



REPUBLIKA SLOVENIJA  
VLADA REPUBLIKE SLOVENIJE

Gregorčičeva ulica 20–25, 1000 Ljubljana

T: +386 1 478 1000  
F: +386 1 478 1607  
E: [gp.gs@gov.si](mailto:gp.gs@gov.si)  
<http://www.vlada.si/>

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## **National Programme of Measures for Roma of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia for the Period 2021–2030**

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS USED

SIAE	Slovenian Institute of Adult Education
JTC	Judicial Training Centre
IVET	Institute of Vocational Education and Training
SWC	Social Work Centre
WG	Working Group
FC	Family Code
ECRML	European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
SPIRS	Social Protection Institute of the Republic of Slovenia
CC	Criminal Code
IWC	Interministerial Working Group
MESS	Ministry of Education, Science and Sport
MLFSEO	Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities
MH	Ministry of Health
MESP	Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning
MEDT	Ministry of Economic Development and Technology
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food
MC	Ministry of Culture
MI	Ministry of the Interior
MJ	Ministry of Justice
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NIJZ	National Institute of Public Health
NPUR 2010–2015	National Programme of Measures for Roma of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia for the Period 2010–2015
NPUR 2017–2021	National Programme of Measures for Roma of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia for the Period 2017–2021
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
FCNM	Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities
SIS	Spatial information system
PLYA	project learning for young adults
RS	Republic of Slovenia
RTV	Slovenia Radio and Television
SA	social activation
ACSW	Association of Social Work Centres of Slovenia
CRCRS	Council of the Roma Community of the Republic of Slovenia
HFRS	Housing Fund of Republic of Slovenia, Public Fund
SURS	Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia
NE	north-eastern (Slovenia)
GONM	Government Office for National Minorities
CRS	Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia
E	education
ZLS	Local Self-Government Act
ZRomS-1	Roma Community Act

**The terms written in the masculine gender are used as gender neutral.**

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## I. INTRODUCTION

The process of preparing the starting points and framework for the national programme of measures for the period 2021–2030 in terms of content started in August 2019, when the Government Office for National Minorities (hereinafter referred to as: GONM) sent an invitation to all relevant ministries to obtain opinions and positions in their departments on the planned topics that they believe should be included in the new programming document for the period from the expiry of the current national programme of measures in 2021 until 2030. The call by the GONM was supported by a discussion within the then working body of the Government, the Commission of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia for the Protection of the Roma Community (hereinafter referred to as: Government Commission), which further called on all relevant ministries to prepare a set of planned content for the coming period and regularly report on the course of activities at the commission meetings.

In addition to this, in 2019 the GONM carried out activities as part of the National Roma Platform project with a clear emphasis on the implementation of the measures of the relevant programme, specifically in the fields of education, promotion of employment of the Roma and health care. In previous years, the project placed the greatest emphasis on developing the living conditions of members of the Roma community and cooperation with municipalities in this field. At a joint working meeting on 15 November 2019, the GONM provided the relevant departments with the starting points for the drafting of the programme and presented its expectations of the ministries, and all were asked to ensure participation at the highest level at the multi-stakeholder event organised by the GONM on 26 November 2019. This event structurally rounded off all activities related to the content of measures in individual areas that had already been implemented, and its purpose was to create starting points for the drafting of a new programme of measures for the period 2021–2030 in the fields of education, employment, social inclusion and health care. After the event, comprehensive material was prepared with an overview of all findings, proposed objectives and necessary measures and was sent to all relevant ministries.

After a prior discussion and call by the Government Commission, on 20 December 2019 the GONM called on all competent bodies to prepare the basis and proposals for strategic objectives and measures based on the findings and proposals made as part of the events of the National Roma Platform. Also sent to the relevant departments with the call was all the key material from the discussions of the National Roma Platform with proposals on how and where action should be taken in the future. This material was the starting point for the preparation of bases and proposals for strategic objectives and measures to be included in the programme of measures for the period 2021–2030 within the competence of each department. In addition to this material, the GONM helped all departments by sending them a brief overview of key topics and challenges that the new programme of measures should address in the coming period, and an indicative methodological guideline for the preparation of contributions.

In 2020, on the basis of debates in the National Assembly and the National Council as part of the discussion of the Government's annual report on the situation of the Roma community in Slovenia, important systemic barriers were identified that prevent measures aimed at improving the situation of members of the Roma community and increasing their activation from being more effective. In 2020, the Government established, on the basis of the Roma Community in the Republic of Slovenia Act<sup>1</sup> (hereinafter referred to as: ZRomS-1), the Working Group for the Treatment of Roma Issues, which replaced the previous government commission, as a consultative body of the Government. The members of the Working Group are representatives of all key ministerial departments as well as representatives of municipalities populated by the Roma (especially municipalities of south-eastern Slovenia) and the Council of Roma Community of the Republic of Slovenia (hereinafter referred to as: SRSRS) as an umbrella organisation of the Roma community established on the basis of the ZRomS-1. The work of the new working body of the government has strengthened the commitment of all relevant stakeholders to increase activities and efforts to address the challenges faced by municipalities and the Roma community, especially in the environments or Roma settlements where the situation is poor.

At the beginning of September 2020, with the support of the working group the GONM further called on all relevant ministries that had already submitted their contributions to the drafting of the new programme

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<sup>1</sup> The Roma Community in the Republic of Slovenia Act (Official Gazette of the RS, No. 33/07)

of measures to once again review and complete the prepared objectives and measures and to specify them in more detail so that it will be possible to take measures to ensure that they actually meet the needs of local communities (both municipalities and the Roma community) and that they are targeted and as measurable as possible. The GONM also asked the relevant departments to examine and comment on the proposals made in the field that were not included in their proposal for measures, while also providing more detailed starting points and explanations in this regard in the call. The GONM sent a special call to those ministries that had not yet submitted their contribution and to those for which it assessed that, given the field of content, they should examine the possibilities for formulating and including concrete measures in the new programme of measures.

On the basis of all proposals made by the relevant ministries and their own planned measures and taking into account the findings and work done as part of the Working Group for the Treatment of Roma Issues, the GONM drafted a new programme of measures to be implemented by 2030, which provided the basis for further discussion, coordination and the final draft of the programme.

The GONM guided and supported the ministries throughout that time and used its experience and information and knowledge about the situation in the field to try to steer and influence the content that would be included in this document as effectively as possible, while taking into account its competencies, and to monitor objectives and measures (indicators and monitoring methods) as effectively as possible. The last round of coordination took place in March and April 2021, after which a comprehensive draft of the document was prepared. The work of the Working Group for the Treatment of Roma Issues was also taken into account. The draft NPUR 2021–2030 was published on the website of the Government and the GONM on 25 May 2021 and was sent to all municipalities where members of the Roma community live, the Council of the Roma Community of the Republic of Slovenia, the Human Rights Ombudsman and the Advocate of the Principle of Equality. The public consultation on the draft NPUR 2021–2030 ended on 25 June 2021.

As part of the public consultation on the draft NPUR 2021–2030, the GONM also held consultations with representatives of the Roma community on 14 June 2021 as part of the National Roma Platform project, specifically with representatives of the Council of the Roma Community of the Republic of Slovenia and representatives of Roma councillors. At these consultations, representatives of the Roma community assessed that the draft document reflects the situation and envisages measures that can improve the situation of members of the Roma community in Slovenia in all areas in the long term. It was established that the draft NPUR 2021–2030 is coordinated and acceptable to all stakeholders involved and that it satisfactorily reflects the intensive process of multi-stakeholder cooperation with the active involvement of the Roma community. The comments and proposals presented by the participants in the consultations were evaluated and explained as part of the discussion by representatives of all relevant ministries and of the GONM in terms of necessity and justification in view of the legal and programme options that are available (also) to members of the Roma community. Most of the issues were resolved on the spot as representatives of all relevant ministries and the GONM attended and participated in the consultations.

On the basis of the published draft document, the GONM collected all comments and proposals received and sent them to be examined by the competent bodies. Based on the collected explanations and responses, the GONM then prepared a comprehensive review of all responses and clarifications by the competent bodies and prepared the draft NPUR 2021–2030 that was again coordinated with the competent ministries, and submitted it to the Working Group for the Treatment of Roma Issues for discussion. It confirmed this at its 7th session on 25 November 2021. The GONM then prepared the relevant material for the proposal of the NPUR 2021–2030 to be sent for discussion and adoption by the Government.

## **II. STARTING POINTS AND BASES FOR DRAFTING OF THE DOCUMENT**

The Roma community in Slovenia is very diverse, as is the situation and socio-economic conditions in the lives of its members. One must be aware of this diversity, especially when drafting and implementing measures. Differences can be detected even between families in a settlement with the majority Roma

population, between individual settlements in a municipality, between municipalities in a region, as well as between regions. It is incorrect to generalise and say that the situation in a certain region is much better than elsewhere, as large differences can be detected in the field, for example, in Prekmurje, where the socio-economic situation and inclusion of the Roma population in the majority society is traditionally much better than, for example, in south-eastern Slovenia. What has contributed to the impression that the situation in Prekmurje is better is that it is strongly supported by the media, which in fact is an illusion, as usually only positive examples are presented, the number of which is indeed slightly bigger in Prekmurje than in south-eastern Slovenia, but these are still just individual cases. The situation in Prekmurje is slightly better than it is in south-eastern Slovenia in terms of dealing with the socio-economic challenges and issues of the Roma due to the geographical location of the region (proximity to Austria as a location that allows better inclusion in the labour market and higher earnings than in Slovenia, including with seasonal work), but not even there is it yet appropriate. Thus, positive examples can also be found in south-eastern Slovenia. It is true, however, that south-eastern Slovenia as a region is facing major socio-economic challenges in the Roma communities and other related problems and challenges, as well as a high rate of social exclusion of members of the Roma community, which is a result of several different factors. One of the most important factors is the slow and insufficiently active inclusion of local communities compared to the north-eastern part of the country.

Data from the field shows that the majority of Roma in Slovenia live in poor socio-economic conditions, resulting in them being caught in a cycle of poverty, being passive and dependent on financial social assistance and other forms of rights from public funds, with the dependence on the latter becoming a way of life accepted by the majority, so the latter no longer achieves its purpose, i.e. a transitional form of assistance offered to people who have found themselves in distress through no fault of their own and which helps them to make the effort to be financially independent again. Poverty and dependence on social transfers as a result of educational and socialisation patterns, passivity and alienation from the majority society is in most cases passed from generation to generation. At the same time, the value systems in the community that place the satisfaction of the individual's growing material needs (vehicles, real estate, gold, parties, weapons, alcohol and illicit drugs) first, create a gap between what is desired and what is available that is difficult to bridge. As a result, the inability to meet the needs with the available funds in some places leads to frequent commitment of misdemeanours and criminal acts which are intended to enable quick earnings and meet the needs of the individual. As criminal acts and misdemeanours remain unpunished in these cases (for example, payment of fines in particular, as perpetrators usually do not officially have property that could be enforced, and no funds may be deducted from financial social assistance to settle fines under the current law), a dangerous situation arises in which perpetrators of criminal acts and misdemeanours start feeling that they have power, that no one can do anything to them, while the victims of these criminal acts and misdemeanours acquire a feeling of inequality before the law as they infer that the Roma are not treated equally by penal policy, but better than the rest of the population. The mentioned situation in the environments where such cases are more frequent reinforces distrust between communities and prejudices that results in groups who feel that they are not protected by law resorting to self-help, which leads to vigilantism and direct confrontation between the Roma and the majority local population.

The Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia<sup>2</sup> (hereinafter referred to as: CRS) stipulates that the status and special rights of the Roma community living in Slovenia shall be regulated by law (Article 65 of the CRS). In comparison to the constitutional regulation of the situation and special rights of the autochthonous Italian and Hungarian national communities (Article 64 of the CRS), the CRS does not determine collective and individual rights that are supposed to belong to the Roma community and its members but leaves their regulation entirely to the law. The mentioned constitutional provision means an authorisation to the legislator to enshrine in law the Roma community living in Slovenia as being a special ethnic community with special rights in addition to the general rights

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<sup>2</sup> Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 33/91-I, 42/97 – UZS68, 66/00 – UZ80, 24/03 – UZ3a, 47, 68, 69/04 – UZ14, 69/04 – UZ43, 69/04 – UZ50, 68/06 – UZ121, 140, 143, 47/13 – UZ148, 47/13 – UZ90, 97, 99 and 75/16 – UZ70a).

that belong to everyone. The constitutional provision is implemented by the ZRomS-1 and the provisions relating to the Roma community in other laws in individual substantive areas<sup>3</sup>.

The intention of the legislator in 2007, when the ZRomS-1 was adopted, was to grant the Roma community as a minority community in Slovenia special rights that will enable it to preserve and develop its culture, language and ethnic features and participate both at the local and at the national level. In addition to laws, safeguards to ensure the rights of the Roma community and the improvement of the situation of its members is also built into other programmes, strategies and resolutions in individual social fields (for example, in the field of education, social security, health, culture, housing and so on)<sup>4</sup>.

Given the constitutional regulation of the situation and rights of members of the Roma community and their inclusion in various strategic and programme documents in individual social fields, it is evident that members of the Roma community in Slovenia are treated:

- a) on the one hand **as members of a minority that has traditionally and historically been present in certain areas**, and as such they are eligible for special rights to enable them to preserve and develop their culture, language and ethnic features and to participate in the creation and adoption of decisions in these processes both at the local and at the national level;
- b) and on the other hand as **residents** who are, in most of the environments where they live in Slovenia, and especially where they live in clusters and separately from the rest of the population, **socially excluded or their actual inequality and the inequality of their participation in society is apparent**. The reasons for this are numerous and complex.

**The National Programme of Measures will also follow this approach in the 2021–2030 period.**

The Republic of Slovenia has also ratified two important documents of the Council of Europe relating to the protection of minorities and the protection of minority languages, specifically the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (hereinafter referred to as: FCPNM) and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (hereinafter referred to as: ECRML), which means that the state, as a signatory to both documents, is committed to protecting national minorities and regional or minority languages. By ratifying the FCPNM, the state undertook and stated in writing that the rules of this convention also apply to members of the Roma community living in the Republic of Slovenia and, by ratifying the ECRML, it notified the Council of Europe that the provisions of paragraphs one to four of Article 7 of the Charter would also apply mutatis mutandis to the Romani language.

The National Programme of Measures is also harmonised with the Slovenian Development Strategy 2030<sup>5</sup> and basic international and development documents that relate (also) to the Roma community as a vulnerable group.

The key framework on which the new National Programme of Measures is based is the new strategic framework of the European Union (hereinafter referred to as: EU) "*A Union of Equality: "EU Roma*

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<sup>3</sup> These are the following laws: Local Self-Government Act, Local Elections Act, Voting Rights Register Act, Organisation and Financing of Education Act, Elementary School Act, Kindergartens Act, Mass Media Act, Act Regulating the Realisation of the Public Interest in the Field of Culture, Librarianship Act, Promotion of Balanced Regional Development Act, Radiotelevizija Slovenija Act, Cultural Heritage Protection Act, Criminal Code, Public Interest in Youth Sector Act, Slovenian Press Agency Act, Social Entrepreneurship Act, Protection Against Discrimination Act, Municipal Costs Reduction Act. All are available at the [Legal information system of the Republic of Slovenia](#) (19 November 2020).

<sup>4</sup> These include, for example, the Strategy for Education of the Roma in the Republic of Slovenia, adopted in 2004 and amended in 2011, Resolution on the National Programme for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men 2015-2020, Resolution on the National Youth Programme 2013-2022, Resolution on the National Programme for Language Policy 2014-2018, Resolution on the National Social Security Programme for the Period 2013-2020 and relevant implementing acts, as well as other strategic and programme documents dealing with individual fields of content. All the listed documents are available at the [Legal information system of the Republic of Slovenia](#) (19 November 2020).

<sup>5</sup> Slovenian Development Strategy 2030, adopted by the Government of the Republic of Slovenia at its 159th regular session on 7 December 2017. Available at: [Slovenian Development Strategy 2030 2030.pdf \(gov.si\)](#) (17 December 2020).

*strategic framework for equality, inclusion and participation for 2020-2030*<sup>6</sup> (hereinafter referred to as: new EU Roma Strategic Framework), which has been adopted with a view to making greater and faster progress in improving the situation of the Roma in the EU. It promotes the effective equality, socio-economic inclusion and meaningful participation of the Roma. The new EU Roma Strategic Framework is an ambitious instrument and one of the key factors in pursuing the priority of the European Commission (hereinafter referred to as: EC) to create a Union of Equality. With this framework, the governments of all EU Member States should now start or continue to develop strong national strategic frameworks for the Roma in order to commit themselves to Roma equality, inclusion and participation in the long term. Together with the communication to the European Parliament and the Council of the EU, the EC also presented a proposal for a Council Recommendation on Roma equality, inclusion and participation which would determine a list of specific measures to be taken to achieve the common objectives of the EU as set out in the new EU Roma Strategic Framework. The Council Recommendation on Roma equality, inclusion and participation<sup>7</sup> was adopted by the Council on 12 March 2021. Both initiatives form the EU's strategic framework for Roma inclusion until 2030.

In its annual reports on the situation of the Roma community, the Government of the Republic of Slovenia (hereinafter referred to as: Government) notes that despite progress, members of the Roma community are still a sensitive, vulnerable group, as they are in an unequal position in certain fields compared with other citizens, which is why intensive efforts will still be needed to improve their situation, while the cooperation of state bodies, the bodies of local authorities and members of the Roma community also needs to be improved. Based on the efforts made and experience of all competent bodies gained thus far, the Government notes that, despite the many measures already taken and those that are still being implemented and are expected to be continued in the future, sufficient participation of members of the Roma community or their involvement in all measures and opportunities available to them has not yet been ensured. This was also one of the key findings of the National Roma Platform projects, which are implemented by the GONM and aimed at strengthening the dialogue and consultation process, especially at the local level, which is why efforts will be made in the coming period to increase the participation of members of the Roma community in the drafting of all regulations, programmes and measures of which they are the target group, both by means of the National Programme of Measures and other activities of the relevant state bodies and bodies of self-governing local communities. The Government expects that the CRCRS will also focus and strengthen its activities in this direction as the umbrella organisation of the Roma community, established on the basis of the ZRomS-1, the work of which is also regularly co-financed from the state budget on this basis.

Pursuant to the provisions of the ZRomS-1, the Government adopted in 2010 the National Programme of Measures for Roma of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia for the Period 2010–2015, and in 2017 the National Programme of Measures for Roma of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia for the Period 2017–2021 (hereinafter referred to as: NPUR 2017–2021). In both mentioned documents, it was established on the basis of the needs expressed by the Roma community and knowledge of the situation in the field that members of the Roma community face the greatest challenges in education, poor social situation and poverty, employment, healthcare and poor living conditions, which is a result of a historical process, the relevant institutions failing to comprehensively tackle challenges both at the local and at the national level for a long time, and the lack of participation of the Roma themselves in finding solutions to improve their situation. The mentioned areas were identified as priorities in both previous programming documents and remain priority areas of the new National Programme of Measures, which require further action in 2021–2030 and most probably also beyond this period. These areas require the utmost attention and concrete short-term and long-term measures to improve the situation. It should be borne in mind that more specific effects should not be expected in the short term, as negative socialisation-value patterns have developed over time and generations in some environments populated by the Roma (usually where the socio-economic situation is the worst) that enable the Roma population to survive and maintain distance and a sense of security in relation to the majority society, which in fact is still largely not ready to accept the Roma as neighbours. The gap that

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<sup>6</sup> Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council: "A Union of Equality: EU Roma strategic framework for equality, inclusion and participation" of 7 October 2020. COM(2020) 620 final. It is available in Slovenian with both attachments at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/SL/ALL/?uri=CELEX:52020DC0620>.

<sup>7</sup> Council Recommendation of 12 March 2021 on Roma equality, inclusion and participation, 2021/C 93/01, Official Journal of the European Union C 93, 19 March 2021, page 1–14. Available at: [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/SL/TXT/?uri=uriserv%3AOJ.C\\_.2021.093.01.0001.01.SLV&toc=OJ%3AC%3A2021%3A093%3ATOC](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/SL/TXT/?uri=uriserv%3AOJ.C_.2021.093.01.0001.01.SLV&toc=OJ%3AC%3A2021%3A093%3ATOC).



has been created in the experience of the "other" and the actual possibilities for improving coexistence in environments populated by members of the Roma community (and especially where the conditions are poor) are also greatly aggravated by images of the Roma in the media, which generalise specific individual events to all members of the Roma community and strongly influence the mindset and perception by the majority population, even where the majority population has no contact with members of the Roma community whatsoever. These established patterns greatly jeopardise all efforts to improve the education and employment situation of the Roma, as they create a family and community environment in which people are disincentivised to make changes, and on the other hand they also create unfavourable conditions in the majority society for the greater acceptance of the Roma as fellow citizens and neighbours. The Government finds that time and the long-term planned implementation of measures and support for this process both from politicians and stakeholders involved in this process at all levels, especially representatives of the Roma community, will be needed if more concrete positive shifts are to be made. In fact, successful changes in an individual come due to a change in the mindset and value system of the environment in which we want to achieve changes, or due to a physical change in the environment in which an individual lives.

In addition to the mentioned priority areas, the state will continue to pay special attention to preserving and developing various forms of the Roma language, culture and informative, media and publishing activity, inclusion of the Roma in social and political life and raising awareness among the majority and minority population about discrimination and antigypsyism and the fight against them, and awareness about the prejudices and stereotypes in individuals, especially public servants who often meet members of the Roma community in their work.

It follows from government reports that some positive shifts have been made in improving the situation of the Roma community in all areas defined in the ZRomS-1, but these shifts are slow. In addition, measures to improve the situation of the Roma community in various fields are often interlinked and require more integration, complementarity and cooperation of the relevant institutions to achieve impact, as social inclusion of the Roma is a very complex process that needs to be implemented with a specific plan and in the long run, with close and constructive partnership of all actors involved, both national and local, and especially the Roma, also being crucial. For these reasons, it makes sense to improve the clarity of the intentions and objectives to be achieved through measures adopted in the form of a national programme of measures, and inter-ministerial cooperation of key departments at the national and the local levels.

**The new National Programme of Measures for Roma of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia for the Period 2021–2030 (hereinafter referred to as: NPUR 2021–2030) has been created in a lengthy process of consultation and cooperation between representatives of the Roma community and all institutions and organisations that have been working in the field with various target groups of members of the Roma community for a number of years in the environments populated by the Roma and is based on their experience and findings thus far. The programme is based on the awareness that the Roma community in Slovenia is not uniform and that its members may be dealing with a wide variety of challenges in different environments. Competent stakeholders will try to take this reality and fact into account as much as possible as part of their detailed sectoral programmes and in the planning and implementation of measures themselves.**

### **III. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE NATIONAL PROGRAMME**

The NPUR 2021–2030 is a programming document of the Government aimed at defining the main objectives and basic measures for improving the socio-economic situation of the Roma community and its members, creating conditions for improving the social inclusion of members of the Roma community and their empowerment, and strengthening the participation of members of the Roma community in processes to improve their own situation and achieve full inclusion and equality in Slovenian society in the 2021–2030 period.

With this document, the Government will seek to address the challenges of social exclusion and poverty of members of the Roma community and help prevent antigypsyism and discrimination against the Roma by implementing measures, while promoting the inclusion of the Roma and their participation in

the creation and implementation of solutions with the purpose of building trust between members of the Roma community, institutions and the majority population.

As the process of integration, socialisation and inclusion in the labour market and achieving active citizenship is complex and time-consuming, no concrete effects may be expected in a short time. **Thus, the first task of the relevant institutions must be to eliminate, with the help of the NPUR 2021–2030 and all other efforts, the negative socialisation and value effects or patterns that have developed among the Roma as a result of missed or ineffective policies in recent decades and the uncoordinated efforts of institutions and organisations that work with members of the Roma community, as well as the lack of investment of the Roma community itself and its organisations in contributing to this process and encouraging their members to be included in measures and activities and to use all opportunities available to them for improving their situation.**

The causal link between the described situation and patterns and the system that enables this has already been discussed by the Working Group for the Treatment of Roma Issues<sup>8</sup>, which proposed to the Government that certain proposals for systemic changes (legislative changes) be prepared, specifically in the field of social security, family benefits, regulation of the labour market, the field of misdemeanours, etc., which is expected to enable the creation of a more favourable environment or basis for greater effectiveness of measures, as previously the Roma have showed insufficient interest in being included in a series of measures available to them. **It is expected that greater activity or readiness of Roma to be included in the measures during the period of this programme of measures will be achieved with some systemic changes. As part of the work performed from August to December 2020, the working group prepared proposals to the Government for specific changes in regulations that would be important for the challenges in the field of Roma issues to be successfully addressed and proposed a set of additional measures in the NPUR 2017–2021, which was still valid at the time.**

**The NPUR 2021–2030 will build on the experience of the previous period and continue with some of the measures that have already been established and implemented, and will upgrade, strengthen and/or expand these measures. The measures will be aimed at empowering members of the Roma community and members of the special minority community, as well as, and above all, addressing the challenges of their social exclusion, socio-economic disadvantage and exposure to discrimination and antigypsyism.**

The program also aims to **determine key objectives and measures in the priority areas of content in the 2021–2030 period, which will provide key stakeholders (including the Roma community itself) with the best possible conditions, opportunities and incentives to improve the quality of life of members of the Roma community and its development.** In order to achieve this most important objective, specific measures and changes are required in areas that are crucial for members of the Roma community, which can only be achieved through constant and permanent inter-ministerial cooperation.

**1. The main long-term strategic objective of the NPUR 2021–2030 is, by following the objectives of the new EU Roma Strategic Framework, to enable and/or contribute to the actual equality, inclusion and participation of Roma by 2030.**

In order to contribute to this long-term strategic objective, the NPUR 2021–2030 will pursue the following **horizontal and sectoral objectives of the new EU Roma Strategic Framework:**

#### **1.1 Main horizontal objectives:**

- ✓ to fight and prevent antigypsyism and discrimination against the Roma;
- ✓ to reduce poverty and social exclusion to close the socio-economic gap between the Roma and the general population;
- ✓ to promote participation of members of the Roma community through empowerment, cooperation and trust.

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<sup>8</sup> Ordinance establishing the Working Group for the Treatment of Roma Issues (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 101/20).

### 1.2 Main sectoral objectives:

- ✓ to increase inclusion of Roma children in quality pre-school and mainstream education;
- ✓ to increase inclusion of members of the Roma community in quality and sustainable employment programmes;
- ✓ to reduce the risk of poverty and increase social inclusion of members of the Roma community and increase the accessibility of social services;
- ✓ to improve the health of the Roma and increase effective equal access to quality healthcare services;
- ✓ to increase effective equal access of the Roma to adequate desegregated housing and essential services.

### 2. The programme also **contributes** to the **primary objective of the Slovenian Development Strategy 2030**, specifically to **a quality life for all** and to the following **development objectives of the strategy**:

- ✓ healthy and active life,
- ✓ knowledge and skills for high-quality life and work,
- ✓ decent life for all,
- ✓ culture and language as the main factors of national identity,
- ✓ inclusive labour market and high-quality jobs,
- ✓ trustworthy legal system.

### 3. **The strategic objectives and subordinate objectives and measures in individual areas**, which arise from the primary horizontal and sectoral objectives of the programme and the central objective of the Slovenian Development Strategy 2030, are included **in a chapter of the programme of measures (Chapter VI)** and help to achieve the above-mentioned primary objectives.

## IV. FINANCIAL ASSETS

As in the previous period, the financial framework for the implementation of the measures of this programme will include **funds from the European structural and investment funds as well as funds from the state budget**. For measures **relating to the original competences of self-governing local communities**, self-governing local communities must secure **funds in their budgets**.

A major change and shift in relation to the financing of municipalities where the Roma community lives or where there are Roma settlements took place **with the adoption of the Municipal Costs Reduction Act<sup>9</sup> on 7 December 2020 in the National Assembly**. The adopted act encroaches on the Financing of Municipalities Act (ZFO-1) and stipulates that municipalities with Roma settlements are entitled to 3.5% of the municipality's eligible expenditure, which amounts to five to six million euros per year. Due to a different procedure for allocating co-financing funds, this change introduces the special Article 20a in the ZFO-1, which regulates co-financing of the exercise of the rights of permanently settled Roma communities separately and differently from the rights of the Italian and Hungarian ethnic communities. The provision applies to two groups of municipalities. The first group is represented by 20 municipalities, for which the legislator determined in 2002 with amendments to the Local Self-Government Act (ZLS-L, Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 51/02) that they are obliged to ensure that the Roma community residing in the municipality has the right to one representative in the municipal council. These are the municipalities of Beltinci, Cankova, Črenšovci, Črnomelj, Dobrovnik, Grosuplje, Kočevje, Krško, Kuzma, Lendava, Metlika, Murska Sobota, Novo mesto, Puconci, Rogašovci, Semič, Šentjernej, Tišina, Trebnje and Turnišče. It was established that these municipalities have, on average, slightly higher costs than municipalities without permanently settled Roma communities due to the exercise of the legal rights of these communities. The municipalities of Brežice, Ivančna Gorica, Ribnica, Škocjan and Šalovci belong to the second group. All the listed municipalities have registered Roma settlements in their territory. Due to the fact that Article 65 of the Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia stipulates that the situation and special rights of the Roma community living in Slovenia are regulated by law, the responsibility for the situation of the Roma is divided between municipalities and state bodies. Therefore,

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<sup>9</sup> Municipal Costs Reduction Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 189/20)

in accordance with the provision of the new Article 20a of the ZFO-1, municipalities with registered Roma settlements are provided with additional funds from the state budget to co-finance the exercise of the constitutional rights of permanently settled Roma communities.

Measures to achieve the objectives of the programme affect various areas of state bodies and services, local communities and the non-governmental sector, however the main focus is on government bodies (relevant ministries and government services), as it is a programme of measures adopted by the Government. The providers of measures will include measures from the programme in their strategic and programming documents and activities, i.e. by preparing their detailed sectoral programmes in accordance with Article 6 of the ZRomS-1 and providing budget funds for them. The same applies to accompanying activities such as activities related to monitoring the implementation of the programme. At the same time, relevant ministries will try to include the main objectives of the programme in their policies. For some measures and activities, the amount of the envisaged funds required cannot be precisely determined, but in any case, these will be drawn from various sources ranging from the state budget to European funds and local community budgets, and will be coordinated as part of the drafting of the state budget, bases for drawing on European cohesion policy funds and local community budgets.

Much can be done to improve the situation of members of the Roma community or to attain some of the objectives of this programme through measures that are organisational and procedural in nature, as part of the applicable regulations and available resources. For all measures that may require additional funds, relevant ministries will allocate additional funds in a timely manner as part of the drafting of the state budget within their financial plans or by making redistributions or increasing efficiency in the implementation of measures.

## V. MONITORING AND REPORTING

As, in accordance with the applicable legislation in the field of personal data protection, it is not possible to officially collect data on the basis of nationality or ethnicity, **data on members of the Roma community is not collected in Slovenia. Slovenia does not approach any of the national or ethnic groups of the population in such a way. Nevertheless, several attempts have been made in the last ten years to obtain more comprehensive data on members of the Roma community living in Slovenia** by means of research.

So far, some project assignments and research have been carried out in individual areas which can serve as a source of data and could also serve as a source for monitoring progress. For example, the National Institute of Public Health (hereinafter referred to as: NIJZ) conducted two surveys on the health of the Roma population in the past; a survey was conducted among the Roma in Prekmurje in the first<sup>10</sup>, and the second survey was conducted with the help of data sources from the NIJZ and the Surveying and Mapping Authority of Slovenia<sup>11</sup>. The first survey was conducted with the consent of the persons involved, and the second was conducted on the basis of a project in which individual persons were not identified. Competent authorities can also obtain individual pieces of important information through public tenders for co-financing of programmes and projects in individual areas of content, which can also serve as a source for monitoring progress upon further implementation. In view of the above-mentioned, monitoring of progress by means of expert surveys is possible within the areas of the content and competencies of ministries.

The following measures were included in the national programme in the past to improve the methods of monitoring the implementation and impact of measures:

- coordinators were appointed at ministries and government services at the level of state secretaries and directors, respectively, and contact persons were appointed at relevant ministries and

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<sup>10</sup> The results were published in the publication "Health-related lifestyle of the Roma (A contribution to reducing health inequalities)", Murska Sobota, 2015. Available at: [Health-related lifestyle of the Roma publication](#) (1 December 2020).

<sup>11</sup> It was published in the NIJZ publication "Public health approaches for the Roma ethnic community in Slovenia", Ljubljana, 2018, pages 55–64. Available at: [Public health approaches for the Roma ethnic community in Slovenia publication](#) (1 December 2020).

- government services who cooperated with the GONM and assisted their coordinators. The CRCRS as the umbrella organisation of the Roma community also appointed a coordinator;
- implementation of the national programme was monitored by a government working body established on the basis of the ZRomS-1; at meetings of this working body, representatives of the relevant ministries who were members of the working body or were invited to meetings reported on the implementation of individual measures. The working body discussed annual reports on the situation of the Roma community before sending them to the Government;
  - in accordance with the ZRomS-1, the Government reported to the National Assembly once a year on the implementation of legal obligations to the Roma community, including the implementation of measures of the national programme;
  - after the first year of implementation, an external contractor that was selected in a call for applications evaluated the implementation of the national programme and prepared the *Annual evaluation of the implementation of the National Program of Measures for Roma of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia for the Period 2017–2021*, which at the time was the subject of discussion and the basis for further monitoring of measures;
  - monitoring of the implementation of the national programme was also carried out through the activities of the National Roma Platform, in particular in individual areas, on the basis of which a content framework and specific proposals from the field were prepared so that a new national programme for the period to 2030 could start to be drafted.

In view of all the above-mentioned and based on the findings of the GONM as part of the National Roma Platform, it is **important that the implementation of the national programme of measures is systematically monitored throughout the year in cooperation with all relevant state bodies, self-governing local communities, CRCRS and other civil society organisations**. The National Roma Platform project, which is primarily intended to strengthen the dialogue of the various stakeholders involved in the comprehensive tackling of challenges related to members of the Roma community and their full inclusion in Slovenian society, provides a venue for cooperation and networking of all providers and implementers of measures, thus providing a suitable space and forum for monitoring their implementation.

As was the case with the previous programme, the implementation of measures will be reported on an annual basis **as part of the drafting of government reports on the situation of the Roma community**. On the basis of possible identified shortcomings and justified needs, it will be possible to propose amendments to the programme throughout the entire period of its implementation.

The structure of monitoring the implementation of the programme will remain the same as in the previous period, as it has proven to be quite successful and operational. **The umbrella body that will monitor the implementation of the programme is the working body as defined by the ZRomS-1**. The ZRomS-1 stipulates that the **Government appoints a special working body that monitors the implementation of the programme of measures referred to in Article 6 of the ZRomS-1, while the relevant state bodies and bodies of self-governing local communities report to the working body on the implementation of this programme at least once a year**.

In accordance with the provisions of the ZRomS-1, the Government reports **every year to the National Assembly on the implementation of the obligations under paragraphs one, two and three of Article 4 and of Article 5 of the ZRomS-1**, and in this report it also regularly reports **on the implementation of the national programme of measures (this is a comprehensive annual report by the Government)**. All previous reports are available on the Government's website<sup>12</sup>. In the coming period of the programme of measures, the **current practice of reporting to the National Assembly on the implementation of this programme will continue**.

The structure of monitoring the implementation of the programme at the relevant ministries and government services that are responsible for measures under this programme or are a body participating in the implementation of individual measures will be continued or supplemented by **coordinators for the implementation of measures and monitoring their implementation**, who will be appointed **at the level of state secretaries or directors of government services**, as this will provide the

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<sup>12</sup> Available at: [Roma Community](#) (12 November 2020).

competencies and organisational power to effectively coordinate and monitor the implementation of measures. The coordinators will **carry out coordination tasks for the implementation and monitoring of the measures and their effects** and for cooperation with the GONM and will **participate in the drafting of the annual report on the implementation of the measures from the programme and its evaluation**. In addition to the coordinators at the level of state secretaries, ministries and government services will also appoint **contact persons from the ranks of civil servants**, who will serve as a **regular liaison with the GONM and will assist the coordinator as part of an individual department**. **Self-governing local communities in which Roma live and the CRCRS will also be called upon to appoint their coordinators** for the implementation of measures and monitoring their implementation.

**With the help of various sources of monitoring in individual areas, reporting by competent institutions and organisations and the activities of the National Roma Platform, the first assessment of the situation in areas of content and as part of each of the objectives of this programme will be prepared in the first half of 2023 at the latest.** The assessment will be based on information obtained from various sources, specifically information from self-governing local communities, state institutions that operate in areas populated by the Roma, the CRCRS and various civil society organisations that operate in these environments. Information will be obtained also and mainly as part of the activities of the National Roma Platform project. **A second assessment of the situation will be prepared half-way into the implementation of the programme, and not later than at the end of 2026, on the basis of which the Government will assess progress in this area and assess whether the objectives set, and the measures taken, need to be amended and adapted to the actual current situation. Following the expiry of this programme, or by the end of 2030 at the latest, also to be prepared will be a final assessment of the situation in the areas of content and as part of each of the objectives of this programme, and an assessment of the success of the programme as a whole. Based on the final assessment, the Government will adopt guidelines for the period that will follow this programme or decide whether it is necessary to continue with the measures or adopt a new programme.**

For the entire duration of the programme, the Government will **also be regularly acquainted with the reports of the Advocate of the Principle of Equality and the Human Rights Ombudsman** and will respond constructively to their recommendations regarding the treatment of the situation of members of the Roma community and ensuring their actual equality.

## **VI. NATIONAL PROGRAMME OF MEASURES FOR ROMA OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA FOR THE PERIOD 2021-2030**

### **1. EDUCATION**

#### **1.1 Bases and description of initial situation**

- The Organisation and Financing of Education Act (Official Gazette of the RS, No. 16/07 – official consolidated text, 36/08, 58/09, 64/09 – corr., 65/09 – corr., 20/11, 40/12 – ZUJF, 57/12 – ZPCP-2D, 47/15, 46/16, 49/16 – corr. and 25/17 – ZVaj); the powers of the Council of Experts of the Republic of Slovenia for General Education as per Article 25 include determining the "programme for the remedial education of Roma children". Article 81 says that state budget funds shall provide for "funds for the drafting and subsidised prices of textbooks and learning materials for basic school, for schools of the national communities and education of members of the Slovenian nation living outside the borders and of Roma" and "part of the funds for the primary education of the Roma". Article 84 stipulates that the minister determines special norms and standards for the education of Roma children.
- The Kindergartens Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 25/08, 98/09 – ZIUZGK, 36/10, 62/10 – ZUPJS, 94/10 – ZIU, 40/12 – ZUJF, 14/15 – ZUUJFO and 55/17); Article 7 stipulates that pre-school education of Roma children is implemented in accordance with the Kindergartens Act and other regulations; Article 14 stipulates that special norms and standards be adopted for the education of Roma children. The MESS provides funds from the state budget for the payment of extra costs of Roma children departments in some kindergartens on the basis of Article 29 of the Kindergartens Act in accordance with the Rules on standards to conduct pre-school education activities and the Rules on the methodology for the formation of prices for pre-school institutions providing public service, in accordance with the adopted financial plan of the Ministry;
- The Basic School Act (Official Gazette of the RS, No. 81/06 – official consolidated text, 102/07, 107/10, 87/11, 40/12 – ZUJF, 63/13 and 46/16 – ZOFVI-L); Article 9 stipulates that Basic education of members of the Roma community in the Republic of Slovenia shall be implemented in accordance with this Act and other regulations;
- The Rules on standards to conduct pre-school education activities (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 27/14).
- The Rules amending the Rules on standards to conduct pre-school education activities (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 54/21). The post of a Roma assistant was added with the changes to the Rules;
- The Rules on the methodology for the formation of prices for pre-school institutions providing public service (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 97/03, 77/05, 120/05, 93/15 and 59/19).
- The Rules on the organisation, operation and financing of state-funded short programme preschool groups (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 43/18);
- The Rules amending the Rules on the organisation, operation and financing of state-funded short programme preschool groups (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 173/20);
- The Rules on norms and standards for the implementation of the primary school programme (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 57/07, 65/08, 99/10, 51/14, 64/15, 47/17, 54/19, 64/15, 47/17 and 54/19);
- The Rules amending the Rules on norms and standards for the implementation of the primary school programme (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 54/21). The post of a Roma assistant was added with the changes to the Rules;
- The Rules on norms and standards for the implementation of the primary school programme in bilingual primary schools and primary schools with Italian as the language of instruction (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 54/21). The post of a Roma assistant was added with the changes to the Rules;

- The Rules on criteria and methods for evaluating material expenses of the basic school programme and basic school adapted programmes (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 41/17 and 47/18);
- The Rules on the criteria and methods for the valuation of material expenses in educational institutions for children with special needs (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 41/17);
- The Rules on norms and standards for the implementation of educational programmes for children with special needs (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 59/07, 70/08, 5/11, 56/14, 66/15, 47/17 and 24/18).
- The Rules amending the Rules on norms and standards for the implementation of educational programmes for children with special needs (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 54/21). The posts of a Roma assistant and an expert worker for work with Roma students were added with the changes to the Rules
- The Roma Community in the Republic of Slovenia Act (Official Gazette of the RS, No. 33/07)

For years, the MESS has been implementing systemic, special and project measures aimed at more successful integration of Roma children and adolescents into the education system. The effects of these measures are not immediate, although some progress has been made step by step in the long run.

With the establishment of Roma educational incubators, which were later renamed multi-purpose centres, the MESS brought the education system closer to Roma children - especially in the Dolenjska region - for the first time. As the activities of these centres took place in Roma settlements, the providers also connected with Roma parents. Mutual trust has been built with the help of Roma assistants, who proved to be an excellent link between the kindergarten, school, Roma parents and the settlement, as well as acting as the confidants of Roma children and their parents. Without doubt, social and cultural capital in settlements has increased. Children's language skills were developed and socialisation in educational institutions was strengthened. A number of projects were carried out in the settlements throughout those years. The latest one, called *"Together for Knowledge" (2016-2021)* brought good results according to evaluation reports and direct reports from the field. The MESS believes that the most important successes of all these efforts are the increased trust of the Roma community in the activities of pre-school education and primary education and a more positive attitude of the Roma to education. The measure of early inclusion of children in pre-school education, which enables language learning and more successful socialisation, proved to be crucial. The introduction of Roma assistants in kindergartens and primary schools was exceptionally important, although their status was not fully regulated until September 2021. Also contributing to greater success was the implementation of educational activities in multi-purpose centres on a daily basis, in which the focus was placed on eliminating deficits in basic areas (language, reading, mathematics, learning about the environment) and promoting knowledge as a value. Some progress can also be observed in the changed attitude of Roma children and their parents towards staff, which shows in the better reception of Roma assistants, greater interest in educational activities in multi-purpose centres and greater trust in staff who perform extracurricular and leisure activities.

The Roma Academic Club, which was established a few years ago, and where Roma intellectuals gather and work, is an example of good practice of the Roma community itself contributing to integration and progress. The exceptional role of Roma assistants should also be emphasised in this regard.

Project work enables the most direct contact with the majority of the Roma community, insight into the actual situation in the environment in which its members live, gaining the trust of the Roma and obtaining their immediate responses. Since 2008, when the MESS started implementing projects for more successful inclusion of the Roma in education, some progress has been detected in all the above-mentioned areas. Unfortunately, project work cannot provide a continuous planned approach to resolving the Roma issue. Any time, financial or content shortfall and/or personnel change in direct work with the Roma community undermines the hard-won trust built in direct relationships in a certain environment.



After visiting kindergartens and primary schools attended by Roma children, as well as conducting interviews with teachers, Roma assistants and providers in the field, the MESS unfortunately still finds that the educational situation of members of the Roma community is worse compared to the rest of the population. Many children still fail to complete mandatory primary education, and even fewer receive a secondary or higher education. The situation varies by region, with the worst example being in south-eastern Slovenia. In the opinion of the MESS, the following factors contribute to the poor educational situation of the Roma, especially in the Dolenjska region:

- poor social situation of the Roma community and families,
- lack of adequate infrastructure in settlements and the related poorer living conditions,
- high level of stratification among the Roma in individual settings,
- presence of stereotypes and prejudices in the majority society and the Roma population, as well as among professionals and pedagogical workers in educational institutions,
- lack of motivation among Roma parents and modest interest by children,
- lack of awareness of Roma parents about the importance of knowledge as a value,
- family illiteracy and low level of education of parents,
- poorly developed communication skills (in Slovene and Romani),
- insufficient adaptation and inconsistency of the education system for the specific needs of this target group and
- other.

The MESS detects the following obstacles to the education of the Roma population (in particular in Dolenjska):

- still insufficient enrolment of Roma children in kindergartens and irregular attendance of kindergartens by children who have already been enrolled,
- excessive proportion of absenteeism in primary schools;
- exceptionally low proportion of children who complete primary school (especially in Dolenjska, Posavje and Bela Krajina),
- insufficient knowledge of the Slovenian language,
- being subjected to stereotypes in the majority community,
- a large number of children with special needs;
- distrust of Roma parents in educational institutions,
- low level of education of Roma parents,
- escapes of children from home into harmful environments,
- (sometimes) insufficient sensitivity of professional staff in schools,
- insufficient involvement of school staff in the training and education of expert workers for work in a multicultural environment,
- insufficient support for secondary and higher education,
- insufficient self-activation and participation of representatives of the Roma community.

All of the above is already sensibly covered in the NPUR 2017–2021, when, referring to the amended Strategy from 2011, the MESS establishes that: "As the amended Strategy from 2011 emphasises that successful inclusion of the Roma in Slovenian society cannot be entirely the responsibility of educational institutions, it also applies to the measures of the NPUR 2017–2021 that successful integration of Roma children in Slovenian society is only possible with active and simultaneous action and cooperation of kindergartens and schools, social work centres, adult education centres, employment services, healthcare

institutions, cultural centres, non-governmental organisations, the police and the commitment of the local communities in the areas populated by Roma. The key to a successful integration of Roma into the education system also or especially includes an orderly housing situation"<sup>13</sup>.

Based on recorded observations and findings, the MESS decided to upgrade the strategic documents on the education of Roma from 2004 and 2011. The renewed and upgraded Strategy of the Education of the Roma Population in the Republic of Slovenia maintains the strengthening of good practice in pre-school education and emphasises the importance of Roma assistants. It shifts the focus of family policy, including awareness of the importance of education, to the local environment, where it envisages multidisciplinary groups for addressing specific challenges. It stresses the importance of self-activation of the Roma community in the sense of the unifying role of Roma intellectuals, with the wish to include Roma assistants among them in the future. The MESS will monitor the implementation of the amended strategy on the basis of responses from head teachers and other expert workers and an evaluation of the work of multi-purpose centres.

## 1.2 Objectives and measures in education

### 1.2.1 Strategic objective: Higher level of inclusion of Roma children in pre-school education programmes.

Indicator: Estimated proportion of Roma children included in pre-school education programmes.

There is no legal basis for the MASS to collect data based on ethnicity. It has at its disposal only estimates of the number of children enrolled in Roma departments in regular kindergartens and the number of children enrolled in shorter kindergarten programmes. According to the estimates by the MESS, approximately 5% of all five-year-old children are not included in pre-school education in Slovenia (source: SURS). The MESS estimates that approximately 35% of Roma children in south-eastern Slovenia are not included in pre-school education; elsewhere the proportion of those included is 60% at the national level.

The MESS has commissioned a national evaluation study for an **analysis of the needs, conditions and possibilities of compulsory inclusion of children in one of the pre-school education programmes from the aspect of reducing social, economic and cultural inequality**, which will serve as one of the bases for possible changes in inclusion of children in pre-school programmes.

On the basis of the applicable legislation and annual decisions of the minister responsible for education, science and sport, institutes that have organised Roma children departments in their kindergartens<sup>14</sup> are provided funds from the state budget in accordance with norms and standards to pay extra costs for the work of these departments. Extra costs for the work of a department with Roma children are determined on the basis of the actual organisation of the department/departments and the number of children in the department in an individual calendar year and include labour costs and costs of material and services

<sup>13</sup> National Programme of Measures for Roma of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia for the Period 2017-2021, page 10. Available at: [Roma Community](#) (12 November 2020).

<sup>14</sup> In 2021, the following kindergartens have organised Roma children departments: The kindergarten attached to the France Prešeren Primary School in Črenšovci, and the Metlika, Mavrica Trebnje, Murska Sobota and Pedenjped Novo Mesto kindergartens. 96 Roma children are enrolled in a total of 8 departments (some kindergartens have multiple departments) in 2021.

that, on the basis of Article 13 of the Rules on methodology, are not taken into account when calculating the price of the programme for the department/departments with Roma children. Labour costs of a department with Roma children are recognised if there are at least 12 children in a department for the first age class or at least 21 children in a department for the second age class or at least 15 children in a combined department. Labour costs for a second pre-school teacher – assistant teacher are calculated at three hours a day, when a second pre-school teacher – assistant teacher must be included in the department in accordance with Article 31 of the Rules on norms. Labour costs for a second pre-school teacher – assistant teacher represent 42.86% of the salary, which includes taxes and employer's contributions and reimbursement of costs of food and transportation to and from work. Costs of material and services are recognised only for costs that are incurred solely due to the specifics of educational work in departments with Roma children, specifically for the following individual types of costs:

- additional didactic resources intended for Roma children, i.e. department with Roma children;
- continued professional education for expert workers who work with Roma children, or for professional lectures intended for Roma parents;
- additional house linens for Roma children, i.e. department with Roma children;
- additional means for hygiene and first aid for the department with Roma children;
- other additional costs incurred due to the specifics of work and approved by the Ministry.

Higher costs are defined in a contract concluded between an institute and the Ministry by determining the types of costs and the amount per individual department for the entire school year.

EUR 116,515 was planned for the financing of programmes for the benefit of the Roma community in 2021, and EUR 329,378 in 2022.

SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring <sup>15</sup>
<b>OBJECTIVE 1.2.1.1</b> <b>Acquisition of basic social and language skills before entering primary school.</b>	<b>1. Encouraging inclusion in pre-school education at least two years before the start of primary school in the following ways:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– with general financial incentives;</li> <li>– in cooperation with Roma kindergarten assistants and in cooperation with the local community;</li> <li>– by continuing to pay extra costs for the departments of kindergartens in which Roma children are enrolled;</li> </ul>	MESS	Until 2030.	Budget of the Republic of Slovenia: financial plan of the MESS.  The total amount of funds spent for pre-school education of Roma children from the budget items of the MESS in 2019 was EUR 37,540.53. These are approximate annual costs under a similar dynamic of expenditure.	Estimated number of pre-school children included in kindergartens with Roma children departments.  Number of kindergartens that formed a shorter

<sup>15</sup> In accordance with the applicable legislation, the MESS covers extra costs for the work of departments with Roma children.

SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring <sup>15</sup>
	<p>– by continuing calls for applications for shorter, 240-hour kindergarten programmes and presenting these programmes. Amendments to the Rules on the organisation, operation and financing of state-funded short programme preschool groups have been drafted for this purpose. With the amendments, the MESS wants to encourage kindergartens and municipalities to ensure the inclusion of pre-school children who have not yet been included in kindergartens in the year before entering primary school, at least in a shorter, 240-hour programme. The programme, which is completely free for parents, allows children to improve their knowledge and skills in activities in the areas covered by the Curriculum for Kindergartens (society, nature, arts, mathematics, language, movement), and achieve empowerment for participation in primary school. The amendments to the Rules on the organisation, operation and financing of state-funded short programme</p>			<p>Given that, so far, the implementation of shorter programmes in 2020 has been almost completely prevented due to the pandemic, as even regular programmes have been implemented only with difficulty, the MESS does not intend to change the estimated cost for the 2020/2021 school year significantly – it is planned that the final amount in this year will be similar, and certainly not higher than EUR 100,000 (assuming that 10 kindergartens decide to organise the programme).</p> <p>The price of a shorter programme department for the 2020/2021 school year is EUR 8,938.32. The price of a shorter programme department in which educational work is performed bilingually in Slovenian and Hungarian, or a department in which children of immigrants or Roma are included, is EUR 13,407.48. In cooperation with the municipality and the primary school, the kindergarten can</p>	<p>programme department in the current school year.</p> <p>Number of realised shorter programmes by year<sup>16</sup>.</p> <p>Estimated number of children in shorter kindergarten programmes by year<sup>17</sup>.</p> <p>Number of kindergartens with Roma children departments.</p>

<sup>16</sup> Not only Roma children are included in shorter programmes, so the indicator does not reflect the actual situation.

<sup>17</sup> Not only Roma children are included in shorter programmes, so the assessment does not reflect the actual situation.

SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring <sup>15</sup>
	<p>preschool groups bring the following news:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a public kindergarten operating in an area where members of the Roma community live in Roma settlements may, in cooperation with the municipality and the primary school, identify children who are not enrolled and organise a shorter programme. Such a programme is implemented if children from vulnerable groups are involved. Exceptionally, there may also be younger siblings among the children (a sibling must be four years old);</li> <li>- a shorter programme may also take place outside the kindergarten to a certain extent, if this makes it easier to ensure the involvement of children (gaining parental trust).</li> </ul> <p><b>2. Providing funds to finance extra costs incurred in regular kindergarten departments</b> - for labour costs and costs of material and services. Labour costs comprise a proportion of the salary for a second teacher of pre-school children – assistant teacher who is included in a</p>			<p>help identify children who are not enrolled and organise a shorter programme. The proactive role of the local community is also crucial here.</p>	

SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring <sup>15</sup>
	<p>department of the first age class for at least three hours, when 12 children are included in the department, and also for three hours a day in a department of the second age class when 21 children are included in the department. The MESS covers the costs of material and services, which exceeds those in regular departments.</p> <p><b>3. Option of exercising a reduced kindergarten fee or exemption from paying a kindergarten fee, which also applies to members of the Roma community.</b></p> <p><b>4. In the coming period, the MESS will also examine the possibilities for additional funding for upgrading the current working conditions of kindergartens as part of working meetings with representatives of local communities.</b></p>				

**Explanation:**

The European strategic objective set out in the *2020 Education and Training Monitor* envisages that 95% of four- and five-year-olds should be enrolled in pre-primary education by 2020. European countries (EU28) are already achieving this objective on average. According to the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia in Slovenia, approximately 5% of all children in the country are not included in the pre-school education system. The MESS estimates that most of them are children from vulnerable groups (immigrants, Roma and similar). In order to increase the inclusion of children in pre-school education programmes, the MESS will conduct an evaluation study for an **analysis of needs, conditions and possibilities of mandatory inclusion of children in one of the pre-school education programmes from the aspect of reducing social, economic and cultural inequalities at the national level**. The study can be one of the bases for possible changes in the field of inclusion of children in pre-school programmes and this is expected as of the 2022/2023 school year.

In addition to the measures to increase the inclusion of pre-school children that have already been implemented, an amendment to the Kindergartens Act entered into force on 1 September 2021 (the measure entered into force on 1 September 2021) that allows the reintroduction of free kindergarten for a second child from the same family who attends kindergarten together with the older child, and the introduction of free kindergarten for every third and subsequent child from the family, regardless of whether another child is in kindergarten or not. This will improve the financial accessibility of kindergarten for parents, due to which an increase in the proportion of pre-school children in kindergartens could be expected.

In addition to the measures to increase the inclusion of preschool children in kindergartens that have already been established (exercising the social rights to free kindergarten or reduced kindergarten fee and exercising additional subsidy from the state budget, specifically a 30% reduction of kindergarten fee for a second child in kindergarten and free kindergarten for a third and subsequent children that the family has enrolled in kindergarten), additional measures concerning the pre-school education of Roma children have been taken recently:

- **introduction of free shorter kindergarten programmes in the year before entering school for children not included in kindergarten:** the option of joining a free short-term programme (240 hours) financed by the state was introduced for the first time in the 2018/2019 school year. A shorter programme is organised by the kindergarten at its own discretion if, on the basis of data on the inclusion of children in the kindergarten, it estimates that there are also children in the municipality who were not included in the kindergarten in the year before entering school. As the response of kindergartens was unsatisfactory, the MESS prepared an amendment to the Rules on the organisation, operation and financing of state-funded short programme preschool groups, with which it wants to encourage kindergartens and municipalities to ensure greater inclusion of pre-school children who have not yet been included in kindergartens in the year before entering primary school, at least in a shorter, 240-hour programme. A public call for applications for the financing of shorter programme departments will be published every school year by 15 October at the latest, and kindergartens will be able to apply by 30 April at the latest. The measure of introducing a shorter programme was intended primarily for children from vulnerable groups or children living in remote areas, with kindergartens being too far away for them to be brought there by their parents every day. Therefore, a lower norm is set for the creation of a shorter programme department, which is created when the inclusion of at least five children is ensured. In exceptional cases, the Minister may decide to include in a shorter programme department a younger sibling who has reached the age of four. A shorter programme may also be implemented outside the kindergarten if there is a realistic possibility that a sufficient number of children could be included this way;
- **updating the current National Curriculum for Kindergartens (1999).** The National Curriculum for Kindergartens is the central content document for working with preschool children in public kindergartens. For kindergartens, it is the basic support and orientation in autonomous planning of a flexible and diverse content and didactic offering of the programme for pre-school children (in the form of short, half-day and daily programmes). This includes activities organised by kindergartens for children who do not attend kindergarten. Children usually attend these "afternoon activities" together with their parents. Because it is not mandatory in Slovenia to attend kindergarten, a quality-oriented and convincing offering tailored to the needs of children and parents is very important for reaching the largest possible number of pre-school children. The body responsible for the updating of the current document is the National Education Institute Slovenia (hereinafter referred to as: NEIS). In 2018, the NEIS carried out an analysis of the implementation of the current national curriculum, and the process continued in 2019 with the drafting of starting points and guidelines for updating the national curriculum. The analysis of the current national curriculum showed, among other things, the need for it to be designed differently in order to make it more useful in direct work with children and in the planning of various kindergarten programmes. In the updated, i.e. new content document for work with pre-school children in kindergartens, a greater emphasis will be placed on the following aspects: quality of the educational process in kindergarten, a balanced mixture of development and learning by pre-school children, individualised work with children in kindergarten, respect for the differences of children, inclusion of children from other linguistic and cultural environments and similar;

- **recent development projects (2016-2020), which are most directly related to increasing and supporting the inclusion of pre-school children in kindergarten**, among which the following projects should be particularly emphasised:
  - "Together for knowledge – implementing activities of support mechanisms for acquiring knowledge for members of the Roma community" (2016-2021), as part of which a special preschool programme model as a preparatory kindergarten in a Roma settlement is being developed and upgraded. As part of the mentioned project, implemented by the Centre for School and Outdoor Education with a broad network of collaborators, a special emphasis is placed on activities that promote early inclusion of Roma children in quality pre-school programmes in their environment. These project activities serve as important preparation for subsequent inclusion in regular kindergarten departments and school, which enables Roma children to acquire basic skills and knowledge, with special emphasis on learning Slovenian and their mother tongue and encourage their socialisation in the educational institution and their emotional development. This begins to build the trust of both children and parents in educational activities, and parents also receive professional assistance in raising children and building a family community. Activities in this field are implemented differently depending on the given possibilities in a certain environment. For children who are not included in organised pre-school education, pre-school programmes are implemented in multi-purpose centres in Roma settlements. Educational work as part of these programmes focuses on the acquisition of basic skills, socialisation and language acquisition. The content for pre-school Roma children is also included in extracurricular activities carried out outdoors, in multi-purpose centres or at home. An important role in the inclusion of Roma children in regular kindergarten departments is played by Roma assistants, who ensure the smooth transition of children to kindergartens, communication with parents and the introduction of elements of Roma culture and language into the daily work of kindergartens. In the Roma settlement Kerinov Grm, a preparatory kindergarten was established in 2011, which is attended by children from the age of two to six. The programme and premises of this kindergarten are comparable to regular kindergarten departments in Slovenia. A special feature of this kindergarten is an integration programme that takes place in cooperation with various units of the kindergarten at the Leskovec pri Krškem Primary School, in their premises or outdoors, in order to encourage greater inclusion of children in regular departments. It is also important to emphasise that the preparatory kindergarten program, which is otherwise based on the National Curriculum for Kindergartens, is specially adapted and designed in accordance with the specifics and needs of this vulnerable group;
  - "Development of teaching material in the field of Slovenian as a second foreign language through the implementation of courses for various target groups and seminars for their providers", as part of which various and adapted teaching materials for Roma children, immigrants, organised education and training for work with Roma children, immigrants and others has been developed;
  - "Challenges of Intercultural Coexistence" is a multi-year development project aimed at helping to develop the values of interculturalism and improve the professional skills of managerial and expert workers in kindergartens and schools for more successful integration of immigrant children from other linguistic and cultural environments into the Slovenian educational system.

<b>SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>MEASURE</b>	<b>Provider of measure</b>	<b>Deadline for implementation</b>	<b>Financial source and envisaged resources</b>	<b>Impact indicators and monitoring</b>
<b>OBJECTIVE 1.2.1.2 Improving the knowledge of the Slovenian language, as well as the Romani language and culture in Roma children.</b>	<b>1. Support for learning of Romani as a mother tongue and learning Slovenian.</b>	MESS, National Education Institute	By 2030.	Budget of the Republic of Slovenia: financial plan of the MESS.  Pilot project: EUR 10,000.	Evaluation of a pilot project for the learning of Romani.  Number of Roma children and pupils



SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring
	<p><b>2. Additional teaching of Slovenian for Roma students upon entering primary school in the Republic of Slovenia.</b></p> <p><b>3. The European Social Fund (ESF) project "Raising the communication capacity of Roma children and pupils": first phase July 2021-July 2022, second phase: new EU financial perspective 2021-2027.</b></p>			<p>Supplementary mother tongue classes: total value - EUR 17,000 (funding for all mother tongues taught as part of these classes).</p> <p>Envisaged ESF funds for the first phase: EUR 140,000.</p>	<p>attending mother tongue classes.</p> <p>Instruments for measuring the communicative ability of Roma children in the Romani language. Evaluation of the pilot project (first phase of the project).</p>

**Explanation:**

By attending kindergarten and in cooperation with Roma assistants, children improve their knowledge of the Slovenian language, but at the same time they must also preserve their knowledge of their mother tongue. Institute for Ethnic Studies (hereinafter referred to as: IES) continues the pilot project of the National Education Institute of introducing supplementary lessons of the Romani language in two multi-purpose centres (implemented by Roma assistants in Dolenjska and Prekmurje). If the project is successful and if it manages to build enough trust, teaching will be transferred to the school environment on a trial basis. In cooperation with other stakeholders, the IES will also prepare didactic recommendations and organise training for the implementation, support and monitoring of teaching.

On the basis of the annual decision of the minister responsible for education on the co-funding of supplementary classes of mother tongues and cultures for children of other nationalities, these classes will continue to be implemented. The number of languages (8-10) and the number of students attending these classes varies from year to year. The MESS wants to place Romani in this framework (see the previous paragraph). As a member of the EU and the Council of Europe, the Republic of Slovenia is committed to promoting and developing the multilingualism of individuals and preserving the multilingual educational

landscape. When integrating children, pupils and students of other ethnicities into the Slovenian educational system, it is especially important to promote and preserve their mother tongues. For this purpose, the MESS co-funds supplementary classes in mother tongues and cultures for children of other ethnicities every year. The MESS covers the costs of premises, teaching material and material costs (EUR 45 per student), while teacher costs are covered by the community itself.

The MESS and the Slovenian Institute of Adult Education (hereinafter referred to as: SIAE) participate in the promotion of learning of the Romani language and of language integration of adults. In cooperation with providers from multi-purpose centres, they devised and conducted several family reading workshops in the Romani language in 2018 and 2019.

By the end of the 2021 calendar year, the NEIS will prepare an analysis of the current legislative regulation for teaching of Roma students in primary school. Based on the results of the analysis and Article 39 of the Rules on norms and standards for the implementation of the primary school programme, the MESS will decide on the option of planned introduction of additional Slovenian language lessons upon entry to primary school in the Republic of Slovenia and possible other legislative changes that would take effect in the 2022/2023 school year (at least 180 hours). Roma children were provided with the option of additional hours of Slovenian language in 2020.

Within the available funds of the European Social Fund, the MESS also proposed the additional developmental project *Raising the communication capacity of Roma children and pupils*, with which information would be provided on the communication skills of Roma children in the Romani language (preparation of measuring and pilot testing instruments) and a reference point would be gained for assessing impacts/progress after a certain period of implementation of the programme. The same procedure would be set in the second phase of the project for measuring the communication capacity of Roma children in the Slovenian language (after 2022).

SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring
<b>OBJECTIVE 1.2.1.2 Improving the knowledge of the Slovenian language, as well as the Romani language and culture in Roma children.</b>	<b>4. Preparation of quality teaching material to help Roma students in the learning process (also in the Romani language) and promotion of production of children's and youth literature in Romani.</b>	MESS, MC	By 2030.	Financial plan of the MESS: EUR 10,000 per year.  The financial resources of the MC are provided within the call for applications for culture projects for the Roma community, i.e.	Number of published teaching materials.  Number of funded projects of the MC for publishing literature and publications in the Romani language.

SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring
				within the objective 6.2.1.1.	

**Explanation:**

The MESS allocates funds for the preparation and subsidising of the price of textbooks and teaching aids for Roma students in the project Subsidising the preparation of textbooks of the current Development Programme Plan. A set of quality teaching and other material in the Romani language will be created in cooperation with the Ministry of Culture, the Slovenian Book Agency and the Educational Research Institute. Additional equipping of school library sections is also planned.

SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring
<b>OBJECTIVE 1.2.1.2 Improving the knowledge of the Slovenian language, as well as the Romani language and culture in Roma children.</b>	<b>5. Employing Roma assistants in kindergartens.</b>	MESS	By 2030. Beginning in the 2021/2022 school year.	ESF+ funds and budget of the Republic of Slovenia: financial plan of the MESS. The financial value of the proposed change is EUR 340,000 for 25 Roma assistant jobs in kindergartens.	Number of trained and number of employed Roma assistants in kindergartens from the school year 2021/2022 onwards.

**Explanation:**

On 1 September 2021, the MESS systematised the post of Roma assistant. They will also work in kindergartens. With the help of Roma assistants, children improve their knowledge of the Slovenian as well as the Romani language and knowledge of Romani culture and the culture of the majority population.

**1.2.2 Strategic objective: Successful completion of primary education.**

Indicator:

1. Estimated proportion of Roma pupils who have completed primary education (target: a minimum of 40% by 2025 and a minimum of 50% by 2030).

2. Estimated proportion of Roma pupils in south-eastern Slovenia who have completed primary education (target: a minimum of 20 % by 2025 and a minimum of 40% by 2030)<sup>18</sup>.

SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring
<b>OBJECTIVE 1.2.2.1 Regular participation of Roma children in learning processes and completed primary education.</b>	<b>1. Systematisation of Roma assistants, education, training, upskilling and employment of Roma assistants.</b>	MESS	By 2030. Beginning in the 2021/2022 school year.	ESF+ funds and budget of the Republic of Slovenia: financial plan of the MESS.  The financial value of the proposed change is EUR 546,000 for 35 jobs.	Number of additionally trained and number of employed Roma assistants in primary schools, primary schools with an adapted programme and institutions for the education of children and adolescents with special needs.

**Explanation:**

The post of a Roma assistant can be added due to the changes to the MESS rules. For more than 10 years, Roma assistants have been an important link in the education system between Roma children, their parents and expert workers in educational institutions, without whom the inclusion of Roma children in educational institutions would be smaller and, above all, less successful. So far, 25 Roma assistants have worked in 29 primary schools in north-eastern and south-eastern Slovenia as part of the "Together for Knowledge" project, and some Roma assistants have also worked in kindergartens. Among the current Roma assistants, 84% are members of the Roma community. The key tasks of the Roma assistant are:

- assisting Roma children in overcoming emotional and language barriers;
- establishing and maintaining contact with parents of Roma children in their communication with expert workers in school/kindergarten;
- cooperating with expert workers in school/kindergarten on activities intended to improve the integration of Roma children with other children;
- cooperating with expert workers in school/kindergarten in formulating and implementing measures to improve the performance of Roma children;
- implementing activities for Roma children and their parents in the environments in which they live;
- promoting the importance of education in Roma communities.

<sup>18</sup> The indicator is based on the estimated proportion, as indicators are a reflection of data that must be legal. Legislation does not provide us with a basis for collecting data on the basis of ethnic affiliation, so the data on the number of Roma children is obtained on the basis of the application from the school management in accordance with the Rules on norms and standards for the implementation of the primary school programme, when they apply for a systematised additional post of an expert worker for work with Roma students on the basis of the estimated number of Roma children.

Through their education and employment, Roma assistants set a very important example for Roma children, parents and the entire Roma community in a certain environment about education being crucial for better career opportunities and a better quality of personal life. A Roma assistant must have a secondary or secondary vocational education or a national professional qualification.

With the systematisation of Roma assistants, these employees in kindergartens and primary schools will be technical and administrative staff in accordance with the criteria set out in the sectoral regulations. For this purpose, the MESS has adopted amendments to four rules, specifically:

- The Rules amending the Rules on standards to conduct pre-school education activities,
- The Rules amending the Rules on norms and standards for the implementation of the primary school programme,
- The Rules amending the Rules on norms and standards for the implementation of educational programmes for children with special needs, and
- The Rules amending the Rules on norms and standards for the implementation of the primary school programme in bilingual primary schools and primary schools with Italian as the language of instruction.

Training of Roma assistants:

In the Together for Knowledge project, 29 Roma assistants worked upon the conclusion of the project (31 August 2021). The Centre for School and Outdoor Education (CSOE) additionally trained 10 candidates who have completed secondary school and would like to gain additional knowledge and skills for activities with Roma children, work in a Roma settlement, acquire skills for establishing ties between school and Roma families and for providing homework and study help to children. The following is envisaged for training:

- acquisition of knowledge: lectures and workshops: content in the field of communication in the Romani language, learning about the cultural and linguistic characteristics of the Roma, effective partnership with Roma families, communication, building trust through specific experiences and situations, developmental stages of the child and their characteristics, importance of early inclusion of children in pre-school education, special features of work in Roma settlements. The estimated scope is 158 hours or 32 days;
- practical training: each participant visits three settlements in Prekmurje and three settlements in Dolenjska or Bela Krajina for work mentorship in a kindergarten or school.

The entire training will take up to three months.

<b>SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>MEASURE</b>	<b>Provider of measure</b>	<b>Deadline for implementation</b>	<b>Financial source and envisaged resources</b>	<b>Impact indicators and monitoring</b>
<b>OBJECTIVE 1.2.2.1 Regular participation of Roma children in learning processes and completed primary education.</b>	<b>2. Co-financing of activities in the field of primary education.</b>	MESS	By 2030.	Budget of the Republic of Slovenia: financial plan of the MESS. Approximately EUR 2.1 million annually.	Estimated proportion of Roma students who have completed primary education.

SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring
					<p>(Target: a minimum of 40% by 2025 and a minimum of 50% by 2030).</p> <p>Estimated proportion of Roma pupils in south-eastern Slovenia and Posavje who have completed primary education (target: a minimum of 20% by 2025 and a minimum of 40% by 2030).</p> <p>A survey on the learning success of Roma children in primary school has been commissioned by the IES. The results of the survey will be known in 2022, when it will be possible to develop an indicator to</p>

SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring
					demonstrate the effects of monitoring.

**Explanation:**

In accordance with the Rules on norms and standards for the implementation of the primary school programme, the MIZŠ provides for:

- shortened working hours for a second expert worker in departments of the 1st grade in which at least 3 Roma pupils are included;
- systematised additional post of an expert worker for work with Roma students in accordance with certain criteria: the school may share the position between the post of a teacher for additional professional assistance for Roma students and the post of an educational counsellor. In the 2018/2019 school year, the MIZŠ provided funds for the classification of 63 teaching jobs for additional expert assistance for Roma students;
- a lower norm for creating a department with at least 3 Roma students (the regular norm is 28 students, and the norm for a department that includes Roma students is 21 students);
- a lower norm for creating a combined department from two classes with at least 3 Roma students (the regular norm is 21 students, and the norm for a department that includes Roma students is 16 students);
- a lower norm for creating a combined department from two classes with at least 3 Roma students (the regular norm is 14 students, and the norm for a department that includes Roma students is 10 students);

The level of completion of primary school for Roma children is particularly low in south-eastern Slovenia and in the Posavje region, which is why attention should be paid with special measures to the completion of primary school for Roma children.

SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring
<b>OBJECTIVE 1.2.2.1 Regular participation of Roma children in learning processes and completed primary education.</b>	<b>3. Reducing the problem of absenteeism.</b>	MESS, MLFSEO	By 2030.	Without financial consequences.	Number of measures imposed by the Inspectorate of the Republic of Slovenia for Education and Sport and social work centres due to absenteeism.

**Explanation:**

The MESS and the MLFSEO have agreed that one of the parents is paid child benefit in kind for three months if the Inspectorate of the Republic of Slovenia for Education and Sport (IRSES) informs the competent social work centre ex officio that misdemeanour proceedings have been filed against the parents of a student who does not attend classes or other activities as part of the compulsory primary school curriculum for unjustifiable reasons.

Upon the entry into force of the amendments to the Parental Protection and Family Benefits Act, the MESS will send guidelines and instructions to primary schools regarding the head teacher's duty to submit a proposal that the IRSES initiate misdemeanour proceedings if the school's educational action against absenteeism for unjustifiable reasons has not produced results. On the basis of the Basic School Act, every primary school has school order rules, in which, among other things, violations and the school's educational action in the event of violations are defined. Should the educational action remain without effect, the school would be obliged to submit a proposal for the IRSES to initiate misdemeanour proceedings.

Also, the individual amount of child benefit will be reduced by 33% if the child, after completing primary education, does not continue their education in secondary school programmes that would provide a higher level of education or a higher level of qualification in accordance with the qualification procedures defined in the laws governing professional qualifications.

SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring
<b>OBJECTIVE 1.2.2.1 Regular participation of Roma children in learning processes and completed primary education.</b>	<b>4. Adequate level of training of expert workers for work with members of the Roma community.</b>	MESS, National Education Institute	By 2030.	ESF+ and budget of the Republic of Slovenia: financial plan of the MESS.	Number of participants in training.  Evaluation of training sessions.

**Explanation:**

The MESS provides regular training of professional staff for work in a multicultural environment: on an annual basis with [KATIS](#) programmes and with work of public institutes, as well as within projects such as: [Only others make us what we are](#), [Challenges of intercultural cooperation](#), [Languages count](#), [Language-sensitive teaching in all classes](#). Training sessions will not be mandatory in the future, either, and the principle of school autonomy applies. The MESS has joined the Council of Europe project Including Roma Children in Education: Testing Multilingual Approaches (2021–2025).

**1.2.3 Strategic objective: Involving the Roma in further education and the gaining of knowledge and experience for successful integration into the labour market.**  
 Indicator: Estimated proportion of Roma children enrolled in secondary school programmes (self-determination).



SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring
<b>OBJECTIVE 1.2.3.1 Assistance in the inclusion of the Roma in secondary and higher education.</b>	<b>1. Exploring ways of adapting the implementation of secondary education programmes or performing obligations as part of a personal education plan in cooperation with representatives of the local community<sup>19</sup>.</b>  <b>2. Preventing early school leaving<sup>20</sup>.</b>	MESS, IES, MLFSEO	By 2030 – implementation of measures.	Budget of the Republic of Slovenia: financial plan of the MESS (also the Slovenian Research Agency (SRA) in 2020) and MLFSEO; ESS+ funds.	Monitoring and evaluation of secondary education programmes with an emphasis on programmes in areas (regions) where members of the Roma community live.  The indicator of early school leaving cannot be developed only for Roma students, because the Ministry does not keep records based on ethnicity.

**Explanation:**

Analysis of the report within the targeted research project "*Roma inclusion in secondary and higher education and adult education: factors of incentives and obstacles faced by members of the Roma community in the education system in Slovenia after primary school*": among other things, the study estimates that 139–144 Roma students attended selected secondary schools in the 2018/2019 school year, and two Roma were included in a secondary school programme at adult education institutions. Approximately 54% of students attend secondary schools in the Pomurje region, 24% in the Podravje region, 19% in south-eastern Slovenia and the rest in the central Slovenia region and Posavje. Regarding secondary school programmes, as in the previous school year, most students attended secondary vocational education (i.e. three-year), secondary (technical and other) vocational education (four-year) and lower vocational education (two-year). Based on various data sources, the researchers came up with the highest overall estimate of the number of Roma students in 2018/2019 – which is 172. In terms of where they attend high school, their structure is as follows: Pomurje 46.5%, Podravje 25.6%, south-eastern Slovenia 24.4%, central Slovenia 2.3% and Posavje 1.2%.

<sup>19</sup> The MESS will be able to create the indicator in the coming period, when it will be developing the measure.

<sup>20</sup> This applies to all students and not only to members of the Roma community, so the measure is not intended only for Roma students.

Prevention of early school leaving is directly connected with the objectives of enabling the entire population to acquire a profession (Organisation and Financing of Education Act (ZOFVI), Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 16/2007, Article 2) and providing the "knowledge, skills and professional abilities necessary for engaging in a profession and for further education" at an internationally comparable level (Vocational Education Act (ZPSI), Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 79/2006, Article 2), while in harmony with European efforts for continuous growth of the quality of education (ET 2020).

In cooperation with public institutions, the NEIS and the Institute of Vocational Education and Training (IVET), the MESS implements various measures to reduce early school leaving. Among other things, a development team of teachers of three secondary vocational schools considers how to include principles of formative monitoring to encourage students to improve learning performance and prevent early school leaving as part of the development task "Formative monitoring in support of each student and development of an inclusive school". The "Tell your Story" project, the purpose of which is to explore early school leaving with digital storytelling and digital schemes, is also being implemented. Since 2007, the MESS and public institutions have been systematically developing and implementing measures to reduce early school leaving. These include: Handbook of good practices to prevent early school leaving - Stay in School! It offers a comprehensive approach to early warning and prevention of early school leaving in five schools developed and tested as part of the Erasmus+ CroCooS project. Guidelines for developing the approach and tools in the Slovenian language are available on the project website. Based on the experience gleaned from the project, the training programme (Katis) "Every Student Counts!", i.e. a system for the prevention of early school leaving, has been created, and was first implemented in the 2018/2019 school year. In cooperation with the NEIS and the IVET, an analysis of the Central register of participants in education was made in terms of its usefulness for monitoring early school leaving. The Spreminjamsolo.si (I Change School) portal has been established and is intended to support schools in developing the abilities of each student. The NEIS and the IVET have issued a Methodology for monitoring and preventing early school leaving in order to improve the effectiveness of professional approaches.

## **2. EMPLOYMENT**

### **2.1 Bases and description of initial situation**

- The Labour Market Regulation Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 80/10, 40/12 – ZUJF, 21/13, 63/13, 100/13, 32/14 – ZPDZC-1, 47/15 – ZZSDT, 55/17, 75/19, 11/20 – decision of the Constitutional Court and 189/20 – ZFRO),
- strategic and programming documents in this field, based on which the Roma are recognised as one of the vulnerable groups of the population, and one which is particularly characterised by long-term unemployment.

The state treats the promotion of employment for the Roma as part of the applicable legislation and strategic programming documents in this field, based on which the Roma are recognised as one of the vulnerable groups of the population, and one which is particularly characterised by long-term unemployment. The state addresses this deficit as part of the Active Employment Policy (AEP) measures. The fundamental act in this field is the Labour Market Regulation Act, the rules adopted on its basis and the Catalogue of the Active Employment Policy measures, and the strategic and programming documents and particularly the Guidelines for the implementation of the Active Employment Policy measures and the Plan for the implementation of the Active Employment Policy measures for an individual budget period.

In the past, the state has addressed the deficit of members of the Roma community within the framework of all measures of the AEP. The Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (hereinafter referred to as: MESS) has included a comprehensive set of state programmes and activities in the labour market through the full inclusion of Roma in state measures in the labour market. The range of programmes in this field has been constantly supplemented

with regard to the situation and trends in the labour market, increasing the employment opportunities of the Roma (including specific work environments) as well as their opportunities for the transition to employment.

The issue of inclusion of the Roma population in employment is multifaceted and requires prior action in various interdepartmental areas (living conditions, education, protection of children, women and youth and similar). The largest obstacles impeding the integration of unemployed Roma into the labour market are:

- their low level of education,
- lack of work experience and
- ability and willingness to identify their own abilities, competences and interests more actively in regard to making decisions in the field of education, training and choice of profession and employment.

Members of the Roma community are a priority target group for inclusion in state measures in the labour market, such as Active Employment Policy (AEP) programmes and labour market services and also receive priority treatment in the provision of career centre services. Not only are they a priority target group for inclusion in various measures, the inclusion of Roma in community service as one of the AEP measures is co-funded by the MLFSEO in the amount of 95% (co-funding of wage), and the inclusion of other target groups of the long-term unemployed in community service is co-funded in the 30%-80% range. In addition, the Roma may be included in the community service programme for up to two years, and other target groups, except for the disabled and those aged over 58, may be included in community service for one year. With the aim of the labour and social activation of the long-term unemployed Roma, the implementation of community service is as adapted as possible to the needs of the unemployed Roma as well as the Roma who are users of community service. For the Roma, two community service programmes are also implemented within the framework of community service, and these are adapted to the target group and are intended for the development of Roma settlements and community service programmes intended to help the socialisation of the Roma.

Concern for and commitment to as successful integration into the labour market as possible is primarily the responsibility of each individual, and partly also of the stimulating environment in which education is considered a value that allows the individual to seek employment more successfully. In the Republic of Slovenia, all citizens are treated equally and are not separated by ethnic, religious, national and other affiliations. The state strives to empower as much as possible all those who need help and encouragement to become effectively integrated into the labour market. Despite the commitment to equal treatment of all those who need help to become integrated into the labour market, measures of positive discrimination in regard to members of the Roma community, as listed above, are also being implemented in the field of employment.

The unemployed Roma, as do all other unemployed persons, have the right and obligation to participate in state labour market measures, including Active Employment Policy (ALP) programmes and activities as part of the framework of labour market services in order to improve their employment opportunities. The unemployed Roma will also be able to participate in these measures in the period until 2030. Thus, for the time being, the MLFSEO is not organising special programmes aimed exclusively at the unemployed Roma, as it assesses that a broad range of programmes is available to those Roma who have a responsible attitude towards educational and professional career planning.

## **2.2 Objectives and measures in employment**

### 2.2.1 Strategic objective: Promoting inclusion of socially vulnerable groups in the labour market.

Indicator: Number of inclusions in the activities of state measures on the labour market and number of exits into employment

The field of NPUR, which is intended for reducing the number of the unemployed Roma and increasing their employability, will be aimed at the educational structure of the unemployed Roma in order to **improve their level of education and opportunities for gaining work experience** (on-the-job training, social and work inclusion).

In the NPUR until 2030, in order to achieve the objective of reducing Roma unemployment and increasing their employability, the implementation will continue of the "inclusion of Roma in state measures in the labour market" measure, which consists of three sets:

- (1) AEP set,
- (2) labour market service set and
- (3) career centre set:

**(1) AEP:** belonging to this set are training and education programmes, employment incentives, job creation, promotion of self-employment. These programmes promote employment and social and labour inclusion. These include, for example, community service, on-the-job training, learning workshops.

**(2) Labour market service set:** workshops from this set are intended for acquiring the skills to learn about individual interests and competencies, identify opportunities in the environment, design and achieve employment and career goals, and develop motivation for achieving career goals and acquiring job seeking skills. The importance of the inclusion of the aforementioned workshop is reflected in the support for a quicker and easier transition from unemployment to employment, which contributes to the greater social inclusion of the Roma.

**(3) Career centre set:** services from this set (for example, basic and in-depth career counselling, rehabilitation counselling) are intended to support members of the Roma community in planning their educational or employment career. In career centres, the Roma can, independently and with the help of counsellors, access all tools for independent job seeking and career management, participate in seminars and social activation programmes, and prepare for job interviews (one person can be dealt with several times, the institution records every visit by an individual).

A total of 3,662 Roma were included in state measures on the labour market in 2018, 3,534 in 2019, and 3,163 in 2020. 271 Roma gained employment in 2018, 231 in 2019 and 262 in 2020.

Each individual set covers a wide range of different activities/programmes/services. Effective encouragement towards employment for members of the Roma community can only be achieved when all state measures in the labour market are in synergy. The "inclusion of the Roma in state measures in the labour market" measure, oriented in such a way, is a general integration measure in the NPUR which can be constantly supplemented with new activities/programmes/services, depending on the situation and trends in the labour market. The adoption of new activities/programmes/services increases the opportunities for members of the Roma community to be included in appropriate training (including in a specific work environment) and education, social and work inclusion, and opportunities for transition to employment.

SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring
<p><b>OBJECTIVE 2.2.1.1 Reducing the number of unemployed Roma and increasing their employability.</b></p>	<p><b>Inclusion of the Roma in the state measures on the labour market until 2030</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <b>AEP set,</b></li> <li>– <b>labour market service set,</b></li> <li>– <b>career centre set.</b></li> </ul>	<p>MLFSEO, Employment Service</p>	<p>By 2030.</p>	<p>Integral budget (MLFSEO) and part of ESF funds /total indicative amount of funds: EUR 1.5 million, of which about 25% is ESF funds, and the rest is sourced from the integral budget. The funds are allocated as part of programmes for all unemployed persons and not specifically for the Roma. However, it is estimated that about EUR 1.5 million will be spent on the needs of the Roma.</p>	<p>Number of the Roma included in the activities of the measures: 3,300 inclusions/year in 2021–2023 and 3,600 inclusions/year in 2024–2030.</p> <p>Number of exits to employment: 250 persons/year for the 2021–2030 period.</p> <p>The number of Roma who will exit to employment or will otherwise be included in employment will in the area of south-eastern Slovenia and Posavje in 2025 represent at least 10% of the total number of the employed Roma in this area and in 2030 at least 20% of the total number of the employed Roma in this area.</p>

Explanation:

Findings from the field show that the majority of members of the Roma community end their education before completing primary school. Consequently, they have very little chance of entering the labour market effectively. Taking into account the above-mentioned, the special way of life and the internal value system that is established within the majority of the Roma community discourages them from looking for a job or other forms of training after finishing education. The environment in which members of the Roma community live is not stimulating for personal growth and the strengthening of competencies, which consequently leads to the individual's general passivity and inactivity. The special way of life (survival linked to dependence on financial social benefits) and the value system do not allow them to become acquainted with the employment and educational opportunities offered by educational institutions and the labour market.

All three measures work towards motivational, competence, experiential and practical encouragement and support of members of the Roma community in taking a more active role in improving their employment opportunities and socio-economic situation and for successful integration into the labour market.

The proportion of employed Roma is particularly low in south-eastern Slovenia and Posavje, so special attention should be paid to employment of the Roma in this area with targeted measures.

### **3. SOCIAL SECURITY, SOCIAL INTEGRATION, PROTECTION OF CHILDREN, WOMEN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

#### **3.1 Bases and description of initial situation**

- The Exercise of Rights from Public Funds Act (Official Gazette of the RS, No. 62/10, 40/11, 40/12 – ZUJF, 57/12 – ZPCP-2D, 14/13, 56/13 – ZŠtip-1, 99/13, 14/15 – ZUUJFO, 57/15, 90/15, 38/16 – decision of the Constitutional Court, 51/16 – decision of the Constitutional Court, 88/16, 61/17 – ZUPŠ, 75/17, 77/18, 47/19 and 189/20 – ZFRO).
- The Social Assistance Payments Act – ZSVarPre (Official Gazette of the RS, No. 61/10, 40/11, 14/13, 99/13, 90/15, 88/16, 31/18 and 73/18).
- The Act Regulating Adjustments of Transfers to Individuals and Households in the Republic of Slovenia (Official Gazette of the RS, No. 114/06, 59/07 – ZŠtip, 10/08 – ZVarDod, 71/08, 98/09 – ZIUZGK, 62/10 – ZUPJS, 85/10, 94/10 – ZIU, 110/11 – ZDIU12, 40/12 – ZUJF, 96/12 – ZPIZ-2, 59/19 and 81/19 – ZSDP-1C).
- The Social Assistance Act – ZSV (Official Gazette of the RS, No. 3/07 – official consolidated text, 23/07 – corr., 41/07 – corr., 61/10 – ZSVarPre, 62/10 – ZUPJS, 57/12, 39/16, 52/16 – ZPPreb-1, 15/17 – DZ, 29/17, 54/17, 21/18 – ZNOrg, 31/18 – ZOA-A, 28/19 and 189/20 – ZFRO).
- The Parental Protection and Family Benefits Act – ZSDP (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 64/18).
- The Equal Opportunities for Women and Men Act – ZEMŽM (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 59/02, 61/07 – ZUNEO-A, 33/16 – ZVarD and 59/19).
- The Public Interest in Youth Sector Act – ZJIMS (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 42/10 and 21/18 – ZNOrg).
- The Family Code (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 15/17, 21/18 – ZNOrg, 22/19, 67/19 – ZMatR-C and 200/20 – ZOOMTVI).
- The Domestic Violence Prevention Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 16/08, 68/16 and 54/17 – ZSV-H).
- The Roma Community in the Republic of Slovenia Act (Official Gazette of the RS, No. 33/07)
- Resolution on the national social assistance programme 2021–2030 – being drafted.
- Resolution on the Family Policy 2018–2028: "A Society Friendly to All Families" (Official Gazette of the RS, No. 15/18).
- Resolution on the National Programme for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men until 2030 – being drafted.
- Resolution on the National Programme for Youth 2013–2022 (Official Gazette of the RS, No. 90/13) and other.

In the field of social security, the Roma are treated as one of the particularly vulnerable groups of the population, which, in the framework of measures to reduce the risk of poverty and to increase the social integration of socially disadvantaged and vulnerable groups of the population, requires both integrated and targeted measures with the goal of the social activation of the Roma and better quality, faster and easier integration into society. As one of the target groups, the Roma are included in all strategic and programming documents in this field. They will thus be included in the Resolution on the national social assistance programme for the 2021–2030 period, which is expected to be adopted in 2021, and which includes the objective of reducing the risk of poverty and improving the inclusion of socially disadvantaged and vulnerable population groups. Because the Roma, in particular Roma children and adolescents, are among the most vulnerable social groups, they face a very high risk of slipping into poverty (intergenerational transmission of poverty).

In this field, measures and activities included in the NPUR 2017–2021 have already been implemented in the past. The MLFSEO co-funded social protection programmes of social inclusion of the Roma, with a special emphasis being placed on the inclusion of youth and the social activation of all generations of Roma women. The MLFSEO also co-funded and monitored the implementation of activities as part of seven multi-purpose Roma centres which have been established and are operating in seven municipalities populated by the Roma. The MLFSEO assesses that the amount of funds intended for co-financing of social protection programmes should be increased, and that expansion of such programmes to the environments with sizeable Roma communities and where the need for such programmes has been identified, but where such programmes are not yet implemented, should be promoted, which is why the MLFSEO will strive for them to be introduced.

In the past, great progress has been made in combating trafficking in human beings and in connection with the emergence of so-called forced, arranged and early "marriages" of Roma children, as guidelines for the work of all relevant institutions in this field have been clearly defined: networking and cooperation of institutions has been significantly strengthened, both in terms of the procedures for dealing with specific cases and, above all, in terms of preventive action. Awareness of members of the Roma community in this area has also started to increase.

There are 16 regional social work centres in Slovenia (hereinafter referred to as: SWC) and 62 local units of these centres. The areas inhabited by members of the Roma community are covered by approximately a third of the local SWC units. In the smaller SWC unit, expert workers are usually assigned to several different work areas; the work is usually organised in a way that ensures that several expert workers work with the Roma. In addition to their own tasks and obligations, SWCs also coordinate action with other institutions (municipalities, schools, educational institutions and organisations in the field of adult education, employment service, community health centres, police, kindergartens, associations and other NGOs and other). Since 2004, in areas where a large number of Roma live, SWCs have been employing, while taking into account staffing plans and options, additional expert workers<sup>21</sup> who specialise in the comprehensive treatment of the social issues faced by members of the Roma community living there. Specialised and integrated treatment of the Roma population and Roma issues means work in the field with individuals and Roma families in their own environment and includes a broad range of activities, from support in exercising rights from public funds, direct work with children in education, providing assistance to children and adolescents in school work to helping the family with housekeeping and learning the various skills needed for everyday life, empowerment and more successful integration into the broader community.

In accordance with the act regulating social security, SWCs perform several social security services that must be available to every individual, family and group in terms of resolution of personal hardships, provision of care, protection, education and training. The rights to services are exercised under the principles of

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<sup>21</sup> There are four such part-time posts in five SWC units, and at one SWC unit there is one expert worker (full-time) employed for assistance and work with the Roma.

equal accessibility and a free choice of the forms for all beneficiaries, under the conditions defined by law and by the principles of social justice. Members of the Roma community are not specifically treated in terms of positive discrimination when exercising their right to social security services.

The act regulating social security benefits defines financial social assistance (hereinafter referred to as: FSA) as a social security benefit intended for those individuals who cannot provide material security to themselves due to circumstances beyond their control. FSA provides the beneficiary with the means to meet the minimum subsistence needs in the amount that enables them to survive. The right to FSA may be exercised by a beneficiary who is *"incapable of ensuring their subsistence through work, the rights from work or insurance, income property and from other sources or allowances or benefits pursuant to other regulations or through those persons who are required for their maintenance or in any other manner set out by this Act [...] in the amount and under the conditions set out by this Act and the Act governing the exercise of rights to public funds"* and persons who are *"unable to ensure funds for themselves and their family members in the amount of the minimum income due to reasons beyond their control and those having claimed benefits in accordance with other regulations and the right to exemption and relief in accordance with this Act and fulfilling other conditions pursuant to this Act and the Act governing the exercise of rights to public funds"*. While records on ethnic or national affiliation and (self-) determination are not kept, it can be estimated based on the assessments of organisations that continuously work with members of the Roma community in the field that the survival and material condition of most members of the Roma community living in Slovenia is largely dependent on social transfers, especially FSA and child benefits.

Every year, the Social Affairs Directorate at the MLFSEO conducts a public tender for the co-funding of social security programmes. Among the nine areas, a special point (point 8) in the call for applications is dedicated to programmes for the prevention of social exclusion of the Roma, which include the programmes of day care centres for children and adolescents, information and counselling, and work in the field. Social security programmes are intended for the prevention and resolution of social hardship of individual vulnerable population groups (and in certain cases for maintaining an acceptable social situation of individuals for whom a solution to their problems is not expected), and they complement the social security services and measures.

### 3.2 Objectives and measures in the field of social protection and social inclusion

#### 3.2.1 Strategic objective: Improving the readiness of members of socially vulnerable groups to enter the labour market and enable their empowerment.

Indicator: More active and expanded scope of work with members of the Roma community in terms of getting closer to the labour market, empowerment and reduction of the risk of poverty by co-financing additional programmes aimed at improving their socio-economic position.

SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring
<b>OBJECTIVE 3.2.1.1 Expanding the scope of inclusion of members of the Roma community in social activation programmes.</b>	<b>1. Co-funding of social activation programmes.</b>	MLFSA	In 2021–2027 and 2028–2031.	Funds from the budget of the Republic of Slovenia (as part of the financial plan of the MLFSA) and funds from the ESS+.	Number of co-funded social activation programmes: 54.



SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring
<b>OBJECTIVE 3.2.1.2 Promoting the greater readiness of FSA recipients to enter the labour market by joining psychosocial rehabilitation, social activation and active employment policy programmes.</b>	<b>2. Co-funding of social activation programmes for Roma women.</b>				Number of co-financed programmes intended for social activation of Roma women: 6-8.  Number of positive exits: 25% of the number of Roma women included in social activation programmes.

**Explanation:**

Many members of the Roma community living in clusters in parts of settlements, and especially when they live in Roma settlements, are quite poorly integrated into the broader social environment in most cases. Therefore, they act in their communities in accordance with their own systems of criteria and values and practices and behaviours, which may differ from the system of criteria and values in the majority society. In these systems, education and employment are often not particularly valued, so (taking into account the problems with understanding of the official language) dropping out before the end of primary school and early school leaving are common. The lack of education greatly reduces their employment opportunities, so their livelihood and support of their families becomes dependent on alternative forms of income and, to the largest extent, dependent on rights from public funds (i.e. social transfers). Such life patterns usually result in a very poor socio-economic situation of individuals and families, a high at-risk-of-poverty rate and a high risk of intergenerational transmission of poverty. In 2019, three programmes for social activation of Roma women started to be implemented. These programmes are implemented at five locations (Maribor, Črnomelj, Novo Mesto, Lendava and Beltinci).

Other than Roma children, Roma women are the most vulnerable subgroup in this vulnerable social group. In what is mostly a patriarchal socio-family structure, Roma women are mostly limited to the social role of mothers and housewives. In accordance with the above-mentioned social role, which is assigned to them, and which (young) Roma women are supposed to start assuming very early in their lives, few of them finish even primary school. By dropping out of school and merely assuming the role of housewives and mothers (and not employees), they slip into a very subordinated position in the community, which severely limits their opportunities for living independently or escaping from unbearable conditions, because they generally do not even know their options and rights as their contact with the outside world is limited. Because they are in such a vulnerable position and at the same time, due to their roles, they are the most important factor in the primary socialisation of children, additional attention should be paid to empowering Roma women as part of social activation measures.

In its efforts to help Roma men and women (as one of the most vulnerable social groups) in their efforts to improve their socio-economic situation, in the period from 2017 to 2022 the MLFSA is co-funding with funds from the European Social Fund earmarked for empowering various vulnerable social groups (including members of the Roma community) and bringing them closer to the labour market, the implementation of five public tenders for co-funding of programmes of social activation (hereinafter referred to as: SA). Thus, in the 2019–2022 period, a set of SA programmes intended directly for Roma women is already being co-financed as part of the public call for co-funding of SA projects. Due to the positive effects and good response of those involved and from the field, the Ministry will strive in the next financial perspective (2021-2027) to ensure co-funding of SA projects intended for members of the Roma community or for the promotion of their integration in the labour market in the event that funds for public calls for applications in the field of SA, secured by the ESF+, are available.

SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring
<b>OBJECTIVE 3.2.1.3 Reducing current debts and preventing generation of new debts to public service providers (e.g. utility services, electricity and water supply and other).</b>	<b>Concluding agreements on active regulation of social issues by increasing the volume of social assistance payments in kind and promotion of financial literacy (with the aim of repaying the debtor's debts to public service providers (e.g. utility services, electricity and water supply and other)).</b>	MLFSA	By 2030.	Funds from the budget of the Republic of Slovenia (as part of the financial plan of the MLFSA).	Assessment of SWCs, other institutions and representatives of the Roma community concerning improvement of the situation related to family debt repayment.

**Explanation:**

As the regulation of individual (or family) living/housing conditions is an important aspect of empowerment and improvement of the socio-economic situation, the MLFSA will strive in the period until 2030 to create and start implementing a measure of systemically provided options for the payment and repayment of individuals' debts in regard to public services (for example, utility services, electricity and water supply, etc.) from financial social assistance. This is a systemic measure of the MLFSA which is not only aimed at the Roma, and which started to be implemented in 2021; it will be continued during the validity of the NPUR 2021–2030.

**The current social security legislation (Article 38 of the ZSVarPre) stipulates that financial social assistance shall be paid as a rule in cash, and in justified cases it may be partially or entirely paid in kind or in the so-called functional form** (vouchers, order forms, payment of bills and so on). With payment in kind (which is regulated by the SWC), the ZSVarPre now also enables the payment or transfer of financial social assistance directly to the public utility service provider, although only in justified cases in accordance with the free discretion of the SWC. Justified cases of payment in the functional form exist

when there is a high probability that the individual or family will not use the financial benefit for subsistence, and therefore the socio-economic security of the individual or family will be endangered, for example due to alcoholism and other forms of addiction and similar. The SWC must explain in the decision the reasons for the payment in the functional form, which can only be paid to cover the costs for which it is intended (for example, for food, payment of bills – electricity, heating and similar), and not, for example, to pay large amounts of outstanding debts. The decision on payout in the functional form must be supported by documents or evidence that justify such a decision and support cash flow. Payment of financial social assistance in the functional form, in accordance with legislative provisions, means paying bills in the name and on behalf of the party, issuing purchase orders for specific goods and the like, with prior explanation or justification of the decision in a specific ruling (and not only on the basis of proposal from the party).

It is being established that there is a problem because some recipients of financial social assistance do not pay for the basic services of public utilities (waste removal, water supply, sewerage and similar) and educational institutions (kindergarten, schools). Some eventually develop the habit of stopping paying those costs, an action for which they assess that nothing drastic will happen if they do not pay them (for example, paying for kindergarten or school meals), while some are not willing/able to give up certain habits, including bad habits, and therefore leave the basic monthly costs unpaid. Certain individuals or families also have poor knowledge/ability to manage and allocate available resources and show resistance to institutions or formal services. With the aim of economic management and allocation of financial social assistance and the purposeful spending of financial social assistance, it is proposed with a **new paragraph of Article 38 of the ZSVarPre** that the use of free discretion in the allocation of financial social assistance in kind is not possible or **that financial social assistance is always paid in kind for three months if the beneficiary has a debt to public utilities or educational institutions**. Within the proposed three-month period, the SWC thus provides the beneficiary with the necessary social welfare services that enable the individual or family to resolve personal and economic distress more easily. In accordance with Article 35 of the ZSVarP, SWCs will also more intensively conclude agreements on active resolution of social issues, as part of which they will be improving financial literacy with the aim of repaying the debtor's debts to public service providers.

**3.2.2 Strategic objective: Improving social inclusion of members of the Roma community living in the Republic of Slovenia in social processes and the broader social environment**

Indicator: More active and expanded scope of work with members of the Roma community for their empowerment, social inclusion and reduction of the risk of poverty by improving the availability, accessibility and scope of social security programmes and services intended for addressing these challenges

SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring
<b>OBJECTIVE 3.2.2.1 Strengthening and building mutual trust and cooperation between the Roma and the broader local community in which they live by strengthening</b>	<b>1. Co-funding of the network of public services in the field of social security programmes.</b>	MLFSA	By 2030. In 2021–2027 and in 2028–2031	Funds from the budget of the Republic of Slovenia (as part of the financial plan of the MLFSA) and funds from the ESS+.	Number of social security <sup>23</sup> programmes aimed at empowerment and integration into the broader social

<sup>23</sup> Co-funded solely from the budget of the Republic of Slovenia.

SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring
<p>their integration into broader society.</p>	<p>2. Co-funding of social security programmes aimed at empowering and promoting social inclusion of members of the Roma community.</p> <p>3. Re-establishing and strengthening the network of multi-purpose Roma centres.</p> <p>4. Co-funding the activities<sup>22</sup> of multi-generational centres for social inclusion of the Roma.</p>				<p>environment and intended for members of the Roma community: 6–10 co-funded social security programmes per year.</p> <p>Number of established multifunctional Roma centres (duration of the next European Financial Perspective 2021–2027): 19.</p> <p>Number of activities performed in multifunctional Roma centres (duration of the next European Financial Perspective 2021–2027): 9,120 activities.</p> <p>Number of multi-generational centres that perform activities to strengthen social inclusion of the Roma (5).</p>

<sup>22</sup> These are the activities of multi-generational centres that are primarily aimed at social inclusion of Roma families, especially women, children and adolescents.

SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring
					Number of hours of activities dedicated to social inclusion of the Roma: 12,500 hours of activities.

**Explanation:**

The basic challenge in all aspects of dealing with Roma issues in the Republic of Slovenia is their social inclusion in the broader community. Often the parallel lives of the Roma and the majority local social communities lead at best to a lack of communication and (more or less tolerable for both communities) separate existences for the majority and minority communities and, at worst, to intimidation, conflict and (physical) confrontation. Over time, conflicts caused by misunderstandings and non-acceptance of the expression of behavioural patterns between the majority and the minority lead to the formation of stereotypes and prejudices that are passed down the generations of the two communities and generate and maintain distrust and non-cooperation between members of both communities.

In the efforts to enable members of the Roma community to integrate more effectively into society, together with encouraging trust and cooperation with local majority communities without forcing the Roma to lose their own cultural identity, projects and institutions that are active in this area should be supported. Roma should be made aware of the opportunities for the individual, family and community offered by integration into the majority society for life, growth and development, and they should be encouraged to engage in activities that involve members of the majority society, that are characteristic of the functioning of society as a whole and that enable the individual and the community to take an active role in constructing society and its development.

The MLFSA regularly finances social protection programmes from the annual budget through annual public calls for applications. These include programmes of social inclusion for the Roma. The Ministry would like to see as many such programmes as possible in the field of work with the Roma, which would further strengthen their availability, reach and accessibility to the Roma. The Ministry co-funded four social security programmes for the Roma in 2019 and 2020, and five in 2021. In the 2014–2020 European Financial Perspective, projects for establishing multi-purpose Roma centres (MPRC) and multi-generational centres (MGC) were implemented in the field of co-funding of social security programmes. Five MGCs that also worked with the Roma, and seven MPRCs were established in the 2014–2020 European Financial Perspective.

MPRCs provided members of the Roma community with activities with content for:

- strengthening the socio-economic situation of members of the Roma community (gaining new knowledge and competencies that enable more successful performance in the labour market, and similar),
- improved quality of life,
- promoting and strengthening integration into the broader community and
- building trust and cooperation with the majority population.

Some MPRCs are established inside and some outside Roma settlements – in compliance with the wishes of the Roma living there and the assessment by providers as to where they would have the greatest reach and impact. MPRCs were well received by the Roma. The activities that are carried out in the centres and that cover a variety of practical health, cultural, educational, social, security, integration, social activation, leisure, networking and reintegration content are attended by all age groups of the Roma. In the period of the 2021–2027 European Financial Perspective, the MLFSA (if part of the funds for public calls for applications in the field of social inclusion is provided by the ESF+) will strive to re-establish<sup>24</sup> a network of MPRCs and expand it to 19 such operating centres, which would operate in all main areas of concentrated Roma settlement in both urban and rural areas. For more successful and intensive work with the Roma, it is planned that there will be at least two employees in each MPRC. The Roma coordinator who will guide the entire operation of the multi-purpose centre will work closely with all other stakeholders in addressing Roma issues and challenges. It will coordinate activities in the centre, cooperate intensively with all other stakeholders who work to improve the situation of the Roma population (SWC, Employment Service, health, culture, education), and ensure and promote networking with the local community. The entire system will take into account the strategic documents relating to the Roma community.

As part of their programmes, multi-generational centres (hereinafter referred to as: MGCs) established in the area settled by Roma communities systematically include the Roma in the activities of the centres both in order to strengthen their competencies and (and above all) for the sake of their social inclusion and networking with other visitors to the centres, with which they complement the work of MPRCs. A markedly low level of educational structure is often detected among the Roma, which hinders job seeking and obtaining employment, creation of a healthy lifestyle and, consequently, active integration into society. Diverse education is thus one of the key tools to improve the situation. As the Roma tend to complete formal education early, it is precisely informal learning that is recognised as effective in gaining knowledge and experience. MGCs provide learning assistance to children and adolescents, holiday care, sports and board games, and include the Roma in all other activities as well as volunteering. MGCs are also places where Roma and other users come together and connect during activities, which contributes to the better integration of Roma into the local environment. For the Roma, the activities of MGCs are an important part of their personal and social development, a preventive mechanism in the field of health, relationships and contribution to society. In order to achieve long-term effects, such activities must be provided continuously. Due to the recognised positive impact of their inclusion in the activities of MGCs, the MLFSA wants to ensure co-funding of these centres in the future financial perspective.

<b>SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>MEASURE</b>	<b>Provider of measure</b>	<b>Deadline for implementation</b>	<b>Financial source and envisaged resources</b>	<b>Impact indicators and monitoring</b>
<b>OBJECTIVE 3.2.2.2 Strengthening the role and improving the situation of Roma women and girls.</b>	<b>Public tender for co-funding of projects of non-governmental organisations aimed at detecting, eliminating or preventing gender inequality, promoting gender equality or</b>	MLFSA	By 2030.	Funds from the budget of the Republic of Slovenia (as part of the financial plan of the MLFSA).	Number of co-funded NGO programmes aimed at empowering and improving the situation of Roma women and girls both in society and in the family

<sup>24</sup> Given that this is project funding, it is not expected that the beneficiary (the MLFSA) would also be able to ensure continuous and uninterrupted operation of the currently operating MPRCs after the completion of the project and until the selection of providers in a new call for applications.

SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring
	creating equal opportunities for women and men in various fields, raising awareness and providing information on gender equality or equal opportunities for women and men, and counselling and protection of rights in cases of gender inequality.				(one call by 2030 and two co-funded projects addressing the issue of strengthening the role and improving the position of Roma women and girls in society and/or the family).

**Explanation:**

The main objective of the public call for applications is to co-fund projects that will implement activities intended for overcoming gender stereotypes and empowering various vulnerable groups of women. Also able to apply to the call for applications are non-governmental organisations dedicated to Roma women as one of the most vulnerable social subgroups in the Roma community. The measure will be appropriate if projects relating to this subgroup are selected. The implementation of the measure will be monitored every year.

**3.2.3 Strategic objective: Improving availability and diversity and ensuring accessibility of social services and programmes aimed at strengthening the socio-economic situation of those involved.**

Indicator: More active and expanded scope of work with members of the Roma community for their empowerment, social inclusion and reduction of the risk of poverty by improving the availability, accessibility and scope of social security programmes and services intended for addressing these challenges

SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring
<b>OBJECTIVE 3.2.3.1 Improved accessibility (affordability) of social</b>	<b>Encouraging applicants<sup>26</sup> by means of better scoring to</b>	MLFSA	By 2030.	Funds from the budget of the Republic of Slovenia (as part	Coverage of all regions where members of the

<sup>26</sup> To the annual public call for applications for co-funding of the implementation of social security programmes.

SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring
<p>services and programmes to users regardless of their social status.</p> <p><b>OBJECTIVE 3.2.3.2 Improved regional availability and accessibility of social services and programmes<sup>25</sup>.</b></p>	<p><b>apply for the implementation of social protection programs intended for members of the Roma community.</b></p>			<p>of the financial plan of the MLFSA).</p>	<p>Roma community live in large clusters through social protection services and programmes aimed at empowerment, social inclusion and reduction of the risk of poverty.</p>

**Explanation:**

In order to improve accessibility (affordability) of social welfare services and programmes to users regardless of their social status and improved regional availability and accessibility of services and programmes, applicants will be encouraged to apply with social welfare programmes intended for members of the Roma community by means of better scoring. This is meant to ensure coverage of all regions where members of the Roma community live in large clusters with such services and programmes.

**3.2.4 Strategic objective: Eliminating harmful practices in the Roma community, such as escapes of minors to harmful environments (so-called child marriages) and forced marriages and raising awareness of the harmfulness of these phenomena and the importance of action taken by competent institutions.**

Indicator: Reporting to the competent institutions and the Council of the Roma Community of the Republic of Slovenia on the situation in the field.

SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring
<p><b>OBJECTIVE 3.2.4.1 Strengthening a multidisciplinary approach for eliminating the occurrences of harmful practices in the Roma community, such as escapes of minors to harmful environments (so-called child marriages) and forced marriages.</b></p>	<p><b>An ad hoc working group of the GONM for monitoring escapes of minors to harmful environments (so-called early marriages) and forced marriages in the Roma community.</b></p>	<p>GONM in cooperation with MLFSA, MJ, MESS, MI, JTC, Supreme State</p>	<p>By 2030.</p>	<p>As part of regular tasks and partly as part of the National Roma Platform project.</p>	<p>Regular working group meetings.</p> <p>Assessments of competent institutions and organisations.</p>

<sup>25</sup> Compared to the previous period (i.e. from 2014 to 2020).



SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring
		Prosecutor's Office, SWCa, CRCRS, Association Ključ, Association Mozaik – Association of Children ...			

**Explanation:**

In 2017, an ad hoc working group was formed to prepare a protocol or manual of action in proceedings dealing with cases of extramarital unions with minors or dealing with escapes of minors to harmful environments (early "marriages") and forced marriages in the Roma community, in which representatives of the competent ministries (the MLFSA, MESS, MJ, MI), JTC, Supreme State Prosecutor's Office, social work centres (coordinators for the prevention of domestic violence), CRCRS, Ključ Association, Mozaik Association – Association of Children and others were involved. In the past, a *"Handbook on recognising and acting in cases of early and forced marriages in the Roma community"* was prepared as part of the working group and the National Roma Platform, and training sessions on forced marriage for judicial staff were conducted at the initiative of the working group. All participants in the working group assessed that connecting institutions and organisations, their cooperation and regular exchange of information and experience is of key importance if more effective action in such cases, both preventively and in individual cases, is to be achieved. In order to exchange information and experience, the working group must meet at least once a year, and several times a year if needed; the GONM will be in contact with individual institutions and organisations more frequently. Various forms of training and education will be implemented in relation to the prepared manual, so this objective and measure are also closely linked to the strategic objective 9.2.3 and the subordinated objective 9.2.3.1 and the measure under this objective.

**4. HEALTH AND HEALTHCARE**

**4.1 Bases and description of initial situation**

- The Health Care and Health Insurance Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 72/06 – official consolidated text, 114/06 – ZUTPG, 91/07, 76/08, 62/10 – ZUPJS, 87/11, 40/12 – ZUJF, 21/13 – ZUTD-A, 91/13, 99/13 – ZUPJS-C, 99/13 – ZSVarPre-C, 111/13 – ZMEPIZ-1, 95/14 – ZUJF-C, 47/15 – ZZSDT, 61/17 – ZUPŠ, 64/17 – ZZDej-K and 36/19)
- Resolution on the National Health Care Plan 2016–2025 "Together for a Healthy Society" (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 25/16).

All citizens of the Republic of Slovenia have equal rights and access to preventive and curative healthcare. The objectives of improving the health condition of members of the Roma community as one of the vulnerable groups of the population are compliant with the starting points of the Resolution on the National Health Care Plan 2016–2025 "Together for a Healthy Society", while measures aimed at improving the healthcare of the Roma have already been part of the national programme in this area in the past

The ministry responsible for health (hereinafter referred to as: MH) cares for socially disadvantaged people, a demographic to which members of the Roma community surely belong. These are people whose insurance type is "socially disadvantaged". The MH provides funds for extra payments, i.e. for so-called voluntary insurance paid to insurance companies by insured persons. Under the applicable regulations, certain groups of insured persons are not required to pay the premium for voluntary insurance, with the funds being provided by the MH.

In the previous period, the MH monitored the work performed by healthcare institutions in the areas populated by the Roma. These are individual activities in Roma settlements, health education work performed by individual centres, and the work of visiting employees in Roma settlements as part of their regular work. The MH also annually publishes the *public call for applications for co-financing of programmes of direct assistance, counselling and care of vulnerable persons and patients with rare diseases*, which are implemented by humanitarian organisations. The content related to the Roma community is part of set 2, which includes healthcare programmes with an emphasis on the health of female Roma adolescents, women and children.

In cooperation with the MH, the National Institute of Public Health (hereinafter referred to as: NIJZ) issued in 2019 the expert monograph [Public health approaches intended for the Roma ethnic community](#), the purpose of which is, based on the available evidence, to explain the causes for the health condition of the Roma, present the current health indicators and selected examples of activities intended for improving the health of the Roma, which have been implemented since 2016, and to give recommendations for improving the health of the Roma.

The published data on the health of the Roma show that their health situation differs from that of the remaining population, and the health of the Roma in Pomurje and of those in Dolenjska also differs. In the future, the MH will take into account all previous findings, both the findings of the NIJZ survey and the findings of providers of various projects implemented in the field in Roma settlements, when planning further activities and measures in this area.

Most Roma live in the area of the Maribor, Murska Sobota and Novo Mesto regional units of the Health Insurance Institute of Slovenia (hereinafter referred to as: HISS). The Roma are included in compulsory health insurance under the same conditions, on the same bases for insurance (arising under paragraph one of Article 15 of the Health Care and Health Insurance Act (hereinafter referred to as: ZZVZZ)) and have the same rights as other insured persons. All insured persons have the right to access healthcare and dental services, rehabilitation, medical devices, medicinal products, health spa treatments, ambulance transport and transport by other vehicles, planned treatment abroad, and to be reimbursed for travel and other expenses. Only certain categories of insured persons are also eligible for wage compensation for the period of temporary inability to work.

A substantial proportion of the Roma population qualifying under the Exercise of Rights from Public Funds Act (ZUPJS) is covered by compulsory health insurance as referred to in point 21 of paragraph one of Article 15 of the ZZVZZ (basis for insurance No. 099) The right to be included in compulsory health insurance on this basis is decided by the social work centre competent for the residence of the person by means of a decision; the registration of compulsory health insurance is made by means of electronic data exchange in the records of the ZZZS, and the municipality of the permanent residence of the person is obliged to pay their compulsory health insurance contribution.

A person applying to exercise rights from public funds is entitled to this type of insurance if they have a permanent residence in the Republic of Slovenia and do not meet the conditions for insurance under any other points of Article 15 of the ZZVZZ, but they do meet the conditions for social assistance benefit in cash, whereby fault-based reasons which would otherwise prevent the person from being entitled to social assistance benefit in cash are disregarded. The insurance enters into force on the first day of the month following the submission of the application and is applicable for the period for which the right is granted, but for no more than one year. The applicant must make sure that the application is submitted on time, as otherwise the right is terminated and, consequently, compulsory health care insurance ceases.

If an individual has no voluntary health insurance, or if they are not entitled to the coverage of supplementary payments from the budget, they must pay a proportion of the costs not covered by compulsory health care insurance. The Roma who are employed or retired mostly have their voluntary health insurance regulated. The Roma eligible for financial social assistance are also granted the right to the coverage of supplementary payments from the budget by means of a decision from the competent SWC.

The rights and access to health care services, both curative and preventive, are the same at the national level for all citizens of the Republic of Slovenia. Strategic guidelines and bases in this area are determined by the central programming document - Resolution on the National Health Care Plan 2016–2025 "Together for a Healthy Society". One of its main starting points is to ensure quality and generally accessible public health, which puts the user and the provider at the forefront, and strives for better health and well-being for all and to reduce health inequalities, which is especially important for the Roma as one of the most vulnerable population groups.

The basic starting point is that the Roma covered by health insurance have access to doctors, i.e. the healthcare system in the same way as any other insured person. If they are not covered by health insurance, the healthcare system in Slovenia provides for accessibility to emergency medical treatment regardless of the status of the insured person. Thus, in cases of emergency, the state enables persons not covered by health insurance due to various complicated and irresolvable circumstances to be treated by a doctor.

The MH implements systemic, special and project measures for the most efficient integration of Roma children, adolescents and adult Roma into the healthcare system.

The MH annually publishes the public call for applications for co-funding of programmes of direct assistance, counselling and care of vulnerable persons and patients with rare diseases, which are implemented by humanitarian organisations. A special set is dedicated to direct assistance, awareness-raising and counselling programmes for Roma adolescents, women and children with the key goal of ensuring a better quality of life and health.

The objectives of the call for applications are: raising awareness and education about the risks related to pregnancy in minors, reducing the number of pregnancies in minors, increasing the number of Roma women who have a selected gynaecologist, strengthening and developing assistance programmes focused on the health of female Roma adolescents, women and children, empowering the mentioned groups, warning about lifestyles harmful to health, creating support environments, ensuring greater availability of counselling sessions and assistance, referrals to appropriate institutions, monitoring and informing, establishing and maintaining cooperation between various institutions with the purpose of more effective and faster resolution of problems, work in the field and counselling in places where female Roma adolescents, women and children live with the purpose of reaching the concealed population, and creating new ideas.

In places with a Roma population, there are response health centres that, with community nursing services, health education centres and other organised forms, implement activities in Roma settlements and at the same time cooperate with SWCs, health clinics for pre-school children and clinics for school children and youth, outpatient clinics for dental care of children and youth, gynaecological outpatient clinics and similar.

Despite some progress brought by measures, it is still being established that the situation is not satisfactory. The lifestyle of the Roma is often unhealthy – they smoke a lot, do not exercise enough, they consume high-energy, low-nutrient and vitamin-depleted food, and they drink a lot of coffee. The following were mentioned as the key health problems: respiratory diseases, type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, obesity (especially of children), cancer, poor mental health (depression, stress, psychosis) and an increase in various addictions (alcohol, gambling, sedatives). The socio-economic situation of the majority of the Roma population in Slovenia is poor, a large proportion of them live below the poverty threshold, in inadequate living conditions and undeveloped housing infrastructure, which is reflected in a poorer health condition.

In the field of health care, financial and geographical inaccessibility, lack of understanding and powerlessness regarding the passage through the complex system of healthcare organisation, unequal treatment and distrust of Roma patients by providers of healthcare services is being identified. As for women's attitude to gynaecologists and reproductive health, shyness and a reserved attitude to gynaecologists is being identified and, in most families, discussing contraception is taboo. The subordinated social position of women in the Roma community, and its adverse impact on their self-perception and health is frequently mentioned.

The key challenges are:

- contraception, talks on family planning, childbirth and related responsibilities, raising awareness of girls before their first pregnancy, helping girls who have become mothers several times, regular examinations by gynaecologists for women and adolescents (many Roma women do not have a selected gynaecologist and do not participate in preventive examinations; they are rarely allowed to decide to use any method to prevent unwanted pregnancies (given that they are frequently prohibited to do so by their partner));
- importance of introduction of diversified food in everyday life (many Roma families have very unhealthy diets, they largely include exclusively basic carbohydrates, unhealthy fats and large quantities of salt in their diet; in their diet, they extensively use basic sugars contained in biscuits, hard candy and other confectionery, they rarely consume fruit and vegetables, and many children say they have never eaten, for example, broccoli or cauliflower, and that they do not have fruit at home);
- importance of drinking of water (sweet drinks are offered even to babies, they start drinking energy drinks, soft drinks, etc. very early);
- raising awareness about the importance of breastfeeding for the child's development;
- raising awareness about the importance of regular and early visits to a paediatrician and other specialists in order to prevent disorders in the child's mental and physical development;

- raising awareness of the risks of smoking (raising awareness of the risks of smoking and the consequences of smoking for both active and passive smokers. The large majority of adult Roma smoke indoors in the presence of children and other non-smokers);
- risks related to smoking during pregnancy and consequences for the foetus;
- greater susceptibility to various health problems and development of chronic non-communicable diseases (cancer, diabetes, high cholesterol) as a result of late recognition of signs of disease and unhealthy lifestyle;
- mental health problems (raising awareness about the importance of stable mental health, providing information about the regular use of therapy and visits to the selected psychiatrist, interpretation of health documentation, informing the broader Roma community about the concept of mental health issues (for example, about the seriousness of psychoses, depression and similar) and cooperation with community health centres, community services and psychiatric hospitals; advocacy and counselling);
- physical exercise for women (women in particular are excluded from any physical exercise not related to household chores or direct work with children, which results in poorer physical condition and muscle weakness as well as various health problems; introducing regular forms of organised and instructed exercise for women);
- bringing Roma culture closer to healthcare staff (the relationship between the healthcare staff and user (Roma) is frequently one-sided. There is a lack of understanding or misunderstanding on both sides; moreover, healthcare workers are usually uninformed about the actual situation in families and frequently uniformly assess and (fail to) diagnose the health condition of Roma people; more work in the field should be done and the concept of health should be brought closer to the Roma population);
- seminars/consultations on dialogue between the Roma and healthcare workers and presentations of the situation in the field.

#### 4.2 Objectives and measures in healthcare

##### 4.2.1 Strategic objective: Improving health of members of the Roma community.

Indicator: Assessment (quantitative and/or qualitative) by the MH, competent institutions in the field and the Roma community regarding the improvement of the health condition of members of the Roma community in the environments in which they live.

SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring
<b>OBJECTIVE 4.2.1.1 Increasing the trust of members of the Roma community in healthcare institutions and improving the accessibility of healthcare services for members of the Roma community in the environments in which they live.</b>	<b>1. Connecting health services, community nursing services, health education centres/health promotion centres and other stakeholders in the field of health with representatives of</b>	MH	By 2030.	Funds from the budget of the Republic of Slovenia (as part of the financial plan of the MH). up to EUR 25,000 per year.	Annual reporting of competent institutions in the field (for example, community health centres, community nursing services, health promotion centres and similar) – competent services

SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring
	<p>representative Roma organisations to improve the situation in the field.</p> <p>2. Implementation of health education activities with an emphasis on increasing health literacy for children and adolescents and their parents, including activities for drop-outs.</p>				<p>and working bodies will be acquainted with the reporting.</p> <p>An annual professional conference or education, training or conference organised by the MH and implemented by the Romani Union Roma Association at locations where Roma live or the competent services for Roma operate.</p> <p>Regular educational and contact radio content (once a month) in the field of health on the radio station Romic.</p>

**Explanation:**

This measure will mostly be about implementation of activities such as consultations, seminars, education, upskilling and training sessions, radio broadcasts on health issues and other various forms of work in Roma communities. There will also be a programme for drop-outs, which will take place as part of the project learning for young adults (PLYA) programme (for example, most Roma are included in PLYA in Murska Sobota, and health education workshops are funded by the HIIS).

SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring
<p><b>OBJECTIVE 4.2.1.2 Eliminating health distress and problems of members of the Roma community in the environments in which they live and where the situation is unsatisfactory.</b></p>	<p><b>Direct assistance programmes in the environments in which Roma live: awareness and counselling programmes for Roma adolescents, women and children with the key goal of ensuring a better quality of life and health.</b></p>	<p>MH</p>	<p>By 2030.</p>	<p>Funds from the budget of the Republic of Slovenia (as part of the financial plan of the MH) up to EUR 100,000 per year.</p>	<p>Annual reporting by non-governmental organisations that have been awarded funds in the call for applications, with an emphasis on an analysis of the situation at the beginning and end of the programme.</p> <p>Annual public evaluation of all programmes organised by the MH and implemented by one of the selected providers in the public call for applications of the MH that implements the programme for the Roma and has the status of a humanitarian organisation.</p>

**Explanation:**

This measure will mainly concern the implementation of the public call for applications for humanitarian organisations and evaluation, specifically projects that will be implemented in the environments in which members of the Roma community live.

**5. DEVELOPMENT OF ROMA SETTLEMENTS AND ACCESS TO HOUSING**

## 5.1 Bases and description of initial situation

- The Local Self-Government Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 94/07 – official consolidated text, 76/08, 79/09, 51/10, 40/12 – ZUJF, 14/15 – ZUUJFO, 11/18 – ZSPDSL-1, 30/18, 61/20 – ZIUZEOP-A and 80/20 – ZIUOOPE),
- The Spatial Management Act (Official Gazette of the RS, No. 61/17),
- The Spatial Planning Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 33/07, 70/08 – ZVO-1B, 108/09, 80/10 – ZUPUDPP, 43/11 – ZKZ-C, 57/12, 57/12 – ZUPUDPP-A, 109/12, 76/14 – decision of the Constitutional Court, 14/15 – ZUUJFO and 61/17 – ZUreP-2),
- The Building Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 61/17, 72/17 - corr., 65/20 and 15/21 - ZDUOP),
- The Financing of Municipalities Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 123/06, 57/08, 36/11, 14/15 – ZUUJFO, 71/17, 21/18 – corr., 80/20 – ZIUOOPE and 189/20 – ZFRO).
- The Municipal Costs Reduction Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 189/20),
- Ordinance on the Spatial Planning Strategy of Slovenia (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 76/04, 33/07 – ZPNačrt and 61/17 – ZUreP-2);
- Decree on the Spatial Order of Slovenia (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 122/04, 33/07 – ZPNačrt and 61/17 – ZUreP-2);
- The Promotion of Balanced Regional Development Act (Official Gazette of the RS, No. 20/11, 57/12 and 46/16);
- The Housing Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 69/03, 18/04 – ZVKSES, 47/06 – ZEN, 45/08 – ZVetL, 57/08, 62/10 – ZUPJS, 56/11 – decision of the Constitutional Court, 87/11, 40/12 – ZUJF, 14/17 – decision of the Constitutional Court, 27/17, 59/19 and 189/20 – ZFRO),
- The Resolution on the National Housing Programme 2015–2025 (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 92/15),
- The National Farm Land and Forest Fund Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 19/10 – official consolidated text, 56/10 – ORZSKZ16, 14/15 – ZUUJFO, 9/16 – ZGGLRS and 36/21 – ZZIRDKG).

Based on the constitutional order and applicable legislation, spatial management and spatial planning at the local level and, therefore, management of Roma settlements, is in the competence of the municipality. Competent state authorities provide municipalities with Roma settlements in various ways, using guidance, professional assistance and also co-funding in the development of these settlements. At the same time, both municipalities and state bodies take into account the vulnerability of the inhabitants of these settlements and, through the measures they take, strive to ensure equal starting points for these inhabitants, as well as greater participation of individuals in regulating living and housing issues. Because municipalities face numerous complex challenges with regard to the applicable legislation in the matter of Roma settlements, some strategic measures have been implemented at the national level in the past with the goal of identifying and addressing the spatial challenges of these settlements and to help steer municipalities in performing their tasks by defining the concept of possible approaches and, consequently, contribute to an increased and faster integration of Roma into society.

Municipalities have more or less followed the guidelines developed in the previous periods as they have faced many complex and everyday challenges. In view of this, the Working Group of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia for the Treatment of Roma Issues, established in July 2020, has started to systematically address some systemic issues that also relate to this issue in cooperation with representatives of municipalities and the Roma community. For example, the work within one of the narrower expert subgroups focused mainly on regulating property law issues related to the land on which Roma settlements stand, where development of settlements is difficult or even impossible because these issues have not been regulated.

With regard to development of these settlements at the current locations, the Building Act (hereinafter referred to as: GZ), which has been applied since 1 June 2018, brings various legal mechanisms for legalisation of facilities that have already been built. In addition to regular legalisation procedures, which had already



been possible earlier (regular procedure to obtain building permit, regular changes to spatial acts), the GZ enables legalisation of minor departures by providing operating permits, maintains the option of legalisation for buildings from before 1968, adds the option of legalisation of so-called buildings of longer existence, constructed before 1 January 1998, and additionally allows for legalisation in accordance with the regulations in force at the time when the facilities were constructed. This way, the GZ provides a comprehensive range of measures which make it possible to address various legal and actual situations related to illegality of buildings. Some of these measures have certainly helped in legalisation of buildings in which members of the Roma community live, but nevertheless it is precisely this group that faces several obstacles to legalisation. The first and largest obstacle is the fact that, as in regular construction, the right to build (this is primarily the ownership right) must be proven. The second obstacle is the fact that drafting of the documentation required for legalisation, and payment of the related dues (public utility charge and compensation for environmental degradation and usurpation of land) still represents a considerable financial investment. The third obstacle is the fact that Roma settlements are usually not provided with utility infrastructure, which is needed for buildings to connect to and thereby meet the essential conditions for their use, in particular from the perspective of hygienic conditions (drinking water, collection and treatment of waste water). A new construction act is currently being drafted, which also emphasises the "right to respect of one's home", which is protected as part of the right to inviolability of the home referred to in paragraph one of Article 36 of the Constitution and to which the Constitutional Court Decision No. UP – 619/17 of 14 February 2019 refers. The new construction act will make legalisation of illegal buildings even easier, as the plan is to move the year until which legalisation is possible from 1998 to 2003.

In the period 2017–2018, an interdepartmental working group for resolving spatial issues of the Roma, headed by the MESP, was active in the 2017–2018 period. This group identified the needs and challenges related to development of Roma settlements and in terms of improvement of the living conditions, and made proposals for legislative, organisational, financial and other measures that it deemed are necessary to successfully address challenges in this area in the future. A detailed analysis of the situation, identification of problems and proposals for solutions in the field of housing issues in Roma settlements were presented in detail in the Final Report on the work of the interdepartmental working group for resolving spatial issues of the Roma No. 012-15/2017/366 of 17 January 2020, of which the Government also took note. The final report shows, among other things, that the working group has collected data on Roma settlements with a questionnaire for municipalities and using data from public records to prepare a review of the state of spatial issues by individual Roma settlements in Slovenia and compiled a set of Roma settlements in Slovenia. In accordance with the additional measures adopted by the Government at the end of December 2020 to the NPUR 2017–2021, which was still valid at the time, this identified data will be entered into the Spatial Information System, which will enable an overview of the state of spatial issues in individual municipalities and Roma settlements and, in the coming period of the NPUR, also the drafting of a proposal for establishing a single, properly systematised, periodically implemented and methodologically coordinated database. As part of the drafting of the Review and analysis of good practices in regulating spatial issues and living conditions of Roma (which is an appendix to the final report), various practices of development of Roma settlements at home and abroad and relevant programmes and projects for the Roma within the EU that were implemented or are still being implemented have been collected, and a set of binding international acts related to the minimum standards in the field of housing has been prepared. The key areas of development of Roma settlements are defined on the basis of the above-mentioned.

After this interdepartmental working group finished its work, the MESP adopted the position that no special act is required for intervention development of Roma settlements, as it would non-systematically interfere with the field of spatial planning and construction, and its implementation would put other citizens in an unequal position. According to available data, such an arrangement is not known in any European country. The MESP advocates that legalisation of Roma settlements be carried out as part of the drafting of municipal spatial plans (MSPs) and their amendments; simultaneously with the drafting of MSPs and detailed municipal spatial plans (DMSPs), local communities must also prepare programmes for providing services as a basis for development of municipal infrastructure

in all settlements. European cohesion funds are available for this purpose, for which local communities must apply in calls for applications, while funds for regional development are available and will continue to be available in the state budget.

According to the findings of the interdepartmental working group headed by the MESP, most Roma settlements identified by local communities in their settlement system as part of the drafting of MSP are already equipped with basic municipal infrastructure (water supply, sewerage, electricity), while secondary distribution and connections are available to individual users only if the conditions from the valid construction legislation are met (final building and operating permit, at the request of the investor and by concluding a contract on payment of costs). The MESP has proposed that it is enabled at the system level to directly divert part of the funds from social transfers to finance municipal services, which is already possible in accordance with the current legislation by concluding agreements on the active resolution of social problems between the competent SWC and the recipient of financial social assistance<sup>27</sup>.

The working party was also of the opinion that the current measures as part of housing policy from the aspect of development of Roma settlements and ensuring current housing standards provide members of the Roma community with approximately comparable conditions for acquiring non-profit rental apartment or housing units with the active assistance of the local community and other competent professional institutions (Housing Fund of the Republic of Slovenia, municipal housing funds, social work centres, etc.). This is a general measure, as part of which the Roma are one of the target groups, and is intended for acquiring public rental apartments and housing units throughout the whole of Slovenia for all groups of the population, by providing the option of co-funding for eligible applicants, which include self-governing local communities and public real estate funds of local communities where the Roma live.

In cooperation with the Housing Fund of the Republic of Slovenia (hereinafter referred to as: HFRS), the GONM already made the effort for greater utilisation of the available options for construction of non-profit apartments and provision of housing units under co-funding programmes of the HFRS during the NPUR 2017–2021. The HFRS has set these tasks both in its business policy and in its business and financial plans and will continue to do so in the coming period of the NPUR, and in cooperation with the GONM it will improve the provision of information about these options to municipalities and interested residents, and the provision of information to members of the Roma community about the options for renting housing as part of the fund's public calls for applications.

With the implementation of the Promotion of Balanced Regional Development Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 20/11, 57/12 and 46/16; hereinafter referred to as: ZSRR-2) and the work of the MEDT, financial incentives to municipalities for faster development of settlements where members of the Roma community live have always been provided in the state budget. The ZSRR-2 is the basis for the drafting of regional development programmes, agreements for development of regions and endogenous policy measures, taking into account the special needs for the development of areas where members of the Roma community live. In the past 18 years of implementation, the MEDT allocated approximately EUR 16 million by means of public calls for applications for co-funding of projects of basic utility infrastructure in Roma settlements to municipalities with clustered Roma dwellings without proper utility infrastructure – Roma settlements, and elected in the current mandate of the municipal council a representative of the Roma community, and had on the date of publication of the call for application a special working body of the municipal council for monitoring the situation of the Roma community which included representatives of the Roma community. The following purposes in Roma settlements could be co-funded by means of these calls for applications:

- water supply systems, including reservoirs and pipelines leading to the user's connections;
- sewage network, when this is necessary to protect water sources, or due to other environmental requirements;

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<sup>27</sup> Article 35 of the Social Assistance Payments Act – ZSVarPre (Official Gazette of the RS, No. 61/10, 40/11, 14/13, 99/13, 90/15, 88/16, 31/18 and 73/18). Available at: [Legal Information System of the Republic of Slovenia](#) (14 May 2021).

- electrification of clustered settlements;
- new construction or reconstruction of local roads and public paths;
- purchase of land to develop and consolidate settlements.

In the period of the NPUR 2017–2021, the MEDT did not issue repeated calls for applications, as activities were carried out mainly within the regional project of spatial and utility development of the Roma settlement Žabjak - Brezje in the Urban Municipality of Novo Mesto, implemented by the Urban Municipality of Novo Mesto and co-funded by several competent ministries (MEDT, MESP and Ministry of Infrastructure - MI) and municipalities. The project expired at the end of 2020.

The MEDT will strive to assist municipalities in co-funding construction of basic infrastructure intended for the Roma on the basis of Article 14 of the Promotion of Balanced Regional Development Act and as part of its competencies and budget capacities in the coming period of the NPUR. However, the MEDT will only support those projects from regional development programmes (hereinafter referred to as: RDP) that realise the development priorities of the development region and exploit its development potentials. These are projects that differ from a local project in that they provide a comprehensive solution to a particular problem as part of the development region or have a broader development impact on the development region and beyond. Such a measure will also be complementary to the new legislative regulation of funding of municipalities, which with Articles 15 and 20 of the Municipal Costs Reduction Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 189/20) in the ZFO-1 redefines the provision of funds to balance municipal development or co-funding of the exercise of the rights of the permanently inhabited Roma community.

Based on the findings of the interdepartmental working group that was headed by the MESP, the MAFF intends to join the drafting of the Act Amending the National Farmland and Forest Fund Act, which will facilitate the process of legalisation of Roma settlements, especially in the part relating to agricultural land managed by the Farmland and Forest Fund of the Republic of Slovenia. The amendments to the act would enable the free transfer of ownership right to land plots whose intended use was previously changed into building land in order to legalise Roma settlements.

## **5.2 Objectives and measures in the field of development of Roma settlements and access to housing**

**5.2.1 Strategic goal: improving the living conditions of the Roma, accelerating the development of settlements with a majority Roma population and, in accordance with national legal requirements, ensuring access to public goods and promoting the elimination of actual spatial separation, preventing further isolation and ghettoisation while overcoming development problems of the target regional policy areas to provide basic opportunities for equal development of the Roma community in Slovenia.**

Indicator 1: Data as part of the database and data from adopted MSPs related to the development of Roma settlements.

Indicator 2: Number of successfully implemented projects for the development of basic utility infrastructure and the number of successfully implemented projects related to the development of Roma settlements.

SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring
<p><b>OBJECTIVE 5.2.1.1 Integration of settlements with a majority Roma population into the settlement system of Slovenia and prevention of further isolation, segregation and ghettoisation of these settlements with additional measures.</b></p>	<p><b>Entry and use of data obtained from various professional bases for the development of settlement, for justifying the definition and development of Roma settlements as part of the drafting of municipal spatial plans (MSP).</b></p>	<p>MESP</p>	<p>In accordance with the dynamics of the drafting of the MSPs of the local communities in which Roma settlements are also identified.</p>	<p>They are not specifically defined (partly provided as part of the establishment of the Spatial Information System (SIS), and partly in the budgets of local communities for the purposes related to the drafting of spatial acts – SA).</p>	<p>Updated database of the Spatial Information System (SIS) in relation to data on the adopted MSPs.</p> <p>The data obtained within the framework of the work of the IWG on resolving the spatial issues of the Roma, which are related to the development of Roma settlements, may not be shown as a special category of "Roma settlements" in the Spatial Information System (SIS). In accordance with the current spatial legislation, settlements in the settlement system of local communities are not presented according to the national or ethnic principle, but according to their typological and morphological features. Until this database is</p>

SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring
					established in the SIS, the MESP advises municipalities to follow the same professional criteria as for other settlements in the matter of definition of settlements with a Roma population, taking into account legislative provisions.

**Explanation:**

This is the data obtained as part of the interdepartmental working group for resolving spatial issues of the Roma, which worked in this field under the leadership of the MESP from May 2017 to the end of May 2018. The data is related to the development of Roma settlements. Entry into the Spatial Information System will enable an overview and supplementation of the overview of the state of spatial issues by individual municipalities and individual Roma settlements.

SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring
<b>OBJECTIVE 5.2.1.1 Integration of settlements with a majority Roma population into the settlement system of Slovenia and prevention of further isolation, segregation and ghettoisation of these settlements with additional measures.</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Preparation of a proposal to establish a single, properly systematised, periodically implemented and methodologically coordinated database related to the development of Roma settlements.</li> <li>2. Updating a single, properly systematised,</li> </ol>	MESP	From 2021 to 2030 (running parallel to the drafting of the MSPs of local communities).	They are not specifically defined (provided as part of the establishment of the SIS).	<p>A prepared proposal for a database related to the development of Roma settlements.</p> <p>Periodically updated data.</p>

<b>SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>MEASURE</b>	<b>Provider of measure</b>	<b>Deadline for implementation</b>	<b>Financial source and envisaged resources</b>	<b>Impact indicators and monitoring</b>
	<b>periodically implemented and methodologically coordinated database related to the development of Roma settlements.</b>				

**Explanation:**

In cooperation with the municipalities where Roma settlements are located, the MESP prepares a proposal to establish a single, properly systematised, periodically implemented and methodologically coordinated database related to the development of Roma settlements, which will be a permanent task of the MESP. After establishing this database, the MESP takes care of its periodic updating.

<b>SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>MEASURE</b>	<b>Provider of measure</b>	<b>Deadline for implementation</b>	<b>Financial source and envisaged resources</b>	<b>Impact indicators and monitoring</b>
<b>OBJECTIVE 5.2.1.1 Integration of settlements with a majority Roma population into the settlement system of Slovenia and prevention of further isolation, segregation and ghettoisation of these settlements with additional measures.</b>	<b>Drafting and adoption of the Act Amending the National Farmland and Forest Fund Act</b>	MAFF	Second half of 2022/first half of 2023.	No additional financial resources are required.	The area of land (ha) owned by the state and managed by the Farmland and Forest Fund (FFF) transferred to municipalities free of charge after the adoption of the act.

**Explanation:**

The MAFF intends to join the drafting of the Act Amending the National Farmland and Forest Fund Act, which is expected to propose an amendment to Article 16.b so as to enable the free transfer of ownership right to land plots whose intended use was previously changed into building land in order to legalise Roma settlements. The act is expected to be adopted in the second half of 2022 or in the first half of 2023. How much land (ha) owned by the state and managed by the FFF will be transferred to municipalities free of charge after the adoption of the act depends on how municipalities will act.

SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring
<b>OBJECTIVE 5.2.1.2 Facilitating the development of Roma settlements that are still undeveloped or poorly developed in terms of utility infrastructure and promoting spatial integration of these settlements into the Slovenian settlement system.</b>	<b>Implementation of measures for the development of areas where the Roma community lives.</b>	MEDT	From 2021 to 2030.	Indicative funds from the budget of the Republic of Slovenia (as part of the financial plan of the MEDT). EUR 1,700,000 in 2022, EUR 1,700,000 in 2023, EUR 1,700,000 in 2024.	Number of successfully implemented projects.  Number of municipalities that will successfully implement projects.  Number of facilities connected to the built utility infrastructure.

**Explanation:**

Development of utility infrastructure in Roma settlements is originally the competence of municipalities. The MEDT will continue to implement Article 14 of the Promotion of Balanced Regional Development Act and will, as part of its competencies and budget capacities, strive to assist municipalities in co-funding the construction of a basic infrastructure intended for the Roma. The MEDT will support only those projects from regional development programmes that implement the development priorities of the development region and exploit its development opportunities. These are (regional) projects that differ from a local project in that they provide a comprehensive solution to a particular problem as part of the development region or have a broader development impact on the development region and beyond.

As a rule, the MEDT will support regional projects with the "agreement for the development of the region" instrument in accordance with the Decree on the implementation of endogenous regional policy measures (Official Gazette of the RS, No. 16/13, 78/15 and 46/19).

Eligible purposes in the field of development of basic utility infrastructure are:

- construction, reconstruction or modernisation of water supply systems;
- construction, reconstruction or modernisation of sewage network;
- electrification of clustered settlements;
- new construction or reconstruction of local roads and paths;
- purchase of land for development of areas where the Roma community lives, and
- drafting of a project dossier as part of the overall project.

For projects that go beyond the narrow focus on development of utility infrastructure, the MEDT will assess eligible purposes on the basis of specific projects, taking into account the scope of work of the MEDT, the provisions of the ZSRR-2 and the Decree on the implementation of endogenous regional policy measures and other relevant legislation.

**5.2.2 Strategic objective: Strengthening measures in the implementation of housing policy.**

Indicator: Reports and information of the HFRS and municipalities with a Roma population regarding the options of co-funding under the fund's programmes used and the options available under open public calls for applications of the fund.

SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring
<p><b>OBJECTIVE 5.2.2.1 Greater utilisation of co-funding opportunities under housing policy programmes and renting housing owned by the HFRS.</b></p>	<p><b>1. Informing municipalities where Roma live about the options for co-funding the construction of non-profit apartments and providing housing units under the HFRS programmes and providing professional assistance to municipalities.</b></p> <p><b>2. Informing the interested Roma population about the options for renting apartments under open calls for applications of the HFRS.</b></p>	<p>GONM in cooperation with the HFRS.</p>	<p>From 2021 to 2030.</p>	<p>Funds for the implementation of activities are provided by the HFRS and the GONM as part of their financial plans. Funds for the organisation of events related to the implementation of these measures will be provided as part of the National Roma Platform project of the GONM.</p>	<p>Number of municipalities in which the Roma live, and which will use the options for co-funding provided by the HFRS.</p> <p>Number of professional meetings and coordination sessions with representatives of municipalities in which the Roma live.</p> <p>Number of HFRS apartments rented out to Roma families (following an open public call for applications).</p> <p>Number of events and information activities carried out as part of both measures.</p>

Explanation:



At various events and as part of various activities, both the HFRS and the GONM will strive to inform and encourage municipalities to provide apartments and housing units for the Roma in accordance with the options for co-funding under the fund's programmes. Both the GONM and the HFRS will also strive to inform the interested Roma population and municipalities about the options for renting apartments offered at public calls for applications by the fund. Regarding the implementation of the latter, the GONM and the HFRS will connect with the providers and implementers of other measures from this NPUR that are implemented in environments where members of the Roma community live, with municipalities where the Roma live, and with Roma councillors, as this will make it easier for them to reach the target group and ensure the flow of information.

In addition to the above-mentioned activities, both the MESP and the HFRS will strive for the purposeful allocation or acquisition of funds that the HFRS will allocate for the implementation of a programme to provide co-funding for the construction of public rental housing units (non-profit apartments and housing units) from the budget of the Republic of Slovenia in connection with a resolution of the Roma housing issue.

## **6. INTEGRATION INTO SOCIAL AND CULTURAL LIFE**

### **6.1 Bases and description of initial situation**

- Pursuant to Article 65 of the CRS and in accordance with the ZRomS-1, the MC promotes the preservation and development of the Romani language and the cultural, informational and publishing activities of the Roma community and, pursuant to Article 65 of the Exercising of the Public Interest in Culture Act (Official Gazette of the RS, No. 77/07 – official consolidated text, 56/08, 4/10, 20/11, 111/13, 68/16, 61/17 and 21/18 – ZNOrg), also finances projects that are intended for the Roma community.
- The Resolution on the National Programme for Language Policy 2021–2025 (Official Gazette of the RS, No. 94/21) also includes activities aimed at preserving, developing and promoting the language of the Roma community. Creating opportunities to fulfil the cultural needs of members of the Roma community and the work of Roma non-governmental organisations is essential to ensure the preservation, promotion and development of the Romani language, culture and identity.

The principles of cultural policy include the right to culture and cultural diversity, which is considered as being of value and which enables the creative intertwining of cultural patterns. In its relationship with ethnic groups, the MC observes, in accordance with Article 8 of the URS, the general values and guidelines contained in international documents on human rights. Inclusion in social and cultural life and thus also the strengthening of the community role is promoted by almost the entire applicable legislation in the field of culture, language and media, as well as all strategic and programming documents under the jurisdiction of the MC, which includes the Roma community in the above-mentioned regulations and documents as one of the constitutionally recognised minority communities. All commitments and activities to promote the preservation and development of the Romani language and the cultural, informational and publishing activities of the Roma community carried out by the MC had already been included in the previous period of the national programme.

The MC has been creating opportunities for cultural activities of the Roma community since 1993. This is based on the expressed needs of members of the Roma community and provides opportunities for their participation in measures intended specifically for them. The MC takes into account that culture manifests itself in various ways and also includes the way of life. As part of the strategic goal, the MC will take into account the protection of the special rights of the Roma community by considering the special circumstances in which members of this community live and work. It will be based on the cultural needs expressed by members of the Roma community. The MC will encourage the implementation of projects, operations or activities aimed at preserving, developing and promoting

Roma culture, language and identity, and mobilising, motivating and activating individuals from the Roma community for their greater social inclusion and sustainable strengthening of human capital. The expected effects of all activities and approaches of the MC are good, non-imposed integration while preserving cultural diversity, greater access of members of the Roma community to cultural goods and contribution to reducing prejudices about the Roma community by learning about and promoting the culture of the Roma community.

The MC carries out every year a call for applications for co-funding of cultural activities for the preservation and promotion of the culture and identity of the Roma community and encouraging good cultural creativity of members of the Roma community. The MC co-funded projects in all fields of culture: publishing, web pages, activities of cultural groups, cultural entertainment, language preservation activities, international cooperation, mutual cultural cooperation of various minority ethnic communities, presentation of cultural activities to the broader environment, events, lectures, seminars, workshops, digitalisation and similar. The MC assesses that it is sensible to provide funds for any preservation, development and promotion of the Roma culture, especially as the projects concern all areas of culture. Not only that - culture is also linked to education, employment and social affairs.

The MC also implemented a call for applications for co-funding of cultural projects in the field of the Roma community, which as a priority support activities in the language of members of the Roma community or bilingual projects that promote reading literacy. Co-financed in this field were projects for the promotion of the preservation and learning of the Romani language and the promotion of literature publication in Romani and bilingual editions.

Under the Librarianship Act, general libraries that operate in the areas populated by the Roma are obligated to perform library services for the Roma as a special interest group of users. It is a principle of multiculturalism of operation of general libraries. The programmes and projects of general libraries intended for the Roma are mostly financed from local sources (as part of their regular service), and some also from other sources. A Romani section, the only one of its kind in Slovenia, has been open in the Murska Sobota Regional and Study Library since 2015. The Romani section is a result of the project Romano Kher – Roma House, in cooperation with the Roma association Phuro Kher – Old House and the Murska Sobota Regional and Study Library. More than seven hundred units of library material on Roma-related topics are available. The Ljubljana City Library has a specialised collection of the Association Humanitas in the premises of the Oton Župančič Library. The content of the material is related to the field of multiculturalism; material on the Roma is available as part of this. Also operating since 2009 is the Digital Collection of European Roma, which is complemented by around 25 national libraries, including the Slovenian National and University Library. Also growing is the digital collection on the Slovenian local studies portal Kamra, where content related to the Roma is available. Unfortunately, libraries have not yet managed to organise library activities for the Roma at the same level of success as they have for the majority population. The obstacles are objective and subjective reasons, and particularly the various Romani languages, which most likely even deepen the poor literacy or illiteracy. Therefore, the libraries must adapt their work for this ethnic group by applying different forms of work. Every library must thus identify the specifics of its environment and then find a model under which it will operate. In their development strategy until 2020, general libraries committed to continue to upgrade their services with a systematic approach to developing various aspects of information and functional literacy. One of the measures entered in the strategy is the creation of services for the promotion of multiculturalism in general libraries. In 2018, the National Council for Library Services adopted the new Expert recommendations and standards for general libraries (for the 2018–2028 period), which represent development guidelines for general libraries for the next ten-year period. They are designed as a framework for the pursuit of professional autonomy of libraries, which is why they put into focus the fundamental starting points for professional operation, which each library will professionally and responsibly implement in practice for itself and its environment. An emphasis in the expert recommendations is thus placed on the connection between the general library with the local community and excellence in its management and provision of services for users, including those with specific needs, such as the Roma.

In the field of media, the MC conducts every year a public call for applications for co-funding of media programmes. It is intended for supporting the media in creating and disseminating programme content which, among other things, is also important for exercising the rights of the Italian and Hungarian ethnic communities and the Roma community in Slovenia to public information and to be informed. In the segment of the public call for application intended for the so-called programmes of special importance in the public and cultural interest of Slovenia (local, regional, student and non-profit radio and television programmes), one of the main criteria is "enabling the exercise of the right to public information and to be informed of local and minority communities and whether this is disseminated in minority languages".

In relation to securing appropriate space in the programmes of the public media in the Romani language, it needs to be emphasised that shows intended for minorities are an important and recognised brand of Channel One of Radio Slovenija. This programme dedicates Monday evenings to Slovenians living in neighbouring countries, and to Roma-related topics. Shows at the public broadcaster RTV Slovenija are co-financed by the GONM on an annual basis in compliance with the Radiotelevizija Slovenija Act and the Mass Media Act. The one-hour show Amare Droma (Our Paths) is aired on Channel One of Radio Slovenija on Monday nights. It is intended for Roma-related content and is a constant in the programme scheme. It follows the events in all Roma communities in Slovenia and abroad. The first Monday in a month is dedicated to Romani music. In collaboration with the listeners, the domestic and foreign Roma music for the month is chosen. Romani music is part of every show, with approximately half of the duration of the programme being dedicated to it. Roma musical groups and the projects they create are presented. A special section, hosted by an external partner, is dedicated to the particularities of the Romani language and its dialects. The creators of the show are members of the Roma community in the Republic of Slovenia. Roma journalists also create the show So Vakeres – What Are You Saying - which is broadcast on national television. The show runs for 15 minutes and is aired every other Saturday at 12.40 p.m. It speaks about the life of the Roma community in Slovenia, the problems its members face and the inclusion of the Roma in the broader community. The show is used both by members of the Roma community and the majority population as an example of good practice of inclusion in educational processes.

## 6.2 Objectives and measures in the field of integration into social and cultural life

**6.2.1 Strategic objective: Promoting specific, active cultural activity and social inclusion in the culture of members of the Roma community, in accordance with the cultural needs they express.**

Indicator: Number of approved projects.

SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring
<b>OBJECTIVE 6.2.1.1 Preservation, development and presentation of the culture, language and identity of the Roma community, greater awareness of residents of Slovenia about the culture and language of minority communities and greater accessibility of cultural goods for</b>	<b>Support for activities that preserve, disseminate, present, and facilitate an understanding of the Roma culture and language, and improve opportunities for cultural</b>	MC	By 2030.	Funds from the budget of the Republic of Slovenia (as part of the financial plan of the MC). EUR 92,115 annually (funds for 2021 and 2022 have already been provided, and funds from	Number of implemented projects. In 2020, 59 projects were implemented. The target number is at least 60 projects per year as of 2021.

<b>SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>MEASURE</b>	<b>Provider of measure</b>	<b>Deadline for implementation</b>	<b>Financial source and envisaged resources</b>	<b>Impact indicators and monitoring</b>
<b>individuals belonging to the Roma community.</b>	<b>diversity and access to cultural goods.</b>			2023 to 2030 will be included by the MC in its financial plan when drafting the budget).	

**Explanation:**

The projects that have so far been funded by the MC from the state budget have been very diverse and include: internal publications, conference proceedings and newspapers, picture books, books in the mother tongue and bilingual or multilingual texts, guest appearances, lectures, round tables on cultural, language and historical topics, language and creative workshops, activities of amateur groups, events, meetings, festivals, competitions, presentations of radio shows and documentary films, online newspapers and websites, various collaborations of minority communities and the Roma community with the majority population and similar. The MC establishes that at least 95% of the projects have been implemented, so it will continue to implement such measures and activities and upgrade them. By means of calls for applications for the financing of various cultural projects, the MC will ensure the preservation, development, leaning about and presentation of the culture, language and identity of the Roma community, raise awareness of the culture and language of minority communities and increase the accessibility of cultural goods of the Roma. The MC will give priority to funding projects involving children, women and the elderly, members of the Roma community; projects that promote reading literacy and reading culture; projects that help to disseminate information about the cultural life, work and ideas of members of the Roma community; production of literature in Romani dialects and bilingual editions, especially children's and youth editions; projects involving professionals and artists; and projects implemented in the public cultural infrastructure. Non-governmental organisations and artists with the status of self-employed in the field of culture who work in the Roma community are suitable to implement the measure. Expected effects: greater involvement of members of the Roma community in active work in the field of culture, improving reading literacy of members of the Roma community, more training sessions (workshops, courses and similar non-formal education) of native speakers and trained Romani language teachers for teaching of Romani; preservation, development and promotion of the Romani language; improving the language skills of Roma women and men in their Romani dialect, raising awareness of the Roma community and the majority population about Roma culture, values, customs and way of life.

<b>SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>MEASURE</b>	<b>Provider of measure</b>	<b>Deadline for implementation</b>	<b>Financial source and envisaged resources</b>	<b>Impact indicators and monitoring</b>
<b>OBJECTIVE 6.2.1.2 Promoting social inclusion of members of the Roma community.</b>	<b>Improving literacy of members of the Roma community in the field of culture.</b>	MC	By 2030.	EU funds (ESF+) and funds from the budget of the Republic of Slovenia (as part of MC financial plan) as of 2023.	Number of members of the Roma community included in the programme. The programme is expected to be implemented as of 2023, the target is 200

SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring
					members of the Roma community involved (180 in the east and 20 in the west of Slovenia).

**Explanation:**

As part of the Operational Programme for the Implementation of European Cohesion Policy 2014–2020, Priority axis 9: Social inclusion and poverty reduction, Priority investment 9i: Active inclusion, including to promote equal opportunities and active participation, and increase employability, Special objective 3: prevention of slipping into poverty or social exclusion and reduction of health inequalities, the MC conducted two public calls for applications for the selection of operations for greater social inclusion of members of vulnerable social groups in the field of culture as part of the ESF funds. The subject of these calls for applications was the co-funding of operations in the field of culture (cultural and creative sector) in support of providing greater employment opportunities in the labour market, raising the level of skills, cultural creativity and improving self-confidence and social inclusion in the broader social environment, including that of members of the Roma community. The MC plans to publish the last (third) call for application for the 2021–2023 period soon.

The MC establishes that special attention should be paid to members of the Roma community in terms of greater social inclusion and more active participation in the labour market in the field of culture and has thus proposed a special measure under CP4 as part of the Programme for the Implementation of European Cohesion Policy 2014–2020. Support for training and employment and strengthening of the self-confidence and social inclusion of the Roma community working in non-governmental organisations in the field of culture in the broader social environment of members is planned as part of the measure. The objectives of the measure are to strengthen the competences of Roma organisations for cultural activity and action in the field of culture by employing an individual in this organisation and training individuals to acquire competences in this field.

In the National Program of Measures for Roma of the Republic of Slovenia for the Period 2017–2021, the Government of the Republic of Slovenia has set strategic goals that, among other things, address the prevention and elimination of exclusion of Roma, in particular women, youth and children, in all areas. The Situation of Roma Women study of the European Economic and Social Committee says that a large proportion of Roma women (and girls) are exposed to multi-layered and cross-cutting discrimination and are therefore unable to fully exercise their rights. The survey shows that Roma women are the most vulnerable minority in the EU, so tackling such a situation is an exceptionally important task and obligation of European democracies. The situation of Roma women in the labour market is much worse than that of Roma men, with all employment indicators showing that the employment rate of Roma women is critically low. The survey also emphasises that Member States should start implementing a structured policy to improve the employment opportunities of Roma women and girls. It is clear from the above that it is very important to protect with special social measures vulnerable groups who may be, and who are unfortunately often actually in a much worse starting position compared to the majority population. Promotion of special measures would enable an individual as a member of such a group to self-realise and improve their situation in the labour market. Thus, these measures are about improving the social, functional and work competencies of members of the Roma community in the field of culture. It is therefore very sensible to address the expressed cultural needs in the broader context of human rights.

## 7. IMPROVING COEXISTENCE IN ROMA SETTLEMENTS AND THEIR SURROUNDINGS

### 7.1 Bases and description of initial situation

Legal bases for police work are the provisions of:

- the Police Tasks And Powers Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 15/13, 23/15 – corr., 10/17, 46/19 – decision of the Constitutional Court and 47/19)
- the Organisation and Work of the Police Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 15/13, 11/14, 86/15, 77/16, 77/17, 36/19 and 66/19 – ZDZ),
- the Minor Offences Act – ZP-1, Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No 29/11 – official consolidated text, 21/13, 111/13, 74/14 – decision of the Constitutional Court, 92/14 – decision of the Constitutional Court, 32/16, 15/17 – decision of the Constitutional Court, 73/19 – decision of the Constitutional Court and 175/20 – ZIUOPDVE)
- the Criminal Code (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 50/12 – official consolidated text, 6/16 – corr., 54/15, 38/16, 27/17, 23/20 and 91/20)
- the Criminal Procedure Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 32/12 – official consolidated text, 47/13, 87/14, 8/16 – decision of the Constitutional Court, 64/16 – decision of the Constitutional Court, 65/16 – decision of the Constitutional Court, 66/170 – ORZKP153,154, 22/19, 55/20 – decision of the Constitutional Court and 89/20 – decision of the Constitutional Court),
- Resolution of the long-term development programme of the Police until 2025 – "Quality police for a safe Slovenia" (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 75/15),
- Resolution on the national programme for the prevention and suppression of crime for the 2019–2023 period (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 43/19) and other.

The Police successfully ensure effective police intervention in order to successfully deal with all security incidents as well as to ensure consistent treatment of all perpetrators of illegal acts. The Police consistently carry out the latter upon reports by citizens and victims, as well upon the illegal acts they detect on their own. As they detect individual security incidents, which are the most common in areas with Roma settlements, the Police prevent and detect illegal acts by means of various forms of work and are successful in most cases.

The security situation in the environments with Roma settlements is very complex. This situation is mostly a result of dissatisfaction of the majority or minority population with the reduced quality of life in the environments or encroachments on property ownership. The most common causes are land disputes, changes to spatial plans, encroachments on property, changes in the quality of life in Roma settlements or the impact of the Roma way of life on the surrounding population (loud music, large parties, waste burning, occasional discharging of firearms at parties and similar).

In performing its primary function, the Police detect that the feeling of safety among the people living in the areas with Roma settlements is deteriorating. Both for the local community and the Police and other institutions, the deteriorating feeling of safety is a criterion of (a lack of) success of the work and must be a motivation for constant adjustments in order to improve it.

For years the Police have been recognised as a leading and responsible body which strives to provide a timely and effective response (both with a repressive approach and preventive action) to security events about which it is notified or which it detects through its own activity. Numerous factors affect the successful

treatment, intervention and prevention, which are mostly manifested in the lack of effectiveness of individual bodies or of penal policy and the absence of general prevention.

It is important to emphasise that work in and with the Roma community is very special, that it requires constant presence and the necessary response of the Police as well as other bodies and local communities, which are primarily responsible for the situation in areas where the Roma community lives. A multidisciplinary approach is very important for greater success in this area. Thus, one of the shortcomings of the repressive approach to this work is in the absence of an effective penal policy that would generally deter repeat perpetrators of criminal acts and misdemeanours and those who intend to commit or will commit criminal acts and misdemeanours.

In the absence of a basic repressive and preventive response from all authorities and the absence of a penal policy, these factors are key to the deteriorating security situation and the deteriorating feeling of security of the public, and an obstacle to the successful assimilation and social integration of the Roma community. It can be stated that the so-called "taking of responsibility" by legitimate representatives of the Roma community as well as the community as a whole is too modest or negligible.

When working and monitoring individual risk situations in the Roma community, especially in south-eastern Slovenia (Dolenjska, Bela Krajina, Posavje, Kočevje-Ribnica area, Grosuplje, Ljubljana), the Police detect numerous events in areas with Roma settlements that stand out in terms of content and number and that were dealt with by the Police (Novo Mesto Police Directorate, Ljubljana Police Directorate, Murska Sobota Police Directorate) as part of their work. Representatives of the Ministry of the Interior and the Police also reported on this issue at the 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th sessions of the Subcommittee on the Monitoring of Roma Issues in the National Assembly.

## 7.2 Objectives and measures for improving coexistence in Roma settlements and their surroundings

**7.2.1 Strategic objective: Improving security and coexistence in Roma settlements and their surroundings, i.e. areas with higher security risk.**  
 Indicator: Security assessment of the Police and the opinion of municipalities and other stakeholders regarding the improvement of security in Roma settlements and their surroundings, i.e. areas with higher security risk.

SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring
<b>OBJECTIVE 7.2.1.1 Improving security in Roma settlements and their surroundings, i.e. areas with higher security risk.</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Ensuring effective police interventions in Roma settlements.</b></li> <li><b>2. Ensuring greater visibility of police work in the vicinity of Roma settlements.</b></li> </ol>	Police, municipalities, representatives of institutions dealing with Roma issues; representatives of governmental	By 2030. Reports are issued every six months.	Funds from the budget of the Republic of Slovenia (provided annually in the financial plan of the MI/Police),	<p>Measurement and analysis of reaction time.</p> <p>Number of planned regular police activities compared to previous periods.</p>

SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring
	<p><b>3. Ensuring proactivity in dealing with potential security incidents in Roma settlements.</b></p> <p><b>4. Ensuring greater "statistical" security in areas where the Roma community lives.</b></p> <p><b>5. Ensuring greater "feeling" of safety in the vicinity of Roma settlements.</b></p>	and non-governmental organisations; representatives of civic initiatives.			<p>Number of preventive contacts and interviews with repeat perpetrators of criminal acts and misdemeanours compared to previous periods and the number of arrests of perpetrators of criminal acts, detentions, mediations and other.</p> <p>Number of criminal acts and misdemeanours compared to previous periods.</p> <p>Opinion (assessment) of municipalities compared to the previous period.</p>

**Explanation:**

Security issues often include non-compliance with the applicable regulations of the Republic of Slovenia, which causes a disproportionately high security risk and, consequently, a greatly reduced quality of life for people in the vicinity of Roma settlements. Police directorates have special plans in place to carry out police tasks more effectively in these areas. The security situation in environments with a Roma population is assessed by the Police on the basis of monitoring and assessment of security events, although only for the preparation of security assessments and proportionate police measures; otherwise the Police do not keep records.

The Police ensure effective police intervention in the event of reports by citizens and victims, as well as the consistent processing of all reported or self-detected misdemeanours and suspected criminal acts. The most frequent (especially in south-eastern Slovenia) of these are the following misdemeanours and criminal acts, which are most common in areas with Roma settlements, and which stand out in terms of content and number according to the Police:



- violations of public order and peace by playing loud music (Roma parties – birthdays, baptisms of children and other celebrations where live music or music played on speakers disturbs the peace and rest of people). These violations are the most common factor of disturbance for the surrounding population, leading to the feeling of a low level of security;
- inter-family disputes (often in public places – petrol stations, shopping malls, healthcare facilities...) that also result in serious breaches of public order and criminal acts (including consequences such as bodily harm and, in some cases, even death – there have been more than eight such cases in south-eastern Slovenia since 2012). In these cases, in addition to all activities, the Police also mediate between the parties to the dispute. The absence of an appropriate penal policy has a markedly negative effect on the prevention and recurrence of violent criminal acts;
- discharging of firearms in Roma settlements at various celebrations (including endangering the general security of people and property). In this regard, the Police consistently conduct house searches and all activities aimed at finding illegal weapons and ammunition, as well as preventive workshops with counselling and warning about danger. The effectiveness of preventive activities is also limited due to cases of dismissals of criminal complaints at district state prosecutor's offices and acquittals of criminal charges under Article 314 of the KZ-1 (causing general danger to people and property);
- escapes or departures of children and underaged Roma women from home to other settlements (around 80 cases in 2014 and 2017, according to unofficial data from other competent institutions). Regarding this issue, the Police participate in various meetings at the professional level and carry out numerous activities with the provider of the activity and measures in the NPUR 2017–2021, which is the GONM. The Police also raise awareness in the Roma community and include representatives of Roma organisations;
- occurrence or increase of domestic violence – although appropriate measures are taken against offenders and perpetrators (payment orders, criminal complaints, restraining orders related to a particular person and place, and similar), the number of cases is increasing as perpetrators commit these criminal acts under the influence of alcohol and drugs;
- criminal act of usury – in the Roma community, a very present and acute practice is the lending of money at usurious interest rates and exploitation of the social situation of those who have less. It is difficult to detect such criminal acts, as it is difficult to identify affected parties who would report cases and later testify in court. The Police believe that such criminal acts are very harmful, especially for the socially vulnerable Roma, who are forced into new criminal acts, and have very detrimental consequences in the community. Moreover, this matter also involves the Roma "lenders" "enriching" themselves at the expense of those in need. What is lacking here in particular is an appropriate response from the competent services (SWC, the Financial Administration of the Republic of Slovenia, local communities and others);
- various forms of intimidation and extortion (in community health centres, SWCs, educational institutions, municipalities and elsewhere). Most of these violations are due to interpersonal disputes and expectations of immediate care, individual service and other reasons related to individuals receiving certain benefits;
- occurrence of false calls to emergency services – criminal acts of abuse of distress and warning signals. Quite a few cases have been reported in which individuals falsely report various events and cause unnecessary interventions by emergency services. There are known cases of criminal acts of damaging foreign property (damage to fire engines and ambulances);
- the issue of the use and trafficking of illicit drugs in Roma settlements – an obvious increase in the use and trafficking of illicit drugs and other psychoactive substances has been detected lately, with users of illicit drugs coming to settlements, or individual members of the Roma community being users of these substances. There is fear and general danger for people and property, such as that arising from incidents involving firearms being discharged by individual Roma while under the influence of hard illicit drugs in combination with excessive alcohol consumption;
- the issue of illegal building on and violent appropriation of land – criminal complaints were filed against the perpetrators after the criminal acts of illegal seizure of real estate were detected, and in individual identified cases reports were sent to the competent inspection service. The latter is a major reproach by representatives of the majority community who are unable to exercise their property rights. As illegal Roma settlements are growing bigger, this represents

a sociological and security issue and a problem in the work of the Police and other institutions (in 1984 there were around 220 Roma in the Roma settlement Žabjak - Brezje, and around 900 Roma live in this area today);

- environmental issues (burning of jackets of electrical cables and various waste, illegal collection and storage of waste raw materials, etc.). The Police most often take action by submitting proposals to other misdemeanour authorities. This is an important issue of general security, as some settlements in water protection areas (such as Roje) and the possible infiltration of waste oils into groundwater poses a risk;
- the issue of stray animals (dogs without owners and abandoned dogs that pose a threat to the health of the population and all those who perform activities in Roma settlements). Catching of stray dogs and dogs without owners, vaccinations and chipping are rarely carried out, as this is a large cost for local communities (there are more than 300 dogs in the Roma settlement Žabjak - Brezje alone);
- non-attendance of school – many children who do not attend school are panhandling or committing other violations. The Police cooperate with primary schools and make proposals to other misdemeanour authorities related to violations of the Basic School Act, but this has no effect, as the Inspectorate of Education mostly does not initiate misdemeanour proceedings (according to a mayor from south-eastern Slovenia, one Roma child completes primary school in their municipality in five years);
- "illegal" migration is very widespread, as Roma move from their homes to other settlements for various reasons. There is also a problem with reporting of changes of residence to administrative units (the seat of the Novo Mesto Social Work Centre, a state body, is the official residence address of around 180 people).

The starting point for monitoring the implementation of measures and their impact will be identified areas with higher security risk, while monitoring will be carried out using data sources and methods such as police reports, police officer reports, police records (for the measure to ensure greater "statistical" security in areas where the Roma community lives) and reporting by mayors of municipalities.

SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring
<p><b>OBJECTIVE 7.2.1.2 Continuing and strengthening partnerships with local and Roma communities in order to improve coexistence.</b></p>	<p><b>Strengthening the complementation of police work in the community</b></p>	<p>Police; municipalities; representatives of institutions dealing with Roma issues; representatives of governmental and non-governmental organisations; representatives of civil initiatives and the majority population.</p>	<p>By 2030. Reports are issued every six months.</p>	<p>Funds from the budget of the Republic of Slovenia (provided annually in the financial plan of the MI/Police),</p>	<p>Number of preventive and other activities performed.</p> <p>Number of participations in various commissions, security councils, committees, working groups and elsewhere.</p>

**Explanation:**

The performance of community policing will strengthen and continue the partnership with the local community and the commitment to effective resolution of various security needs. Such a partnership enables information to be obtained for a timely detection of safety issues, the causes for these issues and their resolution. The performance of community policing in the broadest sense and preventive activities are focused on direct work of the Police with the Roma community and the resolution of individual problem issues together with other entities. In this process, the Police as a connecting link cooperates and it also influences the dynamics of the work of security councils and other counselling bodies, expert and multidisciplinary teams at local, regional and national levels, in which representatives of the Roma community are also being included. The direct work of these teams has major effects on the prevention of all problems and for establishing and implementing measures upon detection of hazardous situations and violations of the positive legislation.

In carrying out police work in the Roma community, the Police will consistently implement the basic tasks referred to in the Police Tasks And Powers Act, Organisation and Work of the Police Act, Police Rules, Resolution on the national programme for the prevention and suppression of crime 2019–2023 and Medium-term police work development plan 2018–2022 and Resolution of the long-term development programme of the Police until 2025. The main objectives arising from the strategic document of the General Police Directorate - the Community Policing Strategy of 2013 and the Resolution of the long-term development programme of the Police until 2025 are:

- more partner cooperation with the local community, state authorities and civil society;
- greater visibility and increased presence of police officers in the local community;
- greater feeling of safety;
- greater confidence in and satisfaction with the work of the Police;
- effective crime prevention and investigation.

One of the ongoing forms of police work is also cooperation with various entities that can contribute to improving the security situation. Work with affected parties and whistle-blowers to make them aware of the work and measures taken by the Police, thus increasing trust in the Police as well as a sense of security, is also important.

## **8. COMBATting ANTIGYPSYISM AND DISCRIMINATION**

### **8.1 Bases and description of initial situation**

- CRS: Article 63 – prohibition of incitement to discrimination and intolerance and prohibition of incitement to violence and war),
- the Protection Against Discrimination Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 33/16 and 21/18 – ZNOrg)
- the Roma Community in the Republic of Slovenia Act (Official Gazette of the RS, No. 33/07)
- the Criminal Code (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 50/12 – official consolidated text, 6/16 – corr., 54/15, 38/16, 27/17, 23/20 and 91/20): Article 297 – the criminal act of public incitement to hatred, violence or intolerance,
- the Police Tasks and Powers Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 15/13, 23/15 – corr., 10/17, 46/19 – decision of the Constitutional Court and 47/19): attitude of employees of the Police towards clients in accordance with the Police Rules, the Code of Police Ethics and the Catalogue of Standards of Police Procedures,

- the Protection of Public Order Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 70/06 and 139/20) Article 20, which define misdemeanours related to incitement of intolerance,
- Resolution of the long-term development programme of the Police until 2025 – "Quality police for a safe Slovenia" (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 75/15),
- Resolution on the national programme for the prevention and suppression of crime 2019–2023 (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 43/19),
- The Mass Media Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 110/06 – official consolidated text, 36/08 – ZPOmK-1, 77/10 – ZSFCJA, 90/10 – decision of the Constitutional Court, 87/11 – ZAvMS, 47/12, 47/15 – ZZSDT, 22/16, 39/16, 45/19 – decision of the Constitutional Court and 67/19 – decision of the Constitutional Court),
- The Radiotelevizija Slovenija Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 96/05, 109/05 – ZDavP-1B, 105/06 – decision of the Constitutional Court, 26/09 – ZIPRS0809-B and 9/14),
- Resolution on the national programme for the prevention and suppression of crime 2019–2023 (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 43/19).

In the past period of the national programme, awareness-raising and anti-discrimination activities were promoted and implemented mainly by the Police, the GONM, the CRCRS and various Roma non-governmental organisations (especially unions of associations).

Since 2009, the Police Academy has been organising training sessions for police officers under the "Awareness of stereotypes, managing prejudices and preventing discrimination in the work of the Police in a multicultural society" programme, and since 2013 also for other public servants who as part of their work meet with members of the Roma community and other minority ethnic communities in the Republic of Slovenia (for example, social work centres, schools, kindergartens, municipal administrations, etc.). In the past, cooperation has also been established with the Judicial Training Centre, as part of which a number of training sessions were organised for employees in judicial bodies, with the topics including work with the Roma community.

With the purpose of enhancing the work of Roma community organisations and of involvement and support by the Roma community organisations for other measures at local or national levels, the GONM financially supported Roma community organisations in their activities, specifically:

- the CRCRS, which is financed directly on the basis of the ZRomS-1, as it is an umbrella organisation that represents the interests of the Roma community in dialogue with state authorities;
- programmes of activities of Roma community organisations based on public calls for applications (funds are secured in the financial plan of the CRCRS; public calls for applications are implemented by the council).

The CRCRS implemented public calls for applications for co-funding of programmes and projects of Roma associations and public calls for applications for co-funding of programmes of activities of Roma community organisations (Roma unions). By co-funding of the Roma information centre Romic and Radio Romic, the CRCRS encouraged information and publishing activities that are important for the development of the Roma community, with the CRCRS reporting that the information activity of Romic is of existential importance for members of the Roma community and that it performs an important mission in preserving the community's identity, language, culture, information and education.

As part of the co-funded programmes and projects of Roma associations, activities were implemented to promote lifelong learning, inter-generational cooperation, professional counselling and guidance, education, entrepreneurship and tourism and learning about environmental protection. As part of the co-funded programmes of activities of Roma community organisations, activities of unions of associations were implemented for the promotion of the activation

and greater social inclusion of members of the Roma community, for contributing the empowerment of members of the Roma community and improving their situation, and also for contributing to the elimination of intolerance between the majority and minority population, in particular in local environments.

With the allocation of funds to the umbrella Roma organisation in Slovenia and other Roma organisations and associations, the capacities of the Roma civil society were strengthened, while the procedures of inclusion of the Roma civil society in the planning, implementation and monitoring of action plan and measures were secured both in legislative provisions and in practice, when relevant ministries and local self-governments deal with issues related to members of the Roma community.

In the past period of the national programme, the GONM also implemented the National Roma Platform project, the activities of which were not expressly intended for preventing prejudices and stereotypes and addressing the challenges of discrimination, while the events that were held in an open and inclusive way, and to which all key stakeholders in individual fields were always invited, helped expand the understanding about the life of members of the Roma community, causes for their social exclusion and how they function, while representatives of expert institutions who attended them were provided with a with deeper insight and understanding of how the Roma community functions. This way the participants of the events gained an understanding of the complexity of the challenges involved, which enabled them to improve their work further and, if necessary, adjust the implementation of their activities in addressing specific challenges in their work.

Following years of discussion and proposals from Roma experts from Member States, the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) adopted under the German Presidency in October 2020 a legally non-binding working definition of antigypsyism, which was translated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (hereinafter referred to as: MFA), which heads the Slovenian delegation at the IHRA, into the Slovenian language for use in Slovenia. Each country was able to translate the term "antigypsyism/anti-Roma discrimination") in accordance with its language customs. Experts agreed that the appropriate term to use in Slovenia is "antigypsyism".

The working definition of antigypsyism adopted by the IHRA reads:

*"Antigypsyism/anti-Roma discrimination is a manifestation of individual expressions and acts as well as institutional policies and practices of marginalisation, exclusion, physical violence, devaluation of Roma cultures and lifestyles, and hate speech directed at Roma as well as other individuals and groups perceived, stigmatised, or persecuted during the Nazi era, and still today, as 'Gypsies'. This leads to the treatment of Roma as an alleged alien group and associates them with a series of pejorative stereotypes and distorted images that represent a specific form of racism."*

In forming the working definition of antigypsyism, the IHRA took into account as a guideline that antigypsyism has existed for centuries and that it was an essential element in the persecution and annihilation policies against Roma as perpetrated by Nazi Germany, fascist and extreme nationalist partners and other collaborators who participated in these crimes. Antigypsyism did not start with or end after the Nazi era but continues to be a central element in crimes perpetrated against the Roma. In spite of the important work done by the United Nations, the European Union, the Council of Europe, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe and other international bodies, the stereotypes and prejudices about the Roma have not been delegitimised or discredited vigorously enough, so they continue to persist and can be deployed largely unchallenged. Antigypsyism is a multi-faceted phenomenon that has widespread social and political acceptance. It is a critical obstacle to the inclusion of the Roma in broader society, and it acts to prevent the Roma from enjoying equal rights, opportunities, and gainful social-economic participation. Many examples may be given to illustrate antigypsyism discrimination. Contemporary manifestations of antigypsyism could, taking into account the overall context, include, but are not limited to:

- distorting or denying persecution of Roma or the genocide of the Roma;
- glorifying the genocide of the Roma;
- inciting, justifying, and perpetrating violence against the Roma communities, their property, and individual Roma;
- forced and coercive sterilisations as well as other physically and psychologically abusive treatment of the Roma;
- perpetuating and affirming discriminatory stereotypes of and against the Roma;
- blaming the Roma, using hate speech, for real or perceived social, political, cultural, economic and public health problems;
- stereotyping Roma as persons who engage in criminal behaviour;
- using the term “Gypsy” as a slur;
- approving or encouraging exclusionary mechanisms directed against the Roma on the basis of racially discriminatory assumptions, such as the exclusion from regular schools and institutional procedures or policies that lead to the segregation of the Roma communities;
- enacting policies without legal basis or establishing the conditions that allow for the arbitrary or discriminatory displacement of Roma communities and individuals;
- holding Roma collectively responsible for the real or perceived actions of individual members of Roma communities;
- spreading hate speech against Roma communities in whatever form, for example in media, including on the internet and on social networks.

Measures to combat antigypsyism and discrimination will be implemented with the new programme of measures primarily with the aim of raising awareness, educating and training police officers and civil servants employed in central institutions who as part of their competences work with representatives of the Roma community or are key decision-makers in drafting and adopting policies at local and national levels. On the other hand, measures in some other areas of this programme, for example integration into social and cultural life and strengthening of activities and participation of the CRCRS and other Roma community organisations, will also contribute to raising awareness of the negative effects and consequences of antigypsyism and discrimination. Radio and television programmes for the Roma community, conducted by the public broadcaster RTV Slovenija, and programmes created by members of the Roma community and their organisations will be exceptionally important mechanisms for raising awareness of both the majority population and members of the Roma community.

## 8.2 Objectives and measures in combating antigypsyism and discrimination

### 8.2.1 Strategic objective: Improving the awareness of institutions and the public about the presence and negative effects of antigypsyism and discrimination.

Indicator: Assessment of the Advocate of the Principle of Equality on the Situation Regarding Discrimination (annual report).

SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring
<b>OBJECTIVE 8.2.1.1 Improving training and raising awareness of police officers and other employees of the Police for work in the Roma community.</b>	<b>Education and training of employees in the Police.</b>	Police; representatives of Roma organisations and the Roma community.	By 2030.	Funds from the budget of the Republic of Slovenia (provided annually in the financial plan of the MI/Police),	Number of training sessions.  Number of participants.

SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring
				*Material costs of one external participant – representative of the Roma community.	Evaluations.

**Explanation:**

Education of police officers for work in a multicultural society is important because they are provided with a certain level of knowledge, experience and appropriate methods of work required for professional implementation of police tasks and activities in the areas with Roma settlements and with representatives of the Roma community. Such training sessions, which have already become a regular form of education, were carried out in 2003 and 2004, during the periods of the 2010–2015 and 2017–2021 national programmes for the Roma.

Negative prejudices against a certain group or individuals in relation to the work of police officers against the latter may cause major problems in the implementation of basic police tasks. Negative prejudices also constitute, both short and long term, a barrier to constructing a model of professional attitude of every police officer in the implementation of procedures in the Roma community, while taking into account strict compliance with the general principles for the performance of police tasks in accordance with the Police Tasks and Powers Act, the attitude of police officers to clients in accordance with the Police Rules, Code of Police Ethics and Catalogue of Enforcement Proceedings Standards. The Police conducted 12 training sessions (464 participants) in 2016, four training sessions (147 participants) in 2017, seven training sessions (136 participants) in 2018 and six training sessions (151 participants) in 2019.

The *"Awareness about stereotypes, prejudice management, and discrimination prevention in a multicultural community"* programme, which was verified in 2009 by the council of the Police Academy, is intended for the acquisition of relevant knowledge for the recognition and understanding of the various forms of discrimination. Police employees are trained to respond appropriately when in contact with the "different", the marginalised, the socially excluded due to their origin, values, way of life, orientation (sexual, religious, political, etc.) and personality characteristics.

The content of training sessions for police officers will include content on some cases of antigypsyism, such as those specified in the legally non-binding working definition of antigypsyism adopted by the IHRA, specifically:

- perpetuating and affirming discriminatory stereotypes of and against the Roma;
- blaming the Roma, using hate speech, for real or perceived social, political, cultural, economic and public health problems;
- stereotyping Roma as persons who engage in criminal behaviour;
- using the term "Gypsy" as a slur;
- spreading hate speech against Roma communities in whatever form, for example in media, including on the internet and on social networks.

The starting point for the implementation of the measure will be the implementation of approximately five training sessions per year, either in accordance with the demonstrated needs or on the basis of an agreement with individual police units. The measure will be implemented in the form of training sessions, workshops, consultations, round table debates and similar.

SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring
<b>OBJECTIVE 8.2.1.2 Improving the awareness of institutions and achieving their greater efficiency in working with members of the Roma community.</b>	<b>Educating public servants who work with members of the Roma community as part of their competences.</b>	Police; public servants who work with members of the Roma community as part of their competences.	By 2030.	Funds from the budget of the Republic of Slovenia (provided annually in the financial plan of the MI/Police),	Number of training sessions.  Number of workshops.  Number of participants.  Evaluations.  Opinion (assessment) of the GONM.

**Explanation:**

In establishing community policing, the Police as a connecting element will strive to strengthen the dialogue and partnership between the Roma community, local community and institutions that meet with members of the Roma community as part of their work, or to establish dialogue where dialogue has not yet been established. Dialogue between all stakeholders or a multi-stakeholder approach is crucial and important in addressing and resolving individual problems. As part of the project "Raising awareness of civil servants, the Roma and the general public in order to overcome social barriers and improve coexistence" (SKUPA-J), between 2013 and 2020 the Police carried out training sessions for civil servants who deal with Roma issues in any way. They meet the Roma community at work and meet with the Roma community in their work. Feedback from civil servants shows that these training sessions are welcome and also very necessary for their work with representatives of the Roma community. The Police also report on the implementation at sessions of the working body of the government established on the basis of the ZRomS-1, and to other bodies and institutions. In 2018 and 2019, the Police participated in meetings of the Informal Working Group of the GONM in the activities of the measure in the National Programme of Measures for the Roma 2017-2021: "*Drafting of a protocol in procedures of processing of cases of civil partnerships with minors - Processing of cases of escapes of minors to harmful environments (child marriages) and forced marriages in the Roma community*". In 2018, activities to raise awareness of judicial workers were also agreed upon. The Judicial Training Centre has included lectures to judges and judicial staff in its training events - judicial schools, which are conducted by the Research and Social Skills Centre of the Police Academy, the General Directorate. Lectures were held at 12 judicial schools entitled "Challenges of the work with the Roma community and its specifics" were thus held in 12 judicial schools in 2018 and 2019. The Police conducted 11 training sessions for civil servants (292 participants) in 2015, two training sessions for civil servants (184 participants) in 2016, four training sessions for civil servants (117 participants) in 2017, three training sessions for civil servants (68 participants) in 2018 and four training sessions for civil servants (129 participants) in 2019. The feedback indicates the need for such training sessions and education, which the Police will continue to undertake in the future.



The objectives of this measure are, above all, to improve the ability of public servants to communicate with members of the Roma community whom they meet in their work, to raise awareness of the prejudices and stereotypes against the Roma in this environment and to acquaint public servants with their own prejudices and stereotypes and to look for practical solutions for specific challenges in the environment from which both public servants and the Roma originate. By implementing this measure, the efforts for special training of public servants will be directed at introducing a solid basis for individual public servants to understand all the characteristics of their work with the Roma community. Considering the objectives of coordinated and enhanced cooperation of all relevant institutions at the local level, and on the basis of the experience of community policing, it will also be necessary to upgrade the present dialogue between all subjects to achieve a basic understanding of the special features in the work with representatives of the Roma community, an appropriate response to individual problems and their successful resolution. As part of training sessions, public servants will obtain basic information and knowledge on combating discrimination, on the normative regulation and on the importance of consistent implementation of positive legislation, protection of human rights, awareness of stereotypes and prejudices about the Roma community. They will also learn how to deal with the individual situations that are most common in work with the Roma community. The training also gives emphasis to the management of various conflicts which public servants encounter in their work with the Roma community. If necessary, a member of the Roma community from the environment from where public servants come will be included in the implementation of training sessions and will help find possible practical solutions to the challenges regarding the situation in the environment based on their own experience and in communication with participants in training sessions.

The content of training sessions and awareness-raising activities for civil servants who meet members of the Roma community in their work will include content on some cases of antigypsyism, such as those specified in the legally non-binding working definition of antigypsyism adopted by the IHRA, specifically:

- perpetuating and affirming discriminatory stereotypes of and against the Roma;
- blaming the Roma, using hate speech, for real or perceived social, political, cultural, economic and public health problems;
- stereotyping Roma as persons who engage in criminal behaviour;
- using the term “Gypsy” as a slur;
- spreading hate speech against Roma communities in whatever form, for example in media, including on the internet and on social networks.

The starting point for the implementation of the measure will be the implementation of approximately five training sessions per year, in accordance with the demonstrated needs and in agreement with individual institutions and individual units of civil servants. The measure will be implemented in the form of training sessions, workshops, professional consultations, round table debates and similar.

SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring
<b>OBJECTIVE 8.2.1.3 Raising awareness of the majority population and members of the Roma community.</b>	<b>Co-funding of radio and television programmes for the Roma community.</b>	GONM; MC; RTV SLO; Roma Community Council of the Republic of Slovenia,	By 2030.	Funds from the budget of the Republic of Slovenia (provided annually in the financial plan of the GONM, MC, RTV SLO),	Popularity and distribution of Roma shows at RTV Slovenija.  Number of the Roma media outlets that have been successful

SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring
					in calls for applications of the MC and the CRCRS.

**Explanation:**

Through the GONM, the Government of the Republic of Slovenia also supports and co-funds radio and television programmes for the Roma community on the basis of Article 30 of the Radiotelevizija Slovenija Act, which stipulates that part of programmes for ethnic communities must be funded from the state budget in the proportion that is not funded from the licence fee. The basis for the support for these programmes is also determined by the Mass Media Act, which stipulates in Article 4 that the Republic of Slovenia supports the media in creating and disseminating programme content that is important for exercising the rights of citizens of Slovenia, Slovenians around the world, members of the Slovenian ethnic minorities in Italy, Austria and Hungary, the Italian and Hungarian ethnic communities in the Republic of Slovenia and the Roma community living in Slovenia, to public information. At the end of the current year, the public broadcaster RTV Slovenija will send the GONM a proposal for the programme and financial plan of RTV Slovenija programmes for the Roma community for next year. After reviewing the programme, the GONM concludes an annual contract with RTV Slovenija for co-funding of radio and television programmes for the Roma community. The GONM usually obtains the information on the drafting and implementation of the RTV Slovenija programmes for the Roma community "in the field" from representatives or organisations of the Roma community. In recent years, the GONM provided approximately EUR 183,000 per year for the RTV Slovenija programmes for the Roma community.

RTV Slovenija regularly broadcasts Roma shows, specifically the radio show "Amare droma – Our paths" and the television show "So vakares? – What do you say?". In the past, RTV Slovenija also organised comprehensive training sessions for members of the Roma community in Slovenia. In 2015, it conducted speech training sessions for four Roma women. One Roma woman is employed by RTV Slovenija full-time and she previously created a radio show for the Roma community. She now works on other content, while three Roma women are working with TV Slovenija, for which they are creating a TV show for the Roma). RTV Slovenija will continue to conduct similar training sessions for members of the Roma community.

Also operating in Slovenia are the Roma media or media established by members of the Roma community. The Roma media can participate in annual public calls for applications for the provision of Roma media content and the provision of media content in minority languages. The annual public calls for applications for co-funding of media content also envisage measures to increase employment of young journalists, including in the Roma media.

Promotion of information activity is one of the tasks of the CRCRS, which receives funds for its work from the state budget through the GONM. The CRCRS also supports through public calls for applications media programmes created by members of the Roma community that ensure a balanced presentation of Roma issues from different angles (from the point of view of the Roma, majority population, state organisations, state, local community, international public, professional public); strengthening and preserving the national, linguistic and cultural identity of the Roma; including the Roma in the preparation and broadcasting of shows; raising awareness of the majority and the Roma population about mutual respect, understanding and acceptance, and including positive examples of coexistence in the local environment.

**8.2.2 Strategic objective: Promoting participation of members of the Roma community through empowerment, cooperation and trust.**

Indicator: Assessment by the Roma community and other stakeholders of the participation of members of the Roma community

<b>SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>MEASURE</b>	<b>Provider of measure</b>	<b>Deadline for implementation</b>	<b>Financial source and envisaged resources</b>	<b>Impact indicators and monitoring</b>
<b>OBJECTIVE 8.2.2.1 Strengthening the institutional framework of representation of the Roma community in Slovenia</b>	<b>Ensuring the work of the CRCRS.</b>	GONM	By 2030.	Funds from the budget of the Republic of Slovenia (provided annually in the financial plan of the GONM),	Scope of the implementation of the CRCRS programme in an individual year.  Number and type of implemented activities.  Number of proposals submitted to the competent authorities.  Number of proposals by the CRCRS considered by the competent authorities.

**Explanation:**

In accordance with the ZRomS-1, the CRCRS represents the interests of the Roma community in Slovenia in relation to state authorities. The operation of this umbrella organisation of the Roma community is co-financed from the state budget. The objectives of co-funding are the strengthening of the institutional framework of representation of the Roma community, providing for and strengthening of the partnership with national authorities and bodies of local self-governments for more efficient exercise of the rights of members of the Roma community or the improvement of their situation, and implementation of the tasks of the CRCRS determined in the ZRomS-1 and the Rules of Procedure<sup>28</sup> of the CRCRS. The GONM monitors the work of the CRCRS and the use of allocated funds by means of CRCRS reports on the basis of a co-funding contract in each budget year.

<b>SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>MEASURE</b>	<b>Provider of measure</b>	<b>Deadline for implementation</b>	<b>Financial source and envisaged resources</b>	<b>Impact indicators and monitoring</b>
<b>OBJECTIVE 8.2.2.2 Empowering and strengthening non-governmental organisations</b>	<b>Support for the activities of the Roma community organisations for improving the situation of</b>	GONM and CRCRS.	By 2030.	Funds from the budget of the Republic of Slovenia (provided annually in the financial plan of the	Scope of the implementation of the CRCRS programme in an individual year.

<sup>28</sup> Rules of Procedure of the Council of the Roma Community of the Republic of Slovenia (Official Gazette of the RS, No. 42/16, 61/19 and 173/20)

SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring
established by members of the Roma community.	the Roma and for recognising the Roma community as a constituent part of Slovenian society, and for activities aimed at preventing discrimination and eliminating prejudices and stereotypes against Roma at the local level, with an emphasis on Roma women, youth and the elderly Roma population.			GONM and awarded to the CRCRS through an annual contract).	<p>Number and type of implemented activities.</p> <p>Number of implemented activities aimed at preventing discrimination and eliminating prejudices and stereotypes about the Roma at the local level.</p> <p>Number of activities aimed at Roma women, girls, youth and the elderly Roma population.</p>

**Explanation:**

The objectives of co-funding of non-governmental organisations of the Roma community are to strengthen their work and integration into broader society while enhancing the contribution of Roma community organisations to improving the situation of members of the Roma community, in particular in the environments in which they live.

On the basis of the actual needs in the field, in local environments where Roma live, it is necessary to continue to support the work of organisations of the Roma community that strive for the Roma community to be recognised as a constituent part of Slovenian society. The activities of the organisations of the Roma community are directed particularly at improving the situation of Roma, their increased and accelerated integration in the environments in which they live, raising awareness among the majority and the Roma population of the existence, culture, languages and habits of the Roma groups living in Slovenia and the fight against discrimination. Some organisations also direct their work towards representing members of the Roma community and finding solutions to the challenges at the local and national levels that still require resolution (e.g. specific social challenges of families in the local environment, warning about shortcomings of the applicable legislation on the basis of the actual situation in the field, etc.). The activities will especially be directed towards the promotion of the integration of Roma community members (especially children, women and young people) into the education system, activation for approaching the labour market and the development of new employment programmes and in the promotion of employment as a value, in the fight against the use of hate speech, raising awareness of the majority population (especially children and young people and the employees of the public administration and the judicial authorities) of the presence of the Roma community, its culture and linguistic composition and the importance for the Slovenian space, in raising awareness and training and offering support

to Roma community members in the councils of the self-governing local communities, members of societies and other important representatives in the Roma community who work for the benefit of the communities, for the provision of professional support and help to societies in applying to calls for proposals in different areas and to other areas important for the accelerated and more effective integration of Roma community members.

## 9. ENHANCING IMPLEMENTATION OF MEASURES AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

### 9.1 Bases and description of initial situation

The National Assembly adopted on 7 December 2020 the Municipal Costs Reduction Act<sup>29</sup>. This encroached on the ZFO-1 and introduced the special Article 20.a in the ZFO-1, which regulates co-funding of the exercise of the rights of permanently settled Roma communities separately and differently from the rights of the Italian and Hungarian ethnic communities. The provision of the new Article 20.a represents a correction of the appropriate spending of the municipality and does not mean payment for the actual needs of the Roma community in a particular municipality, as it was found that these municipalities have slightly higher costs on average than municipalities without the Roma due to the exercise of the legal rights of the permanently settled Roma community. Article 20.a of the ZFO-1 thus stipulates that municipalities with registered Roma settlements should be provided with funds from the state budget to co-fund the exercise of the constitutional rights of the permanently inhabited Roma community. Funds in the amount of 3.5% of the municipality's eligible expenditure are provided for each financial year.

On the basis of the ZRomS-1, municipalities are also obliged to adopt detailed sectoral programmes and measures (Article 6 of the ZRomS-1). It can be concluded based on the reporting by municipalities on the drafting of the annual report of the Government on the situation of the Roma community in Slovenia that they deal with challenges related to the Roma community differently (also according to their size and experience). Some municipalities have adopted their strategic or programme documents aimed at improving the situation of members of the Roma community, some municipalities address this population group in conjunction with other populations and challenges, and some municipalities have adopted a set of measures specifically for members of the Roma community. Most of these measures relate to the spatial and utility infrastructure planning of Roma settlements and social protection, and partly also to education.

**Measures explicitly directed towards work at the local level may be divided into several types.** What needs to be noted first is that, in Slovenia, the Roma are guaranteed the special right to political participation as a constitutionally protected community. In practice, this means that at the local level, the Roma **elect their representative – Roma councillor – to the municipal councils** of the municipalities where they are indigenous. The municipal councils in each of these municipalities must also establish a special working body for monitoring the situation of the Roma community. The Roma councillor is a member of this working body. **The Roma have their right to a representative in the municipal council guaranteed in the following 20 municipalities**, as stipulated by the ZLS: Beltinci, Cankova, Črenšovci, Črnomelj, Dobrovnik, Grosuplje, Kočevje, Krško, Kuzma, Lendava, Metlika, Murska Sobota, Novo mesto, Puconci, Rogaševci, Semič, Šentjernej, Tišina, Trebnje and Turnišče.

Furthermore, on the basis of the provisions of the ZRomS-1, the GONM provides funds to the CRCRS as the umbrella organisation of the Roma community that represents the interests of the Roma in relation to state authorities. The CRCRS then allocates funds to Roma community organisations and associations in which members of the Roma community connect through public calls for applications based on the needs identified in the field so that they can implement

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<sup>29</sup> The Municipal Costs Reduction Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 189/20).

their activities. **Based on the actual needs in the field in local environments where Roma live, the activities of the organisations of the Roma community that strive for the Roma community to be recognised as a constituent part of Slovenian society are being supported.** Activities of Roma community organisations are primarily directed towards improving the situation of the Roma and their greater and faster inclusion in the environments in which they live, i.e. the local level (these measures are covered in Chapter 9). Some organisations also focus their activities on training and supporting Roma councillors in municipal councils, representatives of associations and other visible representatives in the Roma community who work for the benefit of the community, as well as providing expert support and assistance to associations in applying for calls for applications in different fields.

**The third set features tasks and activities performed by the Police** (these measures are covered in Chapter 8). **The Police also invest considerable effort in preventive tasks, which they implement as part of the measure "Implementation of the police work in the community", whose objectives are to strengthen the partner relationship with the local community and to strive for satisfying the various security needs.** The Police actively cooperate with the Roma community in implementing their work in the community and with the everyday presence in the Roma community with various forms of work. They cooperate with individuals and with legitimately elected Roma councillors in the municipal councils of municipalities with the Roma community, and representatives of unions of Roma associations active in Slovenia. Cooperation with representatives of the Roma community in Slovenia is established at all three levels of the Police (local, regional and national).

**The fourth set features measures in the field of community-led local development (CLLD),** which promote joint local development and dealing with specific local issues. This approach is of exceptional importance for the development of both rural and urban areas, which have special development needs, problems and opportunities, which also require a different development approach. The bottom-up principle enables residents to determine priorities and developmental objectives and decide on local development. With the formation of local partnerships, so-called Local Action Groups (hereinafter referred to as: LAG), the local population is enabled to actively participate in decision-making regarding the priority tasks and development objectives of the local area, including funds to attain the objectives of the local area. Under this approach, the tool for promoting joint local development is the LEADER measure (the measure is covered later in this chapter).

**Finally, also focused on the local level are, in particular, the activities carried out by the GONM as part of the National Roma Platform project** (the measures are covered later in this chapter). The purpose of the various activities implemented in this framework is to supplement and strengthen the mechanism of counselling between all relevant stakeholders at the local level, strengthen their cooperation and improve dialogue, enable exchange of experience and best practices and address challenges at the local level in a multidisciplinary way. The activities are also used to monitor the implementation of the measures of the national programme at the local level and to identify gaps and shortcomings in their implementation, while identifying proposals for improvements. In the previous period of the national programme, the GONM focused mainly on activities aimed at the local communities in which Roma live, specifically:

- providing support and assistance to municipalities to develop their own specific and realistic action plans for inclusion of the Roma, which will be adjusted to local requirements by considering all possible restrictions;
- providing support and assistance to municipalities to become coordinators of inter-institutional integration and cooperation at the local level by means of creating multidisciplinary teams;
- identifying, promoting and transferring of the adopted knowledge, positive experience and examples of best practice to the environments in which deficits have been detected and the needs of local communities expressed.
- addressing the specific challenges of the local communities where Roma live by organising inclusive and multi-institutional events.

With the National Roma Platform project, the GONM has been supporting municipalities in developing and preparing specific and realistic action plans for inclusion of the Roma and in strengthening the inter-institutional approach and cooperation with a view to developing effective solutions to locally-specific challenges since 2016. At the beginning of 2020, it was established on the basis of an evaluation of the National Roma Platform activities provided by the participants of the multi-stakeholder events carried out as part of the project that the vast majority of participants thinks that the work and approach as introduced by the National Roma Platform project should be continued, as the situation is deteriorating in a large number of Roma settlements, and the final outcome and results of what are otherwise very well-organised events should be improved. The main findings regarding the required improvements and needs for enhanced action in the future were as follows:

- in the evaluation questionnaire, the participants of the events noted that it is necessary for representatives of the Council of the Roma Community of the Republic of Slovenia and other prominent Roma representatives and other opinion leaders (from various civil society organisations) to participate more actively in the project activities. Until now, they have always been invited to all events as part of the National Roma Platform projects, but they have seldom attended them or, if they did attend them, very few of them attended, and it was mainly always the same representatives;
- it is important to disseminate information about the project, its activities and results; in the future, we should make better use of media information opportunities and start building cooperation with the media, and systematically publish positive information about the results of the project and try to make better use of the GONM website to publish information about the project and its activities and results;
- in the future, it will be necessary to prepare even more specific material in advance for the needs of multi-stakeholder discussions;
- it will be necessary to ensure that the events are attended by representatives of all the relevant institutions dealing with various issues pertaining to members of the Roma community;
- more effort will need to be invested in the activities that will follow the multi-stakeholder discussions, so that the findings and proposals do not remain confined to paper or discussions and simply be repeated. The question of how to ensure that the findings and proposals of the multi-stakeholder discussions are taken into account must be addressed, as it is not enough to send them to the relevant institutions without ensuring that they are implemented;
- approaches to illuminate different issues from different angles should be continued, in particular through practical experience;
- how to motivate and use appropriate methods to attract more members of the Roma community to the debate, who should become more active in improving their own situation and image in the broader society, should be given considerable thought;
- the issue of effective monitoring of the implementation of measures and activities of relevant stakeholders (for example, the results of the work of individual departments should be measurable in a certain period) should also be considered and, if necessary, new methods of monitoring should be created and developed (for example, for the coming period of the NPUR).

As the implementation of the measures of the national programme at the local level is crucial and it is extremely important to monitor them effectively, address the challenges related to their implementation in a timely manner and eliminate potential obstacles and problems, the work of the GONM and the National Roma Platform projects will ensure effective implementation of the programme and achievement of the greatest possible effects of measures and synergies between measures in the field. In order to achieve this strategic goal, the activities of the GONM and the National Roma Platform will monitor the implementation of measures in individual areas and/or within the individual objectives of the programme and identify and eliminate possible obstacles and difficulties in the implementation of measures. The work of the GONM and the projects of the National Roma Platform will further improve the capacity and awareness of all relevant institutions and empower representatives of the Roma community. To achieve this strategic objective, the activities of the GONM and the National Roma Platform will strengthen the capacity and competence of institutions and representatives of the Roma community at the local and national levels, strengthen local communities in the process of inclusion of the Roma and raise awareness and strengthen the competences of civil servants and judicial staff.

Inter-institutional networking will be established and strengthened at the national and local levels to address the vulnerability of Roma children, especially the exposure of minors to harmful environments and forced marriages of Roma girls, and to raise the awareness of Roma girls and boys and young people.

## 9.2 Objectives and measures related to strengthening the implementation of measures at the local level

### 9.2.1 Strategic objective: Promoting joint local development and addressing specific local issues.

Indicator: Reports as part of the National Roma Platform project and number of adopted local action plans and multidisciplinary groups formed in municipalities.

SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring
<b>OBJECTIVE 9.2.1.1 Enhancing the integrated handling of challenges in the local environments where members of the Roma community live, establishing a partnership between all stakeholders, strengthening their competencies and ensuring appropriate and timely action by competent institutions.</b>	<b>Continuing to support municipalities in the setting up and work of multidisciplinary groups to address specific issues in local environments in which members of the Roma community live, and in preparing specific and realistic action plans for Roma inclusion tailored to the needs of each individual local community.</b>	GONM in cooperation with municipalities; all competent institutions, organisations and individuals working at local level and involved in work with members of the Roma community participate in the implementation of the measure.  Competent ministries also participate in finding solutions for and dealing with specific issues.	By 2030.	Additional funds are not required. Possible costs related to the convening and work of groups are covered by the municipality. If the convener of a possible event at the initiative of the municipality and in agreement with it is the GONM, funds for the organisation of the event can be provided from EU funds and the budget of the Republic of Slovenia (annually provided in the financial plan of the GONM; in the part relating to EU funds - usually 90%	Number of groups formed in municipalities.  Number of group sessions or meetings.  Number of drafted local action plans.  Number of implemented measures and their performance.  Evaluation of the work of groups (municipalities and the GONM).  Reporting by the municipality on the work of the group and the implementation of



SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring
				participation of the EU, and 10% participation of Slovenia). For now, these funds have been secured until 2023.	measures upon the annual reporting by the GONM on the activities carried out for the drafting of government reports.

**Explanation:**

It has been established on the basis of reports by municipalities and past experience and the work performed as part of the National Roma Platform project that, regardless of the existence of working bodies of the municipal council to monitor the situation of the Roma community under the ZRomS-1, more operational forms of cooperation between institutions have been established in some municipalities, and the support provided so far by the GONM as part of the National Roma Platform requires additional effort to be made at the local level to strengthen inter-institutional integration and cooperation. On 20 April 20 2021, the GONM hosted a videoconference meeting with the municipalities in which the Roma community lives, entitled *"Together we are more successful: creating multidisciplinary groups and/or action plans of municipalities"*, at which it wanted to:

- hear the experiences, needs and proposals of the municipalities regarding the drafting of action plans and the strengthening of multidisciplinary integration;
- examine the reasons why the approach that has been taken so far has not been successful and whether the efforts should be continued towards attaining the objective in the new NPUR 2021–2030;
- adopt joint answers about how to proceed.

It was established in the discussion that the situation of members of the Roma community varies greatly by municipality, which also can be said for the approaches of municipalities to multidisciplinary cooperation and addressing challenges, and the drafting of local strategies/programmes of measures/ action plans in this area. Nevertheless, representatives of the majority of municipalities expressed at the meeting an interest in and need for the further assistance and support of the GONM for municipalities in the setting up and work of multidisciplinary groups to address specific issues in local environments in which members of the Roma community live, and in drafting specific and realistic action plans for inclusion of the Roma that are tailored to the needs of each individual local community.

The purpose of enhanced cooperation between all competent institutions at the local level is twofold: firstly, to achieve continuous monitoring of the situation of the Roma community in each municipality, and secondly, appropriate and timely action of competent institutions in all matters concerning members of the Roma community. These are issues that are acute in nature and require immediate solutions, as well as issues related to the long-term integration of members of the Roma community in the local environment and society. In the period until 2030, all municipalities where the Roma community lives must establish a multidisciplinary approach and forms of cooperation at the local level, and forms of such cooperation may vary according to the needs in a particular local community: only a working body of the municipal council for monitoring of the situation of the Roma community in accordance with the ZRomS-1 can be established, while additional (more operational) forms of networking and cooperation of competent institutions and members of the Roma community can also

be established – it is crucial that these forms are actually established, that they are active and that they help to address challenges. Municipalities take on the role of a coordinator of this form of cooperation at the local level, and it must include all those institutions at the local level that are involved in work with members of the Roma community: kindergartens, schools, SWCs, community health centres or their services and health promotion centres, the Employment Service or its labour offices, the Police, inspection services for individual areas, the Roma councillor and others, depending on the problems or challenges in each local community. The work of the group is evaluated by the municipality in cooperation with all participants in the group, or by the GONM. The municipality reports on the work of the group to the GONM when reporting on the activities carried out in each year for the purposes of drafting a government report on the situation of the Roma community.

The CRCRS can also be involved in this process at the local level, as the CRCRS has established a special working group to determine the situation in Roma settlements and the Roma community and to help the local community, or independently offer its assistance to all municipalities where Roma live.

In the municipalities that expressed interest in and the need for support from the GONM in forming groups and in their work and in the drafting of local action plans at the event on 20 April 2021 or will express this interest later, the GONM will, with the activities of the National Roma Platform, provide specific assistance for this purpose by organising and implementing relevant events in that municipality. The GONM has so far managed to secure EU funds for such activities until 2023. As of 2021, municipalities with a Roma community or Roma settlements will receive additional funds to co-fund the exercise of the constitutional rights of the permanently inhabited Roma community, from which they can finance such activities.

<b>SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>MEASURE</b>	<b>Provider of measure</b>	<b>Deadline for implementation</b>	<b>Financial source and envisaged resources</b>	<b>Impact indicators and monitoring</b>
<b>OBJECTIVE 9.2.1.2 Promoting social inclusion in rural areas.</b>	<b>Programmes for the Roma for social inclusion of the Roma community and awareness and responsible conduct of the Roma community.</b>	MAFF; LAGs, municipalities; various institutions, such as the Police, regional units of the Administration for Food Safety, Veterinary Sector and Plant Protection, animal welfare associations, schools, kindergartens, Roma assistants/coordinators, shelters for abandoned animals, etc.	2021–2030	The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) from the LEADER measure by means of a public call published by the LAG. The amount cannot be determined because the funds are earmarked with co-financing under a public call published by the LAG.	Number of successfully implemented projects.  Number of municipalities that will successfully implement projects.  Reporting by municipalities regarding reduction of problems in the areas of Roma settlements.

**Explanation:**

In the planning of measures for resolving issues in Roma settlements, the idea is to promote a bottom-up approach, which enables the local population to, by forming local partnerships or so-called Local Action Groups (hereinafter referred to as: LAG) to actively decide on the priority tasks and development objectives of the local area, including sources of funding to attain the objectives of the local area. Under this approach, the tool for promoting joint local development is the LEADER measure.

The LEADER measure can be an appropriate tool, as by supporting soft content such as education, awareness-raising workshops and similar, it can be effective as a support measure for larger investments that can be supported from other sources. The measure is intended for all local stakeholders (associations, municipalities, entrepreneurs, regional development agencies, individuals interested in the development of the local area ...), as the needs and objectives of the local area are determined by the inhabitants of that area. It is residents of an area who decide on local development, which means that they participate in the drafting of the local development strategy, and after the approval of the local development strategy, they apply with their projects at public calls for applications of local action groups.

It should be emphasised that projects funded from the LEADER measure are selected by the LAG in their public calls for applications, and a project can be co-funded if its content is compliant with the objectives and needs set out in the local development strategy. The tasks of the LAG are to provide information to interested residents in the LAG area, to promote the implementation of operations and to assist potential beneficiaries in preparing operations. The objectives of the measure are to promote social inclusion of the Roma community through potential projects of the LEADER measure, to raise their awareness of the importance of inclusion in the broader community, and to encourage them to act responsibly.

Content intended for the Roma in local development strategies for the 2014-2020 programme period already exists in certain LAGs. One such example is the Local Development Strategy of the LAG Dolenjska and Bela Krajina, where the burning issue of stray dogs and irresponsible treatment of owned dogs in Roma settlements has been identified several times over a lengthy period.

**9.2.2 Strategic objective: Ensuring effective implementation of the national programme of measures and maximising the effects of measures and their synergies in the field.**

Indicator: Assessment by various stakeholders involved in work with members of the Roma community in the environments in which they live.

<b>SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>MEASURE</b>	<b>Provider of measure</b>	<b>Deadline for implementation</b>	<b>Financial source and envisaged resources</b>	<b>Impact indicators and monitoring</b>
<b>OBJECTIVE 9.2.2.1 Monitoring the implementation of the national programme at the local level and eliminating possible obstacles and difficulties in its implementation.</b>	<b>Monitoring the implementation of measures, providing information about measures and finding synergies, and identifying and eliminating possible</b>	GONM as part of regular tasks and as part of the National Roma Platform project. all relevant ministries and	From 2021 to 2023. In the years to come (until 2030), the GONM will continue to work on the	Funds from the budget of the Republic of Slovenia and EU funds (provided annually in the GONM financial plan; in the part related to EU funds - usually 90% participation of the	Number of implemented activities.  Number of identified obstacles and problems.

SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring
	<b>obstacles to implementation at the local level.</b>	government departments; municipalities and their associations; Council of the Roma Community of the Republic of Slovenia; various NGOs and representatives of the Roma community.	application for the National Roma Platform project to ensure its continued success.	EU, and 10% participation of Slovenia).	Number of eliminated obstacles and problems.  Evaluation with online questionnaires.

**Explanation:**

Through its regular tasks, the GONM continues to contribute to the monitoring of the national programmes adopted so far. It will further enhance its efforts during the implementation of this programme of measures, in particular by monitoring the implementation of measures at the local level. To this end, the GONM has already successfully applied at a closed call of the European Commission for the next National Roma Platform project, dedicated to the national contact points for inclusion of the Roma (SIFOROMA5), which will be implemented from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2023. While a system of monitoring the implementation of existing programs of measures and the general situation of the Roma in Slovenia has already been established on the basis of ZRomS-1 (through regular annual government reports to the National Assembly and regular monitoring of the implementation of the programme of measures at sessions of the government working body, established on the basis of the ZRomS-1 and comprising national authorities, municipalities in which the Roma live and representatives of the CRCRS, where representatives of relevant ministries report on implementation and progress), this system will be further strengthened and supported by a number of events and activities to be carried out at the local level with all relevant stakeholders. These activities will take place as part of the National Roma Platform project, and their purpose will be to monitor and evaluate the implementation of measures in the field, to provide information about the adopted measures and to look for synergies in order to maximise their impact. The previous projects of the National Roma Platform have shown a lack of cooperation and coordination between stakeholders at different levels in the implementation of measures from the previous programmes of measures. The aim of this measure is primarily to improve the coordination and cooperation of the competent institutions and organisations and representatives of the Roma community at the local level, and by doing so monitor the implementation of measures and eliminate potential gaps and challenges that arise or could arise. For this purpose, several activities will be organised which will be based on organised meetings or multi-stakeholder events and will discuss the implementation of a particular measure, a set of measures or the attainment of the pursued objectives. All relevant and interested stakeholders will be invited to such events. For example, when discussing the implementation of the measure on early inclusion of Roma children in education, such an event will bring together people from the responsible ministries (MESS, MLFSEO), representatives of key institutions that implement the measure at the local level, such as kindergarten teachers, head teachers, teachers, Roma from a particular place or their representatives, representatives of municipalities, social work centres, healthcare institutions, non-

governmental organisations and institutions that implement such projects. In-depth discussions among all participants at such events will enable the exchange of experience in the implementation of this specific measure, improvement and strengthening of coordination and cooperation between all stakeholders, while a network of all relevant and responsible stakeholders will be established to help improve cooperation, exchange of information and experience and greater efficiency. The results and conclusions of such a meeting/event will enable an assessment of the implementation of a particular measure, identify potential gaps and improve cooperation between all stakeholders in this field or in a specific measure. The experience from the past projects of the National Roma Platform shows that such events enable a deeper understanding of the situation of the Roma among participants in such events and at the same time provide an insight into the responsibilities, roles and opportunities (and thus limitations) of each institution, organisation or individual. Activities will be focused on the areas and measures of this programme of measures, with issues of discrimination and antigypsyism being addressed as horizontal issues in each of the areas or measures.

By means of a system for monitoring of the programme of measures enhanced in this way, it will be possible to identify and address the gaps and challenges of the programme and to develop synergies between current measures. Gaps or obstacles will be detected and identified at all events as part of the National Roma Platform project, and not necessarily only at events related to the monitoring of the implementation of measures. Gaps or obstacles will be discussed in the form of a report or other form of material that will be presented to the responsible authorities, depending on the content. For example: if a lack of Roma participation in the implementation of a measure/project is identified as an obstacle or gap at the local level, this will be addressed at the level of the Roma community, municipality and local institutions. If an obstacle or gap requires action from a higher level, for example by a ministry, it will be presented to the ministry in writing with a request that the ministry, as the competent provider of the measure, resolve and report on it.

Activities and findings from the monitoring of the implementation of measures will be presented to the government working body established on the basis of the ZRomS-1.

**9.2.3 Strategic objective: Improving the capacity and awareness of all relevant institutions and empowering representatives of the Roma community.**  
 Indicator: Assessment by competent institutions and representatives of the Roma community involved in work with members of the Roma community in the environments in which they live.

SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring
<b>OBJECTIVE 9.2.3.1 Improving the capacity, level of training, networking and action by competent institutions at the local and national levels and raising the awareness of members of the Roma community.</b>	<b>Implementing various awareness-raising and educational multi-stakeholder events or activities in cooperation with municipalities, other institutions that operate in the local environment and members of the Roma community with the</b>	GONM as part of regular tasks and as part of the National Roma Platform project; municipalities where Roma live; members	From 2021 to 2023. In the years to come (until 2030), the GONM will continue to work on the application for the National Roma Platform	Funds from the budget of the Republic of Slovenia and EU funds (provided annually in the financial plan of the GONM; in the part related to EU funds - usually 90% participation of the EU, and 10%	Number of implemented activities.  Number and type of results of these activities.  Evaluation with online questionnaires.

SUBORDINATED OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	Provider of measure	Deadline for implementation	Financial source and envisaged resources	Impact indicators and monitoring
	<b>purpose of exchanging experience, knowledge and successful practices at the local level and, consequently, enhancing the integration, cooperation and competencies of all stakeholders in the process of social inclusion of the Roma.</b>	of the Roma community; various experts in individual fields.	project to ensure its continued success.	participation of Slovenia).	

**Explanation:**

The evaluation and conclusions from the previous projects of the National Roma Platform show that further activities are needed to address the lack of awareness and knowledge of various stakeholders at the national and local levels who are involved in processing, decision-making and/or work related to members of the Roma community, and for the greater awareness of representatives of the Roma community. The measure as part of this objective will strengthen the capacity and awareness of institutions and organisations that are decision-makers at state and local level or are involved in work with members of the Roma community, as well as informing and raising awareness of the Roma. Previous activities of the National Roma Platform projects have shown gaps in the readiness for action and activation of both sides - among the Roma and with the competent state and local authorities. In order to close these gaps, activities will be carried out to increase the provision of information and knowledge for more effective implementation of measures at the local and national levels. The lack of knowledge and awareness will be eliminated by means of a number of various activities (e.g. meetings, training sessions, workshops, consultations, visits in the field, etc.) tailored to the needs of the target groups of each event. In the previous National Roma Platform projects, multi-stakeholder events in particular highlighted the problem of discrimination and antigypsyism, which will be addressed by training sessions and/or other forms of multidisciplinary activities or events focused on raising awareness and capacity building of all stakeholders. Topics that have been identified and will be addressed in such training sessions or other activities are, mainly: the issue of so-called child and forced marriages and underage pregnancies and the promotion of the handbook prepared as part of the National Roma Platform, and inter-institutional training sessions on this topic on the basis of the handbook; including the Roma in all existing daily activities at the local level together with the rest of the population; coexistence and neighbourly relations between the Roma and non-Roma; discrimination and respect for human rights, etc. Such multidisciplinary activities will be participatory and will target both civil servants and other employees working with the Roma, as well as members of the Roma community.