



Republic of Albania

HDIM 2019

Working Session 16: Roma and Sinti

Thank you Mr. Moderator,

I would like to make some brief remarks on Roma and Sinti issues, even that the time is not enough to explain what is done and what we still have to do.

The Albanian Government is committed to make its utmost to improve the overall situation of the Roma and Egyptian population in the country and to promote their inclusion into society.

The Albanian Government has adopted the National Action Plan for the Integration of Roma and Egyptians for the period 2016-2020. The Action Plan was prepared through an inclusive process with representatives of civil society and other ministries.

One of the strategic areas of this Action Plan is the Housing and Urban Integration of Roma and Egyptian communities, which has two major objectives. Under the first objective "Improvement of the mechanisms that will relieve the Roma and Egyptian families during the legalization procedures", a number of measures will be taken, such as: providing free legal aid to Roma and Egyptians in proceedings regarding the legalization process (i.e. the certificate of ownership, inheritance proceedings); integration of Roma and Egyptian families through pilot projects for the urbanization and providing assistance to local authorities in order to map the informal settlements of Roma and Egyptians.

Under the second objective "More Roma and Egyptian families involved in housing programs directly and indirectly", among the measures to be taken are: providing assistance to Roma and Egyptian families who cannot afford to pay the rent of social housing; training of local government staff to draft financial proposals to attract funding and to implement housing projects; informing and providing technical assistance to local government units for the implementation of Ministry of Urban Development program Improving the living conditions of Roma and Egyptians "; amending the law on Social Housing programs to include Roma and Egyptian families, etc.

Terms of raising the level of education of Roma children is in progress. Positive is the fact that the policies of the Ministry of Education and civil society are also targeted to parents and family members working in particular with them to increase their awareness on the importance of children's education. There are positive efforts for the establishment of multidisciplinary groups in some quarters

for the treatment of problems of the Roma population, but these are on an unaccompanied volunteerism and respective budgets.

The lack of health insurance is high between the Roma. Combined with poverty that prevents Roma and Egyptians to pay for services and treatments, these difficulties affect the shortly lifetime and chronic diseases.

Ministry of Health organizes periodically, throughout the country, promotional activities for child care, nutrition, family planning, STD and early pregnancy prevention, focusing especially for Roma women and girls.

Roma women and girls are considered as among the most disadvantaged groups who experience multiple discrimination, and certainly require making positive and specific measures for them. In recent years, young Egyptian and Roma girls and women are starting to be an active part of civil society, and the number of youth of Roma and Egyptian comes added undergraduate banks, but not only. Although few in number they are also part of the state institutions or the media.

To face the difficult situation of their unemployment, there have been implemented over the years some employment promotion programs of which mainly targeting Roma and Egyptian communities. The National Action Plan for the Integration of Roma and Egyptians for the period 2016-2020; DCM. No. 48 "Employment promotion program of unemployed in difficulty"; DCM. No. 27, dated 11.01.2012, "On the Employment Promotion programmer of the women from special groups" is the basis that provides and supports full employment of this category.

Understandably, the successful implementation of above documents represents a difficult task, especially in terms of resources and inter-departmental coordination. Aware of the challenges persisting in these aspects, the Government of Albania has put the issue of the implementation of the above-mentioned National Strategy and Action Plan at the forefront of its work agenda.

In this regard, Albania stands ready to continue its existing cooperation with the ODIHR and the OSCE Presence in Albania.

Thank you.