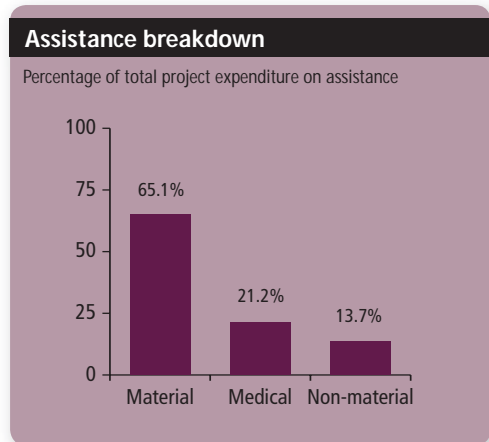




Serbia and Montenegro

IOM began HSP projects in Serbia and Montenegro in September 2002. External service providers and IOM offices in Belgrade and Podgorica carried out seven projects for 4,746 beneficiaries.

Country snapshot	
Total beneficiaries	4,746
Men	44%
Women	56%
Service providers	6
Projects implemented*	7
Implementation period	Sep 2002-Jan 2006
Average project length*	20 months
*Initial project and extensions count as one.	



Outreach

In its search for competent HSP service providers, IOM approached the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and various municipal social service agencies. These recommended a number of NGOs. IOM contacted 11 Roma and five non-Roma organizations. It sought partners respected by their communities and able to help needy victims. IOM selected service providers in all areas of Serbia with large Roma populations. IOM found few Roma NGOs in Montenegro; as none had the experience or capacity necessary for HSP, IOM eventually decided to provide assistance directly through its office in Podgorica.

Beneficiaries

Roma in Serbia and Montenegro regularly endure hunger, unemployment, discrimination and neglect. The elderly are the most vulnerable, often neglected by families and communities. Many live in poor dwellings made of flimsy materials and without electricity or water.

Roma settlements, known as *mahalas*, lie primarily on the outskirts of cities and towns. Poor roads and mutual apprehension make it often difficult for outsiders to enter. Unsafe water supplies, inadequate

sewage systems and problems with waste disposal heighten the risks of infection and disease. The majority of elderly Roma in Serbia and Montenegro do not receive pensions or social welfare. Those who do, find them insufficient to meet their daily needs.

The situation in Serbia and Montenegro worsened with the conflict in Kosovo. After six years, many internally displaced Roma still live provisionally in deteriorating sports facilities, hotels, army barracks and tent cities. Survivors who brought no personal documents when they fled Kosovo have great difficulty obtaining social benefits and medical care.

At first it was difficult to locate beneficiaries, especially those living in areas that are hard to reach or in scattered settlements. Once found





it was a challenge to register elderly Roma who had no documents or fixed residence (the latter due to frequent relocations for seasonal work). Survivors were suspicious of promised assistance and often refused to share personal data with project staff. Neighbours who had already received assistance sometimes needed to convince them to register for HSP.

Long-term activities usually consisted of regular deliveries of material aid plus some non-material support. Most service providers were both capable and dedicated, making it possible for IOM to deliver multiple types of aid as well as to respond quickly to beneficiary feedback by modifying assistance in accordance with needs.

Service providers found the delivery of material assistance to beneficiaries in isolated locations to be challenging. Non-eligible community members could become aggressive, requiring security precautions. NGO staff also reported difficulties organizing appropriate activities in

some project social centres, particularly in the case of women in Muslim communities of southern Serbia. The administration of emergency financial assistance required interpersonal skills, as service providers had both to select the most vulnerable survivors as well as to explain their rationale to other still desperate individuals not included.

Roma survivors confused HSP with other compensation programmes. Staff took pains to explain the differences between programmes and that receipt of HSP assistance did not disqualify a person from receiving financial compensation for slave or forced labour. Some beneficiaries believed they had been given low-cost humanitarian assistance instead



of hoped-for cash, asserting that the service provider had pocketed the difference. On occasion, younger community members threatened IOM's partners.

Projects

IOM selected the **Humanitarian Association “New Road”** to assist 400 Roma beneficiaries in the Kragujevac area, based on its previous experience in legal counselling and psychological support.

New Road delivered food, hygienic supplies and firewood. Some beneficiaries also received small stoves for cooking and heating. Emergency financial assistance helped to purchase medications. The service provider established a social centre where project doctors offered primary care. The doctors also made house calls. Since many elderly Roma lived alone, visits contributed to social well-being. The project psychiatrist reported that some beneficiaries felt alienated. Others suffered from post-traumatic stress, depression and dementia. While as eager as anyone to be treated with respect and dignity, after years of hard work and poverty, many were instead living lives of quiet despair.

Assistance breakdown and beneficiaries assisted		
Type of assistance	% of beneficiaries receiving assistance	% of total project expenditure on assistance
Material		
Food (except food packages)	0.0	0.0
Food packages	90.8	21.7
Clothing	37.9	4.9
Winter assistance	90.8	26.1
Emergency financial support	21.5	3.7
Hygienic supplies	90.8	8.7
Medical		
Medical and/or dental assistance	90.8	21.2
Non-material		
Homecare	25.3	1.6
Legal assistance	76.9	3.5
Social assistance	88.7	8.5



The project lawyer worked at the social centre. New Road's was the only HSP project in Serbia and Montenegro where the lawyer not only advised but also represented beneficiaries in court. Survivors sought help with property rights issues. Many Roma said they had been misled by other attorneys who took their money but failed to help them.

New Road's first extension added 200 new beneficiaries and continued assistance as before. A second extension reduced levels of clothes distribution and increased food and hygienic packages, their contents adjusted according to beneficiary feedback. After a few months New Road became involved in a dispute with a supplier over the price of firewood. Deliveries came to a halt. IOM suspended and then terminated project activities.

New Road's HSP activities were successful in terms of both quality and quantity of assistance. Beneficiaries expressed their gratitude for aid that many considered essential. Legal and medical assistance helped to include survivors in the national medical insurance system and facilitated access to other benefits. When survivors expressed disappointment at project termination, IOM Belgrade decided to take over the delivery of assistance to beneficiaries in Kragujevac.

Rrominterpress had extensive experience administering Roma educational programmes, health projects, social and psychological



assistance as well as in distributing humanitarian aid. Prior to its collaboration with IOM, the NGO had been involved in helping Roma with compensation claims. It also had experience in media and information projects.

The service provider's first HSP project supplied comprehensive assistance to 800 survivors in Belgrade and its surroundings. Medical and dental assistance, legal counselling and homecare, firewood and coal, food and hygienic packages and clothing were included. Rrominterpress succeeded in building good relationships with survivors.

The service provider set up an infirmary in its Community Centre, offering survivors free medical and dental care. Doctors visited less mobile beneficiaries at home. The project's legal adviser handled matters of health insurance, social security and property rights.

Rrominterpress included 400 additional survivors in a project extension. It stopped offering coal as most beneficiaries' stoves burned firewood. In response to beneficiary feedback, clothing assistance was replaced by more firewood and food.

The final project extension allowed the additional delivery of social assistance to survivors in the Belgrade area. The establishment of a social club for elderly Roma was welcomed as it gave many beneficiaries a first opportunity to spend time together outside their homes, in a pleasant and friendly atmosphere.

In cooperation with IOM, **Drustvo ROM "Sait Balic"** delivered food and hygienic supplies, homecare, emergency financial support, medical, winter and legal assistance to 400 Roma survivors in southern Serbia. An experienced NGO led by a well-respected Roma politician, Sait Balic had run educational programmes, distributed humanitarian assistance and established a community centre. It had an excellent reputation and rapport with beneficiaries, in part as its staff already knew most Roma survivors in the city of Nis before HSP began.

Beneficiaries met with physicians at a local health centre. They received examinations and referrals for further treatment, if needed. Doctors

Beneficiaries declared that HSP food packages had saved them from starvation.

familiarized Roma with available healthcare facilities. The medical team spent one day a week visiting survivors at home and three at the centre receiving patients.

Legal assistance helped to include 50 survivors in a state-funded homecare programme that guaranteed them assistance even after the end of project activities.

The NGO added 50 beneficiaries with a project extension. A social worker joined the project team to help elderly Roma access social services and select those most in need of emergency financial support.

The **Italian Consortium of Solidarity (ICS)**, an international NGO working in Serbia and Montenegro since 1995, had experience in micro-credit projects, vocational training, social activities for refugees and educational programmes. For HSP, this service provider identified and assisted 900 Roma survivors living in six municipalities in southern Serbia. This area hosted a large number of internally displaced Roma (IDPs) from Kosovo, whose desperate living conditions required particular attention. The largest survivor populations were in Bujanovac, where 8,000 Roma of all ages lived, and Bela Palanka, where nearly 20 per cent of the 15,000 inhabitants were Roma.

ICS utilized four local NGOs (three Roma and one non-Roma) to contact beneficiaries and to carry out a needs assessment. In each municipality it established a social centre. Hosts organized workshops led by legal advisors. Doctors in each social centre examined elderly Roma and prescribed free medications.

Initially, centres were not well attended. In time, beneficiaries became increasingly comfortable with the setting. Social assistance was a highlight of project activities. Project staff organized workshops, musical and theatrical evenings, celebrations and trips to local historical and cultural sights. Beneficiaries organized chess, domino and card tournaments. Female beneficiaries in Aleksinac were interested in knitting. An exhibition was organized at the centre. Assistance that brought survivors together, for leisure or productive activity, proved especially meaningful. Stress, exacerbated by poverty,

Stress, exacerbated by poverty, illness and family neglect, had made many victims almost forget the pleasure of socializing with their neighbours.



illness and family neglect, had made many victims almost forget the pleasure of socializing with their neighbours.

The majority of Roma survivors needed material assistance. The most vulnerable were selected for emergency financial support. They lived in homes of straw, mud, plastic and cardboard, in former army barracks and camps, without electricity, water or sanitation. HSP assisted them with minor home repairs, stoves and small heaters.

Project activities were extended, adding 400 new beneficiaries from Leskovac. While these received material and legal assistance, HSP did not immediately open a social centre. During its final project extension and in response to beneficiary requests for services organized under HSP in other municipalities, ICS opened a social centre in Leskovac.

A final project implemented by ICS allowed the delivery of assistance to 436 newly identified survivors in Vladicin Han and Surdulica. In each

of these locations, municipalities made available the premises used for organizing social activities for elderly Roma. Some of the more vulnerable beneficiaries living in the village of Lepenica asked to also spend the night at the social centre, warmer and more comfortable than their homes.

In the absence of a Montenegrin NGO capable of implementing a large-scale project, **IOM Podgorica** directly delivered HSP aid to survivors. Because settlements in Montenegro were scattered, it was not easy to locate and inform eligible Roma about HSP. Ultimately, 760 elderly victims were selected. Those in greatest need were Kosovo IDPs living in temporary shelters in the north.

Potential beneficiaries were suspicious. Some refused to be registered until they saw package distribution begin. Assistance briefly raised beneficiaries' standard of living. Elderly Roma who once needed to beg or pick through waste bins for food were able to eat and share resources with their families.



IOM Podgorica established social centres in Podgorica and Niksic, places for elderly Roma to interact. A doctor and lawyer were available to meet with Roma survivors. The lawyer helped with citizenship, pension and welfare applications, social protection issues and applications for identity documents.

A project extension allowed IOM to establish another social centre in Bar. Prior to its creation, beneficiaries on the coast had received material assistance, but did not have access to the medical, social and legal care available to those where concentrations of Roma were higher. The centre in Bar offered check-ups, medications and the opportunity to get legal advice. Workshops were organized on different health, social and legal subjects of interest to beneficiaries.

IOM Belgrade concluded activities left unfinished by the early termination of the final New Road project. Six persons from the NGO's former team helped distribute the last round of food and hygienic supplies to 362 beneficiaries. Unfortunately, many of the original 600 had died or gone to northern Serbia in search of farm work.

Conclusion

In cooperation with service providers, IOM delivered a combination of humanitarian aid and non-material assistance to Roma beneficiaries in Serbia and Montenegro. Collaboration with IOM has positively influenced partner organizations and strengthened their capacity.

Following Dr. Friedrich Christian Flick's donation, the Italian Consortium of Solidarity and the IOM office in Podgorica continued to deliver assistance to former slave and forced labourers in southern Serbia and Montenegro until March 2006.

Service providers have discussed plans with IOM to continue and expand activities benefiting Roma communities, as well as their intention to approach other donors. IOM's familiarity with Roma needs and its good relationship with NGO partners will help in the creation of projects for Roma of all ages.



Project overview

HSP project*	Beneficiaries	Assistance types	Start	End
Humanitarian Association "New Road"	400	Food packages, clothing, winter assistance, homecare, emergency financial support, medical and dental assistance, social assistance, legal assistance, hygienic supplies	Sep 02	Oct 03
Humanitarian Association "New Road" (1 st revision)	600	Food packages, clothing, winter assistance, homecare, emergency financial support, medical and dental assistance, social assistance, legal assistance, hygienic supplies	Sep 03	Sep 04
Humanitarian Association "New Road" (2 nd revision)	600	Winter assistance, homecare, emergency financial support, medical and dental assistance, social assistance, legal assistance, Support for Existing Programmes	Sep 04	Dec 04
Rominterpress	800	Food packages, clothing, winter assistance, homecare, medical and dental assistance, social assistance, legal assistance, hygienic supplies	Jan 03	Dec 03
Rominterpress (1 st revision)	1,200	Food packages, clothing, winter assistance, medical and dental assistance, legal assistance, hygienic supplies	Jan 04	Dec 04
Rominterpress (2 nd revision)	1,200	Food packages, winter assistance, medical and dental assistance, legal assistance, hygienic supplies	Jan 05	May 05
Rominterpress (3 rd revision)	1,200	Food packages, medical and dental assistance, legal assistance, hygienic supplies	Jun 05	Aug 05
Rominterpress (4 th revision)	1,200	Medical and dental assistance, social assistance, legal assistance	Aug 05	Jan 06
Drustvo Rom "Sait Balic"	400	Food packages, winter assistance, homecare, emergency financial support, medical and dental assistance, legal assistance	May 03	Jun 04
Drustvo Rom "Sait Balic" (1 st revision)	450	Food packages, winter assistance, homecare, emergency financial support, medical and dental assistance, social assistance, legal assistance	May 04	Jun 05
Italian Consortium of Solidarity (1)	900	Food packages, emergency financial support, medical and dental assistance, social assistance, hygienic supplies	Apr 03	Sep 03
Italian Consortium of Solidarity (1) (1 st revision)	1,300	Food packages, winter assistance, emergency financial support, medical and dental assistance, social assistance, legal assistance, hygienic supplies	Oct 03	Sep 04
Italian Consortium of Solidarity (1) (2 nd revision)	1,300	Food packages, clothing, winter assistance, emergency financial support, social assistance, legal assistance, hygienic supplies	Oct 04	Apr 05
Italian Consortium of Solidarity (1) (3 rd revision)	1,300	Food packages, medical and dental assistance, social assistance, legal assistance, hygienic supplies	Apr 05	Aug 05
IOM Podgorica	760	Food packages, winter assistance, medical and dental assistance, social assistance, legal assistance, hygienic supplies	Apr 04	Mar 05
IOM Podgorica (1 st revision)	760	Food packages, medical and dental assistance, social assistance, legal assistance, hygienic supplies	Apr 05	Jul 05
IOM Belgrade	362	Food packages, hygienic supplies	Jun 05	Jul 05
Italian Consortium of Solidarity (2)	1,000	Medical and dental assistance, social assistance, legal assistance	Oct 05	Dec 05
Roma and Sinti, total**	4,746			

* Initial projects and project extensions are listed separately.

** Beneficiaries assisted under more than one project or extension are counted only once.

Notes on project names: "Revision" denotes extension of an existing project. Number (only) in parentheses indicates a service provider with more than one project approved for funding.

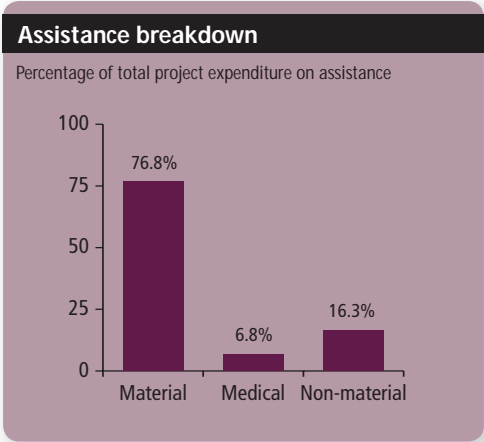


Slovakia

Between September 2003 and January 2006, IOM Kosice managed three HSP projects. Some 8,995 Roma received HSP assistance. Projects were implemented throughout Slovakia, emphasizing the poorer east where great numbers of Roma survivors live.

Country snapshot	
Total beneficiaries	8,995
Men	39%
Women	61%
Service providers	3
Projects implemented*	3
Implementation period	Sep 2003-Jan 2006
Average project length*	17 months

*Initial project and extensions count as one.



Outreach

IOM outreach began in April 2003. Staff sought local organizations that had previously administered humanitarian assistance or had already worked with Roma. Meetings were held with organizations familiar with local Roma communities, including the Open Society Institute and InfoRoma, which helped to identify possible project partners. IOM Kosice contacted a number of Roma organizations and organized informational meetings for those interested in participating in HSP. Eight organizations submitted project proposals. Three of these were accepted.



The ETP Slovakia Center for Sustainable Development, Bridges for Roma, and People in Peril Association (PIPA) were chosen to provide HSP assistance. IOM supported each in project development and implementation, providing technical support, assisting with proposals, logistics and data compilation. Service providers worked with community leaders and municipal offices to identify beneficiaries and to assess needs.

Beneficiaries

While elderly Roma in Slovakia live in poverty throughout the country, their living conditions vary greatly. In the east, survivors and their families were found living in desperately poor conditions. Roma-only settlements often lacked running water and electricity. Roma in western Slovakia, more integrated with other groups, were slightly better off and less deprived of basic necessities.

Throughout Slovakia, the need for assistance was great. Elderly victims often spent their modest pensions to support the entire family. Often as many as three generations lived together. One beneficiary was discovered supporting 70 other family members whose shacks stretched 50 metres into the potato patch behind her house. In another case, five beneficiaries were living in two small apartment buildings designed to accommodate a total of 40 people. Instead, 500 Roma were housed there, with nearly 20 persons to each apartment.

Beneficiaries shared personal accounts of Nazi-era persecution. They recalled work camps for males over 15 years of age, beatings, shootings and food shortages. After the war and under communism deprivations continued. Many complained that their situation had worsened during the current economic transition, with work scarce and discrimination growing.

Survivors told IOM that rising energy costs and utility payments took up an ever-increasing share of their pensions. Recent reforms in state services had deprived poor Roma of entitlements that were, for many, their only income. Although most beneficiaries expressed surprise





and gratitude for assistance provided, HSP still encountered obstacles. Some municipal offices claimed that no assistance was needed, or denied that Roma lived nearby. Others, including Roma, were again sceptical of assistance. In one case, an organization had come and tricked elderly Roma into paying 50 SKK (US\$1.53) to register for aid that never came. As elsewhere, actual assistance soon put these fears to rest.

All projects in Slovakia delivered material support. This included food packages, winter fuel, hygienic supplies, home repair materials, household items (pillows, blankets, duvets) and emergency financial support. The last was most commonly used to pay overdue utility bills. Non-material assistance, consisting of social and legal counselling as well as medical care, was added by more experienced partners. Nine social clubs were established in eastern Slovakia. Several of these are expected to stay open with the backing from local municipalities.

Projects

The **ETP Slovakia Center for Sustainable Development**, an organization with considerable experience in social and development work, operated four consecutive projects. Throughout its implementation of activities, ETP identified new potential beneficiaries. By the time it completed its HSP activities, ETP had served 6,147 Roma survivors.

Elderly survivors received regular deliveries of food and hygienic packages and fuel. The most vulnerable also received emergency financial support. Social, legal and medical assistance were provided to survivors according to individual needs.

ETP Slovakia began with a substantial project. In cooperation with IOM, it conducted a needs assessment in areas where many survivors were thought to reside. ETP found a number of eligible Roma and decided to assist 2,200 more throughout eastern Slovakia.

ETP established a professional project team and earned the support of community and municipal leaders. It opened seven social clubs in

Five beneficiaries lived in two small apartment buildings designed to house a total of 40 people. Instead, 500 Roma lived there, with nearly 20 persons in each flat.

Assistance breakdown and beneficiaries assisted

Type of assistance	% of beneficiaries receiving assistance	% of total project expenditure on assistance
Material		
Food (except food packages)	0.0	0.0
Food packages	41.9	31.8
Clothing	0.0	0.0
Winter assistance	41.9	27.8
Emergency financial support	6.6	5.0
Hygienic supplies	41.9	12.2
Medical		
Medical and/or dental assistance	11.1	6.8
Non-material		
Homecare	0.0	0.0
Legal assistance	4.4	1.3
Social assistance	11.1	15.0



areas where many survivors lived. In all locations municipalities helped with club renovations and contributed towards utilities. Victims visiting the clubs had access to medical, legal and social assistance.

Project social workers and lawyers helped prepare pension applications, requests for better housing and other state entitlements. They facilitated contacts between elderly Roma and municipal offices, advising authorities of particular cases and of the general needs of survivors who had asked for help. The service provider utilized the clubs to arrange cultural and social events, short excursions, and visits to spas. While beneficiaries indicated that they greatly appreciated the opportunity to interact with others, several said they would have preferred more material aid, as hunger remained a concern for entire families.

ETP's first project amendment extended assistance to 2,800 beneficiaries in eastern Slovakia, including 700 of the most vulnerable previously served. By including eight new districts it reached all of eastern Slovakia. In order to promote sustainability, the NGO negotiated a contract with local municipalities whereby these agreed to hire social workers to help destitute citizens, many of whom were Roma.

Material assistance was delivered to areas new to the project. Those who had previously received assistance continued to get social, medical and legal support. The most vulnerable beneficiaries in both areas were granted assistance in line with individual needs, including hot meals, homecare, assistance in obtaining social housing, payment of utility and rent bills, room heaters, minor home repairs, food and hygienic supplies, winter clothes, firewood and bedding.

ETP Slovakia identified an additional 1,533 Roma survivors in central Slovakia. A second project extension established more social clubs where legal assistance included presentations on such issues as usury and debt management. First aid kits were distributed and instructions for their use provided by the project doctor. Despite the service provider's considerable experience, the extension got off to a slow start due to ETP's lack of contacts in central Slovakia. Local Roma, and in some cases municipal offices, were engaged to help with assistance delivery. Once more, local authorities agreed to operate social clubs when HSP ended.

During ETP's final project extension, IOM was able to pursue programme synergies between community stabilization activities for younger Roma funded by non-HSP donors, and HSP assistance to survivors. Firewood collected and processed by young, previously unemployed Roma was delivered to the homes of survivors in need of winter fuel. Younger Roma greatly appreciated the opportunity to assist elderly community members through their work.

ETP Slovakia has sought other sources of funding to be able to carry on assisting needy Roma. It continued its work with a project funded through the European Social Fund EQUAL Initiative, drawing on experiences gained through HSP to address the needs of entire Roma communities.

Bridges for Roma, an NGO based in a large Roma neighbourhood in Kosice, had considerable experience working with Roma youth. As an IOM service provider, it afforded access to particularly vulnerable beneficiaries in its settlement and to urban ghettos not easily entered by non-Roma organizations or municipal agencies.



The project provided 1,059 Roma beneficiaries with HSP assistance. Although it was a large operation, the service provider kept close contact with each beneficiary and gave individualized assistance.

Beneficiaries received food and hygienic packages and winter assistance, and 40 of the most vulnerable received emergency financial support. Bridges established two social-advisory centres in Kosice where beneficiaries could get advice on how to obtain necessary documents and assistance in preparing applications for basic entitlements. It organized social activities on club premises, allowing survivors to enjoy the company of others.

Young Roma Scouts were engaged to deliver assistance, some to their own grandparents. The Roma Scouts also helped victims with domestic chores, such as chopping wood, hauling water, shopping and minor repairs.

Not only did the project improve beneficiaries' quality of life, it increased their participation in the community. By partnering with IOM, Bridges' reputation, capacities and skills were enhanced. In 2004 the NGO received a grant from the Slovak Social Development Fund to continue its work with excluded minority groups.



People in Peril Association (PIPA) worked with survivors in large areas of western Slovakia. Following extensive identification and a needs assessment done by university student volunteers, PIPA focused on material assistance. Working with municipal offices, local leaders and NGOs, it helped 1,847 Roma survivors in 175 locations.

The Roma population in western Slovakia is less concentrated. Survivors were scattered across a large number of villages and towns and lived in integrated areas. Large families shared modest dwellings. Working-age members were absent or unemployed. Although less poor than survivors in the east, beneficiaries were equally in need of assistance. In some cases, entire communities needed aid to survive. Distribution was time-consuming and field staff had only limited opportunities to interact with beneficiaries.

PIPA noted that most beneficiaries could visit a doctor but were unable to afford treatment and medications. It geared medical assistance towards the reimbursement of prescriptions not covered by state health insurance.

PIPA faced difficulties when one of its suppliers was unable to deliver heating fuel as contracted. The service provider paid for missing assistance out of its own resources and initiated legal proceedings against the supplier.

Conclusion

IOM Kosice was privileged to work with experienced service organizations. All three service providers found far more beneficiaries than expected. By collaborating with IOM, project partners strengthened their capacity and improved certain skills. HSP allowed IOM to gain a better understanding of the needs of Roma communities in Slovakia.

Thanks to funding from non-HSP donors, IOM launched an Information and Reintegration Center in Kosice aimed at assisting Roma communities in eastern Slovakia through employment-generating activities and support for the establishment of small and medium enterprises.

While beneficiaries indicated that they greatly appreciated the opportunity to interact with others [through social assistance], several said they would have preferred more material aid as hunger was a concern for entire families.

Project overview

HSP project*	Beneficiaries	Assistance types	Start	End
ETP Slovakia Center for Sustainable Development	2,213	Food packages, winter assistance, emergency financial support, medical and dental assistance, social assistance, legal assistance, hygienic supplies	Sep 03	Nov 04
ETP Slovakia (1 st revision)	2,802	Food packages, winter assistance, emergency financial support, medical and dental assistance, social assistance, legal assistance, hygienic supplies	Oct 04	May 05
ETP Slovakia (2 nd revision)	1,894	Food packages, winter assistance, emergency financial support, medical and dental assistance, social assistance, legal assistance, hygienic supplies	Jun 05	Aug 05
ETP Slovakia (3 rd revision)	1,642	Food packages, winter assistance, emergency financial support, medical and dental assistance, social assistance, legal assistance, hygienic supplies	Sep 05	Jan 06
Bridges for Roma	1,059	Food packages, winter assistance, emergency financial support, social assistance, hygienic supplies	Mar 04	Apr 05
People in Peril Association	1,847	Food packages, winter assistance, emergency financial support, medical and dental assistance, hygienic supplies	Jul 04	May 05
Roma and Sinti, total**	8,995			

* Initial projects and project extensions are listed separately.

** Beneficiaries assisted under more than one project or extension are counted only once.

Note on project names: "Revision" denotes extension of an existing project.



Ukraine

Ukkraine was one of the first countries to offer HSP assistance. Project activities began in June 2002 and ended in September 2005. Fifteen service providers implemented a total of 23 projects, reaching 8,905 Roma survivors.

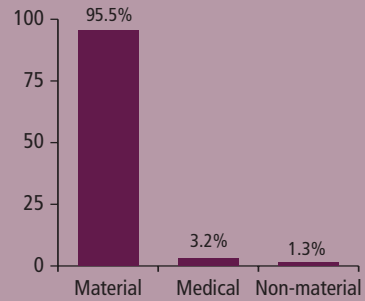
Country snapshot

Total beneficiaries	8,905
Men	38%
Women	62%
Service providers	15
Projects implemented*	23
Implementation period	Jun 2002-Sep 2005
Average project length*	12 months

*Initial project and extensions count as one.

Assistance breakdown

Percentage of total project expenditure on assistance



Outreach

IOM Kiev sought advice on possible project partners from the State Committee on Nationalities and Migration of Ukraine. It learned of 27 registered Roma NGOs and contacted them all. IOM soon discovered that none had substantial experience in humanitarian or social assistance. Most were involved in cultural and educational projects. IOM noted strong rivalries between certain NGOs; some refused to consider cooperation. Several expressed discontent that donors had picked IOM to administer HSP rather than working directly with them.



IOM Kiev did identify promising potential Roma partners from among those contacted. It also considered working through local branches of the State Committee, in the framework of the National Programme on Roma Assistance and Development.

With no organization able to operate large-scale activities, IOM Kiev launched HSP with a number of small, local projects. Service providers were informed of the chance to expand if both sides were satisfied with initial results. This approach was successful in Ukraine.

Beneficiaries

IOM Kiev found it difficult to get good information on survivor numbers and locations. Social stigmas often dissuade Roma from self-identification. The national census listed far fewer Roma residents (47,600, or 1% of the population) than minority rights NGOs, which estimated the number to be closer to 400,000.

Although Roma are dispersed throughout Ukraine, the highest concentration of needy survivors is in the Transcarpathia region on the western border of the country. Roma there often live in *tabors*, segregated settlements on the outskirts of towns ranging in size from a few families to several thousand persons. Many live on the edge of

Beneficiary account

In the remote Transcarpathia region of Ukraine, Uzhgorod lies at the centre of an extended area, stretching across Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Ukraine, inhabited by hundreds of thousands of destitute Roma.

Emma was 88 years old. She lived alone in Tarnovsky settlement, a cluster of shacks on the outskirts of town. She had enough firewood to heat her home in winter, thanks to HSP. IOM heard from survivors that without the provision of wood or coal they would not have made it through the winter.



Beneficiary account



Survivors spoke emotionally of the Nazi occupation, initially thought by the Roma to be their liberators from Stalin. Following the retreating Red Army, they hid in the forests. Accused by the Germans of helping Jews and partisans, many Roma were beaten, transported away by train. They spoke of the burning of livestock, of hiding in holes, surviving on marsh nettles.

Later, under Communism, Lyubov and Lidiya laboured in the potato fields or dug ditches, receiving the lowest state pensions. Briefly, under Gorbachev, for some things were better.

Few homes were heated, despite the sub-zero temperatures. Zolotonosha Roma squatted in abandoned cabins without running water or light. They made a living by collecting and selling scrap iron and glass.

A woman HSP looked for was not at home; she had gone for a walk, to warm up.

Another kept her shutters permanently closed, still fearing the Nazis might return.

At seeing IOM staff, one survivor was heard whispering, "Why did they bring these strangers here? They could take us away".

starvation. Houses, without running water and sanitation, seldom have electricity or heat. Some families squat in abandoned cabins.

Survivors in the Lvov region are more integrated with majority populations. Some Roma migrated to this area from Poland and Belarus. For centuries, Roma in Lvov have experienced harsh discrimination and thus avoided gathering in settlements. Living conditions, although poor, are not as dismal as those in Transcarpathia and other parts of Ukraine.

Roma throughout Ukraine face extreme hardship. Many rural beneficiaries live with their grandchildren and unemployed children, with up to 20 people often under one roof. Entire families survive by collecting scrap metal, recycling paper and begging. Many elderly Roma receive no pensions and little or no social assistance. Those with pensions might get US\$ 13 per month, not enough to cover their basic needs.

Beneficiaries frequently requested food packages, hygienic supplies and winter assistance. Legal assistance helped Roma to register for available state services, gaining them sustainable benefits.

Older Roma described their wartime experiences to IOM. Many had expected the Germans to liberate them from Stalin. When, instead, the SS began to massacre and deport Roma, survivors followed the retreating Red Army or fled into the forest. Accused of helping Jews



and partisans, if caught they were beaten, compelled to work or taken away by train. Beneficiaries recounted the burning of their livestock, hiding in holes in the ground and living on marsh nettles. One elderly woman spoke of three-years’ forced labour in Berlin. Out of fear of the Germans she kept her house shutters permanently closed. Another described how, at the age of 13, she was forced to cook for German soldiers based outside Lvov.

Projects

The **Transcarpathian Cultural-Educational Society “Romani Yag”** approached IOM with a proposal to serve hot lunches to 100 Roma survivors in Uzhgorod. Romani Yag already had a building with kitchen facilities. At first, fewer beneficiaries came than had been expected. By advertising and adding home food delivery for less mobile beneficiaries, the service provider boosted meal service to capacity. The canteen became a place where older Roma could socialize with friends, escaping either from solitude or crowds of family members at home. Its popularity led to the creation of a social centre for Roma survivors in Uzhgorod.

Assistance breakdown and beneficiaries assisted		
Type of assistance	% of beneficiaries receiving assistance	% of total project expenditure on assistance
Material		
Food (except food packages)	11.6	5.7
Food packages	72.7	71.4
Clothing	11.6	5.6
Winter assistance	19.6	5.8
Emergency financial support	0.4	0.3
Hygienic supplies	61.9	6.7
Medical		
Medical and/or dental assistance	21.1	3.2
Non-material		
Homecare	0.3	0.1
Legal assistance	43.2	0.5
Social assistance	20.1	0.8

“Terne Chaya po Nevo Drom” (*Young Women on a New Road*) was founded by Roma and non-Roma women to provide social, economic and educational support to their community. The NGO had experience in humanitarian assistance to flood victims and had dealt with social issues at the grassroots level. For HSP, it offered homecare and aid packages to 25 Uzhgorod survivors. Five younger Roma delivered the assistance. During the implementation of a second HSP project, Terne Chaya produced and mended traditional garments for 250 older Roma. Five young Roma women received vocational training as a project by-product. Although the new seamstresses’ limited skills initially slowed production and the project’s second-hand sewing machines frequently broke down, the service provider eventually managed to serve all beneficiaries. Community involvement helped make the activity sustainable post-HSP.

The **Roma Association of Izmail** began with monthly food packages to 160 needy Roma in the Odessa region. Its second project reached 1,052 survivors with multiple forms of HSP assistance. Izmail overcame beneficiary scepticism by offering “personalized” package contents and making a point of delivering on time. The NGO established a social centre where visitors had access to free laundry services, bathing facilities and counselling on social and legal issues. It organized excursions for survivors to the nearby Black Sea coast; for many the first holiday ever taken from the village. Izmail delivered aid packages, fuel and social assistance to survivors in a number of regions. Some activities were delayed when the NGO overstretched its capacities.

The **Transcarpathian Association of Roma NGOs “Ekgipe”** had previously supplied humanitarian aid to Roma communities after the floods in 2001. With IOM it served 100 Roma beneficiaries living in two *tabors* near Uzhgorod. It had planned to deliver twice-monthly parcels, but switched to larger monthly packages after encountering bad roads and rising transport costs. In its second project, Ekgipe cooperated with nine smaller NGOs. In total 1,548 beneficiaries were served in 11 Transcarpathian locales. Comprehensive assistance included food and hygienic packages, minor home repairs, dental care, payment of overdue utility bills, legal aid and social services.

Many had expected the Germans to liberate them from Stalin. When the SS began instead to massacre and deport Roma, survivors followed the retreating Red Army or fled into the forest.

Ekgipe offered survivors free barbering and hairdressing at its social centre, visiting bedridden beneficiaries at home with the same services. It also reopened the lunch canteen previously operated by Romani Yag. Assistance made an impact; one Ekgipe staff member remarked, *“You no longer see older Roma in the market begging for money.”* The NGO ran an ambitious project that often required IOM’s attention. It tended to miscalculate actual needs. Still, HSP left behind a strengthened local organization able to both manage assistance and to help its own smaller partners do the same.

When IOM contacted **“RomSom” Cultural Society of Zakarpatie Roma People**, the NGO had been working on Roma culture, legal support and child welfare projects for five years. Rom Som identified and assisted 150 beneficiaries in Uzhgorod with monthly food packages.



Rom Som's next proposal sought to include 800 more, many of whom were already being helped by HSP's "Society of Roma Transcarpathia" project. Rom Som's proposed project extension was rejected.

The **Society of Roma Transcarpathia** was established to inform and help Roma exercise their legal rights. This made it a natural partner for similar HSP assistance to survivors in the Transcarpathia region. They received help in filing legal petitions and entitlement applications. Project lawyers helped several beneficiaries to obtain pension increases and victims without work histories to sign up for alternative benefit schemes. The first Roma Transcarpathia project reached 531 survivors. It was successful and its results sustainable. A thousand Roma received material and medical aid in its second project. Roma Transcarpathia ran a medical facility in Uzhgorod in cooperation with a local clinic. A general practitioner examined beneficiaries. Those requiring a specialist's attention were referred to a public clinic. The project doctor made house calls and arranged for a pharmacy to supply prescription medications free of charge. The project also included dental care. Some of the Roma assisted had routinely avoided public hospitals and considered it "meaningless" to see a doctor if they could not afford medication. In its first weeks of operation the medical facility saw up to 60 beneficiaries per day. Assistance popularity advanced public health education in the Roma community. There were challenges and delays. House repairs were not all performed in time for winter due to an early onset of bad weather. Medical care had to be extended for an extra month to allow beneficiaries to complete courses of treatment.

The **Roma Women Charitable Fund "Chiricli"** was established to protect the rights of Roma women. Working with IOM, it delivered food and hygienic packages, clothing, medical and legal assistance to 1,200 Roma survivors. The project operated in Odessa, Nikolaev, Kirovograd and Crimea. The medical aspect of this project was especially meaningful. Beneficiaries in Odessa were screened at the city hospital; doctors prescribed medications and treatment. The NGO utilized beneficiary health data to plan project extensions, whereby more survivors received medical care. Increasing experience and IOM's close attention helped Chiricli overcome some record-keeping and administrative difficulties.

With no organization able to operate large-scale activities, IOM Kiev launched HSP with a number of small projects.

Many rural beneficiaries lived with their grandchildren and unemployed children, with up to 20 people often under one roof. Entire families survived by collecting recyclable scrap metal and paper, as well as through begging.

Carpathia Charity Fund was the only non-Roma NGO to support HSP in Ukraine. It had previously worked with national minorities and gifted youth. Carpathia supplied clothing, hygienic supplies, towels and bedding to 148 Roma living in Beregovo, in the Transcarpathia region. The service provider worked with Roma representatives to ensure access to target communities. As many recipients were illiterate and could not sign for assistance, it videotaped aid deliveries.

Romani Cherhen, a Roma youth organization, brought one-time winter assistance (firewood and coal) to 30 beneficiaries in settlements around Uzhgorod. In a limited implementation period the project dispensed essential aid to victims who would not otherwise have had fuel to warm their homes or cook during the bitterly cold winter.

Romano Drom first delivered monthly food and hygienic packages to 90 needy Roma survivors living in Myrgorod and nearby villages in the Poltava region. While it worked to IOM's satisfaction, Romano Drom did not have the capacity to take on a large-scale project. The NGO completed another small project, supplying winter fuel to 20 beneficiaries in Myrgorod. Later, Romano Drom was invited to cooperate with Kherson City Roma Society on another HSP project.

The **Kherson City Roma Society (KCRS)** had already worked with Roma survivors, collecting information in 1998 on Holocaust victims who might be entitled to compensation payments. For HSP, this service provider distributed food packages to 130 beneficiaries in and around the city of Kherson. The NGO used local newspapers and radio programmes to promote community awareness of its activities. This apparently helped to reduce misunderstandings among ineligible community residents. KCRS located large numbers of potential beneficiaries in places not previously reached. Eventually it delivered monthly food packages to 1,000 needy Roma living in four areas. With logistical experience and accurate beneficiary information, the NGO remained on schedule and overcame numerous challenges. KCRS cooperated with Romano Drom in Myrgorod in order to realize greater geographical reach.

The **City of Lvov Public Organization "Ternipe"** had previous experience with Roma Holocaust survivors and was aware of their location



and numbers. Working with IOM, it delivered monthly food packages to 74 elderly Roma in the Lvov region. Ternipe ran its project efficiently and IOM approved a larger extension. This reached 250 beneficiaries in Lvov and surrounding villages with monthly aid packages, prescription medications and legal counselling. Roma in rural areas were receiving pensions of US\$ 8 per month and eager to have more food package assistance. Beneficiaries also acknowledged the utility of legal assistance in gaining better pensions and social allowances. In Volyn, one beneficiary was left homeless with 12 children when her house burned down. HSP legal aid eventually led to a meeting with the Prime Minister in Kiev and a new apartment.

The **Chernigov City Public Organization “Romano Drom”** provided monthly food packages to 100 Roma survivors for one year. The NGO worked well and beneficiaries expressed their gratitude. Nevertheless, discord broke out among several Roma leaders. Apparently failing to distinguish between HSP and Holocaust claims compensation programmes, they wrote to IOM and the State Committee on Nationalities and Migration of Ukraine and expressed their unhappiness with project assistance. Project beneficiaries who had also signed the letter told IOM they did so without understanding

its contents. They expressed regret that they might have harmed an activity that helped Roma. A member of the State Committee on Nationalities and Migration accompanied Chernigov Romano Drom to beneficiary homes to verify assistance.

Ame Roma helped 706 survivors living in the Cherkasy and Chernigov regions and in the cities of Kiev, Kirovograd and Nykolaiv. This NGO delivered monthly aid packages, clothing and footwear. The service provider was a Roma entrepreneur with the skills and contacts necessary to procure and deliver HSP assistance. It utilized five local representatives to reach target communities. Once more, political rivalry among Roma leaders threatened the project. After much negotiation, Ame Roma reached an agreement with these and HSP assistance was completed.

Forumo Roman Ukrainatar, an NGO with experience in the delivery of humanitarian assistance and Roma issues, oversaw the delivery of food packages to 172 Roma survivors in Kiev and neighbouring villages.

Conclusion

In addition to facilitating assistance to beneficiaries scattered across a vast territory, IOM's collaboration with a number of Roma NGOs significantly impacted Roma civil society in Ukraine. HSP allowed a number of small, innovative Roma NGOs to demonstrate and enhance their project management skills and to improve their knowledge of the needs of community members facing extreme hardship. Several NGOs gradually introduced sustainable elements into their projects.

By working alongside IOM, service providers gained the skills and confidence necessary to manage large-scale assistance. Although IOM initially found limited assistance infrastructures in Ukraine, it left behind a network of credible, if still struggling, Roma NGOs. IOM reached a substantially greater number of survivors than anticipated. Together with its partners, IOM collected reliable data on the situation and needs of Roma communities in Ukraine.

Project overview

HSP project*	Beneficiaries	Assistance types	Start	End
Transcarpathian Cultural-Educational Society "Romani Yag"	100	Food (except for food packages)	Jun 02	Aug 03
"Terne Chaya po Nevo Drom" (1)	25	Food packages, homecare, hygienic supplies	Sep 02	Sep 03
Roma Association of Izmail (1)	160	Food packages	Sep 02	Mar 03
Transcarpathian Association of Roma NGOs "Ekgipe" (1)	100	Food packages, hygienic supplies	Jun 02	Aug 03
"Rom Som" Cultural Society of Zakarpacie Roma People	150	Food packages	Mar 03	May 04
Society of Roma Transcarpathia (1)	531	Legal assistance	Sep 02	Sep 03
Roma Women Charitable Fund "Chiricli"	800	Food packages, clothing, medical and dental assistance, legal assistance, hygienic supplies	May 03	Jun 03
Roma Women Charitable Fund "Chiricli" (1st revision)	1,200	Food packages, winter assistance, medical and dental assistance, hygienic supplies	May 04	May 05
Roma Women Charitable Fund "Chiricli" (2nd revision)	730	Food packages, winter assistance, medical and dental assistance, hygienic supplies	May 05	Aug 05
Carpattia Charity Fund	148	Clothing, hygienic supplies	Sep 02	Nov 02
Romani Cherhen	30	Winter assistance	Sep 02	Mar 03
"Terne Chaya po Nevo Drom" (2)	250	Clothing	Nov 02	Jan 05
Society of Roma Transcarpathia (2)	1,000	Food packages, clothing, medical and dental assistance, hygienic supplies	Jul 03	Aug 04
Society of Roma Transcarpathia (2) (1st revision)	1,000	Food packages, winter assistance, medical and dental assistance, legal assistance, hygienic supplies	Jul 04	Jul 05
Romano Drom (1)	90	Food packages, hygienic supplies	Nov 02	Jan 04
Kherson City Roma Society (1)	130	Food packages	Nov 02	Dec 03
City of Lvov Public Organization "Ternipe" (1)	74	Food packages	Mar 03	Apr 04
Romano Drom (2)	20	Winter assistance	Nov 02	Apr 03
Chernigov City Public Organization "Romano Drom"	100	Food packages	Mar 03	Apr 04
Transcarpathian Association of Roma NGOs "Ekgipe" (2)	1,039	Food packages, clothing, winter assistance, emergency financial support, medical and dental assistance, social assistance, legal assistance, hygienic supplies	Jun 03	Sep 03
Transcarpathian Association of Roma NGOs "Ekgipe" (2) (1st revision)	1,548	Food (except for food packages), food packages, winter assistance, social assistance, legal assistance, hygienic supplies	Sep 03	Dec 04
Roma Association of Izmail (2)	1,052	Food (except for food packages), food packages, winter assistance, social assistance, legal assistance, hygienic supplies	Jul 03	Oct 04
Ame Roma	706	Food packages, clothing, hygienic supplies	Sep 03	Nov 04
Kherson City Roma Society (2)	1,000	Food packages	May 04	Jun 05
City of Lvov Public Organization "Ternipe" (2)	250	Food packages, medical and dental assistance, legal assistance, hygienic supplies	May 04	Jun 05
Transcarpathian Association of Roma NGOs "Ekgipe" (3)	482	Food (except for food packages), clothing, social assistance, legal assistance	Apr 05	Jul 05
Forumo Romen Ukrainatar	172	Food packages	Apr 05	Sep 05
Roma and Sinti, total**	8,905			

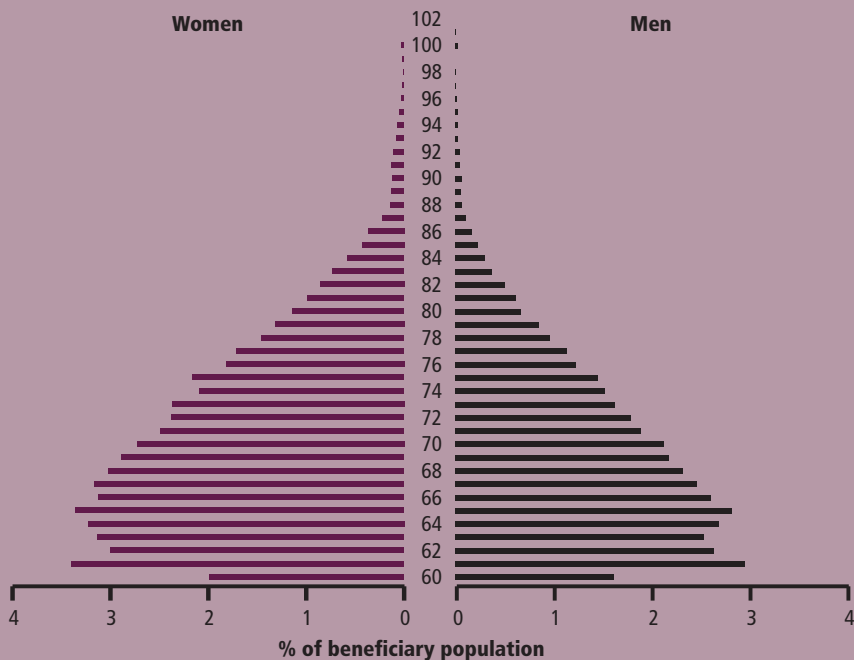
* Initial projects and project extensions are listed separately.

** Beneficiaries assisted under more than one project or extension are counted only once.

Notes on project names: "Revision" denotes extension of an existing project. Number (only) in parentheses indicates a service provider with more than one project approved for funding.

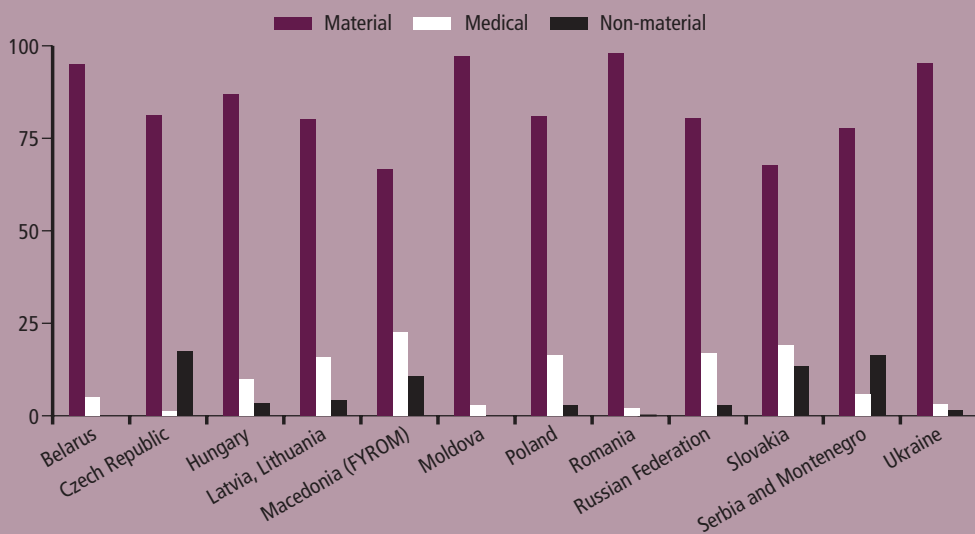
Roma beneficiaries: age and gender

All countries, December 2005



Roma beneficiaries: assistance breakdown

All countries, percentage of total project expenditure on assistance



Working with Roma survivors

Some lessons learned

1. For generations, Roma have resisted assimilation into mainstream cultures. If autonomy requires isolation and illiteracy, they will prefer it. An integrated Roma person may no longer be considered Roma if he or she has lost touch with the community.
2. Most Roma in Central and Eastern Europe are no longer mobile but confined to substandard, often illegal, rural or urban housing, far from services the state can no longer afford to provide.
3. Conditions in many Roma settlements are deteriorating, opportunities for legitimate work virtually non-existent. Although strategic initiatives are needed, access to communities is problematic unless assistance includes basic survival aid.
4. Roma often make little distinction between their historical persecutors: “Germans, Russians, Hungarians – they all treated us the same.”
5. There is very little contact between poor Roma in different countries or regions. Exceptions include economic migrants and young women who marry members of their clan living elsewhere.
6. Different factions within Roma communities are often in competition with each other. Distrust between various clans runs deep, sometimes formally prohibiting communication. Women tend to be less restricted than men.
7. Anti-Roma sentiments throughout Europe are high.
8. Governments tend to undercount Roma populations. Roma NGOs tend to over-count certain Roma clans while ignoring others. When questioned by census takers or other officials, Roma often resist self-identification out of fear of stigmatization, preferring to register with a “majority”.
9. While they may sometimes trust outsiders more, Roma often look to other Roma to solve their problems.
10. Many Roma are convinced that NGOs steal money coming from the UN, the EU and other donors instead of spending it on their community.
11. International Roma associations are often super-imposed constructs intended to give an outward appearance of unity. In reality, many Roma at the local level are unaware of their commonalities with Roma in other regions or countries.
12. Various layers of leadership are present in Roma culture. The most traditional (and often older) leaders may have more authority in the community and understand local interests better. However, they tend to be less educated and to avoid interaction with outsiders. Their focus is on preserving cultural norms and maintaining justice and harmony within the community.
13. External entities usually have access to another sort of leader. These Roma “activists”, who are often self-designated, represent Roma needs to the outside world. The role of traditional leaders has begun to diminish in favour of these leaders, which are generally divided into two types:
 - (a) Older leaders, educated under the communist regime, tend to have greater faith in governmental institutions. Those who work at the ministerial or municipal level may be considered inaccessible by most Roma. They may make a living from international or national “capacity-building” initiatives, while apparently doing little for their constituencies. Favouritism is shown to family members. Some of these older leaders have non-Roma advisers who take advantage of their trust.
 - (b) Younger leaders brought up in democratic societies may be better educated. They understand democratic “lingo” and are able to represent the needs of Roma communities to donor institutions. They often perform more effectively than older leaders and are more accountable to donors. However, they are sometimes distant from local communities and their legitimacy is questioned by Roma elders. Often local communities are not aware of these leaders’ involvement in Roma issues.
14. IOM has resisted various demands to work “exclusively” with certain Roma NGOs. When IOM contracted with another Roma NGO in the same location, accusations of corruption and fraud often followed.
15. Most Roma NGOs said they appreciated IOM’s close monitoring of projects. This led to improved capacity and permitted mid-project changes and timely closure when things failed to proceed as planned.