

**Statement of the Delegation of Ukraine
at the Working Sessions 16-17 (specifically selected topic): “Roma and Sinti” of
2019 OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting
delivered by Andrij Yurash, director of Department for Religious Affairs and
Nationalities of the Ministry of culture of Ukraine
(26 September 2019)**

Mr. Moderator, dear colleagues,

First of all, I would like to thank today’s introducers, especially Mrs. Zola Kondur, for presenting some good examples of positive implementation of politics related to the Roma communities.

That is really good sign, when representative of the public society, as well as of the international organizations, can see positive steps and achievements of the official state institutions in different countries, including Ukraine.

Realization and implementation of the National Strategy and Action Plan of integration of the Roma community into Ukrainian society is a subject of the permanent attention and practical efforts of the Ukrainian government.

Important to remind that the Special Inter-Ministerial Working Group under the roof of the Cabinet of Ministries of Ukraine has been created in 2016.

But because it’s a pretty numerous, according to the quantity of members, executive structure, simultaneously 5 permanent working sub-groups have been created for realization the concrete directions of politics, related to the Roma community.

First group, which is responsible for law enforcement and migration activity, has had its meetings three times during previous and this year. It has initiated beginning of the important project “Media without prejudice”, which started this March. It presupposes increasing existing level of tolerance and mutual respect between different ethnic communities inside the Ukrainian society, especially toward the Roma one.

Second working group, which is concentrating its activity around the question of housing, also has had three meetings, which were organized in places with the most numerous Roma settlements. Totally 9 cities and villages have been visited in three regions with highest number of the Roma population for concrete observing and discussion in details of the housing problematic in the areas, where it is the most relevant.

Three other groups have also very important areas of responsibilities:

- Third one – about education and culture;
- Fourth – for social protection and health care;
- Fifth – for organizational and informational support of any activity related to the Roma community.

Very important to understand, that implemented model of functioning of the Inter-Ministerial Working group presupposes activity on several levels:

- Cabinet of Ministries – for defining the aims and methods;
- Practical work with involvement of the particular state bodies, mainly ministries;

- And finally – regional covering the issues in all 25 local administrations.

For coordination of the different types of activity between all institutions, involved in the process, a special structure has been installed in the direct communication with our Department for Religious Affairs and Nationalities. I mean the activity of the special Secretariat of the Inter-Ministerial Working group, that has two people, responsible on the permanent basis for supporting of any forms interaction.

All presented above details convince that Ukraine in frames of the last four years has achieved absolutely new level of covering all issues related to the Roma communities.

First of all, any problems have become completely open for public discussion, and

Secondly, the state has created different mechanisms for solving existed problems.

This fact of appearance of the new positive reality, in terms of dealing with the covering of the Roma problematics, has been noted in several reports of the international monitoring organizations.

Also I want to inform about important projects, realized recently by the already mentioned today Secretariat of the Inter-Ministerial Working group on implementation the Strategy.

It has prepared a special interaction map which presents all 120 organizations, created by the Roma community. Surely, not all of these organizations are equally involved into activity of different forms. But the objective task of the Department to promote and increase their visibility in frames of realization the Strategy.

According to the special sociological survey, conducted by the Secretariat, when these organizations are contacting with the representatives of the central governmental bodies, in almost 50% of cases they are in communication with the Secretariat staff or other representatives of the corresponding Department. Just in around 25% of cases people have been in interaction with other 12 ministries, that are involved into realization the Strategy.

24 projects, initiated by the Roma non-governmental organizations, have been realized together with the state institutions, specifically with the Secretariat and the Department for Religious Affairs and Nationalities.

Thank you for your attention.