

Centre for Economic and Social Studies (CESS)
Rruga “Mihal Duri”, P. 60/1/5, Tirana
Phone/Fax: 355 4 2225316; E-mail: cess@albnet.net

Mapping Roma Children in Albania



Picture from Shkoza Roma settlement in face of social houses

Tirana, November 2011

CONTENT

- Abbreviations
- Acknowledgements
- Executive Summary
- 1. A short background view**
- 1.1. Diversity of Roma
- 2. Objectives and Methodology**
- 2.1. Methodology
- 2.2. Identification of Roma settlements
- 3. Some Demographic Characteristics of Roma Population in Albania**
- 4. Geographic distribution of Roma**
- 5. Education**
- 5.1. Barriers for the education of Roma children
 - Cultural barriers
- 5.2. Importance of preschool education
- 6. Health situation of Roma children**
- 6.1. Causes of poor health situation
- 7. Access to health services**
- 8. Bibliography
- 9. Maps

List of Figures

1. Number of Roma girls by age and civil status
2. Pyramid of Roma population
3. Roma illiteracy level, from 7 to 18 years old, by district (in percentage)
4. Distribution of Roma pupils, male and females in classes during 2011 – 2012 academic year

List of Tables

1. Age structure of roma children
2. Number of unregistered children aged from 0 to 18 years old, based on parents' declaration (in %)
3. Regional distribution of Roma families and population
4. Roma educational level
5. Illiteracy level and average years of education
6. Illiteracy level and school attendance for children aged from 8 to 18 years old, based on settlements
7. Number of Roma children attending kindergarten

Abbreviations list

CESS	Centre for Economic and Social Studies
ECRI	European Commission against Racism and Intolerance
ERRC	European Roma Rights Council
HH	Household
INSTAT	Albanian National Institute of Statistics
MoES	Albanian Ministry of Education
MoFA	Albanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MoLSAEO	Albanian Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities
NGO	Nongovernmental organization
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-Operation
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNHCR	United Nations Refugee Agency
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WB	World Bank

Acknowledgements

We would like to give sincere thanks to many persons that helped realize this study. First a special thanks to the representatives of the Roma community who helped in the conception and implementation of the surveys, interviews and focus groups in all the Roma settlements. We would like to thank especially: Ilmi Ademi (Durrës), Majko Majko (Delvinë), Ilir Gjoni (Pogradec), Skender Veliu (Tirana), Bujar Berisha (Lezha), Ramazan Kurteshi (Mamurras), Klodian Laze (Kuçova), Refit Dule (Levan), Fatos Koçi (Baltëz), Avni Dule (Vlora), Arben Kosturi and Donika Rrapushi (Korça), Fatmira Dajlani (Fushë Kruja), Enver Mustafai (Elbasan), etc. who helped in the survey and interviewing process.

We would like to acknowledge the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) for the support they offered for this study. Special thanks and appreciation are directed to Detlef Palm, Mirlinda Bushati and Drinold Sema (UNICEF) for their great support in: improving the principles that guided this study, conception of questionnaires and for their precious comments during the preparation of the report.

We would like to also thank the kindergarten teachers, school teachers and directors, doctors and nurses of health centres, officials of local government in all the areas where the Roma communities live for their willingness to share information. We would like to also thank Blerina Tepelena (MoLSAEO) and Gramoz Bregu (MoES) for their comments and suggestions on the report.

The collection of quantity and quality data was made possible by a team of the Center for Economic and Social Studies (CESS), composed by Ada Taka, Artjon Pumo, Briselda Reme, Edlira Filaj, Enerida Isufi, Ermelind Malko, Gledia Pojani, Jona Myzeqari, Marinela Isufi, Simela Gegprifti, Nersida Arapi, Oriana Serani, Paola Treska, Semiha Harapi, etc. Some special acknowledgments go to the team who monitored the process, inserted the quantitative and qualitative data, developed the digital map based on the coordinates of the Roma settlements and analyzed the data: Daniel Jaçe; Egest Gjokuta; Naxhi Mamani; Eleina Qirici; Esmeralda Shkira; Petrit Nathanaili, Skënder Duka, and Nadire Xhaxho. Thanks also go to Gjergj Skënderaj and Reshit Sinakoli for their support and the logistics.

The Authors

Ilir Gedeshi
Elira Jorgoni

Executive Summary

Roma are a specific ethnic group, who have migrated from northwestern India and live in the territory of Albania since XIV century. During the centuries they have managed to preserve their language, tradition and culture. Historically the relations between the Albanians and Roma have been cold ones, but in difference from many other European countries, there have been no conflicts or racial persecutions among them. During the post-socialist transition period – due to the collapse and closure of public enterprises, their specific professional character, low level of education and discrimination – they passed from having a relative level of wellbeing to an extreme poverty. Actually they are the most poor and marginalized ethnic group in Albania.

The objective of Roma Mapping in Albania was the gathering of quantitative data in order to identify the locations of the communities, their size, and number of children according to age-groups and the lack of services in the community. It aims to program for the Government, UNICEF and other interested actors the future interventions, in order to better fulfill the needs of Roma children in these communities.

Roma Mapping in Albania is based in some qualitative and quantitative research techniques which include the review of the actual literature, a social-economical survey with Roma families, interviews and group discussions with the representatives of Roma community, experts and key stakeholders.

Demographic Characteristics

Roma in Albania - under the influence of socio-economic and cultural factors - have had a higher level of population growth compared to the majority of the population. The girls are married at a very young age and they become mothers quicker than the other ethnic groups. The average age of marriage of Roma girls, due to the economic reasons and security, has decreased during the post-socialism transition. In 2011, 31 percent of females of age-group 13 – 17 were married.

As a result of higher birth rates, the Roma community is younger than the general population of Albania. The average age of the Roma community is 25.6 years old while 33.9 % of Roma population is under 14 years old and 4.1 percent of the Roma population is more than 65 years old. About 5.7 percent of Roma children are not registered in civil registry offices and therefore they are "forgotten children" and excluded from some social services. Empiric data show that during the past 10 years, fertility in the Roma community is reduced. Besides the economic factor and population migration, one of the causes is also family planning. The average size of a Roma family is 4.6 members and has visibly decreased compared to some years ago due to the decrease of fertility, internal and external migration.

Geographical distribution of Roma

The empirical data show that the main drivers of the internal migration process are unemployment, low income and poverty. Almost half of the surveyed Roma are unemployed and this unemployment is long term. In absence of jobs in the formal sector, they work in the informal one where the trade of used clothes, casual jobs, music, collection of cans and begging are the main sources of income. In the last years the income sources of many Roma families from trading used clothes have been reduced or exhausted due to the demand decrease and competition increase. As a consequence there is a shift of informal work sources from the trade of used clothes to the collection of scrap metal and cans. Currently 42 percent of the Roma work on their collection. The reduction of incomes is expressed in the increase of poverty level for specific groups and strata. Almost 78% of Roma families are categorized in the "very poor" group. Meanwhile, the increasing number of Roma involved in collecting scrap metal and cans increases competition, and in the conditions of limited sources, it reduces the income of Roma families. In these conditions many Roma choose to migrate to other cities where the competition is lower. The internal migration trend will continue even in the future and the Roma families will spread in other areas.

The internal migration is a coping mechanism, perhaps the most important in facing poverty. On one hand migration helps the Roma to survive for a short term period. On the other hand – as we shall see below – it has negative consequences for Roma families and especially for their children. It affects the children's education, health and economic security. Under these conditions their employment opportunities will continue to be limited to unqualified jobs, with high uncertainty and low income.

Education

The education level of Roma has worsened during the post-socialism transition. At the moment 40 percent of Roma population is illiterate while the average years of school attendance are 5.6 years for males and 5.3 years for females. Due to the lack of education, it is difficult for Roma population to be integrated into the labor market, and its capacity, compared to the majority of the population, will decrease in the future.

61 percent of Roma households declared they face difficulties with children's education. Roma parents list several reasons, which relate mainly to poverty. The difficulty to buy books and school items, lack of adequate clothing, poor living conditions and lack of infrastructure, the contribute children need to make in increasing family income, care for younger sisters and brothers, etc., are some of the main obstacles for the education of children. Apart from the above mentioned issues, there are also institutional barriers, as well as barriers related to Roma traditions and culture.

Meanwhile, during the next 2-3 years about 350-400 Roma children per year will reach the age of enrolment into the school system. The education of Roma children is related to their economic, social and cultural future and is the main link to taking this community out of poverty. Many Roma parents are today aware of the role of education. From the economic standpoint this is also beneficial to the public sector, as the cost of education of Roma children today will be significantly lower than the cost of "economic assistance" in the future.

Preschool education is important for the education of the children. 26.8 percent of Roma children aged from 3 to 6 years attend kindergarten. Children who have attended kindergarten fit better to the school environment, when enrolled in elementary school and have fewer difficulties in attaining new knowledge. Preschool education as well as knowledge of the Albanian language are important elements for the future education attainments. The early inclusion of all the children in the preschool system should be universal for all children and be a priority of the educational policies.

Health

The data of the survey show that 5.9 percent of children do not enjoy good health. Almost 5 percent of children have suffered from severe illness and 5.6 percent suffer from chronic diseases. The causes for poor health situation are explained with their difficult living conditions, poverty, access to health services, low education level and Roma culture and traditions (early marriages and births).

In general the health centres in villages and cities are not far from Roma settlements. Hospitals and maternity hospitals are only a few kilometers away. Meanwhile only 58 percent of the Roma state they have health cards and receive services at the health centres. One of the reasons is the poverty of Roma families that cannot afford to pay for health insurance. 37 percent that do not know where to register and do not know the procedures. In absence of health cards, many Roma parents receive medical treatment for their children only at an advanced stage of the disease.

1. A short background view

Some other ethnic groups as Greeks, Macedonians, Montenegrin, Vlachs, Roma and Egyptians, live in the Albanian territory along with Albanians. Their size is still unclear. In the census of 1989, data showed that the other ethnic groups represented around 2 percent of the population.¹ Other independent sources declare that these groups in Albania represent around 5 percent of the population.² Meanwhile a World Bank study on poverty³ divides the ethnicities in two big groups: those living better than the ethnic Albanians and those living worse. The Roma and Egyptians belong to the second group.

According to Cahn, the Roma, a diversified community of people living in Europe, America, Asia and Africa have in common their historical origin, language and culture.⁴ Through the centuries, despite discrimination, racism and assimilation efforts, the Roma have managed to maintain their identity. Differently from other ethnic groups they do not have a historical homeland, no diplomatic representation or bilateral agreements for support and economic and cultural long – term exchanges.

Based on historical, anthropological and language sources, the Roma originate from North India. The studies show that their language, the Romani, is an Indian language, similar to Sanskrit, the language from which it originates as the other languages that actually are spoken in North India: such as Hindi, Bengali, Panjabi, Gujarati etc⁵. The Roma migrated in consecutive waves from North India towards Europe starting from the IX Century A.D.⁶ until the XIV century. Although the causes of this migration are unknown, the path of their migration is known. The few historical documents and language evidence show that the Roma came through Persia and Caucasia, through the Byzantine Empire in the Balkans and from there they spread in other countries of Europe⁷. According to Croatian sources, some Roma families must have reached the Balkans around the XIV⁸ Century and settled in the Albanian territory around the XV⁹ century.

¹ Vjetari statistikor 1990, Tirana 1991

² **Bexoli A.**, Minorities in Albania, Tirana 2005

³ **De Soto H., Gordon P., Gedeshi I., Sinoimeri Z.**, Poverty in Albania. A Qualitative Assessment, The World Bank Washington D.C., 2002

⁴ **Cahn, C.**, ed, “Roma Rights: Race, Justice, and Strategies for Equality” New York: The International Debate Education Association, 2002; **Silverman C.**, Prosecution and Politicization: Roma (Gypsies) of Eastern Europe. Cultural Survival 19 (2), 1995

⁵ **Liegeois J-P.**, Roms et Tsiganes, La Decouverte, Paris 2009

⁶ **Silverman C.**, Prosecution and Politicization: Roma (Gypsies) of Eastern Europe. Cultural Survival 19 (2), 1995

⁷ **Ringold D., Orenstein A. M., Wilkens E.**, Roma in an Expanding Europe: Breaking the Poverty Cycle, A World Bank Study, Washington D.C., 2003

⁸ **Kolsti J.**, Albanian Gypsies: The Silent Survivors, in Crowe and Kolsti eds., The Gypsies in Eastern Europe, Armonk, New York: Sharpe, 1991

During the Ottoman Empire the Roma, as well as most of the Albanian population, were converted to Islam due to economic reasons or by force. While in Moldova and Wallachia principalities the Roma were sold as slaves, and in the Austrian Empire and Hungarian Kingdom their forced assimilation was stimulated, the Roma in the West Balkans – although treated as “second class” population – lived in peace with the other ethnic groups and were allowed to cross borders freely. Koinova explains this with the fact that Roma were only one of the many suppressed minorities in the suburbs of the Ottoman Empire.¹⁰ The Albanian Independence Declaration in 1912 was associated with a relatively better treatment of Roma¹¹, although the social gap between Roma and non Roma population continued to exist¹².

During the Second World War almost half million Roma from different countries of Europe were executed or killed in Nazi concentration camps¹³. The treatment of Roma in Albania was relatively better and there were no concentration camps or ethnic purging¹⁴. Meanwhile some Roma participated actively alongside partisans in the national liberation war.

During the socialist period (1945 – 1990) the Roma experienced visible improvement in housing, education, health care and social services. As Albanians, Roma benefited full employment, although a part of them worked as unqualified workers¹⁵. In villages they worked in agriculture and animal husbandry. While in cities they worked in construction, public services and handicrafts¹⁶. Besides this while the private economic activities, especially after the 1976 Constitution, were legally punishable, many Roma continued their small trade¹⁷ that included selling and buying of horses, handicraft products and other products that they bought in the city and sold in villages and vice-versa, playing an intermediary role between urban and rural areas¹⁸. The participation in these informal activities provided them supplementary incomes and privileged them towards the other groups. As a consequence their relative status compared to the Albanian population improved.

During the post-socialist transition period the Roma – as a consequence of the collapse and closure of state enterprises, their unilateral professional character, low level of education, and discrimination – passed from a relative prosperity to extreme poverty. Currently they are the

⁹ **Koinova M.**, Minorities in Southeast Europe: Roma of Albania, Center for Documentation and Information on Minorities in Europe - Southeast Europe (CEDIME), 2000

¹⁰ **Koinova M.**, Minorities in Southeast Europe: Roma of Albania, Center for Documentation and Information on Minorities in Europe - Southeast Europe (CEDIME), 2000

¹¹ **ERRC.**, Nje rast i panjohur. Romet ne Shqiperi. 1997

¹² **Koinova M.**, Minorities in Southeast Europe: Roma of Albania, Center for Documentation and Information on Minorities in Europe - Southeast Europe (CEDIME), 2000

¹³ **Ringold D., Orenstein A. M., Wilkens E.**, Roma in an Expanding Europe: Breaking the Poverty Cycle, A World Bank Study, Washington D.C., 2003

¹⁴ Po aty, f. 3

¹⁵ **Fonseca I.**, Among the Gypsies, The New Yorker, 25 September 1995

¹⁶ **Taho B.**, Document on the Situation of Roma in Albania, 2002

¹⁷ **De Soto H., Beddies S., Gedeshi I.**, Roma and Egyptians in Albania: From social exclusion to social inclusion, The World Bank, Washington D.C., 2005

¹⁸ **Courthiade M., Duka J.**, A Social and historical profile of the Rroms in Albania. 1990s. A draft paper provided by the authors

poorest and marginalised ethnic group in Albania¹⁹. The studies have showed that their poverty level is almost twice higher than the Albanians' one and this situation has deteriorated²⁰. Although the Roma population has been historically the poorest in Albania, the decline of living standards during post-socialist transition was faster compared to the other population groups. This created a vicious circle that reproduces illiteracy and low education level between the Roma which deepens even more their marginalization in the society.

On the other hand, the post-socialist transition towards market economy and democracy created new opportunities for the Roma to organise, to express their identity and protect their interests. Starting from 1991 in Albania a series of Roma NGOs were established, such as Amaro Dives, Amaro Drom, Rromani Baxt, Alb Rrom, Roma for Integration, Rromani Kham, Disutni Albania, Roma Woman, North Roma, Mother's Heart, Roma Active Albania, etc. Some of them have local character, are fragmented and spread in specific Roma groups or tribes. At the same time some Roma have been elected even as councillors in local units²¹ (Elbasan, Korça, Delvina etc.). Although they participate in various political parties, the Roma lack the direct representation and have no representatives in the public administration to protect their interests and needs.

1.1. Diversity of the Roma

The Roma are organised in groups or *tribes* that can be distinguished from each other from the time and route of their arrival in Albania, socioeconomic professions, lifestyle and customs, linguistic dialects, etc. They are Meçkarë, Karbuxhinj, Cergarë (Rupane and Skodrara), Bamillë and Kurtofë²², who as Liegeois said, form a *mosaic of diversified groups*.²³

The Meçkarë are the second largest, most integrated Roma tribe that has been established in Albania for centuries. They represent around 32 percent of the Roma and were mainly located in the Myzeqe area (in the villages of Levan, Mbrostar, Baltëz, Morava, Lapardha, etc). Currently they are found in the districts of Fier, Lushnja, Vlora, Berat, Tirana and Durrës. The Meçkarë have traditionally worked in agriculture and animal husbandry²⁴, a profession that is rarely found in the Roma of the Balkans. Courthiade and Duka notice that their language has borrowed many

¹⁹ **De Soto H., Gordon P., Gedeshi I., Sinoimeri Z.**, Poverty in Albania. A Qualitative Assessment, The World Bank Washington D.C., 2002

²⁰ According to the studies about 75% of Roma families are "very poor", while for the Albanian population this data reaches to 28.8%. Roma community is distinguished by two extremes: 80% of the families are classified as poor and very poor, while a minority of about 5% has a relatively good economical condition. The poor and very poor families are faced with high levels of social exclusion because they are not capable to face the daily needs and there is a small chance that they become participants into the processes that influence on their individual everyday life such as: employment and education.

²¹ **CRS.**, Project "Roma Participation in Local Elections 2007", Successful Roma Model of Political Representation, Tirana May 2007

²² **Courthiade M., Duka J.**, A Social and historical profile of the Rroms in Albania; **De Soto H., Gedeshi I.**, Dimensions of Romani Poverty in Albania, *Roma Rights*, Number 1, 2002, Quarterly Journal of the European Roma Rights Center, Budapest, Hungary; **Barjaba K.**, Recent Implications of Inter-Ethnic Relations in Albania, *Anthropological Journal on European Cultures*, Vol. 4, Number 1, 1995

²³ **Liegeois J-P.**, *Tsiganes*, La Decouverte, Paris 1983

²⁴ **Milaj J.**, *Raca shqiptare*, Tiranë 1943

words and dialects from the Albanian language, which shows that before establishing in the current settlements, they have been wandering for a long time in Albania.²⁵

The Karbuxhinj (naming themselves Erli²⁶) are the largest tribe and they represent around 51% of the Roma. They migrated in Albania from Turkey and Greece during the population exchange between Turkey and Greece during the '20-es of the last century.²⁷ An old Roma man from a village in Korça recalls: “My father came at the time when the Greeks cleansed the religion (...). The Turks sent them initially to Izmir, Turkey. My father was born and raised in Follorina, but the Turks took them to Izmir and from Izmir they came to Albania (...)”. Courthiade and Duka notice that their language is archaic and borrows more from Turkish than from Albanian. While Mann underlines that their dialect is closer to that of the Roma from Follorina and Thessaloniki.²⁸ Located mainly in Korça, they then migrated towards Pogradec, Elbasan, Tirana, Durrës and Fushë Kruja. Their traditional professions have been horse trade, handicraft works, and mainly works in straw. They represented a group of small merchants. Courthiade and Duka point out that even the Roma called Stravali in Rrapishta and the Roma called Vakërde in Gjirokastra and Berat are subgroups of the Karbuxhinj. The latter migrated to Gjirokastra from Greece in 1944 and remained in Albania after the closing of the borders. The Meçkarë and the Karbuxhinj were popular musicians that used to participate in weddings and other ceremonies.

The Cergarë migrated from Montenegro and Serbia and settled in Shkodra during the '20-es, to save themselves from the attacks of Yugoslavs²⁹. They mainly dealt with horse trading while the women were involved with fortune telling³⁰. Currently they can be found in Tirana and Durrës. On the other hand the Cergarë of central Albania migrated from Turkey, through Macedonia at the beginning of the twentieth century. They dealt mainly with trade of horses, artistic works and copper products (raki cans, pots, copper jugs, sifts, kebabs etc.) which they used to sell in the villages.

The Bamillë are a small group of Roma that came from Ioannina (Greece) in 1945-1946, alongside with the Cham refugees and are located mainly in Zinxhiraj, Gjirokastra and in Levan, Fier. They were tinsmiths that produced kebabs, raki pots and cans, a profession that they maintain to this day. While some Kurtofë came in the '30-es from Bitola, Macedonia and settled in the district of Fier. Some continued to be semi-nomadic even during the socialist period. Their profession were small trade and handicrafts. Courthiade and Duka estimate that most of them have migrated to Greece in the early years of the transition³¹.

²⁵ **Courthiade M., Duka J.**, A Social and historical profile of the Roms in Albania. 1990s. A draft paper provided by the authors

²⁶ The word “Erli” derives from Turkish language meaning “local inhabitant” or “non-nomand”

²⁷ **Hasluck M.**, The Gypsies of Albania, *Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society*, 17 (2): 49-61, 1938

²⁸ **Mann S. E.**, Albanian Romani, *Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society*, Vol. XII, No. 1, 1933

²⁹ **Kolsti J.**, Albanian Gypsies: The Silent Survivors, in Crowe and Kolsti eds., *The Gypsies in Eastern Europe*, Armonk, New York: Sharpe, 1991

³⁰ **Taho B.**, Document on the Situation of Roma in Albania, 2002; **A.T.**, Magjypët e Shkodrës, *Revista Leka*, N. 7, 1943

³¹ **Courthiade M., Duka J.**, A Social and historical profile of the Roms in Albania. 1990s. A draft paper provided by the authors

The Roma were traditionally nomadic, but starting from the '30-es of the twentieth century, most of the Roma tribes gradually turned to semi-nomadic or complete sedentary.³² Their multi-century nomadic lifestyle and mobility had an economic function, was partially structural and conjectural and is connected to their culture³³. In the early '40-es of the last century, Milaj wrote: "A part of them does a complete nomadic life, while the other part has recently started to work in agriculture. The nomads go around in various cities where they trade horses; the women build and sell sifts"³⁴. Describing the nomad camps, Hasluck writes that their tents are of a "simple type", prepared by the Roma women themselves. "A quilt and straw make up a bed for the nomads. A pot and a pan are their kitchen utensils. Thus, based on the need, a donkey can carry all the belongings of (...) a family"³⁵. The Roma eventually settled in stable housing during the 1960-es and 1970-es.

In absence of data from population censuses, the estimations of the number of Roma population in Albania are different and often subjective. They range from 10,000 to 120,000 people (ERRC 1997).³⁶ Compared to some other countries of East and Central Europe as FYR of Macedonia, Romania, Bulgaria, Slovak Republic, Serbia, Montenegro, Hungary, and the Czech Republic, - the percentage of Roma compared to the total population in Albania is lower.

As a result of this fast social and economic deterioration, not only in Albania but in all transitional economies, starting from the last decade the interest of international institutions as the Council of Europe, OSCE, some UN Agencies, Soros Foundation etc. for the Roma has increased. Some of them have recently compiled reports on the Roma situation in Albania, including a World Bank study³⁷ published in 2005. In addition, the 2005–2015 periods has been declared by the World Bank as the "Decade of Roma Inclusion", a 10-year effort to integrate Roma into the European mainstream. In these conditions, in 2003 the Albanian government drafted a strategy for the economic and social integration of the Roma community³⁸.

But why all this increasing interest for the Roma? Even though compared to some countries in Central and East Europe,³⁹ the Roma in Albania represent a smaller percentage of the population, their extreme and increasing poverty negatively impacts the social stability and cohesion. In the meantime, due to high a birth rate the Roma population is growing and this in prospect hinders the solution of their socioeconomic problems. On the other hand, the European Union, in which Albania aspires to integrate, has conditioned the integration process with the fulfilment of some political criteria, where improvement of human rights and socioeconomic conditions for the Roma are also included.

³² **Hasluck M.**, The Gypsies of Albania, *Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society*, 17 (2): 49-61, 1938

³³ **Liegeois J-P.**, *Roms et Tsiganes, La Decouverte*, Paris 2009

³⁴ **Milaj J.**, *Raca shqiptare*, Tiranë 1943

³⁵ **Hasluck M.**, The Gypsies of Albania, *Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society*, 17 (2): 49-61, 1938

³⁶ **ERRC.**, *Një rast i panjohur. Romët në Shqipëri*. 1997

³⁷ **De Soto H., Beddies S., Gedeshi I.**, *Roma and Egyptians in Albania: From social exclusion to social inclusion*, The World Bank, Washington D.C., 2005

³⁸ **Government of Albania.**, *National Strategy for improving Roma living conditions*, 2003

³⁹ The roma population in Europe is estimated to vary from 7 to 9 milion inhabitamts, equal to the population of Sweden and Austria .In some countries such as FYR of Macedonia, Bulgaria, Romania and the Slovak Republic, the Roma population represent from 6-11 % of the population.

2. Objectives and Methodology

Overall Objective: The gathering of quantitative data in order to identify the location of the Roma community, the size of the community, number of children by age group and gaps in community services.

The purpose of this study is to program the future interventions for the government, UNICEF and other stakeholders of interest in order to better fulfil the needs of Roma children in these communities.

Focus

The project seeks to understand and describe the current socioeconomic situation of Roma communities in Albania through several indicators and methodologies. With the participation of the Roma in this process the project will focus in the following areas:

- Identification of location and size of Roma communities;
- Number of Roma children living in these communities by age groups;
- Their access to education;
- Their access to child and maternal health services;
- Birth registration;

2.1. Methodology

From the methodological point of view, this study is based in several research, quantity, and quality techniques. These techniques include:

- A review of the existing literature;
- A socioeconomic survey;
- Semi-open interviews with Roma;
- Focus group discussions;
- Interviews with experts;
- Organisation of a workshop;
- Development of a community profile.

Each of these techniques was used to provide information and to complete and verify the results of information available.

Research team. The research team consisted in researchers and interviewers with previous experience in the field of social sciences. Some of the interviewers were from the Roma community and communicated in Romani language with the family of the respondent. Before starting the *field-work*, the research team discussed the purpose of the study and research methodology during a two-day training course on the survey.

Desktop Review. The research team reviewed all published literature on the Roma. This literature, given as an annex in the Bibliography, includes all the studies and evaluations of the World Bank, UNDP, UNICEF, ERRC, Soros Foundation, etc. on the Roma situation in Albania. The team reviewed also the National Action Plan for Roma population in Albania and other official documents. Besides this, CESS possessed a rich bibliography on the history, culture, tradition and socioeconomic situation of the Roma in various European countries. CESS also possessed quantity and quality data gathered from different researches and studies on the Roma.

Socioeconomic Survey for Roma HH. The research team realised 3,139 *house to house* surveys for Roma families in all their settlements. The survey consisted of 25 questions and provided quantity information on family location, size and structure, number of children and their age, civil registration, education level and information on access to social services (health centres, crèches, kindergartens, schools, economic assistance, unemployment and disabilities benefits, pension for elderly and orphans, food assistance etc.) and their distance from the community. A household survey took an average of 9 minutes.

The survey was filled out with almost all the Roma families that admitted their identity. However some poor Roma families did not accept to be interviewed with the excuse that the results of the survey (as to date) would not improve their difficult social and economic situation. Some rich Roma families (mainly in Elbasan) who saw themselves distanced from the community did not accept to be interviewed. In some large cities like Tirana, Durrës, Fier, Vlora, etc. some Roma families that do not live in the community and are more integrated were difficult to identify. Other families were in seasonal migration, within the country or abroad. For example, in the villages of Korça some families were in Greece for seasonal employment, working mainly in agriculture. In Rrogozhina some Roma families had migrated for short term periods to Kosovo where they sell used clothes, beg or collect scrap metal. Other families were on the move within Albania and could not be contacted from the interviewer. Meanwhile there were cases where a family that was interviewed in Kukës, Peshkopi, Shkodër or Vriion in Saranda was encountered from the interviewer in Fushë Kruja, Kthesa e Ariut (Durrës) or in Elbasan. The dual interviewing of the Roma family has been avoided by entering the name Family Head in the form. The Roma families were open, welcoming and accepted proudly their ethnicity. Only in 7 or 8 cases, mainly in the villages of Kullë and Bishtkamëz in Durrës, there were Roma families, mainly coming from Kosovo prior the Second World War, that refused they belonged to this community. The research team estimates that all these derogations do not exceed 15 percent of Roma families that were surveyed.

In each Roma family a person able to give all the necessary information was selected to respond. To keep a gender balance and to have age diversity, the interviewer was told to select deliberately the person to be interviewed in the family. In many cases the illiteracy and low education level of the interviewees had a negative impact on the information accuracy. For example, often the age of the family members was rounded up or down to the age that ends with zero or five⁴⁰. The same can even be said about the education period etc. In many other cases in the Roma homes no one could be found or there were only children present. Under these conditions the survey was organised in the evening, a time when the Roma family members

⁴⁰ This phenomenon has been encountered also during population registrations, especially those carried out in the 1950s and 1960s

returned from the market of the second hand clothes or collection of scrap material. The research team interviewed also some mixed families – Egyptian/Roma and Albanian/Roma – when they lived in the community or were identifiable. Although part of the research team members were from the Roma community, some Roma associations or informal leaders assisted in the process of surveying – in Lezha, Mamurras, Durrës, Pogradec, Bilisht, Korça, Delvina, Vlora, Fier, etc.

All the quantitative data were entered in the SPSS programme, was checked and then processed by a statistics expert. The quantitative and qualitative data served to draw a digital map of the Roma communities in Albania and a map of their needs. Some data was compared to that of the previous researches by CESS⁴¹, conducted in 2002-2003 and 2005, in order to measure the progress on some indicators.

2.2. Identification of Roma settlements

The identification of the Roma settlements was done in three stages, consecutive and closely related to each other. During stage one the research team based its work on previous research done by CESS, which produced detailed data on Roma communities in 11 districts of Albania from a project of the World Bank and some other donors,⁴² implemented in 2002. During stage two the information was provided from NGOs and informal Roma leaders. The most complete list of urban and rural housing of Roma households was provided from the “Amaro Drom” Association and contained 68 locations. In many cases the figures on the number of Roma families provided by the organizations and the informal Roma leaders were exaggerated and did not reflect the process of internal and external migration. In some other cases (for example in the villages of Rilë in Lezha and Zhej in Mamurras) the families resulted to be Egyptians and these areas are not included in the Roma settlements. While in the third stage the *rolling snow* method was used, meaning the information related to the new locations of the families was taken during the field work from various members of the Roma community. The research team verified all information related to the new locations of the Roma families. There are towns and villages – such as in Burrel, Milot, Përrenjas, Përmet, Erseka, Vlora, Qafë e Vishës (Himara), Narta and Kotë (Vlora), Rrushkull and Rinia (Durrës), Progër and Plasë (Korça), Hundëkuq and Andon Poçi (Gjirokastra), etc – where there were only one to three Roma families, which however have been interviewed and the data entered in the digital map. As a result of the families’ unification, marriages and births, these small communities could expand in the future. In some other settlements – such as in Beltojë (Shkodra), Ura e Drojës (Mamurras), Golem, Durrës Beach, Sulzotaj (Divjaka), etc – the Roma communities were temporary or seasonal. They stayed there for a few months, mainly during the summer and returned back to their settlement. Even the families of these communities have been surveyed. Some of these settlements of seasonal migration could be a sustainable settlement perspective and therefore they have been marked in the map. As a consequence, the list of the interviewed Roma settlements increased from 68 to 108, indicating that the Roma, for reasons that shall be explained in the next chapter, are increasingly spreading in Albania (Annex 1).

⁴¹ **De Soto H., Beddies S., Gedeshi I.**, Roma and Egyptians in Albania: From social exclusion to social inclusion, The World Bank, Washington D.C., 2005; **UNDP.**, The socio-economic situation of Roma in Albania, 2005

⁴² **De Soto H., Beddies S., Gedeshi I.**, Roma and Egyptians in Albania: From social exclusion to social inclusion, The World Bank, Washington D.C., 2005

The research team returned for the survey in some areas. For example in Zinxhiraj of Gjirokastra, the number of Roma families increased significantly in September as some Roma families returned from the seasonal migration to Greece.

Semi-structured interviews with officials and experts. 400 meetings and interviews with representatives of the local and central governments (different ministries, municipalities and communes), school directors and students, doctors and nurses of hospitals and health centres, etc. were conducted in the course of this research on the topics of Roma communities' education, health, etc. Quantitative information on the number of roma children attending crèches, educational institutions, health institutions etc. was gathered during these meetings. The information processed from these interviews needs to be carefully examined as difficulties were encountered in determining accurately the ethnicity of the beneficiaries as for some of the interviewees it was difficult to separate Roma from Egyptians. In some other cases eg. Fushe Kruja the number of enrolled students did not reflect the real number of students who attended the school as they were found as migrants in Shkodra or Kukës.

The interviews provided also qualitative information on understanding the current situation and determining policies to be drafted to increase Roma children's access to services. All names cited in the study are fictitious. All interviews are recorded and transcribed.

Semi-structured interviews with representatives of Roma community. More than 120 interviews were conducted with men, women and children of the Roma community. Some interviews were conducted with representatives of Roma NGOs and informal community leaders. The interviews aimed at understanding the socioeconomic status and the needs of this community in providing services for children. Parts of the interviews are presented in the report aiming to give it a more human and more compelling character. All the names cited in the study are fictitious. All interviews are recorded and transcribed.

Focus group discussions. The research team facilitated 9 focus group discussions through semi-structured questions. 7 to 12 persons of different ages and socioeconomic level attended in each of the focus groups.

Some Demographic Characteristics of the Roma in Albania

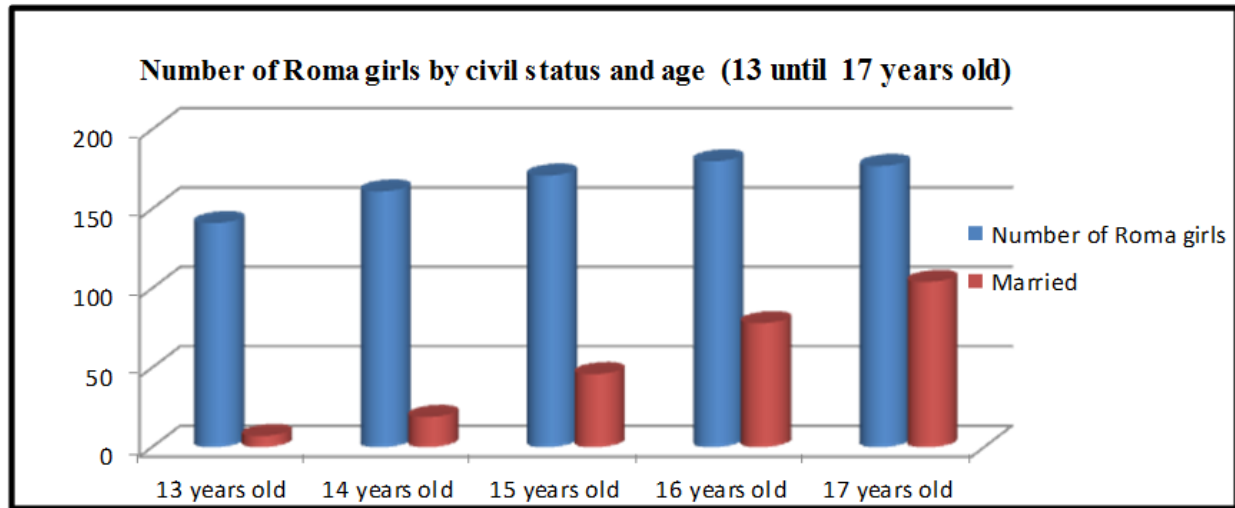
The Roma in Albania historically had a greater population increase compared to the other ethnic groups. In the '30-es Hasluck wrote that Roma women "give birth more than once in three years."⁴³ This is explained by poverty, low educational level and cultural factors. The Roma girls *marry*⁴⁴ at a much younger age and become mothers earlier than the other ethnic groups. The studies show that for economic and safety reasons (kidnapping and trafficking) during the post-socialist transition the average marriage age for Roma girls decreased. A World Bank study, undertaken in 2002-2003 showed that the average marriage age for Roma girls was 15.5 years of age, while the average age for giving birth to their first child was 16.9 years of age. The study points out that these ages have decreased by around 2 years compared to the period prior the

⁴³ **Hasluck M.**, The Gypsies of Albania, Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society, 17 (2): 49-61, 1938

⁴⁴In Albania the official marriage age is 18 years for males and females.

transition⁴⁵ and recalls the rates that existed almost 50 years ago.⁴⁶ In 2011, 31 percent of females of the 13 to 17 year old age group were married or lived together (Figure 1). This phenomenon is more spread in the Cergarë and Karbuxhinj, especially in Shkodra, Fushë Kruja, Kthesa e Ariut, Rrapishta, etc.

Figure 1. Number of Roma girls by civil status and age



Source: Survey with Roma families, 2011

As a result of higher birth rates, the Roma community is younger than the general population in Albania. The average age of the Roma community is 25.6 years old. The survey data show that in 2011, 33.9 percent of Roma population is under 14 years old, while according to the Population Census of 2001, for the general population in Albania this figure is 29.3 percent. On the other hand, only 4.1 percent of the Roma population is more than 65 years old, while for the general population this figure is 7.5 percent⁴⁷. The young age of the Roma population can be also seen in the age pyramid, where the majority of the population is concentrated at its base (Figure 2).

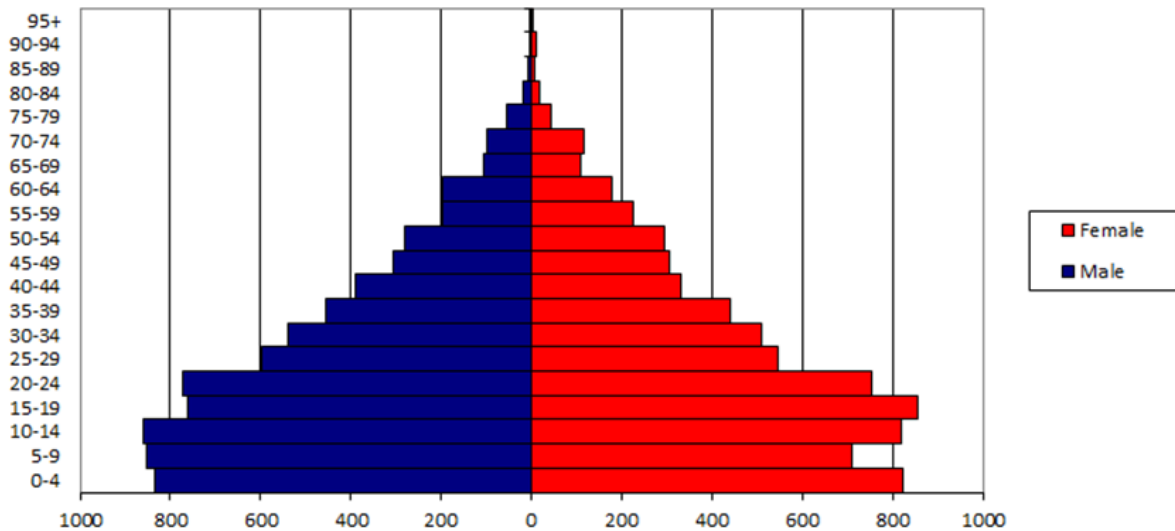
Figure 2. Pyramid of the Roma population

⁴⁵ De Soto H., Beddies S., Gedeshi I., Roma and Egyptians in Albania: From social exclusion to social inclusion, The World Bank, Washington D.C., 2005

⁴⁶ Courthiade M., Duka J., A Social and historical profile of the Roms in Albania. 1990s. A draft paper provided by the authors

⁴⁷ INSTAT, Popullsia e Shqipërisë në 2001, Tiranë, 2002

Pyramid of the Roma population



Survey with Roma families, 2011

Empiric data show that during the past 10 years, fertility in the Roma community is likely to have reduced. Besides the economic factor and population migration, one of the causes is also family planning. The surveys show that the use of contraceptives has increased. In 2003 only 10 percent of the Roma used contraceptives⁴⁸, while in 2011 this number has doubled (23 percent). Ermira, a family planning worker in Gose, Kavaja, shows: “There are many Roma women who take contraceptives in the form of injection with Depo-Provera... Its effect lasts 3 months and then it needs to be repeated. Many of them do this without the knowledge of their husbands, who often come home drunk...” The survey shows that however abortion rates remain high. Almost 53 percent of the Roma women have had an abortion and 75 percent of them have had two or more.

The average size of a Roma family is 4.6 members and has visibly decreased compared to some years ago. In 2003, the World Bank study estimated that the average size of the Roma family was 6.4 members.⁴⁹ Besides fertility reduction, another impact comes from the internal and external migration. Many Roma youngsters that have migrated with their family within and outside the country have left their parents in their native land. However the average size of the Roma household remains higher than the one of the general population that according to the Census of 2011 was 3.8 members.⁵⁰

Roma generally migrate with their families. Selameti, a Roma from the Myzeqe area, explains: “Traditionally, unlike the Egyptians, a Roma does nothing without his wife. Even when begging, husband and wife go together. If the husband takes his family when migrating, he doesn’t need to go back and

⁴⁸ De Soto H., Beddies S., Gedeshi I., Roma and Egyptians in Albania: From social exclusion to social inclusion, The World Bank, Washington D.C., 2005

⁴⁹ De Soto H., Beddies S., Gedeshi I., Roma and Egyptians in Albania: From social exclusion to social inclusion, The World Bank, Washington D.C., 2005

⁵⁰ INSTAT, Albania, Preliminary result of population and housing census, December 2011

forward." Meanwhile even the quantitative data show that a small number of individuals (3.6 percent) do not live together with their family.

Tabela 1. Age structure of Roma children

Nr	Group-ages	Number of Roma children	In percentage
1	0 up to 35 months	917	14.6
2	3 up to 6 years	1451	23.0
3	6 up to 11 years	1577	25.0
4	11 up to 18 years	2359	37.4
	Totali	6304	100

Source: Survey with Roma families, 2011

Children represent 43,3% of the roma population. (table 1). Part of them are not registered in civil registry offices and therefore are "forgotten children", excluded from some social services.⁵¹ The survey shows that in 2011, about 359 children or 5.7 percent of children aged from 0 to 18 were not enrolled. This phenomenon, manifested during the post-socialist transition, due to marriages at a young age (not legal), divorces, poverty and low educational level, internal and external migration, is more diffused in the Karbuxhinj than in the Meckarë. This phenomenon is more enhanced in Tirana, Fushë Kruja, Fier (Roma village, Levan, etc.), Shkodra, Berat (Uznove, Morava), Elbasan (Rrapishta) and Korça (Table 2).

Refija, a Roma from Shkoza, speaks on her case: "My granddaughter, the daughter of my daughter, is not registered. She was born in Kosovo and my daughter, instead of reporting her husband's surname, gave her own. The girl is almost 2 and half years old and she is not registered yet. "In the meantime Meleqe, a Roma woman from Elbasan, makes another case: "The boy was born in Greece, at the maternity hospital. But I got no certificate as I left immediately. They told me to go the next day but I didn't. Then the police caught me and I returned to Albania. I could not take my documents." Another Roma woman, Shpresa from Rrapishta, Elbasan states: "The children are not registered, because my husband has had them with his first wife. But I have raised them. I went to register them, but they said they needed documents from the children's mother. She is now married in Gjirokastra ..."

Table 2. Number of unregistered children aged from 0 to 18, based on parents' declaration

District	Number of unregistered children	Number of unregistered children (in %)	District	Number of unregistered children	Number of unregistered children (in %)
Berat	38	10,6	Kurbin	4	1,1
Delvinë	0	0	Lezhë	3	0,8
Devoll	6	1,7	Lushnje	10	2,8
Dibër	1	0,3	Mat	0	0
Durrës	14	3,9	Peqin	0	0
Elbasan	21	5,9	Përmet	2	0,6
Fier	42	11,7	Pogradec	6	1,7
Gjirokastrë	12	3,3	Sarandë	13	3,6
Kavajë	7	1,9	Shkodër	41	11,4
Korçë	21	5,8	Tiranë	59	16,4

⁵¹ UNICEF., Situation of Albanian Children 2006, Tirana 2007

Krujë	44	12,3	Vlorë	7	1,9
Kuçovë	4	1,1			
Kukës	4	1,1	Totali	359	100

Source: Survey with Roma families, 2011

3. Geographical Distribution of Roma

Migration has been a constant in the history of the Roma, as it is also described by the symbol of the wheel in their flag. In Albania, Roma have migrated even after their establishment in constant settlements during the socialist period. The Roma living in the villages around Delvina moved into town. Other families have moved from village to village, from the village to town and vice versa. The trajectory of their movement was from the lower income areas towards the ones with higher income. Ilmi, a Roma from Xhafzotaj village tells us the odyssey of his family: “My grandfather was born in Libofsh, Fier and came to the Shijak area. From there we moved to Tirana and from Tirana we went to a place called Urë Zezë, in Fushë-Kruja. There we lived as a stabilized family in cabins, not in tents and we all were in the music business. In 1960 my grandfather was called to work as a professional for the Sukth Variety Company. My grandfather was sought after by everyone as he was famous for his music. They came to take my grandfather and his entire family and we were placed in Xhafzotaj. Then we settled here.”

The survey data show that in the first years of the post-socialist transition, 17.2 percent of the Roma changed residence due to economic and social factors or under the pressure of the majority. So, the Roma migrated from Halil village in Fushë-Kruja, from the city of Berat to Elbasan, from other cities to Tirana etc. This migration has continued with high intensity even during the last 10 years. According to the survey, 30.3 percent of the Roma have migrated to Tirana, Shkodra, Milot, Kukës, Peshkopia, Kavaja, Saranda, Gjirokastra, Përmet, Himara, etc. Many of the Roma families currently live in camps, lacking the necessary infrastructure and in very difficult socioeconomic conditions. Others move within the region, from village to town or from village to village. Therefore the Roma are spreading in the whole country hand have changed the map of their locations (Table 3).

Table 3. Regional distribution of Roma families and population

N	Districts	Population	Percentage	Families	Average size of the family
1	Berat	771	5.3	163	4.7
2	Delvina	203	1.4	51	3.9
3	Devoll	342	2.4	83	4.1
4	Diber	84	0.6	16	5.3
5	Durres	990	6.8	211	4.7
6	Elbasan	1114	7.7	235	4.7
7	Fier	2311	15.9	494	4.7
8	Gjirokastra	382	2.6	82	4.7
9	Kavaja	248	1.7	44	5.6
10	Kolonja	7	0.0	2	3.5
11	Korça	1324	9.1	290	4.6
12	Kruja	713	4.9	124	5.8
13	Kucova	187	1.3	38	4.9

14	Kukes	64	0.4	13	4.9
15	Kurbin	115	0.8	29	4.0
16	Lezha	223	1.5	51	4.4
17	Librazhd	1	0.0	1	1.0
18	Lushnja	658	4.5	146	4.5
19	Mat	15	0.1	3	5.0
20	Peqin	150	1.0	28	5.4
21	Permet	15	0.1	3	4.5
22	Pogradec	526	3.6	121	4.3
23	Saranda	168	1.2	39	4.3
24	Shkodra	443	3.1	92	4.8
25	Tirana	3022	20.6	665	4.5
26	Vlora	488	3.4	116	4.2
	Total	14564	100.0	3139	4.6

Source: Survey with Roma families, 2011

Note: This table should be interpreted with caution because it reflects only the results of a survey conducted with Roma families.

Others migrate temporarily in spring and summer, living in temporary camps. Such camps are found in Beltojë (Shkodra), Ura e Drojës (Mamurras), Ura e Farkës (Tirana), in Golem, in Shkozë, near NISH Tulla (former brick production site) and next to the Durres port, in Vrion (Saranda), entrance of Erseka, and in Sulzotaj (Divjaka).

The following map gives all the locations of the Roma in Albania by number of families and their stable or temporary character (Map 1).

Even though mobility is noticed in all the Roma communities, its main hearths are Fushë Kruja, Kthesa e Ariut, Tirana, Rrapishta in Elbasan, village of Gosë in Kavaja, Rrom village in Fier, Peqin, Cërrik, Berat, Rrogozhina and less in Bilisht, Korça, etc. At the moment of the survey the Roma of Fushë Kruja were in Shkodra, Beltoja, Ura e Drojës, Kukës, Peshkopi, Milot, Ura e Dajlanit, Vrion in Saranda, etc. The Roma from Rrapishta were in Shkodër, Fushë Ali and Shupenza in Peshkopia, Farka and Shkoza in Tirana, Shkozë in Durrës, Saranda, Qafë e Vishës in Himara, etc. While the Roma from Bilisht during the summer 2011 were found in Shkozë in Durrës, in Erseka, etc. The questions that arise are numerous. Why has the Roma population mobility increased in recent years, especially in some specific sites, and what pushes them? What is the impact that these processes have in terms of children's living conditions, education and health? Will these movements of the Roma population continue in the future or are they simply sporadic processes related maybe to a return to their "traditional" or nomadic way of living? And of course, what practical conclusions should we draw?

The empirical data show that the main drivers of the internal migration process are unemployment, low income and poverty. Almost half of the surveyed Roma are unemployed and this unemployment is long term. In absence of jobs in the formal sector, they work in the informal one where the trade of used clothes, casual jobs, music, collection of cans and begging are the main sources of income. The trading of used clothes since 1991 has been the main source of household incomes, especially for the Karbuxhinj and Cergarë that by tradition are small

merchants. Meanwhile since 2005 some researchers have warned that “these incomes are decreasing” and if “viable alternatives are not developed, their future economic welfare is in jeopardy⁵²”. In the last years the income sources of many Roma families from trading used clothes have been reduced or exhausted due to the demand decrease and competition increase. Skënder, a Roma trader from Durrës, explains the causes of this situation: “We, Roma, have traditionally dealt with trading, i.e. used and new clothes, shoes, fabric, etc. But for some years commerce is in constant decline as the purchasing power has decreased. Some years ago my turnover was around 12,000-15,000 Lek per day, whereas now it is only 2,000 Lek per day. (...) There are areas such as Elbasan, Fushë-Kruja, etc. where the trading of used clothes is almost over and the Roma are turning to can collection. (...) The situation has hit rock bottom, it is deteriorating”. While Pranvera from Fushë Kruja speaks for her community: “Since the beginning of the transition, we all started the trade of used clothing, which was the main source of income in our community. I used to go to the market with my two sons. (...) Now there are only two families from our community that continue trading used clothes and I have not been at the market for months. (...) The boys in Fushë-Kruja now collect scrap metal and cans”.

The survey data show also that there is a shift of informal work sources from the trade of used clothes to the collection of scrap metal and cans. Currently 42 percent of the Roma work on their collection. Adem, a Roma informal leader, divides the collectors of cans and scrap metal in two groups: those who have motorcycles and those that search in the garbage bins. The first ones have higher incomes, while the latter simply survive.

The reduction of incomes is expressed in the increase of poverty level for specific groups and strata. A comparison of two surveys conducted in 2003 and 2011⁵³, showed that the poverty level in Roma families continues to be very high. Almost 78% of Roma families are categorized as “very poor” (Table 4). Empirical data show that the poverty is higher in Fushë Kruja, Rrapishta, Kthesa e Ariut, Shkoza, Rrom Village, in Uznova in Berat, etc., which explains also the high intensity of internal migration in these areas.

Table 4. Self-definition of socioeconomic conditions in 2003 and 2011

N	Assessment of socioeconomic conditions	2003	2011	Socioeconomic category
1	We cannot even feed ourselves	40	27.3	Very poor
2	We have enough money to survive	35	50.4	Very poor
3	We have money for food but not for clothes	7	6.1	Poor
4	We have enough money to meet the main needs	14	14	Not poor
5	We have enough money to be able to save	4	2.1	In relative good condition
	Total	100	100	

Source: Survey with Roma families, 2011

Meanwhile, the increasing number of Roma involved in collecting scrap metal and cans increases competition, and in the conditions of limited sources, it reduces the income of Roma families. In these conditions many Roma choose to migrate to other cities where the competition

⁵² De Soto H., Beddies S., Gedeshi I., Roma and Egyptians in Albania: From social exclusion to social inclusion, The World Bank, Washington D.C., 2005

⁵³ De Soto H., Beddies S., Gedeshi I., Roma and Egyptians in Albania: From social exclusion to social inclusion, The World Bank, Washington D.C., 2005; UNDP., Needs assessment of the Roma and Egyptian communities in Albania, 2011

is lower. Arben, a Roma from Tirana who migrated to Peshkopia explains: “Here there is more work and not so much competition as in Tirana ...“. But there are also other reasons for Roma migration. Avni, a Roma from Elbasan living for several years in Shkodra, says: “I come from Elbasan and I collect cans, scrap metal, and batteries every day. Meanwhile my wife begs in the city. In Elbasan I was ashamed to work with scrap metal and I stayed home. But here I do not know anyone and I go to work.” On the other hand Donika from Bilisht who migrated with her family to Erseka gives a different reason: “We left because we had many debts in the shops and no one gave us more goods or food. Here we work all day long in villages collecting scrap metal. When we collect enough money to pay our debts, we will go back.”

The following map gives the main migration directions of Roma families. (Map 2).

In many of the new settlements, the Roma live in camps, consisting of tents or huts located mainly on the rivers banks. The size of the camp varies according to the area. In Tirana (Shkoza, Farka, etc.) and Shkodra camps are large and consist of 20 to 50 tents/huts. In Kukës, Peshkopi, Shupenza, Beltoja, Vriion, etc. they consist of 10 to 20 tents/huts, while in Fushë Ali, Qafë e Vishës, Ersekë, etc from 2 to 5 tents. In some other settlements, such as Saranda and Milot, the Roma have put up their tents in former abandoned warehouses, paying rent to their owners. In small settlements the Roma are often members of a family or a tribe. In Beltoja, Halim, a Cergar from Kulla, says: “Here we are one blood. I have eight children here. I have also my son-in-law. I have a big family here”. While in the big settlements the Roma families come from different areas of Albania. All live primarily with the income from collection and sale of metal and plastic items and cans, while women and young children beg.

The internal migration trend will continue even in the future and the Roma families will spread in other areas. The internal migration is a coping mechanism, perhaps the most important in facing poverty. On one hand migration helps the Roma to survive for a short term period. On the other hand – as we shall see below – it has negative consequences for Roma families and especially for their children. It affects the children’s education, health and economic security. Their employment opportunities will continue to be limited to unqualified jobs, with high uncertainty and low income. As a consequence even in the future the Roma will be caught in the poverty trap.

4. Education

Historically the Roma in Albania, as in other European countries, are characterized by a low level of education. The tradition of being nomads and the particular way of living, poverty and discrimination are some of the main factors that explain this situation. In the 1930-es, when describing the Roma nomadic culture, Hasluck noted that sometimes they “settled in a city for several months” but then returned again to the “tent life”⁵⁴. In these conditions the education of a child was something hard. Hekuran, an old Karbuxhi from Elbasan gives the same opinion when he says: “Previously we did not go to school. Our parents wandered from one village to another and my brothers and I could not attend school”.

Roma education level improved significantly during the socialist period as a result of the measures taken to integrate them in society. The placement of Roma in stable settlements during the '60-es, fully guaranteed employment; housing and improvement of living standards were

⁵⁴ **Hasluck M.**, The Gypsies of Albania, Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society, 17 (2): 49-61, 1938

reflected in the increase of their education level. The empirical data show that the illiteracy level for Roma individuals currently age 35 to 45, meaning the ones introduced in the educational institutions during the 1973 to 1983, decreased to 30.6 percent. In the meantime for the ones that continued school, the average schooling period was 6.6 years. 25.1 percent of Roma belonging to this age group have primary education, 33.5 percent middle school education, 3.5 percent secondary education and 0.3 percent higher education.

During the post-socialist transition, the Roma educational level – as in other countries of Central and Eastern Europe⁵⁵ - deteriorated. High unemployment and poverty, discrimination and social exclusion reflected in the lowering educational level. The Roma population is characterized by illiteracy (40.3 percent), completed (25.9 percent) and incomplete (14.9 percent) primary education, while very few have completed middle school education (16.1 percent) and secondary education (2.1 percent). The average schooling period is 5.6 years for males and 5.3 for females.⁵⁶ In the meantime a comparison with the majority population shows that the gap is very large (Table 5). In absence of education for the Roma population it is difficult for them to integrate into the labour market and their abilities compared to the majority population will continue to decrease.

Table 5. Roma educational level

N		Roma Population (8 years and above)	Population of Albania (2001)*
1	Illiterate*	40.3	1.6
2	Literate (know how to write and read)	41.2	14.8
3	Completed middle school education	16.1	57.0
4	High school education	2.1	21.7
5	University education	0.3	4.9
6	Average schooling years (males)	5.6	n.a
7	Average schooling years (females)	5.3	n.a

Source: Survey with Roma families, 2011; *INSTAT, Population of Albania, 2001

Note: * Persons who do not know how to read and write as they did not ever attend a scholastic year.

Despite an improvement in the educational level of the Roma during 2000-es, compared to the first decade of transition, illiteracy remains very high (Table 6). In some districts of Albania – as in Shkodra, Peshkopia, Kukës, Milot etc – the level of literacy for children aged between 7 and 18 has probably become worse with the beginning of the 2000s (Figure 3).

Table 6. Level of illiteracy and average education years

	Period 1991-2000	Period 2001-2010
Illiteracy level*	52.4%	34.4%
Average education years	5.5 years	4.2 years

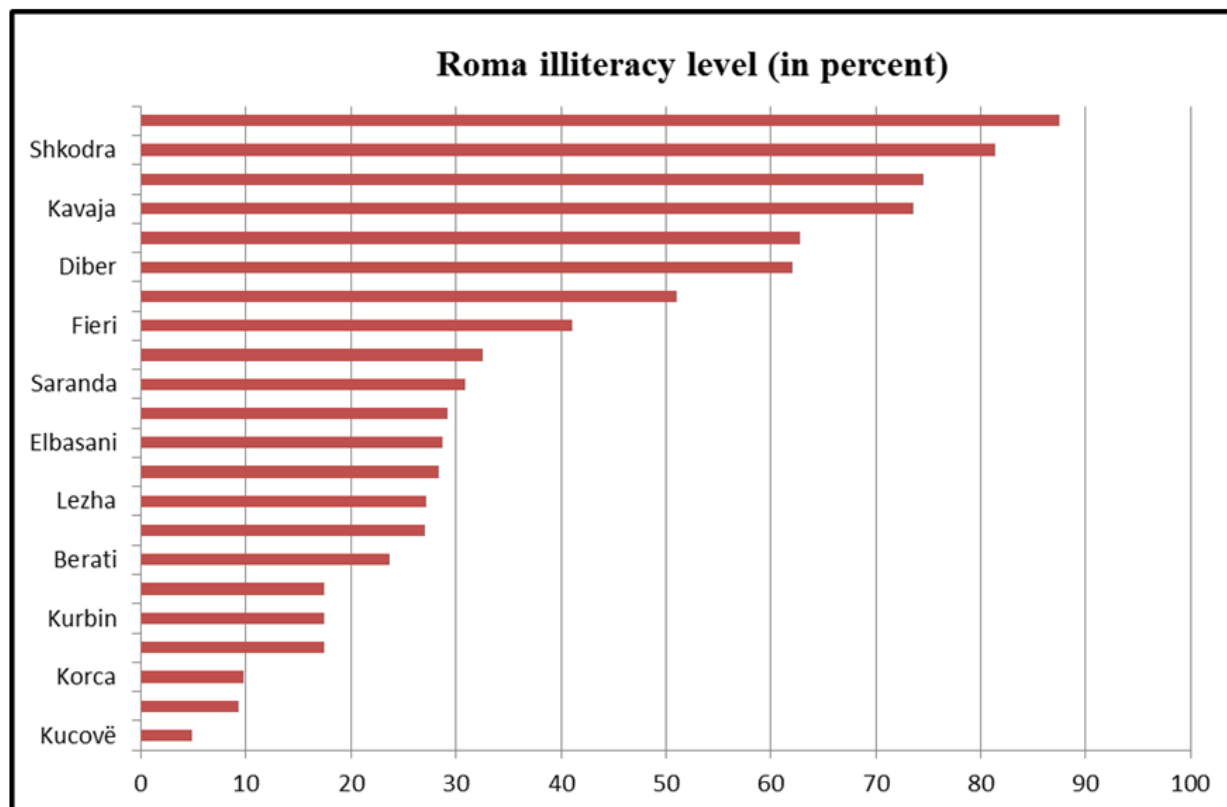
Source: Survey with Roma families, 2011

⁵⁵ Ringold D., Orenstein A. M., Wilkens E., Roma in an Expanding Europe: Breaking the Poverty Cycle, A World Bank Study, Washington D.C., 2003

⁵⁶ Calculation done only from those who have attended (or attend) school

Note: * Persons that do not know how to read and write. The illiteracy level has been measured comparing for each period the number of persons (from 7 to 18 years old) that have not attended a school with all persons of the same age group.

Figure 3. Roma illiteracy level, from 7 to 18 years old, by district (in percentage)



Source: Survey with Roma families, 2011

Note: This graph should be interpreted with caution because often the numbers do not reflect reality. For example in Gjirokastra it is stated that the level of illiteracy is 52 percent. But from the two Roma communities living there, one has a level of illiteracy of over 90 percent.

This high level of illiteracy, which will continue to reproduce poverty in the future, is spreading through internal migration to other areas of the country, where Roma have created *pockets* (sites) completely isolated from the rest of the population. In Gjirokastra, for example, 15 Roma families that migrated from Korça, live from several years in huts by the river bank in the place called 'former grocery market'. Out of 15 children in this community aged between 7 and 18, only one goes to school.

5.1. Barriers to the education of Roma children

61 percent of Roma households declared they face difficulties with children's education. Roma parents list several reasons, which relate mainly to poverty. The difficulty to buy books and school items, lack of adequate clothing, poor living conditions and lack of infrastructure, the

contribute children need to make in increasing family income, care for younger sisters and brothers, etc., are some of the main obstacles for the education of children. Apart from the above mentioned issues there are also institutional barriers, as well as barriers related to Roma traditions and culture.

Table 7. Illiteracy level and school attendance for children aged from 8 to 18, based on location

District	Number of children (8 to 18 years old)	Illiteracy level	Do not go to school	In percentage
Shkodra	102	81.4	95	93.1
Beltoja	11	81.8	11	100
Peshkopi	16	68.8	15	93.8
Kukës	16	87.5	14	87.5
Fushë Ali	8	25	7	87.5
Shupenza	5	100	5	100
Farka (Tirana)	24	50	21	87.5
Qafë e Vishës (Himara)	4	75	4	100
Gjirokastra (grocery market)	12	41.7	11	91.7
Vrion	7	57.1	6	85.7
Kavaja	6	83.3	6	100
Total	211	72.5	195	92.4

Source: Survey with Roma families, 2011

Cultural barriers

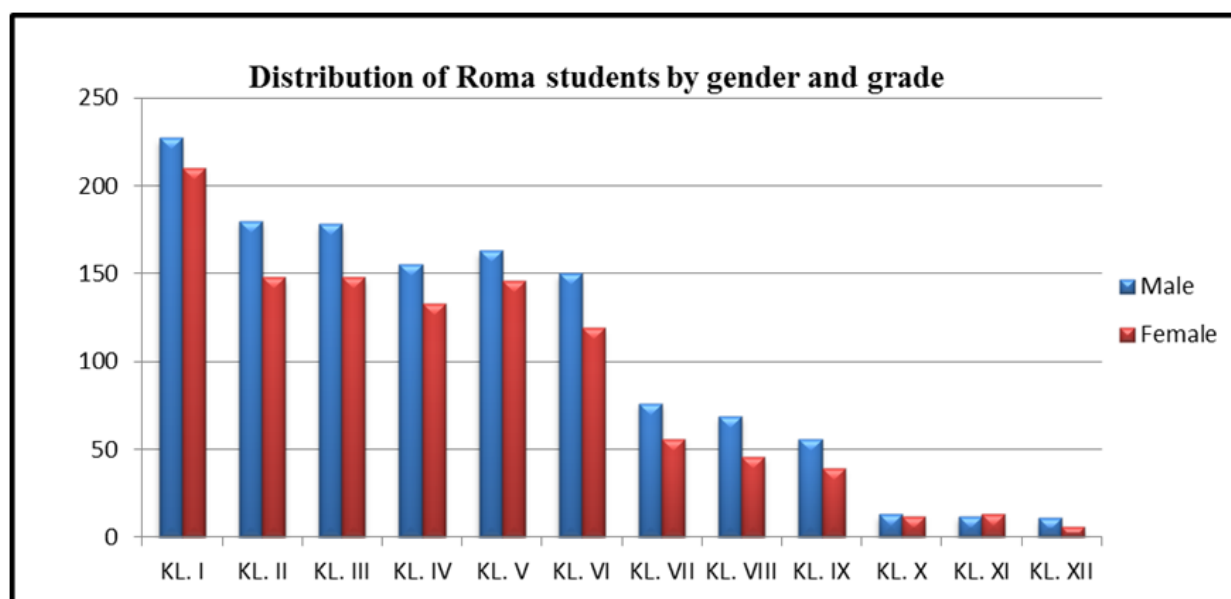
Cultural barriers include gender roles, language and nomadic traditions. Besides these, some other obstacles are the low level of parental education and low perception of the education benefits.

Early marriages (often forced) are another factor hindering education, especially for Roma girls. Data from academic institutions in Albania show that the number of Roma girls starts to reduce as they complete the sixth grade. This decrease is more noticeable among girls compared to boys (Figure 4). This is observed even by a teacher from Mbrostar Ura, who says: “Another problem in Fier is that the girls leave school after the 6th or 7th grade. This is a concerning phenomenon...” This phenomenon is related to some cultural norms (gender role, early marriages, virginity test) that exist in Roma communities and that have been strengthened during the post-socialist transition due to poverty and insecurity⁵⁷. Emin, a Roma leader from Drizë village explains: “This is an early tradition of ours. When the girls become 13 -14 years old, they cannot attend school anymore as they engage and marry, as our tradition demands”. Some other parents take their girls away from school when they become 12 or 13 years old so that they are unable to

⁵⁷ De Soto H., Beddies S., Gedeshi I., Roma and Egyptians in Albania: From social exclusion to social inclusion, The World Bank, Washington D.C., 2005

socialize with boys. Semi, a teacher in Zhupan, states: “When the girls grow up, parents start to hold them back. A 10 year old girl told me her father does not allow her to come to school because in the van she takes to come to school there are few girls and many boys”. Besides negative effects to their physical and psychological⁵⁸ health, early marriages hinder the education and qualification of girls and decrease the perspective for their employment opportunities. Early marriages affect not only today’s children but also the children of the next generation. It is a known fact that many young Roma mothers are still children and they lack the knowledge to nurture children⁵⁹. The illiteracy and low education of child - mothers today impacts the education of children tomorrow.

Figure 4. Distribution of Roma students, male and females by grade in the 2011 - 2012 academic year



Source: Survey with educational institutions, 2011

The survey shows that 69.4 percent of the Roma speak Romani and Albanian in their homes. But in some big Roma communities – such as those in Levan, Rrapishtë, Nish Tulla, Fushë Kruja, etc. –children use more the Romani language amongst them (18.3 percent). Consequently, many of them face difficulties on first grade where classes are in Albanian, pushing them to drop out of school. Almost 8 percent of the parents stress out this obstacle. In this case the policy should ensure the involvement of all Roma children in preschool education, where the Roma teachers would teach them proper Albanian.

⁵⁸ ERRC Submission to the Joint CEDAW-CRC General Recommendation /Comment on Harmful Practices: Child Marriages among Roma, 9 September 2011

⁵⁹ **De Soto H., Beddies S., Gedeshi I.**, Roma and Egyptians in Albania: From social exclusion to social inclusion, The World Bank, Washington D.C., 2005

Almost 7 percent of Roma parents believe that the education of their children does not increase their opportunities to find employment in the formal market and improve their living conditions. As a result of extreme poverty conditions, many Roma families have a short term vision. Consequently the long-term benefits of education are uncertain compared to the immediate benefits of child employment. Entela, a teacher of elementary school, states: “Some parents think that school is needed only to equip children with some basic elements of writing, reading and arithmetic”. The lack of motivation and reduced education values can also be observed in the interviewed pupils, who see that the surrounding environment does not offer better chances. In a group discussion in one of Korça schools, almost all the participating Roma pointed out that their brothers and sisters that completed the 9 year compulsory education were unemployed. Consequently the motivation to improve their education level is very low in parents and children. One of the possible policies in this case could be the training of pupils and their parents showing them cases of successful Roma individuals. University students⁶⁰, Roma experts and professionals from all the fields can serve as an example for the pupils and their parents, by showcasing their experience, education, employment and aspirations. The cases of individual success impress the Roma. Fatmir, a Roma that collects cans in the garbage bins in Shkodër, speaking on the misery of his family during an interview, suddenly asked: “Do you know my nephew that is attending a master program in Tirana?!” While Anila, inspector of education in Gjirokastra reinforces: “I notice that they see the educated persons as idols. The few ones that have an education (...) are some type of leaders for the Roma. This means they love school, they understand that an educated person has values and his voice is heard...” These success cases should be made public even through mass media.

Because of their low education level, many Roma parents cannot assist their children in doing their homework. This concern is also expressed by Nezir for his two little girls when he says: “I have to look after them even in the afternoon when they do their homework, and help them with what I know. My wife has attended only 4 years of school and she cannot help them. Up to now they are average students, but we are really concerned about the future. However, they wish to continue school (...)”. In the meantime Elvira, a teacher in Levan, states: “This year in the first grade we had 3 pupils whose mothers were illiterate. (...). We had difficulty with these children as their mothers couldn’t help them”. In some schools of Gjirokastra and Korça, the Save the Children⁶¹ Organization is implementing a project aiming at after school study hours and preparation of the homework by Roma children at school with the help of qualified teachers. This experience should also be extended to the other schools, especially where the poverty of Roma communities is higher.

5.2. Importance of preschool education

Empirical data show that only 26.4 percent of Roma children aged from 3 to 6 years attend preschool facilities. This percentage is higher in the districts of Delvina, Pogradec, Lezha, Vlora and Korça. In some districts, such as Kukes, Peshkopia, Shkodra, Kavaja, Peqin and Kruja preschool education for Roma children is almost inexistent (Table 8). However, preschool education is necessary for the education of Roma children.

⁶⁰ There are at least 20 Roma students in the Albanian universities

⁶¹ **Save the Children.**, Inclusive Quality Pre-Primary and Primary Education for Roma/Egyptian Children

Table 8. Number of Roma children attending creches and⁶² preschool

Districts	Number of children 6 to 35 months)	Number of children attending creches (6 to 35 months)	In percentage	Number of children 3-6 years)	Number of children 3-6 years attending preschool	In percentage
Berat	32	2	6.3	67	20	29.9
Delvinë	8	0	0.0	15	13	86.7
Devoll	12	1	8.3	26	7	26.9
Dibër	3	0	0.0	8	0	0.0
Durrës	44	1	2.3	91	29	31.9
Elbasan	59	3	5.1	110	43	39.1
Fier	142	4	2.8	227	54	23.8
Gjirokastrë	22	0	0.0	43	4	9.3
Kavajë	16	1	6.3	27	0	0.0
Korçë	57	1	1.8	105	49	46.7
Krujë	45	0	0.0	93	5	5.4
Kuçovë	11	2	18.2	14	4	28.6
Kukës	3	0	0.0	10	0	0.0
Kurbin	6	0	0.0	15	6	40.0
Lezhë	19	2	10.5	22	12	54.5
Lushnje	24	0	0.0	55	17	30.9
Mat	0	0	0.0	1	0	0.0
Peqin	7	0	0.0	16	1	6.3
Permet	1	0	0.0	3	0	0.0
Pogradec	16	0	0.0	39	25	64.1
Sarandë	11	1	9.1	19	6	31.6
Shkodër	35	1	2.9	75	6	8.0
Tirana	162	7	4.3	325	60	18.5
Vlorë	19	0	0.0	45	22	48.9
Totali	754	26	3.5	1451	383	26.4

Source: Survey with Roma families, 2011

Note: The interpretation of this table should take consider that the information presented by this table includes children from the group age of 6 months to 35 months attending creche and children 3 years to 6 years attending preschool. Some roma children attend preschool even by the age of 7 and other attend creche even when they are 3 years. These children are not reflected in this table but the numbers are not significant.

Children who attend preschool adapt better to the school environment when they go to elementary school and face less difficulty in absorbing new knowledge. In Gjirokastra and Korça almost all children attending preschool enrol in the first grade. This is also confirmed by Teuta, an educator in Gjirokastra that states: “All the children that have attended preschool, except the

⁶² The low percentage of roma families attending creches is explained by two main factors. First due to the fact that the periurban and rural areas lack creches and secondly by the fact un employed roma mothers who prefer to take care themselves of their children.

ones that have migrated with their parents, have enrolled in the first grade ...” As we have showed, preschool education is an important prerequisite for learning properly the Albanian language. Kujtim, a Roma leader in Rrapishtë, Elbasan, states: “... the Roma children that do not attend preschool education repeat the class as they do not know the Albanian language. School dropout starts from here (...) When preschool education was present here, we had good results”.

But not all Roma children go to preschool. In some villages or settlements there are no preschools or they are not functioning. Luan, a Roma parent from Plug village in Lushnja states: “The preschool is nearby but it does not function. In winter it was open and worked with 5-6 children, but even they had to take food, slippers and chairs with them.” Luljeta, a Roma mother from Rrapishta, complains: “We don’t have a preschool. There is one in the centre, but it is not worth walking one hour carrying him and return after three hours to pick him up. Preschool costs Lek 32 thousand per month”.⁶³ Inclusion of all Roma children in preschool education, which should be mandatory for all Roma families, should be one of the priorities of the education policy makers. This obviously requires some small investments, but it can also be one of the areas where the public sector cooperates with international organizations.

Conclusions

Although there is improvement compared to the 90s, the level of illiteracy among the Roma continues to be high (40.3 percent), reaching 80 to 100 percent in some settlements or pockets of poverty.

Meanwhile, during the next 2-3 years about 350-400 Roma children per year⁶⁴ will reach the age of enrolment into the school system. The education of Roma children is related to their economic, social and cultural future and is the main link to taking this community out of poverty. Many Roma parents are today aware of the role of education. From the economic standpoint this is also beneficial to the public sector, as the cost of education of Roma children today will be significantly lower than the cost of "economic assistance" in the future. Education of Roma children requires close cooperation between the public sector, local and international NGOs and the Roma community where everyone performs his duties.

5. Health situation of Roma children

A survey conducted with Roma families showed that 5.9 percent of children do not enjoy good health. Almost 5 percent of children have suffered from severe illness and 5.6 percent suffer from chronic diseases. The diseases affecting them the most are the respiratory, infectious and epileptic diseases⁶⁵. In the meantime conducted interviews show numerous cases of viral meningitis, mental disabilities, and children born with disabilities. Even another study conducted by the World Bank in 2003 showed that the cases of children with problems of mental and physical development are more common among the Roma population⁶⁶.

⁶³ In all the interviews the Roma use the old Lek (ALL). To convert this in the current value of Lek, the amount should be divided by 10.

⁶⁴ UNICEF., survey with families, 2011.

⁶⁵ UNDP., Needs Assessment Study on Roma and Egyptian Communities in Albania, 2011

⁶⁶ De Soto H., Beddies S., Gedeshi I., Roma and Egyptians in Albania: From social exclusion to social inclusion, The World Bank, Washington D.C., 2005

Meanwhile survey data show that 602 persons or 4.1 percent of the Roma population are disabled persons. Out of these, one third, are children, who represent about 3.2 percent of Roma children.

6.1. Causes for poor health situation

The causes for poor health situation are explained with their difficult living conditions, poverty, access to health services, low education level and Roma culture and traditions (early marriages and births).

Malnutrition. A poor diet is one of the main factors explaining the poor health situation. Almost 27.3 percent of Roma households state that "we cannot feed ourselves."

Difficult living conditions. Many Roma families live in huts, tents or old houses where the necessary infrastructure is missing. Some other residences lack potable water and sewage systems. The lack of water and toilets in several settlements keeps children from maintaining personal hygiene and this is one of the causes for the spread of infections.

The Roma community in Shkoza, Tirana lives in huts on the banks of the Lana River and deals mainly with the collection of scrap metal and cans from garbage bins in Tirana. This settlement lacks the necessary infrastructure. They obtain potable water illegally from the pipeline that supplies water to Tirana, while the sewage is discharged in the river. The families have built some toilets at banks of the Lana River with circumstantial tools (cartons, plastic etc.). Shpresa, an employee of the health centre says: "We visit the community occasionally. They are often affected by skin diseases..."

Access to health services

In general the health centres in villages and cities are not far from Roma settlements. Hospitals and maternity hospitals are only a few kilometres away. Meanwhile only 58 percent of the Roma state they have health cards and receive services at the health centres. One of the reasons is the poverty of Roma families that cannot afford to pay for health insurance. Myneverja, a Roma woman from Cuke village in Saranda, explains "Here we have a health centre. We have health cards as well. The children do too, since for them the service is free. But my chest hurts and I cannot go to the doctor for a scan, because he will ask for my health card. When we went to get registered for the health card they informed us that we had to pay health insurance contributions. They do not open a card without paying social insurance contributions. But how can we pay that when we don't even have to eat?!" In the village the payment of health insurance is associated to the payment of the land tax, which is too high for many Roma families. Another Roma woman says: "Yes, you have to pay the land taxes, in the amount of around 150-250 thousand Lek per year and they cannot afford it. Therefore there are very few persons with health cards." Some others choose to have a health card for some family members that are more at risk. This is the case of Latif, a Roma from Lapardha village that states: "I have provided it for my wife, children and mother, while my father and I do not have a health card, we will pay when we get the service."

But there are also many Roma (37 percent) that do not know where to register and do not know the procedures. A mother from Levan is totally disoriented: “For these two big children they required an attestation from the school, but I do not send them to school...” A mother from Saranda complains that: “We don’t have health cards and we can’t go in Elbasan where we are registered.”

In absence of health cards, many Roma parents receive medical treatment for their children only at an advanced stage of the disease. Edlira, an employee of the health centre in Rrapishtë, Elbasan, states: “those without a card go to the hospital, to the paediatrician. They are the lowest level; they bring the child to the hospital only when they see he/she is dying”. According to the interviews, this is noticeable enhanced in Shkodra, Beltoja, Kukes, Peshkopia, Shupenza, Milot, Shkoza, Vrion, Saranda, etc. In general they go to the emergency room of the hospital to receive treatment. Meleqe, a Roma mother from Saranda, tells the story of her child: “My daughter was ill with an ear infection and I kept her home all day long. In the evening we took her to the hospital, at the emergency room. They do not ask for money, but we give them, if we wish”. Myfit from Shpërdhet tells the same thing: “We take them to the emergency of Mamurras hospital. My nephew is ill, he is on medications and we take him to be checked out at the Mamurras emergency room...” While the Roma from Beltoja, as Selim recounts, take their children to Shkodra: “When they are sick, we take them to the Shkodra hospital, and they helped us at the emergency room (...)”.

Bibliography

- A.T., Magjypet e Shkodres, Revista Leka, Nr. 7, 1943

- **Barjaba K.**, Recent Implications of Inter-Ethnic Relations in Albania, *Anthropological Journal on European Cultures*, Vol. 4, Number 1, 1995
- **Berxoli A.**, Minorities in Albania, Tirana 2005
- **Cahn, C.**, ed, “Roma Rights: Race, Justice, and Strategies for Equality” New York: The International Debate Education Association, 2002
- **Cahn, C., Chirico, D., Mc Donald C., Mohacsi V., Proc T., Szkely A.**, Roma in the educational system of Central and Eastern Europe, in the Roma Resource Book, Open Society Institute-Institute for Educational Policy, Budapest, 1999
- **Courthiade M., Duka J.**, A Social and historical profile of the Rroms in Albania. 1990s. A draft paper provided by the authors
- **CRS.**, Project “Roma Participation in Local Elections 2007”, Successful Roma Model of Political Representation, Tirana May 2007
- **De Soto H., Gordon P., Gedeshi I., Sinoimeri Z.**, Poverty in Albania. A Qualitative Assessment, The World Bank Washington D.C., 2002
- **De Soto H., Gedeshi I.**, Dimensions of Romani Poverty in Albania, Roma Rights, Number 1, 2002, Quarterly Journal of the European Roma Rights Center, Budapest, Hungary
- **De Soto H., Beddies S., Gedeshi I.**, Roma and Egyptians in Albania: From social exclusion to social inclusion, The World Bank, Washington D.C., 2005
- **Duka R.**, Studim i politikave për minoritetet dhe strategjitë e financimit në Shqipëri, Komiteti Shqiptar i Helsinkit, 2007
- **ECRI (European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance)**. 2002. “EU Support for Roma Communities in Central and Eastern Europe,” Enlargement Briefing, Brussels
- **ERRC.**, Nje rast i panjohur. Romet ne Shqiperi. 1997
- **ERRC** Submission to the Joint CEDAW-CRC General Recommendation /Comment on Harmful Practices: Child Marriages among Roma, 9 September 2011
- **Fonseca I.**, Among the Gypsies, *The New Yorker*, 25 September 1995
- **Government of Albania.**, National Strategy for improving Roma living conditions, 2003
- **Hasluck M.**, The Gypsies of Albania, *Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society*, 17 (2): 49-61, 1938
- **INSTAT.**, Popullsia e Shqipërisë në 2001, Tiranë, 2002
- **INSTAT.**, Vjetari Statistikor, 1993-2001, Tiranë 2003
- **INSTAT**, Albania, Preliminary results of the Population and Housing Census 2011
- **Liegeois J-P.**, Tsiganes, *La Decouverte*, Paris 1983
- **Liegeois J-P.**, Roms et Tsiganes, *La Decouverte*, Paris 2009
- **Koinova M.**, Minorities in Southeast Europe: Roma of Albania, Center for Documentation and Information on Minorities in Europe - Southeast Europe (CEDIME), 2000
- **Kolsti J.**, Albanian Gypsies: The Silent Survivors, in Crowe and Kolsti eds., *The Gypsies in Eastern Europe*, Armonk, New York: Sharpe, 1991
- **Mann S. E.**, Albanian Romani, *Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society*, Vol. XII, No. 1, 1933
- **Milaj J.**, Raca shqiptare, Tiranë 1943
- **Nieuwendijk M.**, The Roma minority of Albania and transformative participation, ISS, The Hague, The Netherlands, December 2006

- **Ringold D., Orenstein A. M., Wilkens E.**, Roma in an Expanding Europe: Breaking the Poverty Cycle, A World Bank Study, Washington D.C., 2003
- **Save the Children.**, Inclusive Quality Pre-Primary and Primary Education for Roma/Egyptian Children, 2010
- **Silverman C.**, Prosecution and Politicization: Roma (Gypsies) of Eastern Europe. Cultural Survival 19 (2), 1995
- **Swire J.**, King Zog's Albania. 1937
- **Taho B.**, Document on the Situation of Roma in Albania, 2002
- **Tamo A., Karaj Th.**, Situata Arsimore e Fëmijëve Romë në Shqipëri, Tiranë 2007
- **UNDP.**, The socio-economic situation of Roma in Albania, 2005
- **UNDP.**, Needs assessment of the Roma and Egyptian communities in Albania, 2011
- **UNDP.**, Avoiding the Dependency Trap. The Roma in Central and Eastern Europe. Bratislava, 2002
- **UNICEF.**, Gjendja e Fëmijëve të Shqipërisë 2006, Tiranë 2007

Annex 1. Roma settlements in Albania

N	District	Roma settlements by Roma NGO	Roma settlements by CESS
1	Devoll	Bilisht	Bilisht Bitinckë Tren
2	Korça	Korça Pojan Maliq Sovjan	Korça Pojan Terrovë Progër Zvezdë Plasë Maliq Sovjan Vlocisht Vashtmie Libonik Rrëmbec
3	Pogradec	Pogradec Train Station	Pogradec Train Station Cërravë
4	Elbasan	Elbasan Rrapishtë Hospital neighbourhood Cërrik Peqin	Elbasan Rrapishtë Hospital neighbourhood Cërrik Peqin
5	Kruja	Fushë-Kruja	Fushë-Kruja
6	Kurbin	Lac Mamurras Adriatik Village	Lac Mamurras Adriatik Village Milot Shpërdhet/Droja Bridge
7	Lezhë	Lezhë Shëngjin Rilë Village	Lezhë No No
8	Shkodër	Shkodër	Shkodër Beltojë
9	Durrës	Durrës Shkozet Xhafzotaj Kthesa e Ariut Fllakë	Durrës NISH Tulla/Shkozet Xhafzotaj Kthesa e ariut/Kullë Bisht Kamëz/Fllakë Beach/ Dajlani Bridge

		Beach (Overpass) Rinia Village	Rinia Village Rrushkull Beach/Plepat
10	Kavajë	Gosë Rrogozhinë	Kavajë/Former paper enterprise Gosë Rrogozhinë Golem
11	Lushnje	Çermë sektor Sulzotaj Zham Pluk Savër/Lushnje Grabian Commune	Lushnje Cermë Shënepremte Zham Pluk Savër Grabian Sulzotaj Gramsh
11	Kucovë	Kuçova Ferma Partizani Perondi	Kucovë Rreth Tapi/Ferma Partizani No
12	Berat	Berat (city) Kom. Otlak/Orizaj Moravë/Qendër Lapardha Kuçi bridge	Berat Orizaj Morave Lapardha Kuçi bridge Pashalli/Ura Vajguore
13	Fier	Roskoveci Baltëz (kom. Derrmenas) Seman Hoxhare Ferma Çlirimi Mbrostar Ura Qender Azotik Neighbourhood Levan (Komuna)	Fier Patos Roskovec Hoxharë/Povelcë Ferma Clirimi Mbrostar Ura Qender Azotik Neighbourhood /Drizë Levan
14	Vlora	Novoselë Akërn Llakatund	Vlora Novoselë Akërn Llakatund Nartë Kotë
15	Gjirokastër	Gjirokastër	Gjirokastër Hundëkuq Andon Poçi

16	Saranda	Vrion Konispol Cukë	Sarandë Vrion Cukë Shkallë
17	Delvina	Delvina	Delvina
18	Himarë		Qafë e Vishës
19	Përmet		Përmet
20	Kolonjë		Ersekë
21	Kukës		Kukës
22	Dibër		Peshkopi Fushë Ali Shupenzë
23	Mat		Burrel
24	Tirana	Kinostudio Allias/B.Curri Profarma Shkozë Selita Kombinat/Yzberisht Bregu i lumit N/stacioni elektrik Burgu/st i trenit J. Pashko/ Nish.Tulla	Sharre/Komuna Vaqar Yzberisht/Komuna Kashar Minibashkia No. 1, Shkozë Mini-Municipality No 4 Mini-Municipality No. 5 Mini-Municipality No. 6 Mini-Municipality No. 8 Mini-Municipality No. 9 Mini-Municipality No. 10 Mini-Municipality No. 11 Babru Valias Ura e Farkes