Table of contents:

I. Introduction ................................................................................................................ .......... 3

II. Description of the problems ................................................................................................ 4

1. EDUCATION ............................................................................................................................... 4
2. THE ROMA VERSUS POLISH SOCIETY ........................................................................................ 6
3. WORK - UNEMPLOYMENT .......................................................................................................... 6
4. HEALTH ....................................................................................................................................... 7
5. THE SITUATION OF LIFE ............................................................................................................. 8
6. SECURITY, CRIMES COMMITTED AGAINST THE BACKGROUND OF ETHNICITY ....................... 9
7. THE ROMA CULTURE AS WELL AS PRESERVING THE ROMA ETHNICAL IDENTITY ............ 10
8. THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE ROMA COMMUNITY........................................................................ 11

III. The state’s support ................................................................................................................ 11

IV. Law-international conditions ................................................................................................ 12

V. The Programme’s Assumptions ............................................................................................. 16

VI. The Programme’s goals ........................................................................................................ 17

1. THE EDUCATION ...................................................................................................................... 17
2. THE ROMA VERSUS THE CIVIC SOCIETY .................................................................................. 18
3. COUNTERACTING THE UNEMPLOYMENT ................................................................................ 18
4. HEALTH ....................................................................................................................................... 18
5. THE LIFE SITUATION ................................................................................................................... 18
6. SECURITY, COUNTERACTION OF THE CRIMES COMMITTED AGAINST A BACKGROUND OF ETHNICITY ......................................................................................................................... 19
7. THE CULTURE AND PRESERVATION THE ROMA’S ETHNICAL IDENTITY ................................. 19
8. THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE ROMA COMMUNITY........................................................................ 19

VII. The means used in achieving the Programme’s goals ......................................................... 20

1. THE EDUCATION ..................................................................................................................... 20
2. THE ROMA VERSUS THE CIVIC SOCIETY .................................................................................. 22
3. COUNTERACTION OF THE UNEMPLOYMENT ............................................................................ 23
4. HEALTH ....................................................................................................................................... 23
5. THE LIFE SITUATION ................................................................................................................... 24
6. SECURITY, COUNTERACTING CRIMES COMMITTED AGAINST THE ETHNICAL BACKGROUND .. 24
7. THE CULTURE AND PRESERVATION OF THE ROMA’S ETHNICAL IDENTITY ............................. 25
8. THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE ROMA COMMUNITY........................................................................ 25

VIII. The Programme’s financing rules ...................................................................................... 26

IX. The Programme's execution monitoring ............................................................................... 29

X. THE ANNEXES.................................................................................................................... 30
Annex 1 - The population and distribution
Annex 2 - The Roma organizations in Poland
Annex 3 - The schedule of financing the Programme for the Roma community in Poland
Annex 4 - The monitoring
Annex 5 - The Report of the National Minorities Affairs Malopolski Governor’s Attorney which talks about the execution of the pilot government programme for the Roma community in the Malopolska province for the years 2001 – 2003 in years 2001 – 2002
Annex 6 - The Roma in Poland – description of the situation
I. Introduction

Currently approximately 20,000 people belonging to the Roma ethincal\(^1\) minority are living in the Republic of Poland. These people suffer mostly from severe social and economical situation that differ greatly from contemporary life standards. The problem of Roma society has been approached repeatedly by: the commissioner for civil rights protection, the Members of Parliament (especially the members of the Parliamentary National and Ethnical Minorities Committee), the government administration, the self-government principle, the media, as well as the non-political organizations. On the other hand the Roma society is looking on its own for ways to maintain its national identity and solve the pressing problems.

The situation of Polish Roma had been caused by, among the others, the policy enforced by the authorities of The PRL (the Polish People’s Republic), which similarly like in the other communist states, imposed compulsory Roma assimilation. The main tool of this policy in Poland was the so called productiveness-settlement campaign which resulted in 1964 enforced settlement of the majority of Roma people who at that time led a nomadic life. Those that belonged to groups such as: Polish Roma, Kelderasza and Lovara (the Carpathian Roma had been living a settled type of life for already few centuries) were most frequently being settled down in most socially demoted city’s districts. These actions had been destructive for the economical basis of the Roma existences connected with the nomadic life the Roma led. The Carpathian Roma had been given jobs as unqualified workforce.

The political system and economical changes that took place in the beginning of the nineties hadn’t been favourable to improvement of the difficult situation the Roma society in Poland was in. The majority of Roma begun to suffer from unemployment, decrease of sense of security, social and health problems. Education and qualification are the basic tramps of people that look for job in contemporary market economy whereas the Roma aren’t able to effectively compete and get employed. In addition, the strong cultural distinction and lack of trust toward people that aren’t part of the Roma community, as well as to the state institutions, makes even socially and economically wealthy Roma remain on the social margin of Poland. They resign from participating in

\(^1\) Annex 1 contains the estimated data in the division into provinces
the public life, they don’t use the rights guaranteed by the Republic of Poland to the national and ethnical minorities.

II. Description of the problems

1. Education

a) description of the situation. The education level of the majority of the Polish Roma should be described as very low. Illiteracy is a common phenomenon among the older generation. About 70% of Polish Roma children attend the school regularly. In some communities the majority of children ignore the school’s responsibility. The attendance of Polish Roma students is low. The children often go on prolonged trips with their parents (accompanying them during e.g. house-to-house selling) therefore the weekends and holidays get lengthened beyond all means. Girls at age of 13 – 16 are already considered to be candidates for wives. After getting married, those young wives rarely go back to school.

The situation of the Roma in the age of political system as well as economy changes of the beginning of the nineties made the Roma leaders and activists realize that the education is essential for the Roma to rightfully participate in the modern world. The Roma leaders realized that the lack of education or even illiteracy is one of the main reasons why the Roma hold low social status or experience economical handicap.

b) the problems. According to the report “The Roma about their children’s education – exemplified by the Carpathian Gypsies” done in 1997 by the Association of Roma in Poland ordered by the Department of Education and Science, what majority of Roma children lack is the preliminary preparation assured by the nursery school education. As a rule, Roma people don’t send their children to nursery schools. One of the reasons is lack of financial means required for the nursery school education. There were also cases when the Department of Education and Science would financially help to pay for the nursery school education and integration summer camps but at the same time the social welfare allowances would decrease. This kind of situation unquestionably discourages Roma parents to send their children to the nursery schools.
Another serious problem is bad financial and social conditions which a lot of Roma families live in. This situation applies particularly to the Carpathian Roma. Poor Roma can’t afford textbooks and teaching aids, they often experience difficulties in satisfying basic needs (clothes and footwear). It’s difficult for a child to concentrate well enough to be able to effectively do their homework in overcrowded homesteads.

The children are often deterred from school by the non Roma peers’ disfavour. They drop out of school since they don’t have strong motivation neither their parent’s support. In the poll examining students, the question “Whom would you prefer not to sit with?” was answered “with a Roma - Gypsy” by the 1/3 of the asked pupils. Only mentally ill and homosexual “scored” higher than the Roma. Marginally smaller disfavour was given to HIV positive person and a former drug addict². According to the most recent research although the level of dislike towards Roma has been systematically going down, it’s still very high³.

Approximately 200 Roma students studies in a dozen so-called “Roma classes”. These rationed out classes for the Roma children which had started being organized since the end of the eighties of the 20th century were supposed to enable the pupils to overcome the educational-adaptation barriers and prepare the Roma students for studying in integrated classes. The venture of „The Roma classes” was supposed to be a temporary solution which failed to pose an effective alternative towards the integral forms of education. It also didn’t give hope for finding solution of the unsolved educational problem of the Roma. On the other hand though, this model, despite of all shortcomings and legitimate accusations in regard to the low teaching level and strengthening the ethnical segregation, was the only chance for the educationally backward youth (e.g. because of outside country trips lasting for several years) to master the basics of Polish or Mathematics. Also some of the parents having the choice of sending their children to the so-called integral class or the Roma class they would choose the second one, thinking that their child studying among the peers of his “kind” would not be exposed to as much stress connected not

² Piotr Pacewicz, 92 Teenagers – a result of the public pool carried out by The Social Research Study Room, ordered by “Gazeta Wyborcza”, in “Gazeta Wyborcza”, no.164/14 September 11992

³ cf. how good it is to have a neighbour that you like – the CBOS public pool results from the 11th – 14th of October 2002, in “Gazeta Wyborcza”, no.4. 4215/6th of January 2003
only to studying but also to potential and actual disfavour or even aggression from their non Roma peers.

Considering the shortcomings of the Roma class model though, a new educational model that would both respect the parent’s beliefs and lead to improvement in attendance and teaching level of Roma students at school had become essential.

2. The Roma versus civic society
   a) description of the situation. Attitudes toward Roma such as disfavour and rejection had been and still are a reason for the Roma to reject and remain reluctant towards the non Roma world. Institutions such as schools, administrations, police or courts had more often posed a threat to the Roma integrity and identity than given a chance for better life, development and prosperity. As a result of this confrontational coexistence numerous barriers, and in many cases, justified distrust towards non Roma that tried to break the barriers from the outside had been created. The non Roma world is still perceived by many Roma as alien, worse and most of all incomprehensible place. If we add to the above mentioned description of the Roma community the fact, that Roma are very often uneducated, we will get a picture of a community of minor importance, excluded from the public life, often living with a sense of guilt spread by the public institutions representatives, whose actions the Roma often don’t understand.

   b) the problems. The unquestionable majority of Roma doesn’t participate in the country and the local community’s public life. As a result of this, their problems remain outside these communities’ and authorities’ focuses. In case of a conflict, both of these communities (most often having for each other dislike and distrust) don’t know how to communicate which often leads to other misunderstandings.

3. Work - unemployment
   a) description of the situation. At present the most common occupation appearing among the Roma is trade. Thanks to family connections living in foreign countries, they make money on importing second hand cars, selling textiles, cotton, carpets and, for many years already, old junk and antiques. Some Roma people put their
money into durable investments such as shops, restaurants, real estates, petrol stations.

The most enterprising and wealthy Polish Roma aren’t the dominant group in the Polish Roma population. The majority of Roma lives from hand to mouth, without permanent employment, providing for their families by having odd jobs, working illegally or begging also with the help of their children. The majority of Carpathian Roma is numbered among this group - almost their entire population suffers from unemployment and keeps alive thanks to the social welfare. What should be noticed though is the fact that the group of the Carpathian Roma that suffers the most from unemployment lives in the area where the unemployment rate is the highest in Poland.

b) the problems. On the strength of consultations that were carried out with the Roma community’s representatives and experts as well as on the basis of the partial researches\(^4\), the Roma environment can be considered to be under a threat of long term unemployment. The main reasons for that are: low education (often illiteracy and not sufficient knowledge of Polish), lack of qualifications, passiveness in searching for a job and employers’ dislike in regard to employment of the Roma people. With reference to the situation of this group of people, the unemployment counteract actions that have been taken so far proved to be insufficient.

4. Health

a) description of the situation. The Roma people to a larger extent than the Polish general public tend to fall ill with various diseases. Cases of diabetes, diseases of circulatory system, and respiratory system (asthma, bronchitis, pneumonia) as well as viral type B hepatitis are definitely more common among them. Among the Roma living in socially devastated house estates and homesteads also cases of tuberculosis happen. High sick rate combined with economic problems and not using free health

service by the Roma cause an increase in the death rate and at the same time, comparing to the rest of Polish society shorter life length.

b) **problems.** The Roma people’s health problems appear as a result of bad, and in many cases catastrophic social situations: no water-supply, no sewage system, no heating in the homesteads, disastrous technical conditions of the heating systems, no money for the heating, poor diet, limited access to the health benefits as well as no prophylaxis and lack of habit of monitoring Roma women’s pregnancies; these neglects often cause congenital defects.

**5. The situation of life**

a) **description of the situation.** Roma communities are strongly diverse in regard to economic situations and what follows situation of life. Next to unquestionably wealthy Roma there are entire communities living in poverty and penury (especially the Carpathian Roma). In 10 communes of the Malopolska province, 75% of the Roma that live there (and in some of the communes even 95%) get social assistance. These families receive all kinds of benefits: cash benefits, payment of their children’s lunches at school, material help including purchase of fuel. Similar situation takes place in the cities of Higher and Lower Silesia where there are also clusters of Carpathian Roma.

This service is rendered in the form of the social assistance permanent allowances and single-purpose allowances. The rent arrears often unable Roma families to receive the housing allowances. Some of the rooms the Roma live in don’t even meet the building law requirements, and some of them are construction arbitrary acts. The apartments that the Roma live in are usually overcrowded. It’s common that a many-generation family (many times 10 people) lives in one room. Also the standard of majority of these rooms doesn’t meet the minimum requirements.

The earnings of most of the families are considered catastrophically low. Cases of receiving old-age pension or systematical financial help that aids the entire family’s budget are very rare. One should expect that in upcoming years there is going to be an increase in number of people of Roma origin that despite reaching the pension age they will never acquire rights to retirement pension. As a result of this
there will be an increase in number of people that don’t have any permanent source of income.

b) problems. The rooms that are inhabited by the Roma families often require immediate redecoration. If the redecorations won’t be carried out in close future, part of the buildings will be fit only for demolition. As a result of reduction in existing accommodation resources further overcrowding or formation of more construction arbitrary acts will take place.

The problem of redecorations is connected to the regulation of the legal positions of the lands where the Roma live as well as the standard of the apartments. These apartments are often devoid of basic amenities: toilets, bathrooms. These defects evidently impinge on the sanitary condition of the apartments as well as the health situation of the people that belong to the Roma community.

6. Security, crimes committed against the background of ethnicity

a) description of the situation. Public opinion poll data mentioned before show that there are a number of negative stereotypes connected with the Roma existing within the Polish society. Incidents and conflicts regularly covered in media such as those that took place in Kety, Żywiec, Łódź, Pabianice, Ciechocinek, Czaniec, Debica, Zabrze, Koszelówka, Nowa Huta as well as every day unpleasantness that the Roma experience in offices, shops, and on the streets of Polish cities show the society’s dislike toward the Roma. Signals of this sort come flooding in especially to The Ministry of the interior and administration, as well as the Commissioner for civil rights protection. According to the Main Police Headquarters, the Roma aren’t frequent victims of crimes though, and the crimes committed by the Roma are usually meet with fast Police response. Nevertheless, complaints concerning indolence of the Police or discrimination of the Roma by some of the police officers do come up. These complaints though get filed officially very seldom. The Police have been making attempts to organize appointments with the Roma representatives in order to discuss problems and threats that occur.

The Ministry of the interior and the administration monitor criminal events inflicted on people of Roma origin as they come. Since April 2003, The Main Police Headquarters has been giving monthly reports to the Ministry of the interior and the administration about those kinds of cases registered by the police services on the
premises of the entire country. Based upon those reports as well as information obtained from the Roma organizations’ representatives or the sufferers themselves, clearing up actions have been entered upon.

Furthermore, according to the decree of the Cabinet from the 25th of June 2002 regarding the Government Attorney on Equal Status of Women and Men Affairs (The Journal of Law. No. 96, item. 849), the attorney was given jurisdiction over counteraction of the discrimination, among other things, due to race or ethnical origin.

b) the problems. In the face of maintained high level dislike towards the Roma within the Polish society, the representatives of the Roma communities are especially exposed to acts of aggression and discrimination. Furthermore, ignorance (lack of knowledge) of the culture and customs that are considered obligatory within the Roma communities often lead to conflicts between the people of Roma origin and the police officers. What’s of great importance in this situation is proper preparation of police officer for working in the Roma environment. The knowledge gained by the police officers of Roma peculiarity, culture, traditions and limits which result from them could help in overcoming the dislike as well help in coming up with more effective counteract actions and pursuing crimes’ perpetrators that attack the Roma.

7. The culture and preservation of the Roma ethnical identity

a) description of the situation. Unusual richness and different nature of the Roma culture differs greatly from the Polish one. Preservation of this culture is possible thanks to measures provided by the territorial self-government and government administration. The Roma cultural and publishing activities are supported by the Ministry of culture. The subsidies coming from that source for the Roma communities had summed up to 478 thousand PLN in year 2002. This financial help is assigned to support the enterprises that preserve and promote the Roma minority culture (the folk groups’ activities, festivals, presentations of the Roma

---

5 The Department of the National Minorities’ Culture of The Ministry of Culture data
artists’ creative activities). The subsidies designed for Roma press and publishing houses come from the same source.

b) the problems. So far transmitted means don’t serve as efficient help in preserving the ethnical identity. In this context one should pay attention to the fact that awakened interest in the native culture shown by the Roma children and youth may become one of the most fundamental elements shaping not only the sense of their ethnical identity but also fundamental component of the multicultural education. Considering the difficult financial situation and low education level of many Roma families, a wilful assimilation of the Roma people may become a problem. Just like for the majority of the society and other minority groups, the expansion of mass culture can be a danger to the Roma culture.

8. The knowledge of the Roma community

a) description of the situation. Maintained stereotypical perception of the Roma as well as the dislike shown in every day communication comes as a result of lack of reliable knowledge of this community. These stereotypes get strengthen by the media coverage focusing on the scandalous, criminal elements, and in best case presenting an archaic-sentimental image of Roma people

b) The problems. The public opinion poll has been confirming for many years the existence of strongly rooted within the Polish society negative image of Roma people. However the essential problem remains the same: elementary ignorance about this community.

III. The state’s support

a) the general assumptions. The Roma community is treated as the ethnical minority to which, according to domestic law and international documents signed by the Republic of Poland, fall by right a full law protection and the state’s help. The Polish government cooperates with specialized branches of the Council of Europe and the Security Organization and Cooperation in Europe in solving the Roma problems. There had been also joint activities carried out with the Know-How Fund subsidized by the government of Great Britain.
b) The pilot government programme for the Roma community in the Malopolska province in the years 2001-2003. As a result of works done by the Trans-departmental Joint Office on National Minorities in March 2000, there were initiated preparatory works that were supposed help in creating The pilot government programme for the Roma community in the Malopolska province in the years 2001-2003. The Programme had been worked out by the Ministry of the interior and the administration also as a result of collaboration between other departments. The attorneys on the Roma affairs working in the self-government structures as well as attorneys chosen by he local Roma communities were involved in formation of this programme. These works had been preceded on a wide scale cooperation of the departmental self-government entities and the nongovernmental organizations including Roma organizations. On the 13th of February 2001 the Programme was accepted by the Cabinet. The resolution implementing the Programme came into life on the 1st of March 2001.

The principled aim of the Programme was to lead the Roma inhabiting the Malopolska province into full participation in the social life of the country and to equalize the differences dividing this group from the rest of the society. Evening the levels of education, employment, health, hygiene, housing conditions and abilities of functioning in the polish society was considered especially important.

The Programme was of a pilot nature. It was assumed that the execution of the Programme in the Malopolska will be introduction to the preparation and realization of the nation-wide, long-term Programme for the Roma community in Poland. Above mentioned programme is then a logical continuation of the programme accepted by the Cabinet on the 13th of February 2002.

IV. Law-international conditions

a) the problems connected with the issue of the Roma in the international forum.
Within the confines of the UN as well as European institutions a number of documents related exclusively to the Roma had been adopted.
The most significant once are:
- The UN Human Rights Resolution number 65 from the 4th of March 1992 about the protection of the Roma/Gypsies;

- Recommendation of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe number 563 from year 1969 about the situation of Gypsies and other wanderers in Europe;

- Recommendation of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe number 1203 from February 1993 about the Gypsies in Europe;

- The Constant Confederacy of the Local and Regional Authorities Council of Europe Resolution number 243 from the 16th – 18th March 1993 about Gypsies in Europe: the role and responsibility of local and regional authorities;

- The European Local and Regional Authorities Congress Recommendation number11 from year 1995 Towards the tolerant Europe: the Roma/Gypsy contribution;

- The Council of Europe European Committee against Racism and Intolerance Recommendation number 3 from 1997 Struggle with racism and intolerance towards the Roma/Gypsies;

- The Brussels Declaration of the round table negotiations participants in the European Parliament in Brussels concerning the Roma/Gypsies in Europe from the 12th of July 1996

The Roma are an ethnical minority whose situation is the most often discussed by the European institutions. Attached to the Council of Europe in 1995 the Group of Specialists on the Roma/Gypsies was appointed and attached the Bureau of the Democratic Institutions of Security Organization and Cooperation in Europe (ODHIR) – The Contact Point on the Roma and Sinti was appointed. The interest in the situation of the Roma in Central-Eastern Europe beard fruits of numerous conferences and international projects.

The European Union, the Security Organization and Cooperation in Europe (OBWE) show a lot of interest in the Roma issue in nations of Central and Eastern Europe. They base their interests upon two general statements:

- the Roma minority is the biggest (most numerous) ethnical minority in the entire Europe especially in the nations of Central Europe;

- their situation is being evaluated - among other things based upon the High commissioner’s report on the national minorities OBWE from March 2000 – as “often the worst from all of the groups inhabiting the territories of OBWE”.

Far reaching involvement has been declared by the European Parliament deputies who have announced active stimulation of first of all European Committee to
bring about further activities helping Roma community in the candidate countries. Also OBWE – both High Commissioner on the National Minorities as well as Warsaw Bureau of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights - are interested in solving the problems of Roma communities in Europe. Unofficial dialogue concerning the Roma issue have been initiated by the Finnish presidency in the second half of year 1999 between European institutions and Central and Eastern Europe nations (especially with Slovakia, Czech Republic, Romania, Bulgaria and Hungary). The document called *Situation of the Roma in the candidate countries; background document* and following this document “guiding principles” served as grounds for this dialogue that drives at overcoming the prejudices people have for the Roma and caring out activities that would change the Public Service standpoint. There has been exhibited interest in creating and funding first and foremost educational programmes which would give bigger chances to the Roma competing for jobs as well as execution of other programmes – funded by interested nations and with financial assistance of European Union.

**b) Roma programmes in other European countries.** In European countries where the Roma live, there are actions being taken driving at improving their situation. In many countries there have been accepted and realized national or regional programmes for the Roma community (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Greece, Spain, Ireland, Lithuania, Moldavia, Federation of Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Romania, Hungary). These programmes include also fields such as education, health, fighting against unemployment, improvement of the social conditions. Part of them is financially supported by the European funds.

c) **the most important international agreements considering the rights of the people that belong to a minority, signed by Poland.** Poland has accepted a number of international legal acts including regulations concerning protection of national minorities. Among other things there are: *the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms* from the 4th of November 1950, *the International Convention on Abolishing Any Forms of Racial Discrimination* from the 7th of March 1966, *International Pact of Civil and Political Rights* from the 16th of December 1966, *Child Rights Convention* from the 20th of November 1989. The most important document regulating national minorities’ rights is the Council of
Europe Skeleton Convention about protecting national minorities, ratified by the Republic of Poland on the 10th of November 2000.

d) international interest shown in the Roma situation in Poland. Situation of the Roma in Poland interests the European institutions as well as the EU countries, especially those to whose territories the Polish Roma travel to and apply for status of a displaced person (e.g. Great Britain and Finland). The government of Republic of Poland is cooperating with specialized branches of the Council of Europe and EU countries in solving problems of the Roma.

The Periodical European Commission report from year 2002 which estimates the preparation of Poland and other candidate countries for entering the EU, positively evaluated the government’s action that had been taken in order to improve the situation of the Roma linking it to the realization of the Pilot government programme for the Roma community in the Malopolska province in the years 2001 – 2003. The authors of the report had noticed though, that the execution of the Programme had been seriously limited due to insufficient funds allocated from the budgetary means. One should remember that the previous reports had been taking a note of lack of integration strategies for the Roma community in our country, of which realization was to be coordinated by the government. It was taken down that the Roma economic and social conditions in comparison with the rest of the society are worse. The report from year 2000 except talking about programmes for the Roma that are being carried out by the candidate countries, finds financing them with the usage of budgetary means as a necessity: “these kinds of programmes should be aided with the budgetary means […] should be initiated in a permanent manner in a collaboration with the Roma representatives”.

Also the Human Rights Commissioner of the Council of Europe Alvaro Gil Robles’ Report concerning his stay in Poland in the year 2002 included a positive evaluation of the actions taken by the administration within the confines of the Pilot government programme for the Roma community in the Malopolska province in the years 2001 – 2003. The Human Rights Commissioner of the Council of Europe took a note though, that the Programme concerns only a small part of the Roma community and it’s necessary to spread the programme’s solutions throughout the country.
V. The Programme’s Assumptions

The Programme for the Roma community is going to be executed on the territory of the entire country in the years 2004 – 2013 but there is a possibility of continuing it in the following years. There are numerous elements of the programme: education, struggle against unemployment, health, living conditions, counteraction of the crimes committed against a background of ethnicity, preserving and propagating the Roma culture, knowledge of Roma people inside the Polish society, awareness of reforms taking place in Poland among the Roma. Based on still usually sparse and fragmentary researches\(^6\), consultations with the government and self-government administration, as well as with the nongovernmental organizations, including the Roma once, one can assume that presented range of problems concerns unquestionable majority of the Roma community in Poland, and solving these problems remains a main postulate of all the interested sides.

Some of the suggested solutions have been tried out in the process of execution of the Pilot government programme for the Roma community in the Malopolska province in the years 2001 – 2003 and is going to be continued in the all-Polish Programme. However owing to internal variety of the Roma community in Poland, part of the solutions will have to have a novel nature or serve as a modification of the solutions used previously in the Malopolska.

Participants working out the Programme are, except government institutions, as follows:

- the representatives of the Roma community;
- the departmental self-government entities (The communes are elementary entities supporting the Programme);
- non-governmental organizations which care about the problems of the Roma community.

The Minister responsible for the national and ethnical minority’s affairs works as a co-coordinator of the Programme (Minister of the interior and the administration).

---

In order to achieve the assumed *Programme’s* goals also the local communities shall participate. The authors of the Programme did their best efforts to construct it in a way that would integrate the Roma minority with the local communities as well as prevent possible misunderstandings and conflicts from taking place. That’s why also the non Roma poorest people that belong the local community shall participate in the *Programme*.

The supervisors watching over execution process of the *Programme* will be as follows: the province governors (with reference to the tasks being executed on the territories of the provinces), Minister of Interior and Administration as well as the Minister of Education, Science and Sport (in the range concerning education).

**VI. The Programme’s goals**

The fundamental goal of the *Programme* is to lead the Roma into a full participation in the society’s public life and to level the differences dividing this group from the rest of the society. Evening out levels of education, employment, health, hygiene, living conditions, Roma’s abilities of functioning within the civic society.

The Programme’s goal isn’t to come up with a temporary aid, a relief in the difficult situation which the Roma community turned up to be in, but develop mechanics that would allow achieving above outlined goals. It’s essential to support the Roma in heading towards preserving their identity and cultural distinction. Lack of education, difficult life situation, loosened up social bounds make Roma people to a bigger extent become subject to the pressure of modern civilization and its negative effects. It’s impossible not to notice that the superficial attractiveness of the mass culture does affect Roma culture and tradition. That’s why the authorities and the Roma community’s leaders believe and agree that marinating positive elements of the Roma culture might help this community in finding their own place in modern Poland.

The *Programme’s* object is then to even out the chances of people that belong to the Roma community as well as help in marinating the Roma identity and culture

**1. The education**

The *Programme’s* goal is to improve the state of education among the Roma people through: increasing the coefficient of graduating from school, improving the
attendance and grades of Roma children and youth, making easier for the Roma youth continuing education in the secondary schools as well as in the colleges. The Programme on the education scale shall prevent an increase in the number of the Roma people that are unemployed and that don’t have any qualifications; counteract stronger than so far pushing aside this group to the social margin; stop the process of inheriting poverty by the next generations.

2. The Roma versus the civic society

The Programme’s goal is social integration of the Roma through civil education which would result in enabling them to fully participate in the civic society.

3. Counteracting the unemployment.

The Programme’s goal in the field of counteracting the unemployment is to decrease the unemployment rate. It’s especially important, when it’s a phenomenon of a long-term nature, when it concerns the majority of the Roma community, when it cancers families with many children, often living in tragic social condition, people deprived of education. The Roma people as a group at risk of long-term unemployment should become subjects of special interest for the employment agencies. The professional trainings should be directed at the activation of Roma people on the job market. They should aim at: first of all creating privat enterprises, arousing motivation needed for gaining, improving and changing qualifications, inspiring to active searching for a job, strengthening one’s self-esteem, arousing the motivation to change one’s qualifications and raise the level of one’s common knowledge, preparing for a job in a profession needed on the job market.

4. Health

The Programme’s goal is to improve the state of health by enabling the Roma people to have a broader access to the health care and improve the state of hygiene.

5. The life situation

The Programme’s goal is to improve the life situation, in particular housing conditions of the Roma, improve sanitary situation (connect the apartments with the sewage system and water-supply system, provide access to the running water, etc.)
One should notice, that the improvement of the Roma financial situation cannot be considered as the goal in itself, but a mean used only in a process of achieving other goals such as education, improvement of the health situation. Material help should be given only in exceptional cases and should be conditioned by the Roma’s activity. The social aid should be connected with other fields such as education.

6. Security, counteraction of the crimes committed against a background of ethnicity

The Programme’s goal is to improve the security by making the Police and the representatives of justice sensitive to the crimes committed against background of ethnicity and to cases of discrimination, as well as to oppose the popular belief that crimes committed against the background of ethnicity the social noxiousness of such is low. Another goal is to convince the Roma that cooperation with the Police is necessary in order to fight against these crimes and build trust for the Police. There are plans of aiming at employing policemen having Roma origin.

7. The culture and preservation of the Roma's ethnical identity

The Programme’s goal is to help in maintaining the Roma ethnical identity and the Roma cultural development. At the same time it’s worth emphasizing how original and special this culture is comparing to the Polish culture as well as to the majority of other European cultures, to promote attitudes of openness also among the Roma toward other cultures.

Another goal is to list and take care of places of Roma martyrdom from World War II period, in order to bring back memories of Roma victims to the Polish society.

8. The knowledge of the Roma community

The Programme’s goal is to improve the state of knowledge about the Roma community among the non-Roma majority and what follows it, improvement of the image of the Roma people within the Polish society and a change in the negative stereotypes connected with the Roma community.
VII. The means used in achieving the *Programme’s* goals

1. The education

The education is the most important element of the *Programme*, since the state of this field conditions the possibility of improvement of situation of the Roma community in other spheres. **In the contest procedure, the tasks from the range of education will be treated as priority tasks.**

The experiences gained during the *Pilot government programme for the Roma community in the Malopolska province in the years 2001 – 2003* as well as the opinions of teachers working with the Roma students point out that the Roma children (often having low, or even no knowledge of Polish) lack preliminary education and socialization ensured by the nursery school education. **In this case is especially important to enable (finance) the Roma children to attend nursery schools.**

In the face of defects of experimental the so-called “Roma classes” **having Roma children studying in the integrated classes under intensive protection** is the most proper action that should be taken. The model of integrated classes in which the Roma children and youth receive support from the helping teachers and Roma assistants is a desirable one. Introducing new forms of support to schools educating Roma children should cause a gradual elimination of teaching in the Roma classes.

**The helping teachers** – knowing the methodology of working in culturally diverse groups – paying special attention to the Roma children, treating them, when on early education level, like speaking foreign language and two-cultural children. The teachers’ task is to currently supervise the children’s progress, carrying on the compensatory lessons, helping with the homework, and being in a constant touch with the family.

**The Roma assistants** – The Roma endowed with the trust of local Roma communities- ensure wide-ranging help to the Roma students in communicating while in a school environment, build positive image of school and advantages that come from being educated, ensure emotional support for the Roma students, help the teachers and educators in identifying needs and possible problems of particular students, help and mediate in difficult and conflict situations. One of the assistant’s responsibilities is building good connections between the parents and the school, informing the teachers about how their children are doing at school, as well as controlling the students’ attendance and educational progresses.
The helping teachers and the Roma assistants should be able to further educate themselves, use specialist literature concerning Roma people as well as help from methodology experts dealing with coexistence of diverse cultures and volunteers chosen from the university students studying social rehabilitation or some educational majors. The teachers and the assistants should be prepared do arouse motivation among Roma kids and make them realize that education leads to a social rise and at the same time mould within them curiosity toward their ethnical diversity, tradition and history of their own group. One should do his very best to both teachers and assistants could establish good connections with the parents of the Roma children that they teach which would help the parents get more involved in their children’s educational processes.

The following actions are also significant:

- funding the children’s stay in the nursery schools;
- enabling the children to go to nursery schools thanks to financial help as well as possibility to lengthen the education in the nursery schools
- funding the textbooks, teaching aids, and school accessories;
- funding children’s drive to and from the school
- funding the needed food at school;
- funding the students’ insurances;
- introduction off compensatory lessons enabling the children to deal with possible backlogs;
- enabling the children to do their homework at school under a teacher’s supervision;
- encouraging the children to participate in competitions and educational contests and sport competitions;
- aesthetic upbringing the Roma children and youth through a direct contact with art;
- helping the youth in developing their artistic abilities
- organization of classes devoted to Roma culture and tradition
- teaching educational-integration courses for children and youth which promote a tolerant attitude and make Roma’s adaptation in new environment possible.
- organization of summer, integrating rest for the Roma and Polish children;
- Making Roma children’s participation in the summer and winter camps possible
- Employment of the Roma parents who would bring and take back their children from school and would also watch over their behaviour during lessons given outside the school, during school trips and events;

- arrangement of meetings with the parents where they would talk about the school’s duty and

- organization of psychological and pedagogic help for the parents and children;

- organization of educational classes for the Roma adults;

- organization of vocational courses for the youth and adults;

- setting up an environmental common rooms in which children could spend time under the pedagogic supervision;

- working out a scholarship system for university Roma students

- working out a scholarship system for artistically gifted Roma children and youth;

- compiling textbooks and programmes of teaching the roman language;

- compiling textbooks about Roma history and culture;

2. The Roma versus the civic society

It’s necessary to carry on among the Roma community educational activities which would inform about the country’s reality that they live in: about their civil rights and responsibilities (passive and active electoral rights), about the rights that they are entitled to as an ethnical minority, about the reforms that are being carried out, about the possibilities of getting pedagogic, psychological and social help, about the process of Polish accession to the European Union and involving it changes. Passing on information as such shall prevent the Roma from functioning outside the civic society.

Further more, these are also important tasks:

- formation of positions of the Roma community’s local attorneys

- organization of Centers of Civil Advices;

- trainings for the Roma local communities’ leaders;

- elaboration and promotion of publications concerning the Roma civic education;

- broadcasting serial programmes for the Roma by the local and all-Polish media;
3. Counteraction of the unemployment

The counteraction activities should be carried out by the employment agencies of the administrative districts listed in the *Programme*:

Individual tasks are as follows:

- segmentation of unemployed Roma depending on what help they need;
- formation of subsidizing jobs;
- trainings improving and changing one’s qualifications;
- organization of occupational counselling;

One should take a note of the fact that the special programmes serve as the statutory tools mitigating the unemployment effects among the social groups being particularly at risk of this disadvantageous phenomenon - including the Roma - (a statute from the 14th of December 1994, *about the employment and counteracting the unemployment* – the Journal of Law 1997, no. 25, item no. 128 with later amendments).

4. Health

- organization of the “white days” for the Roma;
- increase in the frequency of the Roma women doctor appointments;
- funding the medicines;
- making possible for the elders to stay in sanatoriums;
- employment of nurses of Roma origin who could significantly more easily convince the Roma women to regular medical check-ups;
- trainings for chosen people inhabiting the Roma clusters which would teach about first aid as well as organization on this groundwork an aid system;
- formation of places, where the Roma could get first aid and immediate medical help;
- medical examination of children’s psycho-physical development;
- promotion of immunization;
- public lectures about hygiene and health prophylaxis;
- systematical garbage removal;
- extermination of vermin and extermination of rats
5. The life situation

- redecoration of existing apartments and buildings;
- building social apartments;
- regulation of the land’s properties;
- handing over the lands into building plots;
- supporting building of small private accommodations;
- working out technical documentation of the structures;
- purchase of building materials;
- assurance of architectural supervision during realization of building;
- connection of the housing estates to the water-supply systems and the sewage system;
- building of wayside biological sewage treatment plants;
- building of wayside cesspools or purchase of sanitary containers;
- help in repaying the back rents arrears by e.g. paying it off in instalments;
- making receiving housing allowances possible;
- handing the single-purpose benefits over in order to purchase clothing, medicines, fuel;
- other benefits of social welfare;\(^7\);
- activation of the Roma community gained through community service and counselling heading toward its psycho-social independence;
- improving the qualifications of the organizers of the social welfare and the community service workers

6. Security, counteracting crimes committed against the ethnical background

Serial organization of trainings and work-shops for the policeman working in Roma environment teaching about the Roma ethnical minority issues and about crimes

---

\(^7\) They are benefits granted in accordance with the act regulations from the 29\(^{th}\) of November 1990 about the social assistance (the Journal of Laws from 1998 No. 64, item 441 with later amendments)
committed against ethnical background are advisable. It’s important to realize the Roma cultural distinctness, its reasons, social and civil conditions, as well as consequences resulting from this distinctness. Wide-range cooperation between the police and the Roma would be helpful (there have been taken down cases when the Roma had been attacked in their houses and despite the Police intervention and apprehension of the perpetrators on the spot, the injured party did not file a motion of pursuing the perpetrators).

Further more, the following actions are necessary:

- prevention of crimes committed against the background of ethnicity and showing fast respond in case of one
- helping the victims of crimes committed against ethnical background
- convincing the Roma that cooperation with the police is necessary in order to punish the perpetrators of crimes committed against ethnical background
- patrolling the areas inhabited by the Roma
- employment of people of Roma origin in the Police patrol and district services
- cooperation and exchange of information between the Police and the Roma community’s representatives;
- employment of the court guardians that are familiar with the specificity of the Roma community

7. The culture and preservation of the Roma ethnical identity
- supporting the Roma artistic initiatives
- actions heading toward wide-range presentation of the Roma culture
- supporting already existing and helping in creating new music bands
- helping in preparing cultural and sport events organized by the Roma community;
- Organization of events propagating the Roma history;
- supporting the publishing activity;
- assisting in scientific researches concerning the Roma history and culture;
- commemorating the Roma martyrdom during the World War II.
8. The knowledge of the Roma community

The tasks that have been undertaken within the confines of the Programme head towards popularization throughout the Polish society the real image of the Roma including their rich customs and distinctness, fascinating and often dramatic history culture and tradition which enriches polish culture, in accordance with the radiation of “Republic of Many Nations”. Talking about these issues by influential media, including the regional and all-Polish television and radio will be significant.

The following tasks are also important:
- dissemination knowledge about The Roma;
- promotion of the Roma publications;
- serial broadcasting programmes about the Roma by the local and all-Polish media;
- assisting in scientific researches concerning the Roma community.

VIII. The Programme’s financing rules

In order to guarantee financial measures within the national budget needed for execution of the Programme, it’s essential to create a single-purpose reserve, remaining at minister’s disposal who is responsible for the national and ethnical minorities’ affairs (The Minister of Interior and Administration). These measures will be activated by the minister’s motion and handed over through the governors or directly to the people carrying out individual tasks.

Next to the measures from the national budget’s single-purpose reserve there should be measures financed by the local government, foundations, international and national organizations interested in supporting the Roma minority in Poland as well as by the auxiliary European funds. It should be emphasized that the financial measures passed over by the universal rights by other departments to support activities in aid of the Roma community aren’t included in the total costs of the Programmes.

Detailed applying procedure of granting subsidies from the funds remaining at the minister’s disposal responsible for the national and ethnical minorities’ affairs and designed for realizing the Programme’s tasks, will look as follows:

---

8 cf. Annex 3
- in the middle of every year (proceeding the fiscal year), prior to specifying detailed rules of passing over the funds, the minister responsible for the national and ethnic minorities’ affairs announces an open contest for the subjects participating in the Programme. The movers move the proposals to the right governors (for the sake of the area where the proposed tasks are being carried out). After the governors endorse the motions, the minister responsible for the national and ethnic minorities’ affairs decides about who receives the subsidy. After implementing the fiscal bill, the funds get passed on to the budgets of right governors or other entitled subjects. The governors pass the funds on to the subjects whose motions got accepted by the minister responsible for the national and ethnic minorities’ affairs and were qualified for the execution,

- in case of proposal to carry out tasks of trans-local importance and range (going beyond the area of one province), the mover can move a proposal directly to the minister responsible for the national and ethnic minorities affairs. After a possible minister’s acceptance, the funds included in the single-purpose reserve get passed on to the budgets of the right governors or other entitled subjects,

- the minister responsible for the national and ethnic minorities affairs as well as the governors (after receiving the minister’s approval) may throw realization of the entrusted tasks open to competition, with goals and conditions specified in the announcement.

- the tasks in the field of education financed from the 30th part of the national budget which is administered by the Minister of Education –on the proposal of this minister – will be subordinated to the estimating procedure provided for the financial tasks from the single-purpose reserve. The proposals in the field of education presented to the approval of the minister responsible for the national and ethnic minorities affairs get looked at by the proper guardian of education and the proper governor who also pass their opinions in regard to the proposals. The minister responsible for the national and ethnic minorities’ affairs passes on the accepted proposals to the minister on education and upbringing.

Simultaneously, one should stress that the funds designed for the private tasks connected with carrying out the educational tasks, the territorial self-government entities receive from the national budget within the confines of the general subvention which included the educational part. Every year, after excluding the 1% reserve, the
amount of the educational part of the general subvention gets divided among the
individual territorial self-government entities on the basis of the Minister of Education,
Science and Sport decree on the principles of the division of the educational part of the
general subvention for the territorial self-government entities, the so-called algorithm.
The Finance Minister is the disposer of a part of the general subvention – including the
educational part. The territorial self-government entities, which throughout the fiscal
year experience lack of measures for realizing the planned tasks, may apply for extra
funds within the confines of the 1% reserve of the educational part of the general
subvention, after previous applying to the Minister of Education, Science and Sport.

One should take a note of the fact that according to the Programme’s
assumptions, the territorial self-governmental can apply for admission of the funds
(including organizations associating people that belong to the Roma ethnical minority).
The proposals prepared together by the territorial self-government’s entities and the
representatives of the local Roma communities will have a priority. Also other subjects
running public activities (e.g. universities, colleges, pedagogical and research
institutions, churches and religion associations, headquarters of the commune guards,
the press, the radio, the television and others). Since the procedure provides for yearly
applying, the detailed range of the tasks that are planned to be carried out will be known
after every minister’s responsible for the national and ethnical minorities affairs
approval.

Additional expenses of the government administration and connected with the
Programme’s personnel are out of range of expectations. On the strength of the letter
submitted by the Minster of interior and administration from the 21st of January 2003,
the governors appointed attorneys responsible for the national and ethnical minorities
affairs or appointed individuals responsible for implementing the policy toward the
national and ethnical minorities, preparing themselves by doing so for, among the
others, introduction of the Programme. These people’s duties include being responsible
for realization and coordination of the activities that are being carried out within the
confines of the Programme at the grounds of proper provinces.
IX. The *Programme's* execution monitoring

The minister responsible for the national and ethnical minorities affairs as well as the governors monitor currently the Programme’s execution process as well as examine the *Programme’s* execution processes in the individual years.

The *Programme’s* participants have the responsibility to prepare a financial report that also shows the results of the activities that had been carried out. In case of local tasks, the subjects executing the task pass on the report to the right governor, for the sake of where the tasks are being executed. In case of trans-local (going far beyond the grounds of one province) the subjects show the financial report to the right governor, depending on where the subject is seated.

The governors pass on a collective report on tasks’ execution process on the grounds of individual provinces to the minister responsible for the national and ethnical minorities affairs.

The Central and provincial government administration may at every moment of task’s execution apply do the subject for presentation of how advanced and developed the works and effects are, or conduct a research and control of executing the task on their own.

Also results of the examinations and reports worked out by independent experts, nongovernmental organizations and other institutions can be used in evaluation of the *Programme’s* goals execution process.

The modification of methods and means used in executing the goals is possible based upon the analysis of the information gathered during the monitoring the activities taken up within the confines of the *Programme* as well as yearly evaluation of the extent to which the Programme’s goals have been executed.

---

9 cf. Annex 4
X. THE ANNEXES