

WESTERN BALKANS REGIONAL SEMINAR Roma youth: from Education to Employment

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Session II

Ms Veljka JURAN

Employment trends are changing that needs to be reflected. Lack of sensitization between the **demand and supply** in the labor market. It is important to strengthen employability of employees. The focus is on the **vulnerable people, Roma people, people with low qualifications and less demanded professions.**

The Agency cooperates with NGOs and planning joint actions, meetings events. Problems are **low qualification of Roma people; lack of skills; lack of motivation; lack of engagement; low level of confidence; and lack of information.**

The agency uses **media to disseminate information**, however there are significant amount of people who has no access to information. Qualifications and engagement to active job seeking needs to be developed.

To address these problems, the agency has specific **operating plan**, have **grants** distributed, **Internship** program and **community work program**. Support is provided by **mentors and experts also trainings**. Program for creating new employment as of subsidizing salaries. The trainings tend to cover as many unemployed people as possible. The employers being part of the program obliged to employ at least 50% of the people trained.

For the future **all stakeholders need to focus on better dissemination of information. Increasing the participation in active measures also important to work on.**

Mr Serkan BAYSAK

95% of Roma geographically segregated. As a result, students are segregated in ECD and primary education. Lack of completion of primary and secondary schools, very low number of Roma graduates in tertiary education. **Trainings for soft skills development needs to be utilized more by Roma.** More **cooperation is needed with chambers and business sector** to better perceive what the demands of the labor market are.

Mr Asib ZEKIR

Unemployment rate of young Roma are 2-3 times higher than for non-Roma. Young Roma should be employed accordingly their educational background. There is a tendency of **increasing unemployment rate among Roma.** There is a **wish for self-employment among Roma**, because they face with difficulties in getting employed. **Skills need to be upgraded** of young Roma as basis for future self-employment. Their skills are developed as credit officers within an **internship program**, plus trainings are given. REDI supports employment of Roma at business entities by facilitation. Another important factor is **networking**, implying that REDI is a bridge between the institutions and

Roma job seekers. **REDI also operates business clubs** between the Roma beneficiaries and entrepreneurs.

Recommendations: more investment to build proper skills, to ensure six months to one-year internship in business sector, institutions need to establish partnership with NGOs, targeted approach needed for employment measures.

Mr Zoran SIMIĆ,

480 people work at his company out of most of them are Roma competing greatly. It implies that **Roma are performing well if the chance is given. Roma can be successful entrepreneurs as any other people in Europe.** After the training, **employment opportunity needs to be given** to Roma. Roma also have to follow the new trends and follow the technology. **Affirmative measures are needed in employment**, such as 5-10% of the employed people needs to be Roma. This is the solution instead of training provision. There is an idea to establish a **Roma Entrepreneurship Fund** in Serbia.

Questions and discussion

Discrimination at workplaces against Roma still exists that needs to be solved urgently.

To have a specific number of Roma beneficiaries in all **employment measures as quotas**. For instance, out of 100 people at least 5 to be Roma.

There is limited amount of money for self-employment and entrepreneurship. It would be good that **Roma NGOs** are invited by the respective Ministries when drafting the operation plans.

The **campaigns** good ways to raise the awareness, but not always efficient tools for change.

Tax reductions needs to be introduced for companies employing Roma. Also, more work needed on **sustainability** of new businesses to keep them alive even after the direct support ends.