Roma and representative justice in Turkey

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About ETHOS

ETHOS - Towards a European THeory Of juStice and fairness is a European Commission Horizon 2020 research project that seeks to provide building blocks for the development of an empirically informed European theory of justice and fairness. The project seeks to do so by:

a) refining and deepening knowledge on the European foundations of justice - both historically based and contemporarily envisaged;
b) enhancing awareness of mechanisms that impede the realisation of justice ideals as they are lived in contemporary Europe;
c) advancing the understanding of the process of drawing and re-drawing of the boundaries of justice (fault lines); and
d) providing guidance to politicians, policy makers, advocacies and other stakeholders on how to design and implement policies to reverse inequalities and prevent injustice.

ETHOS does not merely understand justice as an abstract moral ideal that is universal and worth striving for. Rather, justice is understood as a re-enacted and re-constructed lived experience. The experience is embedded in firm legal, political, moral, social, economic and cultural institutions that are geared to giving members of society what is their due.

In the ETHOS project, justice is studied as an interdependent relationship between the ideal of justice and its real manifestation – as set in the highly complex institutions of modern European societies. The relationship between the normative and practical, the formal and informal, is acknowledged and critically assessed through a multi-disciplinary approach.

To enhance the formulation of an empirically-based theory of justice and fairness, ETHOS will explore the normative (ideal) underpinnings of justice and their practical realisation in four heuristically defined domains of justice - social justice, economic justice, political justice, and civil and symbolic justice. These domains are revealed in several spheres:

a) philosophical and political tradition,
b) legal framework,
c) daily (bureaucratic) practice,
d) current public debates, and
e) the accounts of vulnerable populations in six European countries (the Netherlands, the UK, Hungary, Austria, Portugal and Turkey).

The question of drawing boundaries and redrawing the fault-lines of justice permeates the entire investigation.

Alongside Utrecht University in the Netherlands who coordinates the project, five further research institutions cooperate. They are based in Austria (European Training and Research Centre for Human Rights and Democracy), Hungary (Central European University), Portugal (Centre for Social Studies), Turkey (Boğaziçi University), and the UK (University of Bristol). The research project lasts from January 2017 to December 2019.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The deliverable 5.2 is about institutional political justice that encompasses the right of participation in politics, including the right to information and the right to vote, but also the right to one's share in the decision-making and freedom of self-determination. It means, therefore, having an effective voice in (public) debates regarding oneself (or the group one belongs to) and the power to influence the specific decisions and processes that concern their (immediate) situation. Within this framework, this report deals with the representative injustices that pertain to political representation of Roma within the changing political and social context of Turkey. Considering that the representative injustices entangle with redistributive and recognitional injustices, the report aims to demonstrate how injustices that relate to the insecure livelihood and poor socio-economic conditions, as well as the "structured" invisibility and exclusion of Roma in the society define their representation claims.

Along with the literature on Roma, the report dwells on the analysis of the documents and interviews that are carried out with Roma and non-Roma activists, Roma NGO leaders, political party representatives, SIROMA project officer, international organization representative working on Roma issues.

Roma are one of the most vulnerable groups living in Turkey as the social exclusion and discrimination regarding access to employment, education, housing, health services as well as social life create significant difficulties and injustices for Roma. Until the 2000s, the Roma in Turkey were largely invisible due to their weak ties with the state, an absence of civil organizations that represent them, and their non-appearance in political institutions. In the 2000s, civil society witnessed the political mobilization of Roma and NGOs were established in several cities, making the problems of Roma more visible. The turning point in Roma political mobilization was the Roma Democratic Opening Process launched in 2009. This process was crucial for Roma to receive recognition in society and made their redistributive claims visible. However, after 2014, Roma political mobilization experienced deep polarization; this was due in part to the polarized political atmosphere of the country and exacerbated by the government differentiating between Roma groups and NGOs by whether they supported the ruling party or the opposition.

The report argues that despite Roma political recognition and the current visibility of their redistributive claims, the political representation of Roma that developed as part of the Roma Democratic Opening Process created vulnerabilities for Roma in a polarized political atmosphere. This has policy implications. In order for Roma to have a voice regarding their political representation, Roma NGOs' capacity needs to be improved through social and political programs.

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1) Introduction

W5.2 is about institutional political justice. Political justice as conceived in ETHOS, connotes broadly understood political participation and representation. It encompasses the right of participation in politics, including the right to information and the right to vote, but also the right to one's share in the decision-making and freedom of self-determination. It means, therefore, having an effective voice in (public) debates regarding oneself (or the group one belongs to) and the power to influence the specific decisions and processes that concern their (immediate) situation. In this respect, the conceptual framework for the emprical case studies might be helpful to think in these terms: to access institutionalised political justice a group needs to access institutionalised politics. In order to access institutionalised politics one has to constitute a (certain kind of) minority – as constitutionally required; but one might also have to be a certain kind of person – come from a certain Roma group, be male, or of a certain class etc. Institutionalised politics might in practice be a form of mediation between states and 'communities' rather than representation of communities (indeed the question of democratic representation is always politically fraught). Questions of accountability and process, and the role of NGOs are relevant here.

Within this framework provided by the WP5.2, this report deals with the representational injustices that pertain to political representation of Roma within the changing political and social context of Turkey. Considering that the representational injustices entangle with redistributive and recognitional injustices, the report aims to demonstrate how injustices that relate to the insecure livelihood and poor socio-economic conditions, as well as the "structured" invisibility and exclusion of Roma, define their representation claims.

The report firstly provides a historical view of institutional injustices and the discriminatory processes and social exclusion that Roma have experienced. Following that, the political mobilization of Roma along with the "Democratic Opening Process" that targets Roma which started in the 2000s are the focus of the analysis. Based on the interviews and written material, the report demonstrates that although today Roma received recognition in the society and their multi-layered problems are made visible, we still refer to a vulnerable political representation of Roma that is entangled in the redistributive injustices that Roma have been experiencing over the decades. The current polarized political climate of Turkey has also contributed to their vulnerability in the political representation processes.

Along with the literature on Roma, the report dwells on the analysis of documents and 9 interviews are carried out with Roma and non-Roma activists, Roma NGO leaders, political party representatives, SIROMA project officer, international organization representative working on Roma issues. The main documents analysed are the draft document on Roma Opening and the final document on Roma Opening.

2) Roma in Turkey

In Ottoman times, it was believed that the 'Gypsies' (as they are referred as) are the descendants from Egypt, they were referred as *Kıbti* after the Coptic local people of Egypt (Güncüoğlu and Yavuztürk, 2009). In official documents, they were differentiated as *Kıbti* Muslim or *Kıbti* Christian and their associations with the Ottoman state is defined through that differentiation (Şanlıer, 2014). On the other hand, although the *millet* system of the Ottoman Empire relied on Muslim/Non-Muslim differentiation, Muslim Roma were segregated from other Muslim communities and a marginal status was attributed to them. They were registered as ehl-i fesad (people of malice) (Özateşler, 2014). This attributed negative connotation to the Roma community and segregated them within the Muslim population. At the administrative level, the most visible treatment of Roma as a community that does not belong to Muslim community was taxation. Although most were Muslims, they were enforced to pay the tax *cizye* that was collected from non-Muslims. In the tax and population records of the nineteenth century, Roma were categorized separately unlike any other Muslim community (Karpat 1985).

Ironically, Roma are recognized as part of the Muslim community during the Turkish Republic. After the foundation of the Republic in 1923, in the population exchange agreement with Greece (*mübadele*), Turkey accepted the Muslims of Greece including Roma as the immigrants (Kolukırık and Toktaş, 2007). However, in the first years of the Republic, Roma were differentiated from other Muslim communities and until the 70s and they were still identified as Kıpti Muslims on their citizenship identity cards (Marsh and Marsh, 2005). The legislation of the early Republic had legal provisions that treated Roma in a discriminatory manner. The 1934 Law on Settlement (as subsequently amended) explicitly listed "itinerant Gypsies" among groups of persons to be subject to differential treatment. In the chapters on "Areas of Settlement", Article 1 states: "The settlement of immigrants, refugees, nomads and itinerant Gypsies within the country shall be arranged by the Ministries of Internal Affairs and Health and Social Assistance in accordance with the program to be made by the Council of Ministers with a view to ensuring their loyalty to Turkish culture and improving the establishment and distribution of the population." Article 4 states: "A. Those who are not attached to Turkish culture; B. Anarchists; C. Spies; Ç: Itinerant Gypsies; and D. Persons deported, shall not be accepted as immigrants into Turkey. The law was revised on September 19, 2006, following the advocacy work of human rights NGOs and Roma activists, and the new law regarding settlement (No. 5543) abolished these discriminatory statements.[1]

As a gateway to becoming part of Muslimness and Turkishness in the sociological citizenship construction, Roma historically emphasized and still emphasize their religious eligibility as Muslims. However, their relationship with Islam is often regarded with suspicion by the Republican establishment. Their religiosity is questioned. This is illustrated by a survey conducted by the government in 1945 indicating that there was a lack of religion among Gypsy people in Turkey (Özateşler, 2014). How Roma are treated as a different group and excluded through the specific features that are attributed to them is also observable in phrases in the Turkish language. Roma are usually called as "dark-skinned citizen" (*esmer vatandas*). Demonization and romanticization go together as Roma are either stigmatized through negative attributes such as idleness, robbery, and immorality or envied because of their supposedly joyful life. As the superiority of Turkishness is accentuated within the content of citizenship, many Roma also stress their reliability as Turks while they emphasize their Gypsyness as socioeconomic status (Özateşler, 2014). Their interplay with Turkishness as the most dominant and national identity profoundly influenced their different strategies and belongingness (Özateşler, 2014).

Although there is no official data, in Turkey it is estimated that the population of the Roma groups dispersed in different regions is between half million-2 million.[2] There are three main Roma groups named as Roma, Dom, and Lom. Roma live in the western part, in the Marmara and Aegean regions; Lom live in the Black Sea Region; Dom live in the Eastern Anatolia and South-Eastern Anatolia regions. Apart from these three main Roma (Gypsy) groups, the Abdal constitute another group living in Turkey mainly in the region of Central Anatolia. The main difference between other Roma groups and Abdal is that Abdal follow the Alevi sect of Islam. They face discrimination both within the Alevi community and the Roma community in general (Akkan et al. 2011). Different Roma groups face similar social problems, discrimination and social exclusion. Hence, Roma are one of the largest vulnerable groups living in Turkey. Their social exclusion and discrimination regarding access to employment, education, housing, health services as well as social life create significant difficulties. The poverty and social exclusion faced by the majority of Roma living in Turkey is one of the main barriers to the social, cultural, economic and political participation of these groups as equal citizens (Akkan et al. 2011).

The poverty and social exclusion faced by Roma also has a spatial character as Roma neighbourhoods in different cities are the marginalized ghettos where the most excluded reside. Hence, those socially excluded hold a common stigmatized spatial identity of being from a Roma neighbourhood (Akkan et al. 2017). With the recent effects of gentrification in slum neighbourhoods, urban transformation projects, which mainly target the

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[1] http://www.errc.org/article/roma-in-turkey/1345

[2] https://www.ab.gov.tr/files/AB_Iliskileri/Tur_En_Realitons/Progress/Turkey_Progress_Report_2005.pdf

displacement of the urban poor from city centres, Roma face demolition of their houses and forced eviction in several cities of Turkey. The demolition and eviction of Sulukule, a historical Roma neighbourhood in Istanbul, from 2006 to 2009, in spite of protests by Roma NGOs and other human rights groups demonstrate the consequences of urban transformation projects. Every Roma neighbourhood fearfully awaits these slum transformation projects. Roma neighbourhoods are not viewed as living spaces but as places of crime that should be eradicated urgently. The reason often used by the administrators to justify the neighbourhood evacuations was that the houses in which Roma lived were not in good conditions. Roma experience a form of forced migration that is justified by offering "better lives" (Akkan et al. 2011).

Until the 2000s, the Roma were absent from the poverty and social exclusion debates in Turkey, as the focus was on the new immigrants in the urban space. Therefore, the literature on Roma in Turkey is dominated by folkloristic and cultural studies that deal with the cultural aspects, the images of Roma the society, and their self-perception (Aksu, 2003; Alpman, 2004; Arayıcı 2008; Kolukırık, 2009; Özkan, 2000). However, since the 2000s, more studies dealing with the socio-economic conditions of Roma and discrimination against Roma have emerged (Kazgan 2004; Helsinki Citizens Assembly 2008).

In the new poverty regime of Turkey, the inhabitants of Roma neighbourhoods face the most severe forms of poverty and social exclusion, which manifest themselves in a stigmatized space. Hence, the slum neighbourhoods inhabited by the Kurds or Roma in the 2000s should be distinguished from any other slum neighbourhood where early immigrants have resided. The Roma space and the Kurdish space also differ from each other. Kurdish neighbourhoods' segregated position in the neo-liberal era is well documented by the recent literature, suggesting that the existence of the Kurdish political movement protects the fall of the Kurdish neighbourhoods into advanced marginality by maintaining social and economic solidarity ties in the neighbourhoods (Kanzık 2010; Perouse, 2011). On the other hand, Roma neighbourhoods with their highly-stigmatized status emerge as hyper ghettos with almost non-existent political solidarity, living in advanced marginality.

3) Political mobilization of Roma since the 2000s

Since the 2000s, civil society in Turkey has witnessed the political mobilization of Roma, as new associations and NGOs were founded in different cities to voice their problems in political and social platforms. Until 2004, Roma have faced barriers in establishing Roma-focused NGOs including an ethnic connotation in the name. This was due to the Law on Associations dating back to 1983 where it was forbidden to establish an association with a name and focus that implies an ethnic, religious, racial, sectarian or cultural diversity. For instance in 1996, in Izmir, an NGO was founded with a name *Romanlar Dayanisma ve Yardimlasma Dernegi* (Roma Solidarity and Assistance Foundation) and was shut down on the grounds that it generated ethnic separation (Akgül 2010). In 2004, the law was changed and the first Roma Association with a name implying "Roma" was founded in Edirne[3]. Since 2005, the number of Roma NGOs has increased rapidly and regional and national federations have been formed, especially in the Aegean and Marmara regions.

When EDROM was founded as a Roma NGO in Edirne in 2006, they started working at the community level, in Roma neighbourhoods, to support the Roma community through helping them to get access to social assistance schemes; enroll children in schools; help the community to find jobs, etc. The Roma NGOs that proliferated in other cities than Edirne were also founded as solidarity and assistance foundations putting an effort in providing local solutions to local problems (related to poverty, access to services, unemployment, etc.) of the community

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[3] The associations's name was EDÇINKAY (Edirne, Gypsy Culture Research, Development, Asistance and Solidarity Association) then. In 2006, it was changed to EDROM (Roma Culture Research, Development, Asistance and Solidarity Association).

through different means. Therefore, the funds that became available mainly through the EU emerged as one of the driving forces behind the growing numbers of Roma NGOs as Roma activists reveal:

> When funds became available, everybody wanted to do something. Their capacity needed to be increased. Then it was Kahvehane (Turkish café house where men hang out) NGOs without any capacity and funds. It came to a point where Roma NGOs run EU projects today.

> Following the Democratic Opening Process, something interesting happened. The number of NGOs multiplied. This was not just in line with the opening process but started a bit earlier. When the negotiation process started with EU in 2005, the number of NGOs multiplied. After that funds started to be discussed, about the funds allocated for Roma. Everybody wanted to get a piece from the cake; everybody wanted to benefit from it. This was the motivation....

The urban transformation projects also pushed Roma communities to form neighbourhood-based associations. Sulukule Roma Association that was founded in the historical Sulukule-Roma neighbourhood of Istanbul was one of them. Sulukule neighbourhood has faced the most severe evictions among the Roma neighbourhoods that also attracted the attention of the global community due to its importance for Roma and as a historical site of Istanbul[4]. In this process, housing emerged as a significant area that Roma NGOs have been working on along with other areas like education, health and, employment due to access and discrimination issues.

The NGOs established at the city, and the neighbourhood level grew to federations at the regional level to have an impact on policies. In 2006, in the region of Thrace, 11 Roma NGOs (later 13) came together and founded the first federation ROMDEF, followed by another federation in the Aegean region. Today there are around 500 Roma NGOs based in different cities along with 20 federations and two confederations all around Turkey where Roma communities reside. Different Roma groups like Dom, Lom, Abdal have established their own NGOs. It is just in a short period, the Roma got mobilized and had a voice in civil society as Roma activists reveal:

> When you look at Roma people, when you look back, it is a 10-year process of mobilization. The associations started to be founded about ten years ago; they started to become visible ten years ago. And today at the moment that we reached, if there is a Strategy Plan, today compared to other groups we have come a long way, we have made excellent progress. Think of it is just ten years, we are talking about the most disadvantaged, most suffering from poverty, having the lowest level in the society.

> 10 years ago they were almost invisible. It is a 10-year mobilization process indeed, they have come a long way. The poorest of the poor, the most discriminated, the lowest group in Europe indeed.

However many of these NGOs either do not have the capacity to engage in projects that would make changes in their communities. Some are founded to serve the interests of a small group of people who established these NGOs for clientelistic purposes, rather than representing the interests of the Roma neighbourhoods or the community. Therefore, the visibility of Roma NGOs is used to build relations with the political parties, and find a chance to get into politics through these relations.

> I would say that mobilization of Roma (forming organizations) happened very fast, reached 500 NGOs, two confederations, around 20 federations. This is not a process that the Roma community supports or participates. This is a process of 5-7 people coming together. For example, Municipality says, Ahmet, you are our man, if an election takes place tomorrow, you will find your way, launch an organization. That is why there is so much fighting among the

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[4] http://mirror.unhabitat.org/downloads/docs/10008_1_593995.pdf; http://www.hic-gs.org/news.php?pid=70

Roma NGOs, among the Roma. This is the main reason, they are not created on a rights-based vision, on the claims of the Roma people. The majority of them, 80 percent of them, are formed on a personal interest basis, that is why there is so much fighting… (Roma activist).

There are also networks established that deal with Roma issues from a rights-based perspective. Roma Rights Forum (ROMFO) is a Roma platform created in 2012 with the participation of 4 Roma federations and 60 Roma associations from various regions. ROMFO advocated for respect of Roma identity, culture, and lifestyle.

It is different to demand as an organized group, rather 3-5 people demanding something. Today there are more than 500 NGOs according to the data of the Ministry of Interior. However, there 6-7 NGOs that work on rights-based issues, equal citizenship issues. They do not have a constituency. They are run by 3-4 people. Even among them, they oppose each other, curb the work of each other.

The research done as part of the SIROMA project[5] demonstrates that many Roma associations engaged in clientelist relations, founded for the interest of a few people do also not enjoy much trust among the Roma community in Turkey. On the other hand, the associations that can demonstrate a track record of real activities to support the community – e.g., by organising employment programmes, recreational and sports activities for young people, or events to promote the school attendance of children – enjoy public trust.

4) Roma Democratic Opening Process

The turning point in Roma political mobilization was the Roma Democratic Opening Process (Roman Açılımı). It was launched in 2009 by President Erdogan, then the Prime Minister, with a big gathering in Istanbul where Roma NGOs, activists, famous Roma musicians were the participants. Erdogan in his speech apologized to the Roma community for the discriminatory acts they have faced. "If there is an apology, the Romani people in Turkey deserve it. I apologize to them on behalf of the State."[6] The gathering along with Erdogan's speech was a historical moment for Roma regarding their genuine recognition in public. Before this, changes were made in the settlement law including discriminatory identification of Roma and the discriminatory depictions of Roma in the Police Regulations were removed. Article 134 of the Police Service Regulations that was abolished was describing Roma as a group "prone to commit crimes" and classified them as a security risk.

The Roma Democratic Opening Process was welcomed and cherished by the Roma NGOs and Roma community in general as it was the first time that Roma as a group in Turkey were publicly recognized.

It is December 10th 2009, we are at Conrad Hotel, the State Ministers are at the stage, for the first time, the State says "let's do something". It is the beginning of our visibility at the high level of the State. (Roma activist)

Roma have always said that they were Turkish citizens. They were saying that we are first Muslim, then Turkish citizen. However, they always felt inferior in society. For the first time, a state person says that "I recognize you, you are my brothers". This is a very new thing for the Roma, state authority recognizes them, gives them a hand. They supported the government; they felt included. The inclusiveness, the recognition of Roma received legitimacy. Roma has

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[5] http://siromatr.net/en-us/Documents

[6] http://timelineturkey.com/en/romani-society/

been invisible in the eyes of the State in their politics, policies. They were considered as part of the majority, but their otherness was there". (Roma activist and expert)

The mobilization of Roma (rapid development of the number of NGOs and federations in the 2000s), the State's launch of the Roma Democratic Opening and the EU accession process came together and created a participatory environment for Roma activists, NGOs and community leaders in the first years of the Roma Democratic Opening Process. Following the democratization package that was launched on October 1st, 2013, the Roma language and Culture Research Institute was founded at Trakya University in 2014.

Between 2012-2014, the Ministry of Family and Social Policy organized a series of gatherings (Roma workshops as they are denoted) with the participation of Roma for the preparation of the Strategy Documents for the Social Inclusion of Roma. Strategy meetings addressed the difficulties that Roma confront regarding access to employment, education, health, housing and discrimination that they face in the society. According to the statements of the interviewees, a large group of NGOs from different regions and cities were the participants of the workshops. So it was a bottom-up meeting. They did not feel like any significant Roma NGO was excluded then. Roma NGOs with different views worked in cooperation with the Ministry of Family and Social Policy. It was a genuine consultation according to the Roma activists as they felt that they were taken seriously, they were included in the policy-making process through the series of workshops. This platform of consultation with Roma NGOs lasted until the Strategy Document was prepared. Following these two years of preparation, in February 2016, Roma NGOs received a draft Strategy Paper on which they provided feedback and the draft Strategy Paper was enthusiastically welcomed by Roma NGOs as it addressed the problems that Roma face in detail; acknowledged the discriminatory processes; and provided strategies to combat discrimination.

The EU accession process was also the driving force for the government to initiate talks with the Roma community. The EU launched the Visa Liberalization Dialogue with Turkey in December 2013. [7] The visa liberalisation agreement between the European Commission and Turkey included criteria on the implementation of fundamental rights in Turkey. Article 63 of the Agreement urged the government of Turkey to "develop and implement policies addressing Roma social exclusion, marginalization and discrimination in access to education, health services, ID cards, housing, employment and participation in public life."[8] The Roma issue has also been brought up in a series of EU Progress Reports on Turkey. The reports pointed to the poverty and social exclusion of Roma, difficulties, and discrimination in access to labour market, education, health and housing, the adverse effects of urban transformation projects and the lack of quantitative and qualitative data on Roma.[9]

However, it took seven years to finalize the Strategy Document since the Roma Opening was launched in 2009. In April 2016, the Ministry of Family and Social Policy released the Strategy Document for Roma Citizens (2016-2021) and an Action Plan for (2016-2018).[10]

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[7] The Visa Liberalisation Dialogue is based on a roadmap, a document setting out the requirements that Turkey needs to meet in order to enable the European Parliament and Council to put Turkey on the visa-free list and allow Turkish citizens to travel without a visa for short stays of 90 days within any 180-day period for business, touristic or family purposes, in the Schengen area. The 72 requirements listed in the Roadmap are organised in thematic groups: document security; migration management; public order and security; fundamental rights and readmission of irregular migrants. https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/background information/docs/20160504/turkey_progress_visa_liberalisation_roadmap_en.pdf

[8] https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/background-information/docs/20160504/turkey_progress_visa_liberalisation_roadmap_en.pdf

[9] https://www.avrupa.info.tr/en/regular-reports-turkey-744

[10] See Annex 1.

According to the Roma activist, the Strategy Document was released due to the government's ambition to get the visa liberalization agreement with EU.

> This whole Roma Opening Process was part of the EU accession process. Some of our friends believe that this was initiated by the goodwill of our President. It is good that he has initiated it, however, this process was not started by the goodwill of our President. If the EU had not pushed the government, this process would not have started. Since 2006, Roma issues have been included in EU Progress Reports. (Roma youth NGO representative)

> As I told you, the strategy document was published in a rush for visa liberation. It is one of the requests of the EU to issue visa liberation to publish a Roma Strategy Document. This Roma Democratic Opening Process was brought up as part of the EU Accession process. There was the Sulukule story (historical neighbourhood evacuation). If the resistance in Sulukule did not attract the attention of the EU, that was the turning point to attract the attention of the international community. It was the time that Roma issue is included in the progress reports of EU. Since 2006, Roma issue is included in all progress reports, the urban transformation projects, the evacuation are mentioned in the reports... (Roma NGO representative)

> Although the Opening Process was important, the government has not taken any official steps in this respect. The Opening Process was launched in 2010, the Strategy Document was released in 2016. On the other hand, it is ambivalent about how the government has accepted it. The visa liberation deal with the EU was the driving force. Otherwise, I do not think they would have done it. There is no much commitment here. (Roma activist)

It is not just the Roma Democratic Opening Process that defined that period. Kurdish opening along with Alevi opening processes have become part of democratization moves. It should be noted that when the State launched the Kurdish opening and Alevi opening processes, these two groups already had a strong political voice and mobilization against the institutionalized injustices, strong associations, political NGOs and a Kurdish political party (HDP) with a constituency and robust political claims. Unlike Kurds and Alevis, the Roma had recently established their NGOs and made themselves visible on the political scene. The Roma Opening Process of the State and Roma mobilization on the ground came about and proceeded in an entangled manner. This also defined the delicate representation of Roma in the political arena, oscillating between proximity and opposition to the political establishment.

5) The vulnerable representation of Roma

The representation claims of Roma started in the 2000s. Before that, Roma had week ties with the State. In the 2000s, the political mobilization of Roma emerged in the Western part of the country, where NGOs were founded to make the problems of Roma more visible. Therefore, as Roma issues became more apparent in the poverty and social inclusion debates, their recognition increased. Redistributive issues that pertain to access to education, health, housing, and employment lie at the heart of Roma claims. Roma demand "work, food, bread" (*is, as, yemek*) as the activists say. The redistributive claims of Roma emerged as an essential part of their recognition claims. They wanted their poverty and social exclusion problems to be seen in public and politics.

> The State's approach to justice is that I provide services to all citizens, they should be the beneficiaries. However Roma mostly do not know their rights, they are engaged in daily livelihood struggles. They do not have the economic means, they do not have the daily bread-money, what kind of justice are you talking about? (Roma NGO representative)

This does not exclude the problems that pertain to discrimination. Discriminatory practices also define Roma's access issues which have been put forward by Roma NGOs.

> The Strategy Document does not include anything on discrimination. There is no reference to discrimination. It refers to problems Roma face without any mention of discrimination. Discrimination lies at the heart of these problems. They are afraid to address it. Addressing the discriminatory process is the breaking point. They do not do it, they are afraid of it. On the other hand, they do not allocate a budget to realize the measures in the Strategy Plan. (Roma activist)

The Roma Opening Process that was initiated in 2009 and strategy document released in 2016 were crucial steps in this respect. The process made the socio-economic and discrimination problems more visible and several projects have started in different cities (with funds from the EU such as the Social Inclusion of Roma-SIROMA) that prioritized Roma's socio-economic issues raised by representatives during the Roma Opening Process.

> Another important development was the Strategy Document prepared by the Ministry of Family and Social Policy. Although the Strategy Document had shortcomings, it is an important document as it has good intentions. It's the NGOs' duty to point out the shortcomings. There are hundreds of Roma NGOs, they should work together and report what is missing in the Strategy Document. As I said before, it is important that the Ministry publishes an official strategy document that brings several measures that the government should take up. (NGO representative)

The entanglement of redistributive and recognition claims is one part of the story in this respect. However, it is noted in the fieldwork that although the socio-economic claims dominated the dialogue in the Roma Opening Process, no budget is defined and allocated at the State level to solve these problems. Roma in this respect question the genuineness of the government in solving these problems. According to some activists, recognition without a genuine redistributive effort makes them even more vulnerable, as they are made visible in the society, they are recognized as a group with a Roma identity in a political atmosphere where identity claims have their fragility. However, steps to provide inclusion of Roma through extensive programs have not been undertaken. Solving socio-economic problems needs a budget. The Roma community needs to be empowered in the society through redistributive mechanisms according to them. As a Roma activist reveals that their claim is not for the recognition of Roma identity or recognition of Roma as a minority, they want equal citizenship, equal access to resources (education, health, etc.) as a Roma political party representative eloquently conveys:

> The Roma are never recognized as equal citizens. You are Roma, wait for a moment… When it comes to equality, justice, you as Roma are the second class. I do not think we have equal access to education, health, labour market, we cannot claim that... Roma children have the lowest levels of literacy. Percentages of Roma children going to high school, the university is very low, what kind of equality, justice are we talking about? If a Roma woman goes to a health service, if it is understood that she is Roma due to her clothes, she is discriminated, how could we be talking about equality? Like in Istanbul Sulukule, Izmir, Ankara, Bursa, if the first houses to be demolished are Roma houses as part of the urban transformation projects, how could we talk about equality? Equal citizenship is our claim, our claims are access to education, health, the labour market, the housing justice system. There are big difficulties in these areas.

The Roma Opening Process that was welcomed by Roma activists cheerfully and that has created a participatory environment for Roma in politics also has a weakening consequence for Roma political mobilization. This was also due to the polarized political atmosphere of the country where the government in this process differentiated Roma groups and NGOs that are supporting them and the groups that are in opposition. This also created a conflict among Roma groups (Roma groups who support the government, Roma groups who oppose the government) who have started the political mobilization together in a way. While the groups for political recognition embedded themselves more in the political system, positioned themselves close to the government and eventually received a legitimate position in the political dialogues with the government, the groups who

opposed to the government policies found themselves excluded in the talks, furthermore, demonized by the groups who position themselves as government allies.

This creates a vulnerability for the Roma groups with rights claims who are staying out of the political clientelist relations.

> Until 2010, the Roma movement has had more rights-based discourses, had the same distance with political parties. After the Roma Opening Process, the number of NGOs increased, the Roma movement came to a different point. After 2014, Roma political mobilization got backward. When you oppose anything, you are attacked. I am a civil society organization; I have to point things that I find wrong. I cannot work as a civil society actor anymore. We are accused of betraying the community all the time. (Roma activist, NGO leader)

Following the year 2010 (launch of the Roma opening), the number of Roma organizations proliferated all around Turkey and reached around 500 with regional federations and two confederations. As one of the interview participants said: "Whenever five Roma people came together, they formed an association". As the Roma Opening Process brought Roma and State apparatus together for the first time, as Roma formed a platform to convey their issues, NGO participation, being an NGO leader became a gateway to political representation. This led to conflicts within the Roma movement. According to an interviewee, the majority of Roma organizations are formed for the political interests of founders. They are brought into play as a bridge to build clientelistic relations with the political elite. Therefore, the visibility of the Roma NGOs is used to strengthen ties with the political parties and find a chance to get into politics through these relations.

> Of course you could get into politics, but becoming the backyard of politics is different. It is important to see that the NGOs, the civil society should be separate, independent of politics. Of course getting into politics is very important and valuable for Roma, however all Roma NGO leaders dream of getting into politics. (Roma activist)

> They all want to be elected parliamentarians. If there are 500 Roma NGOs, 400 of them wants to be parliamentarians. The NGO leaders they all want to run for Parliament. (NGO activist)

Some Roma NGO leaders have become candidates from different political parties in the past elections. However, there is only one elected Roma Parliamentarian from CHP (Social Democrat Party). One of the interviewees who is affiliated with a political party said that the political parties are not genuine in supporting Roma candidates through the elections.

This process led to a polarization in the Roma political mobilization. The mediated representation where the Roma Opening Process provided a space for the Roma NGO who have started to form a political voice left its place to embedded representation where the NGOs find channels of political participation through supporting the ruling party. They were invited to talks with Ministry representatives while opposition groups find themselves excluded from these dialogues. This led to conflicts among the Roma NGOs.

> Since 2014, the Roma movement has not made any progress; instead it has moved backward. We could not point to political mobilization of Roma. There are friends whom the ruling party manipulates. The work of these NGOs gives damage to the work of other NGOs who are doing rights-based advocacy work. Last two years, we are talking carefully. We are alleged of being a "spy", "separatist" by our friends…. (Roma NGOs representative)

According to activists, despite the rapid development of Roma organizations, it is hard to talk about a Roma mobilization with a robust voice under these circumstances. NGOs with clientelist relations with the government received more visibility through their embeddedness.

On the other hand, Roma women's problems and several groups' (like Dom living in the Eastern part of the country) problems are left invisible in the Roma Opening Process.

> After the Roma Opening Process, Dom groups became more visible; they set up their own NGOs. However, they are not represented well enough. They do not have representation at any level of the political institutions. There is no Dom muhtar (elected body at the neigbourhood level) not even in their neighbourhood. There is no solidarity among Roma groups. Dom groups are excluded by other Roma groups, this is what I have observed during our training. (NGO representative)

In this process, Roma women activists who put an effort in highlighting women's position in the Roma community find themselves alienated from the movement.

> As young Roma women, we have difficulties. The Strategy Document does not address Roma youth much. I aimed to continue my education without being discriminated against, Roma political mobilization is male-dominated, women are having difficulties. In society, Roma stereotyping is done through Roma women. As a Roma woman, I have to fight with the stereotypes in the society, but there is also discrimination in the Roma community, among Roma NGOs. Roma women do not have any institutional representation. There are a couple of NGOs where Roma women are active, but they are having tremendous difficulties. (Young Roma woman)

> Roma women have double discrimination in accessing health services. For instance, a Roma woman gives birth at a hospital. Non-Roma woman says she does not want to stay in the same room with a Gypsy woman. Roma women have more difficulties in accessing education than men. Therefore, the Roma woman's image as an uneducated woman married at a child age is a barrier to Roma women's representation. Political participation is a men's job as it is perceived in the Roma movement. (Roma activist)

6) Conclusion

Roma are one of the most vulnerable groups living in Turkey. The social exclusion and discrimination regarding access to employment, education, housing, health services as well as social life create significant difficulties and injustices for Roma. Until the 2000s, Roma as a group remained invisible due to their weak ties with the State, the absence of civil organizations that represent Roma and their non-appearance in political institutions. In the 2000s, civil society has witnessed the political mobilization of Roma where NGOs were established in different cities to make the problems of Roma more visible. Therefore, as Roma issues became more visible in the society, their recognition increased. However, the turning point in Roma political mobilization was the Roma Democratic Opening Process that was launched in 2009 and followed by workshops organized by the Ministry of Family and Social Policy with the participation of Roma for the preparation of the Strategy Documents for the Social Inclusion of Roma. Strategy meetings addressed the difficulties that Roma confront regarding access to employment, education, health, housing and discrimination. This process was crucial for Roma to receive recognition and made their claims visible. Roma's redistributive claims that pertain to access to education, health, housing, and employment lie at the heart of their claims to make their issues visible.

However, after 2014, the Roma political movement experienced deep polarization. This was also due to the polarized political atmosphere of the country where the government differentiated Roma groups and NGOs that support them and those in opposition. This led to conflict among the Roma groups (Roma groups who support the government, Roma groups who oppose the government). While for political recognition, Roma positioned themselves close to the government and eventually received a legitimate position in political dialogues with the

government, Roma groups who opposed government policies found themselves excluded in the talks and even demonized by the groups who position themselves as government allies. This created vulnerability for the Roma groups with rights claims who are staying out of clientelist political relations. The report therefore argues that despite the fact that Roma had received political recognition in society and made their redistributive claims visible, the political representation of Roma that developed as part of the "Democratic Opening Process" created vulnerabilities for Roma in a polarized political atmosphere. The political representation of Roma moved from "mediated" representation to "embedded" representation which created new representational injustices.

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Republic of Turkey

Ministry of Family and Social Policy

General Directorate of Family and Community Services

The Strategy Paper on Roma People

2016 – 2021

Ankara, April 2016

INTRODUCTION

Roma people living in Turkey have been residents of this territory by contributing the formation of customs and values which constitute the cultural structure of Turkey and adopting those customs and values in both Anatolia and Thrace for centuries. However, generally they live in the most disadvantaged regions and the poorest districts of the cities even though Roma people living in different areas of Turkey and Europe have different cultures and life styles. For that reason, especially since 1990s, several steps have been taken in both Europe and Turkey for improving the statue of them. Within this scope, Roma civil society started to be organised in Europe, European Roma Rights Centre has been established and "The Decade of Roma Inclusion" including the period of 2005–2015 has been launched. In 2009, European Platform for Roma Inclusion was established and fundamental principles for social inclusion were identified. Additionally, European Union has published several advisory jurisdiction and declarations regarding the inclusion strategies. Council of Europe of which Turkey is a founder member has announced the Strasbourg Declaration on Roma consisting of anti-discrimination, social inclusion and international cooperation bases.

In Turkey, Roma people started to conduct activities (seminars, workshops etc.) in order to defend their communities' rights and improve their welfare in 2000s through being organized as civil society with the positive effects of increasing consciousness and gradually improving social dialogue. Within this context, Research, Development, Mutual-aid and Mutual-Relief Association of Edirne Roma Culture (EDROM) was established in 2004.

Challenges experienced by Roma people were officially expressed in 2009 upon the instructions of the President Recep Tayyip ERDOĞAN who was the Prime Minister at that time. From that time, problems of Roma people have been handled by the related public institutions. After the interviews, a decision for providing common solutions to Roma people's problems by carrying out common activities especially on the issues of education, health, employment, anti-discrimination and combating poverty has been taken in 2012. As an inception of this cooperation, within the scope of Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA), many social inclusion projects whose final beneficiaries include Roma people were carried out and "Increasing the Social Inclusion in Densely Roma Populated Areas" project was launched. Besides, during the IPA II period, within the scope of Fundamental Rights Sub-Domain Action Plan and Employment, Education and Social Policies Sectoral Operational Program, opportunities are present for carrying out projects for Roma people.

Right of education and training, freedom of employment and contract, right to access to health services, housing facilities, and social security are guaranteed in the Constitution of Republic of Turkey and principles of equality and equity were adopted regarding access to fundamental public services. However, it is observed that Roma people face some obstacles in terms of access to education, health, employment and housing in practice. For that reason, expression of "previously taken steps regarding the solution of the problems of Roma people will be

evaluated and new studies will be launched" was included under the title of "Fundamental Rights and Liberties" of the 2016 Action Plan of the 64th Government which was announced on 10 December 2016.

This strategy document hereby and attached action plan have been prepared considering the abovementioned progresses and issues defined in the Government Action Plan, with the coordination of the Ministry of Family and Social Policy and the contributions of the related public institutions and organisations and civil society organisations with a purpose of improving the living conditions of Roma people. Basic public services such as education, health, housing, employment and social services come into focus regarding the improvement of the socio-economic status of Roma people both in short and long term. Within this framework, the strategy document and action plan includes objectives, goals and actions regarding those titles. With the step taken by the Government, a new and outstanding period will be launched.

A. FUNDAMENTAL POLICY FIELDS AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1. EDUCATION

Visits carried out to the Roma neighbourhoods and investigations conducted by the representatives of civil society organisations and public institutions reveal that Roma children are not able to benefit from the education opportunities sufficiently, their access to education opportunities is relatively low, early leave and absenteeism ratios are relatively high. Roma children, who are not interested in educational activities and couldn't be bound up with school life, face significant challenges when they are grown up in terms of orientating to social life and having the chance of entering the labour force. This situation is considered as a crucial mechanism triggering the cycle of poverty.

One of the most significant reasons of the early leaves of Roma children and their poor educational conditions is socio-economic challenges faced by their parents. Roma families do not believe in future, they consider their children's educational process as a relatively long and ambiguous investment.

School enrolment procedure in Turkey is conducted due to the Central Civil Registration System (MERNİS) in a way based on the residence and automatically. Student distribution among the classes is carried out mostly according to academic success level generally within the framework of school management decisions. Segregation regarding student distribution is not possible but it is observed in the past that Roma children have education in different classrooms or environments or they form isolated groups among themselves. Besides, one of the problems about education which restrain Roma children from attending schools is the perception of segregation observed in practice and complaints related to this perception.

Consequently, some Roma children leave education because their families cannot afford the expenses or they are obliged to work so as to support their families. On the other hand, some Roma children, who continue to study, leave education just because they think that they are exposed to social exclusion.

Strategic Objective

The objective is to ensure all Roma children to access to equal opportunities for education and qualified educational services and have them complete at least the compulsory education successfully.

Strategic Goals

1. Leaving education by means of early leaves and absenteeism during all stages of the compulsory education will be prevented and the people especially youngsters who dropped out the school because of several reasons in the past will be ensured to continue their education.

2. Knowledge level of Roma families related to socio-economic benefits of education and social assistance regarding education will be increased.

3. Social bond between Roma parents, students, school, teachers and peers will be strengthened.

2. EMPLOYMENT

There is no adequate data about the status of Roma citizens in the labour market. However, in the light of general opinions and observations, it can be said that Roma citizens generally work in unsecured, unqualified and low-status jobs. The main reasons of this situation are low education level and lack of attendance in vocational training. Because of this type of the employment, the income of the family is not stabile, and far from the level of satisfying the family's needs.

Furthermore, traditional occupations of Roma people such as musician, blacksmith, tinsmith, basket maker, coppersmith, caner, florist and peddler lack the attribute of creating a market and income today. In this aspect, in order to both having Roma people continue their employments in traditional occupations and create new fields of employment, it is crucial to develop new occupational training programs and having them attend to those programs.

Strategic Objective

The objective is to facilitate Roma people's entering into labour force and to increase the employment of them in qualified and secured jobs.

Strategic Goals

1. Enabling Roma people to reach the professional quality that the labor market has demanded.

2. Developing the collaboration among employers, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and all the related sectors in order to improve the professional quality and provide equal opportunities in labour-market.

3. In order to encourage entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship training programs and financial means such as promoting micro-credits as well as more employment opportunities will be provided.

4. Necessary precautions will be taken to prevent child labour and to support children continue with their education and channel children's and/or youth's talents into the activities that they can improve themselves in different fields.

3. HOUSING

Throughout history, Roma people have developed their own unique housing styles depending on their culture and traditions. Nonetheless, physical capacity of their housing is not enough for Roma people. In fact, Roma people live in squatter settlements that could be built by them either on public or private areas.

To solve that problem, Rome people's living areas were included in urbanization process and settled in social housing places. Locating the housing settlements of Roma people in peripheral areas, however, has not only intensified their integration problem with local people but also their employment dilemma. On top of that, surviving in the housing settlements has been challenging for Roma people. According to the research results on the field and the statements of NGO representatives for Roma people indicate that generally one store apartment buildings have been the first choice of Roma people to live, socialize, and shape their professional tendencies, namely creating their communal solidarity and social life in neighbourhoods with one store apartments.

Strategic Objective

The objective is promoting adequate housing opportunities in disadvantaged areas with an access to public transportation, healthy, liveable milieu, and functioning infrastructure by taking the beneficiaries' demands and social lives into consideration,.

Strategic Goals

1. The conditions of the housing settlements in ameliorative situation will be improved.
2. For the groups living in unhealthy environment and inadequate or temporary housings, social housing and liveable environment will be delivered.
3. Putting beneficiaries' concerns under the microscope and enacting executive and legislative regulations to deliver side services will be the path for the effective application of social housing or urbanization projects, which range from the beneficiaries' financial situations and their conditions for making ends, to their children's educational situation, public transportation problem and beneficiaries' other potential problems.

4. HEALTH

Since 2010, Ministry of Health has been delivering geographically balanced first-step health services. Like socially inclusive health services, these services diagnose illnesses, as they protect and rehabilitate communities where they work and live. However, awareness of Roma people in terms of knowing the health services that they can benefit fluctuates among regions. This awareness portion is also few among Roma people in general. Besides the awareness of existing health services, health-literacy rate is low among Roma people that prevents them from taking advantage of the health services and puts their health at great risk.

Strategic Objective

The objective is having Roma people benefit health services more effectively as well as efficiently.

Strategic Goals

1. Roma people's awareness of the existing health services will be increased.
2. Roma people will be more informed on the subjects of having an access to maternal and infant health care services; fighting with infectious and contagious diseases; being protected from non-infectious diseases i.e. chronic diseases; early diagnosis and health-conscious consumption of medicines/drugs; hazardous effects of smoking and drug addiction on health.
3. Roma people will be more health-literate on general health issues.

5. SOCIAL SERVICES and SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Poverty risk becomes inevitable for Roma people since their employment rate is low and they are temporarily/insecurely employed. Roma people are not able to pay premium, therefore, they are not in the system of social insurance and are supported through social services and social assistance. The other reasons why the poverty risk has been forwarding among Roma people as follows: low interest in Roma people's traditional professions and decreasing social solidarity among Roma groups because of migration and urbanization process. Additionally, while Roma people are in need of having an adequate access to public services such as education and health, they are also in need of receiving consultancy and training services on elderly and disadvantageous people.

Strategic Objective

The objective is ensuring Roma people to benefit from social services and social assistance efficiently in order to combat poverty and increase welfare.

Strategic Goals

1. Developing and disseminating consultancy services in order to ensure Roma people to benefit from public services.
2. The awareness raising activities on the rights of disadvantaged groups needing social service among Roma people such as the elderly and the disabled will be conducted. These activities will also include issues such as gender equality,

prevention of all sorts of violence against women and girls and preventing child- marriages.

B. FUNDAMENTAL IMPLEMENTATION PRINCIPLES

As it is stated before, it is crucial to define principles that intersect all the sectors in order to coordinate and facilitate sectorial objectives and goals as well as general policies. This strategy will be run according to the principles under the framework mentioned below.

• Policy-Making and Implementation Based on Data: Choosing policies depending on hypotheses and prejudices over facts and existing situations will fail efficient implementation of policies. For this reason, it is necessary to periodically gather data and decide on political priorities that relate with activities of strategic goals, and last but not least to monitor and evaluate.

• Regional Political Approach with a Definite Goal that Does Not Lead to Social Exclusion: This strategy principally addresses to all people living in Roma neighborhoods and being exposed to social exclusion. For public sectors, a community has to be socially and economically excluded and to be disadvantaged in terms of accessing public services instead of being from the Roma culture, which is a policy justification. The policy objective is providing equal opportunities.

• Anti-Discrimination: Location-based and cultural prejudices and discrimination against Roma people who could face discrimination in having equal access to the public services such as joining the labor market, getting education and using health and housing services in labor market should be eliminated.

• Improving Social Participation and Civil Society: Roma people's and relevant civil society organizations' participation to policy and decision making processes will be amplified. Furthermore, policies will be made in a way to ensure Roma people's social cohesion and integration.

• Inter-institutional Coordination and Holistic Political Approach: Policies defined in different fields will be facilitated holistically and they will be run in coordination with each other. For that matter, inter-institutional coordination will be provided. Moreover, improving the status of disadvantaged groups and preventing discrimination will be in the agenda of the other related political documents.

• Improving the Access to the General Public Services: All the Roma people will obtain national identification to augment their access to public services. Roma people will also have more information and awareness with regards to how to apply to public institutions.

• Creating Policies and their Activities Based on Local Needs: It is necessary to make and implement policies that will be created solely for the Roma groups addressing to the local needs and necessities and also design policies and side services. It is also crucial that related local organizations and service providers be more active and have initiative, as well as showing full attendance to the decision-making process.

• Empowering Social and Cultural Communication: Prejudices against Roma people will be eliminated and inter-cultural relations will be organized. During that process, social mediation mechanism will be used actively.

• Effective Monitoring System and Re-Designing: Multi-disciplinary nature of social inclusion policies and their goal to improve socio-economic status of disadvantaged groups require them not only to engender coordination and collaboration among public institutions, service providers, and local authorities but also to monitor and evaluate that coordination and partnership.

• Giving Priority to the Disadvantaged Groups: Extra importance will be given to the policies regarding disadvantaged groups including women, children, youth, and disabled people.

• Paying Attention to the European Experiences and European Union Policies: The policies and experiences related to Roma people generated by the European Union, International Organizations operating in Europe and NGOs representing Roma community in Europe will be taken into account in a maximum capacity.

• Promoting Transparency, Accountability, and Participation: All the policies that will be implemented have to rely on concrete facts and public opinion should be constantly informed on those facts. Additionally, representatives of Roma society shall be included to the decision making process of the policy-making and policy implementation procedure.

• Establishing Respect and Dialogue for Basic Human Rights and Differences: Respecting basic human rights and differences should be the policy objective and method.

C. IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS AND METHOD

The Ministry of Family and Social Policy is responsible for the implementation of the National Strategy Document hereby and the coordination of social inclusion policies for Roma people.

Goals in this strategic plan will be implemented through three-year-period action plans (covering the period of 2016-2018 and 2019-2021). Relevant public institutions will foresee preparatory activities for 2016 and for 2017, activities without significant budget increase will be determined. In this process, data will be collected on the social integration of Roma people in order to create a basis for relevant policies. In this way, a healthier way of designing and implementing activities will be ensured starting from 2017.

Monitoring and Evaluation Board will be established in order to monitor the implementation of the policies in this National Strategy Document hereby; this committee will meet in February each year so as to assess the activities implemented in the previous year. Results and evaluations will be reported until the end of the following May. Half of the members of the Monitoring and Evaluation Board will be composed of relevant Ministries and other public institutions and agencies. The other half will be composed of stakeholders not included in the public sector such as relevant CSOs, academics and professional organisations.

Upon the call of the Ministry of Family and Social Policy; all related Ministries and public institutions and organisations particularly the Ministry of National Education, Ministry of Labour and Social Security, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Environment and Urbanization and Ministry of Youth and Sports will come together in the beginning of the second half of each year and review the activities to be carried out next year within the framework of the opinions of the Monitoring and Evaluation Board.