



EUROPEAN SOCIAL POLICY NETWORK (ESPN)

National strategies to fight homelessness and housing exclusion

Serbia

Ljiljana Pejin Stokić and Jurij Bajec



Social Europe

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion

Directorate C — Social Affairs

Unit C.2 — Modernisation of social protection systems

Contact: Giulia Pagliani

E-mail: Giulia.PAGLIANI@ec.europa.eu

European Commission

B-1049 Brussels

European Social Policy Network (ESPN)

**ESPN Thematic Report on
National strategies to fight
homelessness and housing
exclusion**

Serbia

2019

Ljiljana Pejin Stokić Economics Institute, Belgrade

Jurij Bajec, Faculty of Economics, Belgrade

The European Social Policy Network (ESPN) was established in July 2014 on the initiative of the European Commission to provide high-quality and timely independent information, advice, analysis and expertise on social policy issues in the European Union and neighbouring countries.

The ESPN brings together into a single network the work that used to be carried out by the European Network of Independent Experts on Social Inclusion, the Network for the Analytical Support on the Socio-Economic Impact of Social Protection Reforms (ASISP) and the MISSOC (Mutual Information Systems on Social Protection) secretariat.

The ESPN is managed by the Luxembourg Institute of Socio-Economic Research (LISER) and APPLICA, together with the European Social Observatory (OSE).

For more information on the ESPN, see:

<http://ec.europa.eusocialmain.jsp?catId=1135&langId=en>

***Europe Direct is a service to help you find answers
to your questions about the European Union.***

Freephone number (*):

00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11

(*) The information given is free, as are most calls (though some operators, phone boxes or hotels may charge you).

LEGAL NOTICE

This document has been prepared for the European Commission, however it reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

More information on the European Union is available on the Internet (<http://www.europa.eu>).

© European Union, 2019

Reproduction is authorised provided the source is acknowledged

Quoting this report: Ljiljana Pejin Stokić and Jurij Bajec (2019). ESPN Thematic Report on National strategies to fight homelessness and housing exclusion – Serbia, European Social Policy Network (ESPN), Brussels: European Commission.

Contents

- ABBREVIATIONS 4
- SUMMARY 5
- 1 THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF HOMELESSNESS AND HOUSING EXCLUSION..... 6
- 2 RELEVANT STRATEGIES AND POLICIES TACKLING HOMELESSNESS AND HOUSING EXCLUSION 9
- 3 ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT PATTERNS OF SERVICE PROVISION AND CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTING SERBIA’S RESPONSES TO HOMELESSNESS AND HOUSING EXCLUSION.. 15
 - 3.1 LSG administration and NGO sector support 15
 - 3.2 Services mainly provided through social housing programmes..... 17
 - 3.3 Weakness and priorities for improvement of the HHE policies..... 20
- REFERENCES 21
- ANNEX 22
 - Table A1: ETHOS Light categories defined as homeless in Serbia 22
 - Table A2: Latest available data on the number of homeless in Serbia 23

Abbreviations

CC	Collective Centre
CRM	Commissioner for Refugees and Migration (<i>Komesarijat za izbeglice i migracije</i> – KIRS)
CSW	Centre of Social Work
ETHOS	European Typology on Homelessness and Housing Exclusion
FEANTSA	European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless
GIS	Geographic Information System
HHE	Homelessness and Housing Exclusion
IDP	Internally Displaced People
IPA	Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance
LAP	Local Action Plan
LC	Local Community
LSG	Local Self-government
MoCTI	Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe
RCC	Regional Cooperation Council
RHP	Regional Housing Programme
RSO	Republic Statistics Office
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Summary

The nature of homelessness and housing exclusion (HHE) in Serbia has been influenced by the historic events of the 1990s, when a great number of refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs) came to the country. The protracted refugee and IDP situation is ongoing. The Roma population, which is the largest national minority group, has also been at risk of HHE, facing different challenges from the rest of the population.

The 2011 census and the 2012 National Strategy for Social Housing were the first documents to apply the European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless (FEANTSA) European Typology on Homelessness and Housing Exclusion (ETHOS). This typology for HHE is also included in the 2016 Law on Housing and Maintenance of Buildings, which is now the overarching document in this area.

The first data on homeless people who live in public spaces (ETHOS Light categories 1, 3.4 and 3.5) were recorded in the 2011 census. However, it is estimated that the number – 445 people – is under-recorded. The recorded total number of homeless people, which includes also ETHOS Light category 5, was 18,287.

Due to the diversity of HHE problems in Serbia, a number of specific strategy documents and legal acts have been adopted to tackle different population groups. Presently, there are three strategies that target the following specific population groups: Roma (2015), refugees and IDPs (2015) and returnees (2009). The National Strategy for Social Housing (2012) was the first document to embrace HHE issues as a whole and to develop measures and instruments to address them. The main shortcoming of almost all the strategies is their lack of baseline data, which are the prerequisite for monitoring the implementation progress and for evaluation of the results achieved.

The funding of programmes to fight HHE has been secured through international assistance and from central and local budgets. Regional programmes have been implemented for Roma and for refugees and IDPs. The European Union is one of the biggest donors to the regional programmes. Over the past 10 years, through direct assistance from Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) funds, €61.57 million have been disbursed for national programmes that support the improvement of housing conditions for the vulnerable population. Least developed and least funded are services provided by the local administration; their funding also has low sustainability.

The services available at the local level relate mainly to emergency accommodation. Only a small proportion of local communities (around 8% of all communities) provide emergency shelters, safe houses and day care for street children. Accommodation capacity is low and there are neither prevention programmes nor programmes to provide permanent accommodation solutions. The social housing concept, defined by law, provides different types of housing support. The main instrument is the construction of apartments available for purchase (under non-profit conditions) or for rent (at a non-profit rent level). The current practice shows that this concept favours middle-income households and is almost inaccessible to poor households.

The main weakness of the present housing policy is its low sensitivity to the needs of the most vulnerable population. HHE issues are overlooked in the main social protection documents, while the adoption of the new Social Protection Strategy has been postponed, and did not follow the adoption of the recent Law on Housing and Maintenance of Buildings. As the number of refugees and IDPs has gradually declined over the past 10 years, the ongoing housing programmes will be finalised by 2020. The country should focus on the needs of those vulnerable categories that are currently less well covered and develop effective policies to tackle HHE in the long term.

Future priorities should focus on the establishment of a central information system and on the selection of indicators to monitor HHE. Better accessibility and availability of

services to all vulnerable groups is necessary, in order to ensure the effective inclusion of those groups in the housing programmes.

1 The nature and extent of homelessness and housing exclusion

For a comprehensive understanding of the nature and extent of homelessness and housing exclusion (HHE) in Serbia, a historic perspective is necessary. Serbia faced an extraordinary homelessness crisis from the beginning of the 1990s, following the arrival of 621,300 refugees from the former Yugoslav republics, who had left their homes to escape the ongoing conflict (see Table 1). Another wave of homeless people came in 1999, when 209,833 persons left Kosovo*¹ and were granted the status of internally displaced people (IDPs). As a response to the homelessness situation, the state organised urgent accommodation in 'collective centres' for those persons who, at the time of their arrival, were unable to secure a living space on their own. The collective centres (CCs) were created by turning hotels, schools and other large premises into places of accommodation. By 2014, around 300,000 refugees had been integrated and had received Serbian citizenship. The protracted refugee and displacement situation continues to the present day, as a smaller number of persons still have refugee or IDP status.

Table 1: Statistics on refugees and IDPs in Serbia, 1996-2018

	1996	2011	2018
Refugees	621,300	74,487	26,502
IDPs	0	209,833	199,584
All	621,300	284,320	226,086
In collective centres			
Refugees	65,000	898	334
IDPs	0	4,256	368
All	65,000	5,154	702

Source: Commissioner for Refugees and Migration (CRM), Statistics, http://www.kirs.gov.rs/wb-page.php?kat_id=75

Serbia is also home to a relatively large Roma population. The Roma are the largest national minority: in the 2011 census, 147,604 Serbian residents self-declared as Roma (2.05% of the total population). It is estimated that their number is under-recorded, for various reasons (ethnic mimicry, lack of ID documents, statistical neglect, etc.). Roma non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the Office of Human and Minority Rights use the 2010 estimate by the Council of Europe of 600,000 Roma, which is also quoted in the European Commission document 'An EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020' (European Commission, 2011). During the period from 1999 to 2014, around 21,000 Roma left Kosovo* and stayed in Serbia with IDP status (UNHCR, 2014).

The first official definition of homelessness was introduced for the 2011 census. The Republic Statistical Office (RSO) applied the census methodology in accordance with the Conference of European Statisticians' 'Recommendations for the 2010 round of population and housing censuses'. The 2011 census defined two categories of homelessness: (1) primary homeless – persons without a permanent or temporary residence, who live in streets, parks, under bridges, etc.; and (2) secondary homeless – persons living in unconventional dwellings, out of necessity. The RSO also published the

¹ * This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

study *Homeless People*, based on the records and findings from census (RSO, 2014a). More descriptive definitions of homelessness were provided in the National Strategy for Social Housing, adopted in 2012 as a foundation for the strategic planning for implementation of the Law on Social Housing (2009).² The strategy quotes ETHOS as the typology which should be applied to assess 'the extreme forms of housing poverty'.

Currently, official definitions of HHE are included in the Law on Housing and Maintenance of Buildings, adopted in December 2016.³ This law regulates 'housing support', the area that was previously regulated by the Law on Social Housing. Article 3 (Meaning of the applied terms) gives the following definition of a homeless person: 'a homeless person [*beskućnik*] is an individual who lives in the street, with no shelter, i.e. in a place which is not considered an apartment or another type of housing unit defined by this law'. Under the subsection 'Beneficiaries of housing support', two categories of homeless persons are defined: (1) homeless; and (2) temporary homeless, i.e. individuals who have lost their flat/house or, whose housing conditions have deteriorated significantly due to an unstable housing foundation or the effects of a natural disaster, and who do not have the financial means necessary to resolve the situation. The majority of ETHOS Light categories are included in the categories of people defined as eligible for housing support (Table A1 in the Annex). People living in institutions (ETHOS Light operational categories 4.7 and 4.8) are not included as eligible categories.

The true extent and growth trend of HHE in Serbia is not possible to assess properly, owing to the diverse HHE criteria applied for different vulnerable population groups. As the population of refugees in 2018 was almost two thirds lower than in 1996 (mainly due to the reintegration process), a large number of collective centres closed, and different housing solutions were found for those people who left them. According to the report of the office of the Commissioner for Refugees and Migration (CRM), the number of IDPs with housing needs fell by a third in the period 2011-2018. The official data available are presented in Table A2 in the Annex.

The 2011 census recorded the number of people living rough and the number living in emergency shelters for the homeless (but not in the CCs) (ETHOS Light categories 1, 3.4 and 3.5). These people are considered to be 'primary homeless', and data were collected by recording all persons who lived on the street and, at the time of enumeration, were using the services of emergency shelters, or had contacted the Centre of Social Work (CSW) regarding their housing needs. The other recorded category is 'secondary homeless', which corresponds to ETHOS Light category 5. The recorded number of primary homeless was only 445 persons, and it is evident that this figure did not represent the real situation; this inaccuracy was also noted in the RSO publication *Homeless People* (RSO, 2014a). As recording took place during September, the number of emergency shelter users was low, due to the warm weather. In 2011, only a few local self-governments (LSGs) had temporary accommodation services, and so it was not possible to reach all homeless people in other LSGs. The recorded number of secondary homeless people was 17,842, and the total number of primary and secondary homeless people was 18,287.

The HHE situation of the Roma population was also not well represented in the 2011 census, due to under-registration. Assessment of the housing needs of Roma has been carried out within the framework of the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 and the ongoing programme We Are Here Together, funded by the EU. The latest data on the Roma population living in substandard housing are now accessible from the Geographic Information System (GIS), developed in 2016 to map the situation of substandard Roma settlements in Serbia (OSCE, 2017). The GIS definition of substandard housing corresponds to ETHOS Light category 5, although it also takes into account overcrowding

² RS Official Gazette 13/2012, <https://www.mgsi.gov.rs/lat/dokumenti/nacionalna-strategija-socijalnog-stanovanja>

³ RS Official Gazette, 104/2016.

and unresolved property rights. In 2016, the GIS recorded 23,895 substandard settlements, with 56,276 Roma residents (see Table 2).

Table 2: Mapping of substandard housing units in Roma settlements, 2016

	Serbia	NUTS 2 regions			
		City of Belgrade	Autonomous Province of Vojvodina	Šumadija & West Serbia	South & East Serbia
No. of units	23,895	2,841	6,321	5,674	9,059
Regional share %	100	12%	26%	24%	38%
No. of households	17,316	2,510	5,036	3,623	6,147
No. of persons	56,276	8,894	16,124	10,908	20,350
Regional share %	100	15%	29%	19%	36%
Census 2011 registered Roma population					
Regional share	100	18.6%	28.7%	14%	38.7%

Source: OSCE (2017); RSO (2014b).

The housing needs of refugees and IDPs were recorded by different criteria from the one applied in the 2011 census. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) housing vulnerability criteria for refugees and IDPs are broader than those applied in the 2011 census: they include ETHOS Light category 6, and take into account overcrowding and insufficient financial assets to resolve the housing needs. The official statistics on the HHE situation among IDPs and refugees mostly covered those people defined under ETHOS Light categories 3.6, 5 and 6. The 2018 report by the CRM is based on data records from local self-governments (CRM, 2018). According to the report, 68,514 IDPs had additional displacement-related housing needs (15% are Roma IDPs), which is almost one third less than in 2011 (97,286 persons) (see Table 3).

Table 3: Housing status of IDPs, 2018

Housing status	Number of persons	%
Collective accommodation	72	0.11%
Rented apartment	29,116	42.50%
With relatives/friends	29,050	42.40%
Privately owned	6,618	9.66%
Other	3,658	5.34%
TOTAL	68,514	100.00%

Source: CRM (2018).

There are no official data on the number of women in safe houses for women and child victims of family violence; currently only 13 LSGs provide this service.⁴ There are only four day-care centres for street children: two in the city of Belgrade, and one apiece in the cities of Novi Sad and Niš. There are no official data on the number of street children; estimates show that the day-care centres in Belgrade host 50 children per day, on average.⁵

⁴ <https://www.zeneprotivnasilja.net/usluge-u-zajednici/srbija/sigurne-kuce>

⁵ <https://www.bbc.com/serbian/lat/srbija-46682084>

The following analysis of the profiles of the homeless population covers the two most vulnerable population groups and is based on the latest available official statistics.

The socio-economic profile of the primary homeless was presented in RSO (2014a). Individual adults were the largest group in this category; 80% were aged 20 years or over and 65.8% belonged to the working-age group (20-64). The male population was dominant, with a 65.1% share. Some 42.4% were unmarried, while 31.3% were married. The education attainment profile was rather diverse: one third had primary education and one third had secondary education, while a fifth did not have a primary school diploma (see Table 4). Only 9.71% were employed (15 years or older) and 16.2% were pensioners; the remainder were registered either as unemployed or as 'occupation unknown'. There are no data on health status; however, 21% of homeless reported bad health as a cause of their homelessness, while 23% cited dependency diseases, along with family violence as a cause.

Table 4: Education attainment of homeless people in Serbia, by category

Vulnerable population	Less than primary	Primary	Secondary	High
Primary homeless (2011)	26.1%	33.07%	32.30%	5.17%
IDP (2018)	13.67%	20.98%	50.53%	8.79%
IDP Roma (2014)	54.8%	33%	11.5%	0.70%
Refugees (2011)	8.20%	16.20%	56.10%	19.30%

Source: RSO (2014a).

The internally displaced Roma from Kosovo* are one of the most vulnerable groups of homeless people. The 2018 data on IDP Roma show that it is a very young population (37% are less than 18 years of age), while the gender share is almost equal (50.2% male and 49.1% female) (CRM, 2018). The average size of the household is large, with 7.1 family members (mainly multi-generational families), compared to domicile Roma households of 4.1 and the national average of 2.9 members (2011). The education attainment of this population group (14 years or older) is very low: 15.1% are illiterate, 54.8% did not finish primary school, while a third had primary education at most (see Table 4). The unemployment rate of the working-age population is high (80%), while the employment rate is low (around 10%). Poverty among IDP Roma is high: 87% live on income of less than €169 per month (the poverty threshold in 2017 was €132). Many of them also face language barriers, as they do not speak Serbian.

2 Relevant strategies and policies to tackle homelessness and housing exclusion

The present Strategy for the Development of Social Protection in Serbia, which was adopted in 2005, does not address HHE issues.⁶ The draft of the Strategy for Social Protection in Serbia 2019-2025, which has been put for public debate (April-May 2019), also fails to address HHE issues.⁷ Over the period 2010-2019, the following strategies that directly addressed HHE were adopted:

The National Strategy for Social Housing, which was adopted in 2012, is now outdated, since it was adopted within the framework of the Law on Social Housing (2009), which was abolished in 2016. It mainly targets the population that cannot satisfy its housing needs under market conditions, for social or economic reasons. Its primary goal is 'development of the social housing conditions which will facilitate realisation of the housing needs of households that are entitled to such conditions, as specified in the Law on Social Housing'. The law specifies that: 'all households which do not own a housing

⁶ RS Official Gazette 108/2005.

⁷ <http://www.udruzenjesz.rs/images/PDF/nacrt-strategije-socijalne-zastite-2019-2025-27032019.pdf>

unit, or do not have an appropriate unit, and cannot realise the housing need due to insufficient income, are eligible to realise their needs specified under the social housing conditions'. The social housing concept is mainly oriented toward the establishment of a housing market that will offer housing units for sale at more favourable prices and under more favourable purchase conditions. The strategy defines nine modalities of 'public support' in the realisation of housing needs. Only one relates to 'provision of housing units for the needs of social protection programmes', and the potential beneficiaries are: homeless people, children without parental care, victims of family violence, refugees, IDPs, returnees, and households that live in informal settlements. However, there are no stipulations as to the parties responsible for the provision of such services.

The strategy introduced for the first time the HHE concept and proposed the FEANTSA ETHOS typology for monitoring the extreme forms of housing poverty. The strategy defined two specific objectives which addressed HHE: specific objective 6 refers to 'the establishment of instruments for the prevention and decrease of homelessness'. The proposed measures include assessment of the extent of homelessness by applying ETHOS methodology and the creation of accommodation units for homeless persons and persons affected by natural disasters. Specific objective 7 comprises 'improvements of housing conditions in substandard settlements'. The action plan is an integral part of the strategy, with a defined implementation period of 10 years.

The Law on Housing and Maintenance of Buildings, adopted in 2016, is presently the overarching document addressing HHE issues. In the section on 'Housing support', the law defines a measure 'housing care' (*zbrinjavanje*) which comprises: 'a temporary accommodation of persons until the final resolution of housing need'. At the time of writing, the government has still not adopted the new National Housing Strategy, pursuant to Articles 112 and 136 of this law. This prevents the adoption of local housing strategies and delays implementation of the provisions of the law.

Strategies addressing refugees and IDPs. Due to the high number of refugees and IDPs in recent decades, the government focused on providing socio-economic support for this vulnerable population. The latest measures for socio-economic support for refugees were defined in Additions and Amendments to the Law on Refugees (2010).⁸ The law regulates the support for 'persons who, due to the events from 1991-1998 took refuge in Serbia, or were evicted from the former Yugoslav republics and came to Serbia, and who do not want to return, including those persons who have decided to integrate in Serbia'.⁹ The law designated the CRM as the legal body responsible for all tasks such as approval of refugee status, registration, organisation of support and accommodation and management of housing needs. This act is the overarching document for regulating the measures and conditions for the housing support for refugees. In parallel with the legal acts, the government adopted three successive strategic documents, the last (in 2015) being the National Strategy for Resolving the Issues of Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons 2015-2020.¹⁰ This strategy defined two primary objectives: (1) assistance in returning, and (2) assistance in integrating. Assistance in integrating includes resolving the housing and employment issues of refugees and IDPs, and improving their legal and material situation. Strategic goal 6 – resolving housing issues – primarily targets those people living in CCs and other persons living in distressed housing conditions.

Strategies addressing the social inclusion of the Roma population. Improvement in HHE issues for the Roma population in Serbia was defined by two strategic documents: the first, the Strategy for Advancing the Status of Roma in the Republic of Serbia, was adopted in 2009; the second, the Strategy for the Social Inclusion of Roma for the Period from 2016 to 2025 was adopted in 2015.¹¹ The latest strategy document was produced in

⁸ RS Official Gazette 30/2010.

⁹ *ibid.*

¹⁰ RS Official Gazette 62/2015, 25/2016.

¹¹ RS Official Gazette 27/2009, 75 /2015.

accordance with the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020, which defines the goals of Roma integration in four priority areas: access to education, employment, health and housing.¹² The strategy has addressing the poor housing conditions of Roma as one of its priority goals. Specific goal 2 seeks to achieve an improvement in the housing conditions of Roma, by providing: 'legal security for their housing situation, availability of communal services, materials, infrastructure, adequate habitability and accessibility, suitable locations and cultural adequacy'. The most urgent problems related to housing are: i) the absence of local urban plans for the existing Roma settlements, ii) unresolved legal ownership status on land and housing units, and iii) the lack of infrastructure for adequate communal utilities. The first action plan for 2017-2018 was adopted in 2017, and the government established a coordinating body to monitor implementation of the strategy.¹³

The strategy addressing the problems of returnees. In 2008, Serbia ratified the Agreement between the European Community and the Republic of Serbia on the readmission of persons residing in the EU without authorisation.¹⁴ This agreement regulates the return of Serbian citizens who are illegally residing in EU member countries. According to data from the CRM's office, over the period 2011-2018 some 16,243 persons returned under the readmission agreement. Around 75% of returnees are Roma, and around 25% of those stayed with friends, or had no place to stay, after their return.¹⁵ The CRM's office has accurate data only on the readmission of forced returnees; but there are no records on the number of illegal migrants who have returned voluntarily, and so the real number of returnees is probably higher. In 2008, four former CCs were adapted for the emergency admission of returnees, with a length of stay of up to 14 days. Returnees face specific integration challenges. Young returnees have often been returned without their parents, and many of them were born and educated in the foreign country, and so they face language barriers, as well as social and cultural adaptability problems. In February 2009, the government adopted the Strategy for the Reintegration of Returnees under the Readmission Agreement.¹⁶ Related action plans were adopted for 2009, 2010 and 2011.¹⁷ The CRM established the Council for the Integration of Returnees and a Team for Monitoring Implementation of the Strategy. The global aim of the strategy is 'facilitation of the sustainable integration of returnees, with respect for social and cultural differences'.¹⁸ The strategy places heavy emphasis on raising the capacities of the LSGs' administration for monitoring and addressing the needs of returnees. Since the majority of returnees originally came from less-developed, devastated local communities, financial and technical support will be provided to such communities when necessary.

The other strategies adopted which address social inclusion aspects of the vulnerable population groups at risk of homelessness concern the areas of education, employment, healthcare, anti-discrimination and the protection of minority rights.

The sources for funding the fight against HHE very often depend on the type of services available for resolving the actual HHE issues. The LSGs are responsible for the provision and funding of day-care and emergency shelter services. The funding of the emergency shelters is, in some communities, covered exclusively by the local budgets, while in other communities these services are funded by donations and external financial support. The less-developed LSGs can apply for funding from the central budget. In a number of LSGs,

¹² https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/combating-discrimination/roma-and-eu/roma-integration-eu-countries_en

¹³ <http://www.ljudskaprava.gov.rs/sh/press/saopstenja/vlada-usvojila-akcioni-plan-za-primenu-strategije-za-socijalno-ukljucivanje-roma-i>

¹⁴ [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:22007A1219\(03\)&from=EN](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:22007A1219(03)&from=EN)

¹⁵ http://www.kirs.gov.rs/wb-page.php?kat_id=44

¹⁶ RS Official Gazette 92/2009.

¹⁷ http://www.kirs.gov.rs/wb-page.php?kat_id=40&lang=1

¹⁸ RS Official Gazette 92/2009.

the emergency shelters are organised and managed by the local Red Cross organisations, while one shelter in Belgrade is run by another NGO. Since in the less-developed LSGs the funding depends more on external assistance, in a few cases shelters were closed after the donor's programme expired (Housing Centre, 2012). It is evident that the capacity of emergency shelters is inadequate, as in the winter months available emergency shelters are overcrowded.

A similar funding practice is used for the establishment and funding of safe houses for women and child victims of family violence, while the two day-care shelters for street children are run by NGOs. The mixed funding sources are also used for the provision of housing for persons with disabilities who have left institutional care and are living under the Supported Living Conditions programme. The sustainability of this programme is also challenging, as recently two safe house services were cancelled, in the City of Belgrade and in LC Vlasotince, and some of the beneficiaries were returned to institutional care units.

The construction of social housing units for refugees, IDPs, Roma and other homeless people has been funded mainly by international assistance and bank loans, along with funding from the central budget. LSGs participate by providing infrastructure, and in a later phase by offering rent subsidies. It is not possible to assess the total level of all disbursed and used funds, due to the large number of various programmes that are at different stages of implementation.

The integration of refugees and IDPs has been mainly funded by the ongoing Regional Housing Programme (RHP), which was established after a joint 2012 initiative by Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia aimed at finding sustainable housing solutions for refugees and IDPs in those four countries.¹⁹ The RHP is implemented by national structures and funded through non-refundable donor pledges; the EU is the biggest donor to the programme, with a pledged €259 million.²⁰ The total amount of grants approved by 2018 was €155 million (including €87 million for Serbia), covering 22 projects in these four countries.²¹

Significant international funds were allocated to improve the housing conditions of the Roma population during the Decade of Roma Inclusion (2005-2015) and within the EU Support for Roma Inclusion initiative. The ongoing Roma Integration 2020 project is implemented by the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), with financial support from the European Union and the Open Society Foundations (RCC, 2018b).

Aside from helping to fund the above-mentioned programmes, the European Union continuously supports the fight against HHE in Serbia through different social inclusion programmes for the most vulnerable population groups. In Table 5, only the major projects are listed; and the total disbursed funds are €61.57 million. The funds are disbursed through IPA programmes, and managed by the national government bodies.

The programmes for the integration of returnees are funded from multiple sources: national and local budgets and international assistance. Since 2015, the government has annually adopted the Regulation on Financial Assistance to LSGs for Implementation of the Defined Goals for the Management of Migration.²² The allocation of the funds for the integration of returnees comprises the greatest part of this regulation. The 2015 report by the Ecumenical Humanitarian Organisation on the implementation of public policies in the Vojvodina region (NUTS 2) shows that only 13 LSGs (29% of all LSGs in Vojvodina) had earmarked funds for the programmes for the integration of returnees (EHO, 2015). The earmarked funds were in the range €2,500 to €15,000 and were not directly correlated with the number of registered returnees.

¹⁹ <http://regionalhousingprogramme.org/>

²⁰ <https://europa.rs/eu-assistance-to-serbia/eu-and-serbia-15-years-of-partnership/support-to-refugees-and-idps/?lang=en>

²¹ *ibid.*

²² http://www.kirs.gov.rs/wb-page.php?kat_id=67

Table 5: EU financial assistance in Serbia in the HHE area, 2011-2018

Year	Programme title	EUR
2011	Support for the implementation of strategies for IDPs, refugees and returnees	2,200,000
2011	Support for de-institutionalisation and social inclusion of persons with mental disability and mental illness	5,170,000
2012	Support for the social inclusion of the most vulnerable groups, including Roma, through more diversified community-based social services	6,000,000
2012	Implementation of the Strategy for the Advancement of the Status of Roma in the Republic of Serbia	4,800,000
2013	Improvement in the living and housing conditions among the Roma population presently residing in informal settlements	11,000,000
2014	Improving the living conditions of IDPs and returnees under the readmission process in Serbia and support for sustainable return to Kosovo* and Metohija	6,400,000
2016	EU Support for Roma Inclusion – Strengthening Local Communities towards Roma Inclusion	4,000,000
2018	Social Housing and Active Inclusion	20,000,000
2011-2018	Other programmes	2,000,000
Total		61,570,000

Source: Government of Republic of Serbia (2018).

It is not possible to evaluate the funding adequacy of all programmes and projects, as they are numerous and at different stages of implementation. One cross-cutting issue however, should be highlighted: the lack of capability for the efficient and effective use of available resources. This could partially be attributed to the ban on new employment in the public sector, imposed during the period 2014-2018, which caused understaffing in the public administration, and also in social care institutions, especially in the Centres of Social Work, which have an important role in the management of HHE issues.

EU support in the HHE area has proved to be essential, providing not only funds, but also the necessary technical support and much-needed human capacities building for implementation of the programmes. The EU-funded programmes have also benefited from the inclusion of national stakeholders, who have shared the knowledge and experience from similar projects implemented in EU member countries.

Currently, coverage of the housing needs of the most vulnerable groups – people living on the street or in non-conventional dwellings – is inadequate. The reasons are twofold: on the one hand, the lack of resources in less-developed communities; on the other, low awareness of the extent of HHE at the local level.

In the last 10 years, the government has adopted five strategic documents that are relevant for HHE. The National Strategy for Social Housing (2012) was adopted in accordance with the provisions of the now abolished Law on Social Housing (2009). The action plan is an integral part of the strategy; however, the procedures for monitoring and reporting on the implementation processes were not defined. There has been no official report on the results achieved.

The HHE issues relevant for refugees and IDPs were covered successively by the National Strategies for Resolving the Issues of Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons 2011-2014 and 2015-2020. No national action plans were adopted for implementation of these

strategies. However, 133 LSGs (79% of all LSGs in Serbia) have adopted local action plans (LAPs) for the improvement of the status of refugees, IDPs and returnees. The majority of LSGs (60%) covered only the period 2011-2014, while the updated 2015-2020 LAPs were adopted by 40% of LSGs.²³

The Strategy for the Reintegration of Returnees under the Readmission Agreement (2009) was followed by three action plans that covered the 2009-2011 period; but no official reports on the results are available. The above-mentioned LAPs also covered the issues relevant to the reintegration of returnees.

The Strategy for the Social Inclusion of Roma for the Period from 2016 to 2025 (2016) and the related action plan for 2017-2018 provide a good example of an effective strategic document. The whole process of drafting and producing the documents was done in coordination with the RCC, which implements the Roma Integration 2020 project, with financial support from the EU and the Open Society Foundations. The strategy defined the four levels for monitoring of the progress, each level involving different stakeholders. The RCC also prepared the template for the annual reporting on action plans, and participates in meetings at which reports are presented. The 2017 Progress Report was prepared by the government according to the regionally adopted standards.²⁴ The report was presented to the National Assembly on 26 June 2018 by the National Platform on Roma Integration in Serbia.²⁵ After the review of the report, some of the recommendations for further improvement were:

- Data on budget planning and actual spending, as well as gender-disaggregated data on the Roma beneficiaries, should be provided. Impact assessment (statistical) data on Roma are provided only regarding education, and it is difficult to assess properly the successes of other integration policies and their implementation.
- The establishment is highly recommended of a single comprehensive system for collecting and processing annual data (both administrative and statistical) on the situation of Roma, disaggregated by sex, with the proper engagement of the Republic Statistical Office and the Ministry of Finance, to ensure that impact assessment and budgetary data are properly reported.
- After the first two years of the project's implementation, a feasibility study should be conducted by a specialised government body (agency), to be responsible for managing the strategy.

The main limitation of all strategies is the insufficient situational analysis and lack of baseline data. For these reasons, the setting of targets and expected results in the action plans has usually been presented in a rather general form, without the selection of proper indicators to monitor implementation and evaluate the results.

The housing indicators in Serbia are derived from the EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC), which has been implemented and published by the RSO since 2012.²⁶ The data cover the following areas: tenure status, housing quality and housing affordability, using the following indicators: housing cost overburden, overcrowding, severe housing deprivation, arrears on mortgage or rent payments.

²³ http://www.kirs.gov.rs/wb-page.php?kat_id=17&lang=1

²⁴ <https://www.rcc.int/romaintegration2020/docs/86/progress-report-serbia-for-2017>

²⁵ <https://www.rcc.int/romaintegration2020/docs/80/policy-brief-from-the-third-national-platform-on-roma-integration-in-serbia-belgrade-2018>

²⁶ https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Housing_statistics#Type_of_dwelling

3 Analysis of the current patterns of service provision and challenges in implementing Serbia's responses to homelessness and housing exclusion

HHE policies in Serbia were for a long time dominantly focused on resolving the housing needs of refugees and IDPs. The fact that the majority of Serbian residents live in their own house/flat – 82.4% in 2016 – probably contributed to the slow development of social housing policies, and the Law on Social Housing was adopted 10 years ago.²⁷ Another reason for the slow response to HHE is inadequate data collection in this area. A third, equally important, reason is the very strict division of roles among the relevant ministries. Since 2016, after the adoption of the Law on Housing and Maintenance of Buildings the Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure (MoCTI) became the official authority for implementation of the social housing policy, and it is also responsible for implementing the Strategy for the Social Inclusion of Roma, 2016-2025. The role of the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veterans and Social Policy is not specified, and this ministry is less present in this area.

The Social Protection Law does not recognise homeless people as an explicit vulnerable group, and only delegates duties to LSGs to provide emergency shelter services for the vulnerable population. A distinction between the current patterns of housing support could be made according to the administrative status of the provider, namely the LSG administration and local NGOs and government bodies. The provision of day-care services and emergency shelters is under the jurisdiction of the local self-governments and is not overseen by the higher authorities. On the other hand, social housing programmes are regulated by a number of legal acts, and management of these programmes is usually performed by government institutions with the participation of the local administration.

3.1 LSG administration and NGO sector support

The LSG administration and the NGO sector support mainly the provision of temporary services. These services are usually free of charge for end users. The provision of these services is not officially regulated, and there are no standards for the delivery of services. The CSWs play an important supporting role, by securing the social protection of beneficiaries of the services, although this task is not specified by law. Currently, the following services are available:

- Emergency shelters (*Prihvatilista*). This is the only service specifically targeting primary homeless people. It is a first-stage accommodation service which offers 24-hour accommodation (bed, food and healthcare), with a maximum duration of stay of six months. The services are free of charge and, in some shelters, beneficiaries receive a weekly pocket-money allowance. The emergency shelter service is not a housing-focused service, as it does not prepare users for independent living. These shelters also accommodate elderly people who live alone and cannot take care of themselves. In some instances, beneficiaries may be referred elsewhere, if there is a better solution: older persons may be referred to state homes for the elderly; while persons with mental illness may be referred to institutions for the care of persons with mental and physical disabilities. Presently, these services are available in only 12 LSGs in Serbia. Some of them are regional shelters, which accept beneficiaries from different LSGs (see Table 6). The capacities of the existing shelters vary from 6 to 104 places; in total, there are 312 places. Some shelters, like the one in the City of Belgrade, employ a social worker, a psychologist, a defectology specialist, and healthcare workers. The shelters are mainly modestly furnished, with five or more beds in one room and little space for privacy; in the winter additional beds are placed in the halls. These services are sometimes shunned: in Belgrade, some homeless people interviewed

²⁷ https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Housing_statistics#Tenure_status

stated that they preferred to live on the street, rather than to share a place with unknown people.²⁸ According to the same media report on homelessness, the coordinator of the emergency shelter in Belgrade claimed that the majority of users were people with mental illness, who are referred to public institutions for people with mental disabilities, whenever possible.

- Safe houses for women and child victims of family violence. This is a relatively new service, which became available as the number of reported cases increased and awareness was raised through media coverage. Currently, there are safe houses for women and child victims of family violence in 13 LSGs.²⁹
- Day-care services for street children: there are no precise data on the number of LSGs which provide these services. The services are available in the three largest cities: Belgrade, Novi Sad and Niš.
- The 'Supported Living' service provides housing for persons with disabilities who were previously accommodated in institutional care. This service aims at a permanent solution; however, it is very much dependent on the funding available. There are no data either on the number of these units or on the number of beneficiaries. A good example of a sustainable programme comes from the City of Novi Sad. After the implementation of a pilot programme from 2005 to 2008, which supported a three-member family with disabilities to live together, the programme has grown into a permanent project with 39 adults (nine of whom had previously resided in institutions) housed in 12 apartments across the city.³⁰ The project is funded by the City of Novi Sad, and beneficiaries also contribute, making up around 10% of the overall project funding. Support has also been provided by the Open Society Foundations, which supported the first eight people moving in from institutional care.

Table 6: List of LSGs with shelters for accommodation of homeless (2019)

Local self-governments	Population size	Capacity of accommodation		'Safe house' for women and children
		Adults	Children 7-18 years	
City of Belgrade	1,687,132	104	48	Yes
City of Novi Sad	356,126	60	0	Yes
City of Niš	256,826	30	12	Yes
Subotica (open during winter)	137,753	30	0	
Zrenjanin	117,736	10	0	Yes
Vranje	80,961	30	0	Yes
Kragujevac	177,977	6	0	Yes
Smederevo	104,125	15	0	Yes
Vršac, Alibunar, Bela Crkva, Plandište (4 LCs)	95,565	15	0	
Kikinda	55,318	6	0	
Bačka Palanka	52,792	6	0	
Total population of LSGs	3,122,311	312	60	
Serbia total population	7,020,858			

Source: RSO (2018); Data on shelters' capacities collected online from the available websites of the LSGs; done by the authors.

²⁸ Weekly magazine *Vreme*, <https://www.vreme.com/cms/view.php?id=693213>

²⁹ <https://www.zeneprotivnasilja.net/en/>

³⁰ <https://zeroproject.org/practice/practice/pra191186srb-factsheet/?fbclid=IwAR1DFvXgm43aY5IGV4DF3kLAFdHFKCjKA3mQDGHb1GJdg91InVkrHF9AP0>

3.2 Services mainly provided through social housing programmes

The second type of support relates to services mainly provided through social housing programmes. These programmes are usually implemented with mixed partnership of local and government institutions.

The social housing support includes both the rental and the sale of housing units under non-profit conditions: non-profit prices, insurance of housing loans, long-term loans with low interest rates and refund of the value added tax. The Law on Housing and Maintenance of Buildings defines a rather large number of eligible beneficiaries for housing support. There are eight different categories: (1) homeless persons; (2) temporary homeless, whose housing units were destroyed by a natural disaster; (3) victims of family violence, with no financial means to secure adequate accommodation; (4) beneficiaries of financial social assistance support, who do not own a flat or a house; (5) veterans with disabilities of the first category, or veteran beneficiaries of the social protection assistance and civilian casualties of war; (6) persons with disability who do not own a flat or a house, or who do not have an adequate one; (7) persons who do not own a flat or a house, or do not have an adequate one and do not have sufficient means to improve their housing conditions; and (8) people in occupations for which there is a shortage of skilled workers, and which are of special interest to the local or central administration.

The following six modalities of housing support are defined: (1) renting (either non-profit rent of public property for a maximum period of five years – though the contract can be renewed – or subsidised rent); (2) purchase of property and acquiring ownership; (3) transfer of ownership of an apartment or a family house; (4) support for the improvement of housing conditions; (5) support for the legalisation of a housing unit; and (6) temporary accommodation (*zbrinjavanje*). Those eligible include: homeless people; persons whose houses have been destroyed (natural disaster); persons living in houses with poor conditions; victims of family violence. The eligibility conditions for the first five modalities include means testing, ranging from 0.5 of the average wage (the LSG average) to 1.5 of the average wage (for modality number 2). The law defines the procedures for housing support only for the first five modalities, while there are no specifications regarding the delivery of services for temporary accommodation. The responsible parties for the first five modalities are non-profit housing organisations (or a housing department of the LSG administration) who are in charge of the construction or procurement of the housing units, and of the management of the housing support. The 'housing commission' appointed by the LSG is responsible for tendering (tenders are published in the local media or on the LSG's web page) and for the selection of beneficiaries. Funding can be provided from the national budget (loans from international financial institutions, EU funds, donations and other sources) and from the local budgets, in which case a commercial bank loan may also be used.

There are no officially published data on the existing stock of social housing units or on the number of beneficiaries. This shortcoming was underlined in the Third National Report on Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction: 'There is no single record of social housing beneficiaries, which impedes keeping track of housing needs in the longer term, especially in view of the frequent court procedures initiated by local self-governments, who are the owners of dwellings, against the tenants due to the outstanding debts for rents' (Government of the Republic of Serbia, 2018). Up to March 2018, through the regional housing programme Social Housing in a Protective Environment for housing support for refugees and IDPs, a total of 1,282 housing units had been constructed in 44 LSGs, accommodating 3,421 persons.³¹ The records of programmes implemented at the local level can be found only on LSG websites. One example of a local programme is the 2019 tender of the City of Belgrade (January 2019), published on the city's website (see Box 1).

³¹ <http://regionalhousingprogramme.org/serbia/>

Box 1: City of Belgrade - Tender for procurement and renting, published on 16 January 2019

140 apartments:

1. For sale: 80 apartments at €450/m²; Eligible: war veterans, civilian casualties of war and their family members.
 2. For rent: 60 apartments; calculated rent: €0.73/m²; Eligible: Belgrade residents who do not own a housing unit and whose household income is not above 1.2 times the average wage reported for the City of Belgrade (€612 for a single-person household).
- 2.1 Distribution of the apartments for rent, by category of eligible applicants:
- Persons with disabilities – five apartments
 - Households with a child with mental or physical disorders – five apartments
 - Beneficiaries of financial social assistance (FSA), who are unable to work and whose household members are not employed - five apartments; the rent is decreased by 50%
 - Other categories eligible under the general conditions of the tender – 45 apartments.

Source: <http://www.beograd.rs/lat/gradski-oglas-i-konkursi-i-tenderi/1756817-konkurs-za-resavanje-stambenih-potreba-kupovinom-i-davanjem-stanova-u-zakup-na-lokaciji-kamendin-2/>

Only five apartments were designated for financial social assistance (FSA) beneficiaries (8.3% of all apartments designated for renting). It is questionable if the rent is affordable enough for eligible FSA beneficiaries (FSA benefit for a single-person household in 2019 is €70/per month). It is also questionable if the tendering procedure is accessible to the most vulnerable population, as many of them have low education attainment and low computer literacy. The same questions were raised in the Strategy for the Social Inclusion of Roma for the Period 2016-2025. This document estimates that only 5% of Roma live in public apartments. The main reason is that the eligibility criteria are set in a way that is inaccessible to poor Roma families.

The current practice shows that the role of social housing in the provision of affordable non-profit housing solutions has low effectiveness, due to the numerous regulation gaps. Documented evidence shows that, on a number of occasions, beneficiaries lost their right to rent social housing apartments due to their inability to cover high rental costs, even when the construction of the apartments was financed by donations (PRAXIS, 2013). The cost burden was additionally increased after the adoption of the Law on Amendments to the Law on Property Tax (July 2014), which prescribed that property taxes have to be paid by the tenants of social apartments, even though the apartments are public property.³² The low sensitivity to the actual state of affairs was also in evidence in the realisation of housing support programmes. Some programmes for the Roma population could not be implemented due to the criteria set for proving ownership of a dwelling or for possession of a building permit. Such was the situation in the call for the project Permanent Resolutions for Housing and Improvement of Physical Infrastructure in Roma Settlements (IPA 2013), when an extremely small number of households managed to meet the criteria set in relation to financial status and regulated ownership (Government of the Republic of Serbia, 2018).

³² In May 2015, YUCOM – Lawyers’ Committee for Human Rights – filed an initiative to assess the constitutionality of the aforementioned provisions of the Law on Property Tax, but the Constitutional Court has not ruled on this matter yet.
https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CCPR/Shared%20Documents/SRB/INT_CCPR_NGS_SRB_34257_E.pdf

Evaluation of the efficiency and effectiveness of HHE-related policies cannot be performed without proper data on the extent of HHE in Serbia and without data on the results achieved. It is evident that temporary housing services provided by the LSGs are scarce and heavily dependent on the decision-making policies of local administrations. The authors of a paper entitled 'Homelessness and Housing Exclusion in Serbia' concluded that 'little effort is being directed to empowerment of shelter users and to ensuring successful exits from homelessness. Together with insufficient prevention efforts such omissions cause a great number of returns to homelessness' (Petrović and Timotijević, 2013). Even though the government has adopted a number of strategies and legal acts for improvement of the status of the most vulnerable groups, there are still wide gaps in implementation of the proposed measures.

One of the positive changes that have enabled a number of homeless people to gain access to social protection services was introduced after the proposal from the Ombudsperson's office in 2011. The amendments to the Law on Residence allowed persons without a permanent place of residence to acquire an ID card. This was previously impossible, and created enormous difficulties for homeless people in accessing their entitlements (health and social care, etc.) as citizens of Serbia. The amendments provide that in such cases the residence can be registered as the address of the local CSW. In 2012, a further improvement in this area was introduced with the Law on Amendments to the Law on Non-Contentious Procedure, which allowed persons at risk of statelessness to be registered in a birth registry and to obtain the necessary certificates, in a simplified procedure.³³ This regulation has benefited a number of IDP Roma who left their previous place of residence without any identification documents.

Preventive services are the least developed, since there is no designated official body responsible for their implementation. Even though Roma, IDPs and returnees are among the priority groups for implementation of the national Employment Action Plans, their coverage has been low. A UNDP paper points out that only 25% of interviewed returnees had contacted their local CSW for assistance, while in 2015 only 6% of returnees of working age were registered with the National Employment Service – and then generally without any record of their education (as many of them had been educated abroad) (UNDP, 2017). The well-documented problems of beneficiaries of social housing in terms of the rent arrears they have accumulated also point to the inadequate inclusion of these groups in the labour market.

The main systemic deficiencies that limit effective ways out of homelessness relate to the absence of an integrated approach to the social inclusion of vulnerable people. Existing welfare policies are implemented separately, without any systematic coordination between relevant institutions. Since HHE problems in Serbia affect a number of rather diverse population groups, of particular concern is the low sensitivity to social and cultural characteristics of these groups. Low visibility of some of the vulnerable groups (people living in institutional care units) also affects their limited inclusion in housing programmes.

A good example of innovative ways of tackling HHE is offered by the programme We Are Here Together, funded by the EU. The establishment of the Geographic Information System in 2016, developed to map the situation in substandard Roma settlements in Serbia, will for the first time provide an active, up-to-date information system, available to all LSGs, which will enable the creation of evidence-based local policies.

³³ RS Official Gazette 85/2012.

3.3 Weakness and priorities for improvement of HHE policies

The main weaknesses in responses to HHE are:

1. The most vulnerable people, the primary homeless, are the least protected under the current welfare policies. Currently, there are only services for temporary accommodation, which do not provide permanent solutions to their homelessness. By reviewing the media coverage on the stories of homeless people, it appears that prevention measures have failed to reach them in the critical moments of their lives.
2. The current social housing policy does not properly cover the housing needs of all vulnerable population groups. It is mainly oriented towards the creation of a not-for-profit housing market, to facilitate the procurement of housing units under more favourable conditions. This policy benefits mainly middle-income households.
3. Inadequate transparency and accountability for the employment of earmarked funds to fight HHE are also among the reasons for the ineffectiveness of implemented programmes.

The priorities for improvement are:

1. Establishment of a central information system that can feed in data from LSGs on all categories of homeless people.
2. Development of analytical programmes that will respond to the requirements of all stakeholders.
3. Inclusion of HHE issues in the new Social Protection Law and in the new Social Protection Strategy. Special consideration should be given to preventive measures that tackle HHE.
4. In preparing legal acts and regulations, it is necessary to be responsive to the needs and socio-economic situations of the most vulnerable population, and to include provisions that will enable them to have equal access to the available housing services. This requires the participation and cooperation of all relevant ministries, local officials, CSWs and civil sector representatives.
5. Raising the capacities of Roma NGOs to reach the most vulnerable Roma households and to support their inclusion in social housing programmes. The ongoing Roma Health Mediators programme can serve as a model for the introduction of mediators to combat HHE among Roma.

References

- Coalition prEUgovor, 2017, 'Issues related to returnees from the readmission agreement', www.preugovor.org
- Commissioner for Refugees and Migration (CRM), 2018, Situation and Needs of Internally Displaced Persons, http://www.kirs.gov.rs/wb-page.php?kat_id=70
- CRM, 2018 Statistics, Collective centres for refugees and IDPs, http://www.kirs.gov.rs/wb-page.php?kat_id=75
- Ecumenical Humanitarian Organisation (EHO), 2015, *Report on the Implementation of Public Policies with Respect to Returnees under the Readmission Agreement in Vojvodina*, Novi Sad, <http://www.ehons.org/en/latest-news/553-sprovođenje-javnih-politika-prema-povratnicima>
- European Commission, 2011, An EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020, COM (2011) 173/4
- Eurostat, Housing statistics, https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Housing_statistics#Tenure_status
- Government of the Republic of Serbia, 2018, *The Third National Report on Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction*, Belgrade
- Housing Centre - Housing development centre for socially vulnerable groups, 2012, 'Without a house, without a home – Results of the research on homelessness in Serbia', Belgrade
- Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), 2017, 'Substandard Roma Settlements in Serbia: An overview from Geographic Information System for 2016', Belgrade, <https://www.osce.org/mission-to-serbia/309396>
- Petrović, M. and Timotijević, M., 2013 'Homelessness and Housing Exclusion in Serbia', *European Journal of Homelessness*, Volume 7, No. 2, December 2013, pp. 267-286
- PRAXIS, 2013, *Contribution to Social Inclusion and Combating Discrimination against the Marginalised Population of Serbia*, PRAXIS, Belgrade, <https://www.praxis.org.rs/index.php/sr/reports-documents/praxis-reports?start=24>
- Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), 2018a, 'National platform on Roma integration in Serbia, Policy recommendation'
- Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), 2018b, 'Targeting Roma in Housing Policies of the Western Balkans: A legal overview', Belgrade, <https://www.rcc.int/romaintegration2020/docs/89/report-targeting-roma-in-housing-policies-of-the-western-balkans--a-legal-overview>
- Republic Statistical Office (RSO), 2014a, *Homeless People*, Census 2011, <http://pod2.stat.gov.rs/ObjavljenePublikacije/Popis2011/Beskucnici.pdf>
- Republic Statistical Office (RSO), 2014b, *Roma Population in Serbia*, Census 2011
- Republic Statistical Office (RSO), 2018, *Population Estimate 2017*
- UNHCR, 2014, 'Assessment of needs of IDP Roma population in Serbia', http://www.unhcr.rs/media/UNHCR_Brosura_RAE_IRL_Srpski.pdf
- UNDP, 2017, 'Analytical paper on Roma returnees', <http://www.rs.undp.org/content/serbia/en/home/library/poverty/analytical-paper-on-roma-returnees.html>
- UNDP, 2018, 'Roma at a glance', Regional Roma Survey 2017: Serbia fact sheet, <http://www.eurasia.undp.org/content/rbec/en/home/library/roma/regional-roma-survey-2017-country-fact-sheets.html>

ANNEX**Table A1: ETHOS Light categories defined as homeless in Serbia**

Operational category		Living situation		Definition	Defined as homeless in Serbia
1	People living rough	1	Public space/ external space	Living in the streets or public spaces without a shelter that can be defined as living quarters	Yes
2	People in emergency accommodation	2	Overnight shelters	People with no place of usual residence who move frequently between various types of accommodation	Yes
3	People living in accommodation for the homeless	3	Homeless hostels	Where the period of stay is time limited and no long-term housing is provided	Yes
		4	Temporary accommodation		Yes
		5	Transitional supported accommodation		Yes
		6	Women's shelter or refuge accommodation		Yes
4	People living in institutions	7	Healthcare institutions	Stay longer than needed due to lack of housing	No
		8	Penal institutions	No housing available prior to release	No
5	People living in non-conventional dwellings due to lack of housing	9	Mobile homes	Where the accommodation is used due to a lack of housing and is not the person's usual place of residence	Yes
		10	Non-conventional building		Yes
		11	Temporary structures		Yes
6	Homeless people living temporarily in conventional housing with family and friends (due to lack of housing)	12	Conventional housing, but not the person's usual place of residence	Where the accommodation is used due to a lack of housing and is not the person's usual place of residence	Yes

Table A2: Latest available data on the number of homeless in Serbia

Operational category		Living situation		Most recent number	Period covered	Source
1	People living rough	1	Public space / external space	445 people	September 2011	Census 2011, RSO (2014a)
2	People in emergency accommodation	2	Overnight shelters	No data	No data	
3	People living in accommodation for the homeless	3	Homeless hostels	No data	2018, Statistics on refuges and IDPs	CRM, 2018 Statistics, Collective centres for refuges and IDPs, http://www.kirs.gov.rs/wb-page.php?kat_id=75
		4	Temporary accommodation	No data		
		5	Transitional supported accommodation	No data		
		6	Women's shelter or refuge accommodation	702		
4	People living in institutions	7	Healthcare institutions	No data		
		8	Penal institutions	No data		
5	People living in non-conventional dwellings due to lack of housing	9	Mobile homes	No data	Census, 2011	Census 2011, RSO (2014a)
		10	Non-conventional building	5.10 & 5.11: 17,842 people		
		11	Temporary structures			
6	Homeless people living temporarily in conventional housing with family and friends (due to lack of housing)	12	Conventional housing, but not the person's usual place of residence	8,750 people	Census 2011, Refuges (Living with relatives)	RSO, 2015, Two decades of refugees in Serbia, http://publikacije.stat.gov.rs/G2015/Pdf/G20154004.pdf

