

At Present Georgia's government has no strategy or any action plan targeting the ROMA and issues affecting them. The National Concept for Civic Equality and Integration and its Action Plan for the period 2015-2020 has finally included the creation of a working group on vulnerable groups including ROMA, but so far nothing has been done.

While talking about Civic Integration and Political participation of Roma in Georgia, we have to take in consideration that there is a problem of knowing the state language; very little percentage of the Community speak on Georgian. This is a big problem, because without knowing state language it is hard to be active civil citizen, which by its part somehow means political participation as well. Other Ethnic minorities living in Georgia, like Armenians, Azerbaijanis, Greeks and etc. are included in the program called "1+4" which means that you learn Georgian for a year and then you go to university to get a higher education. This program is for ethnic minorities but Roma People still can't use this opportunity because in Georgia They are considered as a Marginal group. So prioritized problem should be the Recognition of Roma Community as Ethnic minorities, to make all state programs for ethnic minorities accessible for them, which actually helps people to integrate in Civil Society.

We all know that it is a long term-process but someone has to start it. The younger generations are key stakeholders for the long term improvement of the lives of the Roma in Georgia, which is reachable through recognition of legal status and through opportunities opened to them after that. Georgia's Reforms Associates recommends Georgian government to recognize ROMA as ethnic minority. We suggest to make a change in law about Ethnic minorities and marginal groups in Georgia to provide ROMA community with bright opportunities. This step will open opportunity gate for them and will make them interested as well; the main outcome of this reform will be the raised awareness about opportunities given to ethnic minorities by government; raised awareness about advantages of Active Civic Citizen and etc. This will empower Roma through capacity-building to advocate for their rights.

We all know well that this is a really long term process, but someone has to start it. Once it starts, time to time it will become part of the internal daily policy which will support ROMA. My organization will support Georgian Government in implementation of any kind of activities affecting ROMA, in a good way of course.