



PROJECT DOCUMENT STATISTICAL MONITORING OF LIVING CONDITIONS OF SELECTED POPULATION GROUPS

Summary

Objective of the project is monitoring of social situation development by collection of statistical data that are comparable in time and that describe living conditions, poverty and social exclusion in marginalised Roma communities in Slovakia. A specific project objective is social inclusion of long-term unemployed and marginalised community members of selected target group through implementation of targeted social policy.

Data on socio-economic living conditions of marginalised Roma communities are of high importance for the social policy. The submitted project will have a direct positive impact on marginalised Roma communities, because its objective is to contribute to social inclusion of long-term unemployed and disadvantaged community members. Data collection and analysis will allow to obtain a detailed knowledge of living conditions in Roma communities and further implementation of targeted measures in the field of social policy. The knowledge gained during the project implementation will contribute to better understanding of social situation, and by this also to improved living conditions of Roma community members. We expect gradual decline of long-term unemployment in marginalised Roma communities during the project implementation and after its completion, as well as strengthening of social inclusion of this group.

I. Background and situation analysis

Characteristics of target groups and project beneficiaries

The current status of exact knowledge of living conditions of disadvantaged ethnic groups (Roma) is not satisfactory in Slovakia, despite of increasing need for statistical data. According to the *Mid-term strategy of Roma minority development in the Slovak Republic for years 2008 – 2013*, the lack of data forms one of the systemic and legislative barriers impeding situation improvement. Data, on e.g. health status in Roma communities, employment situation, education etc., are missing according to the above-mentioned document.

Data on socio-economical living conditions of the marginalised Roma communities have utmost importance for the social policy, for monitoring and evaluation of adopted measures. In other words, even neutrally set social policy can result in undesirable impact for certain groups of citizens. It is necessary to know for the authors of the social policy how will the adopted measures impacts the specific groups of inhabitants.

Target group needs characteristics

Multiple social disadvantages are combined among socially excluded Roma population and among inhabitants of segregated and separated Roma settlements: poverty related to demographic conditions is present, poverty created by unemployment, poverty resulting from low work quality or lack of education, and discrimination. The situation of Roma population living in segregated settlements is the worst. Only 10.5 % of Roma men of active age were employed according to the UNDP survey (2006) of Roma households living conditions (with dominating full time employment - part time employment and self-employment including independent business activities appeared only rarely). Moreover, such low employment rate was differentiated according to the degree of spatial integration with the majority population: it reached only one half among men living in segregated settlements (6 %) in comparison with those living in separated parts of municipalities or mixed among the majority population (13 %). However, the job engagement of Roma men was three times higher than the employment rate. Some work during the last week was performed by 33.4 % of Roma men. Only 12.4 % out of this total volume was related to job outside their households (formal or informal) - regardless to the engagement (full-time vs. part-time), another 3.4 % was formed by random works as doorstep selling or assistance, and 17.3 % by homestead works (other works of household members were found only minimally). The mentioned difference between employment and job engagement indicates exclusion from formal job market need not necessarily to mean exclusion from any kind of work.

Less than 5 % of the Roma women in active age (15 - 54 years) who were included in the UNDP survey sample were employed, but only 2.3 % of the women living in segregated settlements. However, the working engagement of Roma women has shown up to five time higher proportion. Homestead works dominated, only less than 6 % of Roma women in active age had a job outside their households.

Nevertheless, the problem of relatively high level of long-term unemployment persists. In Slovakia, the current development problem remains not so much the unemployment itself but the long-term unemployment of people with cumulated multiple disadvantages and for whom it is difficult to find placement at the labour market. The average proportion of job applicants who are registered with the Offices for Labour, Social Affairs and Family longer than 1 year out of the total applicants varied between 48,2-52,4 in years 2004-2007. Košice, Banská Bystrica, Prešov and Nitra regions have shown higher than national average proportion of long-term unemployed among the work-seekers. From the individual point of view, it is the accumulation of multiple disadvantages that makes the access to the labour market difficult (e.g. unemployment duration and age).

The above-mentioned UNDP survey shows that Roma population has substantially different structure according to the economic status not only when compared with the total SR population, but also when compared with the non-Roma population living in the marginalised regions. It means that the indicated parameters for the Roma communities are of

general nature and they do not result solely from the regional conditions. Structure of the Roma population according to the economical status not only reflects different reproduction behaviour of the Roma population, but it also points to the higher rate of labour market exclusion.

Education structure in the labour market has improved in Slovakia in the last years, and the proportion of employees with elementary education, without education or with high school without graduation decreased in favour of higher education with graduation as well as university degree. The question - what dynamics such development shows in relation to Roma - cannot be currently answered as actual quantifiable data on situation in marginalised Roma communities do not exist. The submitted project will offer the answer to the above-raised question.

Use of the project outputs

Data on living conditions of the Roma communities are of high importance for the social policy. They are necessary for designing targeted measures and for quantification of social policy impacts on these groups of citizens. The submitted project is planned till year 2015 and it envisages series of sample surveys that would offer data sets that will draw a complex picture of the development of marginalised Roma living conditions in a time perspective. Primary sampling units will be spread throughout whole Slovakia territory, in order to allow for classification of the surveyed households into three basic categories according to the degree of integration with the majority population (segregated, separated and mixed).

It is foreseen that the survey of living conditions in the marginalised communities will become a component of regular statistical survey after the project finalisation. The submitted project therefore allows for transfer and use of the same methodology as in Slovakia also in implementation of similar projects in other countries. The submitted project will contribute to the standardisation of data collection on poverty, long-term unemployment and other disadvantages of Roma population in a mid-term perspective, which is of priority needs of the state administration in the areas of social policy and equal opportunities policy. Standardisation and regularity of data collection will ensure, to a certain extent, compatibility of the sample surveys in the Roma communities with regular surveys of EU-SILC that are oriented at the general SR population.

Project implementation benefits

The project objectives are in compliance with Programme Declaration of the Government of the Slovak Republic 2006, where it is declared in Part Three, chapter "Social Policy" that:

„The Government considers the highest possible employment level as one of the basic criteria of successful state economic and social policy. The Government will ... implement strategies supporting the increase of sustainable employment, decrease of unemployment ... by creation of new jobs by suitably supported investment, increase of attractiveness of job positions, labour quality, labour productivity ... in cooperation with social partners and territorial self-government authorities. Special interest will be focused on support of marginalised Roma communities, decrease of regional disparities in employment, unemployment levels and labour productivity, especially in lagging behind regions with high unemployment. The Government will adopt projects supporting creation of new jobs, projects and programmes for achieving and sustaining labour habits in regions with high unemployment rate and poverty, especially for marginalised communities"

The submitted project is linked to the *National Strategy Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion 2006 – 2008*, as well as with the *National Strategy Report on Social Protection and Social 2008-2010* (MPSVR SR 2008), stating that Roma people belong to citizen groups with the highest risk of poverty and social exclusion. The *National Strategy Report* sets an objective of employment support and support of employability of groups with increased social exclusion risk, while meeting of this objective is seen through active labour market policy with different projects and programmes targeting especially the marginalised groups of citizens. The *National Strategy Report* encourages the increased job creation and support of employment for disadvantaged groups of citizens by offering targeted services of social protection and social inclusion.

The submitted project reflects also the priorities of the *National Strategic Reference Framework for the period of 2007 – 2013 (NSRF)*. Employment increase, social inclusion and capacity building are the objectives of the *Operational Programme Employment and Social Inclusion*. Given the low flexibility and effectiveness of the employees in the different public administration sectors, as well as the need for increased quality of policy making, activities oriented at increased quality of human resources and activities towards creation of high quality policies will be supported under this Operational Programme. Operational Programme is linked with activities of the *Regional Operational Programme, OP Education, OP Research and Development and OP Health Care* by the orientation of its Priority Axes as is described in its individual Priority Axes. It implements activities that allow reaching of goals of the employment policy resulting from the *National Programme of Reforms*. It focuses its attention on reaching high employment rate, decrease of long-term unemployment, balancing of demographic changes, but also on social inclusion and ensuring of competitiveness of the Slovak Republic in the European and global framework.

The submitted project is in compliance and is linked with strategic objective of the Slovak Republic formulated in the framework of *National Employment Action Plan (NAPZ)* for years 2004 - 2008. NAPZ is a document, by which SR is declaring its support to the Lisbon strategy (year 2000) and expresses its will to approach its strategic objective - reaching of total employment level of 70 % till year 2011. In relation to the Lisbon strategy, the Slovak Government adjusted and implemented several structural reforms. NAPZ comprise some of the adopted principles. It is stated in the framework of principle No. 7:

"To support integration and fight against discrimination of the people disadvantaged on the labour market" it states that the Government priority is "improvement of employment of the disadvantaged groups on the labour market and prevention of appearance of new long-term unemployment ... by support and stimulation of temporary employment agencies and supported employment agencies in order to integrate the disadvantaged job applicants into the labour market".

At the regional level, the submitted project is in compliance with the priorities of the most important regional documents, e.g. the *Plan of Economical and Social Development of the Košice Self-governing Region*, especially with its global objective No. 5 - strengthening of social capital and institutional cooperation, as well as measure No. 3 ("Preparation of Strategy for Development Support of Marginalised Groups of Citizens") and No. 4 ("Creation of Strategy for Social and Spatial Integration of Roma Population").

The submitted project takes into account also the *Strategy for Human Resources Development in the Košice Self-governing Region for Years 2006 - 2013*, being in compliance with the regional priority No. 1.1 "More Effective Exploitation of Measures Oriented at Increased Proportion and Effectiveness of Active Policies" and its main objective "To increase directness and effectiveness of active measures for unemployed and persons inactive on the labour market, with an emphasis on their targeting, development of up-to-date and effective employment services that will offer differentiated employment services and creation of local partnerships in order to increase the employment."

Integrated Study of Conditions for Further Development of Slovakia - East in the framework of the development subject "Employment Services and Support to Employment" defines a main priority as "Accessibility of Labour Market to Marginalised Groups of Citizens." The following two specific objectives are defined in the framework of this priority: i) to improve the conditions for labour market access for marginalised groups including Roma population (in order to decrease their proportion on the total number of registered job applicants from the global point of view by 15 % in year 2010 when compared with year 2006), and ii) to increase the qualification and to improve the skills of the marginalised groups. Both specific objectives are set to support indirectly also other important activities such as e.g. establishment of "interim" labour market. These strategic objectives are in compliance with the objectives of this project.

Programme of Social, Economic and Cultural Development of the Region Banská Bystrica (2002) also focuses on "integration of disadvantaged groups and regions with high unemployment risk", and it formulates priorities 1.1. Creation of effective job positions and unemployment decrease, and 1.3. Support to marginalised groups of citizens, as well as measure 1.3.1. Support to activities solving the Roma population issues in order to increase their living standard with Involvement of the Roma population itself, and measure 1.3.2. Implementation of programmes supporting the job engagement of the disadvantaged groups of labour market participants.

Similar attention is paid also to the integration of disadvantaged groups in the labour market in the *Programme of Economic and Social Development of the Prešov Self-governing Region for Years 2008 – 2015*, that became a basic development document of the region for the EU programming period 2007- 2013.

II. Strategy and objectives

The project objective is monitoring of social situation development by collection of statistical data that are comparable in time and that describe living conditions, poverty and social exclusion in marginalised Roma communities in Slovakia. A specific project objective is social inclusion of long-term unemployed and marginalised Roma community members through implementation of targeted social policies.

Basic assumptions

Development during last two decades induced deep changes of the socio-economic situation in the big part of population, basically changing their living standards and life patterns. Many undesirable phenomena, such as social exclusion and long-term unemployment, became deeper. Social disadvantage and poverty of part of the Slovak population is a factor of many circumstances. Many analyses confirm that three factors are most closely linked with poverty in Slovakia and these factors mutually enhance each other: education level of the head of household, his/her employment status and position at the labour market, and location of dwelling. Another factor contributing to the above-mentioned employment status, according to many recent surveys as well as according to the UNDP research (2006), is ethnicity, especially Roma ethnicity. This ethnic group combines multiple disadvantages: poverty related to demographic conditions, poverty resulting from unemployment, poverty caused by low job quality or low education and discrimination. The situation is worst for those that live in the segregated settlements.

Lack of precise information and data on living conditions of the marginalised Roma communities poses a problem for public administration. Thus, the so called "Roma question" is not only an issue of social policy and policy of equal opportunities, but also an issue of statistics and data collection in Slovakia. Collection of information on living conditions and discrimination of Roma population was substituted by monitoring probes of the European institutions, and by specialised, mostly sociological surveys in the marginalised environment during last decade. Those specialised surveys were focusing on socio-economic living conditions of Roma population, as well as targeted areas of education, labour market etc. Non-governmental research institutions, academy, European institutions, international non-governmental organisations, as well as inter-governmental organisations such as the World Bank etc. initiated and performed these surveys. From the methodological point of view these studies were probes or qualitative surveys, and the sample size was not sufficiently representative from the statistical point of view. These surveys were not performed on a regular and planned basis, and they were rather a reaction to the immediate impulses or eventually to requests of donors.

An important development of data collection practice on marginalised Roma communities appeared at the beginning of the 21st century, with application of the method of territorial "mapping" of the Roma settlements. Sociographic mapping of the Roma communities in Slovakia identified four types of accommodation of the Roma population in relation to the majority population: integrated - spread (Roma citizens living in the municipality spread among the majority), integrated - concentrated (Roma citizens living in the municipality, but in higher density in certain area or areas), in the margin of the municipality (Roma citizens living in the margin of the municipality in higher density), and outside the municipality (Roma citizens living in the settlement distant from the municipality or separated by certain barrier).

UNDP survey project (2006) was based on the similar approach to identify the target group, and it has played a pilot project role for this submitted project. Thank to detailed data on Roma settlements from the sociographic mappings, it was possible to split Roma households into three basic categories according to the degree of integration with the majority population. The sample of the general population served as a control set in this research, in order to compare certain socio-economic and other information. Economic household, forming a unit of analysis in this research, was defined as an "individual or group of individuals who are or who might also not be relatives, who live together as an independent unit in the sense of having common budget. The questionnaire collected information about the household, as well as information about the individual household members, their education, employment status etc. This survey is unique, and it was the most detailed and most complex survey of Roma communities carried out so far.

The submitted project is planned until year 2015, and it foresees similar sample surveys that will give data packages resulting in complex picture of the development of Roma living conditions in a time perspective.

Methodology

The project consists of six activities. Three activities have a character of quantitative selective field surveys, two activities have a character of in-depth qualitative research. The last activity consists of the preparation of synthetic report on the evolvement of situation during the project implementation. The activities No. 1, 3 and 5 (collection of questionnaire-based quantitative data on living conditions of households) will be based on the „face-to-face“ interviews between interviewer and respondent, following the structured questionnaire. The project will be coordinated by the project manager, and UNDP specialists will provide expert guarantee for the individual activities.

Data collection in the framework of the project activities including the precise questionnaire content, respondents sample, selection of sampling sites will be harmonised with the recommendations of the outputs of project "*Creation of national poverty and social exclusion indicators and proposal of method ensuring their regular monitoring*" commissioned by the MPSVR SR. The submitted project is based on the methodology and experience of the UNDP from survey in 2006.

Activities No. 1, No. 3 and No. 5 will have three phases: preparation, implementation and analysis.

A questionnaire will be prepared during the preparatory phase, and a mini-pilot will be performed. Its aim will be to check the duration of interview as well as understandability of questions, in parallel with identification of potential problems and shortcomings. Mini-pilot will comprise survey of 5 to 8 households in the marginalised environment, and project manager together with the head of survey will participate.

The questionnaire will be developed in order to gain all relevant information, within maximum duration of 90 minutes. The questionnaire should ensure compatibility of the questions with survey of EU-SILC to the extent possible, and it will reflect the recommendations of the project implemented by the MPSVR SR entitled "*Creation of national poverty and social exclusion indicators*". Information from different fields will be gathered in the framework of questionnaire survey, and the questionnaire will be structured to have following components: housing, household structure, education, health, economic activity, social assistance, income and expenses and subjective assessment of poverty. The selection unit will be represented by economic household defined as: "individual or group of individuals who are or who might as well not be relatives, who live together as an independent group in the sense of common budget (i.e. they contribute or support each other in the framework of the common family budget)." The questionnaire will focus on information about the household, but also on data about the individual household members. Information on the household will be delivered by a person who is identified as head of household", i.e. person who is so assigned by the other household members. In case of absence of another household member or in case of small children, the information will be delivered by a substitute member (parent or „head of household“). Detailed manual will be elaborated for specification of respondents, and it will be binding for the interviewers.

The team of interviewers will be composed of experienced interviewers who are able to act in the specific environment. Part of them will comprise the members of Roma minority and persons with some experience in Roma communities. Each interviewer will pass special training and instructions before the research that will be organised during five days in a training centre. During the training course, the interviewers will be explained the purpose of the individual questions how will be done the random selection of households, how they are expected to behave during communication with respondents, how they should raise the questions and record the responses. Social benefits system will be explained to them, as well as labour market functioning, so that they understand the questionnaire sufficiently and they can record the responses correctly, eventually they can instruct the respondent in case of misunderstandings during their communication. The resulting team of interviewers will comprise 20 pairs. Whole data gathering will be controlled by head of the survey, and each interviewer will have a direct contact to the supervisor in order to communicate any uncertainty or problem with him/her. Selection of sampling sites will be based on the *Sociographic Mapping of Roma Communities in Slovakia 2004* that offers data on municipalities and settlements inhabited by Roma. These data will allow for splitting of Roma settlements into three basic categories according to the integration degree with the majority population: segregated, separated and mixed.

We expect selection of 30 sampling sites for each category and 8 households for each site. We propose the following method of the resulting Roma household selection:

Type of population	Number of primary sampling units	Number of households per sampling unit	Total number of households
Segregated (living in settlements outside the municipality)	30	8	240
Separated (living in increased density in marginal or other part of municipality)	30	8	240
Mixed (living spread among the majority population)	30	8	240
Total	90		720

Sample of general population will serve as a control group in the research in order to compare certain socio-economic and other parameters. Similarly as in the research performed in year 2006, we suppose that 90 primary sampling units will serve as a basis for general population sample selection. These sites will be classified as urban (more than 5000 inhabitants) and rural (less than 5000 inhabitants), and 45 sampling sites will be chosen among them, proportionally. Addresses to be visited by the interviewers will be selected randomly out of these sampling units. If certain households will be self-identified as Roma, they will be kept in the sample of the general population. Number of households for one sampling unit will be four which in total gives 360 households. Field investigation will last one month. This time will allow the trained team of interviewers to visit more households as they would be able to visit during a shorter time period. Data analysis will follow after recording of data and their organisation into database files (in SPSS format). Analytical study investigating multiple dimensions of living conditions will result in a final output of activities No. 1, 3 and 5. The study will be structured to the information about household structure, housing conditions, health status, education and labour market. Recommendation in the fields of social policy, social care services, labour market and performance of labour authorities in relation to their clients from marginalised communities will form a part of this study. Analytical study will also reflect data and knowledge from abroad, where positive results were reached in the implementation of social inclusion of marginalised population policies.

Activities No. 2 and 4 (in-depth research of the labour market) will be implemented by means of qualitative methods. These activities will have three phases: preparatory (4 months), implementation (4 months) and analytical (4 months). In-depth investigations will be based on a field research that will collect information in the following areas: (i) activities of the UPSVaR and their capacities in solving the long-term unemployment issues and issues of socially excluded citizens, especially members of the marginalised Roma communities; (ii) barriers on the side of labour demand (unemployed, eventually potential employees), and (iii) barriers on the side of labour supply (low offer of jobs in the marginalised regions, employers etc.).

This in-depth investigation will comprise determination of education profile, qualification conditions and work experience of employed and unemployed Roma who live in the marginalised regions, including eventual assessment of their capacities and experiences in the labour market and their status on the labour market, their experience with labour authorities and social care administration, as well as social services. Conditions of the competitive labour market will be investigated also (receiving of social allowances, arrears, qualification gaps and needs (education), and gaps in qualification that needs longer intervention. The following will be performed:

- Analysis of administrative data of the UPSVaR, according to which a scheme of typical labour demand and profile of typical qualification of long-term unemployed people, duration and unemployment character etc. will be developed for a given region.
- Analysis of traps of the unemployment with emphasis on persons with income close to subsistence wages and to persons with extraordinarily numerous families.
- Targeted focus groups (group interviews) with employees of UPSVaR, experts and job applicants, that will allow for further determination of different qualitative aspects of labour market disadvantages (aspects that could not be determined by quantitative investigations).

In-depth investigation will be performed by team of specialists (sociology, economy, ethnology) who will be strengthened by community work experts knowing perfectly the situation in the marginalised communities. Publication - analytical report - will contain structured recommendations for justification and potential modification of social policy measures.

Synthetic analysis of living situation development and social inclusion of the marginalised Roma community members will be elaborated in the framework of the Activity No. 6, with emphasis on the labour market. Package of recommendation will form a part of the study that will be formulated on the basis of situation development analysis during the project duration 2010 - 2015. Moreover, this analytical study will build on the foreign knowledge (good practice) of the EU countries where positive results were reached in the implementation of the social inclusion of marginalised populations policies. Transfer of good practice will be ensured during the whole project duration by exchange of analyses and participation in the international workshops where the issues in question will be addressed.

The submitted project will also contribute to the improvement of equal opportunities policy. Male and female members of the marginalised Roma communities are exposed to multiple disadvantages. One type of disadvantage - gender - has serious impacts on the worsened living chances of Roma women, not only in comparison with majority population, but also with Roma men. Living conditions of the target group will be investigated and analysed also from the gender point of view: e.g. anonymous record of number of men and women and age groups 15 - 24 and 55 - 64 will be performed in the group of indicators of living or labour conditions.

Project publicity will form integral part of the project during its entire implementation. It will include publication of analytical articles, information articles, information leaflets and advertisement. Publicity will comprise also dissemination of information to the citizens in municipalities where the research will be performed; preparing them that interviewers can visit their household. Importance of the research will be explained, as well as the fact that good will to respond to the answers will help to improve the situation of marginalised Roma citizens. Workshop on the results of the investigation and situation development will be organised at the end of each activity and during each year of the project duration.