

THE ROLE OF ROMA CO-ORDINATORS

SARAJEVO, BOSNIA AND
HERZEGOVINA

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Zoran Pavlović, Co-ordinator for Roma
Issues in the City of Kragujevac, Serbia

Office for Roma Issues

- Republic of Serbia
- City of Kragujevac
- City Department of General Administration and Local Self Government
- Secretariat of Health, Social Policy and Social Care for Children
- Department of Social Protection

Officer for co-operation and Roma integration,
Zoran Pavlović

- ADDRESS: Cara Lazara 15
- CITY: Kragujevac
- TELEPHONE : 034/330-277
- MOBILE: 064/ 46 25 702
- FAX: 034/ 331- 870
- E-mail:
- zpavlovic.kgrom@gmail.com

CHRONOLOGY

At the initiative of the City of Kragujevac, the Office for Roma Issues was opened. By a decision of the Mayor, Zoran Pavlovic was appointed for Roma Co-ordinator. The Office opened on 1 September 2006 and continually works since then.

The Office was supported by the OSCE, the Agency for Human and Minority Rights of the Government of the Republic of Serbia from 01 October 2006 to 31 May 2007. In accordance with the Roma Assistance Programme, this support consisted of 18,700 euros for improving the situation of Roma in Kragujevac along with the participation of the City of Kragujevac in the amount of 1,870 euros.

The Roma Co-ordinator became a permanent position within the City administration.

GOALS

- Main goal:
- Improving the position of Roma in Kragujevac
- Specific goals:
 1. Education, 2. Housing, 3. Employment,
 4. Displaced persons, 5. Readmission,
 6. Personal documents, 7. Social protection,
 8. Health care, 9. Position of Roma women,
 10. Information, 11. Culture, 12. Political participation,
 13. Anti-discrimination

Duties of the Co-ordinator are:

- Undertakes activities that are necessary for the Roma integration in the local community
- Collects the information about the conditions, needs and activities of Roma organizations and individuals. Makes a database on the Roma population at the local level
- Prepares proposals and takes initiative to improve the situation of Roma
- Performs other duties in order to implement the Local Action Plan for Roma, the Strategy for Improvement of the Status of Roma , Social Strategy of Kragujevac
- Participates in the preparation and drafting of plans to improve the situation of Roma
- Participates and contributes to co-operation of local governments and NGOs
- Reports and perform other duties as requested by the Head of the City Administration and the Chief of the Department.

Data on Roma

- In Kragujevac there are 1,482 Roma, representing 0,82% of population. According to unofficial data, however, this figure is closer to 10,000.
- The percentage of Roma at national level is between 4% and 5%, which is reflected at the local level as well, therefore, out of 180,000 citizens, approximately 8,000 to 10,000 are Roma.
- Domicile Roma are between 7,000 and 8,000 and IDPs are between 1,300 and 2,000.
- If Roma settlements are defined by at least 10 houses or 50 people, in Kragujevac we have 13 settlements.
- The largest Roma settlement that is not ethnically mixed is Licika with 130 families and 520 inhabitants. It consists of domicile Roma.
- The most vulnerable illegal settlement with Roma IDPs from Kosovo lies on the southern bypass and consists of 45 people (30 children).
- According to the Social Welfare Centre in Kragujevac, out of 2,680 recipients of social assistance it is estimated that nearly 400 beneficiaries are Roma.

Roma settlements

No.	Name	No. of households	Population
01	LICIKA	130	520
02	PALILULE	70	280
03	KOLONIJA-BAGREMAR	90	360
04	BRESNICA-1 2 3	60	240
05	JUŽNA OBILAZNICA	10	64
06	ILINA VODA	30	180
07	SUŠICA	10	40
08	UGLJEŠNICA-PETROVAC	10	40
09	ERDEČ	300	1500
10	GROŠNICA-1 2 3	300	1500
11	DRENOVAČKI PUT	200	1000
12	KORMAN	30	100
13	MARŠIĆ	10 -1250-250-500	50-5874-1000-2100

What has been done?

- LAP for Roma adopted on 21 February 2007 by the decision of the Mayor.
- The project “Bahtalipea - Let 's Create a Better Life” was successfully implemented, through which the living conditions in the two Roma settlements were improved. In Korman, the retaining wall of 52m was built to protect the village from flooding rivers.
- In Licika, five concrete poles were placed and electrical lines were replaced which upgraded the electricity supply and increased security for 130 families.

Projects

- PPP - 196 children were beneficiaries of three different projects which secured continuous monitoring of children and families.
- Roma Balkans programme - development of the LAP for Roma Health, redefined, children monitored, database on 700 Roma pupils.
- Social inclusion and access to human rights for RAE.
- Balkans - UNHCR, Praxis, over 1,000 personal documents.
- Improving the knowledge of young Roma on the prevention and fight against HIV – Global fund. 1,680 beneficiaries.
- “Till the last glass” – Local community treatment against alcohol dependency, 50 beneficiaries.
- “Healthy smile” – local community project for 120 beneficiaries.
- Roma empowerment – CARE Norway – 3 year project. Business start-up for 24 beneficiaries.

Multisectral collaboration with the institutions

Adopted parliamentary decision to legalize Licika, free legal consultations, humanitarian actions. Short-term financial assistance for Đurđevdan, gifts for children for Bibia and for New Year's, free vacations for children on Kopaonik, space for RRM, Romanipen, Bahtalipe-Tulea, equipment and computers for 4 Roma NGOs, scholarships for Roma pupils, a special Voter Registration List for National Council of the Roma National Minority.

Centre for Social Work – 2,680 families are social assistance beneficiaries, Roma families represent 25 % of all short-term financial assistance beneficiaries. 300 volunteers engaged, including 25% Roma. Mediation in child fostering programme (a quarter are Roma). Issuing documents, raising parental skills.

Schools - database of 700 pupils established and their progress is being followed by the local team. The City has five pedagogical assistants. Affirmative action for the school entry is applied (35 pupils).

Collaboration with the institutions

Police Department – Roma Co-ordinator established co-operation with the Police Department. Representatives of the police actively participate in the local team for solving Roma problems regarding security, documents, improving the position of Roma women. Prevented the attempt of human trafficking and incidents on two occasions.

National Employment Service – Representatives of NES came to Roma settlements to promote active labour market measures, job search and business start-up options (referred 150 Roma for stronger support, 50 were sent for training and retraining programmes, 30 for public works). The most vulnerable were reregistered in NES, as well as for the project “Second chance”.

Collaboration with health institutions

- **Health Centre and Hospital** – Entered Roma settlements to perform preventive check ups, educate on dangers of smoking, demonstrate self-checks for early cancer detection, refer people to choose their physician. Kragujevac has a health mediator who extensively visits Roma families. She is located at the Visiting Nurse Room of the Health Center. A high percentage of children are immunized.
- **Health Insurance Branch in Kragujevac** – included Roma in the health care system. The first health card issued on exceptional basis for Roma was made in Kragujevac. So far 226 health cards have been issued.
- **Red Cross** – 116 hygiene packages, food, baby food, used clothes and shoes, Christmas gifts etc. ... Out of 600 registered free meal recipients, around 400 are Roma.

Conclusions and recommendations

- Problems of Roma are much more visible and clearer. Continuous work on resolving those problems is still needed.
- Good examples should be systematically applied in practice.
- Roma should be involved in resolving the problems that concern them.
- Roma should enter the institutions.
- Most has been achieved in the fields of education and documentation and the least regarding employment and housing.
- Priorities in Kragujevac are housing and employment.

Love thy neighbour
as thyself!

Thank you for your attention!