



**Republika e Kosovës**  
**Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo**  
*Qeveria - Vlada - Government*

*Zyra e Kryeministrit / Kancelarija Premijera / Office of the Prime Minister*  
*Zyra për Qeverisje të Mirë / Kancelarja za Dobro Upravljanje / Office of Good Governance*

**STRATEGY FOR INCLUSION OF ROMA AND  
ASHKALI COMMUNITIES IN THE KOSOVO  
SOCIETY 2017-2021**

Pristina, 19 November 2016

# Contents

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>LIST OF ACRONYMS .....</b>   | <b>4</b>  |
| <b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....</b>  | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>1. INTRODUCTION.....</b>   | <b>10</b> |
| <b>2. METHODOLOGY .....</b>   | <b>12</b> |
| <b>3. BACKGROUND.....</b>   | <b>14</b> |
| 3.1. LEGISLATION.....   | 15        |
| 3.2. POLICIES .....   | 16        |
| 3.3. MECHANISMS FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE COMMUNITIES IN KOSOVO ..... | 16        |
| 3.4. EDUCATION .....  | 17        |
| 3.5. EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL WELFARE .....                              | 20        |
| 3.5.1. <i>Employment</i> .....  | 20        |
| 3.5.2. <i>Social welfare</i> .....                                    | 21        |
| 3.6. HEALTH .....   | 25        |
| 3.7. HOUSING .....  | 28        |
| 3.8. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES.....  | 30        |
| 3.8.1. <i>Gender equality</i> .....                                   | 30        |
| 3.8.2. <i>Security</i> .....  | 30        |
| 3.8.3. <i>Registration</i> .....                                      | 30        |
| <b>4. STRATEGY VISION, MISSION AND PRINCIPLES.....</b>                | <b>32</b> |
| <b>5. ALTERNATIVES TAKEN IN CONSIDERATION .....</b>                   | <b>33</b> |
| <b>6. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES.....</b>                                   | <b>35</b> |
| 6.1. EDUCATION .....  | 38        |
| 6.2. EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL WELFARE .....                              | 44        |
| 6.3. HEALTH .....   | 51        |
| 6.4. HOUSING .....  | 55        |
| <b>7. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY.....</b>                         | <b>60</b> |
| 7.1. IMPLEMENTATION MECHANISMS .....                                  | 60        |
| 7.2. MONITORING AND EVALUATION.....                                   | 61        |
| <b>8. THE BUDGET .....</b>  | <b>63</b> |
| <b>ANNEX: PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK.....</b>                   | <b>65</b> |

## **Acknowledgements**

Drafting of this Strategy is a joint effort of the Office of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Kosovo/Office for Good Governance and all related ministries in the Government of the Republic of Kosovo, representatives of communities in the Assembly of the Republic of Kosovo, representatives of the municipal institutions, and representatives of civil society working with communities in Kosovo.

Office for Good Governance within the Prime-Minister's Office would like to express its appreciation to the European Union funded project "Kosovo Education and Employment Network – KEEN", implemented by the Kosova Education Centre (KEC), for their support in drafting this document; to the member organizations of the "Platforma" network, for their meaningful contributions to the drafting process; to the members of working groups, responsible officers in the line ministries, as well as to the stakeholders who committed their time and energy to the drafting of the Strategy.

The Government of the Republic of Kosovo is very grateful for tremendous and continuous support from all international development partners, representatives of the European Union Office in Kosovo, Council of Europe, OSCE, UNICEF, Norwegian Embassy, Swiss Embassy, the British Council, and humanitarian organizations Terre des Hommes and World Vision.

## List of acronyms

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| AI       | Administrative Instruction                              |
| ALMM     | Active Labour Market Measures                           |
| AR       | Acute respiratory                                       |
| ARI      | Acute Respiratory Infections                            |
| CSAT     | Community Safety Action Teams                           |
| CSO      | Civil Society Organizations                             |
| EMIS     | Education Management Information System                 |
| EU       | European Union  |
| HEI      | Higher education Institutions                           |
| IMSC     | Inter-Ministerial Steering Committee                    |
| KLA      | Kosovo Liberation Army                                  |
| KP       | Kosovo Police   |
| KSA      | Kosovo Statistics Agency                                |
| LFS      | Labour Force Survey                                     |
| LPSC     | Local Public Safety Committees                          |
| MAC      | Municipal Action Committees                             |
| MCCS     | Municipal Council for Community Safety                  |
| MCR      | Ministry for Communities and Return                     |
| MCRO     | Municipal Community and Return Offices                  |
| MED      | Municipal Education Department                          |
| MESP     | Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning            |
| MEST     | Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology          |
| MH       | Ministry of Health                                      |
| MIA      | Ministry of Internal Affairs                            |
| MIA/DRRP | MIA/Department for Reintegration of Repatriated Persons |
| MICS     | Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey                       |
| MLGA     | Ministry of Local Government Administration             |
| MLSW     | Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare                   |
| NGO      | Non-Governmental Organizations                          |
| OCA      | Office for Community Affairs                            |
| OGG      | Office for Good Governance                              |
| OPM      | Office of Prime-Minister                                |
| ORT      | Oral Rehydration Treatment                              |
| PLSS     | Primary and Lower Secondary School                      |
| SAP      | Strategy and Action Plan                                |
| SWC      | Social Work Centres                                     |
| UNDP     | United Nations Development Programme                    |
| UNFPA    | United Nations Population Fund                          |
| UNICEF   | Children's Rights and Emergency Relief Organization     |
| USS      | Upper Secondary School                                  |

## Executive summary

The Strategy for inclusion of Roma and Ashkali communities presents a continuation of the policies of the Government of the Republic of Kosovo that serve for strengthening the multi-ethnic and multi-cultural character of the Kosovo society. During the drafting process of this Strategy authors made use of lessons learnt from the implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan for Integration of Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities 2009-2015,<sup>1,2</sup> as well as the EU Framework on National Strategies for Integration of Roma until 2020.<sup>3</sup> The Framework identifies four priority fields that need to be addressed by the national strategies: education, employment and social welfare, health, and housing. Below we present a brief outline of the challenges according to these fields:

**Education:** Despite the progress achieved in increasing participation in education of members of the Roma and Ashkali communities, they remain significantly below the Kosovo average. More so, children of Roma and Ashkali communities continue to underperform in schools, with low access to pre-school education seen as one of the main causes for this situation. While there has been an increase of awareness on the importance of schooling among the members of the Roma and Ashkali communities, there is still however present a lack of awareness among the majority community on the importance of schooling for marginalized groups in the Kosovo society.

**Employment and social welfare:** The employment situation of the Roma and Ashkali communities is grave, in particular when compared to employment levels of our communities in Kosovo; more so members of Roma and Ashkali communities are commonly hired to perform temporary sweated jobs that do not require higher skills and are not well paid. Adding to this the low level of inclusion of these communities in the social welfare schemes and the insufficient utilization of social services that one understands the immensity of the challenge to alleviate poverty among these communities.

**Health:** With a limited approach to preventive and curative health services, the Roma and Ashkali communities continue to suffer from a dire health situation. Among the key obstacles to adequate access to health services are the following: poverty and inability to pay for medical treatment and purchase of medication, transport, and lack of identification documents. Roma and Ashkali communities suffer from a high prevalence of inadequate and insufficient nutrition, which results in poor health and low life expectancy. The morbidity level is a source of grave concern, in particular the high rate of chronic and transferrable diseases, such as diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular diseases and bone disorders.

**Housing:** A significant challenge for the solution of the problem of housing is the registration of the housing needs of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, whose number is assessed at around 6000. There is an idea to address this problem by putting into function the database on housing needs of the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning. Also, a more active and higher level of inclusion on the part of the Roma and Ashkali communities' members in dealing with the housing problem, starting from better articulation of their housing problems to regulating their property

---

<sup>1</sup> The Strategy for Integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in the Republic of Kosovo 2009-2015, December 2008.

[http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/Strategjia\\_per\\_integrimin\\_e\\_komuniteteve\\_RAE\\_2009-2015\\_shq.pdf](http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/Strategjia_per_integrimin_e_komuniteteve_RAE_2009-2015_shq.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Action Plan for the implementation of the Strategy of the Republic of Kosovo for Integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities, 2009-2015. [http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/Plani\\_i\\_Vepimit\\_per\\_zbatimin\\_e\\_Strategjise\\_per\\_integrimin\\_e\\_Komunitetit\\_RAE\\_2009-2015.pdf](http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/Plani_i_Vepimit_per_zbatimin_e_Strategjise_per_integrimin_e_Komunitetit_RAE_2009-2015.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> EU Framework on National Strategies for Integration of Roma until 2020, Brussels, 05.04.2011, COM (2011) 173. [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/policies/discrimination/docs/com\\_2011\\_173\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/policies/discrimination/docs/com_2011_173_en.pdf)

paperwork. The need for providing housing continues to exceed the budget available and, therefore, it is necessary to establish priorities for cases of providing housing assistance.

For each of the four strategic fields, one strategic objective has been set. Each strategic objective has been broken down to expected outcomes, which were further translated into measures and activities. The table below gives an outline of the strategic objectives and expected outcomes organized by intervention fields

| Fields                               | Strategic objectives  | Activities  | Expected outcomes   |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|---|
| <b>Education</b>                     | Increase inclusion and provide opportunities for personal development, training and education for members of the Roma and Ashkali communities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incentivizing attendance in pre-school education.</li> <li>• Drafting action plans for the prevention of drop-outs and non-enrollment in all municipalities.</li> <li>• Stimulating measures to facilitate the enrolment of Roma and Ashkali children in secondary and higher levels of education.</li> <li>• Drafting individualized education plans for repatriated learners.</li> <li>• Development of specific positive measures and preparatory programs for enrolment and retention of students of Roma and Ashkali communities in HEI.</li> <li>• Support to adult education programs</li> <li>• Defining gender sensitive indicators for EMIS for Roma and Ashkali community members.</li> <li>• Elimination of segregation and discrimination against Roma and Ashkali community children.</li> <li>• Support to community-based learning centers</li> <li>• Provision of supplemental learning for learners facing difficulties in learning.</li> <li>• Promotion of Roma language learning</li> <li>• Development of awareness raising programs for parents regarding early childhood.</li> <li>• Organizing awareness raising activities of Roma and Ashkali communities regarding the importance of timely enrollment and school attendance, particularly focusing on girls.</li> <li>• Awareness raising of general population regarding the education of Roma and Ashkali communities.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved participation in education of the members of the Roma and Ashkali communities.</li> <li>• Improved performance of students of the Roma and Ashkali communities.</li> <li>• Increased awareness among stakeholders to support education of the members of Roma and Ashkali communities.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Employment and social welfare</b> | Improve the economic and social situation of the Roma and Ashkali communities   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research, set gender sensitive indicators and report on the situation of the labour market for members of the Roma and Ashkali communities and their benefits from the services/measures provided by MLSW.</li> <li>• Improvement of representation of the Roma and Ashkali communities in employment in public institution and enterprises.</li> <li>• Research and implement measures of affirmative action for employment of Roma and Ashkali communities.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved level of employment for members of the Roma and Ashkali communities.</li> <li>• Improved participation of the families of Roma and Ashkali communities in the social welfare schemes and better access to social services.</li> </ul>   |

|                |  |  |   |
|----------------|--|--|---|
|                |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment of needs and of effectiveness of employment services and LAMM.</li> <li>• Design / modification of (additional) employment services and LAMM, including vocational training, in line with the needs of the Roma and Ashkali communities.</li> <li>• Organization of information campaigns for LAMM employment services, including vocational training.</li> <li>• Promotion of labour market success stories among Roma and Ashkali communities.</li> <li>• Assessment of additional support for recipients of social assistance.</li> <li>• Identification of children and persons with special needs.</li> <li>• Information campaign on welfare schemes and social services.</li> <li>• Analysis of the quality of social services and identification of new social services.</li> <li>• Building capacity of municipal officers for improvement of social services.</li> </ul> |   |
| <b>Health</b>  | Improve the health situation and quality of life among the members of the Roma and Ashkali communities               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of activities for breast cancer screening.</li> <li>• Implementation of home visitations for mothers and children and other vulnerable groups.</li> <li>• Vulnerable population outreach activities.</li> <li>• Institutional measures that improve access to health services.</li> <li>• Continuous monitoring of access to healthcare services.</li> <li>• Immunization campaigns.</li> <li>• Distribution of information materials on family planning and reproductive health.</li> <li>• Education on importance of hygiene and sanitary conditions.</li> <li>• Enhancing preventive capacity of the primary healthcare staff.</li> <li>• Quarterly control of the lead level in community residential areas.</li> <li>• Supply with family size waste containers.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved access to health services for the members of Roma and Ashkali communities.</li> <li>• Improved health routines and practices among members of the Roma and Ashkali communities.</li> <li>• A healthy environment is provided for the population of Roma and Ashkali communities.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Housing</b> | Provide adequate and sustainable housing for the Roma and Ashkali communities in line with the effective legislation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclusion of members of Roma and Ashkali communities in the database for financing of special housing programmes.</li> <li>• Setting of priorities for families in need for inclusion in the social housing programme.</li> <li>• Organisation of the awareness raising campaign for inclusion in the housing initiatives.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adequate housing and social housing needs identified for the members of the community.</li> <li>• There is increased awareness among the members of the Roma and Ashkali communities regarding their active</li> </ul>   |

|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support Roma and Ashkali communities for supply with adequate property paperwork or some other title right over building land.</li> <li>• Design priority projects for renovation, reconstruction or building houses on own property.</li> <li>• Implementation of programmes for treating informal settlements.</li> <li>• Identification of properties for social housing.</li> <li>• Drafting priority projects for social housing.</li> </ul> | <p>participation in solving their housing problems.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is significant progress towards settling the housing issue for the members of the Roma and Ashkali communities.</li> </ul> |
|--|--|---|

## 1. Introduction

In December 2008, the Government of the Republic of Kosovo approved the Strategy on Integration of Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian Communities in the Republic of Kosovo 2009-2015<sup>4</sup>, as well as the Action Plan for its implementation<sup>5</sup>, in which priority intervention fields were identified that would serve for the integration of the three communities.<sup>6</sup> Each of the identified fields contained measures for achieving the targeted change and the set goals and specific objectives. However, the implementation of this strategic plan lagged behind for various reasons, including insufficient funding, lack of human resources to monitor progress of implementation, inadequate coordination of efforts between the ministries and authorities at the central and local level, inadequate utilization of expertise of non-governmental organizations, and so on.

Office for Good Governance has published annual progress reports in regards to the implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan. Thus, the report of 2013 provides information on the achievement of 280 out of 388 indicators of the Strategy, or 72%<sup>7</sup>. This does not mean that 280 targets set with indicators have been achieved, but that there was some information for achievements; whilst for 108 targets (28%) there was no information. The framework of priorities for 2014-2015 was attached to this report. Meanwhile, the progress report of 2014 is focused on the framework of priorities, where the number of indicators is reduced from 288 to 228, while it was reported the progress of 179 or 79% of the total number indicators<sup>8</sup>. Both reports present incomplete data for budget expenditures, but even from this data it can be concluded that the expenses were significantly below the planned budget, which shows problems in implementing the Strategy and Action Plan. Implementation issues have been regularly highlighted in the Progress Reports by the European Union<sup>9</sup>, as well as in the monitoring report on implementation of the Framework Convention on National Minorities.

Having in mind that the Action Plan was due at the end of 2015, the Inter-institutional Steering Committee,<sup>10</sup> established by the Government of the Republic of Kosovo to coordinate activities for the Strategy implementation, declared in 2014 in favour of a new policy document on the integration of the communities, in line with the EU Framework on national strategies on integration of Roma until 2020<sup>11</sup>. The EU Framework outlines four priority intervention fields regarding integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities:

1. Access to education: Ensure that all children complete minimum the compulsory education.

<sup>4</sup> Strategy on Integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities in the Republic of Kosovo 2009-2015, December 2008.

[http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/Strategjia\\_per\\_integrimin\\_e\\_komuniteteve\\_RAE\\_2009-2015\\_shq.pdf](http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/Strategjia_per_integrimin_e_komuniteteve_RAE_2009-2015_shq.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Action Plan for Implementation of the Strategy of the Republic of Kosovo for the Integration of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities, 2009-2015. [http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/Plani\\_i\\_Veprimit\\_per\\_zbatimin\\_e\\_Strategjise\\_per\\_integrimin\\_e\\_Komunitetit\\_RAE\\_2009-2015.pdf](http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/Plani_i_Veprimit_per_zbatimin_e_Strategjise_per_integrimin_e_Komunitetit_RAE_2009-2015.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> 1. Education, 2. Employment and economic empowerment, 3. Health and social issues, 4. Shelter and informal settlements, 5. Return and reintegration, 6. Registration, 7. Culture, Media and Information, 8. Participation and Representation, 9. Security, Police service, Justice, 10. Anti-discrimination and 11. Gender equality.

<sup>7</sup> Zyra për Qeverisje të Mirë: Raporti i Progresit mbi Zbatimin e Planit të Veprimit dhe Strategjisë së Republikës së Kosovës për Integrimin e Komuniteteve Rom, Ashkali dhe Egjiptian, 2009 – 2015.

<sup>8</sup> Zyra për Qeverisje të Mirë: Raporti I Vlerësimit Kornizës Se Prioriteteve për periudhën 2014 mbi Zbatimin e Planit të Veprimit dhe Strategjisë për Integrimin e Komuniteteve Rom, Ashkali dhe Egjiptian 2014 -2015.

<sup>9</sup> EU Progress Report 2014, [http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key\\_documents/2014/20141008-kosovo-progress-report\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2014/20141008-kosovo-progress-report_en.pdf) (accessed 14-10-2016); EU Progress Report 2015, [http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key\\_documents/2015/20151110\\_report\\_kosovo.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2015/20151110_report_kosovo.pdf) (browsed on 16-10-2016).

<sup>10</sup> Inter-ministerial steering committee is a political body, with participation from civil society, established to oversee and coordinate activities for the implementation of this Strategy.

<sup>11</sup> EU Framework on National Strategies for Integration of Roma until 2020, Brussels, 05.04.2011, COM (2011) 173. [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/policies/discrimination/docs/com\\_2011\\_173\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/policies/discrimination/docs/com_2011_173_en.pdf)

2. Access to employment: Reduce disparity in employment between members of these communities and the rest of the populations.
3. Access to healthcare: Reduce the difference in healthcare between members of these communities and the rest of the population.
4. Housing and access to basic services: Reduce differences between members of these communities in housing and public utilities (water, electrical power, gas) and the rest of the population.

These exact four fields were also included in the new Strategic document, developed by the Government of the Republic of Kosovo. It is worth pointing out that other important fields were not ignored by the new document either that ensure inclusion of Roma and Ashkali communities during the 2017-2021 period, such as: civil registration, return and reintegration and safety.

Despite the achievements made so far, Roma and Ashkali communities continue to be in a disadvantaged position in all spheres of life in Kosovo, particularly in the four areas defined above. Without good planning and assistance from outside, these communities cannot emerge from the vicious circle of poverty and integrate into society. On the other hand, institutions of Kosovo are committed to ensure the inclusion of all communities in Kosovo society. These are the reasons for drafting this Strategic document.

Considerable efforts have been made to ensure that the Strategy for Inclusion of Roma and Ashkali Communities in Kosovo Society 2017-2021 is in accordance with the policies, initiatives and other relevant strategies. At the national level it is considered necessary to align this Strategy with the National Development Strategy (NDS), which was drafted under the leadership of the Office of the Prime Minister. The main interconnection of this Strategy with NDS is accomplished through the first chapter – Human Capital Development. Another important initiative that is taken into account was the National Programme for the adaptation of ACQUIS.

## 2. Methodology

The Office for Good Governance (OGG) in the Prime-Minister's Office, as the agency responsible to lead efforts for drafting of this strategic document, designed an inclusive and participative process that built on the previous experience of drafting and implementation of the Strategic Plan and Action Plan for the integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities 2009-2015. The OGG also based its works on the Administrative Instruction 02/2012 that determines the planning process and contents of the document.<sup>12</sup> Upon the request of the political representatives of Egyptian communities, this community is not included in the new Strategy, therefore, this strategy is valid for Roma and Ashkali communities.

Whenever it was possible, data for Roma and Ashkali communities is presented separately. However, there are cases where they do not exist as such, but are collected and reported as cumulative for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. In such cases, it is explained that the data is related to three communities.

There are four key building blocks of this strategy:

Firstly, based also on the experience from the first strategic document, objectives and measures were formulated in a way that they would serve to improve the situation of the targeted communities.

Secondly, the experience accumulated by the employees of public institutions daily engaged and facing problems of the Roma and Ashkali communities. Drafting of this document was preceded by intensive individual and group consultations with representatives of all relevant institutions, ministries and the civil / non-governmental sector.

Thirdly, NGO-s engaged in working with communities have seen their capacity significantly improved. Unlike in 2008, there are several non-governmental organizations focusing their activities around Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities and which, through their experience and capacity, have significantly contributed not only to setting the foreseen goals and measures, but also to the successful implementation of the same.

Fourthly, during the drafting of this Strategy documents have been consulted that deal with the issue of Roma in other European countries, with the purpose of utilizing their experiences and good practices for the Strategy to deliver the best possible outcomes.

During the process of Strategy development, continuous efforts were made to ensure a broad inclusion of the representatives of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in the consultations process. Besides political representatives of the two communities, this consultation process also involved non-government organizations engaged in representing their interests, as well as development partners active in promotion of the rights of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. The entire process was steered by the Task Team<sup>13</sup> that included Kosovo institutions, non-governmental organizations working with the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, and international organizations in the capacity of observers. The process itself consisted of workshops

---

<sup>12</sup> Administrative Instruction No. 02/2012 on Procedures, Criteria and Methodology for Drafting and Approval of Strategic Documents and Action Plans for their implementation: [http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/Draft\\_Udhezimi\\_Administrativ\\_Per\\_Strategjite\\_FINAL\\_2012\\_2\\_.pdf](http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/Draft_Udhezimi_Administrativ_Per_Strategjite_FINAL_2012_2_.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> Decision of the Government of the Republic of Kosovo on setting up the Task Team for drafting of the new Strategy for the Roma and Ashkali communities – Annex 2.

focused on situation analysis, planning of activities, and budget planning; on the other hand numerous consultation meetings were organized with stakeholders in efforts to collect feedback, comments and suggestions in both oral and written format.

### 3. Background

There are about 10-12 million members of the Roma community living in Europe.<sup>14</sup> According to data available in the Population, Households and Dwellings Census of 2011, there are 1,739,825 inhabitants living in Kosovo, of which 0.5% or 8,824 are Roma and 0.9% or 15,436 Ashkali.<sup>15</sup> In Table 1 below census data are presented for Roma and Ashkali communities by municipality.<sup>16</sup> It is worth pointing out that no population census was done in all municipalities with a Serb majority and, therefore, these are incomplete data.

Roma and communities that are considered part of this community face a similar problem in all European countries, and that is social exclusion. Usually, this kind of exclusion manifests itself in the form of life in poverty, segregation, difficult access to social services, discrimination etc. Western Balkan region also face similar situations, which due to lack of economic development, have made the situation of Roma even more difficult. The period of war and that of post-war in Kosovo caused the displacement of a significant number of Roma and Ashkali communities within the Kosovo territory and neighbouring countries, whilst some members of these communities have emigrated to other European countries. This population shift represents a challenge in itself, since it often invalidates integration efforts in the field of education, employment and health care. Some regional states such as Serbia and Macedonia have developed plans for Roma integration more than a decade ago and have received significant international support in this regard, resulting in a significant progress, especially in the field of education.

Table 1. Members of Roma and Ashkali communities by municipality

| Municipality                  | Roma | Ashkali | Total |
|-------------------------------|------|---------|-------|
| Deçan/Decane                  | 33   | 42      | 75    |
| Gjakovë/Djakovica             | 738  | 613     | 1,351 |
| Glllogoc/Glogovac             | 0    | 0       | 0     |
| Gjilan/Gnjilane               | 361  | 15      | 376   |
| Dragash/Dragas                | 3    | 4       | 7     |
| Istog/Istok                   | 39   | 111     | 150   |
| Kaçanik/Kacanik               | 5    | 1       | 6     |
| Klinë/Klina                   | 78   | 85      | 163   |
| Fushë Kosovë/<br>Kosovo Polje | 436  | 3,230   | 3,666 |
| Kamenicë/Kamenica             | 240  | 0       | 240   |
| Mitrovicë/Mitrovica           | 528  | 647     | 1,175 |
| Lipjan/Ljipljane              | 342  | 1,812   | 2,154 |
| Novobërdë/<br>Novo Brdo       | 63   | 3       | 66    |
| Obiliq/Obilic                 | 661  | 578     | 1,239 |
| Rahovec/Orahovac              | 84   | 404     | 488   |
| Pejë/Pec                      | 993  | 143     | 1,136 |
| Podujevë/Podujevo             | 74   | 680     | 754   |
| Prishtinë/Pristina            | 56   | 557     | 613   |

<sup>14</sup> The situation of Roma in 11 EU member states – Survey Findings, European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2012. [http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra\\_uploads/2099-FRA-2012-Roma-at-a-glance\\_EN.pdf](http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/2099-FRA-2012-Roma-at-a-glance_EN.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> ASKDATA - <http://askdata.rks-gov.net/PXWeb/pxweb/sq/askdata/?rxid=0b4e087e-8b00-47ba-b7cf-1ea158040712/>

<sup>16</sup> ibid.

|                            |              |               |               |
|----------------------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| <b>Prizren/Prizren</b>     | 2,899        | 1,350         | 4,249         |
| <b>Skenderaj/Serbica</b>   | 0            | 10            | 10            |
| <b>Shtime/Stimlje</b>      | 23           | 750           | 773           |
| <b>Shtërpcë/Strpce</b>     | 24           | 1             | 25            |
| <b>Suharekë/Suva Reka</b>  | 41           | 493           | 534           |
| <b>Ferizaj/Urosevac</b>    | 204          | 3,629         | 3,833         |
| <b>Viti/Vitina</b>         | 12           | 14            | 26            |
| <b>Vushtrri/Vucitrn</b>    | 68           | 143           | 211           |
| <b>Malishevë/Malisevo</b>  | 26           | 5             | 31            |
| <b>Mamushë/Mamusa</b>      | 39           | 12            | 51            |
| <b>Graçanicë/Gracanica</b> | 745          | 104           | 849           |
| <b>Kllokot/Klokot</b>      | 9            | 0             | 9             |
| <b>Total</b>               | <b>8,824</b> | <b>15,436</b> | <b>24,260</b> |

The Strategy for Integration of Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian Communities 2009-2015 refers to detailed data that point out to the unfavourable position of these three communities in all spheres of life, in particular when compared to other communities, and indicating a high level of poverty among these communities.<sup>17</sup>

### 3.1. Legislation

The Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo guarantees fundamental human rights within Chapter II of the Constitution (Human Rights) and provides additional protection for the rights of the communities in Chapter III of the Constitution (Community Rights). Fundamental human rights and freedoms guaranteed through international covenants and instruments are also warranted by the Constitution and directly applicable in the Republic of Kosovo, where in cases of collision, these instruments prevail over legal and other acts of the public institutions.<sup>18</sup>

- The national legal system contains legal packages that are generated from the guaranteed rights of the communities and their members in various fields.<sup>19</sup>
- The need for increased commitment to promote and provide human rights from the perspective of prevention and elimination of both direct and indirect discrimination of several groups has brought out the need for adoption of legislation for protection of these groups.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>17</sup> UNDP Report on Human Development, 2010.

[http://www.ks.undp.org/content/dam/kosovo/docs/KHDR/HDR\\_2010\\_English.pdf?download](http://www.ks.undp.org/content/dam/kosovo/docs/KHDR/HDR_2010_English.pdf?download)

<sup>18</sup> Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo, article 17.2; 2008: Universal Human Rights Declaration; European Convention for the protection of fundamental human rights and freedoms and its protocols; the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights and its protocols; the Framework Convention of the Council of Europe on Protection of National Minorities; Convention on Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination; Convention on Elimination of all of Discrimination against Women; Convention on Child Rights; Convention against Torture and other forms of severe, inhuman, and degrading punishment.

<sup>19</sup> The Law on Religious Freedoms in Kosovo, [http://www.kuvendikosoves.org/common/docs/ligjet/2006\\_02-L31\\_al.pdf](http://www.kuvendikosoves.org/common/docs/ligjet/2006_02-L31_al.pdf) (downloaded on 13.10.2016); The Law on Cultural Heritage, The Law on the use of Languages, [http://www.kuvendikosoves.org/common/docs/ligjet/2006\\_02-L37\\_al.pdf](http://www.kuvendikosoves.org/common/docs/ligjet/2006_02-L37_al.pdf) (downloaded on 13.10.2016); [http://www.kuvendikosoves.org/common/docs/ligjet/2006\\_02-L88\\_al.pdf](http://www.kuvendikosoves.org/common/docs/ligjet/2006_02-L88_al.pdf) (downloaded on 13.10.2016); The Law on Protection of Community Rights and their members in the Republic of Kosovo, [http://www.kuvendikosoves.org/common/docs/ligjet/2008\\_03-L047\\_al.pdf](http://www.kuvendikosoves.org/common/docs/ligjet/2008_03-L047_al.pdf) (downloaded on 13.10.2016); the Law on Local Self-Governance, [http://www.kuvendikosoves.org/common/docs/ligjet/2008\\_03-L040\\_al.pdf](http://www.kuvendikosoves.org/common/docs/ligjet/2008_03-L040_al.pdf) (downloaded on 13.10.2016); the Law on Education in Municipalities of the Republic of Kosovo, [http://www.kuvendikosoves.org/common/docs/ligjet/2008\\_03-L068\\_al.pdf](http://www.kuvendikosoves.org/common/docs/ligjet/2008_03-L068_al.pdf) (downloaded on 13.10.2016);

<sup>20</sup> The Law on Protection against Discrimination, <http://www.kuvendikosoves.org/common/docs/ligjet/05-L-021%20sh.pdf> (downloaded on 13.10.2016); the Law on Gender Equality, <http://www.kuvendikosoves.org/common/docs/ligjet/05-L-020%20sh.pdf> (downloaded on 13.10.2016);

In its efforts to implement legislation on protection of minority communities (internationally accepted and directly applicable in Kosovo), as well as specific Kosovo legislation in the same field,<sup>21</sup> the Government has approved a specific regulation<sup>22</sup> for establishing Offices for Communities and Return in all Kosovo municipalities. It is in the mandate of these communities to identify, promote, endorse, implement and oversee the relevant policies, activities and programmes for protection and promotion of the community rights; equal access of communities to public services; creation of conditions for sustainable return of refugees, returnees, displaced persons, and repatriated persons.

### 3.2. Policies

Kosovo prides itself with a sophisticated policy framework and besides the expired Strategy and Action Plan (2009-2015) and the local plans for implementation of the same, there are other policies that provide for increased inclusion of the Roma and Ashkali communities. Then again, two of the four policy documents used during the process of development of this Strategy are either in their drafting or in their approval phase. **The Strategy for Communities and Returns 2014-2018 and Kosovo Education Strategic Plan 2017-2021 are approved, while the Strategy and Action Plan for Human Rights in the Republic of Kosovo and Strategy for Protection and Promotion of Linguistic Rights are still in the process of drafting/approval.**

### 3.3. Mechanisms for the protection of the communities in Kosovo

Among the countries in the Western Balkans, Kosovo has the most mechanisms which focus their attention in the non-majority communities, both at the central and local levels. While a number of these mechanisms deal with their protection from discrimination, the others focus on issues pertaining to participation in decision-making.

**The Communities Consultative Council** was established in implementation of the Law on Protection and Promotion of the rights of communities and their members in Kosovo. The mandate of the Council includes collection and articulation of the community views, inter-community coordination and consultation, communication with state authorities and providing recommendations for the allocation of resources for respective initiatives.

**The Commission for Community Rights and Interests and Return**, within the Kosovo Assembly is responsible for review of draft laws and formulation of recommendations regarding communities and return.

**Office for Good Governance (OGG)**, within the Office of the Prime-Minister (OPM), is responsible to coordinate on issues of human rights with all ministries and municipalities. The Office provides counsel for the Government, drafts policies, monitors recommendations by the Ombudsperson's Office and the implementation of the Strategy on human rights. The OGG advises the Prime-Minister and the respective units in the OPM, on issues of good governance, human rights, equal opportunities, and issues against discrimination; drafts policies in the field of good governance, human rights, equal opportunities and on issues against discrimination; in cooperation with the Legal Office it reviews draft policies and laws prepared by government bodies to ensure that they

---

13.10.2016); the Law on Ombudsperson, <http://www.kuvendikosoves.org/common/docs/ligjet/05-L-019%20sh.pdf> (downloaded on 13.10.2016);

<sup>21</sup> The Law No.03/L-40 on Local Self-Governance; the Law No. 03/L-047 on Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Communities and their Members in the Republic of Kosovo;

<sup>22</sup> Regulation No. 02/2010 on Municipal Offices for Communities and Return. [http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/Rregullore\\_per\\_Zyrat\\_komunale\\_per\\_Komunitete\\_dhe\\_Kthim.pdf](http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/Rregullore_per_Zyrat_komunale_per_Komunitete_dhe_Kthim.pdf)

are in line with the effective human rights standards and practices of good governance, and advises and issues recommendations to the Prime-Minister and respective ministries depending on the needs and circumstances. The OGG also supports the design and implementation of public communication campaigns and other promotion projects to encourage population awareness on international human rights standards, transparency, ethics and accountability in public administration, good governance, equal opportunities, anti-discrimination, and other principles of democratic governance. These responsibilities endow the OGG/OPM with the authority to run the drafting process of the Strategy and Plan of Action 2017 – 2021 for inclusion of Roma and Ashkali communities in the Kosovo society.

**Office of Community Affairs (OCA)**, within the OPM, was established in 2008 to contribute to the coordination of Government efforts to implement the national legal framework on the rights of communities and to ensure that Government policies and respective interventions do meet the community interests and needs. The OPM also uses its own funds to meet community needs through strategic interventions.

**Office of the Language Commissioner**, within the OPM, is responsible for preservation, promotion and protection of languages, in line with the provisions of the Law on the use of languages.

**Municipalities**, in which communities comprise over 10 percent of the local population, have additional obligations, such as establishing positions of the municipal assembly deputy chair-person for communities and the deputy mayor of the municipality. While the position of the deputy chair is to serve as the point of contact for the respective community issues, the position of the deputy mayor is to advise the mayor on issues related to communities.

**Municipal Offices for Communities and Return (MOCR)** are responsible to protect and promote community rights, to ensure equal access of communities to public services, and to create conditions for sustainable return and reintegration of refugees, displaced persons, and repatriated persons.

**Municipal community committee** is responsible for reviewing alignment of municipal authorities with the effective law and for reviewing all municipal policies, practices and activities to ensure that community rights and interests are fully upheld. Besides, the Committee recommends to the assembly measures that need to be taken to ensure the implementation of provisions dealing with the need of communities to progress, to express themselves, to protect and develop their ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic identity, as well as to ensure adequate protection of community rights within the municipality. The Community Committee includes in its ranks the simple majority of the assembly members and representatives of communities. Every community living in a municipality is represented by at least one representative in the committee of communities. Representatives of the non-majority communities in a given municipality comprise the majority of the members of the committee of communities.

### **3.4. Education**

Implementation of the Strategy and its respective measures by the Kosovo Government and local authorities a significant improvement has been achieved in the participation of the members of Roma and Ashkali communities in the education system. Nevertheless, inclusion of the Roma and Ashkali communities in the system of education and their drop-out rates still remain to be considered as challenges faced by the Kosovo society. MEST and the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) have signed a memorandum of understanding with the purpose of facilitating integration of

repatriated children of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities into the Kosovo system of education; a significant number of children of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities are expected to benefit from the implementation of the memorandum. Besides, MEST has approved specific bylaws that serve to facilitate integration of repatriated children in the system of schooling in Kosovo. As a result, the Roma language is now taught as an elective subject in pre-university education, whereas in the higher education MEST has established reserved enrolment quota for members of Roma and Ashkali communities.<sup>23</sup>

Table 3 conveys data on registration of children/students of Roma and Ashkali communities in the pre-university education, whereas table 4 presents data about their drop-out rates. Table 3 shows a negligible trend of reduced enrolment in the period 2012/13-2014/15 that could come as a result of decreased birth-rate, whereas the data for 2015/16 could be an indication of the wave of migration of the end of 2014 and beginning of 2015, which involved also a considerable number of members of the Roma and Ashkali communities.

This is also supported by the increased drop-out from schools in the 2014/15 and 2015/16 school years – shown in Table 4. Besides poverty, low level of awareness on the importance of schooling and early marriages of girls are other reasons for dropping out of school.

Table 3. Enrolment of children/students of Roma and Ashkali communities during 2012/13-2015/16.

| Ethnic affiliation | 2012/2013    | 2013/2014    | 2014/2015    | 2015/2016    |
|--------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Roma               | 1,996        | 2,059        | 1,918        | 1,853        |
| Ashkali            | 4,068        | 4,210        | 4,177        | 3,529        |
| <b>Total</b>       | <b>6,064</b> | <b>6,269</b> | <b>6,095</b> | <b>5,382</b> |

(Source: Annual statistical data of MEST)

Table 3. Drop-out data for Roma and Ashkali students during 2013/14-2015/16.

| 2013/14               | Grades       | Roma      |           |            | Ashkali   |           |            | Roma and Ashkali |            |            |
|-----------------------|--------------|-----------|-----------|------------|-----------|-----------|------------|------------------|------------|------------|
|                       |              | M         | F         | T          | M         | F         | T          | M                | F          | T          |
|                       | Gd. 1-9      | 39        | 51        | 90         | 34        | 26        | 60         | 73               | 77         | 150        |
|                       | Gd. 10-13    | 0         | 0         | 0          | 1         | 0         | 1          | 1                | 0          |            |
|                       | <b>Total</b> | <b>39</b> | <b>51</b> | <b>90</b>  | <b>35</b> | <b>26</b> | <b>61</b>  | <b>74</b>        | <b>77</b>  | <b>151</b> |
| 2014/15               | Grades       | Roma      |           |            | Ashkali   |           |            | Roma and Ashkali |            |            |
|                       |              | M         | F         | T          | M         | F         | T          | M                | F          | T          |
|                       | Gd. 1-9      | 58        | 54        | 112        | 63        | 64        | 127        | 121              | 118        | 239        |
|                       | Gd. 10-12    | 3         |           | 3          |           |           | 0          | 3                |            | 3          |
|                       | <b>Total</b> | <b>61</b> | <b>54</b> | <b>115</b> | <b>63</b> | <b>64</b> | <b>127</b> | <b>124</b>       | <b>118</b> | <b>242</b> |
| 2015/16<br>first term | Grades       | Roma      |           |            | Ashkali   |           |            | Roma and Ashkali |            |            |
|                       |              | M         | F         | T          | M         | F         | T          | M                | F          | T          |
|                       | Gd. 1-9      | 55        | 35        | 90         | 65        | 62        | 127        | 120              | 97         | 217        |
|                       | Gd. 10-12    |           |           | 0          | 1         | 1         | 2          | 1                | 1          | 2          |
|                       | <b>Total</b> | <b>55</b> | <b>35</b> | <b>90</b>  | <b>66</b> | <b>63</b> | <b>129</b> | <b>121</b>       | <b>98</b>  | <b>219</b> |

<sup>23</sup> AI No.09.2016 Application of affirmative measures and reserved quota for registration of candidates of non-majority communities in public institutions of higher education. <http://masht.rks.gov.net/uploads/2016/06/ua-masht-09-2016-aplikimi-i-masave-afirmative-dhe-vendeve-te-rez-al.pdf>

(Source: MEST data)

It is worth pointing out that the drop-out figures given by NGOs are bigger; the reason for this probably rests in the methodology of data collection and processing. Regardless of this, the drop-out rates continue being a grave source of concern regarding Roma and Ashkali communities.

Even though there are no official data on participation of communities in higher education, there are still indications that there are at least 256 students actually enrolled in this level of education<sup>24</sup>.

According to a study by the Kosovo Statistics Agency<sup>25 26</sup> the literacy level of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities is lower than that of the majority population and the same appears to apply to the educational attainment level of communities. Main data of this study that refer to the educational level of the communities are presented below:

- Literacy skills – Percentage of the youth of age between 15-24 who are able to read short sentences about everyday life or who have attended secondary or higher education:
  - (a) Females – 72.8 % (98% nationally).
  - (b) Males – 86.5 % (97.6% nationally).
- Attendance in early childhood education – Percentage of children of 36-59 months of age attending any pre-school programme: 16.1% (13.9% nationally).
- School preparation programmes – Percentage of children in grade one who have attended pre-primary schooling in the previous year: 53.9 % (75.5 % nationally).
- Net level of registration in primary education: 68.1% (91.6% nationally).
- Percentage of children of primary school age currently attending primary or secondary education: 85.3 % (98% nationally).
- Percentage of lower secondary school age children currently attending lower secondary or secondary school: 65.0 % (95.9% nationally).
- Percentage of children of secondary school age currently attending secondary school or more: 30.3 % (82% nationally).
- Working children – Percentage of children of 5-17 years of age, who are engaged at work: 16.6 % (10.7% nationally).

Government of the Republic of Kosovo has approved Kosovo Education Strategic Plan 2017-2021, where measures are foreseen to achieve several specific indicators related to education of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities until 2021:

- Inclusion of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children in pre-primary education (target: 70%)
- Inclusion of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children in primary education (target: 95%)
- Inclusion of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children in lower secondary education (target: 85%)
- Inclusion of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children in upper secondary education (target: 50%)
- Transition rate into upper secondary education for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children (target: 80%)
- Gender parity index for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children (Target: PLSS – 1, USS – 0.90)

---

<sup>24</sup> Source: NGO Advancing Together.

<sup>25</sup> Kosovo Agency of Statistics, Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities in the Republic of Kosovo, Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2013-2014.

<sup>26</sup> Kosovo Agency of Statistics, Monitoring of the situation of children and women, Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2013-2014.

## 3.5. Employment and social welfare

### 3.5.1. Employment

Low level of employment is the key economic and social problem of Kosovo. Based in the results of the Public Pulse<sup>27</sup> survey, 78 percent of Kosovars state unemployment as the biggest problem in Kosovo. This is understandable having in mind that the Labour Force Survey (LFS) for 2015 shows a very high unemployment rate of 32.9 percent, whereas the level of employment (ratio between the numbers of employees compared with the number of persons in the working age) is only at 25.2 percent.<sup>28</sup>

Statistics published about the situation of employment of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities are mainly based on surveys focusing on the labour market that do not use conventional concepts and methodologies; therefore, they should be seen only as indications and not (fully) comparable with the national indicators presented above. Nevertheless, actual statistics show that the situation with employment of these communities is far worse than that of all other communities. For illustration, the Human Development Report 2010 reports that the level of unemployment in Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian families in 2009 was around 58 percent, compared to the national average of 45 percent.<sup>29</sup> However, in a country with high unemployment levels such as Kosovo, where the number of discouraged unemployed persons is high (which then shows lower unemployment statistics), it is more reliable to refer to employment rates in order to get a more accurate picture of the situation. Even though fuller data are still missing, this indicator shows an even wider gap between the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities and the other communities. Thus, in the municipalities of Obiliq / Obilic and Fushë Kosovë / Kosovo Polje the level of employment of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities is estimated at mere 7 percent, compared to 40 percent for Albanians and 21 percent for the Serbs.<sup>30</sup> The difficult situation in the labour market is seen as the key factor that has made a large number of individuals from these communities to emigrate during the last wave of emigration that reached its peak end of 2014 and beginning of 2015.

From the policy-making point of view, one can identify two types of mechanisms / measures for the promotion of employment of the members of these communities (as well of other minority communities):

- A legal framework that would regulate representation in employment of non-majority communities in the civil service
- Active labour market measures carried out by the MLSW (in cooperation with the MIA and/or development partners).

Since 2010, the Law 03/L-149 on Civil Service in the Republic of Kosovo determines the representation of the non-majority communities through a minimal quota of 10 percent at the central level and a representation proportional to the demographic composition at the local level.

---

<sup>27</sup> United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Public Puls XI, May 2016.

<sup>28</sup> Kosovo Statistics Agency, Results of the Labour Force Survey 2015 in Kosovo, 2016.

<sup>29</sup> United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Human Development Report 2010.

<sup>30</sup> United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Community Vulnerability Assessment Report, 2013.

These statistics are calculated as a relation between the (self-reported) employed persons, and the number of individuals of working age calculated as a sum of self-reported categories that are assumed to be of working age (employed, unemployed, and individuals who are take of their home care full time) and excluding categories that (are assumed) not to be of working age (those in the process of education and retired persons).

Further, Regulation 04/2010 on Procedures for a fair and proportional representation of non-majority communities in the civil service of the Republic of Kosovo provides that the institutions should implement at least six out of fourteen measures foreseen therein, which include: communication; measures of affirmative action; internships, stipends, and training programmes for applicants; training for non-majority community civil servants; anti-discrimination workshops; and inter-institutional cooperation.

MLSW, through its Employment Offices, provides various services for job-seekers, including counselling services, employment mediation, vocational training and participation in various schemes of active measures in the labour market (for example, subsidizing wages, internships, seasonal employment projects, grants for business start-ups, etc.), and information on migration for the purpose of regular employment. Access to active labour market measures (ALMM) for non-majority communities is usually ensured through a quota for these communities, provided under the ALMM schemes. In 2014, the number of members of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities who benefited from the ALMM scheme was 247, or 10 percent of all persons benefiting from the scheme. In the first half of 2016, the number of participants of these communities in ALMM was 95 (28 Roma and 67 Ashkali), whereas the current number of job-seekers of the Roma community registered with employment offices is 2,262, with 49.5 percent of them being women.<sup>31</sup> The largest part of the job-seekers are registered and concentrated in Prizren and Pejë / Pec (76 and 18%, respectively), followed by Prishtina / Pristina and Mitrovica (with 3 and 2%, respectively).

Several ALMMs dedicated to these communities are delivered within the repatriation activities. Since 2012, MIA as the funding agency, in cooperation with MLSW and UNDP, as implementing agencies, have implemented activities in support of training and employment of persons repatriated within the Active Youth Labour Market Programme in Kosovo. In February 2016, these activities were extended to include all repatriated persons, by offering them opportunities for training and employment through the Active Programme of the Youth Labour Market in Kosovo. The reintegration programme provides financial support for business plans of repatriated persons who meet the criteria set in the Regulation GRK No. 04/2016 on Reintegration of Repatriated Persons and on Managing the Reintegration Programme.

In order to address employment and social welfare issues, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare has drafted the Sector Strategy 2014 – 2020,<sup>32</sup> with four main strategic objectives, including the objective to increase employment, development of skills and improve the labour market performance. This Strategy does not foresee any measures that would address the specific needs of the Roma and Ashkali communities. However, it foresees that until 2020 at least 15 percent of the total number of participants in the active labour market measures will be from members of the non-majority communities.

### **3.5.2. Social welfare**

Most of the members of Roma and Ashkali communities live in conditions of extreme poverty<sup>33</sup> and continue to face severe living conditions.<sup>34</sup> The situation is especially grave with the 20 % of the

---

<sup>31</sup> Data from MLSW, Employment Information Management System, September 2016. At this time, the number of Ashkali and Egyptian job-seekers was zero (0), while in 2005 they were registered in the system as "Others"; a part of these job-seekers probably belong to these two communities. One should also keep in mind that not all unemployed are registered with employment offices and, therefore, the number of unemployed is higher.

<sup>32</sup> These two documents are still waiting for Government approval.

<sup>33</sup> World Bank, Kosovo Country Snapshot, 2015.

poorest members of these communities and the families living in rural areas.<sup>35</sup> A study carried out in 2013<sup>36</sup> in the municipalities of Fushë Kosovë / Kosovo Polje and Obiliq / Obilic found that two-thirds of the Roma community families, close to half of those of Ashkali and over one-third of the Egyptian community face difficulties in meeting their feeding and other basic needs.

There are two social welfare schemes serving to mitigate the poverty level in Kosovo. The first category social welfare is received by families<sup>37</sup> that consist only of members who are dependant and unable to engage in paid jobs,<sup>38</sup> and who have no employed members (the basic amount varies from € 50 Euros for single member families, to € 150 for families with fifteen members).<sup>39</sup>

The second category social welfare is received by single member families who are capable to work (and has to be registered as unemployed in the Employment Office) and with at least one child under the age of fifteen (the basic amount is € 50 for single member families and goes up to € 150 for families with 15 members). Families benefiting from social welfare receive five euros for every child under the age of 18 in the form of child supplements, aiming stimulating education and improvement of health; they also benefit from discount on electrical energy bills up to € 20 a month; this discount applies also to families of martyrs, war invalids and civil victims of the war.

According to data of the MLSW, 1,736 families of Roma and Ashkali families have received social welfare during 2015,<sup>40</sup> which represents 8% of the overall number of families on social assistance in Kosovo. Data show that the number of the Roma and Ashkali communities benefiting from social welfare has marked a gradual annual decrease, whereas the total financial amounts have increased, as a result of increased amounts of social assistance.

Table 4. Number of families benefiting from the social welfare scheme for the two communities

|                  | Roma               |                          |                       | Ashkali            |                          |                     |
|------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
|                  | Number of families | Number of family members | Total amount in Euros | Number of families | Number of family members | Total amount in Eur |
| <b>Dec. 2013</b> | 929                | 4,273                    | 61,185                | 1,223              | 6,340                    | 84,940              |
| <b>Dec. 2014</b> | 905                | 4,188                    | 71,405                | 1,069              | 5,473                    | 90,000              |
| <b>Dec. 2015</b> | 718                | 3,133                    | 57,540                | 1,018              | 4,962                    | 86,083              |

Source: MLSW, 2016

Table 5. Number of beneficiary families of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities and the overall number of recipients from social welfare in Kosovo

<sup>34</sup> Kosovo Statistics Agency, Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities in the Republic of Kosovo, Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2013-2014; European Commission, Progress Report - Kosovo, 2015; United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Hyman Development Report, 2010.

<sup>35</sup> Kosovo Statistics Agency, Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in the Republic of Kosovo, Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2013-2014.

<sup>36</sup> United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Community Vulnerability Assessment Report, 2013.

<sup>37</sup> According to the Law on the Scoail Welfare Scheme (Article 2, Paragraph 1) family consists of those persons whose needs are taken in consideration on the occasion of deciding about the applicability for selection and on the amount of social assistance; it is defined as a community consisting of the applicant or the assistance recipient and all other family members, who live a given family community.

<sup>38</sup> A dependent person – is the person who belongs to one of the following groups: persons over the age of eighteen (18) who have severe permanent disabilities that make them unable to work for a job that is compensated, persons of the age of (65) or older, permanent caregivers of persons with disabilities or persons of the age of 65 or older who are in need of permanent care, or children under the age of 5, persons up to the age of five, persons in the age between 15 and 18 and who attend regular secondary schooling, and single parents with at least one child under the age of 15.

<sup>39</sup> Kosovo Statistics Agency, Social Welfare Statistics 2015, 2016.

<sup>40</sup> MLSW, Department of Social and Family Policies, September 2016.

|                  | All three communities |                          |                     | All in Kosovo      |                          |                     | Average daily assistance per person |  |
|------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
|                  | Number of families    | Number of family members | Total value in Euro | Number of families | Number of family members | Total value in Euro | In Kosovo                           | For Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities |
| <b>Dec. 2013</b> | 2,152                 | 10,613                   | 146,125 €           | 29,688             | 123,554                  | 1,924,017 €         | 0.52 €                              | 0.46 €                                     |
| <b>Dec. 2014</b> | 1,974                 | 9,661                    | 161,405 €           | 27,389             | 113,842                  | 2,084,983 €         | 0.61 €                              | 0.56 €                                     |
| <b>Dec. 2015</b> | 1,736                 | 8,095                    | 143,603 €           | 25,943             | 107,452                  | 2,398,526 €         | 0.74 €                              | 0.59 €                                     |

Source: MLSW, 2016

Besides social welfare schemes, there are other schemes of social assistance that are currently implemented in Kosovo, including pensions and financial support or compensations, as presented below:

### Pensions

- The basic age pension paid to all citizens of the Republic of Kosovo, who are over 65 years of age (in the value of € 75);
- Age pensions for persons who paid contributions, for citizens employed in the Republic of Kosovo and who have paid their contributions in the former Kosovo Pensions Fund before 01.01.1999 (from € 158-230, based on the level of education);
- Pensions for persons 18-65 of age with limited permanent disabilities (in the value of € 75 Euro);
- Pensions of Trepça, for all employees of the “Trepça” combined enterprise who have lost their job before end of 2004;
- Pensions of the Kosovo Protection Corps;
- Pensions of the Kosovo Security Force.

In 2016, only 160 members of the Roma community and 146 of the Ashkali community received their basic pensions, comprising only 0.2% of the overall number of recipients of this pension. An explanation offered<sup>41</sup> about this small number of recipients was said to be the low life expectancy of the members of these communities, which is estimated to be at 60 years.<sup>42</sup> The low number of contribution paying recipients of pensions could be related to the fact that there has traditionally been a low number of persons employed from among members of these communities. Only 1.1% of the children with special needs for which families receive financial support belong to the Roma and Ashkali communities (88 and 132 children respectively).<sup>43</sup>

<sup>41</sup> Acting Head of the Department of Pensions, MLSW, August 2016.

<sup>42</sup> New health insurance will save lives: Life expectancy and health of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in Kosovo. Balkan Sunflowers. 2016.

<sup>43</sup> Data about the Egyptian community; the Ministry includes them in the category of “others” and as a result there are no data provided specifically for them.

Table 6. Number of pension recipients

|  | Basic pension  | Contribution giving pension | Pensions for persons with disabilities |
|--|----------------|-----------------------------|--|
| Roma   | 160            | 66                          | 88                                     |
| Ashkali  | 146            | 52                          | 132                                    |
| <b>Total in Kosovo</b>   | <b>127,643</b> | <b>41,789</b>               | <b>19,396</b>                          |
| <b>% of both communities in the overall number of recipients</b> | <b>0.2%</b>    | <b>0.3%</b>                 | <b>1.1%</b>                            |

Source: MLSW, 2016

### Compensations and other forms of financial support

- Compensations for blind persons and their helpers (€ 125 each);
- Families of martyrs and KLA war invalids;
- KLA war veterans (€ 170);
- Scheme for material support for families with children with permanent disabilities (€ 100 per child).

Table 7 shows that, families of these communities have received financial support, in average, for 100 children with disabilities, which represents around 3.8% (104 of 2,770) of the total number of children with permanent disabilities who benefit from the scheme of families with children with disabilities.

Table 7. Number of children with disabilities with permanent disabilities of the Roma and Ashkali communities that benefit from the scheme of the families with children with disabilities

| Number of children with disabilities in the age of 1-18 years for which families receive financial support |      |         |                               |
|--|------|---------|-------------------------------|
|  | Roma | Ashkali | Total for the two communities |
| Dec. 2013  | 36   | 52      | 88                            |
| Dec. 2014  | 34   | 53      | 87                            |
| Dec. 2015  | 33   | 50      | 83                            |

Source: MLSW, 2016

### Social services

Besides financial support, the MLSW, through its centres of social work in the municipalities, provides social services, including: counselling family services, services for the protection of children, services for abandoned children, services for child adoption; shelter for elderly persons and persons with disabilities lacking family care, services for cases of domestic violence, and services for integration of victims of trafficking. Families where a child is placed for family care are entitled to financial support of up to € 150 a month, whereas when a child is placed with family members, the receiving family is supported with € 75 a month.

The following table shows that annually, in average 300 members of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities were served by the CSW; however, two-thirds of the services have been administrative in nature (certificates, support with documentation) and only one-third were social services.

Table 8. Number of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian members who have utilized services of CSW

| Services and clients  | 2013       | 2014       | 2015       |
|---|------------|------------|------------|
| <b>Services for children</b>                                  |            |            |            |
| Abandoned children  | 12         | 8          | 8          |
| Abused children   | 2          | 5          | 5          |
| Children of parents limited in their discharge of parenthood  | 3          | 1          | 1          |
| Orphans   | 2          | 0          | 1          |
| Children with unsociable behaviour                            | 5          | 12         | 8          |
| Requests for family shelter                                   | 2          | 1          | 0          |
| Clients with disabilities – children                          | 0          | 0          | 0          |
| Children engaged in harmful jobs                              | 2          | 9          | 7          |
| International abduction of children                           | 0          | 0          | 0          |
| Children in conflict with the law                             | 7          | 24         | 15         |
| Juvenile marriages  | 5          | 16         | 11         |
| International adoption  | 0          | 0          | 0          |
| Local adoption  | 1          | 2          | 1          |
| <b>Counselling services</b>                                   |            |            |            |
| Marriage counselling  | 31         | 33         | 24         |
| Abuse of narcotic substances                                  | 0          | 0          | 0          |
| <b>Services for elderly persons with disabilities</b>         |            |            |            |
| Adults with disabilities                                      | 0          | 0          | 0          |
| Elderly persons   | 1          | 1          | 1          |
| <b>Services in cases of domestic violence and trafficking</b> |            |            |            |
| Victims of domestic violence                                  | 13         | 20         | 11         |
| Victims of sexual crimes                                      | 1          | 1          | 1          |
| Victims of trafficking  | 0          | 0          | 1          |
| Administrative services                                       | 174        | 188        | 193        |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>261</b> | <b>321</b> | <b>288</b> |

Source: MLSW, 2016

Regarding sheltering services, in 2015, 13 persons with disabilities belonging to these communities were sheltered in the Special Institute in Shtime/Shtimlje and in the community house, whereas three elderly persons were placed in the two Homes for Elderly Persons.

### 3.6. Health

Access to health services remains one of the key challenges in this sector. Numerous reports point out financial and non-financial factors that affect access to health services.<sup>44 45 46</sup> Main obstacles for the utilization of health-care services are the following: 1) finances, 2) the long distance from the healthcare facilities, and 3) long waiting times.<sup>47 48</sup> The study<sup>47</sup> shows that 79.5% of the members of

<sup>44</sup> Stanculescu et al., The Performance of Public Healthcare Systems in South-East Europe - A comparative qualitative study. Friedrich Ebert Stiftung. 2014.

<sup>45</sup> Hoxha et al., Antenatal Care Services in Kosovo. UNICEF. 2008.

<sup>46</sup> Bloom et al., Ethnic segregation in Kosovo's post-war healthcare system. European Journal for Public Health. 2007.

<sup>47</sup> Policy Brief 4: Access to and utilization of health services by Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian. Solidar Suisse. 2016.

<sup>48</sup> Stanculescu et al., The Performance of Public Healthcare Systems in South-East Europe - A comparative qualitative study. Friedrich Ebert Stiftung. 2014.

the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities have not been able to visit the doctor more often due to their inability to pay for the medicine or for the treatment. Even in the Centres of Family Medicine, in which medical visits are supposed to be for free, patients are required to bring their own medical and other supplies. These expenses often represent an obstacle to the utilization of health services. More so, 48.8% of the families report that they have not seen the doctor more often because of the “long distance”, and 54.5% due to the “lack of transport”; meanwhile, 49.6% of the respondents agree that most of their family members have avoided using health services because of the very long waiting time.<sup>49</sup> This includes both the waiting time to see a general practitioner and the time for a specialist treatment.

There is a very low level of utilization of preventive health-care services. Only 4% of the community have had more than one of the following screenings: mammography, diabetes test, cervix cancer test, prostate cancer test, or any other tests for sexually transmittable diseases.<sup>50</sup> The most frequently used preventive care procedure used by persons over the age of 30 is mammography with 4% (28 individuals).<sup>51</sup> Over 95% of those who have visited the doctor during the last twelve months have been diagnosed with an acute or chronic disease during the same period.<sup>52</sup> This finding alone provides hard evidence that members of the Roma and Ashkali communities visit the doctors only for curative and not for preventive reasons, or put in other words, only once they started having symptoms of a disease. Inadequate use of therapy is yet another source of concern. Many patients stop taking prescribed medication as soon as symptoms start disappearing. In such situations, the condition will reappear with even graver symptoms and for a longer period. There is a tendency for long waiting times before seeking treatment. Usually, patients from these communities seek healthcare in the more advanced stages of their diseases. As a result, not only does treatment become more difficult, but also more expensive, both for the individual and for the society.<sup>53</sup>

Approach of the members of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities towards their health situation has been one of the key problems. Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities do not consume a balanced diet, and neither do they take in a daily food balance that is recommended by the World Health Organization. Typical food courses most often consist of a combination of beans, potatoes and low quality sausages, processed food that is rich in fat and in salt.<sup>54</sup> Data show that less than one-third of individuals (18.7%) consume meat and meat products daily, and only half of them include in their daily meals vegetable (60.7%), fruit (49.8%) and milk (50%).<sup>55</sup> A significant percentage of families consume essential food once or even more seldom in a week: vegetables (15%), fruit (23.6%), milk (17.2%), and eggs (25.1%)<sup>56</sup>. Communities are inclined to overuse potatoes, bread and other foods based on carbohydrates, which are commonly very poor in nutritious values.<sup>57</sup> Lacking the needed nutrients, individuals do not take in the needed vitamins and minerals and, consequently, become vulnerable of developing anemia, obesity, and chronic diseases like hypertension and diabetes. For one-third (36%) of the children suffering from diarrhea, no medical counsel or treatment was requested, with one-fourth (25%) of them who have been given very little

---

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Policy Brief 4: Access to and utilization of health services by Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian. Solidar Suisse. 2016.

<sup>54</sup> Policy Brief 3: Feeding and life styles of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. Solidar Suisse. 2016.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

or nothing to eat, resulting in only one-third (34%) of the children receiving oral rehydrating treatment (ORT) and at the same time following with a recommended feeding procedure. While seeking medical care for diarrhea is low, 74% of the children of age 0-59 months with symptoms of IAR have been taken to a qualified treatment; nevertheless, only 7% of women can name minimum two symptoms of the risk of pneumonia (rapid breathing and difficulties with breathing)<sup>58</sup>. Only 30% of children from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities received recommended vaccinations until their first birthday, whereas 79% of children aged 24-36 months have immunization record cards.<sup>59</sup>

Hygiene among the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities is very poor and often limiting with conditions of extreme poverty: lack of water, insufficient means for spending water and other cleaning materials, etc. Consumption of tobacco is a common phenomenon.<sup>60</sup> Physical activity is very low among the communities, with youth who are more active and older persons who are less active. In general, less than half (41.1%) of the people are engaged in more than one basic physical activity, with only one-fourth (26.8%) engaged on daily basis.<sup>61</sup> Early births continue to persist in the communities despite a small drop.<sup>62</sup> This is a serious threat not only to the health of mothers and new-borns, but also to the long-term welfare of these families.

High levels of morbidity indicate to a worsened health situation of the population.<sup>63 64</sup> Assessments of 2014 show that 95.4% of the population suffer from an illness diagnosed by a doctor.<sup>65</sup> The most frequent maladies are the following: hypertension (26% of the respondents suffering from the condition), cardio-vascular disorders (17%), bone disorders (11%), diabetes (10%), and kidney illnesses, mainly manifested in the presence of stones in kidneys (8%).<sup>66</sup> The real distribution of diseases may be much worse than what is shown by the survey results. For instance, a study of the Roma communities in Serbia found that the number of cases of undiagnosed diabetes is almost as high as the number of diagnosed cases.<sup>67</sup> More than one in six (17%) Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children under the age of 5 have been reported to have had a case of diarrhea and symptoms of acute respiratory infections (IAR), whereas almost one in three (30%) had suffered from high temperature.<sup>68</sup>

The above mentioned circumstances result in reduced life expectancy of the members of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, currently estimated to be lower than 60 years, compared to the Kosovo average of 70.5 years.<sup>69</sup> On the other hand, studies have shown considerable differences between regions. For instance, Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian living in rural areas, in average live six years shorter lives than their homologues in urban areas.<sup>70</sup> The mortality trends of infants among

---

<sup>58</sup> Roma and Ashkali communities in Kosovo 2013-2014, Survey on Multiple Cluster Indicators: Summary Report. Kosovo Statistics Agency. 2014.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Policy Brief 3: Nourishment and life styles of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. Solidar Suisse. 2016.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> The new insurance system will save lives: Life expectancy and health among Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in Kosovo. Balkan Sunflowers. 2016.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in Kosovo 2013-2014, Survey on Multiple Cluster Indicators: Summary Report. Kosovo Statistics Agency. 2014.

<sup>65</sup> Policy Brief 2: Distribution of diseases in Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. Solidar Suisse. 2016.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in Kosovo 2013-2014, Survey on Multiple Cluster Indicators: Summary Report. Kosovo Statistics Agency. 2014.

<sup>69</sup> The new insurance system will save lives: Life expectancy and health among Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in Kosovo. Balkan Sunflowers. 2016.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities has remained almost the same for over 15 years, with an infant mortality rate of 41 in 1000 births during five recent annual surveys, whereas the mortality rate under the age of five is 49 in 1000 births. When compared with Kosovo average, these values are three times higher and are comparable to the trends of data for the overall population of a decade ago.<sup>71</sup>

### 3.7. Housing

Based on the effective legislation, the institutional support in the housing sector is covered by the following categories of its citizens:

1. Persons who can prove that they hold title over a building lot (a parcel of land) on which their house is built, but the house does not meet the criteria for adequate housing;
2. Persons who can prove that they hold title over a building lot (a parcel of land), but they do not have the needed funds to build a house;
3. Persons who can prove that they have a constructed house, but the title of the lot (parcel of land) is not on their name, and
4. Persons who can prove that they neither have a lot (a parcel of land) nor a house on their name.

Forms of assistance are outlined in the Law No. 03L-164 on Financing of Special Housing Programmes.<sup>72</sup> The purpose of this Law is to create conditions of sustainable housing for families and individuals who cannot afford the costs of the free housing market; it also determines the procedure and ways to allocate and utilize funds for development of special housing programmes. The Law foresees institutional and financial instruments for addressing housing problems, housing programmes for non-profit making rents, and subsidised housing programmes, as well as the procedure for provision of adequate housing to families in need (that is coordinated by the municipalities). The procedure includes the following: management of requests for social housing, selection of beneficiary households, analysis of instruments and the needed financial resources (including land with infrastructure for constructing apartments with non-profit rentals), and allocation of housing and supervision of the process of distribution by managing the contracting process. To implement the Law, municipalities need to develop three-year municipal housing programmes.

Table 10. The actual situation with three-year municipal housing plans

| No. | Actions carried out   | Number of municipalities |
|-----|---|--------------------------|
| 1.  | Decisions for drafting of three-year municipal housing plans issued by Mayors | 20                       |
| 2.  | Setting up of the working groups at the municipal level (Committees)          | 20                       |
| 3.  | Drafts / completed three-year housing programmes in municipalities            | 15                       |
| 4.  | Approval of three-year housing programmes in Municipal Assemblies             | 9                        |
| 5.  | Setting up of the housing sector  | 4                        |

Based on available data, the Government of Kosovo, with support from various international agencies and organizations in the form of projects and programmes, has managed to provide

<sup>71</sup> Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in Kosovo 2013-2014, Survey on Multiple Cluster Indicators: Summary Report. Kosovo Statistics Agency. 2014.

<sup>72</sup> [http://mmph-rks.org/repository/docs/Ligji\\_Nr.\\_03L-164\\_per\\_Financimin\\_e\\_programeve\\_te\\_vecanta\\_te\\_banimit\\_shqip.pdf](http://mmph-rks.org/repository/docs/Ligji_Nr._03L-164_per_Financimin_e_programeve_te_vecanta_te_banimit_shqip.pdf)

housing for a number of families and members of the Roma and Ashkali communities. Based on data by the MCR, it results that from 2005 until 2015, 510 houses were built for the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities,<sup>73</sup> whereas the new reintegration programme, managed by the MIA, and its construction and renovation component has provided housing for 24 Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian families since 2014. MESP has constructed 9 blocks of apartments for social housing; Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities also benefitted from these housing units. Besides, the provisional collective shelter in Plemetin/Plemetina has been closed, whereby 36 families have been accommodated in collective housing, nine individual houses have been constructed and twelve houses renovated. In Magura / Golesh social housing blocks were built providing 22 housing units for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian families and individuals.<sup>74</sup> At the same time, the Government of Kosovo has developed special programmes targeting housing needs of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. As a result of these special programmes, the following collective shelters (camps) were closed: Çesmin Llug, Osterode, and the Camp in Laposaviq, by thus meeting the housing needs of families and persons internally displaced in camps within Kosovo.

Within the Reintegration Programme, MIA/ Department for Reintegration of Repatriated Persons (DRRP), as the funding agency, in cooperation with MESP, as an implementing agency, have designed support schemes for the returnees and repatriated persons; the schemes included reconstruction of houses, renovation of houses, furnishing of houses, and supply with furniture, based on the criteria foreseen by the Regulation GRK No. 04/2016 on Reintegration of Repatriated Persons and on Managing the Reintegration Programme.<sup>75</sup>

Based on policies on reintegration for reconstruction / renovation, repatriated persons who can prove that the building in which they lived before is fully or partially destroyed, and who possess documents attesting ownership, can benefit from the scheme for renovation. After reviewing applications, the Central Commission for Reintegration in the field of housing, supported Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities to reconstruct and renovate houses and to supply their house with furniture. Also, based on this programme, all repatriated persons who do not own an apartment or a house can benefit from the rental scheme for a period of six months with a possible extension for another six months. After having received support from the schemes offered by the MIA/DRRP, it is a responsibility of municipalities to provide sustainable housing through their three-year housing programmes.

Another striking problem of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities is the lack of documentation on property ownership for those who have constructed their houses on building lots which have not been transferred to the new owners.

Living in informal settlements is one of the key problems of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. By definition, "informal dwellings are human settlements, in which it is not possible for its residents to enjoy their rights for a living standard, in particular for adequate housing." In total, there are 174 informal settlements in Kosovo,<sup>76</sup> 32 of which are inhabited by members of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities.

---

<sup>73</sup> Interview with the Director for Management of Construction Projects Mr. Albert Zeqa, MRC.

<sup>74</sup> Information by MESP.

<sup>75</sup> [http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/Rregullore\\_\(QRK\)\\_nr\\_042016\\_per\\_riintegrimin\\_e\\_personave\\_te\\_riatdhesuar.pdf](http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/Rregullore_(QRK)_nr_042016_per_riintegrimin_e_personave_te_riatdhesuar.pdf)

<sup>76</sup> Report on situation of informal dwellings in Kosovo.

<http://mmpf.rks-gov.net/repository/docs/Raporti-29.12.2010-QERSHOR.pdf>

## **3.8. Cross-cutting issues**

### **3.8.1. Gender equality**

Gender equality is a cross-sector issue and, as such it ought to be duly treated. Women, members of Roma and Ashkali communities are faced with social and economic problems, but at the same time they suffer from twofold discrimination: as women in general, and as female members of the of Roma and Ashkali communities, in particular. The low level of education is critical for their actual situation, and plays an important role to improve their employment levels and health situation. Key indicators for the education sector presented in Section 3.5 of this document talk about the unfavourable position of women members of the of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, even when compared with the data about male population of the same communities. For instance, while 86.5% of the males in age of 15-24 from all two communities are literate, this is true only for the 72.8% of the females of the same age-group. Likewise, inclusion of females of the Roma and Ashkali communities in the labour market is very low.

A positive trend of improvement can be discerned in the field of education. Early births have gradually dropped during the last decade, in particular in urban areas. Percentage of births carried out in health institutions is as follows: Roma 96.1 % and Ashkali 97.8%.

Measures of this Strategy are planned in a way that would allow addressing of gender issues, in order to achieve improvement of gender equality between the two communities in all intervention fields of the Strategy.

### **3.8.2. Security**

Statistical data and reports from Standards of Perception of free movement and security for ethnic minorities for 2014 show a positive trend, in particular when referring to Roma and Ashkali communities. In order to further enhance the level of security for these communities, the Kosovo Police is implementing various strategies that pertain to community safety, crime prevention, community policing, participation in the security forums (NCCS, HCPS and ATCS), which altogether show an inclusive approach in implementation, including also Roma and Ashkali communities.

Besides, there are a number of additional information and communication activities, including distribution of leaflets, brochures, meetings with citizens, etc. Also, in close cooperation with local and international partners, other activities are organized that aim at crime prevention, increasing awareness of the citizens regarding protection from crime, solving problems related to crimes and so on.

During 2014 and 2015 a number of members of these and other communities immigrated to EU countries. The Kosovo Police, in cooperation with representatives from the Hungarian Embassy, MIA, municipalities, NGOs and representatives of the Roma and Ashkali communities organized meetings in municipalities to explain consequences that illegal migration can bring about.

### **3.8.3. Registration**

Lack of registration of members of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities<sup>77</sup> is a significant obstacle for these communities to access education, employment, social protection, health services and housing. According to the Law on Schemes for Social Assistance, in order qualify for social

---

<sup>77</sup> OSCE, 2012, Contribution to the progress review of the Action Plan of the Strategy for Integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities in Kosovo 2009–2015.

Assistance, all members of the applying family have to be supplied with Kosovo paperwork. Even though there are no accurate data on the number of members of these communities that are not registered,<sup>78</sup> estimates of a study from 2015 refer to a number of 600 unregistered members of these communities,<sup>79</sup> whereas a study of KSA<sup>80</sup> found that 20% of the children do not possess a birth certificate. Reasons for non-registration are manifold, including cumbersome procedures for cases when children are not born in hospitals, lack of tradition of registration over many cohorts, lack of awareness on the obligation for registration, and lack of information about the rights/benefits resulting from registration, as well as life in informal dwellings.<sup>81</sup> Lack of information about registration procedures appears to be another reason for non-registration of children; since 40% of the mothers of unregistered children have pointed out that they are not aware about the registration procedures of the new-born infants.<sup>82</sup>

To encourage registration, more information and awareness raising campaigns need to be organized on advantages of civil registration and consequences of non-registration; other ideas would be to waive the fees for registration and supplying identification documents for the members of communities, and provide information on the criteria that need to be met for registration. Since television is the main source of information with these communities,<sup>83</sup> campaigns would need to be broadcasted on television, together with direct communication sessions with targeted communities. Also, NGOs engaged with women need to inform women on registration advantages and registration procedures of the new-born infants. It is important to organize training of civil registration officers to allow for a fair and uniform application of the law also for members of these communities who do not own documents of the pre-1999 period.

---

<sup>78</sup> European Commission, Progress Report on Kosovo, 2015.

<sup>79</sup> A study financed by UNHCR and implemented by the Agency of Civil Registration to identify unregistered persons with a special focus on the Roma and Ashkali communities. Information sent from UNHCR, by Milanka Bazdar, Durable Solutions Associate, 23 September 2016.

<sup>80</sup> Kosovo Statistics Agency, Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities in the Republic of Kosovo, Survey Multiple Cluster Indicators 2013-2014.

<sup>81</sup> Noted in the Strategy for Integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities in Kosovo 2009–2015.

<sup>82</sup> Kosovo Statistics Agency, Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities in the Republic of Kosovo, Survey Multiple Cluster Indicators 2013-2014.

<sup>83</sup> Kosovo Center for Gender Studies and the Network of Women Organizations of Roma and Ashkali communities of Kosovo, 2008; Kosovo Statistics Agency, Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities in the Republic of Kosovo, Survey Multiple Cluster Indicators 2013-2014.

## 4. Strategy vision, mission and principles

Vision of the Government of the Republic of Kosovo is to *be a society that safeguards the rights of all communities and meets the highest international standards in respecting human rights, as defined in the respective international covenants, in the Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo and in the Republic of Kosovo legislation.*

To accomplish this vision, the Government of the Republic of Kosovo undertakes to *promote and to ensure effective fulfilment of the rights of the Roma and Ashkali communities, in particular in the sectors of education, employment, health services, and housing, aiming at their full inclusion in all aspects of social life in Kosovo.* This is the mission of this Strategy.

The Government of the Republic of Kosovo is fully aware of the situation of the Roma and Ashkali communities and is determined to engage in additional efforts to bring about more adequate conditions for them, so that they enjoy the equal rights with all other ethnic communities in Kosovo free of any form of discrimination.

This commitment is confirmed through the approval of the Strategy for Integration of Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian Communities 2009-2015 and its Plan of Action and the sequel with the strategy: the Strategy for Integration of Roma and Ashkali Communities 2017-2021 and the Action Plan for its implementation (further in this document Strategy and Plan of Action or SPA). Both these strategies foresee affirmative measures that aim at reducing social differences in all sectors between Roma and Ashkali communities on one side and the other ethnic communities, on the other.

The Strategy for Inclusion of Roma and Ashkali communities is based on three key principles, each aligned with the European Framework on National Strategies for Integration of Roma:

- The principle of equal rights and equal opportunities. This principle recognises the need for members of the Roma and Ashkali communities to enjoy equal opportunities in all spheres of life, on equal footing with the majority population.
- The principle of non-discrimination – that allows for all measures to contribute to significantly reduce the level of discrimination against the Roma and Ashkali communities in all spheres of social life.
- The principle of elimination of differences – one of the key reasons for social exclusion of Roma and Ashkalis rests in the fact that, in most of the cases, they live in separate dwellings and isolated from the other communities. In this way, social factors and mechanisms reproduce marginalization standing on the way of affirmative action that serves for social inclusion.

## 5. Alternatives taken in consideration

Inclusion of the Roma and Ashkali communities in the Kosovo society is a long-term interest of the members of these communities, but also of all citizens of the Republic of Kosovo. Inclusion helps reduce the current gap between members of these communities and the rest of the citizens in all spheres of social life, which directly serves to reduce the poverty prevailing in lives of these communities. The EU Framework on national strategies for integration of Roma until 2020<sup>84</sup> defines four key fields for the Strategy to focus on: education, employment and social welfare, health, and housing. Since the last strategy implemented during 2009-2015 comprised 11 fields, the first dilemma that came up was whether focusing only on four fields would mean injustice towards community members. However, after analysing the situation it was found that several fields are in fact related; for instance, registration and gender equality could be addressed reasonably well within all four fields as defined by the EU. Second, significant progress was witnessed in several fields (for example: security, media, and information) and therefore addressing them within the new Strategy could shift the focus away from paramount problems with which are faced members of these communities. Third, problems of Roma and Ashkali communities are also addressed by other strategic documents, by addressing specific community needs. And, fourth, Kosovo aspirations for integration into EU call for state policies to be aligned with EU provisions, thus allowing a comparison of results with other EU countries.

With regard to the strategic objective 1 ("Education") we considered the fact that the Kosovo Education Strategic Plan 2017-2021 (KESP) already exists, which, to a considerable degree, addresses also the specific needs Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. This has made KESP a starting point for developing specific solutions which are suitable for three communities in education sector. The focus of this objective remains the largest possible inclusion of minority community members in the education system requiring specific activities in increasing their participation, such as, their greater inclusion in preschool education, provision of scholarships for learners and students, etc. However, increasing learning outcomes has been considered an important aspect of their participation, as the drop-out from school has often come as a direct result of a poor performance in school. In view of this, the model of learning centers has been promoted to serve the minority community members. The need for these centers will cease to exist once the overall level of education and the living standard of population has increased, however, it has been estimated that these centers should enjoy special support, at least for the next five year. In spite of the prevailing belief that some members of Roma and Ashkali communities do not appreciate the importance of education, we have considered that our actions should be directed towards raising the awareness of the majority population to help members of Roma and Ashkali communities achieve better results in education, convinced that in this way lasting and sustainable effects will be achieved.

Strategic Objective 2 ("Employment and Social welfare") aims to improve the situation of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in the area of employment and social welfare. Since MLSW already has a sectoral strategy for the period 2014-2020, the same has been taken as the basis in drafting this strategic document, imposing the division of the area in two specific sub-areas: employment and social welfare. In the area employment, efforts will be made to increase the employment level among Roma and Ashkali communities in public institutions and public

---

<sup>84</sup> EU Framework on National Strategies for Integration of Roma until 2020, Brussels, 04.05.2011, COM(2011) 173. [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/policies/di/scrimination/docs/com\\_2011\\_173\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/policies/di/scrimination/docs/com_2011_173_en.pdf)

enterprises, due to the fact that the state has legal instruments available to do so. In addition, following the discussions, active measures of the labor market have also been included to encourage private sector to employ members of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, although such measures have not always produced good results in other countries, in terms of employment sustainability. Nevertheless, a conclusion has been reached that that quotas should be part of the LAMM, including as many members of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities as possible in vocational training programs. As for social welfare, it is thought that efforts should be directed towards informing the members of these communities on their right to be included in the social welfare schemes, and that these measures should be accompanied with the provision of opportunities for vocational training and inclusion in LAMM. Due to the specific situation of Roma and Ashkali communities, identification of children with special needs has remained a primary task of the social welfare service. Several types of social services have also been looked into which do not exist in our own system, and it has been recommended to work on the development of new services, by delegating some of the tasks to civil society organizations.

The starting point for strategic planning in the area of health (Objective 3) has been the existence of substantial differences in health parameters among Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities on one hand, and the majority population on the other hand. For example, only 30.2% of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children aged 24-35 months have received all recommended vaccines within the vaccination schedule, whereas at the level of Kosovo's population this applies for 78% of children<sup>85</sup>. This implied that a large part of the strategy be dedicated to education and awareness raising, and less to the quality of services, since the latter poses a problem in the overall healthcare system of Kosovo. Particular attention has also been paid to improving access to health services, especially for preventive purposes.

Housing (Objective 4) continues to remain a major problem of Roma and Ashkalis communities, and the solution does not seem to be quick and easy. During the drafting process of the Strategy, different models for solving the housing issue have been analysed, including the social housing and bonus-based rental accommodation. It was concluded that efforts should be directed towards having a comprehensive identification of the needs of the community members to help them on the issue of housing, which will be implemented through the MESP database, which is currently being developed. Then, the issue of informal settlements and provision of housing should be addressed within budgetary capacities and the readiness of donors for support in this area. Importance should also be put on completing ownership documentation, which often poses an obstacle in the provision of the housing assistance, and also in those cases when it is feasible.

---

<sup>85</sup> Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2013-2014. UNICEF. 2016

## 6. Strategic objectives

One strategic objective was defined for each of the four intervention fields. Further, each strategic objective was analysed into expected outcomes, and expected outcomes into activities. The table below gives an outline of the strategic objectives and expected outcomes for the four fields.

| Fields                               | Strategic objectives  | Activities  | Expected outcomes   |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|---|
| <b>Education</b>                     | Increase inclusion and provide opportunities for personal development, training and education for members of the Roma and Ashkali communities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incentivizing attendance in pre-school education.</li> <li>• Drafting action plans for the prevention of drop-outs and non-enrollment in all municipalities.</li> <li>• Stimulating measures to facilitate the enrolment of Roma and Ashkali children in secondary and higher levels of education.</li> <li>• Drafting individualized education plans for repatriated learners.</li> <li>• Development of specific positive measures and preparatory programs for enrolment and retention of students of Roma and Ashkali communities in HEI.</li> <li>• Support to adult education programs</li> <li>• Defining gender sensitive indicators for EMIS for Roma and Ashkali community members.</li> <li>• Elimination of segregation and discrimination against Roma and Ashkali community children.</li> <li>• Support to community-based learning centers</li> <li>• Provision of supplemental learning for learners facing difficulties in learning.</li> <li>• Promotion of Roma language learning</li> <li>• Development of awareness raising programs for parents regarding early childhood.</li> <li>• Organizing awareness raising activities of Roma and Ashkali communities regarding the importance of timely enrollment and school attendance, particularly focusing on girls.</li> <li>• Awareness raising of general population regarding the education of Roma and Ashkali communities.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved participation in education of the members of the Roma and Ashkali communities.</li> <li>• Improved performance of students of the Roma and Ashkali communities.</li> <li>• Increased awareness among stakeholders to support education of the members of Roma and Ashkali communities.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Employment and social welfare</b> | Improve the economic and social situation of the Roma and Ashkali   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research, set gender sensitive indicators and report on the situation of the labour market for members of the Roma and Ashkali communities and their benefits from the services/measures provided by MLSW.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved level of employment for members of the Roma and Ashkali communities.</li> <li>• Improved participation of the families</li> </ul>   |

|                |  |   |   |
|----------------|--|---|---|
|                | communities  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improvement of representation of the Roma and Ashkali communities in employment in public institution and enterprises.</li> <li>• Research and implement measures of affirmative action for employment of Roma and Ashkali communities.</li> <li>• Assessment of needs and of effectiveness of employment services and LAMM.</li> <li>• Design / modification of (additional) employment services and LAMM, including vocational training, in line with the needs of the Roma and Ashkali communities.</li> <li>• Organization of information campaigns for LAMM employment services, including vocational training.</li> <li>• Promotion of labour market success stories among Roma and Ashkali communities.</li> <li>• Assessment of additional support for recipients of social assistance.</li> <li>• Identification of children and persons with special needs.</li> <li>• Information campaign on welfare schemes and social services.</li> <li>• Analysis of the quality of social services and identification of new social services.</li> <li>• Building capacity of municipal officers for improvement of social services.</li> </ul> | of Roma and Ashkali communities in the social welfare schemes and better access to social services.   |
| <b>Health</b>  | Improve the health situation and quality of life among the members of the Roma and Ashkali communities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of activities for breast cancer screening.</li> <li>• Implementation of home visitations for mothers and children and other vulnerable groups.</li> <li>• Vulnerable population outreach activities.</li> <li>• Institutional measures that improve access to health services.</li> <li>• Continuous monitoring of access to healthcare services.</li> <li>• Immunization campaigns.</li> <li>• Distribution of information materials on family planning and reproductive health.</li> <li>• Education on importance of hygiene and sanitary conditions.</li> <li>• Enhancing preventive capacity of the primary healthcare staff.</li> <li>• Quarterly control of the lead level in community residential areas.</li> <li>• Supply with family size waste containers.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved access to health services for the members of Roma and Ashkali communities.</li> <li>• Improved health routines and practices among members of the Roma and Ashkali communities.</li> <li>• A healthy environment is provided for the population of Roma and Ashkali communities.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Housing</b> | Provide adequate and sustainable housing for the   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclusion of members of Roma and Ashkali communities in the database for financing of special housing programmes.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adequate housing and social housing needs identified for the members of</li> </ul>   |

|  |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|
|  | Roma and Ashkali communities in line with the effective legislation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Setting of priorities for families in need for inclusion in the social housing programme.</li> <li>• Organisation of the awareness raising campaign for inclusion in the housing initiatives.</li> <li>• Support Roma and Ashkali communities for supply with adequate property paperwork or some other title right over building land.</li> <li>• Design priority projects for renovation, reconstruction or building houses on own property.</li> <li>• Implementation of programmes for treating informal settlements.</li> <li>• Identification of properties for social housing.</li> <li>• Drafting priority projects for social housing.</li> </ul> | <p>the community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is increased awareness among the members of the Roma and Ashkali communities regarding their active participation in solving their housing problems.</li> <li>• There is significant progress towards settling the housing issue for the members of the Roma and Ashkali communities.</li> </ul> |
|--|---|---|---|

More detailed elaboration for each strategic field is given below in the following chapters.

## 6.1. Education

Regardless of the fact that it is not the fastest way out of the poverty, education is the most important and most stable factor in poverty prevention and social integration. It is well known that uneducated people or those who start their education at a later stage, or drop out from school early, face difficulties in getting employment and, in general, their opportunities in life are limited. Adult education programs can to a certain extent compensate for the lack of formal education, but they should not be the first option to provide education to a community.

Kosovo Education Strategic Plan 2017-2021 includes a range of measures dealing with education of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, and other marginalized groups, as well. Some of these measures have been provided below, in an adapted form, while some other measures are specific to this strategy.

### Challenges

#### Participation in the education system

Participation of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian community members in the education system has marked progress in the last 17 years, mainly as a result of the implementation of the Strategy for the Integration of Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities 2009-2015. This is particularly visible in the primary level of education (grades 1-5) where the participation of these communities has exceeded 85%<sup>86</sup>. However, the difference compared to Kosovo's average is still noticeable, while the participation of these communities in the higher level of education system rapidly decreases. Thus, in lower secondary education the participation of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian community children of the age group 11-14 is only 65%<sup>87</sup>, while in the upper secondary education it drops to 30.3%<sup>88</sup>. The provided show an equal representation of girls at the primary level of education, however, situation becomes worse at higher levels of the education system. Unfortunately, there is no completely accurate data for higher education although there is a steady increase in the number of students from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities.

The causes of low participation vary according to levels. In the preschool education, the possibilities are limited, since attending specialized preschools institutions bears costs, while the number of community-based centers is limited and there is no institutional support. Primary education is provided free of charge in public schools, nevertheless, the enrollment rate of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian community children is lower than the average at the level of Kosovo, which could be a matter of awareness raising. However, the decrease in participation in the lower secondary education, and particularly in the upper secondary education could be related to economic factors, namely to the inability of families to cover the costs associated with the education of their children, by giving up on the income they can bring to their families in this period of their lives.

A large number of families of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities have emigrated abroad, particularly during 2014 and 2015. Some Roma and Ashkalis children do not enroll at all or drop out of school because their families migrate during the school year, or leave the country and, when they return, it is difficult for them to go back to education. Sometimes, the reason for this is the lack of

---

<sup>86</sup> Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2013-2014 – Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities (MICS), Final report, KSA, Prishtinë 2014, p. VII. <https://ask.rks-gov.net/images/files/Komunitetet%20Rome,%20Ashkali%20dhe%20Egjptiane%20ne%20Kosove.pdf>

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

documentation from the schools in European countries, as well as difficulties in recognizing the same.

### **Quality of learning outcomes**

The focus on increasing the inclusion has not always been accompanied with proper activities which have an impact on the improvement of the quality of learning outcomes. Although there is no accurate data, Roma and Ashkali community children demonstrate poorer performance in school than average. Insufficient inclusion in preschool education is one of the reasons, since at this stage children acquire pre-reading and pre-counting skills, which are important for the successful start of compulsory education. Another reason is the education level of these families, which does not provide a suitable environment for learning at home. In addition, Roma children, very often, manifest a problem of not knowing sufficiently the language used in schools in order to demonstrate good performance. Poor performance in school has a discouraging effect on children and, very often, demotivates them to continue education.

### **Awareness raising on the importance of education**

Nowadays, one cannot say that members of any social group are not aware of the importance the education has for their children. A high level of awareness has also been noticed among Roma and Ashkali community members, who put efforts to have their children attend school, despite the fact that they are often demotivated due to the fact that those who graduate still remain unemployed. Lack of information, including awareness may be linked to the importance of preschool education, but not for other levels of education. However, there is often lack of awareness of the majority population regarding the social importance of education for marginalized groups. Besides realizing one of their fundamental rights with education, Roma and Ashkali communities create conditions to break out of poverty and contribute to social development. Therefore, it is necessary to raise the awareness of central and local authorities, including schools and the majority community and support these communities in increasing the level of their education.

### **Objective**

**Increased inclusion and provision of opportunities for development, training and quality education for Roma and Ashkali community members**

The implementation of school policies and practices aimed at comprehensive processes is a precondition which enables the increased inclusion and prevent the drop-outs of children. Increased inclusion and prevention of school drop-out time and cannot be achieved without the full implementation of the legal framework. This is also a complex issue and requires the mobilization of schools, including the local and central levels of authorities. Provision of opportunities for realization of the potential for members of the two targeted communities is the key element of this objective. All citizens have the right to quality education and it is the obligation of the state to provide them with such education. For marginalized groups it is even more important because it creates new opportunities for their personal development and employment.

#### Expected outcomes:

- 1.1. Participation of Roma and Ashkali community members in education has been improved;
- 1.2. Performance of learners and students of Roma and Ashkali communities has been improved;
- 1.3. Key stakeholders have been sensitized to support the education of Roma and Ashkali community members.

## Activities

### Outcome 1.1: Participation of Roma and Ashkali community members in education has been improved

#### 1.1.1. Activity: Incentivizing attendance in pre-school education.

Supporting community-based preschool programs subsidizing enrolment fees in public preschool institutions for Roma and Ashkali children are two measures which will help their attendance in preschool education. Based on the needs, pre-primary classrooms should be opened in schools which are attended by Roma and Ashkali community children in order to make the necessary preparations for their inclusion in the compulsory education. Whenever appropriate, possibilities of including educators from Roma and Ashkali communities should be sought, which would facilitate the work with children of these communities.

#### 1.1.2. Activity: Drafting action plans for the prevention of drop-outs and non-enrollment in all municipalities.

Schools, in cooperation with municipalities and CSOs, and with an active participation of the beneficiary communities, should develop action plans to prevent dropouts and non-enrollment of Roma and Ashkali community children. These plans should cover specific activities of school dropout prevention teams which have been established in all schools, implying close cooperation with community representatives, and state authorities. A specific aspect of these plans should be the integration of children repatriated from European countries, through the organization of intensive learning and other forms of support. Such cooperation should also prevail during the enrolment of children in compulsory education, and not allow school-age children to remain at home.

#### 1.1.3. Activity: Stimulating measures to facilitate the enrolment and attendance of Roma and Ashkali children in secondary and higher levels of education.

Children of Roma and Ashkali communities should be supported during their enrolment in upper secondary education, both through career guidance and counselling and through scholarships in order to enable their attendance in schools. A special scholarship program should be institutionalized at the state level aiming to award 600 scholarships per school year, and in addition, municipalities would also be requested to provide scholarships for secondary school students coming from these two communities.

#### 1.1.4. Activity: Drafting individualized education plans for repatriated Roma and Ashkali learners.

The repatriated students, after being included in the education system, should have individualized plans in order to integrate them as quickly and easily in the learning process as possible. These plans should be developed by the schools in cooperation with parents and other social services, taking into account the specific needs of Roma and Ashkali learners.

**1.1.5. Activity: Development of specific positive measures and preparatory programs for enrolment and retention of students of Roma and Ashkali communities in HEI.**

With an aim of admitting students of vulnerable categories in HEI, the development of specific preparatory program will be supported. Practical examples of such measures are the provision of intensive courses for candidates from the communities to prepare them for the entry exam and a policy of reserved seats in HEI in order to reach equal participation. Likewise, student support programs should be developed to retain students from minority communities and marginalized groups in higher education through mentoring programs, provision of transportation and dormitories. Additional support for these students should be provided through the scholarship program for higher education.

**1.1.6. Activity: Support to adult education programs**

Adults from Roma and Ashkali communities could be enrolled in special programs for the completion of formal education, including vocational education (based on needs analysis), and accelerated programs. In cooperation with representatives of municipalities and non-governmental organizations, information campaigns will be organized to explain the opportunities provided through these programs. In addition, implementation of literacy training programs will be supported, particularly for parents who have children in school.

**Outcome 1.2: Performance of learners and students of Roma and Ashkali communities has been improved**

**1.2.1. Activity: Defining gender sensitive indicators for EMIS for Roma and Ashkali community members.**

MEST should define indicators which provide data related to the enrolment and performance of children of Roma and Ashkali communities in pre-university education. EMIS should provide clear information on enrollment rates of members of each of these communities and their performance in national tests, and compare them to the national average and the average of the respective municipality.

**1.2.2. Activity: Elimination of segregation and discrimination against Roma and Ashkali community children.**

Cases of segregation and discrimination against children of Roma and Ashkali communities are not uncommon and have a negative impact on the performance of learners from these communities. All such cases will be addressed in accordance with the law, by taking proper measures against offenders. MEST will develop pedagogical guidelines to avoid cases of segregation and discrimination and by distributing them to municipalities and schools.

Although a significant number of teachers has gone through various training programs on inclusion, social justice, ethnic, cultural, religious, language diversity, this does not suffice to make schools acquire an inclusive approach. Therefore, in order for schools to be open and treat every learner equally, each teacher should have necessary knowledge and skills to ensure the inclusion of all learners in the learning process. This applies in particular to schools which are attended by learners from Roma and Ashkali communities.

**1.2.3. Activity: Support to community-based learning centers**

Currently there are 40 community-based learning centers operating in Kosovo providing services to Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian community members. Through specific activities these

centers have had a positive impact on improving the performance of children of these communities and encouraging them to continue their education. MEST and municipalities will provide support to these centers in different forms, be it financial support through NGOs which look after them, or through the provision of premises in public buildings, particularly in schools. MEST will also engage in developing a legal basis to institutionalize these centers, meaning: the development of minimum standards for their operation, curriculum and staff who will be working in these centers.

**1.2.4. Activity: Provision of supplemental learning for learners facing difficulties in learning.**

In schools which are attended by Roma and Ashkali community children, supplemental classes will be organized to help learners who face difficulties in learning. It would also be desirable to organize mentoring for children of Roma and Ashkali communities.

**1.2.5. Activity: Promotion of Roma language learning**

It is a constitutional right of children of Roma community to be trained to use their language and alphabet. For this purpose, supplemental classes on Roma language will be provided in all settings where interest exists, according to curricula and textbooks already approved by MEST. If the number of Roma learners in a school is small, efforts will be made to organize Roma language learning at the level of the group of schools or municipality. Trainings for teachers of Roma language will also be organized.

**Outcome 1.3: Key stakeholders have been sensitized to support the education of Roma and Ashkali community members.**

**1.3.1. Activity: Development of awareness raising programs for parents regarding early childhood.**

In many cases parents need to be educated to understand the importance of early childhood development. This will be implemented in the areas inhabited by Roma and Ashkali community members in order to encourage them to enroll their children in preschool education, and particularly in the pre-primary education.

**1.3.2. Activity: Organizing awareness raising activities of Roma and Ashkali communities regarding the importance of timely enrollment and school attendance, particularly focusing on girls.**

MEDs, in cooperation with non-governmental organizations, should notify parents regarding the importance of enrollment and school attendance for their children. Activities should accurately reflect the needs, concerns and different challenges faced by boys and girls and which affect their school enrollment and attendance, and if the girls face any particular obstacle regarding their initial enrolment.

**1.3.3. Activity: Awareness raising of general population regarding the education of Roma and Ashkali communities.**

Advocacy campaigns, debates, TV spots are some of the ways to raise the awareness of the general public to support the education of Roma and Ashkali communities. These activities will be implemented by state institutions and CSOs.

### **Cross-cutting issues**

Increasing the participation in education and improving the performance of Roma and Ashkali community learners are closely linked to the progress in three other areas of this Strategy. Thus, the economic situation in the family is a factor which has a significant influence on the decisions related to the continuation of education, and, undoubtedly, affects the performance of learners. Living

conditions also have an impact on performance of learners, including their health condition and of their families. On the other hand, better and quality education has an effect in increasing employment opportunities and solving their housing problem, as well as achieving a higher degree of awareness regarding health care.

### **Assumptions and risks**

The main assumptions to ensure the achievement of the above-mentioned objective are:

- Schools develop and provide support programs for learners with difficulties in learning.
- Schools develop plans for inclusion of repatriated learners.

Whereas, the factors which could put into question the success and implementation of what has been planned are:

- Learning centers threaten to get closed due to the failure to ensure sustainability.
- Lack of readiness of municipalities to facilitate enrollment conditions and attendance of Roma and Ashkali children in pre-school and secondary levels of education.
- Lack of involvement of school and municipal teams to prevent drop-outs.
- Failure to collect data on ethnic belonging in a systematic manner and use them in achieving the set objectives.

## 6.2. Employment and social welfare

Access to employment, social assistance schemes and social services contribute to improve economic and social welfare of individuals and communities. Currently, there are very low employment rates of the Roma and Ashkali communities (even when compared to other communities), whereas inclusion in social service schemes remains limited. Access of these communities to employment, employment services, and opportunities for professional development and in social service schemes ought to be improved in a way that they reflect the specific needs of the two targeted communities. Instead of creating dependence on social assistance schemes, more active participation in the labour market and more opportunities for professional development continue to be the main targets, as the best way to improve economic and social welfare of these communities.

### Challenges

#### Level of employment, sustainability and quality labour

The employment situation of the Roma and Ashkali communities is more difficult than that of the other communities. Jobs they are engaged in are frequently temporary, mostly physical low paid jobs that do not require high skills.<sup>89</sup> These communities remain underrepresented in employment in public institution.<sup>90</sup>

Parts of the reasons for the current situation of employment are specific to these communities or affect these communities than others: a low average level of education / skills (albeit recently showing signs of improvement), discrimination in the labour market and low access to relations / informal networks that would allow for more employability.<sup>91</sup> The situation in the labour market appears to be even graver for women members of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, with only nine percent of whom are currently being employed.<sup>92</sup> Reasons for gender differences are intertwined and include early marriages, low level of education (compared to males), and gender stereotypes according to which the woman is considered to be responsible solely for taking care about home and family.<sup>93</sup> In the public sector, disregard of the proportional representation at the municipal level and of the overall quota for all non-majority communities (not for each separate community) work to the detriment of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. Cases are reported when members of Albanian community report themselves as members of non-majority communities to benefit from measures of affirmative action (in employment and in LAMM).<sup>94</sup>

---

<sup>89</sup> Kosovo Foundation for Open Society (KFOS), Situation of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in Kosovo, 2010, and the World Labour Organization, Transition of Youth to a Better Job: Evidence from Kosovo, Document on Employment Policies of the WLO 2007/4.

<sup>90</sup> Employment of non-majority communities in public institution (at the central and local level – with exception of public enterprises) is only at 7.7 percent, and the Ashkali, Egyptian and Roma communities are underrepresented compared to their respective participation in the overall percentage of the total population. Office of the Prime-Minister / Office on Community Issues, Assessment of Employment of Non-Majority Communities in the Civil Service and in Public Enterprises in Kosovo, 2013. The more recent statistics disaggregated by ethnicity (available only for the central level) gave a similar picture: in 2015, percentage of non-majority communities was at 6.24% (Ashkali 0.07%, Roma 0.13%, Egyptian 0.03%). Sh.Berisha FOR THE Kosovo Democratic Institute (KDI), Parliamentary Research: Representation of non-majority communities in the civil service, May 2016.

<sup>91</sup> The World Labour Organization, Transition of Youth to a Good Job: Evidence from Kosovo, Document on Employment Policies of the WLO 2007/4. Even though the situation with employment is changing, there are still differences with other communities, in particular regarding working age population.

<sup>92</sup> The CREATE Foundation and the Roma and Ashkali Documentation Centre (RADC). Roma and Ashkali Women in Government and Economy.

<sup>93</sup> Kosovo Centre for Gender Studies the Network of Organizations of Roma and Ashkali Women of Kosovo, Position of Women of Roma and Ashkali Communities in Kosovo, 2008.

<sup>94</sup> Reporting from civil society organizations during interviews and the workshop held on September 20, 2016.

### **Access to professional training and employment services**

In general, access to employment and professional training provided by the MLSW (and other organizations) is limited by the level of information of job-seekers and by the capacity of the MLSW to provide services for such a large number of job-seekers. In the case of Roma and Ashkali communities, the level of information shows to be very low, but at the same time, their needs and / or obstacles for participation in LAMM appear to be different: for instance, exclusive criteria for a part of these communities (e.g. level of education / previous knowledge). There are also cases when members of these communities cannot participate in trainings mediated by the MLSW because they need to take care of their home/family, or they are not willing to get employed since they consider that through informal work they can earn better income.

### **Access to social assistance schemes**

Based on the data of the Population census of 2011 the total number of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities was calculated at 35,784,<sup>95</sup> whereas data by MICS, who calculated the average family size at 6 members, show that there are around 6,000 families of these communities. Based on information that 60% (or 3,600 families) of these communities cannot provide the most essential goods for life, it comes out that only 54% of the poor families are covered by the social schemes. The main reasons for poor access to these schemes are the following: poor targeting of the social welfare system (meaning that well off families also benefit from these schemes at a time when the schemes were designed to support only poor families); criteria on the right to benefit from social assistance (legal definition of the family as family community);<sup>96</sup> lack of civil registration of the members of these communities and the insufficient information about social welfare schemes. Lacking the information, most of the families of these communities apply for the category two social assistance, in which the key criterion is for the family to have a child under the age of five. In efforts to meet this condition, the birth rate goes up and the poverty level is only further aggravated.<sup>97</sup>

### **Amount of social assistance**

Despite the supplement payment (of five Euros) for every child the social assistance is deemed very low and insufficient to support poor families and to meet their elementary needs.<sup>98</sup> In average, on member of a recipient family of social assistance in Kosovo obtains 0.75 Euro a day, compared to 0.59 Euro received by a recipient member of a Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian family (Table 5), which is calculated to be for 21% less support for these communities, which again is under the threshold of extreme poverty that was last calculated in 2011 in the value of 1.20 Euro). As a result, benefiting families use the entire amount to meet only the basic life expenses, including also the child supplement payments dedicated for the welfare and education of children.<sup>99</sup>

### **Utilization of social services**

Data of MICS for 2013-2014 show that 71.4% of children 1-14 years of age have experienced psychological violence and physical punishment, whereas two-thirds of the women have reported that there is violence in their respective community.

Despite the presence of violence in the families of these communities, MLSW statistics show that only a small number of them have used social services. Low level of utilization of services can be

---

<sup>97</sup> Representatives of civil society during the workshop held on 09/20/2016.

<sup>97</sup> Representatives of civil society during the workshop held on 09/20/2016.

<sup>97</sup> Representatives of civil society during the workshop held on 09/20/2016.

<sup>98</sup> UNDP: The Real Value of Social Assistance: An Assessment of Social Assistance Benefit Adequacy, 2014.

<sup>99</sup> Interview with the Executive Director of the Balkan Sunflowers NGO.

attributed to the lack of knowledge on services that are provided by the SWC or to the difficulties these communities face in accessing SWCs.

## Objective

### Improve the economic and social situation of the Roma and Ashkali communities

Access to employment opportunities, professional development and social service schemes is critical for the improvement of the economic and social situation of the Roma and Ashkali communities. The key elements of better employment and employability rest in development of skills and in establishing links with the labour market of the members of these communities, on one side, and implementing measures of affirmative action to respond to effects of discrimination in the labour market, on the other. Besides, members of these communities need access to social welfare schemes and quality social services, adapted to their concrete conditions and needs.

#### Expected outcomes:

- 2.1. Improved level of employment of members of Roma and Ashkali communities;
- 2.2. There is improved participation of families of Roma and Ashkali communities in welfare schemes and in social services.

## Activities

### Outcome 2.1: Improved level of employment if members of the Roma and Ashkali communities

- 2.1.1. Activity: Research, set gender sensitive indicators and report on the situation of the labour market for members of the Roma and Ashkali communities and their benefits from the services/measures provided by MLSW.**

An analysis should be carried out on the opportunities for utilization of available information about the labour market for the Roma and Ashkali communities, together with the opportunities for increasing level, quality and reporting on this information in the future. This analysis should focus in particular on sources of periodic data (such as AFP and the Labour Market Information System of the MLSW) that allow for timely monitoring and comparison of performance of the labour market of these communities in relation to the national average. This information should show the following: employment level/rate of these communities in general and by sector / job characteristics (full time or part time job, formal or informal work, economic activity, public/private sector); and other basic indicators of the labour market (unemployment rates, level of participation in the labour market).

Meanwhile, regular MLSW statistics should be reported down to the level of specific communities. For each of these communities the Employment Management Information System should report basic information on the number and percentage of registered job-seekers, number and percentage of job-seekers for which employment mediation was requested, number of participants in vocational training and active measures of the labour market.

- 2.1.2. Activity: Improvement of representation of the Roma and Ashkali communities in employment in public institution and enterprises.**

Regular monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the current legal framework for ensuring representation of non-majority communities in public institutions is the first step

towards improving the representation of Roma and Ashkali communities in the public sector. Special attention in this respect should be dedicated to the representation proportionate to the composition of population in the municipalities as provided by the law; however, monitoring and reporting should also focus on the central level even though there are no quota set specifically for each community. In cases of failures, reasons should be investigated and measures taken as per situation.

In several cases, working positions may specifically target these populations. For instance, engaging members of these communities as employment counsellors could help in facilitating outreach of these institutions to the communities and, at the same time, increase community trust in public institutions.

**2.1.3. Activity: Research and implement measures of affirmative action for employment of Roma and Ashkali communities.**

Potential measures of affirmative action will be analysed for employment of the Roma and Ashkali communities by businesses and non-profit organizations that hire members of these communities, with special focus on the feasibility of a fair process (definition of the measure; criteria that need to be met; procedures and evaluation of the criteria, including verification of ethnic affiliation of the employee). Quota as one of the affirmative measures should continue to be applied in LAMM schemes (including in vocational training), and should be set specifically to be applied for these communities alone. The Law on Social Enterprises, which guarantees participation of up to 30 percent for vulnerable communities in social enterprises, could also be implemented to promote employment of these communities.

**2.1.4. Activity: Assessment of needs and of effectiveness of employment services and LAMM.**

Assessment of needs and specific challenges of the Roma and Ashkali communities, and assessment of the effectiveness of the employment services and LAMM (including vocational training) implemented in the past, should present the basis for the design and modification of services and of LAMM. The purpose of the modification should be for the programmes to reflect the specific community needs. The analysis will include perceptions of these communities and their opinion on the approach and effectiveness of these services / measures; at the same time, it should contain objective measures of their effectiveness, such as employment status of the beneficiaries and sustainability of employment.

**2.1.5. Activity: Design / modification of (additional) employment services and LAMM, including vocational training, in line with the needs of the Roma and Ashkali communities.**

Based on the findings of the assessment of the needs and effectiveness of the previous services and of LAMM, new services and LAMM will be modified or additional services provided (for instance, language courses or covering the transportation costs) in order to ensure better inclusion of the Roma and Ashkali communities. Design and monitoring of services and LAMM will be done with active participation of NGOs of Roma and Ashkali communities. LAMM will, among other things, include (subsidised) training and internships in the private sector and salary subsidies for a given period, in order to allow simultaneous skills development, the experience of a real workplace and promotion of relations of members of these communities with employers. LAMM will also include measures for development of self-employment, including business start-up grants. A special focus of these measures will be the

recipients of social welfare schemes, in order for these families to be economically viable and to mitigate their economic dependence.

**2.1.6. Activity: Organization of information campaigns for LAMM employment services, including vocational training.**

Information campaigns will be designed in a way that will ensure access of Roma and Ashkali communities, making use of the media and ways of communication utilized by these communities, including field visits by officers. Information campaigns should use the capacity of the existing learning centers and community NGOs.

**2.1.7. Activity: Promotion of labour market success stories among Roma and Ashkali communities.**

Success stories will be promoted of members of the Roma and Ashkali communities who have made it in employment or self-employment/business, with a special focus on successful women.

**Outcome 2.2: There is improved participation of families of Roma and Ashkali communities in welfare schemes and in social services**

**2.2.1 Activity: Assessment of additional support for recipients of social assistance.**

To improve economic and social welfare of these communities, the social assistance scheme should be supplemented with additional services. Apart from assessing if the applicants meet the criteria to receive social assistance, SWC officers should also assess which is the most suitable category for the family applying for assistance. More so, SWC officers should inform these families about the vocation training programmes and employment schemes provided by the Ministry and other organizations and institutions.

**2.2.2 Activity: Identification of children and persons with special needs.**

The first pre-condition to benefit from the support scheme for families with special needs children and to receive the pension for persons with disabilities (age 18-65), is to identify the persons who meet these criteria. For identification to take place, it is necessary to organize information and awareness raising campaigns with members of these communities. During the field work, social workers of the SWC and NGOs engaged in working with these communities need to engage in identifying these cases.

**2.2.3. Activity: Information campaign on welfare schemes and social services.**

Information campaigns should be organized on types of social welfare schemes and on criteria that need to be met to access these schemes. As has been pointed out above, these campaigns should be mainly implemented making use of television and direct contact with members of these communities. The campaigns will also clearly inform members of communities about the social services provided by Social Work Centers. NGOs should inform women and children of these communities about their rights and services available in cases of domestic violence (rehabilitation services, shelter in safe houses, psycho-social services, etc.), services for senior persons and persons with disabilities, as well as services available for cases of early marriages and for supporting children engaged in sweated jobs.

**2.2.4 Activity: Analysis of the quality of social services and identification of new social services.**

To increase participation of Roma and Ashkalis in current social services, an analysis should be made to see if the services are in line with the needs of these communities and if the criteria are responsive to the situation of these communities. Based on the analysis, new services

should be identified in line with the needs of the targeted communities. Since there are only limited capacities of the SWCs, the number of NGOs licensed to provide social services for members of Roma and Ashkali communities should be increased.

#### **2.2.5 Activity: Building capacity of municipal officers for improvement of social services.**

Capacity of SWC officers should be built for adequate assessment of the situation and of needs of the communities, as well as for providing quality and timely services. It is important for the officers to be trained to register data on provided services, registration and justification of the new services that should be provided and the services that are not so effective in improving communities' welfare. Besides, SWC officers should be trained to inform families receiving social assistance about the active measures of the labour market provided by the MLSW and other institutions.

#### **Cross-cutting issues**

Success in the labour market is closely linked with the education of individuals. On one side, an individual's schooling is a key factor for obtaining a good workplace. On the other hand, when educated individuals cannot find a job, then this discourages young people to finish schooling and makes educated individuals to emigrate. Consequently, the issue of performance of the members of the Roma and Ashkali communities in the labour market is closely connected to the furtherance of their level of education.

Similarly, improvement of the social welfare of the members of the Roma and Ashkali communities is closely knit with the achievements in the other three sectors of this Strategy. Utilization of social services depends on the level of education, health situation of these communities and their housing conditions. The level of effectiveness of the social welfare schemes depends on the housing conditions and the health situation of the communities. Registration of the new-born infants is influenced by the quality of medical services provided in health institutions, which then affects the access to social schemes and services. On the other hand, utilization of welfare schemes, social services and active measures of the labour market in return positively affect the education level, improvement of housing conditions and of social care for these communities.

#### **Assumptions and risks**

The main assumptions to ensure achievement of the above objective are the following:

- There will be active cooperation between municipalities (with Roma and Ashkali residents) and NGOs and learning centres.
- There is an interest among Roma and Ashkali communities, including women, to fully utilize opportunities for personal development and participation in the LAMM.
- There are sufficient funds for social assistance and new social services.

On the other hand, factors which threaten the success of implementation of the planned interventions are the following:

- Level of creation of new jobs nationally and at the level of municipalities inhabited by Roma and Ashkali communities.
- Insufficient budget for active measures of the labour market.

- Recruitment procedures and management of human resources in public institutions could slow down the process of improvement of the representation of communities during the period of this strategy.
- Lack of capacity in Centres of Social Work in municipalities.
- Lack of additional budget for new services to be provided by SWCs.
- Civil non-registration of all members of these communities.
- Lack of trust of Roma and Ashkali communities in the public institutions.

### 6.3. Health

As in other countries of Central and South-eastern Europe, a large number of families of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities live below the poverty line, with more than 36% living in conditions of extreme poverty.<sup>100 101</sup> Numerous studies have shown a negative influence of poverty on health and life expectancy. Persons with low income are more vulnerable to various illnesses as a result of low quality and inadequate food.<sup>102</sup>

Several strategic documents and a number of national and international agents have made attempts to tackle community health issues. Ministry of Health has approved and is working to implement its Health Sector Strategy and the Strategy on Reproductive Health, whereas Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports has been implementing for several years now its Youth Action Plan. The National Institute of Public Health, the World Health Organization, UNICEF, and UNFPA have also been active in supporting these strategies and in developing programmes to address community problems. More recently, the Swiss Development Office launched a project in support of the primary health sector, that focuses also in support of the marginalized communities.

#### Challenges

##### Access to and utilization of health services by the Roma and Ashkali communities

With a limited access to preventive and curative health services, these communities continue to suffer from ill health. A critical analysis shows that there are multiple obstacles on the way to access to healthcare services for the Roma and Ashkali communities. More notable among these obstacles are poverty and inability to pay for medical treatment and for purchase of medicine, transport, or informal payments for health workers; lack of identification documents, that result in inability to benefit from public healthcare services; distance from healthcare facilities; discrimination based on ethnic affiliation; as well as lack of trust in doctors and other medical staff.<sup>103</sup> The issue of access becomes even more cumbersome in cases of preventive medicine, and in receiving secondary and tertiary medical treatment.

##### Attitude of the Roma and Ashkali communities towards health and living habits

Roma and Ashkali communities suffer from a high prevalence of inadequate and insufficient diet, which contributes to bad health and reduced life expectancy. An unbalanced diet, with insufficient amount of food and providing inadequate nourishing values is a threat to the health of communities. Lack of general and individual hygiene, the culture of massive consumption of tobacco, conjoined with low recreational activities among the Roma and Ashkali communities only adds additional elements to the existing problems.<sup>104</sup> Late reporting of health issues to the doctors and the reduced utilization of preventive services close the negative cycle of the health habits among this population.<sup>105</sup>

---

<sup>100</sup> The new health insurance will save lives: Life expectancy and health of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities of Kosovo. Balkan Sunflowers. 2016.

<sup>101</sup> Stubbs and Nestić, Child Poverty in Kosovo: Policy Options Paper & Synthesis Report. UNICEF. 2010.

<sup>102</sup> The new health insurance will save lives: Life expectancy and health of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities of Kosovo. Balkan Sunflowers. 2016.

<sup>103</sup> Policy Brief 4: Access and utilization of health services by Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. Solidar Suisse. 2016.

<sup>104</sup> Policy Brief 3: Feeding and life styles of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. Solidar Suisse. 2016.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

## Morbidity and mortality rates

Level of morbidity is a source of concern, in particular with the presence of chronic non-transmittable diseases, such as diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular diseases and bone disorders.<sup>106</sup> These diseases and the resulting confines are causing significant problems with the personal and community welfare.<sup>107</sup> Besides losing the satisfaction of a healthy life, treatment of diseases presents a heavy financial burden for the family and the society. This financial burden only gains in weight when considering that Roma and Ashkali families live under the national poverty line. The large number of working age persons not engaged in labour activities means lowered labour capacity in the society and increased dependence from social assistance and from informal sources of income.<sup>108</sup>

## Objective

Improvement of the health situation and the quality of life of the members of Roma and Ashkali communities.

Health is a state of full presence of physical and mental aspects of life, as well as of social welfare, and not simply lack of an illness or weakness. This strategy aims to improve the health situation and the quality of life among the members of Roma and Ashkali communities, always from the perspective of the broader definition of the concept of health. It is widely agreed that illness negatively affects human activity, confining daily activities of individuals. Such confines imply that given persons are not able to enjoy full physical, mental and social wellbeing. These confines also bring about lowered working capacity, which then results in increased dependence on social and financial assistance from other family members. Therefore, measures working to improve this situation are beneficial for the entire society.

### Expected outcomes:

- 3.1. Improved access to health services for members of Roma and Ashkali communities;
- 3.2. Improved health behaviour and practices among members of the Roma and Ashkali communities;
- 3.3. A healthy environment provided for the population of Roma and Ashkali communities.

## Activities

Outcome 3.1: Improved access to health services for members of Roma and Ashkali communities

### 3.1.1. Activity: Implementation of activities for breast cancer screening.

These activities will aim to provide easy access to women, members of the communities, who are threatened by the breast cancer. Activities will be organized by relevant institutions engaging teams of professionals to identify early signs of cancer among the target population and to treat identified cases in adequate institutions.

<sup>106</sup> Policy Brief 2: Distribution of diseases in Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. Solidar Suisse. 2016.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

**3.1.2. Activity: Implementation of home visitations for mothers and children and other vulnerable groups.**

Home visitations will aim at increasing access to educational and counselling service related to healthcare for mothers and children. Setting up of mobile teams will make possible the outreach to these categories of population (elderly, invalids).

**3.1.3. Activity: Vulnerable population outreach activities.**

Various actors will need to engage time after time to promote and provide other subsidised medical examinations targeting the vulnerable population (by age, social and economic situation, etc.). Community activists (including various organizations, community representatives, etc.), need to consult their communities regarding their needs and expectations related to preventive medicine and early warning systems. They should also encourage and support community families to periodically engage in examining most common diseases that can be treated.

**3.1.4. Activity: Institutional measures that improve access to health services.**

Depending on the needs, health institutions should prepare to ensure adequate access to health services for the population of Roma and Ashkali communities. These measures could include engaging adequate staff to work with communities (giving priority to those coming from the same communities), avoiding discrimination and so on.

**3.1.5. Activity: Continuous monitoring of access to healthcare services.**

Local authorities, as well as civil society organizations, should engage continuously in monitoring and assessing access to healthcare services by members of Roma and Ashkali communities in order to make sure that citizens coming from these communities enjoy the needed healthcare services.

**Outcome 3.2. Improved health behaviour and practices among members of Roma and Ashkali communities**

**3.2.1 Activity: Immunization campaigns.**

The immunization campaign aims to address the issue of the low level of vaccination of community children that has been reported for several years now. The campaigns use educational and promotion materials to reach family members to inform and change their behaviour regarding immunization of children. Immunization teams from the National Institute of Public Health need to coordinate their capacities to contribute to the successful implementation of the immunization process.

**3.2.2. Activity: Distribution of information materials on family planning and reproductive health.**

The purpose of these programmes is to educate women, men and youth by offering them skills and knowledge on life and reproductive health, including family planning by organizing training sessions in schools and by supporting awareness raising initiatives on various issues through campaigns, media and round tables.

**3.2.3. Activity: Education on importance of hygiene and sanitary conditions.**

Education on importance of hygiene and sanitary conditions involves training and distribution of educational materials. Themes covered would include importance of drinking water, personal and domestic hygiene, waste management, taking care of food, etc. Various actors, including the National Institute of Public Health, then municipal authorities and civil society

organizations need to join forces to promote positive health behaviour. These actors should design, plan and implement community education sessions; design and distribute health education materials. For this purpose, the Government should allocate, on a regular basis, funds for health education programmes which could be used by civil society organizations and health institutions of secondary and tertiary level.

#### **3.2.4. Activity: Enhancing preventive capacity of the primary healthcare staff.**

Local authorities should engage actively to develop medical staff capacity to implement programmes for community education. This development of capacity needs to be coupled with regular staff engagement in implementing promotion programmes by health institutions, as well as in enhancing preventive and promotional activities within regular provision of health services, in which health education becomes an integrated part of professional activities.

### **Outcome 3.3. A healthy environment provided for the population of Roma and Ashkali communities**

#### **3.3.1 Activity: Quarterly control of the lead level in community residential areas.**

Quarterly control of the levels of lead in areas inhabited by the Roma and Ashkali communities is a sequel to the treatment of the issue of contamination that used to be present in several community residential areas. Considering potential chronic and acute consequences to the health of the communities, the monitoring should continue until such time when it has been concluded that infection does not represent any risk to the health of the given communities.

#### **3.3.2. Activity: Supply with family size waste containers.**

Supply of family size waste containers, together with an improved waste management and elimination of scattered and unplanned dump areas, would provide better hygienic conditions and would reduce exposure to chemical and physical materials harmful to the health of communities.

#### **Cross-cutting issues**

Changes in the health sector can only become sustainable if taking place in concordance with other measures addressing social, economic, and educational issues of the given communities. Ministry of Work and Social Welfare, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology need to coordinate their action and allow for practical implementation of the foreseen measures.

#### **Assumptions and risks**

Key assumptions to achieve the above objective are the following:

- There is an increased interest on the part of international community actors to support the cause and the Government welcomes such support.

Whereas, factors threatening the success of the planned interventions would include:

- Insufficient interest on the part of central and local authorities on the issue, due to focusing primarily on economic and political issues;
- Low interest among community members on interests falling under this strategy;
- Lack of motivation for additional work by the medical staff in health institutions;
- Limited capacity of organizations representing community interests;
- Lack of harmonization of activities by authorities and institutions of different levels;
- Lack of funds.

## 6.4. Housing

The housing issue was and remains one of the key challenges in the post-war Kosovo. This challenge is even more severe among the Roma and Ashkali communities, who were facing this kind of problems even before the year 1999. Lack of the needed number of houses/apartments is evident and measures need to be taken to bring down the number of the members of Roma and Ashkali communities who do not benefit from adequate housing.

### Challenges

#### Lack of accurate data on housing needs

Municipalities are the first responsible institutions for providing housing<sup>109</sup> for all residents inhabiting their territories. A key challenge to effectively address this issue is the lack of databases at the municipal level that would maintain evidence of the citizens' housing needs. Due to this deficiency, there are often initiatives coming from international partners to contribute to the provision of adequate housing to Roma and Ashkali communities who do not coordinate their interventions with community and municipal representatives in the respective municipality. On the other hand, lack of systematic data also results in ineffectiveness of municipal investments in the field of housing. At this stage a database is being designed at the central level, which will provide access to all municipalities to maintain evidence of the citizens needs for adequate housing and for social housing. The database is expected to become functional in 2017 and to operate under the auspices of the MESP.

#### Insufficient inclusion of community members in solving their housing problems

Even though they suffer the consequences of unsolved housing problems, a considerable number of the members of these communities are adequately involved in efforts to solve this complex problem. This is primarily reflected in articulation of their housing needs, which is rarely done in a proper way, either due to the loss of trust in the possibility of finding a solution or for other reasons. The other reason is the lack of arranged property paperwork, as a result of which the property is still formally under the title of the seller or a previous owner; this because the legal procedures are not finalised yet for the transfer of property to the new owners. This situation significantly limits the possibility to offer the needed assistance to them.

#### Lack of funds to support housing for Roma and Ashkali communities.

The amount of funds allocated by the Kosovo budget to provide housing is very low and consistently insufficient. Until recently there was not a specific budget line for housing for the needs of the Roma and Ashkali communities. Due to the lack of accurate data, at this point of strategic planning it is difficult to assess the number of the families in need for private or social housing and, consequently, to calculate the amount of funds needed for this purpose. Nevertheless, once municipalities will have approved their three-year housing programmes and once the database will have become functional, the Government of Kosovo will be able to allocate funds for construction of houses or apartments for these communities based on requests from municipalities and as provided by the Article 25 of the aw No.03/L-164<sup>110</sup>.

---

<sup>109</sup> [http://www.gazetazyrtare.com/e-gov/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=147&Itemid=56&lang=sq](http://www.gazetazyrtare.com/e-gov/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=147&Itemid=56&lang=sq)

<sup>110</sup> The Law on Financing of Special Housing Programmes.

## Strategic objective

Providing adequate and sustainable housing for Roma and Ashkali communities in line with the effective legislation

Housing is a critical issue for social cohesion, health and quality development of human wellbeing. Using immense quantities of space, housing affects the overall trend of societal development and is an important component of the social and economic development, and of the living standard. Housing is a social right of the citizens in most of the developed countries. This right is increasing becoming part of the global policies and of the efforts for human rights, also sanctioned in international covenants.

### Expected outcomes:

- 4.1. Needs have been identified of the community members for adequate housing and social housing;
- 4.2. There is increased awareness of the members of Roma and Ashkali communities for active participation in solving housing problems;
- 4.3. There significant progress towards settlement of the housing problem of the members of the Roma and Ashkali communities.

## Activities

Outcome 4.1. Needs have been identified of the community members for adequate housing and social housing

### 4.1.1. Activity: Inclusion of members of Roma and Ashkali communities in the database for financing of special housing programmes.

Identification of the housing needs, a precondition for inclusion in the database, will be carried out separately for families who own property and for those who need social housing.

Identification of families in need who own their private property, but do not enjoy appropriate living conditions, will be carried out by combined commissions, comprising of municipal officers, NGO members and community representatives living in given residential areas. These municipal commissions, responsible for implementation of strategic measures, need to maintain evidence of all private properties of the Roma and Ashkali communities, which do not provide adequate living conditions. These data will then be populated by the municipality in the central database.

Based on Articles 24 and 25 of the Law on Housing, all applications for social housing will be populated in the respective database in every municipality. Collection of field data will be done by municipal housing commissions in line with Article 5 of the Administrative Instruction No. 22/2010 who need to engage in close cooperation with community representatives as a supplementary source of information for verification of the actual situation in housing.

**4.1.2. Activity: Setting of priorities for families in need for inclusion in the social housing programme.**

All commissions set-up for this purpose have to adhere to the criteria<sup>111</sup> determined by the MESP Administrative Instruction 21/2010. According to measures foreseen in the Strategy, respective bodies will produce priority lists for social housing. Priority lists will be consolidated and will be presented to potential donors to consider for funding.

**Outcome 4.2: There is increased awareness of the members of Roma and Ashkali communities for active participation in solving housing problems**

**4.2.1. Activity: Organisation of the awareness raising campaign for inclusion in the housing initiatives.**

The Kosovo Government, in cooperation with non-governmental organizations, will engage in sensitising campaigns for an inclusive approach in the housing issue. The main purpose of this campaign will be to ensure equal conditions for application, also from the perspective of different housing needs of males and females. For this reason, it will be important for women to also be present in the information meetings with citizens.

Campaigns will take place in areas with the highest concentration of Roma and Ashkali communities. Campaigns will provide sufficient information on population rights to adequate housing (whether on private property or social housing). During the campaign brochures in sufficient numbers will be distributed to participants informing them on housing issues; training will also be organized there to present concrete examples about the steps needed to be followed to arrange property paperwork.

**4.2.2. Activity: Support Roma and Ashkali communities for supply with adequate property paperwork or some other title right over building land.**

The traditional housing ways of the Roma and Ashkali communities is to a large extent different from those of other communities and, therefore, a tailor made intervention is needed for identification of persons who have property title over the land lot where the house was or is build. For this reason, during the period of the Strategy implementation, specialised organizations, both governmental and non-governmental, should be engaged, to support the Roma and Ashkali communities through various projects to benefit from their property rights.

Projects should have several basic components: community inclusion, training and elaboration of property legislation that is feasible in Kosovo, collection of available documentation, legal counselling and authorisation for legal representation before municipal and juridical authorities. Data collected in the community need to be divided in three groups: persons and families that can prove their property right,<sup>112</sup> persons or families that can prove the right to utilization<sup>113</sup> of the property on which their house was or is built, or a room within a shared house. For all these categories the documentation will need to be collected that proves their right to property utilization.

<sup>111</sup> <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDocumentDetail.aspx?ActID=7947>

<sup>112</sup> Property right over a real estate is demonstrated by a cadastre certificate and is the highest right recognised in our country.

<sup>113</sup> Property right over a real estate is demonstrated by possessing and by occupying a property as well as by alternative paperwork such as addresses on personal identification documents, various bills for communal services such as water, electricity, etc.

**Outcome 4.3: There is significant progress towards settlement of the housing problem for members of the Roma and Ashkali communities.**

**4.3.1. Activity: Design priority projects for renovation, reconstruction or building houses on own property.**

From the experience so far, such projects are very costly. Therefore, at this stage of the strategy implementation more financial support is required from the international donors. Besides, the local government should establish a separate budget line to carry out renovation of the houses. Cases should also be addressed of families who do not own a house (either because they destroyed it or it could not resist the time) in the building parcel they own.

**4.3.2 Activity: Implementation of programmes for treating informal settlements.**

After identifying families and settlements in severe living conditions, local and central government shall engage in preparing pilot projects that are feasible in several municipalities with higher concentration of these communities.

**4.3.3. Activity: Identification of properties for social housing.**

During the time of drafting of three-year programmes, municipal assemblies will identify public properties in which to build blocks of apartments for social housing. In concrete terms, public and private properties, which are in the vicinity of Roma and Ashkali settlements will be used (as provided by the law) for building housing projects, giving land on concession to private investors, and renting property from private owners for providing social housing for these communities.

**4.3.4. Activity: Drafting priority projects for social housing.**

Drafting, preparing and approving projects for social housing is done by the municipal assemblies. The municipality drafts three-year housing programmes depending on available funding, and provides the building lot and infrastructure. Municipality also presents the request for funding of new investments and for subsidies of the MESP. All three-year municipal housing programmes need to be previously approved by the MESP.

Municipalities will also make it possible, in line with the Law on Public Private Partnerships, for private investors to be able to obtain the right to build collective housing facilities on public property, whereby the municipality would receive a certain numbers of housing units that would be given to recipients of social housing. This model will contribute to a large extent to a sooner integration of the Roma and Ashkali communities in the Kosovo society. Based on criteria foreseen by AI No. 19/2010, municipality, whenever lacking financial resources, the municipality will rent apartments from the private sector and will allocate a housing subsidy to families that are in need for social housing.

**Cross-cutting issues**

The issue of housing is closely linked to all other components, since adequate housing is part of personal welfare, as a pre-condition for good performance in education and for good health. Employment is also closely connected to the settlement of the housing problems, since it provides the financial means needed for this purpose.

## Assumptions and risks

The main assumptions to ensure that the set objective is achieved are the following:

- Preparations are completed on the database for keeping evidence on the housing needs;
- Municipalities identify communities' housing needs and draft their three-year social housing programmes;

On the other hand, factors that may threaten the implementation of the foreseen results are the following:

- The small budget allocated for housing by the local and central authorities;
- Weak organization of community representatives to present their requests before institutions;
- Insufficient support by the local and central level for the implementation of activities foreseen in the Strategy.

## 7. Implementation of the Strategy

This Strategy covers a five-year period and is followed by an Action Plan, which like the Strategy, will be subject to approval by the Government of the Republic of Kosovo. The Strategy and its Action Plan are complementary and integrated documents and should be treated as one whole for the purpose of their implementation.

### 7.1. Implementation mechanisms

The coordinating role for the implementation of this Strategy goes to the Office for Good Governance (OGG) within the Office of the Prime-Minister. Mechanisms that will serve for the smooth implementation of the Strategy are the following:

- Office for Good Governance (OGG) within the Office of the Prime-Minister, responsible for overseeing and coordinating implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan,
- Working groups for the coordination of the Strategy and Action Plan implementation,
- Municipal Action Committees (MAC) for every municipality.

OGG carries out overseeing and coordination of the implementation of the Action Plan for the implementation of the Strategy for inclusion of Roma and Ashkali communities. OGG will address issues related to the implementation of the Action Plan in the Inter-ministerial Coordinating Group for Human Rights, that is chaired by the Prime minister of the Republic of Kosovo and that includes also ministers of the line ministries, the Ombudsperson and civil society representatives. The OGG may also address issues related to the implementation of the Strategy within the Collegium of General Secretaries of the Ministries, which meets on a regular weekly basis.

OGG sets up four working groups: 1) Working Group on Education; 2) Working Group on Employment and Social Welfare; 3) Working Group on Health and 4) the Working Group on Housing. Their tasks will be to monitor implementation of activities in their respective sector, to issue recommendations for improvement and to refer relevant information to the OGG. Each working group will be chaired by the Secretary General of the respective ministry (MEST, MLSW, MH, and MESP respectively), or in cases of his/her absence by the co-head of the group, and will comprise of ministry officers, agency officers, experts and representatives of civil society organizations.

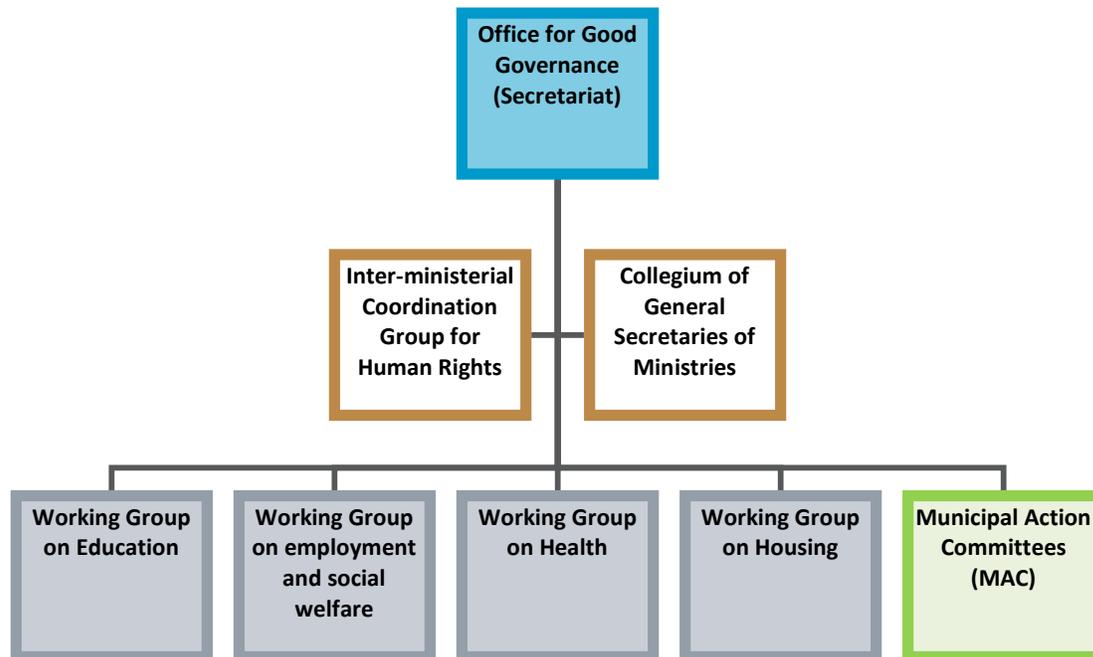
For every municipality the setting up of a Municipal Action Committee (MAC) is foreseen to monitor implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan at the local level. MAC will consist of municipal directors of line departments, representatives of the community offices, municipal human rights officers, officers for gender equality, and representatives of local and international NGOs active in every municipality in the promotion of the interests of Roma and Ashkali communities. MAC will be chaired by the municipality mayor (or deputy-mayor) who will appoint a municipal coordinator of MAC from among the civil staff.

OGG will draft terms of reference for the operation of working groups and the municipal action committees, including clear responsibilities and operating procedure for each of these mechanisms. OGG will also appoint working group members based on proposals from respective ministries, whereas through MESP, it will liaise with municipal mayors on the setting up of the MACs.

OGG will also serve as a secretariat of the working groups, to facilitate the process of implementation of the Strategy and the Action Plan. The duties of this secretariat will include

carrying out technical work and offering professional support for working groups, starting with preparation of meetings to drafting of documents that will be approved by these bodies, including reports on the implementation of Strategy and the Plan of Action. The secretariat will also engage in communication with MACs, collecting information on the progress of implementation from the municipalities. Three representatives of the Roma and Ashkali communities will also be members of the secretariat.

The full structure of the mechanism for implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan is presented in the following diagram.



## 7.2. Monitoring and evaluation

To facilitate monitoring and evaluation of the Strategy and Action Plan, a set of indicators have been identified for all four Strategy fields that are given in the annexes of this document. When drafting the indicators all available information was taken in consideration, together with efforts to compare data and the situation of the Roma and Ashkali communities with the rest of the Kosovo population. Several indicators can be obtained from the statistics of state authorities, whereas others were based on separate studies and research. This list of indicators should be seen as a baseline list and can be expanded with other indicators during the process of Strategy implementation. Depending on the available information, it may be needed to correct some of the baseline values.

Monitoring of implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan will be done at two levels:

**Monitoring of activities**, which has to do with the progress in implementing activities of the Strategy in line with the description given in the Strategy document and the dynamics set within the Action Plan. This type of monitoring shows if the activities are being implemented as planned and suggests possible changes in approach.

**Monitoring of achievements (expected outcomes)** which is based on indicators defined in the annex of this document. In fact, monitoring of this type implies collection of information to compare the current situation with the baseline and the desired situation.

In order to ensure an effective monitoring, a monitoring framework of the Strategy needs to be drafted, which would determine the methodology of collection and flow of information, reporting lines and dynamics, as well as the way of utilization of the reports. This is a responsibility of the OGG, whereas it is reasonable to expect that resources of the civil society and the development partners will be used for monitoring purposes.

It is foreseen that in the third year (2019) of the Strategy implementation to organize an overall evaluation of the Strategy and the Action Plan, all in order to provide (i) relevant information on the progress of implementation of these two documents and (ii) the basis for possible re-planning of activities for the two last years of implementation – 2020 and 2021. Another final evaluation will be carried out in 2021, when the time for implementation of this Strategy ends; this evaluation will serve for drafting new policies in the field. The ISC will approve the terms of reference for these evaluations, with the focal points of evaluation being:

Effectiveness: To what extent have the objectives of the Strategy been achieved and what are the key factors that impact the achievement or failure to achieve the objectives?

Relevance: To what extent has the strategy managed to address real needs of the Roma and Ashkali communities and what have been its limitations?

Sustainability: Will the effects of the Strategy remain sustained even beyond the end of its implementation and to what extent have the new practices become part of everyday work of institutions?

Processes: How satisfied can we be with the implementation of the activities and the processes that are part of these activities, and how can we improve in this regard?

## 8. The budget

The budget needed for the implementation of this Strategy is calculated as part of the Action Plan of the Strategy, whereas calculation is done for the entire five-year period of the Strategy. The overall budget comprises of costs planned within other strategic documents, as well as operational costs, always keeping an eye of avoiding duplication. The total amount of the budget for the implementation of the foreseen measures is estimated at **8,684,758 EUR**. Table 11 represents a summary of budget expenses according to years and strategy fields.

Table 11. Budget summary by year

| Priority field                | 2017        | 2018        | 2019        | Total       |
|-------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Education                     | € 912,875   | € 1,221,875 | € 1,250,900 | € 3,385,650 |
| Employment and social welfare | € 400,133   | € 798,905   | € 943,650   | € 2,142,688 |
| Health                        | € 95,000    | € 95,000    | € 75,000    | € 265,000   |
| Housing                       | € 380,730   | € 1,263,390 | € 1,247,300 | € 2,891,420 |
|                               | € 1,788,738 | € 3,378,420 | € 3,516,100 | € 8,684,758 |

It can be noticed that there is more spending planned in education, mainly for the student scholarships, as well as due to the support foreseen for learning centres that serve Roma and Ashkali students. **On the other hand, the largest portion of expenses in the fields of employment and social welfare has to do with the increased participation of members of Roma and Ashkali communities in social schemes.** In the field of health planned expenses are slightly lower since most of the healthcare services are provided by the mainstream health system. Whereas, in the field of housing, the largest portion of expenses falls in the field of construction and renovation of houses, as well as for social housing for members of the Roma and Ashkali communities.

Table 12 gives a summary of the budget by economic categories, which shows a significant domination of subsidies and capital expenditures in the budget, with a moderate burden on the wages and salaries budget line.

Table 12. Strategy budget summary by economic category

| Priority field                | Wages and salaries | Goods and services | Subsidies and transfers | Capital expenditure | Total       |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| Education                     | € 38,400           | € 134,750          | € 3,200,500             | € 12,000            | € 3,385,650 |
| Employment and social welfare | € 18,900           | € 80,288           | € 2,043,500             |                     | € 2,142,688 |
| Health                        |                    | € 140,000          | € 125,000               |                     | € 265,000   |
| Housing                       |                    | € 79,920           | € 231,000               | € 2,580,500         | € 2,891,420 |
|                               | € 57,300           | € 434,958          | € 5,600,000             | € 2,592,500         | € 8,684,758 |

Table 13, on the other hand shows that **64.4% of the budget is planned to be covered from the donor sources, whereas only 2.3% from the municipal budgets.**

Table 13. Strategy budget summary by sources of funding

| Source of funding       | 2017               | 2018               | 2019               | Total              |
|-------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Kosovo budget</b>    | € 513,880          | € 1,113,490        | € 1,262,300        | <b>€ 2,889,670</b> |
| <b>Municipal budget</b> | € 20,000           | € 91,500           | € 91,500           | <b>€ 203,000</b>   |
| <b>Donors</b>           | € 1,254,858        | € 2,174,180        | € 2,163,050        | <b>€ 5,592,088</b> |
|                         | <b>€ 1,788,738</b> | <b>€ 3,379,170</b> | <b>€ 3,516,850</b> | <b>€ 8,684,758</b> |

## Annex: Performance Assessment Framework

| <b>Objective 1: Increase inclusion and provide opportunities for personal development, training and quality education to members of the Roma and Ashkali communities</b> |                      |   |
|--|----------------------|---|
| <b>Indicator</b>   | <b>Baseline</b>      | <b>Description</b>  |
| Inclusion of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children in pre-primary education (Target: 70%)  | 53.9% <sup>114</sup> | <i>Percentage of children in the first grade of primary school who have attended pre-primary education in the previous school year.</i>               |
| Inclusion of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children in primary education (Target: 95%)  | 85.3% <sup>115</sup> | <i>Percentage of primary school age children who are currently attending primary or secondary education.</i>  |
| Inclusion of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children in lower secondary education (Target: 85%)  | 65% <sup>116</sup>   | <i>Percentage of lower secondary school age children who are currently attending lower secondary education or higher.</i>                             |
| Inclusion of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children in upper secondary education (Target: 50%)  | 30.3% <sup>117</sup> | <i>Percentage of upper secondary school age children who are currently attending upper secondary education or higher</i>                              |
| Transition rate to upper secondary education for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children (Target: 80%)   | 69.9% <sup>118</sup> | <i>Number of students registered in grade 10 in the current school year, as a percentage of students registered in grade 9 in the previous year.</i>  |
| Gender parity index for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities<br><b>Level: Primary</b><br>(Target: 1)   | 1.01 <sup>119</sup>  | <i>Number of girls divided by the number of boys.</i>   |
| Gender parity index for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities<br><b>Level: Lower secondary</b><br>(Target: 1)   | 0.94 <sup>120</sup>  | <i>According to Population census of 2011, there are 35,784 Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian living in Kosovo, whereas the gender parity index is 0.99.</i> |
| Gender parity index for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities<br><b>Level: Upper secondary</b><br>(Target: 0.90)  | 0.80 <sup>121</sup>  |   |
| Inclusion of repatriated children in the system of education<br>(Target: 100%)   | Missing data         |   |

<sup>114</sup> Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2013-2014 – Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities (MICS), Final Report, ASK, Pristina 2014, p. VII. <https://ask.rks-gov.net/images/files/Komunitetet%20Rome,%20Ashkali%20dhe%20Egjiptiane%20ne%20Kosove.pdf>

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

|   |                      |   |
|---|----------------------|---|
| Lowering drop-out levels from compulsory education<br>(Target: < 0.1%)        | 0.20% <sup>122</sup> | <i>Number of children who have dropped out from compulsory education as a percentage of the total number of children attending this level of schooling</i>      |
| Lowering the drop-out levels from upper secondary education<br>(Target: < 1%) | 1.70% <sup>123</sup> | <i>Number of children who have dropped out from upper secondary education as a percentage of the total number of children attending this level of schooling</i> |

---

<sup>122</sup> Statistical report on education indicators 2014/15, MEST p.27. <http://MASHT.rks-gov.net/uploads/2015/12/raport-statistikor-me-tregues-arsimor-2014-15.pdf>

<sup>123</sup> Ibid, p.28.

| <b>Objective 2: Improvement of the social and economic situation of the Roma and Ashkali communities</b>                      |                     |  |
|---|---------------------|--|
| <b>Indicator</b>  | <b>Baseline</b>     | <b>Description</b>   |
| Employment rate (Target: 17%) <sup>124</sup>  | Missing data        | <i>Percentage of employed working-age individuals</i>  |
| Women's employment rate (Target: 12%) <sup>125</sup>  | 9% <sup>126</sup>   | <i>Percentage of employed working-women</i>  |
| Inclusion in LAMM (Target: 10%)   | 6% <sup>127</sup>   | <i>Percentage of persons benefiting from LAMM belonging to Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities</i>          |
| Inclusion of women in LAMM (Target: 25%)  | 12% <sup>128</sup>  | <i>Percentage of women among the LAMM recipients belonging to the two communities</i>                          |
| Inclusion in employment in the public sector (Target: 1%) <sup>129</sup>  | 0.5% <sup>130</sup> | <i>Percentage of persons employed in the public sector belonging to Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities</i> |
| Inclusion of poor families in social welfare schemes (Target: 80%)  | 54% <sup>131</sup>  | <i>Percentage of poor families receiving social assistance (Categories I and II of social assistance)</i>      |
| Inclusion of families with children permanent disabilities in the financial assistance schemes (Target: 100%)                 | Missing data        | <i>Identification and diagnosing of children with permanent disabilities</i>                                   |
| Inclusion of persons with permanent disabilities in the pension scheme for persons with permanent disabilities (Target: 100%) | Missing data        | <i>Identification and diagnosing of persons of age 18-65 with permanent disabilities.</i>                      |
| Number of community members receiving services from SWCs (Target: 228/yearly)   | 105 <sup>132</sup>  | <i>Number of persons who have benefited from social services at SWCs.</i>                                      |

<sup>124</sup> Despite the missing baseline data at the national level, the available data show significant discrepancy in employment levels between these three communities and the rest of the population averages. The target was set in a way for employment rate to be by 30 % lower compared to that rate from 2015. The Kosovo Statistics Agency, Results of the Labor Force Survey 2015 in Kosovo, 2016.

<sup>125</sup> In this case the target was set at the same level as the rate of women on the national average for 2015.

<sup>126</sup> CREATE Foundation and the Roma and Ashkali Documentation Center (RADC). Roma and Ashkali Women in Governance and Economy.

<sup>127</sup> The figure refers to the January– June 2016 period. In 2015 participation of these three communities was significantly higher (at 17.8 percent), but the number of recipients was much smaller. Source: MLSW, Employment Information Management System, September 2016.

<sup>128</sup> Source: MLSW, Employment Information Management System, September 2016.

<sup>129</sup> According to data of the Population Census of 2011, participation of these communities is around two percent.

<sup>130</sup> Roma and Ashkali about 0.2%, whereas Egyptians with 0.1%. The Office of the Prime-Minister /Office for Community Issues, Evaluation of Employment of Members of Non-majority Communities in the Civil Service and Public Enterprises in Kosovo, 2013.

<sup>131</sup> Based on data of the Population Census of 2011 and MICS 2013-2014, it is estimated that there are 6,000 families of these communities. Based on data by the United Nations Development Programme (2013) 60% of families of these communities are not able to provide essential goods for living; therefore, it can be estimated that only 54% of the poor families are covered by these schemes.

<sup>132</sup> According to MLSW data for the last three years (2013, 2014 and 2015), in average 105 members of the Roma and Ashkali communities have benefited annually from social services. This source shows that only one-fourth of the SWCs has provided services for members of

| <b>Objective 3: Improvement of the health situation and quality of live for members of the Roma and Ashkali communities</b> |                           |  |
|---|---------------------------|--|
| <b>Indicator</b>  | <b>Baseline</b>           | <b>Description</b>   |
| Life expectancy of the members of communities (Target: 63 years)  | 58.7 years <sup>133</sup> | <i>Years of average life expectancy of the members of communities.</i>   |
| Percentage of out of hospital/home births (Target: 30%)   | 38% <sup>134</sup>        | <i>Number of births out of hospitals (at home) within the grand total of all births by community women</i>   |
| Level of satisfaction with access to public services (Target: 90%)  | 80% <sup>135</sup>        | <i>Subjective level of satisfaction with public sector health services.</i>  |
| Level of utilization of public health services by community members (Target: 80%)   | 71.2% <sup>136</sup>      | <i>Percentage of increase in utilization of public health services by community members compared to previous periods.</i>  |
| Full immunization (Target: 50%)   | 30.2% <sup>137</sup>      | <i>Percentage of children 24-35 months of age that have received all recommended vaccines as per vaccination schedule before their first birthday (measles with their second birthday)</i> |
| Births at early age (Target: 5%)  | 16.7% <sup>138</sup>      | <i>Percentage of women 20-24 years of age with minimum one live birth before age of 18</i>   |
| Children with diarrhea (Target: 10%)  | 17.2% <sup>139</sup>      | <i>Percentage of children age of five suffering from diarrhea in the last two weeks</i>  |
| Children with AR symptoms (Target: 10%)   | 17.2% <sup>140</sup>      | <i>Percentage of children under age of five with Acute Respiratory symptoms in the last two weeks</i>  |

these communities in a month. The target is to increase this to two SWCs providing social services to members of these communities every month, respectively 19 municipalities x 1 person x 12 months = 228.

<sup>133</sup> New health insurance will save lives: life expectancy and health in Kosovo Roma and Ashkali communities. Balkan Sunflowers. 2016.

<sup>134</sup> Improving Health of Roma and Ashkali Communities in Kosovo Polje. Health for All. 2010.

<sup>135</sup> New health insurance will save lives: life expectancy and health in Kosovo Roma and Ashkali communities. Balkan Sunflowers. 2016.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

<sup>137</sup> Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2013-2014. UNICEF. 2016

<sup>138</sup> Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2013-2014. UNICEF. 2016

<sup>139</sup> Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2013-2014. UNICEF. 2016

<sup>140</sup> Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2013-2014. UNICEF. 2016

| <b>Objective 4: Providing adequate and sustainable housing for Roma and Ashkali communities in line with the effective legislation</b>   |                     |   |
|--|---------------------|---|
| <b>Indicator</b>   | <b>Baseline</b>     | <b>Description</b>  |
| Number of families registered in the database who have private property, but lack suitable housing conditions. (Target: 3,000 families)  | N/A                 |   |
| Number of families who have regulated the status of the property they live in (Target: 3,600)  | 1200 <sup>141</sup> |   |
| Number of families included in the database for financing of special housing programmes (Target: 2,000)  | N/A                 |   |
| Number of houses and other buildings in municipal property and private ones that can serve for accommodating families in need of social housing (Target: 210 - 7 regions, of 30 houses each) |                     |   |
| Number of houses built in parcels whose owners are members of the communities (Target: 100 homes)  |                     | <i>So far 900 houses have been built for members of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. There is an accurate evidence of building projects by municipality and by investor.</i> |
| Number of renovated houses whose owners are community members (Target: 150 homes)  |                     | <i>So far 260 houses have been renovated for members of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities (Source: Voice of RAE)</i>   |
| Number of housing units for members of communities who are in need for social housing (Target: 80 housing units)   |                     | <i>So far, 445 housing units have been built for members of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian members. There is an accurate evidence of building projects by municipality and by investor.</i> |
| Number of programmes implemented by municipalities or the government for treating informal settlements dwelled by community members (Target 7)   |                     | <i>Treatment of informal settlements implies building of infrastructure that provides optimum living conditions within that settlement.</i>   |

<sup>141</sup> According to estimates, 20% of the total number of 6000 families of Roma and Ashkali communities have regulated the status of the property they live in.