

COMBATING SOCIAL EXCLUSION OF ROMANI WOMEN: TOWARDS A COMPREHENSIVE POLICY



Center Amalipe
www.amalipe.com



Contents

Introduction	1
Policy paper	2
Conclusions	8
Declaration	11

Early / forced marriages are not a primary and unchangeable part of the Roma culture, they are not a question of specific “Roma” tradition and their overcoming will not endanger the Roma identity. The early family establishment is a patriarchic, but not Roma tradition: all people in their pre-modern development have created families at early ages. The fact, which today is being called by many “Roma tradition” – the arrangement and

the establishment of family among some Roma groups in Bulgaria, Romania and Greece was typical among the ethnic Bulgarian, Romanian and Greek just 2-3 generations ago. Beyond that, the practice of early marriages has already disappeared within some Roma groups in the pointed countries and that did not lead to assimilation and depersonalization.

INTRODUCTION

The project “Combating social exclusion of Romani women” was financed by the Roma Initiatives Program of Open Society Foundation as complimentary to the project “Preventing Early/Forced Marriages” financed by the European Commission under Daphne III program. It addressed three main problems.

The first one was social exclusion of Romani women in Bulgaria and the other countries of South-Eastern Europe. Romani women in Bulgaria face deep exclusion from the social, economic and public life as well as double discrimination (once as Roma and another time as women). Their educational, social and health status is disadvantaged not only compared to the one of majority women but also compared to the status of Roma men.

The second problem was the existence of harmful practices in some traditional and marginalized Roma families that prevent raising the educational and social status of

Romani girls and women: such as early marriages, forced marriages, etc. These practices still persist in some Roma groups and the efforts of young Romani women leaders to overcome them do not meet real support from the state institutions.

The third problem was the lack of comprehensive policy for combating the social exclusion of Romani women: at national and even at European levels. Although special Resolution on the situation of Roma women in the European Union was approved by European Parliament in June 2006 it was not continued by efforts of the member-states to establish comprehensive policy for overcoming the social exclusion of Roma women. European institutions do not continue their efforts in this direction and the attempts of national Romani women activists until now are relatively weak and unsuccessful.

Within the present project three documents have been prepared:

- *Policy paper*
- *Conclusions “Combating social exclusion of Romani women - towards a comprehensive policy”*
- *Declaration “Towards comprehensive policy for overcoming social exclusion of Romani women”*

“I want to tell you a short story about my life, about the ups and downs, about the fights and wins, and the things that stimulated the change in me, so that I can be what I am now...”

POLICY PAPER

The early marriages in Roma community is a topic which is currently attracting the attention of the so called “wide society” and “public opinion”. From one side, the early marriages are often combined with “arranged marriages” and even “forced marriages”: usually the parents themselves are those who initiate this form of cohabitation. Even more often they lead to “drop-out”, i.e. to early drop-out of school which is related with limitation of the following suitable social development and realization. The early marriages are usually followed by “early births” as far as (at least within the traditional Roma families and the marginalized) the married woman is expected to prove that she can give a birth: she is highly appreciated as a prolonger of the family and if she cannot fulfill this role she has to bear one of the heaviest stigmas. Not even rare early marriages are accompanied by different forms of domestic violence, divorces, and health diseases among the young mothers and so on. I.e. we could see the whole aspect of negative phenomena where each European society is (or at least should be) painfully sensitive to each of them. From the other side, the early Roma marriages seem curious, exotic and not understandable: a remnant of “not-European marriage model.” This “exotics” is often related with the absolute stigmatization of the whole Roma community as lagging and unable for development generator of child-

ren, accompanied by even more expressive oblivion that the early marriages were also typical to not long time ago for the majority of the people on east of Trieste - St. Petersburg, (and a bit before that - for all of the European people), as well as with the neglecting of the fact that not all Roma groups, families and social strata practice the early marriages.

As a result of all mentioned above, the public interest towards the early Roma marriages in CEE (as well as the rest of the countries where Roma people live) is sustainably high. Usually this is related with the generation of many myths and stereotypes (for trade with young Roma girls, for common practice of giving birth at 12 years of age and so on): they are often raised by the lack of information and the lack of surveys this area; and by the deep lack of adequate discussion (involving representatives of the Roma community). In all those situations, the myths and the stereotypes do not help for the solution of the issue with the early marriages.

The high public interest towards a certain problem usually leads to formation and implementation of a complete policy for its overcoming, but this is not the case with the early marriages in the Roma community: the institutions who are in charge are often passive and do not react because of the absurd excuse that this is a “Roma tradition and

Roma mentality”, and a complete policy on the issue is missing.

On the opposite of the wide public interest, a discussion on the early marriages rarely took place within the Roma community. The Roma NGOs, formal and informal leaders and activists are avoiding this issue, because they are afraid no to enforce the stigma towards the community, and often because of disbelieve, that they could oppose this practice. This is another barrier for overcoming the early marriages and all accompanying negative effects.

In this context, the Center for interethnic dialogue and tolerance “Amalipe” (Bulgaria), Liga Pro Europa (Romania) and Association for social support of Europe - ARSIS (Greece) in 2009 initiated a project “Prevention of the early/forced marriages”. The project was supported by DG Justice of the European Commission (within the frames of the Daphne 2009) and was implemented in Bulgaria, Romania and Greece in 2010. In addition, it was matched by Open Society Roma Initiatives through the project “Combating Social Exclusion of Roma Women”.

Both projects did not have the ambition to fight windmills and to completely overcome the practice of the early marriages: something, which cannot be achieved for one year. Their goal was modest - to analyze the situation of the problem and to set the question (in the Roma community and in front of the

relevant institutions) and to check on field several types of activities for prevention of the early cohabitations. We believed that this could accelerate the objective process of overcoming the early marriages and modernization of the Roma community, as well as to provoke a complete policy in this direction - on national and European level.

We approached the issue of the early marriages with the idea that they are not a primary and unchangeable part of the Roma culture, they are not a question of specific “Roma” tradition and the overcoming will not endanger the Roma identity. The early family establishment is a patriarchic, but not Roma tradition: all people in their pre-modern development have created families at early ages. The fact, which today is being called by many “Roma tradition” - the arrangement and the establishment of family among some Roma groups in Bulgaria, Romania and Greece was typical among the ethnic Bulgarian, Romanian and Greek just 2-3 generations ago. Beyond that, the practice of early marriages has already disappeared within some Roma groups in the pointed countries and that did not lead to assimilation and depersonalization.

We also approached the issue of the early marriages with the idea that the Roma community should be an active participant in the

The most influencing and clearly revealed factor that affects early start of marital cohabitation is education. As higher the educational level is as later the marital cohabitation and the marriages will occur.



With the financial support of





efforts for overcoming this patriarchal tradition. The outer impact on the community (through the relevant institutions, who stay “distant” and are not recognized by the community, through the authorities of order and so on) is not sufficient and would not reach an effect if the Roma community is not involved: through its informal authorities, through its educated representatives and so on. This is not only a moral and a human rights issue, but also a question of effectiveness.

Last but not least, we approached the issue of the early marriages with the idea that their overcoming (where they exist) will give a chance for realization of the young Roma and will support the complete modernization of the Roma community. The deterioration of the administrative penalties will not resolve the problem of with the early marriages, but the social work with the families and mostly the support for the efforts of the succeeded Roma to change their local communities.

That is why for the implementation of the project we choose an approach that combined:

- tailored approach: as the implemented research showed, the problem with the early marriages is not common for all Roma and it stays differently among the different Roma groups, regions and social stratum. The motivation of the different participants is different: parents, young people, etc.

This diversity of the conditions requires differentiated activities for impact, relevant to the specifics of the local community. In this regard, we have supported local campaigns for prevention of the early marriages that proposed activities corresponding to the local specifics;

- Innovation: the practice in Bulgaria, Romania and Greece until now shows that the activities of the institutions for prevention of early marriages are not effective within the Roma community and innovative activities, services and approaches are needed. For this reason, the project has tested innovative activities, organized by succeeded Roma in 10 local communities. The effect of these activities has been researched with the purpose to widen them and to apply them in other communities;

- fostering the social work on local level in Roma community: the trend, until present, in the fight with early marriages relies on the administrative penalties, and the social work with the Roma families is often formally organized and taken to description of cases. The services that are based in the community are also rarely being organized in the Roma neighborhoods. For this reason we went to a stronger social work on local level in Roma community with supporting the organization of social work in 17 Roma neighborhoods;

- collaboration: a negative practice in the three countries is the lack of effective collaboration between the

institutions with relevance to the issue of the early marriages (e.g. Child protection departments, schools, municipalities, religious institutions), as well as between the institutions and the Roma community. In this regard we tried to build local partnerships in the municipalities, where we have implemented campaigns for preventions of early marriages by involving the Roma leaders, social workers, teachers and etc.

Using this approach we have realized several types of activities:

1. research of the situation of the problem “early/arranged marriages” in Bulgaria, Romania and Greece: As up to this moment there was not a focused scientific research of the early marriages in Roma community, and for the good planning of the campaigns for prevention we needed a trustful information on this issue, during the first months of the project there was a study on the phenomenon of the “early marriages” in Bulgaria, Romania and Greece. It did include several activities. National representative sociological research of the family attitudes of the Roma in Bulgaria involved almost 3000 people from 595 households in the segregated Roma neighborhoods. The research showed a clear picture of the situation of the problem of the early marriages among main Roma groups in the different regions in Bulgaria. while debunking many

of the widespread myths in this direction. It revealed the main trends in the marriage attitudes of the modern Roma, the motivation of parents and young people and the ways of effective impact.

Another activity was the implementation of review of the legislative, normative and institutional frame, related with the “early marriages” in Bulgaria, Romania and Greece. The review showed the strengths, but also the existing gaps in the three countries.

Extremely useful was the research of the attitudes of the field workers (social workers, teachers and etc.), implemented in the three countries. It has revealed the point of view of the servants in the institutions that work directly on field with the communities where early marriages happen. More precisely: it has shown the different views of the social workers, because it appeared that the views of the social workers and the teachers are significantly different, and the communication between them is often lacking.

2. Implementation of local campaigns for prevention of the early marriages: local Roma activists implemented coordinated campaigns in the relevant Roma communities in 10 municipalities of Bulgaria. They applied a wide spectrum of activities: communal discussions, individual and family consultations, “door-to-door” campaign and “com-

“Young girls like me should know that it is better for them to finish their education before committing themselves to marriage and having children.”

“When I was a little girl I had a dream - to study. Not a desire, nor a strive, but a Dream. While for my classmates from the primary school education was a given and they came as part of a duty, because their parents made them, for me the chance to be in class was a dream coming true.

Even after I graduate, I will still be a Roma and be empathetic to the problems of my people. For me education serves to form one's personality. All of us, the young Roma who study, who have university degrees, we should help the rest to follow their dreams.



munity conference” (an adapted method for work in Roma community of the so called “family-group conference” and etc.). The achieved results have overreached the expectations. They clearly showed that the social work which is implemented inside the community by succeeded Roma representatives is able not only to help for the solution of particular cases, but to change attitudes too. They have shown that conversations for the early marriages could be and should be conducted even amongst the most conservative Roma groups.

An important additional result was the proof of the activists who conducted the local campaigns (most of them - young, educated Roma boys and girls) as role models for the rest of the young people in the relevant communities and as authorities for the adults. This fact showed the necessity of targeted support for turning the successful Roma into models for their communities: a state policy in this area is needed. In particular - the achieved showed the necessity of institutionalizing of the position “inside” the community, engaged with the organization of field social work in partnership with the rest of the institutions.

3. Building partnerships with the institutions that work on local level: the municipal units for child protection, the schools, the community centers and the

local municipal representatives, as well as the informal Roma leaders were informed for the implemented campaigns, and at some of the locations they have actively participated in the activities. They have participated in special trainings for work in Roma community: it appeared that none of the universities nor any other educational or training institution provides such knowledge, even though they are extremely necessary for the effective field work.

4. Increasing the public awareness: Campaigns for increasing the awareness towards the phenomenon of the “early marriages” and the necessity of its overcoming were organized in Bulgaria, Romania and Greece. The campaigns were targeted at main factors, working in the Roma community - NGO activists, social workers, teachers, journalists, servants of the municipal administration - and their goal was to motivate them for realization of activities for prevention of the early marriages. For more successful implementation of those activities were prepared and printed educational materials and are already being used in more than 30 schools in Bulgaria and Romania.

Specific accent of this activity for Bulgaria was the involvement of the topic of the early marriages in the planning of the social services. The elaboration of regional strategies for social

services coincided with the elaboration of the local campaigns and the teams that organized them managed to propose and justify the incorporation of activities for prevention of the early marriage in the relevant regional strategies. This creates preconditions for continuation of these activities in the upcoming years.

An important feature of the project “Prevention of the early marriages” was that it is being realized in partnership with the main stakeholder institutions in Bulgaria, Romania and Greece. The Ministries of labor and social policies, the Agencies for child protection in Bulgaria and Greece, the state agency on Roma in Romania, the National council for collaboration on the ethnic and the demographic issues in Bulgaria, the Chief Prosecution and a number of other institutions actively participated in the activity of the Managing Committee of the project and in the implementation of the main activities. The implemented partnership and interaction between the pointed key national institutions and non-governmental organizations from these countries gives hope for a sustainable and complete policy, targeted at the overcoming of the early marriages and at support for modernization of the Roma community.

The implementation of the project “Prevention of the early marriages” and the project “Combating Social Exclusion of Roma Women” showed that

currently within the Roma communities in Bulgaria, Romania and Greece, exists a favorable environment for the overcoming of the early /forced family cohabitations. The conducted researches have outlined several interrelated processes: the modern attitudes start dominating over the traditional in most of the Roma groups, the share of the modern Roma families is not a small one anymore, and even among the most conservative Roma groups there are young educated Roma, who would like to support the development of their communities. The realized local campaigns have proven that the fostering of the social work in the traditional and marginalized Roma communities, implemented by educated representatives of those communities in collaboration with the main stakeholder institutions may resolve particular cases of early/forced marriages and even to bring change of the attitudes.

It is necessary to realize systematic policies, supporting the complete development (modernization) of the Roma community, the inclusion/integration and the empowerment of Roma. Those policies would not be realized without the active participation of the Roma, and without the active engagement of the national governments. The active support on behalf of the European Commission for conduction of such policies is also imperatively needed.

The idea that the parents should decide whom their children to marry has become increasingly unacceptable. 52.2% of the Roma questioned within the survey do not approve this idea, while on the contrary 34.5% still accept it. 69.1% of the Roma reject the traditional payment of dowry.

CONCLUSIONS: Principles and models for prevention of early marriages in Roma community and for fostering Romani women emancipation

Certain principles and methods appeared as successful mean for overcoming the early marriages and for fostering Romani women emancipation:

On first position could be highlighted the principle of **personal example from successful Roma**: the young, educated Roma that have grown up before the eyes of the others and managed to achieve more than the rest without forgetting their Roma origin could influence significantly the others. The personal example of those Roma may influence in two ways. The first is by inviting successful Roma to participate in public meetings, hearings, etc. The other, more effective approach is with empowerment of those Roma and engaging them on certain positions to work for prevention of the early marriages in the community: among their group or among other Roma. Transformation of those Roma into *role models*, i.e. the validation of their authority is a particular guarantee for success.

There is a close link between the quality of education in the relevant locations, **building motivation for continuation of the education** and the distribution of the early/forced marriages. In this regard, the transformation of the schools - where a problem with the drop outs exist - in attractive and adequate to the modern requirements educational centers, inevitably would influence positively the prevention of the early marriages and births. The increasing of the motivation for studying would happen in many ways - through the measures pointed above (personal example from successful, community discussions, etc) and also through activities for improvement of the quality of the educational process in the existing schools, activities for introduction of different forms of inter-

cultural education (e.g. elective subjects on Roma folklore, celebration of the calendar holidays in school and etc.) and for involving the Roma parents in the educational process (through trainings for parents, involving the parents in the classes on Roma folklore, involving the Roma parents into the school Board and etc.). Increasing the motivation for continuation of the education influence significantly the communities where the process of overcoming of traditions is on the way and early, but forced marriages, happen. In these communities the initiative for early marriages is most often arising from the young people themselves and the increasing of the motivation for education directly leads to overcoming of the early marriages.

Support for community development is another important principle that should be applied in the efforts for prevention of the early marriages. The community and the different communal mechanisms for influence are very important for the life of the individual Roma. Thus, it is necessary the community to participates actively in the efforts for overcoming different negative practices. Even more - the complete community development has to be supported. That may occur through different community discussions, activities for support of individual members of the community and etc. The sustainable frame, where the community development may be supported, is the establishment of community centers that should systematically organize the indicated activities.

The principle of **interaction between all institutions**, which are relevant to the existence of the problem with the early/forced marriages, is of a high importance for its limitation. The structures

of the Ministry of education, Ministry of labor and social policy, Ministry of Justice that are situated in the problematic location has to be motivated and encouraged to be familiar with the problem and to take their responsibilities for its prevention. They should overcome their passiveness on the issue, which is usually being excused with the argument that “this is a Roma tradition and we do not want to get involved”. It appears that the image of the representatives of those institutions has a positive impact within the community in regard with the knowledge and keeping the existing rules.

Meanwhile, it should be born in mind that this is not enough. **The institutionalization of a position within the community** is needed. The influence of the institutions from “outside” as it is about the Roma community (especially with the more traditional Roma groups) is limited. The influence has to be supported by activities of people inside the community, who are doing the social work by working for solution of certain problems (like the one with the early marriages, drop out from school) and in the same time they support the development of the community itself. This position - **Roma community moderator** - should be institutionalized. Engaging Romani women on this positions is strong precondition for fostering Romani women emancipation.

Among the successful models could be highlighted the **community discussions**, where participants are the significant people from the community - the outer significant persons (e.g. the spiritual leader, the mayor of the village, the teacher and etc.), as well as the people with internal significance (e.g. informal leaders, who are usually wise people and their advices are being

accepted). In some Roma groups the internal authorities have some level of institutionalization: e.g. the so called “meshere” - among the group of the Kalderashi. Usually among the other groups there is no such institutionalization, but the informal leaders are very well known (“cheribashii”, “patroni”, and etc.) and should definitely be involved in the community discussions.

Another effective method appeared to be the **group discussion** where participants are not the whole community, but representatives of a certain group: e.g. young people, women and etc. The group discussion gives opportunity to the participants to debate the issues in depth, as long as there are no hesitations for speaking in front of the older people. The topics for these discussions cannot be limited to the early marriages only too, but to many others also.

Viewing the fact that there is a lack of information within the pilot municipalities among the young people on the matters of the **reproductive health and the family planning**, obviously there is a necessity of organizing conversations and discussions on this topic that should be served in the best way in regard with the audience. It should be born in mind that there are serious differences in the approach of serving this information in Roma community: depending on the different Roma groups, on the level of modernization of the local community and on the age (the generation) of the audience. For example, the usual measures for distribution of the information on reproductive health and the family planning could have a contraindicative effect in the groups of the Kalderashi, Burgudjii (especially those in North-East Bulgaria, the Thracian Kalajdjii

and etc.: absolutely different information materials are needed there, that are relevant with the cultural norms of the Group.

The method of the **family-group conference** could be briefly defined as a method, of which aim is to make the family a generator of the positive social change and is based on the understanding that the families could find solution for their problems by themselves, they have enough resources to manage with the problems of their children, as well as the right to participate in the decision making in planning the future. This method proved to be extremely suitable for work with the Roma families that not even rarely deny to let in an external intervention in managing their family issues, but often they also have enough capacity to make the best decision for their children, if they receive a minimal support and to realize the responsibility which they bear for this decision. In most cases it is relevant to transform the method into **community conference** through the involvement of internal authorities from the community: often, namely the influence by the side of the community is decisive for an early marriage (e.g. through the power of tradition) and in such cases it is important to engage the community authorities in the prevention of the early marriages through the model of the **community conference**.

From door-to-door campaigns in the Roma neighborhoods are also efficient method. Individual conversations or family discussions within the frames of such a campaign appear to be an effective measure for increasing the awareness on the issue of the “early marriages”, which a required step for its solution.

The described methods are not a “magic tool” for immediate success. Their application depends a lot on the skills of those who realize the activities for prevention of the early marriages: one and the same approach could be very effective or to bring contra results. The different methods should be in accordance with the specifics of the local community: some of them may be applied among all Roma, while others will influence effectively certain groups. In any case, it should be born in mind that resolving the issue of the early marriages cannot be achieved in a short time: continuous and systematic efforts are needed in order the described methods and principles to bring sustainable results.



TOWARDS COMPREHENSIVE POLICY FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION OF ROMA WOMEN**Declaration from the International conference****“Policies for the empowerment of Roma women in the context of European policies for Social Inclusion”,****Sofia, November 29, 2010**

We, representatives of NGOs, independent experts and institutions working for the social inclusion of Roma

Having regard to the fact that:

- Protection of human rights and social inclusion of vulnerable groups are among the basic principles of the European Union;
- Roma are Europe's largest minority, and integration and social inclusion of Roma community is one of the main challenges facing Member States and the Union as a whole;
- Successful integration and social inclusion of Roma meet many challenges at national and European levels. Among them at national level highlight the need for greater commitment to targeted action for Roma integration (including the use of EU funds in this respect), for investing the necessary financial resources in activities for social inclusion of Roma, for development of appropriate administrative infrastructure of the process of Roma integration in most European countries, for real participation of Roma organizations and Roma community as a whole in the planning, implementation and evaluation of policies targeting Roma. Among the challenges at European level highlight the need for faster progress on the preparation of a European Roma Strategy, for establishing an appropriate administrative infrastructure (including increasing the competences of the European Roma Platform), for increasing the constituency of European Roma organizations and others. These challenges should be addressed through appropriate action by national governments, European institutions

and civil society (including Roma organizations);

- Romani women form one of the most vulnerable group among European Union citizens and often face multiple discrimination: once as Roma, the second time as women;

- Achieving substantive equality and social inclusion of Romani women face multiple challenges - in the mainstream society, within the Roma community and so on. Some of these challenges relate to achieving faster progress in policies for Roma integration, increasing effectiveness of institutions working in the Roma community, strengthening the participation of successful Romani women in the administration, political and public life, etc. Modernization and overcoming patriarchal practices like early marriages, forced marriages, stopping girls from school, etc. that still exist among some Roma groups and classes (not including all the Roma) are another important challenge that must be properly addressed;

Considering also that the project *“Prevention of early / forced marriages”* in Bulgaria, Greece and Romania clearly demonstrates that to overcome the traditional (patriarchal) practices such as early and forced getting married, to support the modernization processes in the Roma community and to achieve equality and social inclusion of Romani women is necessary:

- Promoting social work in Roma community, including the provision of specific community-based services;
- Promoting innovative approaches for

mobilizing and involving local Roma communities, incl. support for the educated and successful Roma and their commitment to community work;

- Cooperation and joint actions of the institutions working in the Roma community at the local level (social, educational, health and other institutions), NGOs, Roma authority (formal and informal)

WE CALL UPON all stakeholders: national and European institutions, intergovernmental organizations, civil society and the Roma community **FOR:**

1. Strong and comprehensive national policy for Roma integration that takes into consideration the challenges for Romani women emancipation: most countries with large Roma population in the EU have approved national documents for Roma integration. However, there is *strong need of concrete and forward-looking measures to implement these documents: with clearly defined financing, proper administrative infrastructure and mechanisms for engaging the civil society and Roma community itself.* It is also necessary these documents, as well as the overall national policy for the Roma to take into account the unequal situation of Romani women and to include specific measures to achieve equality and social inclusion of Romani women;

2. Strong and comprehensive European policy on Roma integration that takes into consideration the challenges for Romani women emancipation: So far, the European policy for Roma inclusion has defined 10 Common Basic Principles and has been seen mainly as a process of exchange of good practices among the member-states through the European Roma Platform. These are important founding steps. Nevertheless, the

recent events have outlined that these steps are not enough and should be further developed towards stronger European Roma Strategy that defines common *European standards for Roma inclusion and mechanisms for monitoring the implementation* of these standards at national and regional levels. The European Roma Platform should go beyond the exchange of experience and to appropriate stronger policy development, consultation and monitoring functions. The usage of European funds for Roma inclusion should become stronger obligation for the member-states;

3. Linking the overall European gender policy to take account of the challenges Romani women meets: mainstreaming the issue of Romani women emancipation in the agenda of all institutions involved in formulating and implementing policies for equality of women and the agenda of European Women's Lobby should be encouraged;

4. Promoting widespread application of innovative approach for supporting the modernization of the Roma community and overcoming the patriarchal practices hampering the realization of the Roma woman: this approach should be based on activation of local Roma communities (including by supporting the efforts of successful Roma and their engagement with the modernization of Roma community), promotion of social work in Roma communities (including through the development of innovative community-based services) and cooperative action among the institutions working with Roma communities, NGOs and Roma authorities. Applying this approach should become a priority in the overall policy for Roma integration and emancipation of Romani women