

Project Fiche No. 4

Regional Initiative for Roma Integration

1. Basic information

- 1.1 CRIS Number:** 2010/022-028
- 1.2 Title:** Regional Initiative for Roma Integration
- 1.3 ELARG Statistical code:** 01.63 – Aid to refugees and IDPs or disadvantaged groups
- 1.4 Location and Beneficiaries:** Western Balkans: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia as well as Kosovo under UNSCR 1244/99

Implementing arrangements:

- 1.5 Contracting Authority (EU):** European Union represented by the European Commission on behalf of the Beneficiaries
- 1.6 Implementing Agency:** Not applicable
- 1.7 Beneficiary (Target Group):** Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian (RAE) community

Financing:

- 1.8 Overall cost (VAT excluded)¹:** EUR 3 333 333
- 1.9 EU contribution:** EUR 3 000 000
- 1.10 Final date for contracting:** 30 November 2011
- 1.11 Final date for execution of contracts:** 30 November 2013
- 1.12 Final date for disbursements:** 30 November 2014

This project fiche is the output of a workshop held in Brussels on 18 August 2009, which involved representatives of all the Beneficiaries² as well as the European Commission - DG Enlargement.

¹ The total cost of the project should be net of VAT and/or other taxes. Should this not be the case, the amount of VAT and the reasons why it should be considered eligible should be clearly indicated (see Section 7.6)

² Albania: Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities; Bosnia and Herzegovina: Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees as well as Directorate for European Integration; Croatia: Government Office for National Minorities; the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: Mission of Macedonia to the EU; Montenegro: Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion as well as Mission of Montenegro to the EU; Serbia: Ministry for Human and Minority Rights, Ministry of Finance – NIPAC Office, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy as well as Commissariat for Refugees; Kosovo: Office of the Prime Minister.

2. Overall Objective and Project Purpose

2.1 Overall Objective

To contribute to the integration of minority groups in the Western Balkans in accordance with the Beneficiaries' commitments in the perspective of EU accession.

2.2 Project purpose

To improve the quality of life and access to rights of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian (RAE) communities in the Western Balkans.

2.3 Link with AP / NPAA / EP/ SAA³

The issue of Human Rights and the protection of minorities is highlighted in all European / Accession Partnerships as a short-term or medium-term priority.

2.4 Link with MIPD

This project has been designed on the basis of the Multi-beneficiary MIPD 2009-2011⁴, and in particular Section 2.3.1.2.1 – Minority Rights, protection of minorities and refugee return, which states that one of the objectives to be achieved by IPA Multi-Beneficiary programmes is to *"ensure the protection of minorities, marginalised and vulnerable groups in accordance with EU and international standards and tackle discrimination and the difficulties faced by vulnerable groups following the inclusive labour market and the economic integration occurring in the IPA beneficiaries."*

2.5 Link with National Development Plan

See Section 2.6 as well as Annex IV

2.6 Link with national/ sectoral investment plans

Existing relevant policies and strategies set up by Beneficiaries include:

Albania

By joining the Decade of Roma Inclusion, the Government of Albania has pledged to put more efforts and resources to promote social inclusion of the Roma, as well as improve the living conditions of the Roma community. This involves enhancing cooperation between central government, local government, international organisations, donors and NGOs in order to ensure efficient implementation of the national strategy. Local authorities are also required to develop local plans with a view to fulfilling the strategy objectives, as well as work closely with central institutions and donors to support the development of capacities and secure funding for development projects targeting the Roma community. Monitoring of the implementation of the strategy is ensured at the level of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities

³ AP = Accession Partnership; NPAA = National Programme for the Adoption of the Acquis (for Candidate Countries), National Action Plan (for Potential Candidates); EP= European Partnership; SAA = Stabilisation and Association Agreement

⁴ Com (2009) 4518

(Monitoring Department). The national strategy is currently under review and will be updated accordingly on the basis of broad consultations with interest groups.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Since the National Action Plan on Roma in the fields of employment, housing and health in Bosnia and Herzegovina was adopted, and the Decision on joining the Decade on Roma inclusion 2005-2015 endorsed in July 2008, Bosnia and Herzegovina authorities have been intensively working on the improvement of the social status of the Roma population. Approximately EUR 1 500 000 million have been earmarked in 2009 by the Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees for the implementation of the action plans.

A Coordination Board for Monitoring the Implementation of the Action Plan in the fields of employment, housing and health has also been set up and is now operational. A document called "Methodology and plan of disbursement of financial resources for registration of Roma and establishment of a database on Roma" has been drafted, aiming to ensure that the activities from the action plans should have concrete and measurable results and that they are delivered by implementation of specific projects.

Representatives of Roma associations and other non-governmental organisations have been involved in drafting all the documents related to Roma issues.

The action plans on employment, housing and health are currently being implemented in several local communities/municipalities. The revision of the Action plan for Roma education is also in the pipeline.

Croatia

In order to address the needs of Roma in Croatia in a comprehensive manner, the Government of Croatia adopted a National Programme for the Roma in 2003. In 2004, a Commission was set up to monitor its implementation, headed by the Deputy Prime Minister and including 8 representatives of the Roma community. In parallel with the implementation of the measures proposed in the National Programme for the Roma (NPR), the Republic of Croatia, together with several other European countries has joined the Roma Decade 2005-2015. The Government Office for National Minorities (GOfNM), in co-operation with relevant line ministries, Roma associations and other stakeholders prepared an *Action Plan for the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015* that was adopted by the Government of the Republic of Croatia and published in March 2005. The Action Plan further details the NPR in four areas: education, health care, employment and housing/infrastructure. Each year, the ministries and other relevant government bodies responsible for the execution of particular tasks determine which measures will be implemented the following year and submit their proposals to the Commission for Monitoring the Implementation of the National Programme for Roma. The Action Plan for 2009-2010 was adopted by the Government in July 2009.

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

The government has adopted two very important documents for Roma: National Strategy for Roma and National Action Plans for Decade for Roma inclusion 2005-2015. Both documents were prepared in 2004 and adopted in January 2005 and were

prepared by working groups made up of representatives of relevant ministries and Roma NGO. The Ministry of labour and social policy is in charge of coordinating all activities between ministries in relation to the implementation of the Roma Decade and the Strategy for Roma. For better implementation of the Strategy and the Roma Decade, all ministries have been allocated funds.

Other important relevant strategies include the National Strategy for Poverty Reduction and Social Inclusion (set up by an *ad hoc* multi-ministerial working group) and a National Strategy for Integration of Refugees and Foreigners.

Montenegro

The Action Plan “The Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005 - 2015” was adopted in January 2005, which represents a set of activities streamlined towards the full integration of Roma into Montenegrin society. The Strategy for the enhancement of Roma population status 2008-2012 has been adopted, which encompasses the set of legal, political, economic, social, educational, urban – communal measures and activities in the forthcoming four-year period. The Strategy was developed on the basis of European Union recommendations in relation to human rights and minorities. During the first year of its implementation, in addition to the means allocated by line ministries for the enhancement of the status of the Roma population, the Government secured EUR 400 000 specifically earmarked for the following areas: database, legal status, employment, health care, housing conditions, social and child care. For the implementation of the Strategy in 2009, the Government has dedicated EUR 600 000 for the enhancement of housing conditions. In October 2008, the Statistical Office of Montenegro (MONSTAT), in cooperation with the coalition „Roma circle“ and the National Roma Council, has implemented the research for the needs of the database of the Roma population, Ashkali and Egyptians in Montenegro. The Local Action Plan of Roma inclusion was adopted by the municipality of Nikšić (second municipality in Montenegro according to the number of Roma) for the period 2008-2015. The Government of Montenegro has given its support to the Decade of Roma inclusion by allocating EUR 20 000 to the Multi-donor fund of the Roma Decade. There is a clear commitment on the part of the Government of Montenegro to allocate significant budgets every year for the improvement of the Roma position.

Serbia

One of the main activities, at national level, of the recent Serbian Presidency of the Decade of Roma Inclusion was the adoption of a Strategy and Action Plan for Improvement of Roma Position. One of its priority areas is housing, the following solutions for improved social inclusion of the Roma being more particularly targeted: upgrading the existing regulatory framework; improving legalisation in relation to settlements; ensuring the provision of basic services; upgrading the existing settlements and housing stock; organising relocation; enhancing empowerment and participation of Roma communities and participation.

The Serbian Ministry of Infrastructure has also adopted Guidelines for Improvement and Legalisation of Roma Settlements (now under the competences of the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning). In 14 municipalities, a process for the development of urban planning documentation for Roma settlements has started,

which provides the basis for the improvement of housing conditions. These activities may serve as a model for improving Roma settlements in other parts of the region.

*Kosovo*⁵

While Kosovo is not officially a member of the Roma Decade, it has taken concrete steps aiming to improve the socio-economic and representation status of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities in Kosovo. In December 2008, the Kosovo Government unanimously approved the “Strategy for the Integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities in the Republic of Kosovo, 2009-2015”. A detailed action plan document is being finalised and the action plan activities are being aligned with key documents and activities of the Government of Kosovo, including the Medium Term Expenditure Framework, European Partnership Action Plan, Education Strategy for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians 2007–2017 to name but a few, as well as other sectoral and cross-sectoral strategies. Meanwhile, work is underway to relocate the Roma displaced population who lives in the lead contaminated camps to places with acceptable living conditions. In this respect, the government has allocated EUR 4 000 000 for the 2010-2012 period to support all related activities. In addition, an Informal Settlements Situation Analysis will be initiated in 2010.

The coordination and monitoring of the strategy implementation rests with the Advisory Office of Good Governance, Human Rights, Equal Opportunities and Gender Issues, which is part of the Prime Minister’s office of Kosovo.

2.7 Link with other donors' contribution

A number of interventions, both national and regional, are aimed at improving integration and inclusion of Roma, IDPs and other vulnerable groups in the Western Balkans.

In particular, UNHCR has implemented a CARDS 2006 regional project on social inclusion of and access to human rights for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in the Western Balkans, which was completed in July 2009 and is now being continued via an IPA 2008 programme.

The UNDP has launched a regional project called "*Improving institutional capacity and monitoring capabilities at central and local level for decreasing vulnerability of Roma in Western Balkans*" and other stakeholders have been also active in developing initiatives in the region and Europe in general, including the Council of Europe. Donor coordination is therefore essential to improve local ownership, coherence and efficiency, as well as avoid duplication.

The Decade of Roma Inclusion is yet another key initiative, which involves all targeted Beneficiaries and is supported by the donor community including the EU (see below). This project proposal also aims to support Beneficiaries in fulfilling their commitments to reach the goals of the Roma Decade in a pro-active manner. A Roma Education Fund (REF) was also created within the framework of the Decade of Roma Inclusion in 2005. Its mission and ultimate goal is to close the gap in educational

⁵ Under UNSCR 1244/99

outcomes between Roma and non-Roma. In order to achieve this goal, the organisation supports policies and programs which ensure quality education for Roma, including the desegregation of education systems. The Roma Education Fund is supported by a number of Member States – Austria, Germany, Sweden, United Kingdom – besides Soros and the World Bank.

3. Description of project

3.1 Background and justification

Situation of the RAE communities in the Western Balkans

For the past twenty years, the Western Balkan region has experienced profound institutional, economic and social change. Some of the most significant consequences of these successive upheavals have been a new rise in poverty levels and the emergence of new forms of extreme social exclusion. Poverty is highest among refugees and internally displaced people, as well as minority ethnic groups, such as the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian (RAE) communities. For the latter, displacements have caused further deterioration of their access to basic human rights, thus aggravating their already significant levels of deprivation.

The Roma are particularly vulnerable on account of generally low levels of education and the scarcity of economic opportunities apart from the so-called "grey economy" (meaning that they are usually outside of the social welfare system), but also substandard living and housing conditions (the main problems ranging from the informal character of some Roma settlements to unclear ownership or inappropriate land use frameworks).

These issues are some of the reasons why the Roma are often unable to apply for permanent or temporary residence, but they are also compounded by deep-rooted and institutionalised discrimination, making it difficult for the Roma to fulfil their rights in terms of equality with other citizens. The frequent attitudes of contempt on the part of a number of civil servants, added to the complexity of administrative procedures in order to get personal documents (as well as their associated costs) often lead to mistrust of the Roma population in public services.

Finally, lack of representation, participation and visibility in decision-making processes implies that the Roma have very little chance of influencing decisions or policies that affect them.

Segregation and stigmatisation are therefore common features characterising the RAE communities, which makes it a further cause for the deterioration in their possibilities to escape poverty.

Roma inclusion and cooperation at regional and European levels

An important turning point towards a systemic approach for addressing issues related to the Roma community in Central and Eastern Europe was the conference "*Roma in expanded Europe: Challenges for the future*" held in Budapest in June 2003, during which the participating governments and international organisations reached an agreement to launch the "*Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015*".

The Decade of Roma Inclusion is owned by almost all governments⁶ in South East Europe and has become the key political commitment and action framework to reach key economic and human development outcomes. The goals of the Decade are to close the unacceptable gaps between the Roma community and the rest of society and to work towards the elimination of discrimination through the development and implementation of National Action Plans in the areas of education, housing, health and employment, whilst income poverty, discrimination and gender are dealt with as cross-cutting themes. An important purpose of the Decade is to measure progress in reaching national goals.

"Nothing about us without us" is the mission and value statement of the Decade of Roma Inclusion, its key principle being to support full participation and involvement of national Roma communities in achieving the Decade's objectives. The Decade has become a unique initiative to try and break the routine of the poverty cycle by increasing Roma participation and empowerment in the region.

Inclusion of the Roma and the European Union context

Countries wishing to accede to the European Union need to demonstrate a commitment to tackle social exclusion. The current situation of the marginalised communities like the Roma represents a serious human rights issue in the Western Balkans. The region must work towards the social inclusion of these minorities in order to comply with their responsibilities under the European Social Charter and to fulfil the requirements of EU accession.

In this field, the key EU policy reference is the Lisbon Strategy, one of its main objectives being to make a decisive impact on the eradication of poverty and the creation of social inclusion by 2010. In this context, Member States are required to co-ordinate their policies for combating poverty and social exclusion through a process known as the "Open Method of Coordination". 2010 will mark the tenth anniversary of the Lisbon Strategy and has also been designated as the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion.⁷

Steps have also been taken by the European Union over the past years to boost the fight against discrimination of the Roma. In this respect, the first meeting of the integrated European platform for Roma inclusion held in Prague on 24 April 2009⁸ was a defining moment, during which Common Basic Principles on Roma Inclusion were agreed. These principles were endorsed on 8 and 9 June 2009 by the Council of the European Union, who invited the Commission and the Member States to take them into account⁹ when designing policies to promote the full inclusion of the Roma, but

⁶ Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro are among the founding members of the Decade of Roma Inclusion, along with Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia and other international partner organisations. Albania joined the Decade in 2008 and Bosnia and Herzegovina during the Serbian Presidency (July 2008 - June 2009).

⁷ Candidate Countries and Potential Candidates in the Western Balkans may take part in the activities of the European Year. Cf. Article 11 of Decision No 1098/2008/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 October 2008 on the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion (2010).

⁸ Spain will organise the second Roma European Summit on 8 April 2010.

⁹ The Common Basic Principles on Roma Inclusion emphasise the importance of the gender dimension and the need to combat multiple discrimination (Principle No5), the need to make full use of Community instruments, including financial instruments like IPA as well as coordination instruments like the Open Methods of Coordination (Principle No7), the necessity to work closely with regional and

also to make use of the integrated European platform for Roma inclusion for the exchange of good practice and experience between the Member States and with those countries with a perspective of joining the EU.

3.2 Assessment of project impact, catalytic effect, sustainability and cross-border impact

The project aims to enhance policy convergence and thematic dialogue among the entities and stakeholders concerned by fostering the participation of Roma communities in the definition, implementation as well as monitoring of relevant activities in the region. Involving Roma representatives will be a key basic principle of the project, thus helping to guarantee real impact on the ground at target group level. Through this participatory process, the project seeks to reach a more empowering effect and therefore increased sustainability of the activities implemented as part of it.

The regional dimension has also the potential for sharing knowledge and good practice, and brings greater opportunity for learning than would otherwise be generated through individual assistance projects. Regional cooperation will provide for an ideal platform for peer review, benchmarking and coordinating efforts between existing initiatives, as well as for furthering multiplier effects at all levels. It is expected that the various joint actions and exchanges of experience on measures undertaken by Beneficiaries will significantly contribute to improved future planning and management of the problems targeting Roma communities.

The regional dimension of the project will also ease the introduction of cross-border initiatives. Indeed, most of the causes and effects of social exclusion in the Western Balkans are common to all Beneficiaries. In view of the recent history of the region, with groups of populations migrating or being displaced, several issues in relation to aspects like claims in the fields of social security or simply civil registration, are characteristically of a cross-border nature and necessitate shared responsibility for the design of solutions. The cross-border impact will be guaranteed via the possibility for the authorities involved to expand policy and action coordination – namely in relation to issues like the delivery of documents from public services in partner countries/entities - thus also avoiding duplication of interventions.

By their nature, the services developed by the project have to be supported institutionally. The project will therefore be well embedded in relevant national and local structures. The whole process is long lasting and exceeds the limits of the lifespan of a project, which is expected to cater also for the continuation of the stream of benefits resulting from the various activities. The wider project impact will gradually emerge later when the benefiting institutions start mainstreaming the lessons learned from the actions implemented jointly at regional level. It is expected this wider impact will generally affect the Roma communities and also the rest of society positively.

3.3 Results and measurable indicators

- Results and measurable indicators in relation with *Activity 1*:

local authorities (Principle No8), as well as the essential active participation of the Roma (Principle No10) in the design, implementation and evaluation of the various initiatives affecting them.

- Improved capacity and empowerment among Roma for addressing community issues;
 - New role of Roma community coordinator developed and/or skills of existing community coordinators expanded and number of community coordinators established within local structures;
 - Increased efficiency of public services in dealing with RAE population and addressing related issues;
 - Dialogue and collaborations between R.A.E community and public authorities established and sustained;
 - Cross-fertilisation of experiences promoted and networking between relevant stakeholders supported.
- Results and measurable indicators in relation with *Activity 2*:
 - Skills in the field of legal advice for RAE community expanded;
 - Legal assistance / information systems for R.A.E community set up and efficiency of targeted advice enhanced;
 - Increased pro-activity of public services for the delivery of personal documents to RAE communities;
 - Access to personal documents for RAE community facilitated;
 - Number of R.A.E individuals at risk of statelessness reduced;
 - Coordination between relevant administrative bodies in the region promoted and supported as well as relevant administrative/legal procedures improved.
- Results and measurable indicators in relation with *Activity 3*:
 - Empowerment of target groups in the management of their communities promoted and developed;
 - Living conditions (housing) in Roma settlements enhanced;
 - Situation related to issues of land planning / property documents clarified and/or improved;
 - Access to public services for RAE community expanded;
 - Access to health care for RAE community promoted and improved;
 - Access to social welfare system for RAE communities enhanced.
- Results and measurable indicators in relation with *Activity 4*:
 - Awareness about importance of education and equal opportunities (gender equality) raised within RAE community;
 - Increased awareness among relevant authorities, stakeholders and the general public regarding Roma issues;
 - Perceptions of the general public vis-à-vis RAE modified and improved.
- Results and measurable indicators in relation with *Activity 5*:
 - Cross-fertilisation of activities at regional level promoted;

- Networking between project implementers and representatives of the Roma community at regional level fostered;
- Empowerment of national authorities/bodies in the follow-up of EU-funded interventions in the field of integration of minorities enhanced;
- Presence of relevant stakeholders and visibility, at European level, of regional actions in the field of Roma inclusion in the Western Balkans supported.

3.4 Activities

- *Activity 1* : Develop a regional capacity-building programme targeting a selected number of Roma groups/settlements and relevant (local and regional) authorities dealing with RAE communities, including:
 - Set up a regional human resource development package aiming to train, coach and recruit Roma community coordinators within local structures/authorities (from within the settlements/communities)¹⁰ on the basis of common terms of reference and job profiles agreed by partners (training elements to include fundamental human rights, access to documents, mediation with public services, relevant legislation, ...);
 - Promote networking as well as exchanges of information, experience and best practice between Roma community coordinators;
 - Organise peer review and monitoring of the work performed by Roma community coordinators through regular visits by implementing partners;
 - Put together common protocols/manuals on how to deal with issues in Roma settlements on the basis of lessons learned;
 - Trial and implement a common regional training scheme targeted at local/regional authorities (including decision-makers) on how to plan and develop adequate activities to address issues related to the management of Roma settlements in their areas;
 - Support the organisation of inclusive capacity-building sessions involving all relevant stakeholders (Roma community coordinators, representatives of local authorities and other civil servants, NGOs) about different topics related to anti-discrimination, gender issues, etc.
- *Activity 2*: Set up a regional service aiming to improve the provision of free legal aid to RAE communities and facilitate access to documents, including:
 - Select a panel of legal advisors whose role would consist of providing legal assistance to Roma communities as well as launching and coordinating appropriate administrative procedures;

¹⁰ It is understood that the Roma Community Coordinators are actually representatives of particular Roma settlements, who would be awarded an important role in project implementation. This concept is inspired by the recommendations of the Serbian Strategy for Improvement of Roma Position -to recruit the Roma Community Coordinators to act as technical support and to facilitate improvement of housing conditions of settlements in close cooperation with local authorities and institutions. Other similar experiences are being developed by other beneficiaries in the region.

- Organise joint training for the selected legal advisors as well as other relevant representatives or contact points at central government level;
 - Set up a Roma legal aid info service mechanism (Helpline/Helpdesk), which would act as a regional hub for information on legal assistance on behalf of all Beneficiaries;
 - Organise regional joint sessions involving legal advisors and other representatives of relevant public authorities aiming to improve administrative cooperation at regional/cross-border levels (including "surgeries" to help resolve specific requests for civil registration, access to documents, etc.);
 - Put together recommendations and best practice with a view to informing policies in relation to document provision for the Roma.
- *Activity 3:* Conduct regional actions aiming to improve living and housing conditions for RAE communities, including:
 - Establish a regional programme of small grants for local relief actions (small scale activities in the field of education, environment, sanitation, etc.) based on engagement and initiatives of Roma communities;
 - Organise campaigns to promote free medical services and social welfare coverage for Roma (free vaccination, job opportunity counselling, etc.).
 - *Activity 4:* Raise awareness among the general public on Roma issues and promote participation and visibility of RAE communities in public life, including:
 - Hold public campaigns and other outreach activities and events (based on a set format agreed regionally by partners) on Roma cultural values, Roma rights for housing, social services, health, education as well as participation in decision-making processes;
 - Conduct regional opinion surveys and specific analyses on the situation of Roma.
 - *Activity 5:* Foster regional coordination and active participation of relevant public authorities in the field of Roma inclusion, as well as visibility and promotion at European level of actions carried out in the Western Balkans, including:
 - Create a project regional task force involving relevant authorities at central government level – as well as representatives of target groups and other stakeholders - aiming to ensure close follow-up of the activities carried out by Beneficiaries, as well as effective cross-fertilisation of initiatives;
 - Promote the participation of project stakeholders in European initiatives and events, e.g. European Platform for Roma Inclusion, etc.

3.5 Conditionality and sequencing

Project success will hinge on the following two key conditions:

- Cooperation and commitment of relevant authorities in the region at all levels and active participation of RAE communities, and

- Willingness of relevant authorities to implement the necessary changes in order to alleviate the current conditions of RAE groups.

It is expected that relevant authorities will fully cooperate by enabling the relevant stakeholders to take part in the various activities and by providing easy access to existing information and resources. In this respect, the level of risk is rather low on account of the degree of institutional commitment in the field of social inclusion of Roma (cf. Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015).

3.6 Linked activities

The proposed project activities have been designed to take into consideration the regional dimension of the issue. Projects relating to education and housing and developed and implemented by Beneficiaries on an individual level, complement this regional project. The project should also be seen as a pre-condition for the targeted marginalised groups to legally become the beneficiaries of other projects of a national nature.

Apart from the support to marginalised communities, the Commission has also been active in refugee return. In parallel to the physical return, assistance has also focused on providing sustainable solutions to the refugees and Internally Displaced Persons who wish to remain in their host country. In this respect, the provision of legal assistance to target groups is a common feature of EU interventions for both refugees/IDPs and Roma. Of importance to any EU intervention in this field in the Western Balkans is the fact that the Roma also very often combine the status of minority group with that of refugee or IDP.

Previous or current EU-funded projects targeting disadvantaged communities include:

Prior regional or multi-beneficiary programmes (IPA, CARDS):

- CARDS Regional Programme 2006 - Social inclusion of and access to human rights for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in the Western Balkans
- CARDS Regional Programme 2006 - Support to civil society dialogue "People to people actions"
- IPA Multi-beneficiary Programme 2008 - Social inclusion: regional support to the marginalised communities
- IPA Multi-beneficiary Programme 2008 - Regional Programme for refugee return and provision of durable solutions for refugees and Internally Displaced Persons in the Western Balkans
- IPA Multi-beneficiary Programme 2009 - Regional Programme for refugee return and provision of durable solutions for refugees and Internally Displaced Persons in the Western Balkans

IPA national programmes:

- IPA 2007: Implementation of Priorities in the Area of Human Rights and Protection of National Minority Groups (Serbia)

- IPA 2007: Support to Refugees and IDPs (Serbia)
- IPA 2007: Return, Reintegration and Cultural Heritage in Kosovo - Activity 1: Return and Reintegration of Refugees and IDPs to Kosovo
- IPA 2008: Support for Vulnerable Groups in Bosnia and Herzegovina (includes support to the national Roma Strategy)
- IPA 2008: Roma support project - phase III (Croatia) - Infrastructure improvement in two Roma settlements in Međimurje County
- IPA 2008: Durable solutions for refugees and displaced persons in Montenegro
- IPA 2008: Fostering Social Inclusion by strengthening institutions that provide community-based social protection services (Serbia)
- IPA 2008: Support to Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons in Serbia
- IPA 2008: Support to the implementation of the Roma Strategy (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia)
- IPA 2008: Return and Reintegration in Kosovo
- IPA 2009: Implementation of the RAE Strategy in Kosovo

3.7 Lessons learned

The lessons learned taken from previous and current initiatives call for adapted responses centred on the mobilisation of grassroots opinion and the design of solutions which would serve as ideal targeted tools for increased consultation and participation of the Roma communities. Ownership and confidence building are prerequisites to guarantee the quality and sustainability of the measures taken and eventual conflict resolution.

Assessment of previous EU-funded interventions also indicates that whereas access to personal documents (an overarching objective of the recently completed CARDS Regional project “Social inclusion and access to Human Rights for RAE communities in the Western Balkans”) is a precondition for full citizenship, it is not per se a sufficient condition. In this respect, it is agreed that the prospects for impact of future EU support will be mainly determined by the tangible benefits in the areas of health care, education and housing, to name but a few.

On another level, there is a need to foster active regional coordination between the various authorities concerned at national and local levels. This would mean moving away from a type of EU-funded regional interventions in the field of social inclusion of minorities, which has until now mainly been the exclusive responsibility of a selected number of international organisations, without real linkages with, and active involvement of relevant national authorities.

4. Indicative Budget (amounts in EUR)

			SOURCES OF FUNDING									
			TOTAL EXP.RE	EU CONTRIBUTION		NATIONAL CONTRIBUTION					PRIVATE CONTRIBUTION	
ACTIVITIES	IB (1)	INV (1)	EUR (a)=(b)+(c)+(d)	EUR (b)	%(2)	Total EUR (c)=(x)+(y)+(z)	% (2)	Central EUR (x)	Regional/ Local EUR (y)	IFIs EUR (z)	EUR (d)	% (2)
Grant Contract: Regional Initiative for Roma Integration	x		3 333 333	3 000 000	90						333 333	10
TOTAL IB			3 333 333	3 000 000	90						333 333	10
TOTAL INV												
TOTAL PROJECT			3 333 333	3 000 000	90						333 333	10

NOTE: DO NOT MIX IB AND INV IN THE SAME ACTIVITY ROW. USE SEPARATE ROW

Amounts net of VAT

- (1) In the Activity row use "X" to identify whether IB or INV
- (2) Expressed in % of the **Total** Expenditure (column (a))

5. Indicative Implementation Schedule (periods broken down per quarter)

Contracts	Launch of call for proposals	Signature of contract	Project Completion
Grant	Q2 2010	Q4 2010	Q3 2013

6. Cross cutting issues

6.1 Equal Opportunity

Based on fundamental principles of promotion of equality and struggle against discrimination, taking part in this project will be equally accessible to all, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, religious belief, disability, age or sexual orientation. While implementing the project activities and, to the extent applicable, Beneficiaries will ensure that gender disaggregated data will be made available to carry out an analysis of the social and economic impact of the actions undertaken.

6.2 Environment

Positive impact on the environment and environmental health will be looked into more particularly when activities are related to the improvement of living conditions in Roma settlements.

6.3 Minorities

Tackling issues related to minorities is at the centre of this project.

ANNEXES

- I- Logical framework matrix in standard format
- II- Amounts (in EUR) contracted and disbursed per quarter over the full duration of project
- III- Description of Institutional Framework
- IV - Reference to laws, regulations and strategic documents
- V- Details per EU funded contract

ANNEX 1: Logical framework matrix in standard format

LOGFRAME PLANNING MATRIX FOR Project Fiche	Regional Initiative for Roma Integration	CRIS No.: 2010/022-028
	Contracting period expires on 30.11.2011	Disbursement period expires on 30.11.2014
	Total budget : EUR 3 333 333 IPA budget: EUR 3 000 000	

Overall objective	Objectively verifiable indicators	Sources of Verification	
To contribute to the integration of minority groups in the Western Balkans in accordance with the Beneficiaries' commitments in the perspective of EU accession	The general situation of marginalised women, men and children in terms of access to basic civil rights and social inclusion has improved.	EU Annual enlargement package - Country annual progress reports	
Project purpose	Objectively verifiable indicators	Sources of Verification	Assumptions
To improve the quality of life and access to rights of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in the Western Balkans	<p>Increased level of response and cooperation of authorities at national, regional and local levels and other stakeholders with regard to social inclusion and access to rights for R.A.E communities.</p> <p>Increased number of Roma who have access to free legal aid as well as obtained personal documents.</p>	<p>Country annual progress reports</p> <p>Monitoring reports</p> <p>Databases at central level and international organisation level</p> <p>Conclusions of the <i>Decade of Roma</i> meetings</p> <p>Implementing partners' reports and databases</p>	Cooperation and commitment of relevant authorities in the region at all levels and active participation of marginalised communities in the process
Results	Objectively verifiable indicators	Sources of Verification	Assumptions
<p>Results and measurable indicators in relation with Activity 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved capacity and empowerment among Roma for addressing community issues; - New role of Roma community coordinator developed and/or skills of existing community coordinators expanded; - Increased efficiency of public services in dealing 	<p>Quality and relevance of regional capacity-building schemes and number of stakeholders reached</p> <p>Number of Roma Community Coordinators trained and recruited</p>	<p>Implementing partners' reports and databases</p> <p>Monitoring reports</p> <p>Reports from the field and reports of various organisations and institutions.</p>	<p>Willingness and ability of the authorities and other stakeholders in the region to support legal and social inclusion of the marginalised population</p> <p>Willingness of authorities and relevant institutions to enable implementation of</p>

<p>with RAE population and addressing related issues;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dialogue and collaborations between R.A.E community and public authorities established and sustained; - Cross-fertilisation of experiences promoted and networking between relevant stakeholders supported. <p>Results and measurable indicators in relation with Activity 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Skills in the field of legal advice for RAE community expanded; - Legal assistance / information systems for R.A.E community set up and efficiency of targeted advice enhanced; - Increased pro-activity of public services for the delivery of personal documents to RAE communities; - Access to personal documents for RAE community facilitated; - Number of R.A.E individuals at risk of statelessness reduced; - Coordination between relevant administrative bodies in the region promoted and supported as well as relevant administrative/legal procedures improved. <p>Results and measurable indicators in relation with Activity 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Empowerment of target groups in the management of their communities promoted and developed; - Living conditions (housing) in Roma settlements enhanced; - Situation related to issues of land planning / property documents clarified and/or improved; - Access to public services for RAE community expanded; - Access to health care for RAE community promoted and improved; - Access to social welfare system for RAE communities enhanced. <p>Results and measurable indicators in relation with Activity 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Awareness about importance of education and equal opportunities (gender equality) raised within RAE 	<p>Number of stakeholders involved in peer review and monitoring of Roma Coordinators' work</p> <p>Quality and usefulness of joint manuals/ protocols</p> <p>Frequency and level of networking / exchanges of information and experience between stakeholders</p> <p>Quality and relevance of training for legal advisors</p> <p>Level of collaboration between legal advisors at regional level</p> <p>Quality and usefulness of common legal advice / information systems established, including number of users from RAE community</p> <p>Number of cases of requests for civil registration / access to personal documents resolved as a result of regional collaborations</p> <p>% decrease in processing time for administrative procedures</p> <p>Number of, and level of financial support for local relief actions supported by small grant schemes</p> <p>Number of RAE individuals concerned and positively affected as a result of small grant scheme</p> <p>Level of RAE population targeted / reached by information campaigns on health care and social welfare opportunities</p> <p>Number, frequency and relevance of awareness-raising campaigns and other outreach activities, as well as level of</p>	<p>Public surveys</p> <p>Government and civil society reports and adopted national mechanisms for protection of marginalised groups</p>	<p>activities</p> <p>Willingness of relevant authorities to implement the necessary changes and alleviate the situation of RAE groups</p> <p>Readiness of R.A.E groups to pro-actively participate in the processes</p>
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<p>community;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased awareness among relevant authorities, stakeholders and the general public regarding Roma issues; - Perceptions of the general public vis-à-vis RAE modified and improved. <p>Results and measurable indicators in relation with Activity 5:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cross-fertilisation of activities at regional level promoted; - Networking between project implementers and representatives of the Roma community at regional level fostered; - Empowerment of national authorities/bodies in the follow-up of EU-funded interventions in the field of integration of minorities enhanced; - Presence of relevant stakeholders and visibility of regional actions in the field of Roma inclusion in the Western Balkans at European level supported. 	<p>population reached</p> <p>Number of PI-material and other material produced</p> <p>Level of improved perception of the general public vis-à-vis Roma groups as monitored by surveys</p> <p>Number and level of responsibility/involvement of stakeholders involved in coordination of activities and networking at regional level</p> <p>Number and types of activities at European level in which project partners and stakeholders have taken part</p>		
Activities	Means	Costs	Assumptions
<p><i>Activity 1</i> : Develop a regional capacity-building programme targeting Roma groups/settlements and relevant (local and regional) authorities dealing with RAE communities;</p> <p><i>Activity 2</i>: Set up a regional service aiming to improve the provision of free legal aid to RAE communities and facilitate access to documents;</p> <p><i>Activity 3</i>: Conduct regional actions aiming to improve living and housing conditions for RAE communities;</p> <p><i>Activity 4</i>: Raise awareness of the general public on Roma issues and promote participation and visibility of RAE communities in public life;</p> <p><i>Activity 5</i>: Foster regional coordination and active participation of relevant public authorities in the field of Roma inclusion, as well as visibility and promotion at European level of actions carried out in the Western Balkans.</p>	<p>Grant agreement with a public sector operator or international organisation</p>	<p>Total budget: EUR 3 333 333</p>	<p>/</p>

ANNEX II: Amounts (in EUR) contracted and disbursed per quarter over the full duration of project

Contracted	Q4 2010	Q1 2011	Q2 2011	Q3 2011	Q4 2011	Q1 2012	Q2 2012	Q3 2012	Q4 2012	Q1 2013	Q2 2013	Q3 2013
Grant Contract	3 000 000											
Cumulated	3 000 000											
Disbursed	Q1 2011	Q2 2011	Q3 2011	Q4 2011	Q1 2012	Q2 2012	Q3 2012	Q4 2012	Q1 2013	Q2 2013	Q3 2013	Q4 2013
Grant Contract 1	800 000				1 000 000				1 000 000			200 000
Cumulated	800 000				1 800 000				2 800 000			3 000 000

ANNEX III: Description of Institutional Framework

Improving social inclusion of minorities and the Roma communities in particular is a priority for all Beneficiaries covered by this project. The project will target public authorities, primarily Ministries related to Minorities and Human Rights, as well as other institutions and line Ministries, such as Ministries of Health, Social Affairs, etc. The following is an indicative list of the main target authorities:

In Albania

- Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, and in particular the Technical Secretariat of the National Strategy on Improving the Living Conditions of the Roma Community and the Roma Monitoring Department (its role also includes the promotion of employment among the Roma community);
- Ministry of Education and Science (activities include cooperation between NGOs and government for identification of Roma children or improving the provision of information to parents);
- Ministry of Health (promotion of access to primary health care);
- Ministry of Interior (registration of the Roma population as well as the promotion of opportunities for Roma to join the ranks of the police force and public administration);
- Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Communication (its role includes the promotion of proposals for improving the living conditions of Roma);
- Ministry of Culture (setting-up of an action plan in the field of art, culture, youth and sport for the Roma); Focal Points are assigned within each responsible Ministry;

In Bosnia and Herzegovina

- Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees;

In Croatia

- Government Office for National Minorities;

In the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

- Roma Minister without portfolio;
- Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Department for Implementation of the Strategy and the Decade of the Roma;
- Multi-ministerial working group on poverty reduction and social inclusion;

In Montenegro

- Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Affairs;

- Ministry for Human and Minority Rights Protection¹¹;
- Ministry of Finance;
- Ministry of Education and Science;
- Ministry of Internal Affairs and Public Administration;
- Ministry of Health;
- Ministry of Culture, Sports and media;
- Bureau for the Care of Refugee;
- Roma National Council;

In Serbia

- Ministry for Human and Minority Rights;
- Commissariat for Refugees;
- Ministry of Labour and Social Policy;

In Kosovo

- Office of the Prime Minister, and in particular the Office for Good Governance, Human Rights, Equal Opportunities and Gender Issues, as well as the Office for Community Affairs.

¹¹ The tasks of the National Coordinator for the implementation of the Action Plan for the “Decade of Roma inclusion 2005-2015” are positioned within the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights Protection.

ANNEX IV: Reference to laws, regulations and strategic documents

Relevant laws, regulations and strategic documents related to integration of minorities at EU level include:

- Staff working document accompanying the communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions – Non discrimination and equal opportunities: A renewed commitment – Community Instruments and Policies for Roma Inclusion, COM(2008)420 final, of 2.7.2008;
- Council Conclusions on Inclusion of the Roma 2947th Employment, Social Policy, health and Consumer Affairs, Council meeting, Luxembourg, 8 June 2009;
- The EC communication on Western Balkans: Enchasing the European Perspective, COM(2008)127 final, of 5.3.2008;
- Council Decision of 18 February 2008 (2008/210/EC) on the principles, priorities and conditions contained in the European Partnership with Albania and repealing Decision 2006/54/EC;
- Council Decision of 18 February 2008 (2008/211/EC) on the principles, priorities and conditions contained in the European Partnership with Bosnia and Herzegovina and repealing Decision 2006/55/EC;
- Council Decision of 12 February 2008 on the principles, priorities and conditions contained in the Accession Partnership with Croatia and repealing Decision 2006/145/EC;
- Council Decision of 18 February 2008 (2008/212/EC) on the principles, priorities and conditions contained in the Accession Partnership with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and repealing Decision 2006/57/EC;
- Council Decision of 22 January 2007 (2007/49/EC) on the principles, priorities and conditions contained in the European Partnership with Montenegro;
- Council Decision of 18 February 2008 (2008/213/EC) on the principles, priorities and conditions contained in the European Partnership with Serbia including Kosovo as defined by United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 of 10 June 1999 and repealing Decision 2006/56/EC;
- Multi-Beneficiary Multi-annual Indicative Planning Document (2009/2011);
- Albania 2008 Progress Report;
- Bosnia and Herzegovina 2008 Progress Report;
- Croatia 2008 Progress Report;
- The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 2008 Progress Report;
- Montenegro 2008 Progress Report;

- Serbia 2008 Progress Report;
- Kosovo 2008 Progress Report;
- Multi-Beneficiary Multi-annual Indicative Planning Document (2009/2011);

Relevant laws, regulations and strategic documents related to integration of minorities at the level of Beneficiaries include:

In Albania

- Strategy “For improving the living conditions of Roma community” (decision of Council of Minister’s No 633 dt 18.09.2003) drafted in 2003 by an Inter-ministerial group in cooperation with NGO’s;

In Bosnia and Herzegovina

- State Law on Protection of National Minorities (2003, Official Gazette BiH No. 12/03 and 76/05) - This law, which recognises 17 minority communities in BiH, is the most important document regulating the status of minorities in BiH;
- Law on Protection of National Minorities adopted by the Republika Srpska in 2005 (OG RS 2/05);
- Law on Protection of National Minorities adopted by the Federation of BiH in 2008 (OG FBiH 56/08);
- National Strategy on Roma adopted by the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2005;
- National Action plan for employment, housing and health and the Decision on joining up the Decade of Roma Inclusion adopted by the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina on 3 July 2008;
- Action plan on educational needs of Roma and other minorities adopted by the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina in February 2008;

In Croatia

- National Programme for the Roma (2003);
- Action Plan for the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 (latest annual version adopted in May 2009);
- National Programme for the Integration into the European Union (2009 update);
- National Implementation Plan on Social Inclusion 2009 – 2010 (draft);

In the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

- Strategy for Roma and Action Plans of the Decade for Roma Inclusion (2005-2015): Healthcare Action Plan and Operational Plan; Education Action Plan and Operational Plan; Housing Action Plan and Operational Plan; Employment Action Plan;

- National Strategy for poverty Reduction and Social Inclusion;
- Strategy for Integration of Refugees and Foreigners;
- National Action Plan for integration of Refugees and Foreigners (not yet adopted);
- Government Report "On the way to the EU: contribution of the civil society in creating policy of social inclusion";

In Montenegro

- Law on minorities' rights and freedoms;
- Strategy of the minorities' policy;
- National Action Plan for the “Decade of Roma inclusion 2005 -2015”;
- Strategy for the enhancement of the status of RAE population in Montenegro 2008-2012;
- Local Plan of action for RAE inclusion in the municipality of Nikšić 2008-2015;
- Publication of the database of RAE population in Montenegro;

In Serbia

- Strategy and Action Plan for Improvement of Roma Position;

In Kosovo

- Strategy for the Integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities in the Republic of Kosovo 2009-2015.

- **ANNEX V: Details per EU funded contract**

To be implemented via a restricted call for proposals, following which a grant agreement will be signed with the successful organisation, who will be selected on the basis of criteria reflecting the specific skills and experience needed in the various areas of work.

Eligibility criteria for applicants: Public sector operators and International Organisations.

The grant beneficiary will contribute with a minimum of 10% of the total eligible cost of the project.