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## Project "Increased Education Opportunities for Roma Students and Youth in Western Balkans and Turkey"

### **National Policy Event: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ROMA CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA**

30 May 2019, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

#### **Recommendations**

##### **General Recommendations and Key Messages**

- There is a need to develop a joint platform of cooperation where Roma inclusion would be discussed on national level with specific measures that will involve Roma, relevant institutions, and stakeholders while the budget has to be incorporated when designing action plans and initiatives for Roma in BiH;
- There are two core elements for the Roma community advancement: quality of education and transition to employment with particular emphasis on gender equality. Community needs are growing and in order to be able to respond to them, the involvement of all stakeholders is a must.
- There are two priorities identified by the Bosnia and Herzegovina Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees when it comes to Roma inclusion: one is to continuously invest in preschool education and monitor progress and attendance of Roma children involved in primary and secondary education. As for the higher education, efficient and collaborative initiative is required for Roma children transition to higher education. Second priority is employment, vocational education and professional development programmes should be available to Roma after school graduation;
- Roma culture, history and language should be highly considered in the national education level. There is a positive feedback from the relevant cantonal institutions and already examples of good practice from the region which could be adapted for this purpose. Qualified teachers to be engaged in schools with same approach as it is with Bosnian language.
- Monitoring index with European set of indicators should be taken into consideration when talking about inclusion of Roma children.

##### **Session Specific Recommendations**

###### **Session I: Access to Quality Education for Roma Children: Perspective from the Ground**

1. Establish synergy between educational institutions and Roma community, Roma activists and CSOs as well as enhanced cooperation between schools and municipal authorities.
2. Introduce a position of Roma Mediator in primary and secondary education.
3. State authorities are urged to establish inter-sectoral cooperation between relevant stakeholders on municipal level to prevent early school leaving.
4. State authorities should provide additional support to Roma children through mentoring, tutoring and scholarships to improve academic success, prevent early school leaving and increase transition to the next level of education.
5. Educational institutions should monitor transition from preschool level to the next level of education as well as transition to employment as ultimate result.
6. State is urged to ensure free kindergarten services, transportation, textbooks, school supplies and school snacks for Roma children in order to remove barriers.



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7. State authorities in collaboration with Roma CSOs should develop and apply models of good practice to reduce and eliminate discrimination in education.
8. State authorities are urged to find adequate solutions to open daily centers for the street children and/or victims of abuse.
9. State authorities are urged to find adequate solutions for returnee children to continue quality education with their peers.
10. State should allocate more funds in education as they were allocated in housing.

## **Session II – Roma Youth Employment: A Human Development Agenda for the Next Decade**

1. State is urged to develop a monitoring system of the Employment Action Plan efficiency.
2. National Employment Agencies should set measurable goals/expected outcomes for each activity per year;
3. State is urged to develop and introduce more on-ground employment outreach support in Roma communities so that information about available employment opportunities reach Roma communities in BiH;
4. Create a uniform system of annual reporting for employment offices. The reporting template to be a part of MoU between the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees BiH and employment office;
5. To establish a database on Roma beneficiaries that will enable monitoring of the program efficiency.
6. State should establish a different employment approach: analyze the employer, Roma beneficiary selection, Roma beneficiary training and beneficiary employment;
7. In addition to the Centers for Information and Counselling in the Republic of Srpska and good cooperation between the Employment Institute and schools, there is a need to promote employment program in the field (dual education concept);
8. Government should increase funds for employment program in the country and make sure that funds are distributed in timely manner.

## **Session III – Structural and Policy Changes for Roma in Bosnia and Herzegovina: Scaling up Collaboration at the National Level**

1. State is urged to ensure budgetary means to support action plans for Roma inclusion in Bosnia and Herzegovina;
2. State should adopt Strategic Platform to Address Issues of National Minorities Issues in Bosnia and Herzegovina;
3. State is urged to develop programs and work more with Roma women, Roma children as well as to boost Roma identity;
4. State should reinforce their intersectoral approach so that results on Roma inclusion are visible in public;
5. State and respective Roma CSOs should jointly advocate for active political participation for Roma women, at least in the bodies that are directly dealing with Roma issues.
6. State is urged to ensure more favorable conditions for Roma women in Roma community and sensitize society and institutions towards Roma women issues, unfavorable position and problems through adequate strategies and mechanisms.
7. To ensure financial resources to all Roma women interested in gaining primary and secondary education.
8. State is urged to ensure that Roma in Bosnia and Herzegovina are part of the separate EU support policy from migrants and refugee crisis support in Bosnia and Herzegovina.