

titul Roma Human Development Project  
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**Roma Human Development Project** – v novembri 2001 realizoval Inštitút pre verejné otázky kvantitatívny sociologický výskum v spolupráci s UNDP, ktorého cieľom bolo získať a analyzovať informácie o životnej úrovni (výška, zloženie a zdroje príjmov, vybavenie domácnosti), o rodinných vzoroch, životnom štýle a zdravotnej situácii rómskej populácie, jej postojoch ku vzdelaniu, politickej reprezentácii a participácii a celkovej situácii lokalít, kde respondenti žijú. Údaje boli analyzované v januári a februári 2002 a komparované s údajmi z iných krajín (Česká republika, Maďarsko, Bulharsko, Rumunsko), ktoré uskutočnili súčasne ten istý výskum pod záštitou UNDP. Publikovanie záverečnej správy je predpokladané v októbri 2002.

## Main assumptions and objectives of the project

Project *Roma Human Development Program* attempts to advocate a new approach by applying a human development perspective to Roma integration issues and providing **an alternative to the dominating focus on human rights**. In light of worsening socio-economic problems facing Roma populations throughout the region, this project claims that the inefficiency of previous attempts mandate the establishment of a new analytical approach rooted within the concept of sustainable human development. This new approach should be three-pronged: it should be **sustainable**, it should be **human** (as opposed to simply economic seen exclusively in terms of economic growth) and it should be development oriented i.e. should be **providing development opportunities**.

The development perspective has been missing in most analyses of Roma issues. While integration is treated as the policy goal vis-à-vis the Roma, the focus has generally been on protecting human rights, or on deprivation in the context of increased social spending for marginalized groups. **The broader development context - focusing on choices, opportunities, participation, and responsibility - is still missing.**

The project addresses issues such as Roma access to employment, health care, and education: it also attempts to link them to the fundamental causes of these problems, and advocate sustainable policy solutions. **The project goes beyond the prevailing “deprivation” and “discrimination” discourse by addressing the root causes of Roma problems and proposing adequate, sustainable policy approaches** (“sustainable” in this context meaning affordable, achievable, not requiring constant subsidization and capable of receiving the support of majorities as well).

## What is Human Development?

In the past decade the Human Development paradigm became hugely popular. During the 1990s, development economics and policy debates came to acknowledge that development is more than the expansion of material output, and should serve broader objectives for human well being. The annual Human Development Reports

(HDRs) have been a major force behind this shift, having been one of the strongest voices advocating attention to the non-monetary dimensions of human development. The Human Development Index has played a major advocacy role in the process of focusing attention on non-economic aspects of human life.

Ironically, the success of HDI has only served to reinforce the narrow interpretation of the HD concept. People often tend to forget that “human development” is much broader than the three components of HDI (economic, educational and health) and has three major features intrinsically linked to the measurable aspect of HD (and reflected in HDI). These focus on people as the ends (and not means) of development process, are *concerned with human freedoms and dignity and the role of freedom in development*.

The first aspect means that in the HD framework, development is about people’s well being and the expansion of their capabilities and functioning. Expansion of material output is treated as a means and not the end. The second implies that human development is motivated by a concern for freedom, and dignity of individuals in all societies. Expansion of freedoms is at the center of the concept and should be at the center of its implementation. As stated in HDR2000, capabilities include ‘the *basic freedoms* of being able to meet bodily requirements, such as the ability to avoid starvation and undernourishment, or to escape preventable morbidity or premature mortality. But they also include the enabling opportunities given by schooling, or the liberty and economic means to move freely and to choose one’s abode. There are also important ‘*social*’ freedoms, such as the capability to participate in the life of the community, to join in public discussion, to participate in political decision-making and even the elementary ability ‘to appear in public without shame’.

The third aspect means that within the HD paradigm people cannot be considered as passive beneficiaries of economic and social progress in a society but must be regarded as active agents of change. This means participation opportunities, empowerment, access to information and opportunities to influence policy-making. Human beings can and should be agents of change through both individual action and collective action - education and health that enhance productive potential, knowledge that can enhance health, and through the use of civil and political liberties to take collective action and promote political change.

All these elements go well beyond the HDI components, especially regarding Roma and other marginalized communities. That is why, despite the difficulties in computing HDIs for Roma (this project provides just an attempt in this direction), HD paradigm is the most appropriate for approaching the problems these communities are facing.

Human development is the appropriate framework because within this concept economic and employment growth is seen not as an end in itself, but as one of the means for helping individuals to realize their potential. The human development perspective also emphasizes the sustainability, equity, participatory, and human security dimensions of social welfare. However having said this we are aware that human development is about efficiency as well, about measurable impact, about decreasing (and not increasing) dependency culture, about avoiding corruption at the local level (which may go hand in hand with donors’ spending).

## **Main objectives**

1. **To provide quantitative data outlining the existing status of Roma populations in terms of human development opportunities.** Currently most analyses of different aspects of Roma issues verge on generalities. It is well-established fact that Roma unemployment is high – but it is not clear how high? It is also known that education attendance is low but how low? Without explicit and measurable data on all these issues any approach would be susceptible to manipulation and speculation. Only on the basis of quantitative information it would be possible to approach the Roma issues in a broader development context outlining the costs and benefits of different approaches.
2. **To encourage a debate on the elaboration of a “Common Code of Conduct” of major actors involved in Roma and other marginalized communities’ issues.** Such a “common code of conduct” should outline the basic requirements any involvement should meet in order to avoid adverse outcomes of specific projects (for example increasing segregation instead of bridging the gap between majority and minorities, increasing dependency of social assistance or humanitarian aid instead of encouraging people to adopt active life strategies etc.).

## **Methodology**

To gather the empirical data we used the method of questionnaire, which was standardized for all countries engaged in this project. The questionnaire was divided into following fields:

- ❖ Family patterns and life style,
- ❖ Education attitudes and aspirations,
- ❖ Health patterns,
- ❖ Levels of living standards and economic status,
- ❖ Political representation and participation,
- ❖ Inter and intra-community relations,
- ❖ Demography,
- ❖ Introductory section,
- ❖ Evaluation.

During the month of October 2001 a preliminary test was conducted to verify the questionnaire. The empirical data were then gathered in November 2001. The research was conducted in ten districts of Slovak Republic – Malacky, Brezno, Prievidza, Rimavská Sobota, Rožňava, Spišská Nová Ves, Trebišov, Svidník, Sabinov, Košice.

In each district approximately one hundred respondents was selected. The sample size consists of 1030 cases. To sample the cases we took into account several criteria:

- Demographical characteristics of the respondents – sex (even distribution of males and females), age (stress on the age category between 18 – 35),
- Distribution of Roma population in Slovakia regions (majority of Roma population is concentrated in East Slovakia regions),
- The measure of community integration where respondents live (majority of Roma settlements are separated or segregated).

We applied these criteria to make the sample to reflect the Roma population makeup. In spite of using these criteria the research is not fully representative due to the lack of data on Roma population.

### **Personnel of the project**

**Michal Vašečka** - national coordinator.

**Martina Holecová** – coordinator of interviewers' network and data analysis.

**Peter Puliš** - coordinator of interviewers' network and data analysis.

**Elena Kriglerová** –conduct of pretest, team leader in district of Svidník, data analysis.

**Jana Rybová** – conduct of pretest, team leader in district of Malacky, data analysis.