
CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION AND EMPLOYMENT OF ROMA PEOPLE IN REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA

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Abstract: The social exclusion of the Roma population is still a challenge in the countries of South-Eastern Europe where this population is the largest minority group. Especially in the countries of the Western Balkans, including the North Macedonia, the Roma population, has a very low social and economic status, has limited opportunities and low participation in social and cultural life. As a consequence, the Roma face marginalization and discrimination, which in turn makes them the most economically vulnerable ethnic group. The paper aims to analyze the current situation regarding the degree of socio-economic integration of the Roma population, especially in the field of employment and Roma participation in the national labor market. Also, the paper examines the legal framework, policies and programs aimed at improving the integration of the Roma population. The analyzes in the paper are based on a qualitative research strategy and qualitative research methods such as the analysis of official documents originating from the state, textual materials in the form of national legislation, programs, strategic and planning documents, and the analysis of official documents created from other sources, such as research reports and analyzes generated by international and domestic institutions and organizations. The quantitative method of secondary analysis of official statistical data from the field of labor and employment was also applied. Although the country has made partial progress in improving the inclusion of Roma, the findings suggest that there is still much room for improvement, especially in the area of employment. The data show that in the last few years, the number of unemployed Roma is growing, and the participation of Roma in the total number of unemployed is increasing. The biggest obstacles faced by the Roma in the labor market are: the lack of professional qualifications, which is the result of low participation in the formal education system, and, discrimination by employers. As a result, Roma are mostly economically active in the informal labor market and have low-income earnings. Institutional challenges are located in the area of implementation of policies and activities due to systemic inconsistencies, but also due to insufficient consideration of the characteristics of the Roma tradition, and the specific cultural and social norms and values of the Roma community.

Keywords: socio-economic inclusion, Roma population, employment, labor market participation, North Macedonia.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Roma population is widely spread throughout Europe, and it is the largest and poorest ethnical minority. It is estimated that 10 to 12 million of Roma citizens inhabit the European continent, and nearly 6 million are citizens or inhabitants of EU (Council of Europe, 2012). This population is mostly concentrated in Central and Eastern Europe, particularly, in Romania (est. 2 million persons), Bulgaria (est. 700,000), Hungary (est. 500,000), Slovakia (est. 450,000) the Czech Republic (est. 300,000); as well as on the Iberian Peninsula (circa 700,000 Roma in Spain, and another 55,000 in Portugal), (FSG, 2023).

Throughout history, the Roma people usually lived in great poverty, were often discriminated by the majority of the local population, and they were excluded from the social processes. Many of the Roma people living in EU, are still victims of prejudice and social exclusion, on many levels of the social, political and the economic life. In average, 80% of the Roma people in some of the EU countries (FRA, 2022), are in risk of poverty, are faced with a higher risk of unemployment, spend less years in the education system, and many live without access to adequate housing.

In the accession process as an equal member of EU, Republic of North Macedonia (RNM) makes constant efforts of adjusting the laws and the policies according to the EU recommendations for the Roma people. The issue of social and economic integration of the Roma people is of a high priority on the Government agenda, of the department ministries and the government institutions. Even though these last years a partial progress in the fight against the discrimination and social exclusion is evident, the Macedonian society has still not overcome the barriers and the prejudices towards minority groups, especially towards the Roma minority group, which results in slowing down of the processes of integration of the marginalized groups. Apart of the social barriers, prejudices and stereotypes, the implementation of the Government policies for employment and integration, represents yet another serious challenge for the country.

The paper aims to analyze the current situation regarding the social inclusion of Roma in Macedonia, especially in the field of employment and participation of Roma in the national labor market. The employment is being considered as one of the most important issues for improving of the socio-economic position of the Roma population, and one of the key indicators, for the level of integration in the society. Also, the paper examines the institutional framework, policies and programs for Roma inclusion, with a focus on employment challenges and opportunities.

2. SOCIO-ECONOMIC INCLUSION OF THE ROMA POPULATION IN EUROPE

Social exclusion is a process that creates certain communities, social groups or citizens to find themselves on the margins of society, to have limited opportunities compared to other citizens, which leads to low participation in social and cultural life. Consequences of the social exclusion are marginalization and discrimination, which makes the marginalized group, economically vulnerable as well. A life on the verge, or in a complete poverty, produces negative effects, such as, inadequate housing, impaired health, as well as, limited access to education, employment and health care. The Roma population has a very low social and economic status, as opposed to the population's majority. The Roma, unlike their fellow citizens, have a poor integration on the labour market, poor inclusion in the educational system, and poor political participation. The Roma people as a minority in the EU countries, are the most vulnerable to violation of human rights (FRA, 2022). As of 2020, an EU Roma Strategic Framework in the European Communication Commission, is being set, which has an equality, inclusion and participation of the Roma people as a goal, by 2030. This initiative sets out a comprehensive three-pillar approach: equality with all other members of society, social and economic inclusion, and participation in political, social, economic and cultural life. This strategic framework was supported by North Macedonia, as one of the Western Balkans partners.

The Roma ethnic minority in one of the fastest growing population in Europe, and it is estimated that a large part of the new participants on the labor market are Roma. The lack of education in the majority of the Roma, is a big obstacle in their participation on the labor market (World Bank, 2010). Education is considered one of the main reasons for the labor market disadvantage of the Roma in Europe. The low employment rate is due to the low level of education and the lack of basic skills of the Roma workforce compared to the majority population in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (Messing, 2014). In addition, the education is of key importance for overcoming poverty and providing equal opportunities for the Roma population. The analysis confirm that the education is an important determinant for the Roma labor market participation in the Central and South-Eastern European countries (O'Higgins, 2012). Also, some findings suggest that education and ethnic social contacts have an important influence on the levels of self-employment in Spain (Aisa and Larramona, 2014).

The employment issue and the position of the Roma on the labor market are of crucial importance. Employed Roma, through their work and having an income, strengthen their economic independence, and improve their personal and their family's living standard. At the same time, the employment and participation in the work environment via good practices, prevents prejudice and discrimination of the Roma, and provides better social inclusion and participation in various aspects of the social life. Unfavorable employment position of the Roma can be perceived by the unemployment rate, as the most used indicator for the labor market performance. The Roma are experiencing higher unemployment rates than the non-Roma population in all countries of Southeast Europe. The employment rate is also an important measure of the labor market situation faced by the Roma. But employment in itself is not the only issue when it comes to the disenfranchisement of the Roma. Roma are also disadvantaged when it comes to the quality of employment and the right to decent work as a significant number of Roma participate in the informal employment sector. The informal employment rate is much higher for Roma, than for non-Roma population, in the entire South-Eastern Europe region. The exclusion from an official employment, and working in informal segments on the labor market, is a result of the fact that the Roma mostly belong to the low-qualified work force (O'Higgins, 2012). The research suggest that the employment of the Roma, unlike the regular employment, is being considered as temporary, non-regular, unstable and out of the range of formal labor market (Messing, 2014).

The situation of the Roma participation on the labor market in the Western Balkan countries, is similar to that of the South-Eastern Europe countries. What is particularly characteristic of the countries of the Western Balkans is the high rate of NEET (neither in employment, education or training) for the Roma population aged 18-24. According to the Regional Roma Survey Briefs (2019), the NEET rate among Roma in the Western Balkans is between 67% (North Macedonia) and 82% (Bosnia and Herzegovina). The NEET rate among Roma women is even higher and it is ranging between 81% (North Macedonia) and 93% (Montenegro). The high NEET rates indicate that the majority of the young generation of Roma would not have a prospect for regular employment and would remain in the informal sector as self-employed and precarious workers, with no social security and low, unstable incomes.

3. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research objective is to analyze, and to determine the current situation, as well as, to investigate the challenges regarding the socio-economic integration of the Roma population, especially in the field of employment. The research aims at answering the following questions: 1. What is the progress of the RSM in relation to the socio-economic integration of the Roma and are there improvements in employability and employment? 2. In which areas have no improvements been recorded or is there a deterioration of the situation? 3) What are the challenges for better integration of Roma in the labor market?

In order to answer these questions, a qualitative research strategy is being applied, and the following qualitative research methods are being used: analysis of official documents of state origin, text materials in a form of the national law regulative programs, national strategic and systematic documents relevant for the research, and which are tackling the issues of Roma employment and inclusion; official documents originating from other sources, as research reports and analysis generated from international and domestic organizations, the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, or created by non-government organizations, as well as, the State Statistical Office's statistical announcements and publications.

Also, in one part, the quantitative method of secondary analysis of official statistical data was applied, i.e. statistical data from the field of labor and employment, collected for specific statistical purposes by the State Statistics Office and the Employment Agency. Unit of analysis of the research are: planned documents, laws, research findings and statistics.

4. INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK AND POLICIES FOR ROMA INCLUSION

Social inclusion as a process of individual's integration in the society, is an unavoidable segment of the state's public policies, which are constantly being upgraded and improved. The fight against the social exclusion, with corresponding public policies, active programs and measures, is strengthening the relation between the individual and the society, and is simultaneously enhancing the social progress and cohesion. In the last years, in Macedonia, laws are being passed, planning documents and strategies are being created, with an aim of better integration of the Roma marginalized community. The process of the accession negotiations with the European Union and the regional cooperation of the Western Balkans countries as part of the Berlin process to support the enlargement of the EU, strengthened the country's commitment to the accelerated integration of the Roma. At the Summit in Poznan in 2019, the Prime Ministers from the Western Balkans adopted the "Declaration of Western Balkans Partners on Roma Integration within the EU Enlargement Process", where they committed to improve the Roma status, and to achieve concrete results, in the education field, as well as, the fields of employment, health care, housing, and the fight against discrimination.

According to the 2021 Population Census, total of 46 433 Roma live in RNM, out of which 23 630 men and 22 803 women. The Roma ethnic community represents 2, 53% of the country's total resident population, and it is the fourth in size, after the Macedonian, Albanian and the Turk community. Compared to the 2002 census, when 53,879 Roma lived in Macedonia, or 2.66% of the total population, although insignificant, the decrease in the number of Roma population is evident. Of the total Roma population, 45,242 Roma or 97.4% live in the so-called city municipalities (city-based municipalities). The largest number of Roma live in the city of Skopje as a separate unit of the local government (18,498) and the municipalities of Prilep (3,966), Kumanovo (2,795), Bitola (2,890), Shtip (2,301), Gostivar (2,273), Kicevo (2 003), Kočani (1 892) and Debar (1 140). The poverty and segregation are serious challenges that the Roma and their community are faced with. The Roma mostly live in substandard conditions, in isolated, poor and underdeveloped settlements, on the periphery of the largest cities. Due to poor living conditions, Roma face negative perception by non-Roma communities, which leads to discrimination resulting in social isolation, difficult transportation and access to education, employment and social services. The Roma population discrimination is reflected in all areas of life, as for example: poor school attendance, lower employment rate, shorter life span, higher death rate, higher migration rate, and higher participation in informal economy.

The findings of the 2021 Roma survey of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights show that 75% of Roma are at risk of poverty, compared to 22% of the total population in Macedonia. 20% of Roma declared that they face discrimination in various aspects of their lives, while 10% reported that they experienced at least one form of harassment motivated by hatred due to belonging to the Roma nationality. 2% reported an incident of discrimination because they are Roma. Only 2% of Roma children aged 3 to the age of starting compulsory primary education attend early childhood education and care, compared to 43% of the total population in Macedonia (based on the 2019 population estimate). In the 20-24 age group, only 41% of Roma have completed secondary education, compared to 94% of the total population (based on the 2020 population estimate), (FRA, 2022).

The basic legal framework for Roma inclusion can be found in a number of systemic laws and international regulations that regulate policy areas for the effective integration of Roma. The commitment to equal rights and opportunities for marginalized ethnic communities, including the Roma, has been incorporated into several laws of the RNM. On this occasion, those strategies, programs and plans that specifically target the issue of socio-economic integration of the Roma population in RSM are mentioned. The Government of RNM in 2010, has passed the **National Strategy for Reduction of Poverty and Social Exclusion, 2010-2020**. The strategy was created as a document that aims to equalize the degree of inclusion and well-being across all layers of society. Through the proposed measures, activities and solutions, social inclusion and poverty reduction should be enabled for certain vulnerable groups and for different levels of government. Unfortunately, there has been no new National Strategy for reducing poverty and social exclusion for three years, after the previous one adopted for the period 2010-2020 expired. The **Strategy for inclusion of Roma in North Macedonia 2022-2030** aims at the promotion and development of the socio-economic, legal position, cultural and language rights of the Roma by ensuring adequate and fair access to public goods and services and equal participation of the Roma community in building of an inclusive society, based on elimination of all forms of discrimination, anti-gypsyism, and poverty. Eight goals have been set in the Strategy 2022-2030. The first strategic goal refers to the employment of Roma and is defined as: Increasing the employment of Roma in the RNM. According to the data from social mapping, the initial situation is 23%, while by 2030 it is predicted to reach at least 28%. Within the strategic goal, five specific objectives have been defined, some of the objectives are aimed at direct employment support, and some are aimed at increasing skills and qualifications in order to improve the employment of the Roma people. The remaining seven strategic goals are aimed at housing, education, expected lifetime, culture, material security, civil registration, and antigypsyism.

The most effective way to achieve the goals for increasing employment is to transform the undeclared work of the Roma into a registered one. In the National Program for the transformation of undeclared work among Roma 2021-2023, a goal has been set for the transformation of undeclared work among Roma from 39% to 25% by 2025. The program includes several components: 1) Legal environment suitable for the formalization of undeclared work, including social insurance and debt write-off; 2) Direct support to undeclared workers for the transformation of their work into declared work through an institutional support network and 3) Monitoring progress in reducing undeclared work. In **The 2022-2024 Program of the Government of Republic of North Macedonia**, efforts are being made to increase the coverage of Roma in the active employment measures and services, by implementing of 5% quota for Roma coverage. **The Operational Plan** for active programs and measures for employment and services on the labor market for 2023 determines the programs, measures and services for employment that will ensure the creation of new jobs and increase the employability of unemployed persons. The measures in the Operational Plan also cover the unemployed Roma as a marginalized ethnic community. The measures are: 1. Support for self-employment (entrepreneurship) for unemployed Roma, men up to 60 years old and women up to 58 years old; 2.1 Subsidizing employment for unemployed Roma people; 2.2 Employment and growth of legal entities, in order to support the creation of new jobs in micro, small and medium enterprises, social enterprises and civil organizations for Roma and Roma women with completed secondary or higher education; 3.1 On-the-job training at a specific employer; 3.1 (A) Job training with subsidized employment (pilot measure), which aims to encourage the employment of unemployed Roma people who find it difficult to join the labor market; 3.2 Skills development through training to increase the employability of vulnerable returnees from EU countries with particular attention to the Roma (pilot measure).

5. EMPLOYMENT AND PARTICIPATION OF THE ROMA IN THE LABOUR MARKET

The employment status of the Roma population is difficult to accurately determine because the data on the number of employed and unemployed Roma are often incomplete, and accurate data are rare. This is mostly due to the practice of some Roma not wanting to declare their nationality when registering in the national databases due to the fear of individual or systemic discrimination. Therefore, the position of the Roma can only be analyzed through limited information available from national data register databases or from research by international and domestic institutions and organizations.

According to the data of the Labor Force Survey, for the second quarter of 2023, in Macedonia, the working age population is 1 515 012, the active population is 793 602, and the inactive population is 721 410. Of the total number of active population, 689 714 are employed, while 103 888 are unemployed. Table 1 presents data on the working age population and economic activity, by gender.

Table 1. Working age population by economic activity and gender, II quarter 2023

Q-2 2023	Total	Men	Women
Total*	1 515 012	745 060	769 952
<u>Labour force</u>	793 602	466 686	326 916
Employed	689 714	404 515	285 199
Unemployed	103 888	62 171	41 717
Inactive population	721 410	278 374	443 036

* The working age population consists of persons aged 15 to 89.

Source: State Statistical Office, Labor Force Survey, second quarter of 2023.

The activity rate in the second quarter of 2023 is 52.4, the employment rate is 45.5, while the unemployment rate is 13.1. The following table (Table 2) presents data on activity rate, also for employment and unemployment rate in RNM, by gender.

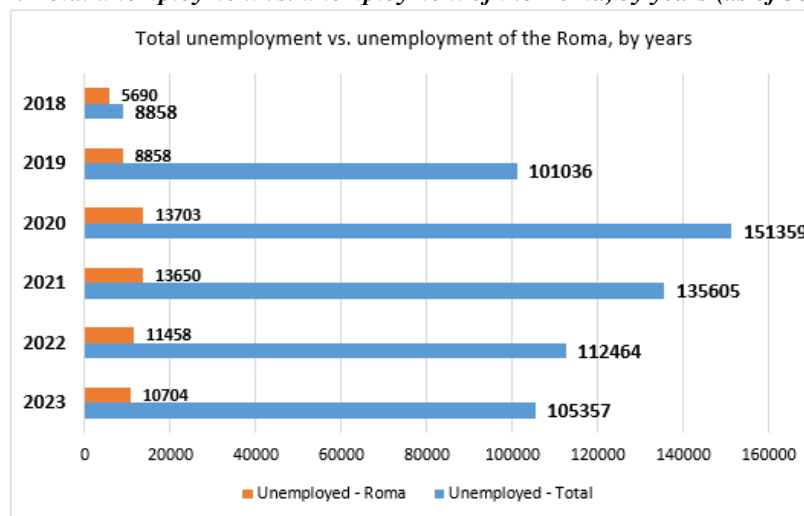
Table 2. Activity rates by gender, II quarter 2023

2023T02	Activity rate			Employment rate			Unemployment rate		
	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
Total	52.4%	62.6%	42.5%	45.5%	54.3%	37.0%	13.1%	13.3%	12.8%

Source: State Statistical Office, Labor Force Survey, second quarter of 2023

Data on the economic activity of the Roma working age population can be obtained from the regular monthly announcements of the Employment Service Agency of the Republic of North Macedonia. The Agency, in 2023, (as of 30.09.2023), has registered total of 105 357 unemployed persons, out of which 10 704 are Roma. A comparative overview of the total unemployment versus the unemployment of the Roma population in RNM, for the 2018-2023 period, is being given in the Figure 1.

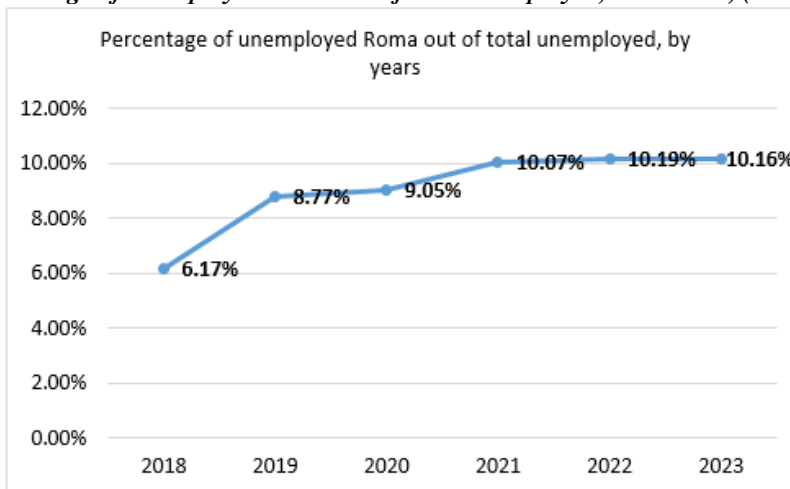
Figure 1: Total unemployment vs. unemployment of the Roma, by years (as of 30.09.2023)



Source: Authors creation according to available data from the Employment Service Agency of the Republic of North Macedonia

In 2023, the participation of unemployed Roma in the total unemployment in Masedonia is 10.16%. Graph 1 presents a comparative overview of the percentage of unemployed Roma in total unemployment for the period 2018-2023.

Graph 1: Percentage of unemployed Roma out of total unemployed, 2018-2023, (as of 30.09.2023)



Source: Authors creation according to available data from the Employment Service Agency of the Republic of North Macedonia

As can be seen from Graph 1, since 2018 there has been a constant increase of the participation of unemployed Roma in the total number of the unemployed. The highest share of unemployed Roma in the total number of unemployed persons is 10.19%, in 2022.

In 2023 (as of 30.09.2023), 10 704 unemployed Roma are being registered in the Employment Service Agency. A detailed overview of the number of unemployed Roma by gender, for a six year period, is being given in the Table 3. The data show that the number of unemployed Roma is increasing. However, these data should be taken with caution because they are considered incomplete and reflect the number of only those Roma citizens who registered as active job seekers and who declared themselves as Roma during the registration at the Agency. On the other hand, a precise determination of the increase of unemployed Roma is impossible due to the absence of data on the number of active Roma population.

Table 3. Registered unemployed persons of Roma ethnic origin, by years and gender.

State of affairs on the 30-th of September in the referral year	Roma - Total	Roma - Women	Roma -Men
2023	10 704	5 514	5 190
2022	11 458	5 861	5 597
2021	13 650	6 999	6 651
2020	13 703	6 923	6 780
2019	8 858	4 407	4 451
2018	5 690	2 266	3 424
2017	6 116	2 369	3 747

Source: Authors creation according to data from the Employment Service Agency of the Republic of North Macedonia

The overview of registered unemployed Roma by years, given in Table 3, shows that since 2019, the number of unemployed Roma has a growing tendency, which is worrying if it is known that the total number of Roma population has been continuously decreasing during the same years. Although the unemployment rate at the national level has been decreasing in the past years, the unemployment rate of the Roma is still high and has a tendency to

increase, which is due to the growth of the number of unemployed Roma and the increased participation in the total number of unemployed in Macedonia.

The 2018 Roma Social Mapping research results, conducted in municipalities with a significant number of Roma population, are as follows: the employment rate of Roma is 23%, almost twice lower than the national average, while the unemployment rate for Roma is 67%, calculated as the proportion of the labor force from the sample in each municipality. Compared with the national average, where the unemployment rate is around 22%, the unemployment rate among Roma is almost two to three times higher in the Roma communities (Social Mapping Report, 2019). Among Roma men, the employment rate is 15%, while among Roma women, the employment rate is very low, 8%. On average, 25% of the population is informally working. The frequency for informal working is higher for the Roma males 15%, while for the Roma women is 10%. This indicates that the labor market conditions for the Roma population are unfavorable. Roma rarely have access to full-time jobs, they mostly end up in jobs that are short-term and seasonal, forcing them to look for work in the informal labor market. Such conditions make it impossible for Roma to acquire regular and stable incomes, achieve social security and practice social interaction. Other relevant research for the Roma socio-economic status in the Western Balkans is UNDP-World Bank-EC Regional Roma's Survey. The survey was administered in all six Western Balkan countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Kosovo. Regional Roma Survey Briefs estimates are based on the 2017 UNDP-World Bank-EC Regional Roma Survey. The key indicators of the labor market in RNM, are presented in the Table 4.

Table 4. Labor market indicators for North Macedonia - Regional Roma Survey Briefs estimates based on the 2017 UNDP-World Bank-EC Regional Roma Survey

Labor Market - Key Indicators, 2017	National MK	Roma	Non-Roma
Employment (% of population, ages 15-64)	49%	22%	39%
Labor force participation rate (% of population, ages 15-64)	65%	43%	48%
Unemployment (% of total labor force, ages 15-64)	24%	49%	19%
Not in education, employment or training (% of population, ages 15-24)	24%	67%	27%

Source: Regional Roma Survey Briefs (2019), World Bank

The Fundamental Rights Agency's research findings (FRA, 2022) clearly detect the challenges the Roma community is faced with on the labor market. The following are some of the important findings: 1) 46% Roma with age between 20-64 have declared that their main activity status is 'paid work' (including full-time, parttime, ad hoc jobs, self-employment, occasional work or work in the past four weeks), as opposed to 59% of the general population; 2) The gender employment gap for the general population in Macedonia is 20 percentage points; 3) 60% of the young Roma with age between 16–24 have declared that their main activity is neither in employment, education or training' (NEET), as opposed to 20% of the general population, and 4) 25% Roma have declared that they felt discriminated due to their origin, when searching for job in the last 12 months.

The low level of education is an important determining factor in employability in Roma population. The Roma usually enter the labour market at a very early age, which prevents them to improve their education or training, or to apply for more qualified job positions. The Roma most often belong to the unqualified work force group, which is the weakest and most vulnerable segment of the labor market. The low qualifications of the Roma workforce is the reason why Roma accept unstable and insecure work positions. Certain findings suggest that the Roma have a lower return on investment in education compared to the non-Roma population. The low return from education is correlated with the low level of education, as well as the group attitude towards education in the Roma community. Roma do not see the meaning of investing in education as an opportunity for employment or as an opportunity for higher earnings. The reason for such attitudes is the traditionally low participation in the educational system and the low incomes of educated Roma on the labor market (O'Higgins, 2010).

The policies and measures of the government to improve the inclusion of the Roma population result in some progress, especially in the part of Roma participation in training and skills development programs, intended for unemployed Roma who are actively looking for work in the labor market. But it is necessary to invest more effort in dealing with certain challenges and barriers that prevent progress, especially in the area of employment. Challenges in the employability of Roma are detected on several levels. At the level of policy interventions, it is necessary to address the high degree of segregation, insufficient access to education and lack of professional education opportunities. At the level of social interactions, the challenges refer to the improvement of social networks outside of the Roma community, dealing with social discrimination and gender-based discrimination. Interventions are also

needed in policies to support the private sector for the employment of Roma in companies. Policies of positive discrimination, wage subsidies and employment can stimulate employers to benefit from employing a diverse workforce.

6. CONCLUSION

The Roma are faced with a lot of challenges and barriers regarding employment and underutilized opportunities. The data analysis and the existing policies have determined that a large portion of these challenges are not being substantially solved. A portion of the Roma community, which is on the society margins, is extremely exposed to negative health and socio-economic influences. The labor market discrimination from the employers, as well as, the insufficient competencies and professional qualifications, which makes the Roma non-competitive on the labor market, creates conditions for them to be more active on the informal labor market, and to have low-income earnings.

With the law harmonization, the passing of strategic documents, programs and plans, for socio-economic inclusion of the Roma, additional improvement is expected, especially in the competitiveness of the Roma workforce, employability and the access to the labor market. However, the data analysis about Roma inclusion in various society areas, indicates the need for more effective implementation of the integration policies. The institutional challenges are being located in the area of policies implementation and activities, due to systematic shortcomings, but also, due to insufficient policy harmonization, with the specifics of the Roma culture and convictions. The Roma ethnic group had difficulties with social adaptation, due to the strong cultural norms and traditions, specific living and working habits and habits, which characterize this ethnicity. They usually live in compact settlements, which are mostly Roma, and the population is maintaining strong internal cohesion. These Roma ethnical community's peculiarities, should be taken into consideration, when creating policies and programs for social inclusion, by designing and adapting them, in such a way, that they remove the barriers coming from tradition, cultural norms and values of the Roma.

The successful implementation of the policies and programs for integration, suggests participation of all interested parties. The civil sector organizations, which are in a direct contact with the Roma population have especially important role, and they are the most acquainted with all the circumstances. The non-government organizations dealing with the Roma intergration issues, regularly secure useful practices which could be supported and accepted as national, or local implementation measures.

Finally, for better monitoring and evaluation of the Roma population integration process progress, improvement of the administrative data is necessary. As it is noted in the 2019 World Bank Report, "Breaking the Cycle of Roma Exclusion in the Western Balkans", the official data insufficiency, dissected by ethnicity, are burdening the analysis of the active programs and measures, and limit the possibilities for effective monitoring of the Roma inclusion outcomes.

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