



# IMPROVED EDUCATION AND INTEGRATION OPPORTUNITIES FOR ROMA IN SERBIA, EMPLOYMENT EMPOWERMENT OF YOUNG ROMA AND REINTEGRATION OF RETURNEES

## OVERVIEW

Extremely low graduation rate (11.5% compared to 88% for majority youth) and low employment rate of young Roma (14% compared to 38% for majority youth) feature regularly in reporting on Serbia’s public education system. Such numbers indicate that Serbia’s education system is inadequately addressing the current employment needs of students from vulnerable communities.

## BACKGROUND

"Improved Education and Integration Opportunities for Roma in Serbia, Employment Empowerment of Young Roma, and Reintegration of Returnees" provides technical assistance and efficient mechanisms to combat discrimination and to create conditions in which Roma can access quality education and employment. The prospect of few opportunities after graduation, combined with socio-economic and cultural pressures, frequently leads to Roma abandoning their studies. Parallel, many employers remain hesitant to hire those Roma high school and college students who do graduate, even if they are suitably qualified, and competition is stiff for the spots that become available. The project aims to provide a mechanism of sustainable solutions and policies for Roma children and youth in the process of their return to the education system in Serbia, and to increase the rate of graduation for Roma secondary and university students and their successful transition into the labor market. Reintegration of returnees is a complex and multidimensional process. It requires strong partnership and cooperation among various state agencies and non-governmental organizations working on the issue.

## ABOUT REF AND KfW

The project is implemented by the Roma Education Fund’s branch office in Serbia and funded by the German Financial Cooperation implemented by KfW on behalf of the German Government – Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development.

## CONTACT

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## HIGHLIGHTS

500 scholarships for Roma in vocational education and training (VET)

75 Roma vocational school graduates targeted for long-term employment

50 paid internships from 2017-2019 with additional vocational and life skills training

200 mentors to provide adequate and direct support to Roma VET students and their parents and teachers

100 Roma families to be supported by Roma NGOs from Serbia that will be awarded grants to cooperate with the national and local institutions in order to build their capacities for providing adequate support to Roma returnees and help repatriated Roma who may need assistance enrolling in school and acquiring additional professional and life skills.

1 national policy approach to be developed on the children of Roma and other vulnerable groups of returnees,

