



**Romani CRISS**

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## ***PRESS RELEASE***

### ***Census 2011: Although they are three times poorer than the rest of the population, Roma parents have educated their children 2 times more***

Romani CRISS Roma would like to kindly thanks the Roma parents and all relevant stakeholders for their efforts which led to substantial results in increasing the level of education of Roma children and youngsters, over the last decade.

Thus, compared to the 2002 census, in 2011<sup>1</sup>, the percentage of Roma who have completed superior studies is 4.25 times bigger (0.71% in 2011 vs. 0.16% in 2002); for the same period, the national increase was only 2 times (14% vs. 7%).

In the same period, the percentage of post-secondary Roma graduates doubled (0.2% vs. 0.1%), while the secondary school Roma graduates increased by 53% (reaching 44% in 2011 compared to 29% in 2002); the national increase was almost insignificant, less than 1% for each category (the percentage of post-secondary school graduates on national level fluctuated around 30% value, while the percentage of secondary school graduates on national level was about 65 %).

The percentage of primary school Roma graduates represents 0.95 from the 2002 percents (standing around 34% value), while nationally the decrease is more pronounced (0.70, decreasing to 14% today vs. 20% in 2002).

The percentage of Roma people without education percentage represents 0.58 of the 2002 percents (about 20% in 2011 vs. 34% in 2002) roughly similar to the 0.53 (3% vs. 5.5%), which is the total population of the country.

Despite the registered progress (probably the largest educational progresses of an ethnic group in Romania in the period of 2002-2011), the education disparity between Roma and majority population is still substantial. According to the 2011 census, the percentage of Roma university graduates is 20 times lower than the national average (0.71% Roma vs. 14% the national average), while in 2002 the difference was 42 times bigger (0.16% vs. 7%).

This Roma parent's effort is worthy of all gratitude considering the studies from this period show that Roma face great barriers in employment and 75% of Roma live in poverty, compared with 25% on

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<sup>1</sup> Statistical data related to census in 2011 are based on the data offered by National Institute of Statistics, available at <http://www.recensamantromania.ro/>

national level<sup>2</sup>. Therefore, although they are 3 times poorer than the national average, Roma parents have educated their children 2 times more than the average, reported to the percentage of superior education graduates.

Romani CRISS asks the Government to intensify the application of educational policies for Roma, policies that produced results (such as affirmative action, school mediation, the promotion of inclusive school programs concept, after-school and early development programs etc) and to adopt concrete measures for removing the main barriers that harden the access of Roma to education, particularly by supporting the families without the material resources necessary for keeping their children in school, and ensuring equal access to quality education. These barriers were disclosed on many occasions by the organizations of the civil society and not only by them. We recall that, in 2011, Romani CRISS published a report which showed that the main reasons which generated school dropout among Roma were the precarious economic situation of the family (41.8%) and discrimination in schools (12.5%)<sup>3</sup>.

Public policies for Roma have failed in ensuring equal access for Roma on the labour market, and in supporting economical initiatives. This fact severely affects the education of Roma children. Also, although legislation for prohibiting discrimination and school segregation was adopted, they are not properly applied, despite the warning signals drawn by the civil society<sup>4</sup>.

In 2009-2012, only in two projects of Romani CRISS, we supported 19.800 Roma children and parents to have access to education, for improving the school performance, learning in a multicultural and non-segregated environment, for closing the educational gap and for realizing the importance of education. Therefore, 3% of Roma officially declared in Romania participated to these 2 programs of Romani CRISS. Unfortunately, the support offered to those families was not as consistent as we would have wanted and as it would have been possible, mainly due to delays in reimbursement by the Romanian Government POSDRU.

The official number of Roma in Romania increased with 16%, from 535,140 people in 2002 (representing 2.46% of the total population) to 621 573 people (3.08% of total) in 2011. During 2011, Romani CRISS run a national and local campaign for sustaining the participation at census and the declaration of the real ethnic affiliation among Roma. In 8 communities where Romani CRISS developed door-to-door campaigns, the number of declared Roma increased in 2011 to 6156 (7% overall) compared to 3936 (4% overall) in 2002, representing an increase of 56%. This is 3.5 times more than the increase at national level. The largest numerical increase occurred in Babadag, Tulcea county, from 168 Roma in 2002 (1.67% of its population) to 1219 Roma (13.63%) in 2011. They were followed by Apata village from Brasov county, from 146 Roma (4.87%) to 545 Roma (17.19%) and Tunari village from Ilfov county, from 80 Roma (2.1%) to 449 Roma (8.41%).

Underrepresentation of Roma at census can be corrected through such actions which should be implemented at national level by the public authorities, in order to ensure a more accurate listing, so that it will correspond with the real number of Roma in Romania.

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<sup>2</sup> Amnesty International, the right to housing is a human right, Treated as waste, Romania, January 2010, page 2, available at <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/EUR39/001/2010/en/8bd97fc8-542f-4d99-84a6-898d117dface/eur390012010ro.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> Romani CRISS, Participation, school absenteeism and discrimination experience in the case of Roma in Romania, page 6, available at <http://www.romanicriss.org/PDF/RC%202011%20-%20Participare,%20absenteism%20scolar%20si%20experienta%20discriminarii%20%28ro%29.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> Romani CRISS and ACRR, Report to Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination with the occasion of the Report for Romania, 2010.