

The Decade of Roma Inclusion

NON- ROMA GROUPS
Focus Groups Discussion

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MONTENEGRO

Realized by



**For
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SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

Situation in the country

- **Citizens of Montenegro are very pessimistic about the current direction in which the country is heading. Their opinion is that life in the country is very difficult, and they blame for it "vlast" (Serbian word "vlast" includes all people in power and all levels of power, government, administration, politicians, etc.) whose only aim is to grab as many as possible benefits for themselves.**
- **The biggest problems that the citizens are faced with are unemployment (as a result of collapsed economy), poverty, corruption, bad situation in judiciary, public health system, education system, disrupted system of values and apathy among the young.**
- **Older respondents think that some positive strides have been made in the area of agriculture and NGO sector, while the younger ones are the most optimistic about sport and tourism.**
- **Attitude towards integration into European Union is very ambivalent.**
 - ✓ **Positive expectations concern increased employment opportunities, improvement of laws, free traffic of goods, possibility to travel abroad, exchange experiences and study abroad.**
 - ✓ **Negative expectations are loss of national identity and economic independence, as well as financial burdening of our country's budget which will result from obligation of the country to finance joint European institutions.**
- **Citizens are not informed about the way in which the government spends money from the budget, and they do not feel any positive effects of this money distribution. They assert that, besides attracting foreign investments, more money should be invested in all mentioned resources.**
- **If they were in a position to influence spending the money from the budget in a different way, the citizens would primarily invest in revitalization of economy and new jobs. Older respondents would invest money in agriculture, tourism and culture, while the younger ones would prioritize investments in public health, education, infrastructure and improvement of situation in judiciary.**

National identity and attitudes toward differences

- **The opinion is that present time is characterized by loss of all values that Montenegrins were proud of in the past, such as courage, honesty, bravery, skillfulness, respect of own and other people's word of honor, etc.**
- **Today they are proud of being dignified, benevolent, honest, and affectionate. However, they also have negative characteristics such as inertness, idleness, obstinacy and subservience.**
- **In the areas where national minorities are the majority population, tensions frequently occur. Respondents from Nikšić have a very hostile attitude towards the Albanians who live in Montenegro.**

Attitude toward the Roma

- **Roma community is faced with the biggest problems, and they are the least integrated into Montenegrin society.**
- **The Roma are most frequently described as poor, beggars, dirty, uneducated, ill-mannered, unorganized, irresponsible, abortive, but also as free, cheerful and optimistic.**
- **Dominant feeling in contact with the Roma people is either compassion or absolute disregard.**
- **In description of the Roma people whom they personally know, the citizens mainly use positive attributes, such as modest, joyful, honest, pleasant, moderate, kind-hearted, friendly, hard-working, nice, and a good friend.**
- **The biggest problems that the Roma are faced with are unemployment, poverty, housing problems, unhygienic conditions, hunger, discrimination, lack of culture, abuse of children who are forced to beg.**
- **The opinion is that the Roma themselves use inadequately the help they receive, which is why it is not worth helping them at all.**
- **A very strong attitude among the citizens is that help should primarily be given to poor groups which come from majority population.**
- **Integration of the Roma into majority population is principally supported, however the citizens doubt that any result can be achieved unless education about coexistence is carried out on both sides.**
- **Majority of young citizens of Podgorica think that integration of the Roma will not be possible because the Roma themselves do not want to change their way of life.**
- **Positive consequences of integration would be increased education and employment opportunities, and, in their life together, Roma minority would be respected more.**
- **The opinion is that state bodies, that is, the government, should solve the problems of Roma population.**
- **Ideas for helping the Roma community range from collection of old items to classification of garbage before throwing it in the garbage containers, in order to make it easier for Roma to collect secondary raw materials. The citizens do not perceive Roma as a nation which, in the future, could be better integrated into community and do some better paid jobs.**

The Decade of Roma Inclusion

- **The citizens have not heard about the action „The Decade of Roma Inclusion“**
- **Objectives of actions for improvement of the lives of Roma should be to provide employment for the Roma and eliminate prejudices against them.**
- **The citizens have a positive attitude towards the action „The Decade of Roma Inclusion“ and they think that it is necessary, however, if they were to decide where the money will be firstly spent, they would spend it on solving the problems of majority population.**
- **If there was a referendum and they had to vote for this action, they would vote in favor of this action, regardless of the amount of money spent for it, since it would come from other funds, not from the government budget.**
- **Young respondents from Podgorica are very skeptical about spending money for solving the problems of the Roma within future actions. They think that the money will not be used in proper way, that is, just small amounts of money will actually reach the Roma.**

- **Reduced price of pre-school programs / books/ transport/ school lunch for poor Roma children, as well as scholarships for university studies are the objectives towards which the citizens have a very positive attitude.**
- **Younger citizens of Podgorica have a very negative attitude towards incorporation of Roma culture in school curricula. They think that, first of all, the Roma do not have any culture whatsoever, and giving them such freedom (inclusion of culture elements in school curricula) would do nothing else but lead to increased requirements of minorities and new wars.**
- **Respondents are also very skeptical towards granting micro loans to the Roma in order to help them start some businesses. They doubt that the Roma possess skills and knowledge necessary to start some business, that is, they doubt that the Roma would know how to use these loans.**
- **Younger male respondents in Podgorica argue against the adoption of antidiscrimination law, because they think that much more important laws should be enacted. They justify such attitude with the fact that majority of Roma are unemployed, which is why there is no need for such law.**
- **Free vaccines for Roma children are considered necessary by all respondents, and they even suggest other health benefits for the Roma (free medicines, etc.)**

Ambassadors of Change: Voices to Trust

- **Citizens from Nikšić mention Veselj Begenaj (who is actively involved in helping the Roma community) as a prominent Roma leader, while the citizens of Podgorica do not know a single Roma leader.**
- **There is a substantial distrust in leaders and institutions in Montenegro. It is generally thought that none of the leaders would sincerely want to help the Roma community, and those who might undertake to help them, would rather do it for personal advantage.**
- **Everyone agrees that the action „The Decade of Roma Inclusion“ should be under strict control of European Community, since the money wouldn't otherwise end up where it was planned to.**

Methodology

TYPE OF RESEARCH

Qualitative research, focus group discussion.

PROCEDURE - TECHNIQUE

Discussion in focus groups (one of the methods of qualitative research) last approximately from 90 to 120 minutes, they are facilitated by trained moderator (psychologist), and they include from 6 to 10 participants. This techniques makes possible deeper understanding of behavior, attitudes, motives, etc, as well as the collection of a big number of information in a relatively short period of time.

Results of discussions in focus groups can not be generalized to population, because the sample is too small.

Taking into consideration that the participants are selected according to previously chosen criteria, opinions expressed in the focus groups should be considered typical for that segment of population only.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

- ✓ To ascertain the attitudes of the citizens towards the Roma national minority and the action "The Decade of Roma Inclusion"

Specification of objectives:

1. Perception of the direction in which the country is heading today: defining the main problems and positive trends;
2. Attitudes towards alignment with the European Union;
3. Perception of own national identity;
4. Perception of identity of the Roma national minority: characteristics, attitude of the majority population towards the Roma;
5. Attitude towards integration of Roma into society;
6. Attitude towards the action "The Decade of Roma Inclusion"
7. Testing of messages for promotion of "The Decade of Roma Inclusion"

PARTICIPANTS

A total of 16 respondents participated in focus group discussions. They were divided into 2 groups, and structure of the groups according to age, education, income and place of residence is presented below:

	Age range	Sex	Education level	Income	City
FGD1	31 - 60	Mixed sex	Secondary school	Average	Nikšić
FGD2	18 - 30	Mixed sex	College/ University	Higher	Podgorica

Screening requirements

Participants in focus group discussions were recruited by quasi random method – the interviewers find the respondents according to screening questionnaire, but the sample can not be considered as representative for population

- Neither participants, nor their close relatives and friends are employed in the following areas: advertising, market research, marketing, journalism, psychology
- Participants have not lately (during the past 12 months) participated in any discussion group, interview, or any other form of market research;
- Participants do not know each other;
- Participants are aged from 18 to 30 that is, from 31 to 60 years
- Participants have college/university education (higher income) or secondary education (average income)
- Participants are the residents of urban territory of Nikšić and Podgorica

SURVEY RESULTS

Situation in the country

- **Citizens of Montenegro are very pessimistic about the current direction in which the country is heading. Their opinion is that life in the country is very difficult.**

„I think that people have never lived worse than now in Montenegro “

„I don't think that our life is better. Average citizens can not live from their work “

„The poor can not be seen behind the glamour and splendor of people in power “

The opinion is that Montenegro is in hopeless situation, since foreign donations which Montenegro received while Milošević was in power in Serbia have been discontinued.

„We lived well while we received the donations from the west, but we don't have them any more “

- **The biggest problems** that the citizens of Montenegro are faced with are:

- ✓ **Unemployment, as a result of collapsed economy**

The opinion is that the sources of these problems are wars and economic sanctions during the past period, but also the corruption, which is in the full swing. A very big number of people lost jobs, and they are currently registered in the Employment Bureau. The respondents think that new jobs and possible improvement are still far from the sight.

- ✓ **Poverty**

Numerous citizens are unemployed, and those who do have jobs, have meager salaries. Current situation in economy is compared with feudalism: *„People who work are maximally taken advantage of, while having no rights. We switched from communism to feudalism. Minority is extremely rich, and the rest of population are extremely poor“.*

- ✓ **Corruption**

Corruption is in full swing in all pores of society (public health, education, judiciary, administration). Poverty is considered to be the cause of this problem as well, since the professions which should be adequately paid are not, so people are inclined to bribe and corruption. Citizens think that corruption is also widespread in the process of privatization, which damages not only the privatized enterprises, but the society as a whole.

Some respondents think that corruption has always been present in Montenegro (even in the period of SFRY), since it is a small country in which *„everyone is everyone's relative or neighbor, and someone is always fixing a job or some other favor to someone else..“.*

- ✓ **Unfavorable situation in judiciary.** It is characterized by corruption and inefficiency (lingering procedures)

- ✓ **Unfavorable situation in public health area**

- ✓ **Unfavorable situation in education system** (*„Teachers are not motivated to pass their knowledge to pupils for some 200 euros, when they can give private lessons after school classes “*).

- ✓ **Disrupted system of values:** The supreme value is money, and one can earn money only by „wheeling and dealing“ and not by honest work and knowledge.

„Everything is based on money “

„A girl who is dolled up will find job much more easily than a girl who has knowledge “

- ✓ **Apathy among the young.** It is perceived as a logical outcome of overall destitution,

unemployment, corruption. and the feeling that nothing depends on will and potentials of an individual.

„The young have lost determination and wish to fight against anything. They are afraid of everything“

„No one does anything, no one pushes the people in power to change something “

„How can one not be apathetic when one can not do anything without being the member of some political party“

- Majority of the respondents **blame people in power for such an unfavorable situation** (*„Milo Đukanović and his government“*) whose only aim is to grab as many as possible benefits for themselves. However, some respondents think that the citizens themselves should be blamed, because they elect such “vlast” (Serbian word “vlast” includes all people in power and all levels of power, government, administration, politicians, etc.)
- The respondents assert that they are not optimistic about any sphere of social life whatsoever. They think that situation in the country will deteriorate even more. Nevertheless, they mention some positive strides as well:

- ✓ **Older respondents - agriculture** (*„Agriculture has started improving since minister Simović took the position“*) and the work and accomplishments of **NGO** (*„NGO sector is successfully involved in many issues which the government should deal with“*)

- ✓ **Younger respondents - sport and tourism.**

Respondents state that the country has always had talented athletes, but too little has generally been invested in sports. Now, when pretty much is invested in sports, numerous Montenegrin teams are successful (*„We are now successful in some sports where we have never had success on top level“*). However, negative aspects of this situation is the fact that sport is perceived as a possibility for money laundering of illegally earned money (*„This is the way to carry out money laundering, the mobsters are buying sport clubs. All owners of clubs are suspected. These are the people who made profit and became rich in the period when majority of people had nothing to eat“*).

Tourism is gradually developing, but this is the money which mainly comes from abroad. Almost all hotels have been privatized. *„Foreigners are coming to Montenegro, everyone is investing here, but, this is not without a good reason. All this money will be returned to them many times over“*.

- **Citizens of Montenegro are very ambivalent towards alliance with the European Union.** On one hand they think that this is a **keystone of future betterment**, but, on the other hand, they think that **this requires a great self-sacrifice** (*„We have to satisfy many more requirements“*). The citizens think that it is very difficult to change our perception, which will be the source of numerous problems in realization of our future tasks.
- **Positive expectations** from alliance with the EU:
 - ✓ **Employment opportunities**
 - ✓ **Free traffic of goods**
 - ✓ **Improved laws** (*„And it will not be possible that every government does whatever it wants to do“*)

Younger respondents put special emphasis on:

- ✓ **Possibilities to travel (without visas)**
- ✓ **Exchange of experiences**

✓ **Possibility for education abroad**

• **Negative expectations** from alliance with the EU:

✓ **Loss of national identity**

✓ **Loss of economic independence**

„Others will control our economy. We will be just the labor force, servants in the country whose economy will be run by someone else“

„They invest in our country because we are a cheap labor force“

✓ **Financial pressure on the budget of the country**

„We will have to invest in joint institutions“

✓ Some older respondents in Nikšić state that one of the problems is **joining the NATO, and limitations in armament.**

„I will decide myself about the size of our army, not anyone else. I will decide whether we are threatened by Croatia or not“

• The citizens **are not informed at all about the way in which the government spends money, that is, they do not feel any positive effects of** the government's actions. They state that the money is spent in proper way only before the elections, when it is necessary to „eyewash“ the citizens.

„They construct roads only before the elections“

„They don't invest where they should“

„The government doesn't have enough money to invest to the extent when we would feel the difference “

• It is generally thought that the **government should spend more money from the budget for all mentioned areas/departments.** One third of the respondents (mainly the elderly respondents from Nikšić) think that approximately the same amount of money should be spent to attract foreign investments in the country. Excessive foreign investments are perceived as a threat to ownership over the enterprises.

• If they could influence spending the money from the budget, the citizens would primarily invest the money in:

✓ **Revitalization of economy and new jobs**

✓ **Besides that, older respondents would invest in agriculture, tourism and culture.**

✓ Younger respondents would also invest in **public health, education, infrastructure and improvement of situation in judiciary.**

„It would be easy to save the money. Montenegro has 13000 official cars (cars owned by the government and other official bodies). Huge amounts of money are spent on fuel and business trips“

„They should reduce the number of elections, and spend less money on campaigns and fireworks“

National identity and attitudes toward differences

- The opinion is that **present time is characterized by loss of all values that Montenegrins were proud of in the past**, such as courage, honesty, bravery, skillfulness, respect of own and other people's word of honor.

„Montenegrins today do not have morals, all traditional values are vanishing. I am sometimes ashamed of being a Montenegrin“

„Today some people would sell their own mother because of the money“

- Characteristics of Montenegrins today:**

<i>Positive</i>	<i>Negative</i>
Courageous	Inert
Benevolent	Lazy
Honest	Obstinate
Affectionate	Subservient
Naturally clever	

- Montenegrins perceive themselves as a **very tolerant nation**, and they justify this opinion with the fact that, in the past 15 years of warfare, there were no conflicts on the territory of Montenegro. Besides that, 25% of minorities live in Montenegro, mainly Albanians, Roma and Croatians. Albanians and Croatians are mainly integrated into the community, while the Roma people live in isolation.
- Relationship between majority population and minorities largely depends on concrete locality.** Namely, the citizens think that, in localities where Montenegrins are the majority population, problems do not occur. However, the **tensions occur in the towns where ethnic minorities are the majority population.**

„In the areas where the citizens do not feel threatened by some ethnic minority, everything is OK. However, my parents live in Pljevlja, where there are a lot of Albanians and Muslims, so tension is felt on every step of the way. Even the cafés are divided. Wherever the minority becomes a majority, the tensions are extensive. Imagine how the people from Ulcinj feel (Albanians are a majority population in Ulcinj) “.

Older respondents from Nikšić express extensive hostility towards the Albanians who live in Montenegro.

„I don't like the Albanian people too much, because of some personal experiences. For me, these people are malicious“

- Respondents assert that **national minorities in Montenegro are not fully accepted.**

„Imagine the teacher who says – look how dingy you are, like a Gypsy “

Attitude toward the Roma

- In everyday speech the Roma people are still **called Gypsies most frequently.**
- **According to respondents, the following words best describe the Roma community:**
 - ✓ *Poor*
 - ✓ *Dirty*
 - ✓ *Begging*
 - ✓ *Uneducated*
 - ✓ *Bad-mannered, inclined to bad manners*
 - ✓ *Free*
 - ✓ *Unorganized*
 - ✓ *Irresponsible*
 - ✓ *Undeveloped*
 - ✓ *Bright, cheerful, carefree*
 - ✓ *Optimistic*

Very rarely the Roma are described as:

- ✓ *Unprotected*
- ✓ *Misconstrued*
- ✓ *Humiliated*
- ✓ *Isolated*
- ✓ *Kind-hearted*

„The Roma are a sad occurrence on the entire planet “

- **In description of Roma people whom they personally know, the citizens mainly use positive attributes such as:**
 - ✓ *Modest*
 - ✓ *Joyful*
 - ✓ *Honest*
 - ✓ *Pleasant*
 - ✓ *Moderate*
 - ✓ *Good-hearted, good*
 - ✓ *Friendly*
 - ✓ *Hard-working*
 - ✓ *Nice*
 - ✓ *Fantastic friend*

Sometimes they have compassion with situation of someone they know, describing his situation with the words: sad, worried, frightened, aware of his situation.

They rarely mention characteristics such as:

- ✓ *Unfriendly*
- ✓ *Lazy*

✓ *Ill-bred*

- **According to respondents, the biggest problems that Roma population are faced with are:**

✓ **Unemployment**

- Older citizens from Nikšić think that the Roma do not work because of the **general unemployment in the country**

„Jobs in Urban Sanitation were previously done only by Roma people, but today, Montenegrins do these jobs“

„They should be given the chance to work, once they started to work, they would organize their lives differently“)

- Younger respondents from Podgorica think that the problem is in the fact that the **Roma are lazy, irresponsible and uninterested**

„There are a lot of vacancies in Urban Sanitation, but they don't want to work“

„They don't want to pick fruits because they say that they are not paid enough for this work“

„If you try to engage some Gypsy to clean your garden, none of them want to do it. They earn 20, 30 euros if they beg“.

„No use giving them any job, they will still go begging“

✓ **Poverty**

„They are hungry, undressed, barefoot, and susceptible to illnesses “

„This is the life below human dignity “

✓ **Being uneducated**

Respondents mention the problem of **discrimination when Roma children are enrolled in school**, because, by being the Roma, they are pronounced as unintelligent.

„But they are not understood, and, at the very beginning, they have much more problems to enroll in schools. When they see a Roma child they say immediately that they are unintelligent, without testing them “

Some respondents think that Roma children stop going to school because they are **ill-treated by other children** in school, while the others assert that Roma people have the same right to education as everyone else, but **they don't want to exercise this right**.

„No one here is forbidden to learn. Every child can give 50 cents for books for Roma children, but they themselves do not want this“

„Several days ago I watched a couple of our children chasing a little Roma child. They wanted to beat him. I am not a Roma, but, if someone touched my child, I would react“

„It is impossible that none of them want to go to school. They must have clever children, the same as we do“

- ✓ **Housing problems, life in unhygienic conditions** (without water, electricity, basic hygiene)

„They don't have houses, they don't have basic conditions of living“

✓ **Hunger**

„They virtually live from day to day“

✓ **Discrimination**

„We discriminate them. For us they have always been dirty Gypsies, unintelligent, thieves, they don't want to work“

„We were brought up to insult them“

The Decade of Roma Inclusion – Non Roma Groups, Montenegro

„None of us will discriminate the Roma, but everyone insults them. I am hurt when they describe that they like the Roma “

„I used to invite the Gypsies in my home and give them something to eat, but now I can't do it any more, because my children don't allow me to do it “

Some respondents think that discrimination of Roma is a logical consequence of their way of life:

„It is normal that people have aversion when they see how they live “

„If they were not so boring, no one would discriminate them “

✓ **Ill manners**

„They don't have a basic culture of living “

✓ **Abuse of children (organized begging)**

„Little Aca who came from Priština, must bring money home every night, or he is not allowed to come home “

„Majority of children are forced to beg “

- Besides the laziness, which is perceived as characteristic of all citizens who live in Montenegro, there are no other similarities between majority population and the Roma.

- It is generally thought that the **Roma themselves inadequately use the help which they are given, so there is no use helping them at all.**

„One man, whose name is Smajlo, who was the boxing champion, got 25000 German marks, and he had nothing else to do but to make a Gypsy tent on the hill“

„They made some flats for them, but they destroyed all that “

- **In contact with the Roma some respondents feel compassion, while the others try to ignore them.** The respondents mainly state that they are not bothered by Roma people if they don't disturb them personally.

„Sometimes I feel pity, but I usually don't feel anything “

„I stopped having an attitude on them long ago “

„I don't mind them if they leave me alone “

„All that depends on situation. Some of them are very aggressive... just give, give, give.., such people are nuisance for me “

„Sometimes, when you walk in the street, they almost clutch to your leg “

„I don't mind them if they just pass by me, or if they mind their own business “

- **The citizens would not like the Roma to move into their neighborhood because they don't have adequate culture of living (they have bad hygiene habits).** However, if this happened, **they wouldn't object to it.**

„You know how these things are here, people don't accept them because they stink, the whole building entrance stinks“

„There is one Roma family in my neighborhood, but if I were to choose, I wouldn't choose to have a Gypsy as my neighbor “

„To be honest, I wouldn't like it, but I wouldn't oppose it either“

- Respondents have a **positive attitude towards integration of Roma children into regular school classes**. The opinion is that this would eliminate the prejudices, because the children would be in position to learn more about each other and spend time together.

„It was a great mistake to open the Gypsy class at all “

„They should go to school with my children “

„If I have the right to university education, they should have the same right too “

- It is generally thought that the Roma should be integrated in majority population, however, **the respondents doubt that this can be achieved** without serious work on this issue. According to respondents, the Roma should be integrated gradually. At that, **education about coexistence should be carried out on both sides**.

„They understand that they are not accepted, that no one wants them, that the only thing left for them is to steel and beg, and we think that this is the only thing that they are intended to do. Well, what we have to do now is to educate people, in schools and families, that they belong to us “

„We distrust them and they distrust us “

„They should be integrated, and I don't think that they run away from work, they agree to do any job“

- Citizens think that **integration of the Roma would have positive consequences for the entire society, because they would be trained to work on one hand, and, on the other hand, coexistence would result in bigger respect of Roma population**.

„I think that this is good for our children as well. This would help create a normal picture about them in people's perception “

„We should invest in their education, so that, one day, they have a job and they can pay taxes, so that there is some use from all that “

However, the dominant opinion in Podgorica, particularly among the younger respondents, is that **Roma are always seen in the context of law-skilled or unskilled workers**.

„If they were integrated, the society would also have a lot of benefits from this. This is an army of people who could be used for cleaning, picking something“

„Epidemic outbursts are also possible among them. They should be helped first“

- **Majority of young citizens of Podgorica think that integration of Roma will not be possible because the Roma themselves do not want to change their way of life**.

„They would find it very difficult to adapt, just because of this gene which they carry in them. They are used to live under any conditions, they are not used to hygiene. Even if they had conditions to maintain hygiene, they wouldn't do it “

„They made a building for them, and they demolished it in 10 days“

„I was brought up quite differently, that Gypsies are the same as other people, but I still think that they have some world of their own, some different system of values “

„It is in their blood not to bathe“

„I don't know at all how they would live in the buildings“

- **The opinion is that state bodies, that is, the government, should solve the problems of Roma**. Younger respondents from Podgorica state that, during the last year, some money was invested in the Roma community, however, these investments are not visible. The opinion is that this is nothing but „make up“ for European Community. In other words, the

respondents think that EC requests integration of minorities, which is why the government makes some efforts, but they are superficial, and their only aim is to show that something is being done about this issue.

- **A very strong attitude among the citizens is that help should primarily be given to poor groups which come from majority population.** These are the citizens who have worked all their lives, who gave contribution to development of the country, and they are now at the threshold of existence. On the contrary, the Roma have never been integrated in society and they did nothing for the country.

Government should spend the same amount of money for Roma community as they spend for other national minorities and poor groups, however, problems of majority population should be solved first.

„Some of our families live in the same conditions as they do, without water and electricity, they should be helped first ”

„They should spend money on other things, we have a lot of problems, and they should not spend the money on them ”

„I think that these miserable pensioners who worked the whole life, and who are now at the edge of poverty, should be taken care of first ”

- **The opinion is that, among Roma people, as much as 99%** (minimum 95%) **are unemployed.** This is associated with their lack of education and lack of qualification. However, the respondents assert that, also among majority population the unemployment rate is high.

- ✓ In the town of Nikšić the Montenegrins are doing the jobs which the Roma used to do before.

„There is no work for us either”

„I passed by the steelworks, and I saw that our people were doing the work which the Gypsies used to do before ”

- Regarding the possible help to the Roma, the respondents assert that they are occupied with own needs and problems, they can't help themselves, let alone the others.

„How can I help the Roma, when I can't help myself”

„The problem is that we are in deep problems now”

Ideas for helping the Roma community range from collection of old items to classification of garbage before throwing it in the garbage containers, in order to make it easier for Roma to collect secondary raw materials. The citizens do not perceive Roma as a nation which, in the future, could be better integrated in community and do some better paid jobs.

„For instance, what my family does – we don't throw away anything, but we give these things to Gypsies”

„Many people give them some parcels”

„Every winter people give them some clothes”

„The Roma mainly work in Urban Sanitation. They should be given some garbage bags and gloves, so that they shouldn't carry garbage with hands ”

- The opinion is that, if they want, the **Roma can help themselves by better organization, but also education.** The Roma could be guided and educated by Roma people who are educated.

The Decade of Roma Integration

- **The citizens have not heard about „The decade of Roma inclusion“**, but they notice some efforts of the NGO sector to solve the problem of Roma.

„There are some efforts, but they are weak“

„Something has been happening lately“

- Respondents think that **objectives of the actions** for improvement of the life of Roma should primarily be:

✓ **Education**

✓ **Employment**

✓ **Elimination of prejudices**

„It is the most important that we realize that this Gypsy is not a beggar, a tramp, but part of our society. And they should also realize this “

- **The citizens have a positive attitude towards the action „The Decade of Roma Inclusion“ and they think that it is necessary, however, if they were to decide where the money will be firstly spent, they would spend it on solving the problems of majority population.**

Majority population should firstly be protected in their own country. The impression is that **minorities are perceived as citizens who should naturally have less rights in the state** in which they are not majority population“

„A lot of people are unemployed. They live from one day to another. The government should solve our problems first, our problems, and only after that their problems “

Nevertheless, if some money is received under the condition that it is spent on the Roma, the opinion is that it should be spent like that. **If there was a referendum and they had to vote for this action, they would vote in favor of this action, regardless of the amount of money spent for it, since it would come from other funds, not from the government budget.**

„We would support this action, but, only under the condition that the money really goes to the right place“

„I think that EU will give this money for the Roma, this money is intended for them, and I would vote for it “

- **Young respondents from Podgorica are very skeptical about spending money for solving the problems of the Roma within future actions. They think that the money will not be used in proper way, that is, just small amounts of money will actually reach the Roma.** The money would disappear through malversations of state institutions and NGOs.

„I think that this money wouldn't be used for this. Behind these organizations are the people who grab for themselves“

„A good portion of this money would disappear“

„I know one man who used to work in some humanitarian organization. He received some goods from abroad which he was supposed to dole out. He was selling these goods and bought other goods from the Chinese, and then he doled out these Chinese goods“

- **Reduced price of pre-school programs / books/ transport/ school lunch for poor Roma children, as well as scholarships for university studies are the objectives towards which the citizens have a very positive**¹⁶ **attitude.** The opinion is that it is very

important to stimulate and support financially the education of the Roma, which would solve numerous problems. The education would result in increased employment opportunities, and this would considerably increase their culture of living.

- **However, in contrast to Nikšić, where incorporation of the Roma culture in curricula is accepted, respondents from Podgorica have a very negative attitude towards this suggestion.**

Respondents from Nikšić (older respondents, with secondary education) assert that the Roma are people with rich cultural tradition, so it would be useful to incorporate some elements of their culture into school curricula.

Respondents from Podgorica (younger, with university education) think that, first of all, the Roma do not have any culture whatsoever, and giving them such freedom (inclusion of culture elements in school curricula) would do nothing else but lead to increased requirements of minorities and new wars.

„There is not a single book written by a Gypsy. Šiptari (Albanians from Kosovo) have at least some culture of their own”

„Everyone would like to incorporate their history. Gypsies and Šiptari (Albanians from Kosovo) and Muslims ”.

„If we do this, in several years we will have a new war again. Someone is requesting something all the time”

- **Citizens of Nikšić have a positive attitude towards micro loans for the Roma to start businesses, however, they express doubt that the Roma have skills and knowledge necessary to start some business.**

„What can he do if he is not educated. He can repair caldrons, but what do we need this for, this is a forgotten trade”

„They could make small caldrons, and we can sell them to foreigners as souvenirs”

Younger respondents from Podgorica think that granting micro loans to the Roma would be throwing the money away, namely, they doubt that the Roma would know how to use these loans. They mention the example of failed government program of loans for unemployed citizens to start businesses.

„They initiated it, but it never took hold. Not to mention what would happen if the loans were granted to Gypsies. First of all the government does not have sufficient resources, and secondly, they will not start any business”

„Nothing would happen, there would be no change, this might work with some European Gypsies, not for ours”

Some respondents openly oppose such program, thinking that they should firstly be implemented for the poor citizens of Montenegro.

„I would be against it. Pensioners are not the only problem, but also the middle-aged people, whom no one will give employment at this age. Who will help these people? They are a priority. If they helped these people, I wouldn't oppose it ”

- **Citizens of Nikšić (older, with secondary education) and Podgorica (younger, with university education) have opposed opinion about antidiscrimination laws.** Citizens of Nikšić and female respondents from Podgorica think that antidiscrimination laws should exist, and that they are useful not only in case of the Roma, but to prevent other forms of discrimination.

On the other hand, male respondents from Podgorica argue against the adoption of antidiscrimination law, because they think that such law is not a priority, and that it's high time to

adopt some much more important laws. They justify such attitude with the fact that majority of Roma are unemployed, which is why there is no need for such law.

„This is not a problem here at the moment, because, they objectively are not in a position to work because they don't have qualifications"

„This is not important now. Who would be implement this here anyway?"

On of the younger respondents from Podgorica states that he wouldn't employ Roma because he wouldn't trust them.

„I wouldn't employ them because I would be afraid that they will steel something"

- **Free vaccines for Roma children are considered necessary by all respondents.** They think that vaccination should be compulsory, and assert that much has been done in Montenegro about this issue. **Free They even advocate other health benefits for the Roma.**

„They should be given free medicines, but the only problem is the fact that someone can squander this possibility"

Ambassadors of Change: Voices to Trust

- **Citizens from Nikšić mention Veselj Begenaj (who is actively involved in helping the Roma community) as a prominent Roma leader, while the citizens of Podgorica do not know a single Roma leader.**
- **There is a substantial distrust in leaders and institutions in Montenegro.** It is generally thought that none of the leaders would sincerely want to help the Roma community. **Those who might undertake to help them, would rather do it for personal advantage.**

„I wouldn't trust anyone"

„I always think that politicians would steal this money"

„I don't trust anyone at all. All this would be reduced to corruption and embezzlement"

„If the money appeared from somewhere, there would immediately be hundreds of people who would want to do something about this"

Some respondents state that majority population would be disappointed with the leaders who would be involved in solving the problems of Roma, and not the problems of majority population, since they are perceived as more important and pressing.

„Everyone would condemn them because of the problems that I've just talked about. Because they are not solving our problems, but the problems of Roma. I would be the first one to throw a stone on them, although I don't hate the Roma "

„Everywhere in European Community they solved the problems of their population, so they can talk about the Roma. We also must solve the problems of our people first "

Citizens of Nikšić assert that possible leaders who might be reliable and convincing spokespersons about the Roma-related topics could be:

- ✓ Local businessman Daka Davidović (*„This man is rich and he has a heart of gold "*)
- ✓ Representatives of political parties, depending on preferred political party – namely, some of them mention Prime Minister Milo Đukanović, and others mention the representatives of opposition party SNS – Danilović and Mandić.
- ✓ Minister of agriculture – Mr. Simović (*„All people like him "*)

Citizens of Podgorica think that doctors and social workers who spent a lot of time working with the Roma could undertake to do this, or representatives of EU (citizens would trust them more that they will not embezzle the money).

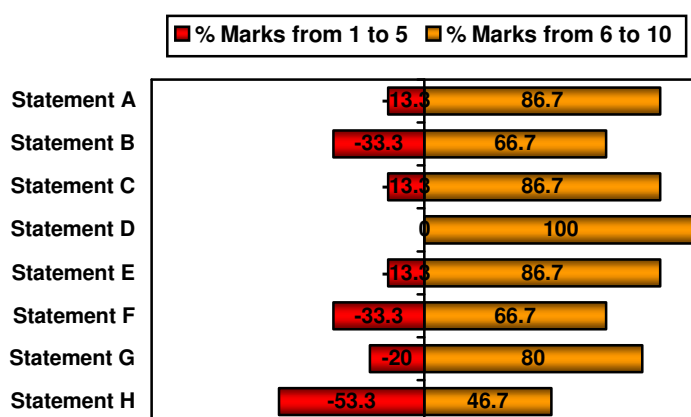
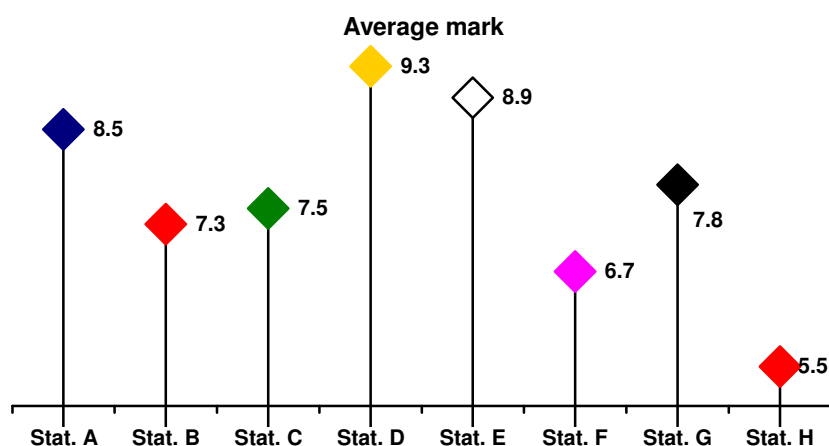
- **Everyone agrees that the action „The Decade of Roma Inclusion“ should be under strict control of European Community, since the money wouldn’t otherwise end up where it was planned to.**

Message concepts

Statements which explain why „The Decade of Roma Inclusion“ could be good for our country are the following ones:

- In order to become a real part of Europe, we must take care of the people in our country who have been most discriminated against. It is a true sign of a modern country.**
- Helping the Roma advance and integrate is, quite simply, the right thing to do.** This is an issue of human rights. We are an unjust society if we continue to treat them in the way that they’ve been treated here.
- Helping the Roma is a matter of simple economics.** All taxpayers will continue to pay more in the future if we don’t do something now to truly help educate the Roma and move them out of lives of poverty, it will cost us and our children more in the long run.
- If there’s one thing we must do, **it is to help the Roma children so that they will have the opportunities to prosper in a way that our own children have.**
- Helping the Roma is really about **giving every person in our country the opportunity to achieve his/her potential.** This is the true meaning of freedom and the fall of the wall.
- The way the Roma **have been treated in this country is simply wrong.** It makes me ashamed and I want it to change.
- Having a large minority population like the Roma living in such abject poverty and experiencing constant discrimination reflects badly on our country.** I think our country can do better.
- Our country is on the road to prosperity. **We must make sure that this prosperity is shared by all.**

- **The highest graded messages/statements are D, E and A**, and the lowest graded messages, with the lowest average score are H, F and B.



- The main objection to formulation in statement **H** is the fact that it claims that **our country is on the road to prosperity, which is contradiction with the opinion of majority of the citizens.**
- **Citizens show more antagonism towards the statements in which the accent is put on emotional component, that is, the statements which accentuate the feeling of personal guilt.** This is why they scored badly the statement B which accentuated the fact that we are an **unjust society**, and statement F which accentuates personal shame.

Statement F provokes very sharp reactions of respondents against formulation – **It makes me ashamed** and I want it to change. A good portion of the citizens assert that they are not ashamed because of the way the Roma are treated, and they also state that they have no reasons to be ashamed personally because of that.

„I am not ashamed. Why should I be ashamed, this is a completely wrong formulation“

„I have no reason whatsoever to be ashamed“

„I can not give any answer to this question, because I am not ashamed“

- Lesser number of respondents **don't understand statement C, that is, why all taxpayers will continue to pay more in the future** if we don't solve the problems of the Roma now.

„I don't understand at all why this is my obligation, and why we will pay more in the long run “