

Romania

1. INSTITUTIONAL ISSUES

1.1 DAP Drafting

In January 2005, as the Decade of Roma Inclusion was about to start, Romania seemed on track in terms of developing a draft national Decade Action Plan (hereinafter, DAP). At the third meeting of the Decade's International Steering Committee (hereinafter, ISC) in June 2004, Romania had not only presented a first draft of its DAP, but also cost estimates for many of the line items included in the draft DAP. By the fourth and final ISC meeting in October 2004, the Romanian delegation had produced a more detailed version of the DAP, which it presented as being close to the expected final form.

The various drafts for an action plan were supposed to be produced in consultation with Roma civil society representatives. To this end, the Office for Roma Issues, the governmental agency coordinating Roma-related activities at the time, began cooperating with Roma nongovernmental organizations on preparations for the Decade as early as March 2004. At that time the Office for Roma Issues cooperated with the human rights group Romani CRISS to co-host a seminar that introduced the Decade process to Roma NGOs across the country. Roma representatives, both from the government side and from among civil society, have participated in the ISC meetings and in various seminars and informal meetings that were organized in Romania in the year leading up the launch of the Decade.

But NGOs and outside observers have noted that Roma NGOs were not involved in the actual drafting of the DAP. The openness initially demonstrated by Romania's government during the Decade preparations in early 2004 appears to have disappeared by the fourth ISC meeting, when Romania presented a draft DAP that had been produced solely by government representatives, with no input from Roma civil society. Consequently, tensions between Roma NGOs and governmental agencies in charge of the Decade increased. For their part, Roma NGOs have pointed out that too little information was available on specific government activities, that the flow of information was inconsistent, and that the decision-making process often lacked transparency. Meanwhile government representatives questioned the legitimacy of the NGO participation. These officials expressed the concern that the young Roma leaders involved in the preparatory process since 2004 may not be representatives of the diverse Roma communities in the Romania, and they worried that it was not clear to them what NGOs had to offer to the Decade process as a whole.

Despite these troubles, by the end of the 2004 preparatory year, Romania seemed to have taken an early lead among the Decade countries, even announcing its intention to host the first Decade Secretariat in 2005. But Romania's early gestures toward adopting the Decade's framework have yet to be matched by effective action in terms of actual implementation of reforms in support Roma inclusion.

The clearest indicator of Romania's poor implementation is that, as of this writing, the Romanian

government had not adopted a DAP. Such inaction calls into question Romania's commitment to the Decade and, more importantly, to Roma inclusion as a long-term policy goal. Two years into the Decade, the Romanian government is finally able to give a specific date for the adoption of the DAP. This means significant time was lost in terms of coordinating policy on Roma inclusion, mandating specific measures of responsible state agencies, and allocating the necessary budgetary and human resources to reach to the objectives to which Romania subscribed when joining the Decade.

For the purposes of the present report, the lack of an adopted DAP also means that there is no standard document against which progress can be measured in Romania. In the absence of an adopted DAP, no official report or document on the implementation of Decade-related objectives was produced, either. In 2006, the National Agency for Roma produced a report on activities relating to the Romanian presidency of the Decade (*Decade of Roma Inclusion—One Year of Romanian Presidency*), but it does not cover progress in substantive areas. The following analysis, therefore, will use as reference the available drafts of the DAP, along with the whole range of Roma-related policies currently in place until the plans are adopted by the government decision we cannot talk about Action plan implementation.

1.2 Draft DAP Content

Two draft DAPs have been made available to NGOs to date. One version, which is available on the Decade website, appears to be a draft text dating back to the 2004 preparatory year (Government of Romania, *Action Plan*). The other version was published in 2006 as one part of a National Agency for Roma study that was prepared by agency President Marica Ionescu and Sorin Cace and focused on policies targeting Roma in Romania (Ionescu and Cace, *Public Policies*). The 2006 version closely follows the 2004 draft, with some changes in the segment on housing. The later version focuses much more on reforming the legislative framework affecting the housing situation of Roma, while the 2004 text proposes the rehabilitation of Roma settlements and an increase in the provision of social housing in general.

Despite this difference, the two drafts share a similar outlook. They were both built on the existing government-adopted National Strategy to Improve the Status of Roma in Romania (hereinafter, the National Strategy on Roma), which means they have carried over some of the problems associated with the government strategy in terms of delegating specific responsibilities, coordinating national and local structures, securing adequate funding for actual implementation, and generating data for proper monitoring of progress. As outside observers have noted, since the adoption of the National Strategy to Improve the Status of Roma in Romania, there have been several gaps: the government has failed to ensure the operational effectiveness of the various implementing institutions at both central and local level; no provisions have been made to secure adequate funding for implementation, either through direct allocation or through line ministries; and there has been no close monitoring of progress on specific objectives (Focus Consultancy, *Assessment of the Roma Strategy*).

Thus, while the two draft DAPs both list a similar series of objectives—and the 2004 version even includes indicators for measuring progress—neither version specifies any concrete policy measures and means to achieve the stated objectives. Should the final Romanian DAP closely follow these early drafts, the government risks turning the Decade framework into an empty shell, with no clear actions, outcomes and achievements to show by 2015.

Ionescu, the president of the National Agency for Roma, indicated that a more detailed DAP is being developed by the government. When interviewed by NGO representatives for the purposes of the present report, Ionescu, whose agency is the coordinating body for the Decade in Romania, said the new draft DAP template includes concrete policy measures associated with each objective. She said all of these measures are linked to specific institutions responsible for their implementation, a timeline for action, and an estimated budget; but the new draft has yet to clarify the coordination mechanism for implementing all activities under the framework of the Decade.

In her interview, National Agency for Roma President Ionescu said that not all sections of the new DAP were fully developed. She said the most detailed section of the new DAP is the one on education, fol-

lowed by the one on housing, while the employment section had yet to be developed in terms of specific measures, timelines and budgets. Ionescu said the line-item costs in the new draft DAP are based on each individual ministry's budget estimations, as well as funds available from the state budget, the European Union, and projects financed by outside sources. The National Agency for Roma cannot, by itself, provide direct funds from the state budget, as it is institutionally and financially dependent on the General Secretariat of the government. In the absence of an adequate coordination mechanism, many decisions as to what will actually be done under the framework of the Decade are left to the good will and resources of individual ministries. This system has not functioned to date. No funds from the state budget were allocated by individual ministries to Decade-specific activities in the budgets submitted to Parliament for 2005, 2006 and 2007.

As of January 2006, the following process still needed to take place before a DAP could be adopted by the government: A new draft of the DAP had to be submitted to relevant national institutions for consultation, after which it would be submitted for review to the county Roma offices at the regional level. Only then would the draft be opened for review through consultations with Roma NGOs. Following NGO consultations, the DAP would be submitted to the government. All ministries involved would have a chance to review the draft DAP, comment on it, and formally approve it. Once this process is completed, the government can adopt the DAP as public policy, in the form of a governmental decision. According to National Agency for Roma President Ionescu, this entire process was expected to be completed by mid-2007.

Ionescu said the current draft takes into consideration the need for complementarity among a number of intersecting policy documents that are otherwise very poorly coordinated, including the National Strategy on Roma, the National Anti-Poverty and Social Inclusion Plan, as well as the Joint Memorandum of Social Inclusion concluded by the government of Romania with the European Commission, and the UN Millennium Development Goals. Indeed, some poverty reduction objectives mentioned in these policy documents crossed over into the first two draft DAPs. Some anti-discrimination objectives, such as school desegregation, equal access to healthcare provision,

and the need for intercultural education, also appear as cross-cutting themes in the first two draft DAPs. The gender dimension, however, is nowhere to be found in the draft action plans. As of this writing, it is not clear whether the new draft DAP being prepared by the government will incorporate gender in all sectoral priorities, according to Decade commitments.

1.3 Decade Coordination and Implementation

Thus far, the governmental structure in charge of coordinating Decade-related activities has been the National Agency for Roma. Set up in 2004, the National Agency for Roma was intended to provide Roma with better, more influential representation at the government level. The agency was expected to take on a wide array of responsibilities, including the development of policies relating to Roma in Romania. In effect, the National Agency for Roma is subordinated to the General Secretariat of the government, and it functions primarily as a coordination and monitoring office, with a very limited independent budgetary allowance, a small office in Bucharest and eight regional offices, each staffed by three employees objectives (Focus Consultancy).

Though still young, the National Agency for Roma is the product of a tumultuous history of representation, delegation and reshuffling of Roma-related issues by various Romanian governments over the past 10 years. The National Agency for Roma is the successor to the National Office for Roma, which was part of the no-longer-extant Department for the Protection of National Minorities—itsself a part of the General Secretariat of the government—between 1997 and 2000. In January 2001, the National Office for Roma was transferred to the Ministry of Public Information, which is also no-longer-extant. In July 2003, the National Office for Roma was transferred back to the General Secretariat of the government and renamed the Office for Roma Issues. In February 2004, the Office for Roma Issues was transferred to the Department for Inter-Ethnic Relations, which was subordinated to the General Secretariat of the government. Before the last general elections, in October 2004, the Office for Roma Issues was replaced by the National Agency for Roma, established by means of an emergency

government ordinance. The head of the Office for Roma Issues was appointed as President of the agency in November 2004, only to be replaced by the current leader, Ionescu, in July 2005. This series of constant transfers and reorganizations severely impeded the development of the institution, leaving it in chronic disarray. Periods of relative institutional stability are overshadowed by an acute awareness of this history and of the fact that appointments to the presidency of the National Agency for Roma are understood to be political, and therefore inherently exposed to the changing winds of Romanian politics objectives (Focus Consultancy).

Nonetheless, the new agency enjoys relative autonomy as compared to its previous incarnations, and, at least in theory, it carries more weight than them, as the head of the institution holds the rank of a state secretary. The current set-up would allow the National Agency for Roma to perform some of its coordination functions under the Decade framework, though outside observers have questioned both the internal management of the agency and its capacity to work directly with line ministries' objectives (Focus Consultancy).

Ionescu, the current president of the National Agency for Roma, is a Roma who came to work for the government after a productive career in the NGO world, and her presence could help ease current tensions between Roma civil society and the government. She has proven herself on occasion to be a powerful advocate, so she can help raise the visibility of the Decade, both inside the government and among the public at large. But in the absence of a DAP, it is difficult to assess how—or, indeed, whether—the National Agency for Roma carries out its substantive duties as Decade coordinator in Romania.

What is clear, however, is that the National Agency for Roma gives priority to implementing the National Strategy on Roma in comparison to implementing goals of the Decade of Roma Inclusion. While the Decade plan is not yet approved, several hundred people have been hired for local implementation of the National Strategy on Roma. According to Ionescu, presenting the Decade as policy priority carries the risk of dramatic cuts, or at least reduced local influence, in the structure for the implementation of the National Strategy on Roma. Ionescu said the National Agency for Roma is not willing to take such a political risk.

2. FOCUS AREAS

2.1 Education

It is difficult to assess the relative success of various educational policies affecting Roma in Romania because no nationally representative enrolment and attainment data for Roma is consistently produced on an annual basis. The few statistical studies in the field are far from comprehensive, and they offer only one-time snapshots of the system, making it impossible to trace the evolution of education for Roma over time (Ministry of Education, *School Participation*). Most of the publicly available data comes from NGO reports and studies commissioned by international development agencies working in Romania (EUMAP, *Equal Access*; European Roma Rights Centre, *Stigmata*; Roma Education Fund, *Advancing Education*). The information that is available hints at a complex picture, in which the educational system has some progressive elements, particularly at the level of the Ministry of Education and Research (hereinafter, the Ministry of Education), while there is a lack of real progress on the lower levels, in primary and secondary schools.

Beginning with the early 1990s, Romania developed a series of affirmative action policies aimed at increasing university and high-school-level attendance among Roma students. What began in 1992, with 10 places allocated for Roma students in the School for Social Work of the Bucharest University, expanded over 10 years to a countrywide program, with 422 places allocated for Roma in 37 universities, according to Ministry of Education officials interviewed for the purposes of this report. This growth was mandated by annual orders from the Ministry of Education. But universities themselves also took on affirmative action policies that went beyond the requirements of the ministry. This is the case with qualification programs for Roma teachers without a college degree: Several universities took the initiative to expand these training programs by 50 places every two years. Similar affirmative action policies were developed for vocational training institutions and high schools throughout the country.

Additional positive developments include programs that aim to improve preschool and primary school attendance for disadvantaged groups by providing free school meals, subsidized school supplies and free

transportation. The provision of child allowances was also tied to school attendance until recently, again with the idea of motivating low-income families, not only Roma, to send their children to school. An adult literacy program called “second chance” is now underway, and it is reportedly mostly attended by young mothers and Roma who dropped out of school at an early age (EUMAP, *Equal Access*; Roma Education Fund).

Romania also developed Romani language programs much sooner than some of the other Decade countries. As early as 1990, a first set of three Romani language classes were set up as an experiment in pedagogical high schools in Bucharest, Bacau and Targu Mures, with the intention of training future Romani language teachers. At the central level, civil servant Gheorghe Sarau of the Ministry of Education spearheaded these efforts by helping to set up a Romani language program at the Bucharest University in 1992. Romani language programs are now scattered throughout the Romanian educational system—serving students from the preschool level to the university level. Inspectors of Roma education have been appointed in each county to coordinate activities relating to Romani language education and Roma culture and history classes (EUMAP, *Equal Access*; Roma Education Fund). Unfortunately, these inspectors often work only on a part-time basis, and they do not have the time to effectively oversee all the programs under their supervision. Moreover, NGOs have noted that the inspectors seem to be appointed based on their political affiliation, which casts suspicion on their length of tenure and their commitment to the issues of Roma education.

One other improvement that should be mentioned is the institution of Roma school mediators in Romania. The position of Roma school mediators was created to improve school enrolment and attendance and to prevent school abandonment for Roma children. The initial idea was to place a school mediator in each school, but the number of qualified school mediators is still very low. This means that each mediator is usually responsible for several schools in one area, a situation that greatly reduces their effectiveness (EUMAP, *Equal Access*; Roma Education Fund). As of this writing, the Ministry of Education had declared its intention to assimilate school mediators into the category of auxiliary teaching staff, and to extend the program to also assist non-Roma who may benefit from additional support. This move is partly motivated by a need to

increase the number of school mediators and to systematize their work.

While affirmative action policies and the introduction of Romani language curricula appear to have improved school attendance at all levels for Roma students, the Romanian education system continues to fail to provide Roma with equal opportunities to quality education in regular programs. By the government’s own admission, educational segregation is a systemic problem in Romania (Ministry of Education, *Notification 29323*). The immediate justifications given for segregation include: the combination of residential segregation with faulty school districting; abusive implementation of educational reforms for ethnic minorities; inadequate diagnostic and assessment procedures for placement in special schools; or simply “white flight” towards private schools or “better” schools, which almost always means predominantly non-Roma schools. Whatever the explanation given, many Roma children study separately from their non-Roma peers—in separate classes, buildings, or schools, and even in special schools originally intended for children with intellectual disabilities. These predominantly or exclusively-Roma classes or schools exhibit appalling conditions. Not only are they missing handbooks and essential supplies, such as chalk or paper; often basic furniture, heating, sanitation, or even windows are nowhere to be seen. Teachers in segregated schools are ill-prepared and unmotivated to work with their students. School abandonment among Roma students in segregated settings is high. Those who do stay in school can spend years without learning to read or to do basic math (EUMAP; European Roma Rights Centre, *Stigmata*; Roma Education Fund).

The first cases of segregation in Romania were documented in 2003 by the human rights group Romani CRISS (*Report on Educational Segregation*). Soon after, other domestic and international NGOs reported more cases. The legal avenues to address the issues proved insufficient. For instance, in response to a complaint submitted on behalf of Roma parents by Romani CRISS, the Romanian anti-discrimination body, the National Council for Combating Discrimination, issued an inconsequential “warning” to the school authorities guilty of segregating Roma children away from non-Roma (Gergely, “Anti-Discrimination Legislation”). In the light of the ineffective application of the law, activists saw that advocacy was the only way to effect policy change. Following increased pressure from NGOs and

other independent observers, the Ministry of Education adopted a Notification that mandated desegregation in the Romanian school system (Ministry of Education, *Notification 29323*). The Notification tasked school inspectorates to present complete and accurate information on the ethnic composition of local schools, and to propose solutions for integrating Roma and majority students in regular schools. Through the ministry, EU PHARE funding was dedicated to such desegregation projects, and a steering committee, which included representatives of civil society and Roma rights groups, was formed to oversee the PHARE-funded desegregation programs (Ministry of Education, *PHARE Program*).

But the ministry's progressive policy document has at least in part failed to produce the expected effects. As of this writing, cases of segregation continue to be documented by rights groups throughout the country. It is not clear how many counties in Romania have actually developed the mandated desegregation plans. There has been no independent monitoring of the use of PHARE funding intended for desegregation projects, but there are indications that at least some of the projects funded through the program did not actually end in the integration of Roma students in mainstream schools (Andruszkiewicz, *School Desegregation*). Under these circumstances, it is hard to imagine how the government hopes to achieve the draft DAP's objective of eliminating segregation by 2008.

2.2 Employment

The only available data on employment outcomes for Roma in Romania has been provided by the job fairs for Roma organized annually since 2003 by the National Employment Agency within the Ministry of Labor, Social Solidarity, and the Family (hereinafter, the Ministry of Labor). The data provides only specific figures for the number of persons attending the fair and the number of successful Roma applicants selected for employment. For example, in 2005, the fair was attended by 8,239 persons, out of whom 2,243 Roma were selected for future employment (National Agency for Roma, *Progress Report*). Outside these very small annual snapshots of the job fairs, there is no reliable, nationally representative, regularly collected data on the employment situation of Roma.

The job fairs for Roma are not only the sole source of limited information on the employment of Roma—they appear to be the only functioning active employment measures specifically targeting Roma in Romania to date. Moreover, the success of these fairs is felt on a very small scale, as they are not properly publicized and are therefore attended by only small samples of both potential employers and actual job-seekers. Roma NGOs have additionally pointed out that the program is not adequately tailored to the needs of Roma as beneficiaries, because the majority of jobs on offer at the fairs require qualifications higher than those usually attained by Roma.

While the job fairs may be imperfect, outside of some short-term PHARE-funded self-employment programs, there are no other mechanisms for actively promoting the employment of Roma. Other positive employment measures—such as offering tax breaks to employers hiring Roma, encouraging the revitalization of traditional crafts and trades, or providing farmland and supporting farming programs for Roma—appear on paper in the National Strategy for Roma, but have not been enacted in practice.

EU programs like PHARE and SAPARD have rarely been available to Roma, because the complex financing system is not conducive to targeting projects whose direct beneficiaries are Roma. Financing is sometimes only available to public institutions, for whom Roma have been a low-priority constituency. Often, such programs as microfinancing for income-generating activities have been available only to legally registered community initiative groups; this excludes, by default, the poorest and most isolated communities, which do not have the resources or know-how to incorporate initiative groups.

Part of the problem may come from the fact that the Ministry of Labor, which not only coordinates employment policy but also often serves as a conduit for outside funding, has yet to develop consistent policies for Roma. It is not even clear whether Roma inclusion in employment is in fact seen as a priority area for the ministry's work. According to the "Impreuna" Agency for Community Development, a Bucharest-based NGO, the Ministry of Labor and the National Employment Agency have not developed mechanisms for communicating with Roma communities, and they have yet to establish a system for cooperation with NGOs. The little cooperation that has taken place to

date occurred around some limited training and retraining programs, which were basically outsourced by the government to Roma groups.

The National Employment Plan, while formally recognizing the existence of the National Strategy on Roma, does not include specific provisions targeting Roma. The National Employment Plan only addresses Roma within the general category of disadvantaged groups. This means Roma are lumped together with recent high school and university graduates, people with disabilities, the elderly, etc. (Government of Romania, *National Employment Plan*). But the problems that Roma face are specific to their group, and this one-size-fits-all approach may not ensure that resources are allocated to Roma inclusion as part of the Decade initiative. The National Agency for Roma, however, informed the authors of this report that an understanding with the Ministry of Labor exists according to which Roma are placed in first position, as a priority target among the broader category of disadvantaged groups.

The flipside of inclusion policies—a system to redress cases of discrimination—has been slightly more effective. Since 2000, Romania has had an anti-discrimination law in place, and successive packages of amendments have brought the law closer to alignment with EU legislation as of this writing (Weber, *Report*). But the actual enactment of the law has been crippled: The implementing body, the National Council for Combating Discrimination, was organized slowly, and when it was finally established, it showed a clear lack of determination to deal with discrimination on racial grounds. The mechanism has proven to be a blunt, imperfect instrument for Roma in the area of employment. True, the National Council for Combating Discrimination punished and actively banned the most overt forms of discrimination, such as job advertisements expressly barring Roma from applying. But the council has yet to deal head-on with other widespread types of discrimination in employment, including victimization and harassment, even though one of the organization's earliest actions was to publish and disseminate anti-discrimination guidelines for employers (Holtmaat, *Catalysts for Change*).

Under these circumstances, it comes as no surprise that the employment sections of the available Romanian draft DAPs are underdeveloped. The drafts list only the broadest objectives for addressing Roma employment needs, and they do not provide for any

specific measures or financing mechanisms to achieve those objectives. Employment is a policy area where Romania is still a long way away from enacting effective programs for Roma inclusion.

2.3 Health

Roma health is an area where the Romanian government has been more actively involved in recent years. For example, the Ministry of Health has a functioning Ministerial Commission for Roma. The commission is chaired by a state secretary within the Ministry of Health who is charged specifically with oversight of Roma policies. The Ministry of Health is also the only ministry to have a specific budget line for Roma allocated in the annual state budget.

The main Roma-related expenditure of the ministry has to do with training and employing health mediators. The institution of the health mediators in Romania was initiated by the NGO Romani CRISS in a pilot project, and then was officially recognized and taken over by the Ministry of Health in 2003.

Since the inception of the program, Roma health mediators have encountered resistance. Health professionals questioned the mediators' qualifications and the very need for their existence. Meanwhile, health-care administrators treated mediators as external to the healthcare system and, consequently, the administrators provided no institutional support, such as offices where health mediators could be found at regular hours, or other logistical assistance Party (Network Public Health Program, *Mediating Romani Health*). In recent years, NGOs such as Romani CRISS have also expressed concern that new mediators could only be included in the program if they had formal or informal affiliation with a specific political organization, the Social-Democrat Roma.

Nevertheless, health mediators have gradually been accepted as a necessary part of the healthcare system, and their numbers are set to increase over the coming years. Official figures set the number of mediators in 2005 at 176, far below the recommended minimum of 600 mediators, which is estimated as the lowest amount needed for adequate nationwide coverage (National Agency for Roma, *Progress Report*).

National campaigns against tuberculosis, funded by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and

Malaria, have reached some Roma communities. In recent years, the Ministry of Health's vaccination drives that have included Roma communities have usually been organized in cooperation with the National Agency for Roma. NGO-led harm reduction programs, such as the ones run by the Romanian Association Against AIDS (known by its Romanian acronym, ARAS) have also included Roma communities.

The draft DAPs make reference to extending the network of health mediators and to developing preventive care and health education programs in Roma communities. They also include a series of incentives for medical personnel working in largely Roma areas, as well as a set of sensitivity training and anti-discrimination measures aimed at ensuring equal access to quality healthcare for Roma. But in the absence of specific measures, timelines, indicators or budget allocations, it is not possible to assess whether the broad goals set by the draft DAPs comprehensively and adequately address the health issues of Roma communities throughout Romania.

2.4 Housing

As part of the National Strategy on Roma, a number of measures to directly improve the living conditions of Roma have been developed at the central government level. The Ministry of Transportation, Construction, and Tourism (hereinafter, the Ministry of Tourism) created a four-year emergency-measures plan to rehabilitate houses and areas inhabited by a significant number of Roma. The ministry also developed a program for building social housing and a funding system for partnership between private or public companies and NGOs that intend to improve access to public utilities in locations with large numbers of Roma (Ministry of Tourism, *Housing and Environment Plans*). The ministry boasts some measurable achievements under these programs: Between 2003 and 2005, some 10,017 housing units were delivered, and water supply systems were built in 42 villages. The Ministry of Administration and Internal Affairs also states that about 95,620 Roma families who do not own agricultural land have been identified in rural areas (National Agency for Roma,

Progress Report). Former Prime-Minister Adrian Nastase announced that agricultural land will be distributed to Roma during the 2004 election year, but no concrete measure followed this promise.

The two draft DAPs appear to reflect these existing policies. Furthermore, the draft DAP presented in the 2006 study proposes a series of additional legislative measures aimed at regulating property rights and rental agreements, settling issues relating to unregistered settlements, and commissioning a variety of studies on urban planning, the typology of Roma housing, etc. In the absence of specific measures, timelines, indicators or budget allocations, it is not possible to assess whether these different programs and studies amount to a coherent, adequate policy on Roma housing on a national level. At least these programs and documents, produced by the government, do indicate recognition of housing rights for Roma as a legitimate policy area at the central level.

However, the good intentions expressed by the national government are often at odds with the actions of local authorities. Independent monitoring by domestic and international NGOs has revealed a pattern of housing rights violations that further deepen the segregation and marginalization of Roma in both urban and rural areas. In recent years, cases in which local authorities forcibly evicted Roma from their homes and relocated them into extremely inadequate housing—if the authorities provided alternate accommodation at all—have been widely publicized in the press. Houses in unregistered settlements are routinely demolished. Roma families in urban areas are frequently evicted from their homes in the center of town and relocated to the outskirts, where their circumstances are often appalling. For example, Roma have been moved to former state farm stables, the edges of city garbage dumps, or in the proximity of water treatment plants. Despite the strong outcry of civil society groups, and the media attention given to many of these cases, central authorities have made no effort to stop, reverse or correct the actions of local authorities, and the pattern is set to continue in the coming years. It is not clear whether the Romanian DAP, when it is finally adopted, will include any measures to address this serious ongoing housing rights problem.