

War against poverty target group focused policies

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Abstract

Over the last two decades Albania has been undergoing radical structural reforms as a consequence of the changing trajectories of the democratization process, economic transition, administrative reforms, changing social groups and dynamics of the country as well as the integration process into the European Union. In this line, one of most persistent recommendations of the European Commission is the respect of fundamental rights and, in particular, with regards to the education and the employment is the social inclusion of the minorities in the Albanian society, in particular, the Roma minority. The aim of this research paper is to introduce the debate initiated in Albania for the promotion of a policy suitable of the effective mechanisms which guarantee equal protection of Roma Minority Rights in the country, in line with the recommendations of the European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI). This study has concluded in a number of recommendations directed to public administration bodies, both locally and centrally, such as a wider inclusion of members from the Roma Minority into employment programs and vocational training; amendments in the normative legal basis for definition of criteria, procedure and action towards economic assistance focusing on Roma community; amendments in the existing legislation concerning Housing of Residents in Urban Areas; facilitation of enrollment and school attendance for Roma minority children as well as development of actions which would permit a better access to education for children etc.

Keywords: *Roma minority, Albania, Education, Employment*

1. Introduction

The existence of minorities in Albania is a reality as historical as well as current, which is paid special attention to the materialization of a good relationship with regards to tolerance, coexistence and understanding between members of the minorities concerned and the rest of the population. With the establishment of democracy in the country, the treatment of minorities has taken a new dimension, a fact that is evident in Article 20 of the Constitution of the Republic of Albania, which explicitly provided the excision in full equality before the law of the rights and freedoms of national minorities, as well as by sanctioning the principle of equality before the law and non-discrimination.

Effectively today, the Albanian society has set a positive balance for the issue and respect for minority rights, ranking among the countries that are engaged in fulfillment of international standards in this field. The Constitution guarantees the general principle of equality before the law and protection against discrimination on grounds such as race, ethnic origin, language, religion, social status, or ancestry¹.

Albania has already developed a National Strategy for the Development and Integration (2013-2020), a document drafted in the framework of the National Program for the social inclusion of marginalized groups. The attention towards marginalized groups, as Roma population, has started with the registration of them as part of the 2011 Census. The figures of persons declared as Roma amount to 8301 and 3368 Egyptian Rom. It is worth noting that the figures that show the size of the Roma and Egyptian communities range from 13,702 (UNICEF) in 11,669 in 2011 Census. The facts show that despite efforts to increase the degree of social inclusion of this population, only 55% of children from 6- 9 years old attend the 9-year education, versus 97% figure to the rest of the population.

TABLE 1: School enrollment according to age and ethnicity

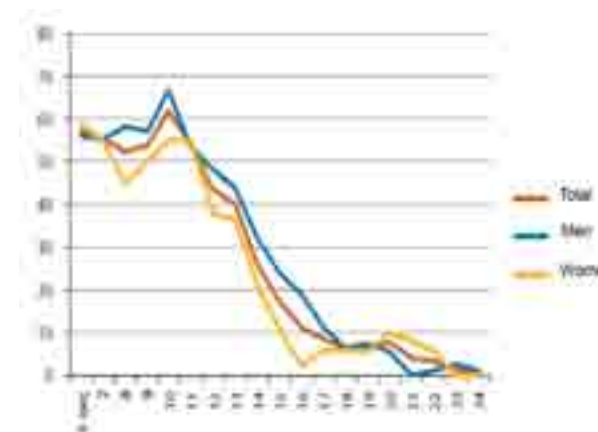
	Children that never attended formal education		Children that currently do not attend formal education	
	6-9 years old	10-14 years old	6-9 years old	10-14 years old
Albanians	2,1	0,6	2,8	4,5
Egyptians	6	9,7	6,8	27,6
Roma	44,4	39,5	45,2	54,1

Source: INSTAT, 2011 Census

¹ Article 18 of the Constitution.

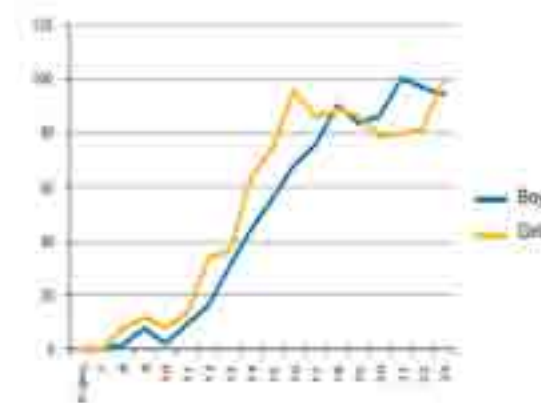
Referring the 2011 Census figures makes evident the reality how year after year children growing up go far from school despite efforts to increase the education years and quality among Roma children and young people. Till 10 years old, Roma children attending elementary school go around 60 percent after this age school attendance decrease and dropping out increase rapidly.

FIGURE 1: School attendance according to age and gender (2011) of Roma population



Source: INSTAT, 2011 Census

FIGURE 2: School dropout according to age and gender (2011) of Roma popula



Source: INSTAT, 2011 Census

Even if Roma children dropping out occurrence is still present, decade after decade in Albania, evidences can highlight the positive trend on the percentage of people who attend formal education throughout their life

TABLE 2: The percentage of people who have attended formal education throughout their life according to generation and ethnicity

	2005-1997	1996-1987	1986-1977	1976-1962	Before 1962
Albanians	98,5	99,1	98,5	99,0	93,7
Roma	58,7	45,1	42,4	57,3	51,5
Egyptians	91,8	83,6	79,5	86,7	83,1

Source: INSTAT, 2011 Census

The biggest obstacle faced by Roma families in access to education is economic by nature. The situation of Roma children is even more critical in terms of labor market. Only 25% of them are employed and gender inequality in this area is evident. Only 15% of Roma women are employed. The majority of this population does not participate in comprehensive economy and continue to be employed in informal sectors. Arguments justifying employment levels are linked to objective factors such as level of education or the lowest level of education as well as subjective factors such as discrimination in significant numbers. While 46% of those looking for work face rejection on reasons of discrimination.

TABLE 3: The duration of unemployment for Roma and Egyptian population

	%
Never been employed	58
Less than five years	24
Five to ten years	6
More than ten years	12
Total	100

Source: PNUD Research/BB, 2011

Instability in employment is accompanied by lack and instability of housing, as well. About 15% of them live in unusual buildings, cabins, tents etc.

History of Roma in Albania reveals an experience of deprivation and social exclusion. Voluntarily initiatives for poverty reduction are not sufficient. Today, social policies of Roma community as target-group focus on their education and housing.

Generally speaking, Roma people live in the outskirts of cities and not much urbanized areas which show their standard of living, manifested in the poor access to water, electricity, and sanitary services.

TABLE 4: Types of dwellings according to ethnicity

	Roma	Egyptians	Albanians
Total	100	100	100
A separate house	51,0	32,5	55,5
Partially separate house	8,6	14,3	9,2
In-row house (or with a terrace)	5,3	10,0	4,5
Apartment building (low)	19,3	38,2	30,1
Collective dwelling	0,5	0,9	0,3
Building not designed for living	0,4	1,4	0,4
Shelter	11,0	2,6	0,1
Tent	1,2	0,0	0,0
Barrack	2,4	0,1	0,0
Other type of structure	0,1	0,0	0,0

Source: INSTAT, 2011 Census

Although the government's commitment to the development of policies for Roma inclusion is an important step and has progressed into practice, these policies face a number of challenges. Despite the measures taken, many Roma and Egyptians in Albania are affected disproportionately by social exclusion and discrimination. Roma and Egyptians are facing extreme poverty and social and economic marginalization. The Roma community continues to be one of the most marginalized groups of the population in Albania. Inadequate housing, limited access to the labor market, education, health care services and other social services remain key concerns for the community. Some of the research questions of this paper are: Have been properly implemented the activities planned for the period 2013 - 2015 into Action Plan (including education and employment)? What are the key issues still unresolved? Why these obstacles are encountered and what might be some of the possible practical solutions (except those with legal basis)? Problems encountered are in housing and infrastructure, the provision of health care, employment, level of education and the access to that.

TABLE 5: Source of income according to the concentration level for Roma population

	Total	Low contribution	Middle Concentration	High Concentration
Self-Employment	39,6	48,7	40,8	32,1
Pension	16,2	21,7	16,0	12,6
Economic assistance	21,6	22,5	27,6	14,4
Remittances	4,8	5,2	3,7	5,6

Aid from other persons	1,1	0,6	1,1	1,4
Total	31,3	21,5	24,3	45,6

Source: INSTAT, 2011 Census

2. Review of the literature

Our country has ratified almost all the United Nations Conventions on the protection of human rights. Albania has also signed all the documents of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and a number of important documents adopted by the Council of Europe (CoE). Albania to guarantee the rights and freedoms of minorities has also adopted a number of laws and bylaws of important values, which provide not only the recognition and protection of the rights of minority members, but also to take firm measures for the integration and their involvement in public life, as well as preservation and development of cultural and ethnic identity. The law passed in 2010, against discrimination presents among others the opportunity to equal protection against acts of state or private individuals, in the area of employment, education and services. Besides the legal framework in the context of social policy in terms of promoting and protecting the rights of Roma in Albania, a series of positive steps were taken by the central government (National Action Plan 2010-2015).

The Albanian government approved in September 2003 the National Strategy "For the improvement of the living conditions of the Roma community", and adopted it with the Council of Ministers Decision 633, dated 18.09.2003. This strategy opened a perspective for social integration and improvement of living standards of the community is vital, and suffered traditionally marginalized. In addition, in the context of inclusion of the Roma, decade 2005 - 2015, as a political commitment of the Albanian government to reduce disparities in the spectrum of human and economic development of the Roma through the implementation of reforms and political programs designed approved National Action Plan 2010 - 2015, which aims at improving the situation of Roma in key areas such as education, health, employment, housing and social protection.

3. Research methodologies

The analysis focuses on some specific settlements (as in Shkodra, Kukes, Peshkopi, Shupenzë, Milot, Gjirokastra, Vlora, etc.) And institutions (first phase) while the second is a study (desk research) the achievements and results processing.

The purpose of this study, in essence, is to show that the majority of Roma children abandoning the school before reaching the minimum legal age. The same observation is achieved even in the case of employment, most of them are unable to find work due to lack of professional skills, limited opportunities for employment after structural changes in the economy, maladjustment to the new needs of the labor market, discrimination by employers and by the lack of specific policies designed to address the issue of unemployment of Roma.

4. Analysis of findings

The process of internal migration that is happening to Roma due to economic conditions is causing their settlements to lie in the entire country, changing the map of their locations.

Monitoring reports on the implementation of the National Action Plan on Roma Inclusion Decade confirm the status quo of Roma in Albania. Discriminatory practices against this community are still present in our society. The number of Roma children attending school remains very low compared with the number of children belonging to the majority population. The majority of Roma children abandoning school before reaching the minimum legal age. This also makes them highly vulnerable to other social problems. Most of the families belonging to the Roma community live in precarious conditions, in dwellings that do not have access to the system of drinking water supply and sometimes to system power supply. A great number of young people among the unemployed Roma have to contend with direct discrimination.

Employment

The road to a market economy was accompanied by the closure and reducing the activity of state-owned enterprises. Consequently Roma took full employment and ensure a massive and long-term unemployment. As a result of poverty and social exclusion they gradually displaced at formal market.

Roma unemployment is very high and usually derive their income from employment in ordinary jobs and low-skilled, usually in non-formal sector. The most common occupations, cleaning of streets, begging seasonal work in agriculture or sale in street clothes. The rest of the population employment is a common reality for Roma in Albania, it still continues to remain a major concern for them, as the situation related to the economic situation in which there are Roma families comes worse and worse, going up extreme poverty. Self-employment has become the subject of income of Roma in Albania, but taking into account the activities

with which they deal, these revenues are significantly below the average than the non-Roma population.

Despite this encounter a low level of participants in these programs Rome, a level that is associated with lack of information and awareness on the benefits of vocational education. Employment Office has an average access of Roma community. Despite the lack of information about the preferential policies, which are approved for this community, discrimination is one of the most serious obstacles and basic factor that significantly contribute to the level of unemployment this community. As one of the links of the failure of the legislation regarding the Roma community, feels the need of reinforcing measures against entities that discriminate this community. Safe discrimination, the community will more easily integrate and significantly increase their employment. A solution for the normalization of market employment and income growth for the Roma could be the creation of social businesses, such as the collection and sale of scrap metal, recycling of PVC-processing, paper and glass into works of straw in agricultural production, meeting the sale of medicinal plants etc. These businesses can have as partners, along with members of the Roma community, the municipality / commune, private entrepreneur and a banking institution.

Roma integration through education and vocational training is regarded as one of the measures that will increase employment and alleviate poverty in Roma.

Education

Because of poverty, many Roma children do not have the proper conditions at their homes to prepare lessons and homework. In addition, the low educational level of the parents did not give the opportunity to receive help with their preparation, as students of the majority population. Others are forced to work to contribute to the financial income of the family. Therefore, in schools where students learn Roma should be developed special programs, where students (of all ethnicities), on school premises and under the care and help of dedicated teachers and qualified, have the opportunity to study after completion hours. Books and other school items should be provided free of Roma pupils. Also, in some villages, or urban areas where the Roma are settled, they are positioned away from school, and must ensure regular and free transportation to the Roma pupils.

Still lacks strengthening the cultural identity of Roma, which will help to better integrate them. Therefore extra hours, by teachers trained and prepared, should talk about the history and culture of the Roma in Albania. However, strengthening the cultural identity of Roma pupils would make school friendlier to them. Such things are done in some schools of Korca and Gjirokastra, but this experience should be extended even further.

According to the quantitative and qualitative data with parents and students, some school teachers do not treat them equally with Roma pupils of the majority population. Consequently, educational policies should be aimed at training and qualification of teachers to work in multi-cultural classes, to recognize cultural values of other ethnic groups, to recognize the needs of marginalized groups and be able to treat all students equally.

Meanwhile, university scholarships where public institutions can collaborate with international organizations will have a major impact on the creation of Roma elites. Some of these scholarships may also be awarded to branches (teaching, medicine, etc.), Where the Roma community needs are greater. Preschool education should be expanded further for Roma children, aiming to include all children free of charge and possibly in gardens with lunch. In these gardens, Roma children can learn Albanian from teachers' educators dedicated Roma. In some certain places (as in Shkodra, Kukes, Peshkopi, Shupenzë, Milot, Gjirokastra, etc.), these institutions must take account of the difficult living conditions of Roma children and must have the necessary infrastructure.

It should increase access this minority, for a particular awareness of youth for attending school, vocational training courses, increasing the participation and involvement in the labor market and public sector. Policies aimed at training and educational qualification of teachers to work in multi-cultural classes, to recognize cultural values of other ethnic groups, to recognize the needs of marginalized groups and be able to treat all students in equal order. Roma talented students from poor families should be supported with scholarships to continue their studies in secondary and higher education. These scholarships will be administered and monitored by public institutions will motivate talented students and successful (starting from the upper grades of primary education) and would help them in terms of social-economic hard.

5. Conclusions

Recently, the treatment of minorities has taken a new dimension, a fact that is evident in the commitments that the state has taken for this purpose. Practical implementation of the provisions of the basic acts, but also the implementation of international acts and particularly the provisions of the Framework Convention of the Council of Europe "Protection of minorities" directly affect the improvement of minority rights.

Roma should have a broader involvement in vocational training programs and employment. Changes to the legislation law to take positive measures by the state to ensure equality in fact and effective members of the Roma minority in the

access they should have in the educational system in the country, ranging from pre-school onwards.

Based on this situation to ascertain, the Roma minority in the country is still necessary to make improvements in the Albanian legislation, in terms of meeting the criteria to benefit from the opportunities offered by central and local government on issues such as education and employment, simplify the application procedures for the Roma community near government offices, for a wider access and ease in completing documentation.

Finally we can conclude that the most important elements in resolving the issues facing Albanian society, including Roma minority issues remain constructive dialogue and continuous, and intercultural cooperation between, state institutions, civil society and citizens, that addressing the issues and the process of analyzing and solving them to be more inclusive and accepting of all. Fulfilling the obligations of Albania in the framework of respecting the rights of minorities, especially against Roma, in order for this community to live by the standards of the rest of the population in our country requires interagency coordination, which is essential for the effective protection his rights.

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An alternative method to evaluate the teaching's standards

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Abstract

The article applied the DOE approach to evaluate the teaching's standards. Design of Experiments (DOE) is the statistical method to assess the quality related to products and services. Meanwhile the one's aspect of DOE's using focused to the evaluation according to the public services. DOE used to evaluate the teaching's quality in the master courses at European University of Tirana (EUT). The article demonstrates shortly the content of DOE model referring to the required practical construction of orthogonal matrix to obtain information by using the standard matrix L_2^8 Taguchi. The questionnaire focused to the students of master's courses of Faculty of Economics and Information Technology, I Year (2015-2016). The analysis of results using the Taguchi method through ANOVA's highlighted the significance and impact of the inclusive factors which affected the teaching's standards. The results confirmed the significance of ability to explain and to communicate and the teacher's experience related to the teaching's standards.

Key words: DOE, Taguchi, teaching's standard

1. Introduction

The evaluation of teaching process comprises the one's core issues according to the comprehensive development into universities actually. Institutional accreditations, legal requirements, internal or external evaluation, the various rankings of colleges, etc., are the most important elements of the overall framework related to the