistance. More work is needed on information systems to monitor health needs and health outcomes of Roma.</i></p> <p><i>Registration with public authorities is necessary.</i></p>

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Housing	<p>The strategy includes in particular the following positive elements:</p> <p>Pilot initiative for building new social housing in four Bulgarian municipalities, launched under the operational programme for regional development.</p> <p>Understanding of the existing problems, willingness to solve them and interest for Roma inclusion from local authorities.</p>	<p><i>The quantification of the scope of actions should be developed and be supported by appropriate funding. Municipalities are expected to make needs assessments and prepare action plans for the improvement of the housing conditions of Roma, but no measure is specified in order to ensure deliver. Desegregation in housing should be addressed along with desegregation in education and labour market integration.</i></p>
Structural requirements and funding	<p>The strategy acknowledges the key role of municipalities in the implementation: municipalities will have to adopt annual action plans for implementing the activities planned in the strategy.</p> <p>Further consultation with respective bodies implementing the Action Plan is foreseen.</p> <p>The consultation and dialogue with civil society organisations on the preparation of the strategy was of high quality.</p>	<p><i>A territorial approach to Roma integration could be particularly relevant, in to the light of the uneven spread of the Roma population on the territory and the fact that local authorities have the competence for a number of social support measures. Appropriate funding for local authorities needs to be ensured.</i></p> <p><i>In the light of the considerable reliance on Structural Funds to support projects addressing the identified priorities, a significant improvement of the absorption capacity should be a priority.</i></p> <p><i>The strategy does not make reference to any potential contribution of the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD).</i></p>