POVERTY AND WELFARE OF ROMA IN THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC

THE WORLD BANK
FOUNDATION S.P.A.C.E.
INEKO
THE OPEN SOCIETY INSTITUTE

APRIL 2002
CURRENCY EQUIVALENTS

(Exchange Rate Effective as of January 30, 2002)

Currency Unit = Slovak Crown
1 Crown = US$.0205
US$1 = 48.775 Crowns

FISCAL YEAR
January 1 to -- December 31

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS
AFDC : Aid to Families with Dependent Children
ECOHOST : European Center on Health of Societies in Transition
EU : European Union
ILO : International Labor Office
INEKO : Institute for Economy and Social Reform
IOM : The International Organization for Migration
IVO : Institute for Public Affairs
LFS : Labor Force Survey
MFIP : Minnesota Family Investment Program
OECD : Organization for Economic Coordination and Development
PHARE : Poland and Hungary: Assistance in Restructuring Economies (EU program for Central and Eastern Europe)
ROI : Romany Civic Initiative
TANF : Temporary Assistance to Needy Families
S.P.A.C.E. : Social Policy Analysis Center
UKF : University of Constantine in Nitra
UNICEF : United Nations Children’s Fund
Acknowledgements

This report was prepared by a team of Slovak researchers and World Bank staff. At the Bank the work was coordinated by Dena Ringold and Helen Shahriari. Iveta Radicová of the SPACE Foundation led the research in Slovakia along with Michal Vašecka of the Institute of for Public Affairs (IVO), and Michal Šebesta of the Department of Political Science, Faculty of Arts, Comenius University. Imrich Vašecka was a Consultant to the team and Marián Babitz of the SPACE Foundation was the Project Assistant. The full field research team is listed at the end of this report.

The report benefited from close collaboration with the team which prepared the “Living Standards, Employment and Labor Market Study” for Slovakia, and particularly the comments and suggestions of Ana Revenga (team leader), Carolina Sanchez-Paramo, Carlos Silva-Jauregui, Anton Marcincin and Diane Steele. Halil Dundar provided background material on education. The peer reviewers for the study, Helena Ribe and Alexandre Marc provided valuable inputs. Maureen Lewis oversaw the work and provided guidance throughout. The work was carried out under the overall direction of Roger Grawe, Country Director for the Slovak Republic. Ian Conachy prepared the manuscript for publication.

INEKO and the Open Society Institute in New York provided invaluable logistical and financial support for this work. Eugen Jurzyca and Luboš Vagac at INEKO supported the research team, and hosted and organized consultations of the draft report in Bratislava in April 2000. Deborah Harding, Vice President of the Open Society Institute provided financial support and substantive inputs to the report.

The work of the team was facilitated by the collaboration and support of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for Human Rights, Minorities and Regional Development and the Office of the Plenipotentiary for Roma Communities. Finally, the team is grateful for the time and contributions of numerous individuals in the study sites in Stará Lubovna, Rimavská Sobota and Malacky, as well as Roma leaders from across the Slovak Republic, who were interviewed for the study.
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Executive Summary

Background

The Slovak Republic has one of the largest Roma populations in Europe. Although the 1991 census identified only 75,802 individuals as Roma – or just 1.4 percent of the population – informal estimates suggest that there are between 420,000 and 500,000 Roma in Slovakia, or between 8-10 percent of the population. For many reasons, Roma in Slovakia have been hardest hit by the process of transition from plan to market. As a whole, Roma are poorer than other population groups and are worse off in terms of nearly all basic social indicators, including education and health status, housing conditions and access to opportunities in the labor market and within civil society.

Despite these developments, limited information is available on poverty and living conditions among the Roma in Slovakia. Privacy legislation prohibits the collection of most data by ethnicity and existing quantitative surveys – including the 1996 Microcensus and the 1991 census – have been found to significantly underestimate the Roma population, due to problems with self-reporting of ethnicity and undersampling of areas where Roma are likely to live. To address these information gaps, this study included a qualitative survey specifically focused on documenting conditions in Roma settlements.¹

In contrast with the situation of Roma living in other countries in Central and Eastern Europe, more Roma in Slovakia live in settlements, on the outskirts of villages and towns. An estimated one-quarter of Roma in Slovakia live in settlements, many of which are in the poorer eastern regions of the country. Settlements vary significantly based upon geographic location and the level of ethnic segregation. Some settlements have their roots in policies adopted during the Second World War and early socialist period, which required Roma to move outside of towns. The population of Roma in settlements has been growing in the past decade, as many Roma have returned to settlements because of the availability of cheaper housing.

Poverty in Roma Settlements

Poverty among Roma is closely linked to four main factors: (i) regional economic conditions; (ii) the size and concentration of the Roma population in a settlement; (iii) the share of Roma in a settlement; and (iv) the degree of geographic integration or segregation of the settlement and its proximity to a neighboring village or town. The situation of Roma in more economically developed regions is generally more favorable. Within regions, the level of poverty in a Roma settlement seems to be closely connected to the level of ethnic integration and segregation. Conditions in settlements which consist only of Roma are significantly worse off than more integrated communities. The most segregated and geographically isolated settlements are the most economically and socially disadvantaged. In almost all of the completely segregated settlements formal unemployment was close to 100 percent.

Poor Roma themselves identify several common elements of poverty, including: inadequate food, poor housing conditions and ill health. Ability to provide a good

¹ The study is a non-representative sociological study of settlements in the districts of Malacky, Ľubovňa, and Rimavská Sobota.
education for their children and lead a better life are also identified as important, but take second place to more immediate issues of hunger and living conditions. Roma also view exclusion and discrimination as important dimensions of poverty.

**Nutrition.** In the poorest settlements, child nutrition appeared to be a frequent problem. Researchers observed evidence of stunting among some children. Some teachers reported that Roma children do not participate in school lunches because their parents are unable to pay.

**Housing.** Housing conditions are the worst in the most isolated and segregated settlements. Access to utilities and public services is nonexistent, or limited, in many of the more marginalized settlements. The most serious problems include lack of access to electricity, water, sewage and garbage collection. Most Roma in settlements do not own their homes or land. Lack of clarity regarding property ownership prevents the improvement of housing conditions—as individuals and local governments are unable to maintain or invest in buildings, or local infrastructure when ownership is unclear.

**Health Status.** The health status of Roma is generally worse than that of non-Roma. The prevalence of communicable diseases associated with poor living conditions such as hepatitis, trachoma, meningitis, and skin diseases is particularly high in isolated and segregated settlements. Doctors reported epidemics of conditions in settlements, which have been eliminated in the majority population, such as tuberculosis.

**Educational Attainment.** There are significant gaps in the education levels of Roma and non-Roma. Very few Roma in Slovakia continue on to secondary education. According to the 1991 census, 77 percent of Roma had completed primary education, 8 percent had completed vocational training, and less than two percent had completed academic secondary education, or university. An earlier survey from 1990 found that 56 percent of Roma men and 59 percent of Roma women had not completed basic education (grades 1-8). Such low levels of education put the Roma at a huge disadvantage in the labor market and contribute to other correlates of poverty including poor health status.

**Labor Market Status**

The labor market status of Roma has changed dramatically during the transition period, with huge increases in unemployment and inactivity. Roma were often among those first laid off in the early transition period, because they commonly held low or unskilled jobs. Because of low education levels and discrimination, Roma have faced substantial barriers to reentering the labor force.

While official unemployment data by ethnicity are lacking, a 1997 survey by the Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Family, estimated that Roma comprised between 17 to 18 percent of the total unemployed in 1996, with this figure as high as 40 to 42 percent in eastern districts with large Roma populations. Similarly, the registries from the National Labor Office (which contained information on ethnicity until 1997) suggest that, for the country as a whole, Roma represented between 15 and 20 percent of all the registered unemployed in the Slovak Republic through 1997.

Long-term unemployment among Roma is particularly high. Many of the Roma interviewed in the qualitative work had been unemployed for many years. Employment opportunities for Roma in marginalized areas are limited to temporary jobs in agriculture and construction, and public works. Social assistance benefits are the only source of
income for some Roma families. Many Roma identified ongoing unemployment and insecurity as the most demoralizing aspect of their lives.

Because of the limited formal labor market, many Roma work in the informal sector. Common activities include salvaging and selling scrap metal, petty trade and playing music. Informal sector activities are fueled by incentives for employers to hire labor while evading taxes and insurance contributions. Roma in geographically isolated and segregated areas have fewer opportunities for involvement in the informal sector, because communities are more closed and have limited channels for locating opportunities.

Many Roma cited discrimination as a significant barrier to employment, and as a rationale for not searching for work outside of their communities and villages. Although Slovakia has legislation prohibiting discrimination in employment, Roma describe experiences of discrimination. A number of Roma in the study noted that they had applied for jobs, and although they were accepted over the phone, they were subsequently rejected once they reported to work.

Access to Public Services

Education. Roma children often face stiffer challenges in accessing education than other ethnic groups. In addition to issues common to other poor households, such as economic constraints, limited access to quality education and parents’ education levels, Roma children face additional barriers including low demand for education within the community, geographic isolation, low Slovak language proficiency and low expectations of teachers. Roma children are also more likely to end up in special schools for the mentally and physically disabled which limit their future education and labor market prospects.

Health Services. Access to health care among Roma in the settlements was influenced negatively by the geographic distance of settlements from urban areas, by poor communication between Roma and health providers, and discrimination.

Social Assistance. Because of high levels of unemployment and poverty, social assistance benefits provide an important source of income for many Roma households. Nearly all of the long-term unemployed Roma interviewed for this study, and especially those living in poorer segregated settlements, are dependent upon social assistance benefits for income support. The dependency of Roma families on social assistance reinforces negative stereotypes about Roma among the non-Roma population. However, such dependency may be encouraged by the very design of the social assistance and support mechanisms, which penalize those who can find only low-paying work.

Social Exclusion

A prevailing characteristic of Roma poverty is its relationship to social exclusion. Social exclusion and discrimination of Roma within civil society severely affects access to employment opportunities, education, and public services. Limited communication between Roma and non-Roma, and negative stereotypes on both sides, can lead to poor relations between Roma and local government officials and social service providers.

There are indications that negative perceptions of Roma are worsening for a number of reasons, including their declining social status, growing unemployment, and increasing dependency on social benefits. Negative stereotypes are also reinforced by
geographic separation, and the limited contact between Roma and non-Roma, especially in segregated settlements. In integrated communities, the level of contacts and interactions between Roma and non-Roma was higher and relationships were reportedly smoother.

**Policy Implications**

Policy measures to aid the Roma population, reduce poverty and improve living conditions could include:

**Measures to improve housing conditions** include expanding access to utilities and public services by bringing isolated settlements into the mainstream utility networks. While inhabitants should be charged for utilities, subsidies may be needed for low income households. Other important measures could include clarifying property rights, and introducing incentives for local governments and communities to provide services in settlements;

**Measures to expanding income generating opportunities for Roma workers**: enforcing anti-discrimination legislation; reducing non-wage costs and other biases working against hiring of unskilled labor; and improving on-the-job training/re-training opportunities;

**Measures to increasing the educational attainment of Roma**: reducing barriers that keep children from starting school; addressing the language constraint; training of teachers (including Roma teachers and teacher’s assistants); increasing preschool attendance; and facilitating secondary school attendance;

**Improving access to health care in remote areas (improved local infrastructure, e.g. roads and telecommunications)**: increased outreach activities; and improved public health awareness, particularly reproductive health and contraception; and,

**Addressing exclusion through anti-discrimination legislation**: public education and information campaigns; multi-cultural education; and training for public officials such as mayors, health practitioners and other public servants.
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1. Introduction and Objectives

The Slovak Republic has one of the largest Roma populations in Europe. Although the 1991 census identified only 75,802 individuals as Roma – or just 1.4 percent of the population – the actual size of the population is thought to be significantly higher. Current estimates by local government officials and Roma leaders put the total number between 420,000 and 500,000, or close to 10 percent of the population, one of the largest shares in Europe (Figure 1.1). Despite the significant size of the Roma population, very little is known about the actual living conditions and welfare of Roma in Slovakia. Limited quantitative, as well as qualitative analysis of Roma communities has taken place. There are a number of reasons for this, including an overall lack of surveys on poverty and welfare in Slovakia and privacy legislation, adopted in 1993, which prohibits the collection of data based upon ethnicity. As a result, this report draws from a qualitative study of Roma living conditions commissioned to address these information gaps.

Slovakia is one of the most ethnically diverse countries in Central and Eastern Europe. The 1991 census identified as many as 17 nationalities living in Slovakia. Roma are the second largest ethnic minority in the country after Hungarians. Because of higher birth rates among Roma than other population groups, this share is likely to rise in coming years. Recently reported demographic projections suggested that, given current trends, Roma could become a majority in the country by 2060.

Figure 1.1: Estimated Roma Populations in Europe

Sources: Roma population data from Liegeois, J-P, 1994; total population data from World Bank, 2000. Notes: Latest possible year; population data are 1997; Roma data are midpoints of ranges.

As a whole, Roma in Slovakia are over represented among the poor and are worse off in terms of nearly all basic social indicators, including education and health status, housing conditions and access to opportunities in the labor market and within civil society. The available information suggest that the socioeconomic status of Roma in Slovakia is similar to that of Roma in other countries in Central and Eastern Europe. While absolute poverty in Slovakia has been found to be low, there are significant “pockets” of poverty, especially concentrated in regions with large Roma populations, and isolated rural areas (World Bank, 2001). Roma are also deprived in other ways including access to public services and exclusion within society. The evidence suggests that poverty among Roma in Slovakia is deep, and is deeper in comparison with other groups.

Limited empirical data are available for measuring poverty in Slovakia. The 1996 Microcensus, which was administered in 1997, is the best source of information on the welfare of the population. Data in the Microcensus cover annual household incomes and selected demographic variables including age, gender, education levels, and occupations. Although the sample is intended to cover the entire population, there are questions as to the extent to which the sampling frame adequately captures the Roma population, especially those living in isolated settlements. An indicator that the sample may not adequately cover Roma is household size and the number of children. Very few families in the Microcensus report having more than three children; yet the average number of children for a Roma family is estimated at 4.2 (Vašecka, 2000).

Because settlements where Roma live are often geographically remote, and may not be officially registered, because of, among other things, unclear property ownership, they are not covered in most official registries and household surveys. None of the existing household surveys capture ethnicity, since privacy legislation prohibits such gathering of data, so there is little objective basis on which to build an estimate of their poverty. However, Roma do have a higher incidence of all the correlates of poverty, which suggests that poverty among Roma is likely to be high and probably deeper, than among other groups of the population.

This report aims to address the gaps in information on Roma in Slovakia by bringing together existing information on the living conditions and welfare of Roma and documenting the conditions of Roma living in settlements. It draws from quantitative data sources, including data on the labor market from the Ministry of Family and Social Affairs. In order to provide a more comprehensive picture of Roma living in settlements, a qualitative study of Roma was commissioned for this report. The report is intended to improve understanding of the situation of Roma in Slovakia and to facilitate the development of policies and programs to address their needs.

**Data Sources**

A large share of Roma in Slovakia live in settlements on the outskirts of villages and towns, mainly in the poorer eastern regions of the country, although there is limited reliable information about the location and size of settlements. Many settlements have their roots in policies adopted during the Second World War and early socialist period, which required Roma to move outside of villages. A survey of district officials estimated that there were 591 Roma settlements in 1998, in comparison with 278 in 1988. It is not

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4 The Microcensus is intended to cover 1 percent of the Slovak population.
known to what extent this represents a real increase, or simply differences in surveys.\(^5\) During the past decade some Roma have returned to settlements because of the lack of affordable housing. This, in addition to the high birth rate among Roma living in settlements, partially explains the increase.\(^6\) The total number of people living in settlements also has grown dramatically. In 1988 there were approximately 14,988 inhabitants, and by 1997 this figure had grown to 123,034.

A qualitative study of conditions in Roma settlements in 3 contrasting districts in Slovakia was undertaken to address the gaps in information about Roma in settlements. In each district, sociological fieldwork was conducted, involving in-depth interviews with individuals, households and key informants – including teachers, doctors, social assistance workers, religious leaders and local government officials. Fieldwork was conducted between December 2000 and January 2001. The study examined the characteristics and correlates of poverty, conditions in the settlements, and the experience of Roma living in these areas. Although the survey is not representative, the results provide illustrative case studies and a snapshot of the conditions of Roma in geographically and socioeconomically diverse locations. The districts included in the study were:

**Malacky**: A better off district with below average unemployment (13.5 percent in 1999) and share of population receiving social assistance benefits. Malacky is in the Bratislava Region near the capital city. There are very few segregated settlements in Malacky.

**Stará Lubovna**: An average region in terms of unemployment, social assistance beneficiaries and the composition of Roma settlements. The district is located in eastern Slovakia in the Prešov Region where the concentration of Roma is high.

**Rimavská Sobota**: A relatively poor district in the Banská Bystrica Region, with a high level of unemployment (35 percent in 1999) and a high share of the population receiving social assistance.

The study looks at poverty in its broader sense among Roma, including the lack of access to education and employment, income insecurity, social exclusion, and the lack of opportunities for participation in civil society. Poverty in the study is defined in different ways, based upon self-assessment of Roma, and the interviewers’ assessment of material conditions – including housing conditions, nutrition, health care, and access to public services. Summary data on housing conditions in the sites are included in Annex 2. These measures are inherently subjective, and cannot substitute for rigorous empirical analysis of welfare. It is hoped that the findings from this qualitative analysis will provide the basis for development of a quantitative survey that will look in depth at the conditions among Roma. It is important to note that the interviewers’ assessments of poverty did not always coincide with those of the households being interviewed. These discrepancies highlight the highly subjective nature of the concept.

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\(^5\) This figure is based on a loose definition of settlements, including integrated areas in towns and villages, as a result it is unclear to what extent the higher number of settlements in 1998 reflects an actual increase, or whether it is due to changes in the way in which settlements were counted.

\(^6\) The database, housed in the Office of the Plenipotentiary for Roma Communities, provides only a rough estimate of the number of settlements and their conditions. The fieldwork conducted for this study found significant errors in the database regarding the number and location of settlements.
This report draws from the existing literature and the qualitative study. The first chapter provides the context for the study, by discussing the historical origins and characteristics of Roma in Slovakia. Chapter Two describes the nature of poverty in Roma settlements, based upon Roma’s self-assessment of their own living conditions, as well as concrete experiences and observations. Chapter Three discusses the status of Roma on the labor market, unemployment and employment patterns, and their coping strategies. Chapter 4 addresses access to public services, including education, health and social assistance. Chapter 5 looks at the issue of social exclusion, followed by Chapter 6 on policy recommendations.

1.2. Historical Background

The origins of Roma in Europe have long been a subject of mystery and controversy. Historical records indicate that Roma arrived in Europe from northern India in waves between the ninth and fourteenth centuries, although the reasons for their migration into Europe and their paths in moving into the continent are unknown. Linguistic roots and limited documentation suggest that Roma came first through Persia and the Caucasus through the Byzantine Empire into southern Europe (Fraser, 1995), although some Macedonian legends place Roma in Europe at the time of Alexander the Great as early as the fourth century B.C.

The oldest references to Roma living on the territory of the Slovak Republic date back to 1322. There is increasing evidence of Roma living in the Czech and Slovak lands during the Middle Ages. Roma appeared both as settlers and nomadic groups with travel permits issued by the Holy Roman Emperor and the Pope. Roma who settled in Slovakia worked as castle musicians, metalworkers, and served in the Hungarian royal armies. Anti-Roma policies began to emerge in the 15th century in Europe and intensified in the Hungarian kingdom in the 16th century, following the Turkish occupation of central Hungary when Roma were viewed as spies for the Turks. As a result Roma settlers were restricted to living on the outskirts of towns and villages, and metalworkers were allowed to sell only a limited amount of goods.7

Restrictive policies continued during the early period of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in the 18th century. Leopold I declared that Roma were outlaws and ordered all Roma men to be hanged without a trial. Policies changed under Empress Maria Theresa, and subsequently Joseph II, her son and successor. Both sought to assimilate Roma as citizens within the Empire. Legislative measures required Roma to settle, pay taxes and provide compulsory service to local landowners. Other edicts included mandated school and church attendance and improvement of housing infrastructure.

These policies were the first step toward the settling of Roma, an important feature that still distinguishes Roma in Central and Eastern Europe from those living in Western Europe. Although these policies aimed – sometimes aggressively – at assimilation, they represented the first time that Roma were treated as citizens of a nation-state and were not persecuted. Austro-Hungarian measures were used as models for other European countries, which aimed to assimilate Roma in the 19th and the 20th centuries.

7 For a more detailed discussion of the history of Roma in Slovakia see David Crowe’s A History of the Gypsies of Eastern Europe and Russia.
The first Czechoslovak Republic, founded during the interwar period (1918–1938), passed legislation which limited the mobility and civil rights of Roma, particularly nomadic and homeless groups. Laws included mandated identification cards and fingerprinting of Roma. Conditions deteriorated substantially during World War II. Like Jews, Roma throughout Europe were targeted with discriminatory legislation, and subsequently extermination under the ‘Final Solution.’ During the course of the ‘Devouring,’ as Roma called the Holocaust, approximately one-half million Roma from across Europe were executed or killed in concentration camps.

The experience of Roma in the Czech and Slovak Republics during the Holocaust differed significantly. The majority of Czech Roma were killed in concentration camps. In contrast, fewer Roma from Slovakia were deported to camps, although many were sent to work camps. The rights of Slovak Roma were curbed in many ways. Roma were banned from public spaces and prohibited from using public transportation. Roma were allowed to enter towns and villages only on certain days and at specific times, and they had to move their homes a minimum distance of two kilometers from all public roads. This latter policy formed the basis for the establishment of many Roma settlements which still exist in Slovakia today. In 1941, several labor camps were established for Roma, where workers lived under extremely poor conditions.

After Slovakia was invaded by the German army in September 1944, the situation for Slovak Roma became more dire and violence intensified. Mass executions were carried out in several towns and villages, and Roma living in the southern and southeastern parts of Slovakia, which were annexed to Hungary during the war, were transported to the concentration camp at Dachau.

After World War II, large numbers of Roma migrated from Slovakia into the Czech lands in search of better living conditions and employment. In many cases, migration was forced, as a result of state policies. Over the course of several years, more than 15,000 Roma migrated westward. Because of the Holocaust and the intra-Czechoslovak migration, the majority of Roma living in the Czech Republic today are originally from Slovakia.

The Socialist Period

The Czechoslovak socialist regime, which came to power after the war, adopted policies aimed at assimilating Roma and eliminating ethnic differences. These measures, similar to policies adopted by socialist governments across the region, left behind a legacy that has affected the socioeconomic status of Roma into the transition period. The government refused to officially recognize Roma as an ethnic minority, but rather identified them as “citizens of a gypsy origin.” Among other constraints on Roma civil rights, this implied that Roma cultural activities were banned. Roma were not allowed to establish their own music ensembles, youth or sports clubs, Roma folk songs were not allowed to be sung at schools, and Roma books and magazines were banned.

Assimilation policies in the areas of housing, employment, and school attendance were stringent and aggressive. In 1959, the government embarked upon a violent campaign against nomadism, and drew up plans for a ‘dispersal and transfer’ scheme.

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8 Estimates differ, however approximately 6,000-8,000 Czech Roma are thought to have been killed.
which aimed to resettle Roma from areas with large Roma communities in eastern Slovakia to the Czech lands. This latter program was never fully implemented, although many Roma families were transported to the Czech Republic against their will. The program was coordinated by a Commission for the Problems of the Gypsy Population in Slovakia, which was established in 1966 under the auspices of the Presidium of the Slovak National Council. The work of the Commission was concentrated on resettling Roma from the Slovak to the Czech Republic. In 1967 alone, 3,178 Roma were resettled from Slovakia. Of that number, a total of 1,034 Roma returned to Slovakia within the same year.

To combat nomadism, state officials literally broke up caravans, sometimes slaughtering horses in the middle of the night (Fraser, 1995). Policies relaxed somewhat during the period of the Prague Spring reforms in 1968. Roma began to form official organizations for the first time, and approximately 200 Roma musical groups and 30 football clubs were established.\(^9\) Repression resumed following the Soviet crackdown in 1969. Forced migration and resettlement policies were continued with renewed vigor. Between 1972 and 1980, 4,000 Roma dwellings were destroyed and 4,850 Roma were resettled.

Efforts to improve school attendance were similarly forced. Regulations were issued to implement compulsory schooling. However, the objectives were not communicated to parents, and as a result Roma perceived school attendance as an externally imposed obligation. School attendance did increase dramatically. In 1971 only 17 percent of Roma finished compulsory education, this increased to 26 percent by 1980. However, many were enrolled in “special schools” intended for the mentally and physically disabled, these practices have persisted, and large numbers of Roma children in both the Czech and Slovak Republics still study in special schools.

Some of the most stringent policies were adopted in the 1980s. Most notoriously, the government adopted a sterilization program for Roma women to reduce the growth of the Roma population. Local health workers attempted to convince Roma women to undergo sterilization in return for financial compensation.

### 1.3. Roma in Slovakia After 1989

With the Velvet Revolution in November 1989, came new opportunities for minorities to express their ethnic identity and participate in civil society. In January 1991 the new Declaration of Basic Human Rights and Freedoms adopted by the Czechoslovak Federal Assembly allowed for free determination of ethnic identity. Subsequently, in April, the government of the Slovak Republic adopted “The Principles of Government Policy Regarding Roma.” For the first time in history, Roma were recognized as an independent ethnic minority, with equal status to that of other minorities living in the Slovak Republic.

The first Roma political party, the Romany Civic Initiative (ROI), was established after the transition in November 1989. Other parties and cultural associations soon followed. In the 1990 parliamentary elections, Roma were elected to parliamentary posts

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\(^9\) Roma were officially allowed to form organizations during the first Czechoslovak Republic (1918-38), but none did. The first Roma organization was established in 1948 and was banned soon after by the communists.
for the first time and other Roma representatives were appointed to positions within the Office of the Government, the Ministry of Culture, and the Ministry of Education.

Government activity related to Roma issues accelerated in the late 1990s, as increased local and international attention has been focused on the issue. In November 1997, the Slovak cabinet adopted the “Conceptual intents of the Slovak Republic for solution of the problems of Romany population under current social and economic conditions.” The document outlined the issues facing Roma and institutional responsibilities for addressing them.

One of the most significant developments in Roma affairs was the establishment of the Office of the Plenipotentiary for Roma Communities after elections in 1998. The Office falls under the jurisdiction of the Deputy Prime Minister for Human Rights, Minorities and Regional Development, and has been headed by a Roma since 1999. The Office is charged with implementing government policy regarding Roma.

In 1999, the new government adopted a new “Strategy of the Slovak Government to Solve Problems of the Romany Ethnic Minority and the Set of Implementation Measures.” The new document formulated a more detailed action plan for policy measures related to Roma issues. A second phase of this strategy was adopted in May 2000, which further detailed measures to be undertaken. The document charged specific ministers and heads of regional public administration offices with specific measures. The areas of focus within the strategy, in order of priority are: human rights, education, unemployment, housing, social security and health. The strategy is limited in that it fails to specify levels and sources of financing for activities.

**EU Accession.** The EU accession process has focused attention on Roma issues in the Slovak Republic, as well as the other countries in Central and Eastern Europe which have large Roma populations. Roma issues are addressed under the political criteria for accession, as part of the sub-chapter on “human rights and the protection of minorities.” In its November 2000 progress report on accession, the EU noted that the Slovak Republic had made considerable progress in establishing the legislation and institutional framework for minority policies – as outlined in phase 1 and 2 of the strategy mentioned above— however implementation had been slow.

**Migration.** The emigration of Slovak Roma within Europe and outside has also raised international concern and focused attention on the conditions of Roma within the country. The first wave of migration began in 1997, when Roma began trying to emigrate to Great Britain in 1997. In June 1999 over 1,000 Slovak Roma requested asylum in Finland. All of the applicants were denied entrance, and Finland reintroduced visa requirements for Slovak citizens soon after. Migration attempts by Slovak Roma into other countries, including Norway, have had similar results. It is not known how many Slovak Roma have migrated, or attempted to migrate to other countries.

There are multiple reasons for emigration. Roma cite a variety of factors, including difficult economic conditions and ethnic discrimination. The International Organisation for Migration undertook a study of the roots of Roma migration in Slovakia in 2000. The study found that the majority of migrants came from urban environments – rather than rural settlements – in Eastern Slovakia. Most were young and of working age – between 26 and 40 years of age (IOM, 2000).
1.4. Population and Location

Roma remain the second largest ethnic minority in Slovakia after the Hungarian minority, representing 9.7 percent of the population according to the 2001 census. However, as mentioned above, the exact size of the Roma population is unknown. Census data on Roma in the Slovak Republic vary dramatically and highlight the problematic nature of collecting quantitative data based upon ethnicity (Table 1.1). In the 1970 census, a total of 159,275 Roma (3.5 percent) declared themselves to be Roma, while ten years later that number had grown to 199,853 (4.0 percent). Census data from the socialist period are believed to significantly underestimate the Roma population. Because Roma did not exist as an national minority, it was impossible for them to declare as Roma on the census. However, census officials marked the forms of individuals they believed to be Roma with a “C” for Cigán (Gypsy) without the knowledge of the respondents. As a result, data are based on external characteristics and interviewer perceptions of ethnic identity.

Although Roma were provided the option of declaring their ethnicity for the first time in sixty years on the 1991 census, very few chose to do so. The number of Roma recorded in the census plummeted to 75,802, or 1.4 percent of the total population. This substantial change is likely the result of a number of factors, including problems with self-reporting, conflicting national identities and undersampling of areas where Roma are likely to reside. In the early transition period Roma may have felt more unsure about claiming Roma ethnicity for two reasons. First, because the Roma nationality had not officially existed during the transition period, ethnic ties may have weakened, and Roma may have felt more Slovak (or Hungarian) than Roma. In addition, Roma may have been more unsure about the implications of identifying themselves as Roma in the immediate aftermath of the transition and been concerned about negative perceptions of Roma and how public officials would use the data.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>75,802</td>
<td>Census</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>254,000</td>
<td>Survey of municipalities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>199,853</td>
<td>Census</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>159,275</td>
<td>Census</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A Roma leader explained the reluctance of Roma to declare their nationality for official purposes:

*When there will be a census here in the south, only one of the 150 Roma in the village will declare Roma nationality...We want every Roma not to feel ashamed for who he is.*

The most recent census was conducted in May 2001. Roma civil society and political leaders, and the government made a concerted effort to encourage Roma to declare their ethnicity.

A defining characteristic of Roma in all countries is their diversity. There are numerous subdivisions based on various cross-cutting cleavages, including family groups.
and religion, many of which have little or no contact with each other. There are three main Roma groups in Slovakia: the Rumungres, the Vlachika and the Sinti. The majority of Roma in Slovakia are Rumungres, a branch of settled Roma. Ethnographers have estimated that up to 90 percent of Roma in Slovakia are Rumungres Roma. Within this group are separate sub-groups of Slovak and Hungarian Roma, based upon linguistic differences. The Vlachika, or Vlakhi Roma, are descendants of nomadic tribes. The largest sub-groups among them are the Lovars, who live around the towns of Rimavská Sobota, Jesenské, and Lucenec, the Bougheshs who live in Nitra and its surroundings, Levice, Želiezovce, and Bratislava. The last subgroup consists of ancestors of the Germanic Sinti. Very few Slovak Roma identify as Sinti. A Roma leader has suggested that there are just three Sinti extended families in the country.

Roma in Slovakia also differ linguistically. Over half of Roma in Slovakia are thought to speak some of the Roma language, but it is not known how many speak it at home. Many Roma living in the south of the country speak Hungarian.

The Roma population is unevenly distributed throughout Slovakia. Nearly two-thirds live in the east of the country, around Košice and in the southernmost districts of central Slovakia, such as Rimavská Sobota. According to the 1991 census, Roma constituted more than 5 percent of the population in 9 districts in eastern Slovakia, all in the regions of Košice, Banská Bystrica and Prešov.

The demographic profile of Roma in Slovakia is considerably different from that of the total population (Figure 1.2). The Roma population is significantly younger and has been growing more rapidly than other ethnic groups, due to higher birth rates. The national birth rate for Slovakia has declined steadily during the transition period from 15.2 live births per 1,000 population in 1990 to 10.7 in 1998 (UNICEF, 2000). In contrast, birth rates among Roma have been increasing, especially in the most isolated, segregated settlements. The life expectancy of Roma is considerably lower than the national average, although recent data are not available. Estimates derived from the 1970 and 1980 censuses put life expectancy for Roma at 55 for men and 59 for women, in comparison with 67 for men in the total population and 74 for women (ECOHOST, 2000).

**Figure 1.2: Age Structure of Roma and the Total Population in Slovakia, 1991**

Data from 1988 on family structure found that, of families living in segregated settlements, 25 percent had three children or fewer and 77 percent had four or more children. Of these, 41 percent had six or more children (Vašeka, 2000). In contrast, less
than 10 percent of Roma families in integrated towns had six or more children. In the qualitative study commissioned for this report, in the village of Lomnicka in Stará Lubovna district, a settlement of approximately 1,200 inhabitants, the population has reportedly grown by 70-80 persons annually during the 1990s. Demographic patterns of Roma in more integrated areas appeared closer those of the non-Roma population.\(^{10}\)

In the qualitative sample, the average age of the Roma interviewed was 34. Roma living in settlements tended to be younger and have more children than integrated Roma. There are very few older Roma living in settlements. For example, in the study in a segregated settlement of 670 people in Stará Lubovna there were only 7 people over the age of 60.

There was some evidence in the sample that demographic patterns among Roma in some of the more integrated settlements were changing. Younger Roma living in integrated areas seemed to be altering their reproductive behavior and were having fewer children. A 36 year old mother in a village in Rimavská Sobota explained, “I have only two children because they are both sick and I do not want to have more so I can take care of them” In general, it was difficult to discuss birth control and family planning during the interviews. The number of children in more integrated and better off separated Roma communities was much lower than in segregated communities. In integrated areas the average number of children was below 4 (in Malacky it was between 2-3), while in segregated areas the average number of children among the respondents was 5.

1.5. Conclusion

Contrasts between Roma living in segregated and integrated areas are a theme which cuts through this report. In general, Roma in integrated areas are less poor than Roma living in settlements and have greater access to opportunities in the labor market and education. Conversely, Roma living in isolated and marginalized settlements are caught within a vicious circle of poverty, with limited chances for upward mobility and interactions with the rest of society. As conditions within settlements appear to be worsening over time, and the population living in settlements is growing, some observers have noted the emergence of an “underclass” of Roma in Slovakia, who are being left behind in the processes of economic and political transition. The following chapters explore the extent of poverty among Roma, its roots and correlates, and subsequent policy implications.

\(^{10}\) Refer to Chapter 2 for a discussion of different types of settlements.
CHAPTER 2: POVERTY IN ROMA SETTLEMENTS

2.1. Defining Poverty

This study defines poverty broadly, beyond a narrow focus on material consumption or resources. It encompasses many other aspects, including social exclusion, lack of access to social services, vulnerability, and the psychological dimensions of being poor. In this context, social exclusion refers to the inability to participate in social, economic, political and cultural life as a result of factors including low incomes, poor health and education status, lack of contact with the majority population and discrimination.

Due to the limited amount of quantitative data, this report relies on qualitative indicators and observations, as well as the experiences and perceptions of Roma themselves. Absolute, or material poverty, refers to the absence of appropriate housing, clothing, food and access to basic infrastructure and utilities – such as roads, running water, electricity and sewage – and health status. In addition, the study looks at poverty in a broader sense among Roma, including access to education and employment, coping strategies, insecurity, social exclusion, and opportunities for participation in civil society.

This study found that poverty has different characteristics in the Roma and non-Roma populations in Slovakia. Poverty in Roma settlements is closely related to living conditions, and more specifically, levels of integration and segregation. Poverty among Roma is closely linked to four main factors: (i) regional economic conditions; (ii) the size and concentration of the Roma population in a settlement; (iii) the share of Roma in a settlement; and (iv) the degree of geographic integration or segregation of the settlement and its proximity to a neighboring village or town.

Regional economic conditions. The situation of Roma in more economically developed regions is generally more favorable than that of Roma in poorer areas. For example, living conditions of Roma in Malacky, a district with a lower unemployment rate (13.5 percent) than the national average of 17.1 percent in 1999 and close to Bratislava (less than 50 km), were better than conditions in Rimavská Sobota, a district with 34.8 percent unemployment in 1999. Roma houses in segregated settlements in Malacky resembled those of the majority population. They were generally made of solid materials such as bricks, and had access to electricity. In contrast, housing conditions in settlements in Rimavská Sobota were poorer and health and education status was observed to be worse. Even Roma living on the outskirts of villages in Malacky for a long period of time were better off, and more likely to be employed than those in the other districts included in this study.

Roma Settlements. More Roma in Slovakia live in settlements, on the outskirts of villages and towns, than Roma in other countries in the region. The characteristics of settlements vary significantly based upon geographic location and ethnic composition. An estimated one-fourth of Roma in Slovakia live in settlements, many of which are in the poorer eastern regions of the country, although the actual number is difficult to gauge because of methodological difficulties in measuring the Roma population and defining what is a ‘settlement.’ Living conditions for Roma in settlements are generally worse than for the rest of the Roma population.
In this report ‘settlement’ refers to a group of people living together in an distinct geographic area, either within or outside of a town or village. In general, there are three types of settlements, based upon living arrangements between Roma and non-Roma. First, are completely integrated towns and villages. This was the case of Nová Lubovna in the district of Stará Lubovna, a district of average development in the east of the country. Second, are separated areas, in which Roma live together within a town or village, either on the outskirts, or within a particular street or neighborhood, as in Studienka in Malacky. Finally, are completely segregated settlements outside of the village or town, such as Kyjatice in the district of Rimavská Sobota, a settlement 3 km from the nearest town. It should be noted that these definitions are arbitrary and, in the absence of rigorous methodological measurements, were used to help document patterns. In particular, the distinction between separated and segregated settlements is sometimes blurred.

**Box 2.1: Integration and Segregation**

The study found significant differences between Roma living in segregated and completely integrated areas, and especially between Roma who had been living with non-Roma for more than one generation, and those in segregated areas. Although it is difficult to generalize, it was possible to document some patterns. The main reasons observed for better living conditions were: (i) living in a town or village where non-Roma constituted the majority for a long period of time; (ii) higher education levels; and (iii) exposure to better living conditions (parents and grandparents of most Roma in integrated areas had been employed as skilled workers under socialism and therefore had been better off).

Two types of integrated Roma were interviewed. First were Roma who had been settled in areas with non-Roma as a result of the forced assimilation policies of the 1970s. Second were Roma whose parents and/or grandparents had moved out of settlements in search of a better life for themselves and their children. In general, the education attainment and employment situation of the latter group was higher. However, the first group also had higher living standards than those living in segregated settlements. Those Roma who moved from settlements were generally followed by other members of the family, especially brothers and sisters with their families. Some had contacts with non-Roma before moving from settlements.

The majority of Roma from integrated areas had finished vocational secondary school with specialization in areas such as music, teaching, accounting, sales and construction. Extended family members who had also moved to the integrated areas were also educated and mostly held regular jobs. Some had family members working in the Czech Republic as professionals.

An issue shared among Roma living in integrated areas was the distinction they felt from Roma living in settlements. Some referred to themselves as from a “different caste.” Some also expressed pride that they had not been allowed to speak the Roma language at home when they were growing up.

**Geographic location and segregation.** Within regions, the level of poverty in a Roma settlement appears to be closely connected to the geographic location of the settlement, and the level of ethnic integration and segregation. Conditions in settlements which consisted only of Roma were significantly worse off than conditions in more
integrated communities. This leads to a vicious cycle: the more isolated and segregated the settlement, the more severe and deep the poverty, the fewer opportunities residents have to leave and work outside of the settlement, and consequently the higher the chances are that Roma will continue to live in isolated settlements and, consequently, remain in poverty.

The level of spatial separation is positively correlated to the level of poverty. The social status of Roma living in segregated settlements is considerably lower than that of Roma who are integrated among the majority population. Roma living in segregated settlements in marginalized regions are significantly worse off than those who live in segregated settlements in more developed and economically better off regions.

Roma living in segregated settlements within a poor district are “doubly marginalized” and are worse off in terms of both economic and social indicators. In the majority of cases included in this study, the level of unemployment in these settlements was close to 100 percent, health status was poorer than in other areas, and the educational attainment of inhabitants was low. The majority of residents in these settlements had only primary education. Mobility in these areas was close to zero, even among the younger generation. Most of them blamed their lack of mobility and unemployment on the economy and exclusion from employment and economic opportunities.

### Box 2.2: Poverty in Slovakia

The recent World Bank study of living standards in Slovakia, based upon the 1996 Slovak Microcensus, found that absolute poverty was low in comparison with other countries in Central and Eastern Europe (World Bank, 2001). Despite high unemployment, at US$4.30 PPP per person per day the incidence of poverty in 1996 was only 6.3 percent among households and 8.6 percent among individuals—one of the lowest poverty rates in the region. However, although Slovakia has a much lower proportion of its population living under the US$4.30 PPP per person per day line than do successful reformers such as Poland or Hungary, it has twice the population living in severe poverty, under US$2.15 PPP (purchasing power parity) per person per day than do those neighboring countries. In other words, there is a larger group of people at the very bottom of the income distribution in the Slovak Republic who are truly deprived in an absolute sense. Therefore, the Slovak Republic seems to have some deep pockets of poverty in the midst of a relatively well-off population.

The Microcensus does not provide information by ethnicity. However, the qualitative study indicates that Roma are at a greater risk of poverty than other population groups. The three variables most strongly related to poverty in Slovakia are the education level of the household head, the employment status of the household head, and the geographic location of the household. Households headed by individuals with elementary education or less were 41 percent more likely to be poor than other households. Similarly, households headed by an unemployed member are nearly six times more likely to be poor than households headed by someone who is employed. Evidence from the qualitative study and other sources discussed in this report illustrate that Roma have lower education levels than the majority population and are more likely to be unemployed.
By virtue of the geographic and economic conditions in which they live, doubly marginalized Roma are also more likely to be socially and politically excluded than Roma living in more integrated areas. The degree of their marginalization and segregation has a direct impact on the frequency and quality of their interactions with non-Roma, other Roma communities, and with public institutions, including local governments, schools and social assistance offices. These issues are discussed in detail in the following chapters.

Within regions, there is evidence that the level of poverty in areas with higher share of Roma in the population is higher than in areas where the population density of Roma is lower. Poverty among Roma in districts where at least 5 percent of the population was “officially” classified as Roma (which likely underestimates the true Roma population), was consistently worse than those for the region as a whole.

With the exception of Roma in completely integrated areas and some in separated settlements in better off regions, high unemployment and dependence on social assistance were common elements weaving most of the Roma settlements together, and were, to an extent, independent of their level of segregation:. While the national unemployment rate was 18 percent in 2000, in the qualitative sample it was approximately 85 percent. This was due to the inclusion of segregated settlements in the sample where unemployment often reaches almost 100 percent.

2.2. Perceptions of Poverty

Roma in urban and rural areas defined poverty in relative and concrete terms. They describe their living conditions mainly in relation to the past. For most Roma, poverty is a recent phenomenon. Although none of those interviewed described themselves as well off before 1989, most felt that they had lived well relative to prevailing living standards. A minority said that they had always been ‘poor.’ The most salient comparison with communism for older Roma was that they all had jobs.

Roma associate the socialist regime with an abundance of job opportunities and related benefits including subsidized consumer goods, utilities, and animals for breeding. Roma also recall having more possibilities for obtaining housing and better relationships between citizens. A Roma reflected, “People are not as willing to help each other as they used to be because everyone has troubles today.” Another noted: “During communism we were better off because everyone had to work, even if it was pointless or unskilled work.”

Many Roma also related their descriptions of poverty to their current circumstances. Roma living in segregated, as well as many in separated areas, explained that for them, the worst aspects of their present situation were: poor housing conditions, lack of infrastructure, poor health, lack of adequate food and clothing, lack of a social network that they could rely on, unemployment and social exclusion. A Roma respondent from a separated settlement explained: “We are poor because we don’t have a proper house, we don’t have any money and no one to borrow from.” Roma from segregated settlements also noted the absence of adequate housing, overcrowding (e.g. number of people per bed) and inability to afford food and clothing.

11 This sentiment is common to many poor in the transition countries. See, for example, Bulgaria: Consultations with the Poor, 2000.
It was common for households living in poor segregated settlements to identify food insecurity as a main element of their poverty. One woman explained that it was difficult for her to feed her children properly all the time: “we have no cash most of the month to buy food on a regular basis and nobody will give us anything. Here we all have the same condition.” Generally, Roma from segregated settlements in marginalized regions associated poverty with material insecurity, while Roma in more developed regions and more integrated ones perceived poverty in relation to secondary needs such as employment, quality education and a more inclusive society.

Many Roma also compared their situations to those of fellow citizens. Unemployed Roma living close to non-Roma, felt much worse off in comparison with others. Many Roma living in villages or towns with non-Roma believed that it was more difficult for them to find work than their non-Roma neighbors. As one said: “nowadays all the work is for gadjos.” In contrast, Roma in segregated settlements were less likely to compare themselves to non-Roma, because of more limited contact with outside communities.

The most common frame of reference among Roma was their own experience and the living standards from before 1989. Roma also related their well-being to their immediate surroundings. Roma living in integrated areas were more likely to compare themselves to non-Roma, while Roma in segregated areas were more sensitive to the situation of other Roma within their settlement.

**Insecurity and Shame.** Poverty has important social and psychological components. Respondents living in segregated settlements describe poverty as associated with feelings of defenselessness, and exclusion from the larger community. Poverty for many is also associated with shame. Even those respondents who appeared extremely poor to the interviewers often preferred to define themselves as "close to" but not completely "poor." For the very poorest, however, "not completely poor" means little more than "not dying of hunger.” This has its roots in communism which defined and understood poverty as a consequence of personal failure and laziness.

Many Roma felt that existing institutions were hostile, or at best indifferent, to their conditions and predicament. In particular, they expressed a lack of trust in local governments and related institutions, mainly social assistance offices, and to a lesser extent schools and health care centers. The majority of Roma living in segregated and separated settlements described their loss of hope for the future, and a pervasive sense of uncertainty and insecurity.

**Generational and gender differences.** Although young Roma are less likely to compare their situation to the past than their parents, the experience and interpretation of "poverty", surprisingly, does not vary much across generations. Most young people identify the same problems and constraints in their lives as their parents: lack of jobs, adequate education and a sense of exclusion.

For young married couples, poverty signified the inability to live independently from their parents, to start life on their own, and to enjoy privacy and independence. In many settlements, young couples live with their parents, or their in-laws, in a one or two room dwelling with three or four of their siblings. Due to the low availability of housing and high costs, many young Slovaks live with their parents, however circumstances are

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12 “Gadjo” is a Roma word for non-Roma.
more difficult for Roma in poor areas where the size and quality of housing is extremely low.

Perceived poverty among young Roma also had a gender dimension. Some young girls noted that they were worse off than the young men in their communities and had access to fewer opportunities in employment and education. They felt that their only option was to start having children at an early age. A number of young women said that they could not even get unskilled work, while young men in their community at least had the possibility of participating in public works or unskilled jobs. These patterns likely reflect barriers to employment for young women, as well as traditional gender roles for women in closed communities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 2.3: Typology of Perceptions of Social Status</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Roma</strong> can be categorized into four groups based upon their perceptions of their social status:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-Poor</strong>: These Roma do not consider themselves poor, but rather view themselves as average Slovaks. They believe that there are many who are much worse off than themselves, and that the transition has not led to dramatic changes in their lives: “The only difference between Christmas today and Christmas during the Communist period is that today there are fewer presents.” The problems, in their view, are national, including inflation, unemployment and subsequent constraints on living standards. This group constitutes a small share of the respondents living in integrated areas (e.g. approximately 25 percent in Malacky), who are either employed or engaged in the informal economy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subjectively poor</strong>: This group can be characterized by the statement: “We are not rich but we are able to support ourselves.” This is typical of integrated Roma who believe that the demographic groups hit most severely by poverty include elderly people, young families and Roma from Eastern Slovakia. Their views about the more segregated Roma are similar to non-Roma view of Roma: “People there are worse off than dogs, but they are to blame. They should take better care of themselves. When they don’t have a job, they should at least keep themselves and their house clean.” The majority of people expressing these views had a better starting point after 1989; they lived in integrated localities in better off regions, and mostly own their homes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relatively poor</strong>: These Roma perceive themselves to be poor and are generally unemployed, living on social benefits: “It is bad without a job, we live from one day to another.” Most lived in integrated and partially separated types of settlements, and face difficulties in re-entering the labor market because of low education levels: “I have no clue what could help us out. If we could turn back time we would get a proper vocational training or move to another country. People on TV say that everybody is doing better there and that everybody has a job.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Absolutely poor</strong>: This group of poor live mostly in segregated settlements in marginalized regions. They express a strong sense of apathy and helplessness and feel totally excluded from mainstream society: “We have nothing here, no roads, no electricity, no running water, no job. Nobody helps us either, not the mayor, or even the priest in the village.” Some receive social assistance benefits, however, in certain cases some have lost eligibility because of lack of documentation and unofficial residency status.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.3. Material Dimensions of Poverty

The poorest respondents identified common elements of poverty, including: inadequate nutrition (e.g. sufficient food and nutritional composition), poor housing conditions and ill health. Ability to provide a good education for their children and lead a better life – for example, having opportunities to travel – were also identified by some Roma as important, but took second place to the more immediate issues of hunger and shelter.

Hunger and Nutrition

Prior to 1989, because of near-full employment and subsidized consumer goods, very few households had difficulty obtaining basic foodstuffs. These circumstances have changed with the transition. Roma households in the poorest settlements reported difficulties in affording sufficient food and maintaining adequate nutrition. Child malnutrition, in particular, was observed to be a frequent problem. Researchers observed evidence of stunting among some children. Some teachers reported that Roma children do not receive school lunches because their parents are unable to pay. The director of a school in Stará Lubovna noted that “in the entire primary school only one child goes to lunch at school.”

Some elderly Roma also reported problems in maintaining adequate food intake. A number of them explained that they were unable to afford necessary foods because of the low levels of welfare benefits. A Roma from the village of Rimavská Píla related that he had to maintain a high protein diet for medical reasons, but could not afford it.

Roma in integrated and segregated communities have contrasting strategies for ensuring adequate food. Roma in integrated, as well as many in separated areas, prefer to plan ahead and economize in order to secure enough food for the rest of the month, regardless of their employment status. Those who live in rural areas who own land are able to grow vegetables during the summer months for home consumption, and some do so. The wife of an unemployed respondent in a community in Stará Lubovna reported that they tend to buy many things which last, such as potatoes and beans in bulk. As much as possible, she makes sure that her children have sufficient food, despite the fact that her husband is unemployed and they live mainly on social assistance, “sometimes I buy on credit, but usually I make sure that we have enough to feed our family during the month.”

In contrast, Roma in segregated settlements focused more on immediate survival and are less able to plan ahead. Consumption tended to increase after social assistance payments were made. A resident of Lipovec in Rimavská Sobota district noted “why not eat now that we have money, it doesn’t matter what comes tomorrow.” A doctor in the town of Podolíneč in Stará Lubovna, who sees patients from a number of nearby settlements reported that she sometimes sees babies who have become dehydrated. Mothers explain that they have no money for milk after their social assistance benefits run out. Many Roma from marginalized settlements, including some poorer integrated settlements, admitted that during the week before social assistance benefits were paid their family often had one simple meal (e.g. beans) for the entire week. Many also said that they had to buy cheap food items to make it through the month. A woman explained:
“We have to buy the cheapest food and prepare it in a way that the whole family will not feel hungry. I use fatty meat and potatoes to feed my family”

Very few residents in segregated settlements had access to land to grow food for own consumption. Some pick mushrooms or berries from the forests. Non-Roma living in nearby villages reported that Roma steal potatoes and other food items from their fields.

**Housing policies**

Most Roma in segregated settlements do not own their homes or land. In some settlements, property ownership is not clear. This prevents the improvement of housing conditions — since individuals and local governments are unable to maintain or invest in buildings or local infrastructure when ownership is unclear. Roma were more likely to have been left out of the property and land privatization processes that took place during the early 1990s than non-Roma. During the communist period, houses were mostly privately held, while the land belonged to the state. The “tenants” would rent their house or flat for 99 years from the state. After 1989, the government privatized the land, or gave it to municipal governments. The land was given to the tenants for free if two basic conditions were met: (i) the house had a valid building permit, or appropriate legal status; and (ii) the property was registered with the land-registry office and there was no pending application for restitution. If these conditions were met, the tenant could apply for the transfer of property to his or her name.

Public communication regarding the process was limited, and many people were unaware of their options and the steps needed to initiate the transfer of land. In theory, the mayor was responsible for informing residents of their rights. However, in practice, few mayors did so. None of the mayors in the settlements included in this study, with the exception of one mayor in Stará Lubovna, provided information to their constituents without being explicitly asked. Roma in integrated areas were more likely to learn about the process from their neighbors, while Roma in segregated areas had more limited access to information. As a result, a larger share of integrated Roma were able to secure property ownership. This has limited the ability of many to make much needed improvements to their homes. A man from Kyjov, a segregated Roma settlement in Stará Lubovna, explained: “We built our house with a building permit, but there are still problems with the site, although it was officially given to us during socialism. But today the land is not ours, therefore we can not install any water, gas, or sewage pipes.”

Roma in segregated areas have also faced substantial challenges with legalizing their homes. The vast majority of houses in segregated settlements were built illegally, mostly on land with unclear ownership. In some of these settlements, such as the village of Jablonové in Malacky, Roma moved into the village in the early 1990s and began to build houses on municipal land at the edge of the village. As a result, they do not have legal access to electricity and water. In the case of electricity, they tap into homes of neighbors who have legal connections, and they pay them directly.

In many cases, houses in settlements which are constructed with makeshift materials do not comply with basic construction standards, and were built without the required permits. Some Roma explained that the only way that they could afford to build a shelter for themselves was to use materials that they found around their settlements, in forests or in garbage dumps. One explained, “we can never have legalized housing and
obtain a permit, so why ask.” This creates a vicious circle in which buildings do not have legal status, and as a result, municipalities cannot provide funds for investment in infrastructure, such as roads, and public services.

Roma are also poorly positioned to borrow money, because of their economic status and lack of access to information on processes and procedures. The criteria for receiving loans have become more demanding since 1989, and the process for obtaining a building permit has become extremely complex. Current requirements include 32 individual permits and approvals from different government bodies. The research team encountered many unfinished homes that consisted of one or two rooms and a kitchen. Many of the occupants began building before 1989 and were unable to finish construction because of lack of financial resources and/or building permits. A Roma in Stará Lubovna explained, “I started to build this house before 1989, but could not finish it because I have no chance to put together enough money and cannot get a loan.”

**Housing conditions**

The housing conditions of Roma vary substantially between integrated and segregated areas. Conditions are the poorest in the most isolated and segregated settlements (Box 2.4). The homes of Roma living in more integrated areas, and those separated within a village are similar, and the interviewers found that it was not possible to identify the ethnicity of the owner from the outside of the house.

In segregated settlements, with the exception of Malacky, Roma houses are typically made of wood or scrap metal, plaster, tin and tree branches. However, the construction type varies within regions depending on the kind of building materials that are available in the area. In the village of Kolackov in Stará Lubovna, there was only one stone house, while the others were constructed from wood and clay. In the same district, in the village of Kyjov houses and shacks are made of a mixture of stone and other materials, while in Šarišské Jastrabie stone houses are the norm. In Lomnicka, a settlement of 1200 with only 100 houses, the majority (over 90 percent) of the houses were built from stones and bricks.

### Box 2.4: Housing Conditions in a Village in Stará Lubovna

Kolackov is a segregated settlement of 220 inhabitants in the Stará Lubovna district. None of the houses in the settlement are legally registered. Unemployment is nearly 100 percent. In the village, a family of 7 people (the parents, their oldest daughter of 17, newly wed and pregnant, her husband, and three other children) lives in a two room shack constructed from wood and tin. The house lacks access to water, sewage and there is no garbage collection in the settlement. The family has a wood burning stove which is used for heating and cooking.

The extent of overcrowding within Roma houses was found to be closely related to the degree of segregation and geographic isolation of the community. In general, in both Roma and non-Roma houses in integrated areas the qualitative study results show that there were approximately 1.5 people per room, while in segregated settlements there were an average of 2.5 to 3.5 persons per room. Estimates by district officials put the number of people per dwelling in Roma settlements at 8.6 in 1997.

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13Based upon information collected during the qualitative survey.
Access to Utilities

Access to utilities and public services is non-existent, or limited, in most marginalized settlements. The most serious problems include lack of access to electricity, water, sewage and garbage collection. Integrated settlements, and separated settlements within a town or village were more likely to be connected to services. In the better-off district of Malacky all settlements, with one exception, had access to electricity and roads. The situation differed in the other districts, where more isolated settlements did not have access to utilities.

**Water.** Many settlements lack access to running water. Five of the seven segregated settlements in the study, and four out of ten separated settlements had no access to running water. Even in a relatively higher income district such as Malacky some settlements such as Jablonové and a completely segregated settlement the village of Plavecký Štvrtok, did not have access to running water. In the first case, which is a relatively new settlement, the mayor delivered water tanks to the inhabitants, while in Plavecký Štvrtok there was a common fountain in the middle of the settlement. The situation is more difficult in the poorer districts of Stará Lubovna and Rimavská Sobota. Running water is an exception, and is not generally available in many communities in these districts. In four of the settlements included in the study, Roma use the same stream for both drinking water and sewage.

In some areas, residents linked the inadequacy of the water supply to poor health conditions. Residents of Rimavská Píla in Rimavská Sobota complained that their drinking water was contaminated and caused diarrhea, parasites, and trachoma among their children. In other areas, parents blamed epidemics of scabies and lice on the lack of running and hot water for washing.

**Electricity.** In some of the most isolated settlements electricity was unavailable. In Stará Lubovna, two settlements lacked coverage and in four of the settlements households were receiving electricity through illegal connections. The situation was similar in Rimavská Sobota, where seven of the thirteen settlements either lacked electricity, or relied on illegal sources. Residents of Rimavská Sobota explained that the lack of electricity was particularly problematic in the winter, as it is difficult for them to afford candles or fuel.

**Waste collection.** Lack of garbage collection services also seriously affects living conditions and creates health problems for residents as a result of contamination. In the majority of segregated settlements garbage collection was either non-existent or sporadic because residents were unable to afford the service. Even in three segregated settlements in Malacky (Lozorno, Malé Leváre, and Plavecký Štvrtok), where nearly all homes had access to electricity, residents complained about the lack of garbage collection. They noted that waste dumps were in the immediate vicinity of their settlements, there were not enough waste bins, and collection was irregular.

The situation was even worse in the poorer districts of Stará Lubovna and Rimavská Sobota. In most settlements in these districts, even if garbage collection facilities did exist, residents often complained that the municipalities only collected the garbage a couple of times during the year (e.g. twice a year in Jakubany, or once per year

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14 Refer to Annex tables for detailed information on access in the study sites.
in Lubotín in Stará Lubovna). As a result, some residents throw their garbage into a nearby stream, or in the area around the containers. In a segregated settlement in the village of Plavecký Štvrtok in Malacky, despite the fact that residents reported that they burn the garbage that they can, the waste containers at the entrance to the settlement were overflowing.

Roma also complained that garbage dumps were too close to their settlements, leading to contamination of land and water, and in some cases, attracting rats, stray dogs and cats. Many local authorities blamed residents for not paying local fees for garbage collections. Mayors explained that some non-Roma communities had purchased their own waste bins, while this was not the case in Roma settlements. Some mayors provided settlements with containers free of charge – but were unwilling to pay for waste removal. This was despite the fact that the amount for collection of garbage is nominal.\(^\text{15}\)

Lack of garbage collection perpetuates negative stereotypes about poor hygiene among Roma. Some non-Roma blame Roma for the situation of poor waste collection in settlements. An educated non-Roma commented:

“Gypsies are themselves responsible for the terrible situation around their communities. I know of a situation where there is a garbage bin close to a building occupied by gypsies, but since it is 20 meters from the building and they are too lazy to walk there, they just throw their garbage out of their windows.”

**Heating.** Most Roma households rely on wood, the cheapest form of fuel, for heating (see Annex tables). Gas was available to some households in integrated areas. In Stará Lubovna, gas was used by households in three integrated settlements. Only one household in one of the segregated settlements had access to gas. Similarly, in Rimavská Sobota, households in three integrated settlements used gas, while in three other settlements gas and central heating were available, but were not working – so residents had switched back to using wood. In Malacky a few households in three settlements used gas, while the rest relied on wood.

Roma generally expressed little interest in having gas pipes installed, because of the significantly higher costs associated with gas than wood. In the majority of houses in rural areas, wood burning fireplaces were used for both heating and cooking. The residents argued that they could not afford gas since it was extremely expensive to install a service pipe.\(^\text{16}\) However, the majority of Roma respondents, even many with access to gas, used wood for heating and cooking because of lower costs.

**Sewage.** Only households in integrated areas have access to standardized plumbing. Most segregated and separated communities used septic tanks or nothing at all. A few households in each district have toilets, but the majority use latrines. In Stará Lubovna and Rimavská Sobota toilets were available in three of the study settlements. In Malacky, all settlements, with the exception of Plavecký Štvrtok had access to toilets.

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\(^\text{15}\) The amount differs from one municipality to another, depending on the wealth of the municipality. For instance, in a better off neighborhood close to Bratislava the annual collection fee is 1000 Slovak crowns (about US$ 21). In other areas it is much less.

\(^\text{16}\) According to respondents in one village it can cost up to 47,000 Slovak crowns for a gas connection (close to US$ 1000).
Household assets. Ownership of cars was quite unusual. A few Roma in integrated and separated areas had cars. Only a limited number of households had telephones. In segregated settlements we witnessed sporadic ownership of cellular phones and cars, mostly owned by local moneylenders.

Health Status

Another important component of welfare is health status. Doctors in the study areas noted that the health status of their Roma patients was generally worse than that of non-Roma. They attributed this to unhealthy lifestyle factors, including poor diets and smoking, and poor housing conditions. The prevalence of communicable diseases, associated with poor living conditions, was found to be higher in the more isolated and segregated settlements. Doctors reported epidemics of hepatitis, trachoma, tuberculosis meningitis, and skin diseases, including scabies in settlements in Stará Lubovna and Rimavská Sobota. These diseases have generally been eliminated in the majority population and are associated with overcrowding, unsafe water, lack of waste disposal and proximity to environmentally contaminated areas – all characteristics of Roma living conditions.

Physicians and other key informants linked deteriorating health status among Roma to inadequate housing conditions, including overcrowding and lack of access to clean water and sewage, insufficient clothing; and poor lifestyle factors – common to the majority population as well – such as poor diets and high tobacco and alcohol consumption. Doctors also noted that Roma have difficulty affording medicines. In some cases general practitioners are able to provide medicines out of their own supplies, but this is not always the case. A doctor in Lipovec noted:

“Recently there has been an epidemic of scabies, but nothing was being done, since the Roma did not have money to buy the medicine for scabies. They were instructed to boil everything and disinfect the house, but they have no means for that.”

Communicable disease epidemics were reportedly lower in integrated than in segregated settlements. This is likely a consequence of better living conditions, availability of basic infrastructure and utilities, and general socioeconomic conditions. Some of the segregated settlements had recently experienced officially registered epidemics of hepatitis. Four settlements in Stará Lubovna, which were included in this study, have had outbreaks of hepatitis A, as well as skin diseases. Even in Malacky there was an outbreak of hepatitis A in a segregated settlement. In response, local physicians initiated an aggressive immunization campaign and municipal officials began to address the need for waste disposal.

Non-communicable diseases, including disabilities, were also found to be more frequent among Roma in both segregated and separated areas. A large number of those interviewed were receiving disability benefits. Conditions ranged from chronic illnesses, to back pain and injuries. Others were considered disabled due to heart conditions and related cardiovascular disorders. Among social security officials, there is a perception that a sizeable fraction of these disability claims are fraudulent, but there is no concrete evidence to assess this claim. The most frequently cited reasons for the high incidence of non-communicable diseases among Roma include lifestyle factors including smoking and diet, and untreated injuries. Information on congenital disorders is scant.
These findings are consistent with the existing body of evidence on epidemiological developments in Roma communities. Gaps in health status between Roma and non-Roma were recorded during the socialist period (ECOHOST, 2000). More recently, epidemics have been documented of hepatitis and measles in Roma communities.

The isolation and poverty of many settlements may have limited the spread of drug abuse to Roma communities. The remoteness of settlements, the poverty of their inhabitants and the absence of social contacts do not provide a conducive environment for distribution of drugs. In contrast, more integrated settlements in closer proximity to urban centers are more vulnerable to drug trafficking. Two cases of heroin abuse among Roma were noted in the village of Zohor in Malacky. Inhaling of glue and paint thinner was also reported by key informants in some areas. Alcoholism was found to be significantly more prevalent across settlements.
CHAPTER 3: ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES AND COPING STRATEGIES

3.1. Unemployment in Slovakia

The emergence of open unemployment has been one of the most serious social dimensions of the economic transition process in Slovakia. By 2000, unemployment, had reached nearly 19 percent of the labor force – the highest rate of unemployment in the OECD (Figure 3.1.). Because Roma were over represented in low and unskilled jobs, they were more immediately affected by enterprise downsizing at the outset of transition than other groups, and nowcomprise a disproportionate share of the unemployed. According to data from the National Labor Office, one-quarter of the unemployed in Slovakia were Roma in 1999, although they comprise a much smaller share of the population.  

Subsequently, Roma have been less likely to reenter the labor force because of a myriad of factors including low educational attainment, limited access to social networks, few employment opportunities, and discrimination.

Figure 3.1: Unemployment in Slovakia (1993-2000)  

Correlates of unemployment in Slovakia indicate that Roma are at a higher risk of being out of work than other groups. Unemployment in Slovakia has a strong regional dimension. In 2001, the three regions with the highest unemployment rate were Košice (27 percent), Prešov (25 percent) and Banská Bystrica (24 percent). According to the 1991 census data, these three regions had the highest share of Roma to population in the country.


17 Because of privacy legislation, unemployment data are not officially collected by ethnicity. However, the National Labor Office has been unofficially marking Roma records. Data cited in this chapter are derived from these estimates.

18 Registration data are based upon the records of the National Labor Office. Labor Force Surveys (LFS) are conducted quarterly and are based on a sample of 2,465 individuals. The definition of unemployment used in the both sources does not necessarily exclude work in the informal sector, and as a result, may overestimate actual unemployment (see Sanchez-Paramo, 2001).

19 According to the census data the population of Roma was 1.9 percent in Banská Bystrica, 3.8 in Prešov, and 4.2 in Košice. These data only provide rough indications of the size of the Roma population, for the reasons discussed in Chapter 1.
Education levels are also closely related to labor market status in Slovakia. Unemployment rates for workers with basic education, or less, were close to 40 percent in 2000 (Sanchez-Paramo, 2001). Workers with vocational and apprenticeship education have higher unemployment rates than workers who have completed general secondary education. This reflects changes in labor market demand which have favored workers with more flexible academic backgrounds, rather than narrow technical training. As will be discussed further below, very few Roma complete secondary education, and those that do are more likely to have participated in vocational and apprenticeship schools, than academic secondary schools. The composition of registered unemployment by ethnicity reflects the education status of Roma (Figure 3.2).

**Figure 3.2 Registered Unemployment by Ethnicity, 1999**

![Graph showing registered unemployment by education level and ethnicity.](image)

*Source: Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Family.*

Unemployment is closely linked with poverty. Households headed by an unemployed member are more than 6 times more likely to be poor than households headed by an employed individual.\(^2\) This chapter focuses on the labor market status of Roma, including unemployment, the situation of Roma in formal employment (public and private sectors); labor mobility and migration; barriers to employment; job search strategies within the formal labor market; and informal employment, as well as coping strategies.

### 3.2. Formal Labor Market Dynamics

The labor market status of Roma has changed dramatically during the transition period, with huge increases in unemployment and inactivity. Under socialism, many Roma held formal public sector jobs, most commonly in agricultural cooperatives, factories, public construction enterprises and mines. Many of these enterprises have closed or have been substantially restructured over the last decade.

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Unemployment of Roma

A 1997 survey by the Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Family, estimated that Roma comprised between 17 to 18 percent of the total unemployed in 1996, with this figure as high as 40 to 42 percent in eastern districts with large Roma populations (e.g. Košice, Spišská Nová Ves). Similarly, the registries from the National Labor Office (which contained information on ethnicity until 1997) suggest that, for the country as a whole, Roma represented between 15 and 25 percent of all the registered unemployed in the Slovak Republic through 1999 (Table 3.1.).

Furthermore, the share of Roma receiving unemployment benefits was lower than the share among the total population. This was mostly due to the long duration of unemployment for Roma, who had largely exhausted their eligibility for insurance-based benefits.

Table 3.1: Share of Roma in Total Registered Unemployment, 1992-99

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of registered unemployed and share of Roma:</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>260,27</td>
<td>368,09</td>
<td>371,48</td>
<td>333,291</td>
<td>329,74</td>
<td>347,75</td>
<td>428,20</td>
<td>532,27</td>
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<tr>
<td>Roma</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(%)</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eligibility for unemployment benefits:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>33.6</td>
<td>33.4</td>
<td>22.9</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>28.4</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>28.0</td>
<td>27.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roma</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>5.3</td>
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</table>


Long-term unemployment. The majority of unemployed Roma have been out of work for over one year. According to Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Family data for the first half of 1999, 92 percent of Roma registered as unemployed had been out of work for over one year, in comparison with 63 percent of the total population, and 17 percent of Roma had been unemployed for over four years (Figure 3.2.). Most of the Roma interviewed for the qualitative study had been out of work for over two years.

Even though unemployment is a problem faced by Roma across the country - as well as by the majority population - its extent, to a large degree, is linked to regional economic conditions. In Malacky, where the overall district unemployment rate was 13.5 percent in 1999, unemployment among Roma ranged from 60 percent in integrated settlements, to nearly 100 percent in the most segregated settlements included in the survey. In Stará Lubovna and Rimavská Sobota, where total unemployment rates are higher, unemployment among Roma was between 80 to 100 percent.

21 The practice of collecting information based on ethnicity was discontinued in 1998 after protest from the Roma and Hungarian minorities. One reason for these criticisms was that ethnicity was being determined by labor office staff, which was inconsistent with Slovak legislation aimed at protecting basic individual rights.
Figure 3.3: Unemployment by Duration, June 30, 1999
(% of total unemployed)

Source: Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Family

Many Roma identified on-going unemployment and insecurity as the most
demoralizing aspect of their lives. A resident of Klenovec, in Rimavská Sobota who had
found employment explained: “we were happy that we found a meaningful way of
spending a day. In two or three years a man gets used to doing nothing and then it gets
really tough.” Another respondent noted, “when I had a job, it had a positive impact on
the family because everybody felt more secure.” Roma also expressed discouragement
with the lack of employment opportunities. Roma in segregated settlements are
particularly disadvantaged, as job prospects are generally limited to seasonal employment
in neighboring towns and villages. A 35 year-old father of five in a marginalized
settlement in Stará Lubovna explained: “Who is going to give me a job? I have no
education, no skills and am Roma, even in my neighboring village nobody wants to give
us any work.”

Unemployment among young people, and especially women, is high. Most young
Roma interviewed from the settlements who were under the age of 25 had never been
formally employed. Young women do not generally enter the labor force, because of
eye early pregnancies. Many get married and begin having children soon after completing
primary school. Nearly all of the girls over 18 interviewed for this study, with the
exception of those from more integrated villages in Malacky, or those in completely
integrated areas in other districts, were already married with children, or pregnant.
Women in more integrated areas were more likely to be employed in jobs such as
teachers, cleaning ladies or public administrators.

Employment

The employment status of Roma included in the survey differed according to the
degree of segregation. The majority of Roma from highly integrated settlements had
finished secondary vocational education and had regular employment. This was
regardless of gender. The situation was quite different among Roma living in the
settlements. Of those Roma who were employed among this group, most were engaged in
unskilled labor, frequently in seasonal agricultural work, or construction activities. Some
Roma work in public works programs including jobs as street cleaners and forest rangers.
In many settlements, public works offer the only source of employment. A few Roma are
employed in more skilled labor, including construction and stone masonry, and some of these Roma had vocational training. However, not all Roma with vocational education had jobs.

**Labor mobility and migration** As is the case among the majority population, labor mobility among Roma is low. Of those Roma in the study areas who were employed, most had jobs in the immediate surroundings of their settlements. High transportation costs were cited as the most significant deterrent to seeking work elsewhere. Costs were perceived to be too high in relation to the wages paid for unskilled workers.

Very few Roma sought employment in neighboring districts or countries, such as Hungary and the Czech Republic. Those that did commute to the Czech Republic complained that their wages were too low to make it worthwhile, that employers were often late with payments, and that sometimes they were not paid at all. Roma were more likely to work abroad if someone else in their family or settlement had gone first and had a successful experience. Roma from Malacky and Stará Lubovna were working in the Czech cities of Hradec Králové and Ostrava. However, Roma noted that commuting had been more common during the socialist period, “hardly anyone from our village goes to the Czech Republic these days, as it was in the past.”

Other Roma work in construction or seasonal agricultural employment in nearby towns or villages, where transport expenses were lower. Moving permanently – or for extended periods of time – to other districts or towns was not an option for most Roma respondents. Roma from segregated communities are too poor to afford to move, and those from separated communities are also discouraged from migration because of high costs and insecurity about finding work due to their low skill and education levels. It has been more common for Roma families to move from towns and villages to settlements, rather than the other way around.

**Discrimination** Many Roma cited ethnic discrimination as a significant barrier to employment, and as a rationale for not seeking work outside of their communities and villages. Although Slovakia has adopted anti-discrimination legislation, consistent with ILO conventions, Roma in the study described experiences of discrimination. A number of Roma related an anecdote of friends or relatives who had applied for a job, and although they were accepted over the phone, were subsequently rejected as soon as the employer realized that they were Roma. While none of the Roma in the study confirmed this experience directly, it undoubtedly had an effect on their readiness to apply for jobs.

A school director related that a Roma had applied for a teaching position in his school. He had a difficult time deciding whether to hire her, since he suspected that non-Roma parents might protest his decision. In the end she was not hired. A director of a vocational school in Podolínce who train cooks and waiters reported that he had difficulty finding restaurants which would accept his Roma students for practical training.

Roma also explained that they were denied employment because of low education levels: “Even trained people have no chance to find a job, so how could I find one?” Women noted this problem even more than men, “Men are allowed to take jobs for which they are not trained, but from a woman, they always require that she be trained.” Labor market discrimination was a source of stress for many Roma, and in many cases
led people to give up their job search. A young Roma in Rimavská Sobota expressed a common sentiment: "No one will employ a Gypsy anyway, why try?"

**Job search strategies.** Because of the extent of long term unemployment, many Roma have become discouraged and have stopped looking for work altogether. This was particularly the case among Roma in the most marginalized settlements. Job search strategies among Roma include use of labor offices and municipalities for public works. But overall, Roma appear to have fewer opportunities for identifying employment than others in the population. More unemployed Slovaks find new jobs through informal personal connections and other search avenues (private job agencies, placing/reading advertisements, etc) than through labor offices, even though most (some 90 percent) are also registered with the labor office.

According to the Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, and Family in 2000, 28 percent of the unemployed who found jobs did so through labor offices, while 38 percent found jobs through social contacts or other means. Very few Roma reported that they use informal channels such as personal connections for finding work. Roma mainly rely on local labor offices for information on formal employment. Many noted that the offices were not helpful, as their activities focused on distribution of passive unemployment benefits, and only limited job counseling, training or placement services.

**Public works programs.** Many Roma participate in public works programs run by the Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, and Family through local municipalities. This program was initiated in 2000 to provide employment through local public works. Jobs generally last 3 months and most commonly involve unskilled work, such as cleaning streets and parks, and garbage collection. Jobs do not include training or preparation for future employment opportunities. A significant share of Roma, especially those in separated settlements in all of the three districts, participated in these projects. However, these programs may not always reach Roma. In two localities, Roma explained that they were denied participation in the local public works program because the mayor preferred to hire non-Roma.

Local officials expressed concerns about the incentive effects of the public works programs. An amendment to the Social Assistance Act which took effect on July 1, 2000, halved social assistance benefits for individuals who had been unemployed for two consecutive years or longer. Full benefits are reinstated only once the individual has been officially employed again for at least three months, providing a strong incentive for beneficiaries to seek short term employment in the public works program. This has reinforced negative stereotypes about the dependency of Roma on public support, as reflected in the comments of mayors:

"Finally somebody pressed them against the wall and cut their [welfare] benefits. Do you really believe that they would [apply for the program] if the government did not cut their benefits?"

"When the government introduced a similar program back in 1995, none [of the Roma] wanted to apply. They said ‘why should I go to work if I don’t have to.’ Now they will do anything in order to receive benefits."

Some Roma respondents complained about the quality of work and observed that, in some cases, work was focused almost exclusively on cleaning around non-Roma
houses, and ignored Roma neighborhoods and settlements. On the other hand, many Roma interviewed explained that the public works program was a beneficial alternative to unemployment: “When a man has a job, it is easier to live, he is healthier, he has more energy and life is more fun.”

3.3. Coping Strategies

**Informal Sector Employment.** Due to limited formal employment opportunities, many Roma work in the informal sector. Because of the absence of taxes and official and unofficial fees, employment in the informal sector is frequently more attractive than formal jobs for employers and employees alike. Common activities include salvaging and selling scrap metal, petty trade, and part-time work in agriculture and construction.

One of the most widespread informal economic activities for Roma in the study settlements was working as musicians. This was particularly the case for Roma in Jesenské, Hodejov, and the urban ghetto on Dúžavská cesta in Rimavská Sobota. A few Roma had small workshops where they produce tools for construction workers, such as in Kaloša in Rimavská Sobota. Another common activity, mainly among those from segregated localities, was to salvage scrap material for resale. For example, in the southern Slovak village of Sír – Šrobárka, Roma managed to salvage most of the equipment from their closed mine. Other occasional and informal employment, especially for men, included helping local non-Roma with minor construction tasks. Some painted houses and women worked as cleaning ladies.

Roma in geographically isolated and segregated areas have fewer opportunities for involvement in the informal sector, because their communities are closed off from broader society; moreover, they have limited connections outside of the settlement to help them find work. A number of Roma admitted to resorting to theft as a coping strategy, including stealing potatoes, firewood and construction materials.

**Box 3.1: Informal Employment in Malacky**

A respondent from a segregated settlement in Malacky and his son both work informally in construction. The father works occasionally in the non-Roma part of the village and the neighboring municipality. The son regularly travels with a friend to Bratislava, where they go from house to house in search of work. Both explained that they were unable to open a workshop or a small business because they lacked the start-up capital and were wary of high taxes.

**Access to Credit.** Roma lack opportunities to borrow money, and therefore have limited capacity to establish small businesses. Credit is scarce and costly for all small borrowers in the Slovak Republic; but Roma may face additional difficulties in accessing credit. In many cases Roma lack collateral to borrow, because of unclear property ownership. Access to loans from commercial institutions is virtually zero, and the small amount that some may want to borrow is generally not available through commercial channels. Some Roma do borrow small sums from neighbors, friends, and relatives, as well as through local Roma usurers. In some communities the Roma leader, or vajda, lends money, however interest rates were reported to be extortionary. Rates were reported to be 40 percent or higher, while the interest rate for consumer credit was around 14 percent.
**Subsistence Farming.** Growing food for own consumption was not reported to be an important coping strategy for the majority of Roma, including those who own land. Many Slovaks cultivate land, including small plots and gardens, to support their consumption. This practice was common during the socialist period, although never for Roma. Nearly all Roma households in integrated settlements, and some living in the margin of villages owned at least a small amount of land. Most household plots are small, ranging from 8-10 by 3-4 meters in back of their houses, or larger if not attached to the house. Some more affluent households did cultivate land. Crops varied according to region and included potatoes, wheat, grapes, and other vegetables.

With few exceptions, the majority of Roma in segregated settlements do not own land. In two settlements in Stará Lubovna, families owned their homes and land, and have been involved in agricultural activities for three generations. Roma explained that they did not make use of land for a number of reasons. In some cases the plot was too small, in other cases the soil was poor, there was no convenient source of water, or the household could not afford the necessary inputs. Others explained that cultivation of land was not traditionally a Roma occupation. In Studienka and Malé Leváre in Malacky, all of the households owned land, but only half of them grew crops. Those who did not use their land explained that they were unprepared: “How can I farm the land if I don’t have a tractor or a horse.” Another noted, “farming is a job for gadjos.” Finally, in some of the segregated settlements (e.g. Kyjov, Kolackov and Šarišske Jastrabie in Stará Lubovna), specific geographic conditions made cultivation of land extremely difficult. For example, some settlements were located on a steep slope.

Very few families raised animals. Some families in the settlements, including those without land, kept chickens and, in some cases, pigs. However, raising livestock for own or commercial use was not reported. This was mainly due to the lack of land. Only five families included in the study cultivated land and raised animals. Some non-Roma explained that breeding of animals for home use had declined during the transition period. Prior to 1989 it was common for agricultural cooperatives to give employees animals for domestic use, but now “[Roma] do not breed them since no one hands out small pigs for free anymore.”
CHAPTER 4: ACCESS TO SOCIAL SERVICES

4.1. The Poor and Social Services

Important dimensions of poverty are not directly linked to income. Indeed, access to social services, including education, health care and social assistance is a critical component of welfare. Throughout the transition countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the poor face particular barriers in access to social services, due to increasing costs and eroding efficiency and effectiveness of services (World Bank, 2000). In addition to these challenges, Roma encounter unique constraints to access.

As discussed, Roma in settlements are more likely to be geographically isolated and out of the range of coverage of health services and education – particularly preschool. Communication problems between non-Roma service providers and Roma also affect access and quality of services. Some Roma who are not fully proficient in the Slovak language are unable to communicate effectively with teachers, doctors, social workers and other service providers. Social isolation and mistrust between Roma and non-Roma also influences relationships and access to services.

This chapter examines the access of Roma to social services and the constraints which they face. Roma and key informants in the study spoke more readily about issues related to education than the other policy areas, and as a result, the emphasis here is on education.

4.2. Education

Educational Attainment

According to the 1991 census, 77 percent of Roma had completed primary education, 8 percent had completed vocational training, and less than two percent had completed academic secondary or university education. An earlier survey from 1990 found that 56 percent of Roma men and 59 percent of Roma women had not completed primary education (grades 1-9) (Vašecka, 2000). Education patterns of Roma in the settlements were consistent with this pattern. The majority of adults interviewed in the settlements had some primary education, although not all of them had completed all eight grades.

Almost all Roma from segregated, as well as some from separated areas, had not completed secondary school. In many cases, students dropped out after completing 10 years of compulsory education. Secondary education in Slovakia include three main types of schools: gymnasia (or grammar schools); (ii) vocational education; and (iii) specialized secondary education schools. Gymnasia provide general academic training and prepare students to continue on to university. In 1998 21 percent of Slovak secondary students were enrolled in gymnasia. Very few Roma enroll in gymnasia – none of those interviewed for the study were enrolled in, or had attended, gymnasia.

Vocational schools include apprentice schools, which prepare students for specific occupations through 2-year programs, secondary vocational schools, which offer 2 to 3 year programs, and secondary specialized schools, which prepare students for the labor

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22 Primary education in Slovakia includes grades 1-9 and generally covers children from 6 to 16 years old.
market in specialized fields through professional programs. Most secondary school students are enrolled in vocational and apprentice schools – 46 percent in 1998 – and 33 percent in secondary specialized schools. Graduates from secondary vocational schools are not eligible to enter higher education institutions unless they complete an additional 2 years of education and pass a school-leaving examination, while graduates from secondary specialized schools may continue on to university. The majority of Roma who had continued on to secondary school had enrolled in apprentice schools or secondary vocational schools. Roma from integrated areas, and some better off Roma from separated areas, were more likely to attend secondary specialized schools. Most of the respondents who had graduated from special secondary schools were employed. As discussed previously, the overrepresentation of Roma in apprentice and secondary vocational schools has implications for their opportunities on the labor market, as well as their risk of falling into poverty.

Many Roma do not see a direct relationship between education and employment, because of widespread unemployment. The majority of Roma in separated and segregated communities have only primary or unfinished secondary education, categories which comprise the highest share of the unemployed in Slovakia. In general, unskilled workers have found it increasingly difficult to participate in the labor market. Part of this may reflect the lack of demand for labor with low skills; part of it may be due to the fact that high payroll taxes and other non-wage costs make hiring unskilled labor relatively more costly than hiring workers with higher skills, given the differences in their productivity.

School Attendance. Teachers and school directors in the study districts reported that the attendance of Roma children had been declining since the transition. Particularly in the poorest settlements, many children were observed playing in the streets during the school day. Some doctors reported that Roma children came to them to ask to be excused from school. One doctor said that at least 10 healthy Roma students from nearby settlements came each day to ask for a release form. Very few Roma children in the areas visited for the study continue their education beyond compulsory education. A number of children from segregated and separated areas had completed one or two years of secondary education, but had subsequently dropped out. This may be linked to the fact that compulsory education is 10 years in Slovakia.

Under socialism, penalties for truancy were more stringent and frequently enforced through various mechanisms including interrogation by the police, placement of children in institutions and reduction of social benefits. Some examples of these types of penalties were reported in the study sites. In Rimavská Sobota teachers reported absent students to the police and cut the families welfare benefits to motivate attendance. As a result, many parents understood education more as an obligation to the state, than to their children. One parent explained: “They must go to school, this is the law. The teacher was here and told us, if we do not send our children to school, we will lose our financial support.”

Constraints to School Attendance

Roma children face stiffer challenges in accessing education than other ethnic groups. In addition to issues common to other poor households, such as economic constraints, limited access to quality education and parents’ education levels, Roma children face additional barriers including low demand for education within the family, geographic isolation, low expectations of teachers and parents, exclusion and limited
Slovak language proficiency. Roma children are also more likely to end up in special schools for the mentally and physically disabled, which limit their future education and labor market prospects.

Children from the most segregated and isolated settlements face the greatest challenges in accessing education. Geographic isolation is an issue in some areas and some settlements are simply too small to be able to have their own school. In Malacky and Stará Lubovna, all separated settlements in the study sample either had primary schools, or there was a school close by. In Rimavská Sobota five settlements included in the sample had less than 500 inhabitants and had no primary school, so children commute to neighboring villages. Roma mothers from Kyjov, a settlement in Stará Lubovna asked school officials not to pass their children on to the fifth grade, because they were unable to pay for their children to commute to the new school.

Poverty and lack of basic infrastructure are also notable barriers to school attendance. The absence of electricity in isolated settlements makes it difficult for children to study and do homework. Economic constraints are considerable. Some Roma children need to stay home to help with housework and take care of siblings. As a result, they have difficulty keeping up with the curriculum. In the poorest areas such as segregated settlements in Stará Lubovna and Rimavská Sobota there were reports that children were unable to attend school because they lacked clothing and shoes.

**Preschool Attendance.** Few Roma children from segregated settlements attend preschools. Preschool in Slovakia is not compulsory and generally includes children between 3 and 6 years of age. Most segregated settlements lack preschool facilities. An exception was the settlement in Plavecký Štvrtok in Malacky, where the church had opened a preschool mainly for the children of the settlement. Many parents interviewed did not recognize the value of preschool, and felt that mothers could adequately prepare their children. A Roma mother explained, “all of my children are at home, together with me, I am at home, so why send them to kindergarten?” Parents also cited costs related to attending kindergarten such as fees and clothing as a deterrent. “Kindergarten is not free of charge, we would need to pay and we cannot afford that.”

Lack of preschool education is a significant constraint to Roma education. Without this preparation, children are at a disadvantage because they lack exposure to basic knowledge and skills, socialization and communication with other children. Perhaps most importantly, Roma children who do not speak Slovak at home miss out on an opportunity to acquire essential language skills. Without preschool, Roma begin primary school at a further disadvantage. Teachers complained that Roma children were less prepared than other students, and that they did not have sufficient time to give them special attention. A teacher from Rimavská Sobota noted:

> In the first grade, we spend our energy teaching [Roma children] what they should have mastered long ago: telling colors, the basics of hygiene, and physical activities [motor skills]. The reason is that these children do not acquire this basic knowledge in their families and they do not attend kindergartens that could partially substitute for parents.

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23 Fees are set regionally and vary based upon the economic situation of the region. For example, in 2000 fees ranged from 600 Slovak crowns in Bratislava, to 20 crowns per month in Rimavská Sobota district.
Because these Roma children begin primary school unprepared, they face additional difficulties in adapting to the school environment. These circumstances exacerbate preconceptions of non-Roma students and teachers that Roma are not capable of learning, and lead to further exclusion. In many cases, Roma are placed in separate classes or special schools because of their lack of preparation.

**Language.** Experts estimate that about 70 percent of Roma in Slovakia speak some of the Roma language. It is not known how many Roma only speak the Roma language at home. Roma from isolated and segregated settlements are at a particular disadvantage in this regard, as they lack the exposure with non-Roma that children have in more integrated areas, and may be introduced to the Slovak language only once they enter primary school.

Teachers are poorly equipped to handle this gap in the children’s knowledge, and in some cases send Roma children to separate classrooms or special schools if they cannot keep up with the rest of the students. School directors explained:

“Children from segregated [Roma] settlements do not master the Slovak language and do not understand their teachers. The teachers do not speak the Roma language, so they communicate by using gestures.”

“In a school where teachers do not speak the Roma language at all, or only some, the first grade is not enough for these children to eliminate the gap [with other children].”

“It is easier to remove the language barrier in mixed classes, but many Roma kids are in separate classes.”

The issue is even more complex in ethnically diverse areas, such as Slovak-Hungarian areas in the south. In the district of Rimavská Sobota some children speak Hungarian in addition to the Roma language, but are not proficient in Slovak. Others are neither fully proficient in Slovak or Hungarian, yet attend Hungarian schools. Some children do not encounter the Slovak language until they begin primary school. The situation is similar in some villages in Stará Lubovna where most non-Roma speak Ruthenian.

**Demand for Education** Low demand for education among some Roma families discourages children from attending school. This has its roots in the chronic unemployment, which is common in many Roma settlements, the lack of job opportunities and the disconnect between education and the labor market. The dismal labor market situation leads parents to undervalue the importance of education. Particularly in isolated settlements where the majority of adults are long-term unemployed, there are few examples of education paying off, and, as a result, parents may not encourage their children to go to school. A Roma parent noted, “my daughter completed secondary school, now she is sitting at home without work.” Another asked, “why force our children to study when there aren’t jobs for the educated ones?”

In some cases, parents, especially those from integrated and separated localities where employment opportunities are greater, acknowledged the importance of education for their children’s future. A grandparent in Malacky explained, “My grandson is a first grade student. We sent him to kindergarten and hope in the future he will put more importance on education than we did.” A resident of Rimavská Sobota concurred, “I
think that Roma should change. For example we need to make sure that our children go
to better schools, because their future depends on that.”

A significant share of Roma view education as system representative of gadjo
society which is of limited relevance for them. Parents explained: “From the beginning,
since the first grade our children have difficulties understanding what is going on: other
children are singing the songs we do not know.” And, “all poetry, literature, history is
not about and from our life.”

**Parental involvement.** Demand for education among Roma in isolated and
segregated communities was low, and Roma parents were less likely to be involved in
their children’s education. As a result, many Roma students lack effective role models.
Roma parents are frequently poorly positioned to help their children with school work at
home because of their own limited educational backgrounds. Some parents in integrated
areas were involved in schools. A parent in Malacky noted the importance of being
involved in their children’s education: “I help my children learn every day, if I miss out
on one day of reading with my son, the very next day he has a problem. Therefore I help
them learn every day.” However, most Roma students lack the advantages of other
students whose parents assist their children with school work and/or hire private tutors.

**Box 4.1: Zero Grade Classes**

“Zero grade classes” were first implemented in 1992 in order to prepare children
for basic school through provision of basic social, cultural and hygiene skills. Children
attend zero grade class after preliminary psychological tests at the age of compulsory
primary school attendance. These classes are located at primary schools. The zero grade
program is designed to prepare children to attend regular compulsory first class after one
year. Together with socialization, language preparation is emphasized along with basic
skills such as reading and writing.

The zero grade program is mainly targeted to districts with high Roma populations.
There are 61 primary schools out of 2,362 across Slovakia which have zero classes.
There are 85 zero grade classes in these 61 schools, covering 1,057 children. These
classes are free of charge and education is provided by teachers from regular primary
schools.

*Source: Ministry of Education.*

**Special schools and classes**

Roma are at a higher risk of receiving lower quality education because of
institutional factors and incentives which lead to separate education for Roma and non-
Roma. Special schools are a legacy from the socialist era, and were designed to provide
special education for children with mental and physical disabilities. A disproportionate
share of Roma are enrolled in special schools. In the Czech Republic, which inherited a
similar system, a survey from 1997 indicated that 64 percent of Roma children in primary
school were in special schools, in comparison with 4.2 percent of the total population
(ERRC, 1999). Although data are not available for Slovakia, the situation is likely to be
similar. A majority of Roma students from the segregated settlements in the qualitative study attend special schools.\textsuperscript{24}

Students enrolled in special schools are at a dual disadvantage, first because the curriculum is less rigorous and expectations of teachers are lower than in mainstream schools, and second, because opportunities for graduates of special schools are limited. Even if children are able to overcome the low expectations of teachers in these schools, they are not prepared for secondary school exams and are disadvantaged on the labor market, as employers look unfavorably on graduates of special schools.

Even when Roma children are educated within the mainstream Slovak school system, they may be placed in separate Roma classes. The majority of primary schools in segregated and separated settlements have separate classes for Roma students. Maximum class sizes are low, and provide teachers with a rationale for separating Roma children in separate classes.\textsuperscript{25} According to teachers, non-Roma parents favor this separation by arguing that Roma students slow down the educational process. Non-Roma prefer to enroll their children in schools that provide separate classes for Roma students. These dynamics create an environment that can be hostile. A Roma mother in a village in Stará Lubovna observed that \textit{“children are not racist, it is their parents that tell them to keep separate, and that is why they tease our kids and call them names.”}

Some Slovak teachers argued that Roma should attend special schools and classes because they need special care and assistance which cannot be provided in a regular classroom. Others took an opposite view. A third grade teacher at a primary school in Šarišské Jastrabie; in Stará Lubovna explained: \textit{“It is simplistic to consider these children mentally disturbed – and there should be even more reasons to step up the effort. If you can do it, they catch on.”}

Despite the disadvantages of special schools and classes, some parents interviewed supported them, believing that their children receive more attention at special schools and are not singled out. A Roma mother said: \textit{“The youngest son does not go to a kindergarten, since I am at home. My son and daughter go to a special school. At the beginning my son went to a normal primary school, but he was not good in reading, so the teacher suggested he go to a special one. We are satisfied with him, he gets only As. We put our daughter into a special school ourselves.”} Most Roma parents expressed a preference for mixed classes, so that their children would be exposed to the Slovak language.

The director of a special school noted, \textit{“approximately 30-40 percent of children attend special primary schools on the basis of their parents decision. Sometimes, the parents do not want to put their first child here, but as they have more children they find out that here the children achieve better results than in a ‘normal’ primary school.”} Roma parents also indicated that they preferred special schools because there are more Roma children and their children are ‘protected’ from discrimination and hostility from

\textsuperscript{24} There are approximately 380 special schools throughout the Slovak Republic for mentally and physically disabled children. A total of 30,583 students study in special schools, which amounts to about 3 percent of the total number of students at kindergartens, primary schools and secondary schools altogether.

\textsuperscript{25} The minimum class size is 4. The maximum number of students is 8 for grade 1; 10 for grades 2-5; and 12 for grades 6-9.
non-Roma students. In some cases special schools provide housing, making them more financially attractive to parents.

**Teachers.** Teachers are central to the quality of education and play an important role in motivating student attendance and performance. In many of the settlements, teachers were poorly prepared to work with Roma children. Many teachers interviewed expressed an interest in training and teaching materials in Roma culture and history, as very few of them had any knowledge of Roma issues. Prejudices and low expectations of Roma students by teachers can adversely affect student performance. This phenomenon manifests itself in different ways. Some parents complained that teachers did not let their students bring textbooks home because they believed Roma children would destroy them. As a result, students lacked the opportunity to do homework and adequately prepare for classes.  

The study also found a number of examples in which teachers and school directors took the initiative to reach out to Roma communities and support Roma children at school, but these examples were sporadic and stemmed from individual initiative. Educational advisors also played an important positive role in some schools. In Šarišské Jastrabie, advisors worked with Roma parents to encourage them to send their children to school and continue on to secondary education. In some communities, such as Jarovnice, Teplý Vrch and Jablonové in Malacky and Rimavská Sobota, teachers and school officials maintain close relations with Roma parents and children. They make frequent visits to Roma settlements and work to mitigate conflicts between children.

Some teachers visit Roma settlements on their own initiative to persuade parents to send their children to school. Because Roma from segregated and some from separated settlements often do not have officially registered residences, local and school officials would not know about some Roma children without the assistance of teachers. A teacher explained the challenge of convincing parents to send their children to school: “One boy told me that his father did not want to enroll him in a secondary school. So I invited his father to school and tried to convince him that it was a good idea. I think now [the boy’s] chances are about fifty-fifty.”  

Roma parents in areas where teachers and school directors were more available and involved in their communities expressed satisfaction with the schools, and children were happy to attend school. Roma mothers explained:

> “The teacher visits our settlements on a regular basis. She has bought some books for my children and also organized common afternoons for them.”

> “We go to school meetings, but that is not the only meeting with the teacher. He comes here, to the settlement, and borrows tapes with Romany music. Children then learn Romany songs with the teacher.”

Although there is no rigorous empirical evidence that outreach by teachers has improved educational outcomes, the interviews indicate that such initiatives have increased communication between Roma parents and schools in these communities.

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26 In Slovakia, textbooks are free of charge. Children keep their books at home, however in some – especially segregated – settlements teachers keep the books in the classroom, explaining that children do not have a place to keep the books at home and as a result they are damaged throughout the course of the year.
4.3. Access to Health Care

Access to health care among Roma in the settlements was influenced negatively by the geographic distance of settlements from urban areas and by poor communication between Roma and health providers, as well as discrimination. In most settlements, access to health services was not cited as an issue by inhabitants, but some – especially from better off separated settlements – complained about the quality of health care available to them.

Because of poor road conditions, ambulances are often unable to reach geographically isolated areas at the time of an emergency. A young man in a segregated settlement in Stará Lubovna noted, “in the winter we have to carry our pregnant women who are about to give birth about a kilometer to the ambulance since it refuses to come to our settlement.” Other Roma noted that they cannot rely on ambulances and have had to find alternative ways to get to the hospital. In Lomnicka, a better off settlement in Stará Lubovna, the mayor – who is Roma – rents his car to residents to get to the hospital.

In many cases communication and understanding between Roma and health professionals was poor. Some health officials believed that Roma in settlements abuse ambulance services, by calling for doctors in non-emergency situations, while Roma complain that ambulances refuse to come or take too long to reach the settlement. Roma report instances in which the local hospital would not send an ambulance. In other cases Roma expressed satisfaction with the level of care in their settlement. Nurses regularly visit some of the settlements.

Roma gave examples of discrimination within the health system. A number of Roma mothers complained that maternity wards in some hospitals placed them in separate rooms apart from non-Roma women. Some of the hospitals admitted that they had introduced such a practice because of the behavior of some Roma women – smoking was cited as an example.

Roma were not generally critical about access to primary health care. When there is a school in the settlement, nurses, and sometimes doctors, regularly come from a nearby town to check on students and to provide immunizations. Roma in some of the settlements noted that health officials were responsive the case of disease epidemics, such as the outbreaks of hepatitis A, which occurred in four settlements in Stará Lubovna and one in Malacky. Doctors report the cases to health officials at the district level, and provide immunizations to all those who may have been infected. District health officials also go door to door to provide both information and disinfectants, if necessary.

Although Roma did not cite access to health care as an issue, utilization of health services by Roma may be insufficient. Since 1989, responsibility for health care has been shifted to the individual. Mandatory health checks conducted through schools were discontinued, and it is now up to patients to seek care, including preventative treatments.

Costs of care may be another likely barrier for Roma and other poor groups. Although health care is officially free in Slovakia, similar to other countries in the region, informal payments for health care are prevalent in Slovakia. A 1999 survey found that individuals reported paying for health services in 60 percent of visits, including both inpatient and outpatient care (Lewis, 2000). Poor Roma may also be unable to afford medicines or nutritional food. Further research is needed into the costs of health care and
their impact on utilization among the Roma. Other possible barriers to access include cultural taboos – which have been found to deter Roma from seeking care in other countries (Ringold, 2000).

4.4. Social Assistance

Because of high levels of unemployment and poverty, social assistance benefits provide an important source of income for many Roma households. Nearly all of the long-term unemployed Roma interviewed for this study, and especially those living in poorer segregated settlements, are dependent upon social assistance benefits for income support. Many noted that these benefits were indispensable, but felt that they were not adequate to secure basic living conditions. Non-Roma local officials and priests described the high level of dependency on benefits in Roma settlements. For many outsiders, the dependency of Roma on benefits reinforced stereotypes of Roma as social parasites who would rather receive income support than work.

The re-integration of unemployed Roma workers into the labor force may be made more difficult by the distorted incentives arising from the design of the social safety net. For a family where the adults have low education levels and where there are many children, there are strong incentives for the adults to remain at home or unemployed. The ratio of what the family can receive in benefits to what they would make if one (or both) of the adults were able to find employment at the minimum wage is well over 100 percent: In other words, the family is worse off if one of the adults finds a job that pays only the minimum wage. Given the lack of well paid jobs for workers of low skills, it is not surprising that many workers would choose to remain at home - in this, they are making a rational decision of what is best for their family income.

The design of the safety net lacks mechanisms that allow benefits to taper off gradually as workers become employed, building pro-work incentives. Consequently, the system penalizes those who find employment; thus setting up a dependency trap, much like that documented in many OECD countries during the 1960s and 1970s. The relationship between design of the safety net and these perverse work incentives is not in any sense unique to Roma families, but the demographic characteristics of the Roma, with relatively low levels of educational attainment among the adults, and a large number of children, makes them particularly vulnerable to falling into this dependency trap.

Faced with these incentives, households may be simply making a rational choice of maximizing family income by staying at home. In this context, incentives to work could be improved not only by cutting benefits and restricting eligibility (as was done in the past) but also by thinking of introducing tapering mechanisms, and more innovative ways to encourage benefit recipients to engage in paid work. Recent efforts to reform welfare in the United States may provide some useful lessons for how to do this (Box 4.2.).
Box 4.2: Lessons From US Welfare Reform.

During the 1990s, as concerns grew about the increasing number of welfare caseloads, the US government introduced substantial legislative changes in programs design to assist low income families. In particular, the federal government granted a growing number of waivers early in the decade, allowing states to experiment with alternative rules for the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) and food stamps programs. In addition, these changes were followed in 1996 by the approval of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act, which fundamentally changed the public assistance system in the United States. The Act abolished AFDC, which required states to match federal welfare funds, and replaced it with the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), which granted unconditional, fixed amounts of funding to states and allowed them to set their own rules for eligibility and benefits.

In the light of these changes, several states started using “diversion” (one-time assistance rather than enrollment in ongoing TANF-funded programs), and benefit programs which allowed recipients to keep a higher level of public assistance benefits after going to work, thus increasing both work incentives and income among low-income families. They also worked to transform public assistance offices into employment assistance offices, where applicants are given constant incentives to seek and find work, and they did more sanctioning, imposing penalties on those who did not respond to these work incentives. Finally, they spent more money on work-related programs relative to cash benefits.

These changes were followed by a reduction in the use of public assistance (i.e. the AFDC/TANF caseload was cut by half between 1994 and 1999, from 5 to 2.5 millions), and noticeable increases in labor market involvement among recipients. Poverty rates also declined steadily, although at a more gradual pace than the caseload. The question then arises as to what extent the reform of the welfare system was responsible for such trends.

The US economy enjoyed a decade of tremendous prosperity during the 1990s. As a consequence, employment growth was high, unemployment was low and, since 1996, wages grew significantly among workers of all skill levels. These factors influenced the welfare of less skilled workers and are therefore important in explaining the trends described above. In fact, between one-third and two-thirds of the caseload change can be attributed to the overall performance of the economy.²⁷

²⁷ Different studies provide different measures. See Wallace and Blank (1999), Figlio and Ziliak (1999) and Schoeni and Blank (2000).
Unfortunately, a strong economy not only affects poverty but also economic policy, which makes it difficult to measure the magnitude of the effect of welfare policy changes independently of the business cycle effect.\(^{28}\) However, while the overall effect of welfare reform is difficult to pin down, one should not dismay since there have been a few places that experimented with particularly innovative types of programs in ways that allow for some form of evaluation. These programs combined financial incentives with work mandates. In particular, the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) substantially decreased the benefit reduction rate for public assistance recipients, thus allowing them to keep more public assistance income when they went to work, but mandated participation in work/welfare programs. Similarly, the Self-Sufficient Program (SSP) in Canada provided substantial financial support to long-term public assistance recipients who went to work 30 hours or more. The evidence concerning these two programs shows that employment, earnings and family income increased for program participants while poverty fell.

Although these programs are not money savers in the short run - they actually provide more assistance to low-income families than did traditional welfare programs -, it is important to consider their long-run effects, since studies of people leaving welfare tend to suggest that the majority of them (55 to 85%) are employed at a future date, and about one-half to two-thirds report higher incomes post-welfare (Brauner and Loprest, 1999).

Moreover, the probability of success of such programs can be increased through good design. For instance, it is important to consider that employment is associated with extra expenses in the form of child care, transportation and others. Hence in some states public support for those items was included, together with provision of health insurance coverage by the Medicaid system, as part of their welfare policy. At the federal level, the Earned-Income Tax Credit program served a similar function.

In sum, it seems that in the US case a conflux of events came together at the same time (a strong expanding economy, substantial revisions of public assistance programs that emphasized work and reduced benefit eligibility, and major policy changes that increased the returns to work and the subsidies to support work, particularly among vulnerable groups), and created the right environment for the decline in poverty rates and welfare caseload that is observed in the data. Moreover, because a large number of the programs described above rely strongly on the availability of jobs, it is then not clear how sustainable these welfare policy changes are in the long run or how dependent their success has been on the strong economy. However, the fact that SSP managed to succeed despite the fact that the Canadian economy did not do as well as the US in the 1990s, shows that programs can work in less favorable environment with high unemployment if designed correctly.


\(^{28}\) There is some crude evidence that such changes had a substantial effect on caseloads, but there has been significantly less research relating TANF changes to work behavior or poverty rates. In this respect, the best evidence comes from the fact that participation rates are increasing among vulnerable groups (e.g. single mothers with young children).

\(^{29}\) Most low-skilled jobs do not offer health insurance and this could act as a deterrent for employment.
Many Roma complained that the reforms to the Act on Social Assistance, which cut benefits for those who had been unemployed for two years or more, made it impossible for them to survive on social assistance. Although this change was intended to promote work incentives, Roma in isolated settlements were particularly disadvantaged because of the absence of employment opportunities. Non-Roma social workers and local government officials also felt that the current system of child allowances and the subsistence minimum provided incentives for Roma to have large families. While there is no empirical evidence to confirm this, the importance of these benefits for the survival of many poor Roma families breeds resentment and contributes to the impression among non-Roma that Roma are overly dependent on the state.

Relations between social workers and Roma were reportedly more contentious than relations with other public service providers. Roma view social workers as representatives of the state, and are frequently their only contact with government authorities. Social workers are responsible for conveying ‘bad news’ on eligibility for benefits, and as a result, are often the target of frustration with decisions that are not necessarily under their control.

Social workers are poorly prepared to work with Roma communities. This lack of preparation is linked to systemic problems within the welfare system itself. Social workers in Slovakia rarely do field visits and are not trained to work directly with clients. Instead, their jobs are largely administrative, focused on disbursing cash benefits and social workers explained that they had no time left for field visits. Social workers complained about the administrative burden of their work: “Every time the law is amended, we have to check and review all files; we often work late in the evening and do not have time for fieldwork.” Only two of the social workers interviewed for the study actually visited Roma settlements. The lack of contact between Roma and social workers contributes to poor communication on both sides.

Many Roma complained that social workers were not responsive to their needs, explaining: “They come to our settlement only when they want to screen us.” It appeared that social workers were not effective at communicating with Roma, as many Roma lacked basic information on social assistance programs and eligibility criteria. Some Roma asked the interviewers for information on various benefits. In other cases, Roma appeared well versed in the eligibility criteria of benefits, so it is likely that awareness depends upon the individuals involved.
CHAPTER 5: SOCIAL AND ETHNIC DIMENSIONS OF ROMA POVERTY

5.1. Ethnic Relations

A prevailing characteristic of Roma poverty is its relationship to social exclusion. Although Roma in Slovakia are ethnically diverse – including Hungarian speaking, Rumungres, and Vlachika Roma – the majority population for the most part perceives Roma as a single group who are different and live on the margins of society. Social exclusion and discrimination of Roma within public affairs and civil society is an important factor which affects access to opportunities in the labor market and education, and other public services. Exclusion of Roma in Slovakia stems from a combination of historical, cultural, sociological and geographic factors and varies extensively across communities. Identifying the extent of the issue and its roots is extremely complex and a full discussion of these issues lies outside the scope of this report.

Relations between Roma and non-Roma. A number of sociological surveys conducted since 1989 have confirmed a high degree of social distance between the Roma and non-Roma populations in the country, including negative stereotypes and lack of trust (Vašecka, 2000). A 1995 survey found higher negative impressions of Roma by non-Roma in Slovakia than in the Czech Republic. The survey also found that these impressions were largely based on stereotypes – rather than direct experience. 50 percent of respondents had never had a negative personal experience with Roma. Another survey from 1995 found that as much as 66 percent of those surveyed believed that Roma should live separately from non-Roma (e.g. in settlements).

Many non-Roma interviewed for this study view poverty among Roma as related to Roma culture and lifestyle rather than to socioeconomic circumstances. The following statement is characteristic: “educating them is not going to solve the problem, they are all lazy, do not want to work and only want to live off of social benefits.” Some non-Roma expressed violent sentiments in the interviews. A mayor in one of the study areas said that the only way to solve the situation in his municipality was to “eradicate them.”

There are indications that negative perceptions of Roma are worsening and that relations between Roma and non-Roma have been deteriorating during the past ten years. There are a number of possible explanations for this, including declining social status of Roma, growing unemployment and increasing dependency on social benefits. Negative stereotypes are also reinforced by geographic separation, and the limited contact between Roma and non-Roma.

Contacts between Roma and non-Roma were extremely limited in all of the segregated settlements visited for this study. Roma are separated geographically, in schools, and even in some cases in churches. In one settlement in Stará Lubovna, Roma were reportedly not allowed to enter the local pub. The village store was identified as the most important center for social contact between Roma and non-Roma. A 1994 opinion survey confirmed that social distance was higher in more isolated communities – finding

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that residents of small villages had higher negative sentiments toward Roma than others in the country.31

Roma respondents from Lubotín, a village in Stará Lubovná, complained that young non-Roma frequently try to throw them out of the local pub and provoke fights. A resident noted that: “Today, youth are different than they used to be. In the past, we did not have any problems [with non-Roma].” According to some non-Roma, increasing tensions are due to the worsening economic situation of Roma and related social consequences, such as theft and increasing birth rates which the majority tends to perceive as a threat.

In integrated communities, the level of contacts and interactions between Roma and non-Roma was naturally higher and relationships were reportedly smoother. Many respondents noted that they have regular contacts, and some noted that if they have to borrow money, they prefer to borrow from non-Roma, than from other Roma. “If I borrow money from my non-Roma neighbors I trust them and they know I will return the money on time. Usually they do not ask me for any interest.” In segregated and some separated settlements, Roma generally borrow from professional money lenders since there are no other options for borrowing money.

Segregated and marginalized Roma lack a social network which they can rely on and benefit from. To a large extent they are isolated from the majority population. Roma rarely have regular working relations with other ethnic groups, which leads to social distance and misconceptions on both sides. Institutions, including local governments, public services and churches are most commonly located in integrated areas and have limited interactions with segregated Roma. Roma children are frequently educated in separate schools and classrooms. Social workers rarely visit segregated settlements and have limited contacts with Roma settlements.

Relations among Roma. Local authorities in some of the integrated settlements noted that personal conflicts involving Roma are usually not between Roma and non-Roma, but rather between local Roma and other Roma from outside settlements. A mayor from a town in Stará Lubovná explained, “If a strange Roma is causing disturbance in the village, it is the local Roma who come running to file a complaint with the police or local council.” Some of these tensions may be based on intra-ethnic divisions. The interviews indicated strained relations between Slovak-speaking Rumungres and Hungarian speaking Vlachika Roma in some settlements in Rimavská Sobota.

Roma also identified tensions between different Roma communities. Roma living in integrated areas, especially those who had been living with non-Roma neighbors for more than one generation, do not associate with or relate to Roma living in settlements. Roma from integrated areas tended to look down upon Roma from segregated settlements, and expressed sentiments including: “we are from a different caste”; “Roma in settlements] deserve their situation because of their lifestyle”; and “my father could not tolerate us not attending school, these parents do not care.”

Many integrated Roma do not identify themselves publicly as Roma because of the associated stigma and discrimination. A teacher in a village in Malacky told about a local

music festival and competition for school children organized by PHARE. The teacher wanted to have some of his Roma students sing in the festival. However, the parents were reluctant to have their children participate, because they did not want their children to be identified as Roma in the community. The teacher was ultimately able to persuade the parents to allow their children to participate and the event was a success. Some integrated Roma were proud that they had not been allowed to speak the Roma language at home when they were growing up. In general, Roma who wanted to be integrated distanced themselves from other Roma.

The main source of tensions between Roma within settlements was economic conflicts between relatively higher and lower income Roma. In a village in Malacky included in this study, there was a fight in the settlement between those living in the front of the settlement, and those, living further towards the center. Vandalism had occurred, windows were broken and some houses were damaged. The better off households instructed the interviewers not to go to the inner part of the settlement, indicating that they would not be welcomed there because they had been in their house. The Roma mayor had a small garden but explained that he did not grow anything on the land because: “if I grow something I have to sleep in my garden as well,” fearing that poorer Roma in the settlement would steal his produce.

Social Capital

Social capital among most Roma, especially those from the segregated settlements, was observed to be low. The immediate family is the most important institution for most, and trust in outside institutions is low, or non-existent in the most marginalized communities. The immediate and extended family functions as a close circle of people whose members help each other. In segregated settlements it is virtually the only source of contacts and assistance. Since almost all of the families in the settlements face virtually the same level of material deprivation, mutual help between various families is limited. Trust between different Roma groups was also found to be low. A Roma leader explained:

A Roma living at the edge of a village can only offer certain services. He lacks means of communication, opportunities for relationships and the establishment of a family. He only has the opportunity for creating family ties within the small community.

In contrast, integrated Roma have more relationships with their neighbors and with non-Roma. In the village of Studienka in Malacky, an elderly Roma widow explained that most of her friends were non-Roma women pensioners from the villages. Inhabitants of another village frequently ask each other for help and have also developed neighborly relations.

Families provide an important network for Roma in both separated and segregated settlements during periods of economic difficulties. Many who cannot find work have moved back to settlements where their relatives live – in some cases these moves may further decrease their chances of finding jobs, since they are moving back to segregated settlements. A Roma who had returned to Lipovec, a settlement in Rimavská Sobota

32 Here “social capital” refers to the institutions, relationships, and norms that shape the quality and quantity of a society’s social interactions, this includes kinship (family) relations, as well as formal interactions with public institutions, NGOs and other associations.
explained: “We have lost our flat, we cannot pay, so we came to my mother’s house where my sister also lives with her family.” Because many Roma do not own their homes, if they move they often stay with relatives on a “long-term visit,” without the necessary approvals for permanent residency status – which can subsequently affect their access to social benefits and services.

As a result, there is a group of Roma in each municipality who lack permanent residency status. Many of them do not have a marriage certificate, since they did not register their marriages. Municipal authorities refuse to grant them status as permanent residents, arguing that there are already too many people living in the house, or that the population of the settlement is increasing.

5.2. Relations with Public Institutions

Relations with Local Governments

Relations between Roma and mayors and local council members are complicated. In some cases, leaders of municipalities with segregated settlements under their jurisdiction did not hide their strong views on Roma from the interviewers. This was largely due to their own frustration and lack of understanding and knowledge of how to address the needs of Roma communities. The chairman of a local council in Malacky refused to acknowledge the presence of Roma in his municipality, explaining: “Officially they declare Slovak nationality, so I don’t have any Roma here. I see nothing to comment on.” Some mayors expressed typical negative stereotypes about Roma. From their side, Roma criticized local officials of corruption in assigning people to public works programs, and for their unwillingness to make necessary investments in their settlements (e.g. for roads).

Most mayors contend that they do visit Roma settlements, that they know their Roma neighbors, are aware of their problems, and that they are trying to solve them. Roma claim that their experience is quite different, and point out the inability of municipal authorities to dispose garbage from their settlement, build access roads, or allow them to register for permanent residence in the village. An exception documented in the study, was the case of a mayor in Malacky who regularly visits the Roma settlement and informs the residents about ongoing initiatives of the municipal council. There were no examples in the study of collaboration between Roma and non-Roma leaders (e.g. mayor, teachers, priest), to address the needs of settlements.

Some Roma cited examples of discrimination on behalf of local officials. A Roma woman and teacher at a local school told the interviewers that the mayor had refused to let her rent the community center for her wedding, explaining that if he did it for her, he would have to do it for other Roma and that “other people would stop having their weddings there because they would refuse to eat from the same plates after the Roma.”

Participation and Political Representation

There has been considerable political activity among Roma groups in Slovakia. However, because of fragmentation the aggregate impact has been limited. After the collapse of the socialist regime in 1989, a national Roma political party, the Roma Civic Initiative (ROI), was established in Czechoslovakia. ROI received 4 seats in the Federal Assembly in the first democratic parliamentary elections in 1990. Since then, Roma politics have become increasingly splintered with the emergence of nearly 15 national
and local Roma political parties. Currently there are no Roma representatives in the Slovak parliament. Activity has increased at the local level. In the municipal elections in December 1998, 56 Roma were elected to local councils and 6 as mayors.

According to the Ministry of Interior, there were 254 Roma candidates for Roma political parties in the last election – this figure does not include many Roma who were candidates for of the majority political parties. Of this group, 56 were elected as deputies and 6 as mayors (in the municipalities of Blatné Remety, Cicava, Jurské, Lomnicka, Luník IX, and Žehra).

In the three survey districts, Roma participation in civic affairs was low. This was largely due to a lack of trust of public officials and limited information about local politicians and their roles and responsibilities. Many Roma expressed apathy and a sense of hopelessness about the potential of politicians to make a difference in their lives: “Nobody from political parties, also those called Roma parties has visited us. What are they doing for us?” This was a sentiment shared by many.

Some Roma did identify themselves as members of political parties, both Roma and majority. Very few Roma in the study sites were involved in politics themselves. An exception was Lomicka in Stará Lubovna, where the mayor is Roma. In another settlement, a Roma woman, who was married to a non-Roma and did not identify herself as Roma, was serving on the local council. In some cases Roma were working as advisors to local councils.

Roma were more informed about mayors than other politicians, as mayoral candidates were most likely to campaign in Roma settlements. There were some indications that candidates took advantage of Roma’s lack of knowledge and access to information about electoral choices. One Roma noted: “I don’t know [which ballot] I threw in [at the polling station], I can’t write or read, but they gave me a hundred crowns for it.” Some Roma said that the mayor bought gifts such as jackets to secure votes.

The Role of the Church

Churches have an important potential role to play in the Roma community, and building bridges between ethnic groups. However, in the settlements included in this study, priests had limited interactions with Roma settlements. Some priests expressed negative sentiments toward Roma. A number of priests complained that Roma attend church services out of superstition: “[They believe that] if their child is not baptized, it will cry during nights and will die.” A priest admitted that non-Roma are reluctant to interact with Roma, and that this can grow into prejudice and hatred, but still he feels that: “It is desirable to keep a distance from the Roma because if you give them an inch they’ll take a mile.”

In some cases, priests reportedly refused to baptize Roma children if their parents had not had a church wedding. There were exceptions to this, a number of priests baptized Roma children in their parish, as well as Roma children from neighboring areas: “Children cannot be punished [for their parents].” Some priests said that they had tried to help Roma, but since they failed to change them they gave up: “I invited them several times to the church. They came only when I obtained some clothes or gifts for them. When
I asked them to help me in the church, they promised but never came again. They only come to the church when they need something.”

Roma in segregated communities reported that they generally do not feel welcome in churches. Some Roma who attended churches said that they have assigned separate seats from non-Roma. Roma in one of the segregated settlements related that on one occasion, on Saint Nicholas Day, the priest in one of the Roma communities prepared Saint Nicholas gifts for all children, except for Roma.
CHAPTER 6: POLICY IMPLICATIONS

6.1. Opportunities and Challenges

Addressing poverty among Roma in Slovakia is a complex challenge which will take time and collaboration among many partners, Roma and non-Roma alike. Over the past decade there has been considerable project activity by the government and NGOs. A recent review by the European Union and the Open Society Foundation in Bratislava identified over 900 projects, implemented by NGOs, which had been targeted to Roma.\(^{33}\) Despite this level of activity little is known about the impact of these initiatives and lessons from their experience are absent because of the lack of built in mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation.

The analysis of conditions in Roma settlements raises difficult policy concerns. A central question raised by the study is how to develop an effective strategy for addressing the needs of Roma in settlements. The most segregated and geographically isolated settlements face the greatest challenges on all fronts, including access to employment opportunities and public services, while conditions in integrated settlements are more favorable. Although it is important to adopt measures to meet the immediate needs of residents of the poorest settlements in the short-run, over the longer-term investing in settlements may lead to further entrenchment of segregation and, consequently, continued marginalization and impoverishment.

There are no easy answers to this dilemma. The failure of socialist era policies which aimed at forced assimilation of Roma indicate that encouraging Roma to leave settlements is not a viable solution. On the other hand, lessons from existing projects in Slovakia and Hungary illustrate the importance of community involvement and participation in policies and projects. In this regard, a balanced package of short and medium term measures which aim at (i) improving immediate living conditions for Roma in the poorest settlements and; (ii) expanding possibilities for Roma to take advantage of opportunities within the economy through education, employment and access to public services should be considered.

Addressing Exclusion

An important finding of this study is that the degree of segregation and marginalization of a Roma settlement is correlated with the level of poverty in the settlement. While the nature of these linkages needs to be validated through more rigorous empirical research, the basic findings are clear. Roma living in more remote and segregated settlements have fewer opportunities to participate in the mainstream economy, access social services, including education and health care, and tap into social networks and information about economic opportunities such as jobs. In other words, geographic and social exclusion are important correlates of poverty. In contrast, Roma in integrated areas are more likely to interact with non-Roma and are better informed and positioned to identify and take advantage of opportunities.

\(^{33}\) This project database can be found at: [www.osf.sk](http://www.osf.sk). The evaluation was run by a group of researchers who evaluated 16 projects directed at Roma.
These results have important policy implications. In the first place, they highlight the diverse nature of Roma in Slovakia and the need for varied approaches to different circumstances. Secondly, they indicate that interventions which reduce isolation and exclusion of Roma through integration can facilitate the improvement of living conditions over the longer term. This does not imply that programs and policies should revert to the type of forced assimilation which was prevalent under the socialist period. Rather, policy and project design need to be sensitive to Roma culture and the desire of communities to maintain their cultural identity. In the first place, this objective can be ensured through participation of Roma. A number of successful projects use Roma mentors as liaisons between Roma and non-Roma communities. For example, Roma teacher assistants who work with parents, or peer advisors who assist with job placement can facilitate integration, while strengthening the Roma community itself (Box 6.2).

Addressing exclusion and the negative impacts of segregation also involves overcoming divisions between Roma and non-Roma communities. Measures in this regard need to involve Roma and non-Roma alike. Education is an important vehicle for overcoming cultural barriers through multicultural education and inclusion in the curriculum of the history and culture of Roma and other minorities. Training of teachers, local government officials and other personnel working in social services can be important mechanisms for addressing discrimination within public services. Finally, public information campaigns can promote multiculturalism and raise awareness about discrimination.

**Targeted vs. Untargeted Approaches**

An important trade-off is whether programs and policies should be targeted to Roma, directed more broadly at poor communities, or aimed at the population at large. Targeted programs can be tailored to meet specific needs of Roma, but may create divisions among communities and resentment that some groups are receiving special treatment. Broad based programs may be easier to administer, and may be more politically popular, and perhaps facilitate integration and cohesion. On the other hand, untargeted programs may be ill suited to reaching the poorest and most isolated Roma settlements.

In a number of areas there is justification for policy approaches toward Roma which are different in focus and more intensive than those intended for the majority population. For example, specific interventions are needed to address the most immediate issues of poverty in settlements, low school attendance and lack of employment opportunities. Because Roma comprise a large, and increasing, share of the Slovak population, the risks of inaction are high – including the growth of an underclass that has the potential to undermine economic growth and increase social inequalities.

The multifaceted nature of poverty in Roma settlements also highlights the need for interventions which cut across policy areas. Projects and policy measures can address multiple objectives through community development projects and other initiatives. For example, a housing project could involve Roma in the construction and upgrading of infrastructure, and could provide participants with training in construction, as well as employment, during the course of the project. Similarly, an education project could include exposure to public health issues, or social assistance support through school
lunches and access to educational materials. There is room for substantial creativity and multisectoral approaches in project design and implementation.

**Participation**

Regardless of whether programs and policies are explicitly designated for Roma or not, Roma involvement and participation is essential. A clear lesson to emerge from the experience of policies and programs directed at Roma during both the socialist and transition periods is that participation and involvement of Roma in the design, implementation and evaluation of programs is essential for any kind of initiative to work. The Slovak experience highlights this, as the legacy of failed forced assimilation policies during the socialist period can still be noted in the organization of separate Roma settlements and schools, and in the relations between Roma and non-Roma within society.

Ensuring Roma involvement in policy and project development rests on the existence of effective mechanisms for participation. While Roma have been increasingly involved in civil society and various aspects of policy-making, there are significant challenges to ensuring effective communication and involvement. Continued expansion of opportunities for Roma to participate in civil society at the local and national levels is essential. The activity of Roma NGOs and the leadership of the Office of the Plenipotentiary for Roma Communities will be important elements of this process.

Non-Roma involvement is critical as well. This report has highlighted the perils of separation and segregation. Roma who lack opportunities for interaction with wider society, including other Roma communities and non-Roma, are cut off from society, including the labor market, education and involvement in and access to a wide range of public services. Increasing contacts and partnerships between non-Roma and Roma will facilitate inclusion and address the mistrust and miscommunication which limit the progress of local and community development.

**Links with Policy Reform**

A number of the themes identified in the study relate to systemic policy issues which need to be addressed at the national level. In the first place, economic growth and reforms to stimulate growth are needed to reduce unemployment and increase the demand for labor. Addressing the unemployment problem is a critical step toward reducing poverty and improving living standards among Roma and non-Roma alike. This involves a multi-pronged approach. Critical among them – although not sufficient – is maintaining macroeconomic and political stability, and financial sector reform.

Increasing employment opportunities hinges upon creating a more favorable environment for job creation, including measures to support micro, small and medium enterprises, and improving access to credit for small entrepreneurs. Many of these measures can have a positive impact on Roma as well as non-Roma households, by encouraging self-employment and entrepreneurship, which historically have engaged Roma populations in much of Central and Southern Europe. Another national-level issue, with positive benefits for unskilled Roma workers, is lowering the non-wage costs of labor. High payroll taxes and non-wage labor costs discourage employers from hiring unskilled labor, as it makes them proportionately more expensive than workers with

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34 Refer to World Bank 2001 for a more detailed discussion of these measures and the rationale.
higher skills. Studies in numerous OECD countries have documented that often it is the unskilled who are most hurt by such non-wage labor costs and recent evidence for Slovakia corroborates this (Blanchard et al, 1995, World Bank, 2001).

Education reform is another systemic issue of particular relevance for Roma. Comprehensive reforms of both general and vocational education are needed to prepare workers for the labor market more effectively. Improved vocational education, that expands elements of the general education curriculum, holds potential for attracting young Roma and helping them secure marketable skills. Similarly, secondary school programs and curricula need to be reviewed to ensure that they provide adequate preparation for the labor market, by shifting away from vocational and technical training, to more general, academic programs.

Another crucial issue is the reform of social assistance to improve work incentives and reduce the risk of falling into a dependency trap. As discussed in Chapter 4, reducing disincentives to labor market participation is a reform priority for Slovakia. This could be achieved by adopting a scheme for phasing out benefits so that employed workers earning low wages would still be entitled to a (smaller) fraction of their benefits. This could improve work incentives for those at the margin and would increase income among low-income working families.

In addition to improving the effectiveness of cash benefits, reforms of social assistance also need to focus on enhancing the roles of social workers in working with poor communities. Currently, social workers function largely as administrators, their capacities to work with individuals and households should be expanded. For many Roma in the most isolated settlements, social workers function as the main contact point with the outside, non-Roma, world. Social workers can serve as referral agents to other social services, to provide information regarding employment opportunities as well as counseling and other types of support to households.

**Improving Information**

This study has highlighted the urgent need for better information regarding Roma, as well as the need for thorough monitoring and evaluation of projects and policies. In the first place, basic information on living standards in Slovakia needs to be upgraded to international standards. Currently, the 1996 Microcensus and the Household Budget Surveys (HBS) are the only available instruments for measuring household welfare in Slovakia. Both have substantial methodological drawbacks which limit their effectiveness for assessing living standards among the population at large, and for the Roma in particular (World Bank, 2001). The sampling of both the Microcensus and HBS excludes most Roma settlements, and undersamples the Roma population significantly. Developing a poverty monitoring strategy based upon regular, periodic and nationally representative surveys is an important priority for Slovakia.

In addition to filling the gaps on household welfare data, addressing information needs on specific topics is of prime importance. This study has illustrated the absence of current information on the basic social indicators of Roma, including access to education, labor market status and health status. While privacy concerns are valid, up to date information is critical for policy makers to make decisions about program design and to monitor outcomes. Privacy can be respected by making declarations of ethnicity
voluntary, and using periodic sample surveys, rather than national administrative data, to collect information on specific topics.

Involvement of Roma groups – such as was done in the 2001 census – in the development and implementation of surveys, as well as the analysis is also extremely important. Qualitative assessments can also provide valuable information for project design. Basic information about conditions within Roma settlements is also sorely needed. The field research team for this study found that the government’s existing database, maintained in the Office of the Plenipotentiary for Roma Communities contained errors and gaps, this database should be improved to serve as an effective instrument for targeting and designing policy interventions at the local level.

Finally, the importance of building monitoring and evaluation mechanisms into projects and policies cannot be overstressed. Monitoring should be an integral part of all projects to ensure accountability. Equally important are evaluations to assess project impact and outcomes. This requires baseline data at the outset of the project to compare once beneficiaries have completed the project. For example, an intervention designed to improve school enrollments should measure enrollments prior to the project and assess whether participants stay in school during the project, as well as afterwards. The time horizon for outcome evaluation should also be sufficient enough to assess longer term impacts. Again, in the case of education, the evaluation should assess not just whether children are in school at the end of the project, but whether they graduate and continue on, and how the project affects their chances in higher education and the labor market.

6.2. Policy Recommendations

This section outlines a number of policy options and interventions which can be implemented to improve living conditions for Roma, by addressing poverty, and increasing future opportunities through expanding access to education and employment. It draws upon examples of project experience in Slovakia, as well as other countries in Europe. Implementing these measures will involve collaboration between central government ministries, local governments, Roma communities, NGOs and international partners.

Improving Living Conditions

Housing. Measures can be undertaken to alleviate poor conditions in some of the most disadvantaged Roma settlements and to increase coverage of utilities. A priority in housing policy is creating conditions which will enable communities and local governments to make necessary improvements in housing and basic local infrastructure, such as roads and water supply and ensure subsequent maintenance. Measures can include:

- Clarifying property rights and resolving questions regarding the ownership of land and buildings which prohibit residents and local governments from investing in and maintaining properties.
- Reviewing and simplifying procedures for obtaining building permits to allow residents to upgrade their property.
- Providing clear information to the public on procedures for applying for construction permits and acquiring property.
Utilities. Mechanisms for expanding coverage of utilities and public services to settlements should also be identified. Options include:

- Expanding access to utilities and public services by bringing isolated settlements into the mainstream utility networks. While inhabitants should be charged for utilities, subsidies may be needed for low income households, particularly in the case of public goods, such as sanitation.

- Introducing incentives for local governments and communities to provide services in settlements, possibly through a central fund which would allocate resources to poor communities based upon clear national criteria.

- Providing opportunities within public works programs for improvement of basic infrastructure and services within Roma communities.

Increasing Opportunities

Education. Increasing the educational attainment of Roma is critical to enhancing their ability to take advantage of opportunities in the economy and labor market. Priority objectives of education interventions include reducing barriers that prevent children from starting school in the first place, keeping children in school once they start, and facilitating the transition from basic to secondary school. Finally, improving the quality of education for Roma students by reducing participation in special schools and segregated classrooms can increase opportunities for students in further education and the labor market and reduce segregation. A number of successful initiatives have been undertaken in Slovakia in the area of education.

The Zero Grade classroom experiment has facilitated the transition to primary school for children since 1992. Similarly the School Wide Open Foundation, with support from the Open Society Institute, has been implementing the Step by Step Program targeted to disadvantaged children from kindergarten through fourth grade. The program involves Roma teacher’s assistants to build connections between the community and the school, and experiments with innovative learning methods in the classroom to involve children and parents in the learning process. A similar approach has been taken by the Foundation For a Romany Child, which has established pilot “education centers” to educate parents and children together.

Successful aspects of these initiatives can be integrated into the mainstream education system including:

- Reducing economic barriers that keep children from starting school through the co-ordination of social assistance and education policies to alleviate the cost of education to poor families. Programs could include scholarships, provision of school lunches and materials and linking eligibility for social benefits to school attendance. Social workers can play an important role in identifying households in need of assistance.

- Increasing pre-school attendance. Pre-school programs are critical for preparing children for the classroom environment and overcoming language and cultural differences. The experience of the Zero Grade program and other initiatives should be used as a starting point. Expanding pre-school attendance should involve increasing the availability of pre-school services in settlements and
addressing the demand constraint, by involving parents in education to increase
their awareness of the importance of education.

- Training teachers, including training of Roma teachers and teacher’s assistants
  who can work with both parents and students and serve as role models is a
  important measure to involve Roma in education, build bridges between Roma
  and non-Roma and increase the accessibility of education for isolated settlements.

- Facilitating secondary school attendance through extracurricular activities, after
  school tutoring, and social and economic support to students. A number of
  alternative secondary school models for Roma students have been piloted in
  Hungary, which provide useful examples (Orsos, 2001).

- Reforming special education to focus on real disabilities. Improving education
  quality for Roma can have positive effects on school attendance and educational
  outcomes. A central objective is reducing negative discrimination within the
  education system and the role of special schools and separate classrooms. Special
  education should be reformed to address true learning disabilities and needs of at-
  risk children. This would include changing entrance procedures to identify real
  disabilities.

- Limiting the use of separate classrooms and schools for Roma can improve
  education quality, as well reduce segregation and divisions between Roma and
  non-Roma communities. Within schools, this should include eliminating separate
  classrooms. For geographically remote settlements, other options could be
  included, a pilot project in Bulgaria transports Roma children from a Roma to an
  integrated school (Box 6.2.).

**Box 6.1: Desegregation of Roma Schools in Bulgaria: The Vidin Model**

In Bulgaria many schools have been designated by the Ministry of Education as
“Roma schools.” These schools are located in Roma neighborhoods and have a
disproportionately high share of Roma pupils – as much as 80 percent in some cases. The
overrepresentation of Roma in these schools is due to geographic reasons and the high
concentration of Roma in certain areas, as well as discrimination by non-Roma parents
and teachers who encourage the separation of non-Roma students into different schools.
The quality of teaching and school infrastructure in Roma schools has been found to be
significantly worse than in mainstream schools.

In Vidin, the Open Society Institute and the Roma NGO, DROM, have been
collaborating on an innovative program to integrate Roma students into the mainstream
school system. Vidin is a town of 85,000 in north-west Bulgaria, 6 percent of the
population identified as Roma in the 1992 census. In the 2000/2001 school year 460
students, or 50 percent of school-age students, were integrated into the mainstream school
system, more are expected to follow in the next school year. Under the project students
are bussed from the settlement to school, and back. In addition to transportation, the
project involves Roma monitors who interact with parents and the school to encourage
attendance. Low income students also receive shoes and school lunches – students are
given lunch on the bus to reduce the stigma of receiving it at school.
Last summer, DROM went door-to-door in the Roma settlement explaining the project to Roma families. DROM also sought the support of the schools, the mayor and the media. The project eventually gained support of all stakeholders, excluding the mayor. However, he did not try to block the project. With the agreement of a number of Roma parents, DROM invited the 6 mainstream schools in Vidin to participate in a TV program at which each school presented its program, philosophy, and teachers. Roma parents selected the school they wanted their children to attend. This lessened their concerns and was the first time, that their views had been solicited by the authorities.

Project success at the end of the first semester of the project was measured by 100 percent attendance; first term final grade averages were identical to the level of the non-Roma pupils; parental and teacher satisfaction; no known anti-Roma racism in the schools; full support from the Regional Directorate of the Ministry of Education and encouragement to scale up in other cities. In addition, 35 Roma parents of the bussed children have returned to school in adult education programs; 3 teenagers who had dropped out in the third grade asked to join the program and teachers agreed to work extra hours with them and others. On the negative side, twenty-four pupils received failing grades in one or more subjects and three have left the program. One returned to the Roma school and two 8th graders who were functionally illiterate dropped out.

The success to date of the program is attributable to three major factors. First, the parents feel (a) that their children are protected from racial humiliation because of being bussed to and from school and monitored throughout the day by adult Roma and (b) that they can meet the higher scholastic standards. Second, the schools have accepted young adult Roma monitors in the schools who assure the children aren't mistreated. The monitors also monitor the engagement of the parents in overseeing homework, the participation of the pupils in extra-curricula activities and the cleanliness, feeding and appropriate attire of the children. The monitors help the teachers with teaching aides and understanding cultural differences. Working through the monitors and the local Roma NGO which employs them, grades and progress are monitored every day; problems are addressed on the spot. Third, the children are happy to be in schools where learning takes place. On-going assessment of project outcomes will be essential to understand the longer-term implications of the Vidin project.

This approach may be applicable in Slovakia. However, it is important to note that many Bulgarian Roma children speak Bulgarian. This clearly contributed to the early success of the project. In countries such as Slovakia, where Roma children in eastern Slovakia do not speak Slovak, pre-school programs for national language acquisition and social integration will be critical preconditions.

Source: Open Society Institute.

Health Care. Addressing the poor health status of Roma is an important priority for improving their capacity to participate in education and employment. Improving monitoring of health status, is an important priority. In particular, more effective monitoring of communicable diseases such as tuberculosis, hepatitis, and HIV/AIDS is critical. Other priorities include:

- Improving the availability of health care for isolated Roma settlements through outreach. Policies that expand access to remote rural areas and urban communities can include incentives for physicians, community health workers and social
workers to work with communities on both addressing their problems and teaching prevention.

- Strengthening public health interventions by involving schools and social workers. The elimination of health checks through schools has led to a lack of health information provision for some settlements. Teachers and social workers can play an important role in health promotion activities within Roma communities, and to facilitate interactions between Roma and health care professionals. Information campaigns are also key in addressing many emerging health behavior, including substance abuse, sexually transmitted diseases, and conditions associated with poor nutrition and hygiene. Other initiatives can include improved dissemination of public health information through the media, and co-ordination with organizations such as churches and NGOs within the Roma community.

- Improving reproductive health care. Reproductive and family health care issues help overcome cultural taboos, such as fear of screening for cervical cancer. Some of the PHARE projects are addressing women’s health issues in different ways. A team of NGOs in Slovakia is piloting a course on hygiene and child development for Roma mothers. There are examples from countries in other regions of successful initiatives for improving women’s health through community groups and education.

Employment. Expanding labor market opportunities is a priority for Slovakia. It is critical that employment opportunities be widely shared, and that the poorest have the means to take advantage of new jobs. Without this, a core group of poor, or ‘underclass,’ will continue to exist. In the case of Roma, specific attention is needed to address the additional barriers of lower education status, geographic isolation and discrimination. Experience from Spain and Hungary provides examples of promising employment projects with relevance for Slovakia (Box 6.1).

Box 6.2: Promoting Employment among the Roma

Programs in both Eastern and Western Europe have been adopted to promote employment income generating opportunities for Roma. One of the most established is the Autonomia Foundation in Hungary which provides grants and interest-free loans to develop employment programs for Roma. Small-income generating initiatives include livestock breeding, agricultural programs, and small enterprise development.

The success of Autonomia’s projects, as measured by the repayment rate of its loans, has increased greatly since it was established in 1990. In 1998 repayment rates reached nearly 80 percent, in comparison with 10 percent during the first year. Autonomia attributes this improvement to the involvement of trained monitors, some of whom are Roma, who work closely with project teams throughout the implementation of the project. Autonomia is now in the process of expanding its programs to other countries in the region. In 2000, the first group of Roma began training in preparation to start small grant and loan programs for Roma in four CEE countries, including Slovakia. Further evaluation on the project should examine the impact of the project on the welfare of participants.
A different type of employment program is the Acceder Programme run by the Asociación General Gitano in Madrid, Spain. The program provides individualized support to participants in identifying and preparing for employment. While the program is open to all interested applicants, 79 percent were Roma in 1999. Roma mediators work closely with job-seekers and employers to identify their skills, training needs and employment opportunities. The mediators provide support to applicants throughout the training and job search process.

In 1999 there were 304 active job seekers enrolled in Acceder and 63 percent found employment. However, the job retention rate is not known, and rigorous cost-benefit analysis of the program is not available. Staff of the Asociación and participants noted that the strengths of the program are its individualized approach in assessing and matching skills and jobs and the use of mediators who can bridge the gap between gitanos (Roma) and non-Roma. Challenges include the difficulty of providing adequate and appropriate training for individuals with low education levels, persistent discrimination on the labor market and incentives. Participants may be reluctant to accept low paying jobs and risk losing access to social assistance benefits.

Sources: Ringold, 2000; Martin, 2000.

- Improving access to credit is an important aspect of increasing opportunities for Roma and other low income groups to engage in entrepreneurial activity. NGOs can play an important role in training and capacity building among communities to initiate projects. Partnerships between these organizations and banks are needed to establish credit mechanisms. Related to this, expanding the availability of microcredit can eventually decrease the role of local usurers who currently lend funds at extortionary rates.

- Increasing the effectiveness of public works programs is another important element of promoting employment. Actions need to be taken to improve the quality and training content of public works jobs, so that participants gain transferable skills. Current programs focus on short-term low skilled employment and provide participants neither with enhanced skills, nor employment possibilities over the longer term.

- Providing anti-discrimination legislation and provisions for appeals. While Slovakia has adopted anti-discrimination legislation consistent with ILO conventions, this study indicates evidence of discrimination in hiring. Mechanisms should be put into place at the local and regional level to monitor compliance and provide job seekers with an opportunity to appeal violations.

Conclusions

Addressing Roma poverty in Slovakia is a complex challenge which will take time and patience. Poverty among Roma is multifaceted and has deep historical roots. Effective policy responses will require a multi-layered approach involving cross-country partnerships among Roma and international organizations, national governments, NGOs working at all levels of government, local governments and communities. The EU accession process provides an important window of opportunity for tackling issues through programs and projects.
The recent review of Roma programs in Slovakia documented a myriad of projects which have been implemented to address the needs of Roma in the country. Many of these involve creative approaches to difficult problems, involving committed and dynamic individuals and communities. Future work needs to build upon these experiments. In this regard there is a critical need for mechanisms for monitoring project experience, disseminating results and developing strategies for scaling up small initiatives across communities and regions. This process requires the involvement of a range of partners – including government, NGOs and other organizations within civil society, as well as the international community.
References


Annex 1: Methodology

Selection of the Study Sites

The objective of the research was to examine the living conditions of Roma in different types of settlements. To cover regional differences, and within regions, the differences based on the living arrangements and the degree of integration and segregation, three districts with Roma populations were selected. The criteria for selecting the districts were socioeconomic conditions, based upon the level of unemployment and number of beneficiaries of social assistance. The sample included a district which was well off economically (better than national average), one which was average and one with economic indicators below the national average. They districts selected were: Malacky, Stará Lubovna, and Rimavská Sobota.

Within these three districts, 9 settlements, or communities with Roma populations were selected. These included 3 villages, or towns (3 integrated, 3 segregated, and 3 separated), making the total number of sites 27. This selection was based on the following criteria:

A. The level of segregation:
   1. Roma settlements that are integral part of a locality (village or town).
   2. Roma settlements that are connected to a locality by their infrastructure (on a street in a village or town, or located in the outskirts of a town or village).
   3. Roma settlements that are segregated from near by towns and villages completely.

B. The number of Roma families within a given locality:
   1. Less than 100.
   2. 101 - 500.

For the selection of the settlements, the local research team also considered the following criteria:

1. Existence of a road and its type (paved, unpaved, gravel, none);
2. Existence of a water supply and running water (water pond, well, water pipe, water supply, plumbing, cesspit, none);
3. Number of families and number of houses.

Roma settlements and communities were selected from the database provided by the Office of the Plenipotentiary for Roma Communities. The research team found some errors in this database, including mistakes in the number of settlements in a given district, and information about the existing infrastructure. It should be noted that in the district of Rimavská Sobota, Roma settlements were selected based on the information and knowledge of the head of the Social Affairs Department, since the government database did not contain any information on this district.
Research Methods

The study was based upon qualitative research methodologies, including open-ended interviews and observation of 270 Roma individuals and households and approximately 120 key informants. The interviews were based on households rather than individuals, therefore, the total number of people we talked to was higher than 270. Finally, focus group discussions were held with Roma leaders from across the country.

Interviews with key informants included:

- 27 mayors;
- 9 social workers (3 for each district);
- roughly 50 teachers from both regular and special schools; and
- 27 other key informants such as priests, health workers, NGO leaders. One from each of these categories was selected in each settlement (e.g., in one an active NGO and the other a health worker)
Annex 2: Summary Data on the Study Sites

A. Stará Lubovna

Table A.1: Population and Level of Integration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Settlement</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Roma population</th>
<th># of Roma families</th>
<th>Level of Integration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nová Lubovna</td>
<td>1 590 inhabitors 2 382*</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>High: neighborhood with non-Roma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jarabina</td>
<td>830 845*</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>21 (14 houses)</td>
<td>High: neighborhood with non-Roma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hniezdne</td>
<td>1 395 1 355*</td>
<td>108 with permission, others without</td>
<td>11 (estimate)</td>
<td>Partial: 4 families integrated, others live together on one street in the village</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kamienka</td>
<td>1 410 1 432*</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Low: separate (Roma) neighborhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jakubany</td>
<td>2 500 2 176*</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>Low: separate (Roma) part of the village</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lubotín</td>
<td>1 300 1 196*</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Low: separate (Roma) part of the village</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyjov</td>
<td>755 731*</td>
<td>165 ( 200 )</td>
<td>18 (estimate)</td>
<td>Low: Roma neighborhood near the village</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kolackov</td>
<td>1 200 884*</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>25 (estimate)</td>
<td>None: segregated settlement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Šarišské Jastrabie</td>
<td>1 088 976*</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>30 (estimate)</td>
<td>None: segregated settlement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lomnicka</td>
<td>1 475 972*</td>
<td>1 450</td>
<td>more than 100</td>
<td>None: segregated settlement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* official numbers; Statistical Office of the Slovak republic; Lexicon of Municipalities in the Slovak Republic; 1996
## Table A.2  Housing Conditions and Roma Sub-groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Settlement</th>
<th>Housing type</th>
<th>Property of houses/land</th>
<th>Legality of housing</th>
<th>Roma Sub-group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nová Lubovna</td>
<td>family houses, brick houses</td>
<td>private/private</td>
<td>legal (construction, land ownership)</td>
<td>Rumungri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 houses 4 x families</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jarabina</td>
<td>family houses, brick houses, flat</td>
<td>private/private</td>
<td>legal (construction, land ownership)</td>
<td>Rumungri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 houses 6 x families</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hniezdne</td>
<td>brick houses</td>
<td>private/private</td>
<td>legal (construction, land ownership)</td>
<td>Rumungri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 houses 4 x families</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kamienka</td>
<td>one wooden house other brick houses</td>
<td>land – private ownership of Roma</td>
<td>legal (construction, land ownership)</td>
<td>Rumungri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 house 4 x families</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jakubany</td>
<td>55 brick houses, 11 wooden (hovel)</td>
<td>11 houses private 23 private, partly legal 22 illegal no private land (only 11)</td>
<td>21 illegal houses without construction permission, 23 with construction permission without approval 11 with approval 11 (shacks) illegal</td>
<td>Rumungri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 houses 9 x families</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lubotín</td>
<td>two brick houses other wooden</td>
<td>Roma are not owners of the land (they could buy the land)</td>
<td>only one house is legal</td>
<td>Rumungri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 houses 6 x family</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyjov</td>
<td>one brick house, wooden houses</td>
<td>land – partly municipality, other – non Roma private ownership</td>
<td>only one legal house in whole settlement</td>
<td>Rumungri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 houses 6 x family</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kolackov</td>
<td>wooden houses</td>
<td>no private ownership</td>
<td>all non-legal</td>
<td>Olašský, Rumungri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 houses 8 x family</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Šarišské Jastrabie</td>
<td>13 brick houses 18 wooden</td>
<td>land – partly municipality, others illegal</td>
<td>only 1 house constructing permission, other non-legal</td>
<td>Rumungri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 houses 13 x family</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lomnicka</td>
<td>majority – brick houses, flats few wooden (1 wooden)</td>
<td>land- majority legal ownership (bought from municipality) illegal - wooden</td>
<td>construction permission, except wooden houses, flats - private</td>
<td>Rumungri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 houses 2 flats 9 x family</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Settlement</td>
<td>Electricity</td>
<td>Water</td>
<td>Waste</td>
<td>Plumbing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nová Lubovna</td>
<td>in all houses</td>
<td>in all houses (water – supply system)</td>
<td>twice a week by garbage truck</td>
<td>cesspit (2 houses) or outside plumbing (2 houses)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jarabina</td>
<td>in all houses</td>
<td>in all houses (5 water supply system and 1 well)</td>
<td>garbage truck</td>
<td>cesspit or outside plumbing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hniezdne</td>
<td>in all houses</td>
<td>2 water supply 1 from well 1 without</td>
<td>garbage truck once per week</td>
<td>1 x cesspit others not</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kamienka</td>
<td>in all houses</td>
<td>6 water supply system other common well</td>
<td>garbage truck for others container (collected several times per year)</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jakubany</td>
<td>40 houses others shared with neighbors</td>
<td>40 houses water – supply system others common well</td>
<td>container (twice per year), garbage around full container</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lubotín</td>
<td>illegally (2 x) semi – legal (shared with other family) – 2x</td>
<td>one well in settlement one in a house</td>
<td>once per year garbage truck</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyjov</td>
<td>legally only one connection in the settlement</td>
<td>water – supply system from stream, others only well</td>
<td>to the stream</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kolackov</td>
<td>legally in one house in whole settlement</td>
<td>no water –supply system water from spring</td>
<td>out of the settlement (one container, they do not use)</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Šarišské Jastrabie</td>
<td>10 legally, 4 illegally</td>
<td>1 water-supply system from own well, 2 common wells</td>
<td>2 containers (once per three month)</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lomnicka</td>
<td>in all brick houses in wooden houses – only in one house (others illegally)</td>
<td>water-supply system in brick houses in wooden – no (1 well for 35 houses)</td>
<td>2 containers for whole settlement (not enough) garbage is everywhere</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table A.4: Availability of Household Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Settlement</th>
<th>WC</th>
<th>Bathroom</th>
<th>Refrigerator</th>
<th>Washing Machine</th>
<th>TV</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Car</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nová Lubovňa no. of houses – 7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jarabina – 6 houses</td>
<td>2 (4 latrines)</td>
<td>2 of 6</td>
<td>2 of 6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4 yes</td>
<td>1 of 6</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hniezdné 4 houses</td>
<td>1 latrines</td>
<td>1 of 4</td>
<td>2 of 4</td>
<td>2 of 4</td>
<td>3 of 4</td>
<td>2 of 4</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kamienka 4 houses</td>
<td>1 WC, 3 latrines</td>
<td>3 of 4</td>
<td>all</td>
<td>3 of 4</td>
<td>all</td>
<td>1 of 4</td>
<td>1 of 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jakubany 8 houses</td>
<td>3 of 8, 5 latrines</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lubotín 6 houses</td>
<td>3 latrines (1 common for 3 families)</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>3 of 6</td>
<td>2 of 6</td>
<td>5 of 6</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>1 of 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyjov 5 houses</td>
<td>1 others latrine, only one</td>
<td>only one</td>
<td>only one</td>
<td>2 of 5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kolackov 5 houses</td>
<td>two latrines for whole settlement, no</td>
<td>2 of 5</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>4 of 5</td>
<td>1 in whole settlement</td>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Šarišské Jastrabie 10 houses</td>
<td>1 WC, 2 own latrines, other – shared latrines</td>
<td>2 of 14</td>
<td>11 of 14</td>
<td>9 of 14</td>
<td>all</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lomnicka 8 houses</td>
<td>latrines, also common (for 20 people), in flats WC, only in flats</td>
<td>7 of 8</td>
<td>4 of 8</td>
<td>all</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### B. Rimavská Sobota

**Table B.1: Population and Level of Integration**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Settlement</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Roma population</th>
<th># of Roma families</th>
<th>Level of Integration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hnúšta – town</td>
<td>7 636</td>
<td>1 439</td>
<td>Separated:</td>
<td>Partial: 2 separated parts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7 146*</td>
<td></td>
<td>Kolónia: (29)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Meštanka: (22)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>separated:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kolónia: 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Meštanka: 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hodejov</td>
<td>1 398</td>
<td>779</td>
<td>about 110</td>
<td>Partial: part concentrated at the end of village</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 358*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uzovská Panica</td>
<td>640</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>576*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rybník</td>
<td>150: 123*</td>
<td>about 100</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vyšné Valice</td>
<td>300: 198*</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sása</td>
<td>120: 915*</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jesenské</td>
<td>2 273</td>
<td>about 400</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Partial: Rumungr, and separate (Roma – Olašský) part of the village</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 150*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Klenovec</td>
<td>3 300</td>
<td>640</td>
<td>no data about 50 houses</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 470*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lipovec</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>81*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rimavská Píla</td>
<td>437</td>
<td>about 80, of which 38 separated 44 segregated</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Partial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dužavská cesta (Rimavská Sobota) – town</td>
<td>846 ( 700 ) 24 771* - the hole Rim. Sobota</td>
<td>3,4 % ( 846 )</td>
<td>7 constructing buildings</td>
<td>None: segregated neighborhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyjatice</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>None: Segregated settlement 3 km from the village</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>103*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sirk – Šrobárka</td>
<td>1 045 ( celý Sirk ) 995*</td>
<td>220 (celýSirk) (215)</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>None: Segregated settlement far from the village</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*official data; Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic; Lexicon of Municipalities in the Slovak Republic; 1996
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Settlement</th>
<th>Housing type</th>
<th>Property of houses/land</th>
<th>Legality of housing</th>
<th>Roma Sub-group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hnúšta</td>
<td>majority – flats in buildings</td>
<td>land owners – integrated Roma in family houses</td>
<td>legality of housing except woodsheds</td>
<td>Rumungrí</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hodejov</td>
<td>brick houses</td>
<td>Roma land owners or municipality land</td>
<td>legal houses (only few illegal – no approval)</td>
<td>Rumungrí</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uzovská Panica</td>
<td>brick houses</td>
<td>private/private</td>
<td>legal</td>
<td>Hungarian Roma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rybník</td>
<td>brick houses</td>
<td>private/private</td>
<td>legal</td>
<td>Rumungrí</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vyšné Valice</td>
<td>brick houses</td>
<td>private/private</td>
<td>legal</td>
<td>Rumungrí</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sása</td>
<td>part of brick house</td>
<td>7 houses, 4 legal</td>
<td>4 legal</td>
<td>Rumungrí</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jesenské</td>
<td>brick houses</td>
<td>private/private</td>
<td>legal</td>
<td>Hungarian Roma, Slovak Roma (Rumungrí, Olašíkí)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Klenovec</td>
<td>wooden houses</td>
<td>majority of land – illegal</td>
<td>15 out of 50 are legal</td>
<td>unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lipovec</td>
<td>wooden houses</td>
<td>illegal</td>
<td>illegal</td>
<td>unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rimavská Píla</td>
<td>2 brick houses</td>
<td>9 wooden – illegal land – illegal</td>
<td>illegal, without constructing permission (7 houses)</td>
<td>Rumungrí</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dúžavská cesta</td>
<td>flats in constructing buildings</td>
<td>no land</td>
<td>legal</td>
<td>Olašíkí</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyjatice</td>
<td>wooden shack</td>
<td>illegal</td>
<td>illegal</td>
<td>unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Šrobárka – SírK</td>
<td>brick houses</td>
<td>rent of rooms in the houses (Roma non payers)</td>
<td>municipality or other unknown owner</td>
<td>unknown</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table B.3   Access to Basic Infrastructure and Utilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Settlement</th>
<th>Electricity</th>
<th>Water</th>
<th>Waste</th>
<th>Plumbing</th>
<th>Fuel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hnúšta 12 accom.</td>
<td>in all flats (7)</td>
<td>in all flats</td>
<td>garbage truck in 5 flats of 7; latrines.</td>
<td>central heating in 3 flats of 7, wood</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meštanka: no other sheds: yes</td>
<td>In wooden sheds: well</td>
<td>In wooden sheds: outside</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In wooden sheds: well</td>
<td>no water-supply system in the village, only wells</td>
<td>container</td>
<td>no gas in the village wood</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In wooden sheds: well</td>
<td>own wells</td>
<td>garbage truck</td>
<td>no gas and electricity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In wooden sheds: well</td>
<td>water-supply system</td>
<td>garbage truck</td>
<td>wood</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In wooden sheds: well</td>
<td>well</td>
<td>container</td>
<td>wood</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In wooden sheds: well</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>garbage truck</td>
<td>yes Central heating is not working</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In wooden sheds: well</td>
<td>water supply system in integrated well - segregated</td>
<td>garbage truck</td>
<td>electricity and wood</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In wooden sheds: well</td>
<td>one legal electric meter, other illegal – usage of one legal</td>
<td>no (one container is full)</td>
<td>no wood</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In wooden sheds: well</td>
<td>two legal electric meter</td>
<td>no water – supply system, well</td>
<td>no wood</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In wooden sheds: well</td>
<td>9 x illegal</td>
<td>1 x well</td>
<td>3 x wood, 13 x central heating, no gas in the flats (destroyed)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In wooden sheds: well</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>garbage truck</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In wooden sheds: well</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>wood</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In wooden sheds: well</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>wood</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In wooden sheds: well</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>one water source (rent of water – 10 SK, do not pay)</td>
<td>wood (central heating – no working: no payers)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

73
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Settlement</th>
<th>WC</th>
<th>Bathroom</th>
<th>Refrigerator</th>
<th>Washing Machine</th>
<th>TV</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Car</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hnúšta</td>
<td>in 5 flats of 7</td>
<td>in all flats</td>
<td>in all flats</td>
<td>in all flats</td>
<td>in all flats</td>
<td>2 cell phones</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 accommod.</td>
<td>In others and wooden sheds: latrines</td>
<td>In wooden sheds: no</td>
<td>In wooden sheds: no</td>
<td>In wooden sheds: 1 of 5</td>
<td>In wooden sheds: 3 of 5</td>
<td>No in wooden sheds</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hodejov</td>
<td>latrines</td>
<td>2 of 4</td>
<td>2 of 4</td>
<td>3 of 4</td>
<td>3 of 4</td>
<td>1 of 4</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 houses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uzovská Panica</td>
<td>4 latrines (in whole village are latrines)</td>
<td>3 of 4</td>
<td>in all</td>
<td>in all</td>
<td>in all</td>
<td>2 of 4 (1 cell phone)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 houses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rybník</td>
<td>1 WC, 2 latrines</td>
<td>2 bathrooms of 3</td>
<td>2 of 3</td>
<td>in all</td>
<td>in all</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 houses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vyšné Valice</td>
<td>latrines</td>
<td>1 of 3</td>
<td>2 of 3</td>
<td>1 of 3</td>
<td>all</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 houses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sása</td>
<td>no (latrine)</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 house</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jesenské</td>
<td>latrines</td>
<td>3 (integrated) of 14</td>
<td>6 of 14</td>
<td>6 of 14</td>
<td>in all integrated. Segregated. 3 of 5</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 houses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Klenovec</td>
<td>latrines</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 house</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lipovec</td>
<td>2 latrines</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>1 of 4</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>2 of 4</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 houses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rimavská Píla</td>
<td>1 WC, 6 latrines</td>
<td>one of 7</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>6 of 7</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 houses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dúžavská cesta</td>
<td>1 x latrine, 15 x WC</td>
<td>15 x yes</td>
<td>10 x yes of 16</td>
<td>9 x yes of 16</td>
<td>15 x yes</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 flats</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyjatice</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 house</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Šrobárka - Sír</td>
<td>shared latrines (1 per 3 houses)</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>few houses</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Malacky

**Table C.1: Population and Level of Integration**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Settlement</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Roma population</th>
<th># of Roma families</th>
<th>Level of Integration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Malacky district town | 18 300  
17 573* | 76 legal all together 500 | - | integrated and concentrated on three streets |
| Záhorská Ves     | 1460  
1 412* | 320 legally some illegally | - | integrated, and concentrated in Roma neighborhood |
| Lozorno          | 2 615  
2 514* | 261 | 73 | separate part of the village (neighborhood) |
| Zohor            | 3 041  
3 030* | 200 Separated – legally 20 – 30 illegally more than 100 | Separated: officially 3, in reality 10 | integrated, and separate part near the village |
| Malé Leváre      | 1 036  
979* | 140 legally only 1 Roma | - | separated part, near the village |
| Studienka        | 1 600  
1 455* | about 100 | - | separated, frontier of the village |
| Jablonové        | 1 050  
1 042* | about 68 | 17 all together Segregated: 6 | separated, part of the village |
| Plavecký Štvrtok | 2 098  
1 918* | 460-legally, about 600-illegally | about 60 | segregated, near the village, |
| Pernek           | 751  
773* | 46 | about 15 | segregated, near the village |

* official numbers; Statistical Office of the Slovak republic; Lexicon of Municipalities in the Slovak Republic; 1996
**Table C.2   Housing Conditions and Roma Sub-groups**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Settlement</th>
<th>Housing type</th>
<th>Property of houses/land</th>
<th>Legality of housing</th>
<th>Roma Sub-group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Malacky</td>
<td>apartments and brick houses (roof – stolen)</td>
<td>town ownership (buildings and land) Roma - no land</td>
<td>76 legal, 424 illegal</td>
<td>Slovaks (Rumungri)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Záhorská Ves</td>
<td>55 brick houses</td>
<td>houses – private, Roma without permission – illegal</td>
<td>55 houses are legal,</td>
<td>Rumungri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 houses 4 families</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lozorno</td>
<td>brick houses</td>
<td>3 private/private other on municipality land</td>
<td>7 legal, constructing</td>
<td>no knowledge (Slovaks)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 houses 7 families</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>permission, other illegal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zohor</td>
<td>Separated: official 7 brick houses</td>
<td>Separated: 3 Romas –private – land ownership</td>
<td>separated: legal only 3 houses</td>
<td>Rumungri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrated:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 houses Separated: 4 houses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malé Leváre</td>
<td>cca 20 brick houses</td>
<td>land – municipality (3 private)</td>
<td>illegally (without constructing permission)</td>
<td>Rumungri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 houses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studienka</td>
<td>all brick houses</td>
<td>land – army</td>
<td>2 of 6 illegally</td>
<td>Rumungri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 houses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jablonové</td>
<td>all brick houses</td>
<td>land – municipality</td>
<td>1 of 7 illegal</td>
<td>Rumungri (but not selfidentification as Roma)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 houses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plavecký Štvrtok</td>
<td>cca 60 houses,</td>
<td>land – restitution (new owner)</td>
<td>legally 20, and 40</td>
<td>Rumungri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 houses</td>
<td>15 houses, 2 wooden</td>
<td>land – private for 4 houses</td>
<td>illegal houses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pernek</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>legally 4 houses, 11</td>
<td>Rumungri (selfidentification – Slovaks)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 (+ 2) houses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>illegal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Malacky: Roma did not respond, answers are based on interview descriptions
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Settlement</th>
<th>Electricity</th>
<th>Water</th>
<th>Waste</th>
<th>Plumbing</th>
<th>Fuel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Malacky</td>
<td>in all apartments</td>
<td>in all</td>
<td>container, but stolen or destroyed</td>
<td>yes, but clogged with garbage</td>
<td>central heating (out of function) wood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Záhorská Ves</td>
<td>in all legal houses</td>
<td>water–supply system or well</td>
<td>3 garbage truck 1 out of doors 3 – cesspit, 1 – outside</td>
<td>3 gas 2 wood</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lozorno</td>
<td>in all</td>
<td>water – supply system (few – wells)</td>
<td>out of village in 3 garbage truck</td>
<td>plumbing in the village</td>
<td>gas in the village but only in 2 Roma houses, wood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zohor</td>
<td>in all</td>
<td>integrated: all separated: 3 of 4</td>
<td>garbage truck</td>
<td>integrated: yes Separated: 2 of 4 (in 2 cesspit)</td>
<td>wood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malé Leváre</td>
<td>in all</td>
<td>in half water-supply system, wells</td>
<td>Integrated: garbage truck Separated: only 8 garbage trash can.</td>
<td>Integrated: yes Separated: 1 cesspit, other outside</td>
<td>half gas and half wood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zohor</td>
<td>in all</td>
<td>in 7 of 8</td>
<td>regular garbage truck 4 cesspits, others without</td>
<td>1 gas integrated) other: wood</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studienka</td>
<td>8 houses</td>
<td>no water – supply system water tank</td>
<td>container</td>
<td>no jama</td>
<td>no gas, wood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jablonové</td>
<td>7 houses</td>
<td>no water – supply system water tank</td>
<td>container</td>
<td>no jama</td>
<td>no gas, wood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plavecký Štvrtok</td>
<td>legally in 20 houses, in others illegally</td>
<td>water-supply system in 4 houses, in other common water hydrant or well</td>
<td>2 containers, but garbage anywhere</td>
<td>no, to the forest</td>
<td>wood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pernek</td>
<td>9 houses</td>
<td>no water – supply system, wells</td>
<td>each house container, in one part without garbage truck</td>
<td>no, 1 cesspit</td>
<td>wood</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table C.4: Availability of Household Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Settlement</th>
<th>WC</th>
<th>Bathroom</th>
<th>Refrigerator</th>
<th>Washing Machine</th>
<th>TV</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Car</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Záhorská Ves</td>
<td>3 x WC, 1 latrine</td>
<td>2 bathrooms</td>
<td>2 of 4</td>
<td>2 of 4</td>
<td>3 of 4</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 houses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 families</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lozorno</td>
<td>1 WC, 6 latrines</td>
<td>4 of 7</td>
<td>5 of 7</td>
<td>4 of 7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 houses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 families</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zohor</td>
<td>Integrated: 3 WC, 2 latrines</td>
<td>integrated: in all</td>
<td>in all</td>
<td>in all</td>
<td></td>
<td>no</td>
<td>1 in integrated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrated: 3 WC, 2 latrines</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separated: 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malé Leváre</td>
<td>Integrated: 2 WC, 4 latrines</td>
<td>Integrated: 1 to 1 separated: 2 of 6</td>
<td>in all</td>
<td>in all</td>
<td></td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrated: 2 WC, 4 latrines</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separated: 6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studienka</td>
<td>4 WC, 4 latrines</td>
<td>5 of 8</td>
<td>6 of 8</td>
<td>7 of 8</td>
<td></td>
<td>in all</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 houses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jablonové</td>
<td>only latrines</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>in all</td>
<td>3 of 7</td>
<td>in all</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 houses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plavecký Štvrtok</td>
<td>no WC, 7 latrines</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>5 of 9</td>
<td>5 of 9</td>
<td></td>
<td>in all</td>
<td>1 cell phone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 houses</td>
<td>2 – to the forest</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pernek</td>
<td>1 WC, 8 latrines</td>
<td>2 of 9</td>
<td>7 of 9</td>
<td>7 of 9</td>
<td>8 of 9</td>
<td>1 phone, 2 cell phones</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 houses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Annex 3: The Field Research Team

Kristína Batová: Department of Social Work, Pedagogical Faculty, Comenius University, Bratislava
Michal Cenký: Department of Sociology, Faculty of Arts, Comenius University, Bratislava
Barbora Cernušáková: Department of Political Sciences, Faculty of Arts, Comenius University, Bratislava
Zuzana Doválová: Evangelical Theological Faculty, Comenius University, Bratislava
Ján Drozdík: Faculty of Gardening and Landscape Engineering, Slovak University of Agriculture, Nitra
Roman Eštocák: Department of Roma Culture, Pedagogical Faculty of UKF, Nitra
Lýdia Gabcová: Department of Roma Culture, Pedagogical Faculty of UKF, Nitra
Monika Gorolová: Department of Roma Culture, Pedagogical Faculty of UKF, Nitra
Norbert Hajský: Evangelical Theological Faculty, Comenius University, Bratislava
Jozef Havrilá: Evangelical Theological Faculty, Comenius University, Bratislava
Iva Havrilová: Department of Roma Culture, Pedagogical Faculty of UKF, Nitra
Martina Holecová: Department of Sociology, Faculty of Arts, Comenius University Bratislava
Petronela Holecková: Department of Political Sciences, Faculty of Arts, Comenius University Bratislava
Milan Jurík: Evangelical Theological Faculty, Comenius University, Bratislava
Barbora Kahátová: Department of Roma Culture, Pedagogical Faculty of UKF, Nitra
Pavol Kelley: Department of Social Work, Pedagogical Faculty, Comenius University Bratislava
Albert Kovác: Department of Roma Culture, Pedagogical Faculty of UKF, Nitra
Elena Kriglerová: Department of Sociology, Faculty of Arts, Comenius University Bratislava
Radoslav Majerik: Department of Sociology, Faculty of Arts, Comenius University Bratislava
Adriana Mesochoritisová: Department of Political Sciences, Faculty of Arts, Comenius University Bratislava
Ján Mihálik: Department of Roma Culture, Pedagogical Faculty of UKF, Nitra
Katarína Paťková: Department of Sociology, Faculty of Arts, Comenius University Bratislava
Peter Puliš: Department of Sociology, Faculty of Arts, Comenius University, Bratislava
Eva Radicová: Department of Social Work, Pedagogical Faculty, Comenius University, Bratislava
Rafael Vlado: Department of Social Work, Pedagogical Faculty, Comenius University, Bratislava
Jana Rybová: Department of Sociology, Faculty of Arts, Comenius University, Bratislava
Leo Singer: Department of Political Sciences, Faculty of Arts, Comenius University, Bratislava
Zuzana Stanová: SPACE Foundation
Paula Tomáňková: Department of Roma Culture, Pedagogical Faculty of UKF, Nitra
Ivan Tököly: Department of Roma Culture, Pedagogical Faculty of UKF, Nitra