

Project Fiche – IPA National programmes / Component I

1 IDENTIFICATION

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| Project Title | Local integration of refugees, internally displaced persons and minority groups |
| CRIS Decision number | 2011/022-988 |
| Project no. | 8 |
| MIPD Sector Code | 7. Social Development |
| ELARG Statistical code | 02.24 |
| DAC Sector code | 16010 |
| Total cost (VAT excluded)¹ | 1.000.000 EUR |
| EU contribution | 900.000 EUR |
| Management mode | Decentralised |
| Responsible Unit or National Authority/Implementing Agency | <p>The Central Financing and Contracting Department (CFCD) will be the contracting authority and will be responsible for all administrative and procedural aspects of the tendering process, contracting matters and financial management including payment of project activities.</p> <p>The Head of CFCD will act as the Programme Authorising Officer (PAO) of the project.</p> <p>Mrs. Radica Koceva (PAO) Central Financing and Contracting Department Ministry of Finance Tel: +389 2 3106 455 Fax: +389 2 3231 219 E-mail: radica.koceva@finance.gov.mk</p> |

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| Implementation management | <p>Main beneficiary institution and project coordinator will be the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP).</p> <p><u>Contacts:</u> <u>Ministry of Labour and Social Policy</u> Mr. Aleksandar Georgievski, Head of Department and SPO/IPA Coordinator Dame Gruev 14, 1000 Skopje Phone: +389 2 3106 253 Fax: +389 2 3220 408 E-mail: Aleksandar.Georgievski@mtsp.gov.mk</p> <p>Mr. Dejan Ivkovski Head of Unit for Asylum, Migration and Humanitarian Aid, Department for Social Protection in the MLSP Phone: + 389 2 3106 371 Fax: + 389 2 3233 460 E-mail: DIvkovski@mtsp.gov.mk</p> |
| Implementing modality | Stand-alone Project |
| Project implementation type | Service contract |
| Zone benefiting from the action(s) | Nationwide project activities |

2. Overall Objective and Project Purpose

2.1 Overall Objective:

The objective is to enhance the state administration and implementation capacities for further strengthening and supporting the local integration process and inclusion of the residential and/or non-residential displaced persons (refugees and internally displaced) and minority groups (Roma), as well increasing the sustainability of their reliance.

2.2 Project purpose:

The specific project purposes targeting the population of concern are:

- To contribute in supporting process of the residential and/or non-residential displaced persons in their access for provision of comprehensive state administration services;
- To increase self-reliance via participation and inclusion of the displaced persons in the society;
- To provide contribution and added value to the long-term and durable housing solutions for improvement of living standards of the displaced persons;
- To improve the quality of life and access to rights and services for social inclusion of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in the country.

2.3 Link with AP/NPAA/EP/SAA

The Project will contribute towards the implementation of the Article 2 of SAA on the respect for the democratic principles and human rights as the core principles of this Agreement. One of the goals of the SAA is the goal to support the efforts for development of the economic and the

international cooperation and the harmonisation of legislation with the Community legislation in whole. The cooperation between the parties shall also include the adjustment of the national legislation, so as to enable more complete legal regulations with reference to this issue, in accordance with the standards which have been prescribed with the EU regulations.

The **National Programme for the Adoption of Acquis** as well as **2010** foresees further harmonisation of the national legislation with the Acquis and continuous capacity building of the relevant institutions. The Integration Strategy and the Action Plan for refugees and foreigners will be continuously implemented by the relevant institutions; the staff within the Shelter Centre and Unit for asylum, migration and humanitarian aid within the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP) will be continuously trained; the National unit for comparison of fingerprints is planned to be established until the end of 2012.

The project will address the following **Accession Partnership** priorities:

- Promote access to education, justice and social welfare for members of minority groups;
- Ensure administrative capacity to implement social inclusion and social protection policies;
- Sustain effective implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement with a view, *inter alia*, to promoting inter-ethnic confidence-building.

2.4 Link with MIPD

According to the MIPD 2011-2013, continued efforts have to be undertaken to support promotion and protection of human rights and improvement of the living standard of different vulnerable groups (socially excluded persons or persons living in risk, such as displaced persons), as well strengthening the institutional capacities for the management of *migration and visa issues*, as well as guidelines for processing asylum cases. Additional efforts are also necessary to address more effectively the conditions of the Roma, which remain very difficult. Support for the implementation of the Ohrid framework agreement will continue to be a priority where concrete results are expected in equitable representation and education.

2.5 Link with National Development Plan

N/A

2.6 Link with national/sectoral investment plans

On 29 December 2008, the Government adopted the 2008-2015 Strategy for Integration of Refugees and Foreigners in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, providing a national policy framework for implementation of an integration process targeting recognised refugees and persons under humanitarian/subsidiary protection and other vulnerable categories. In November 2009, the National Plan of Action (NAP)¹ was adopted by the Government outlining the activities for integration of refugees and foreigners within six-core components, as per the strategy: Housing; Education and Training; Employment and Vocational Skills Training; Health Care; Social Services and Protection; and Community Engagement and Development. A Government established Inter-Ministerial Body for Integration of Refugees and Foreigners comprised of representation of various line ministries and agencies as an

¹ Further supporting the actual implementation of the activities defined with the Integration Strategy and the NAP, in November 2009, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP) established a project unit within the Department for Social Protection, under its Unit for Asylum, Migration and Humanitarian Aid – the Centre for Integration of Refugees and Foreigners. The Centre for Integration of Refugees and Foreigners acts as multidisciplinary information and counselling centre built on the functional model developed in other European countries.

important role in developing integration related strategic documents and policy guidance. The Body is chaired by the MLSP and might serve as a platform for overall coordination of integration activities.

The project implementation also corresponds to the priorities defined in the following development strategic documents:

- National strategy for alleviation of poverty and social exclusion 2010-2020 ;
- Strategy for inclusion of Roma in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – Action Plan on housing within the Decade for inclusion of the Roma;
- Resolution on Migration Policy of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 2009-2014.

3. Description of project

3.1 Background and justification:

The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP)² is responsible for development and implementation of policies for Roma inclusion and local integration of displaced persons. The actions envisaged in this project fiche shall support the MLSP, as Beneficiary Institution, towards sustainable solutions to address issues of Roma, refugees, IDP's and minority groups in society.

Support to the implementation of national and local public policies for Roma inclusion

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is a multicultural and multiethnic country, and following the 2002 census³, more than 3% of the population declared themselves as members of the Roma community and 0.18% as Egyptians. The statistical data regarding different minorities, notably the Roma, Askhalia and Egyptian, will be updated once the new census is carried out. Of all ethnic groups, the Roma minority generally lives in the harshest conditions and with the lowest level of education. The rate of unemployment among Roma far exceeds the national average, reaching close to 90% in some settlements in the country.

To improve the living conditions of the Roma communities, new strategies need to be developed in order to ensure that they have equality of opportunities in areas such as civic and political participation, as well as developmental sectors, such as housing, education, employment and health. The current institutional set-up of the Strategy and Decade for Roma⁴ is facing the challenges for implementation of the obligations in terms of planning and delivery of the activities based on the provisions of the Strategy for Roma and National Action Plans, especially at local level. The prepared local action plans (LAPs) at municipal level, as well as the preparation of other LAPs in the municipalities where Roma people reside, need further streamlining for effective implementation, capacity building and awareness raising among Roma and non-Roma population. The local self-government units of Delchevo, Kochani, Stip, Debar, Kumanovo, Bitola, Prilep and Tetovo have hired persons responsible for Roma related affairs on a local level. Sporadic initiatives by few municipalities and Roma NGOs with limited resources were able to carry out activities for Roma based-needs within the Roma community, but with no sufficient community level

² Annex III – Description of the Institutional Framework.

³ 2010 Statistical Year book, Section 03. Population, page 56, Table "Population according to declared ethnic affiliation, by census"

⁴ National Coordinator, National Coordinative Body (inter-agency entity), Unit for Implementation of the Strategy and Decade of Roma Inclusion as part of the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy and the Roma Information Centers

impact. Nevertheless, these municipalities are still lacking strategic approach, funds, human resources and clear vision for resolving the issues of the local Roma population.

The proposed project will ensure continuity in the support for the institutions both on national and local level. The proposed activities envisage more specific and targeted assistance to the central and local administration, aiming to support the relevant institutions in the process of creation and implementation of public policies for Roma at national and local level and to allow full implementation of active labour market measures programme targeting Roma, with a special focus on developing and implementation of specified actions targeting Roma women and children with special focus on Roma street children .

It should enable relevant institutions to adequately create solutions for policy implementation by mainstreaming the Roma issues within the current state/local affairs and to be able to create specific solutions based on the needs of the Roma community. The project activities should support the relevant national/local entities in planning, budgeting, delivery of services, analysis of legislation and current procedures, and creation of recommendations for improvement of the services it provides on national and local level, as well supporting the decision making processes. Since the implementation of the policies for Roma is mainly centralised in terms of planning and budgeting, it is more than necessary that this project strengthens the institutional and human capacity of the actors relevant to the Roma issue.

Local integration of refugees and IDP's

Along with voluntary repatriation to the country of origin and resettlement, the local integration is a third option considered as a durable solution to a refugee situation. The complex and gradual process is comprised of socio-economic elements through which refugees are given opportunities to build a new life in the host country. Integration is an implicit process of inclusion and reconciliation in which displaced persons become the equal members of host community. The final beneficiaries of this project are displaced persons who hold the legal status of a recognised refugee, person under subsidiary protection or internally displaced persons.

As of May 2010, there are remaining 1,010 persons (approximately 220 families) under subsidiary protection and 24 persons with the recognised refugee status. The majority are members of Roma, Askhalia, Egyptian community who arrived from Kosovo in 1999. The majority of population lives in one of the ten municipalities of the city of Skopje - the municipality of Shuto Orizari, in rented accommodation paid by the state provided financial assistance for social protection.

In June 2010, the most recent situation with regards to the internally displaced persons (IDP) from the 2001 conflict in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is the following: 617 internally displaced persons (187 families). Majority of them have submitted the appeals against the state in relation to obtain the material damages (damages on the fixed assets, households, movable property) caused during the 2001 conflict. As a specific group of total number of IDPs are identified 149 persons (approximately 38 internally displaced families) originating from area Radusha. The long-lasting problem is that these persons cannot obtain evidence of the ownership of the property, on which they had lived before 2001 conflict, thus limiting their access to state settled damages.

High unemployment rate, substandard living conditions and consequent health problems are predominant concern of refugees, thus a priority for the provision of integration assistance.

The most recent field survey carried by the MLSP/Centre for Integration in October 2010 among 286 families, reported that 117 families or 40% stated that they are not satisfied with their current privately rented accommodation due to the poor quality of housing and infrastructure, and majority of them, or 64% are living in the Municipality of Shuto Orizari. Substandard living conditions affect families across sectors bringing poverty, poor health and uncertainty to dominate their lives. The same survey confirmed that 50% of families have no working experience or any vocational training while only 22% occasionally have some seasonal work.

Government's adopted legal framework and strategic documents⁵ on integration and established institutional framework⁶ created conditions to start new development processes and transfer from provision of basic emergency/humanitarian assistance to the provision of assistance supporting self-reliance and sustainability.

Sustainability of such processes that ensure long-term impact on lives of the displaced families must be supported by adequate capacity building activities targeting the policy makers and the responsible state institutions. Taking into consideration that the integration strategies and policies are relatively new to the country, along with the fact that such strategies are also subject to constant upgrade at the level of EU due to their wide socio-economic impact and related migration developments, the responsible institutions must be constantly up-to-date and thus enabled to transfer policies into timely activities and results.

3.2 Assessment of project impact, catalytic effect, sustainability and cross border impact

Overall project impact is expected primarily through triggering a change in ways displaced population now is perceived and solving their daily-faced concerns. It will shift from beneficiaries being only recipients of basic survival assistance to a situation where active engagement will result in solved employment and housing issues, thus providing the long-term self-reliance supporting sustainability of their integration. Such a development approach will also remedy the dependency syndrome created in the past and trigger empowerment on long-term basis.

The project will have an impact not only on the life of direct target groups (refugees and IDPs) who will be able to achieve their preferred durable solution – integration or return, but also on the wider domestic population and local community in terms of better quality of life.

Sustainability of the process on the level of displaced persons will be reflected with individual increase of employability and solved accommodation – both elements are basic preconditions for sustainable integration. Improved living conditions for refugees, IDP's and minorities will result in a healthier life, fewer needs for social protection and overall decrease in costs needed for assistance. Taking into account that local integration is a contemporary process, on the level of state administration responsible for implementation of integration assistance, capacity building activities will strengthen the system and positively impact long-term perspective of integration process.

Parallel to integration process there is an ongoing process of voluntary repatriation. Coordinated and orderly organised integration and voluntary repatriation is a positive factor in

⁵ See Annex IV – Reference to laws, regulations and strategic documents

⁶ See also Annex III – Description of Institutional Framework

the bilateral relations between the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Kosovo*, creating a good example of sharing the responsibilities. Further to the cross-border elements, it is important to emphasise the risk of protracted displacement that creates potential for secondary displacement and transferring of the problem from one state to another.

*This designation is without prejudice to positions on the status, and in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

3.3 Results and measurable indicators

Results and measurable indicators under Component 1: Support to the implementation of national and local public policies for Roma inclusion

Expected results:

- Implemented training plan for capacity building of relevant institutions on the Local Action Plans (LAPs) within the implementation of the Roma Strategy and Decade;
- Enhanced capacity for all the relevant stakeholders for implementation of Roma Strategy and Decade and memorandum for cooperation with the municipalities;
- Local Action Plans for Roma implemented.

Measurable indicators:

- Developed training need assessment and training plan;
- Number of received trainings and number of people trained from all the relevant stakeholders;
- Four round tables per year organised;
- Two workshops on policy advise per year organised;
- Revised and adopted Local Actions Plans for Roma;
- Decreased racial and gender discrimination;
- Increased rate of education completion;
- Increased rate of employment in Roma youth.

Results and measurable indicators under Component 2: Institutional Capacity Building and Access to Labour Market for refugees, IDP's and Roma minority

Expected results:

- Increased capacity of state institutions and policy makers to deliver integration policies and facilitate access to services;
- Achieved economic sustainability;
- Increased employability;
- Gained experience and best practices in the area of refugee integration.

Measurable indicators:

- Number of trainings delivered;
- Number of employment consultations made as:
 - o Number of work permits issued;
 - o Number of employment/vocational training consultations;
 - o Number of companies contacted;
 - o Number of facilitated employments;
 - o Number of field visits;
- Number of employments (till the project end at least 20 families benefit from employment);
- Number of vocational trainings organised per market demand (till the project end at least 30 families benefit from vocational trainings/increased employability).

3.4 Activities

Activities under Component 1: Support to the implementation of national and local public policies for Roma inclusion:

Activity 1: Supporting the national institutional structure of the Strategy for Roma and Decade of Roma Inclusion

- Capacity building activities for the responsible institutions;
- Revision of the existing policies for Roma;
- Analysis of the current legislation, procedures and practices in terms of delivering services for improved access to subsequent registration, regulation of status, acquisition the personal documentation for Roma;
- Recommendation for improvement of the legal framework, procedures and services of the responsible institutions;
- Improving the coordination among the responsible institutions;
- Awareness raising and breaking negative stereotyping;
- Capacity building and support of Roma women in terms of decreasing both racial and gender discrimination;
- Specific measures targeting Roma children with special accent to Roma street children;
- Capacity building and support to networks with different international and local NGOs for integrated and complementary approach.

Activity 2: Supporting the local institutional structure for creation and implementation of Roma policies

- Capacity building activities of local stakeholders (municipalities, institutions, Roma civil sector, etc.);
- Policy advice to the municipalities;
- Building network of stakeholders in order to coordinate actions for implementation of local policies and support implementation of local action plans;
- Creation of (workable, realistic and durable) local policies for Roma;
- Analysis of the current state of service delivery of the local public administration institutions;
- Creation of recommendation for improvement of the service delivery;
- Awareness raising and breaking negative stereotyping.

Activities under Component 2: Institutional Capacity Building and Access to Labour Market for refugees, IDP's and Roma minority:

- Organisation and delivering of 3 tailor made capacity building trainings;
- Provision of detailed information on access to employment rights and procedures;
- Provision of assistance to open application and submit documentation to obtain personal work permits with Employment Service Agency;
- Provision of information on market demand and jobs availability;
- Provision of information on available qualification and prequalification opportunities;
- Organisation of related coordination meetings;
- Developing and implementation of modalities of employment program for the persons of concern for assistance in starting-up small businesses, mediation in employment via subsidiary assistance for hiring companies and provision of vocational trainings;
- Personal needs assessment profiled from personal integration plan – employment sector;

- Provision of assistance in application procedures and development of employment plan or plan for attendance of vocational trainings;
- Coordination of the screening and selection process with Employment Service Agency;
- Implementation of vocational trainings via training providers;
- Implementation of subventions (employment) via Employment Service Agency;
- Monitoring and evaluation of approved employment/VT plans.

Three (3) modules of trainings will cover three main levels of integration governance, one being on a level of policies targeting integration policy makers and the other being on the level of implementation of the policies targeting practitioners; and the third will target end-beneficiaries (refugees, IDP's and Roma minority).

Training (1) for policy makers will primarily include members of the Inter-Ministerial Body for Integration and specifically high level officials from the following institutions: the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Local Self-government, the Secretariat for European Affairs, and the Association of Local Self-government Units.

Capacity building training for practitioners (1) will include the Centres for Social Work (CSW) (all the branches), the Employment Service Agency, the Health Insurance Fund, the Local Self-government Units, as well as responsible departments with the line ministries – the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Local Self-government.

Training for refugees (1) will target their Refugee Committee on Integration to support community development and increase their advocacy and lobbying capacities.

Trainings for policy makers and practitioners will elaborate topics on up-to-date EU policies on integration/migration and their implementation; system of measurable indicators and evaluation and; EU integration/migration related funding and project development and refugee advocacy issues.

Access to labour market and employment program of the persons of concern is developed along several modalities such as assistance in starting up small businesses (self-employment), mediation in employment via subsidiary assistance (on-the-job training) for hiring companies (employment) and provision of vocational trainings to meet skills demand in the country.

The Employment Service Agency (ESA) is responsible institution in facilitating and implementing employment measures and runs programs within the national Active Labour Market Measures to boost employment of unemployed and persons requiring more assistance with employment such as minority groups, single mothers, etc. The measures combine assistance with self-employment, employment, business counselling, business trainings, skills analyses, etc. The Agency is also responsible for issuance of personal work permits for persons granted asylum and their registration with the Agency.

MLSP has proposed to the Employment Service Agency (ESA) to assume responsibility in facilitating employment for refugees where employment as an integration measure is being mainstreamed and interlinked within existing national system. In addition, the project

activities will be focused on providing the assistance and advice to refugees by project staff in close cooperation with the Refugee Integration Centre.

Led by the expertise of the Agency, the Refugee Integration Centre will be developing employment/business plans together with interested beneficiaries to either get employment or attend vocational trainings following the Agency's recommendations sourced from the up-to-date market demand and deficiency trends. Development of project proposals and employment assistance will be based on registration for integration and beneficiaries personal/family integration plans where assistance with employment and vocational training is agreed priority in supporting individual/family self reliance and integration process. Besides system solutions, further investment must be made in rising awareness on long-term benefits from employment and vocational training on behalf of refugee community. Awareness raising and promotion of employability of refugees shall also include potential employers among private companies and various associations and chambers gathering private businesses in the country.

Strengthening the component of community participation and development as planned by the National Action Plan for Integration, approximately 10% of the employment projects will involve the country's citizens, as well the Roma IDPs.

Management and contracting arrangements

- 1 service contract will be concluded for the implementation of Component 1 and 2 of the project. The value of the contract will be in amount of 1.000.000 EUR, out of which 900.000 EUR as IPA contribution and 100.000 EUR as national contribution. It is expected the services under this arrangement to be delivered within 20 months. Contract signature is envisaged for Q4 2015.

Project Management and Administration

A team leader (key expert) will be responsible for the overall project management, representation and reporting. The co-ordination of activity development in the different components of the project is important. The team leader is responsible for appropriate management of resources. Advisory services will be provided to the beneficiary. A pool of short-term expertise will be made available to assist the key expert and to carry out the activities in the areas of concern, if necessary.

During the inception phase of the project, a detailed deployment plan will be developed under the coordination of a Steering Committee in which each co-operating national institution will be represented to ensure appropriate inclusion. The project Steering Committee will be established to oversee the implementation process of the project activities. The project Steering Committee will be chaired by the Minister of Labour and Social Policy and will include at least one representative of the primarily involved beneficiary services and the Ministry of Finance. The Delegation of the European Union and the Secretariat for European Affairs shall be invited to participate with Observer status. The Steering Committee shall meet not less than once per three months.

3.5 Conditionality and sequencing

The process of integration is completely based on voluntary participation of targeted population. Currently, the legal or procedural framework of integration does not impose or condition integration especially not in its development aspect, e.g. regarding employment or education. For example, some European countries introduced "integration contracts" obliging

both the beneficiary and the state to participate in integration activities of the persons of concern. Also, the system of social protection is not linked to active labour market measures, practically allowing a person with refugee or subsidiary protection status to be entitled directly to social protection only. Accordingly, focused on achievement of the results planned with this project, targeted population must first voluntarily approach and apply for local integration to allow a number of measures to be implemented.

Overall political and socio-economic environment, as well employment and business environment in concern of the persons of concern must be especially improved for supporting the facilitation process of refugee integration in all the societal aspects.

3.6 Linked activities⁷

Roma Inclusion

EU funded

The IPA Component I national programme for 2008 entails the project “Support to the implementation of Roma Strategy” focused on enhancing the institutional capacity of the beneficiaries in order to further improve the transparency and accountability of the Government vis-à-vis the citizens and protecting their fundamental rights, including the Unit for the implementation of the Roma Strategy. Additionally, the IPA Component I (2010) project fiche “Support to institutions in implementation of policies relevant to non-majority communities” foresees the implementation of capacity building activities at national level for the implementation of the Roma Strategy.

Planned activities regarding Roma issues are linked to the Human Resources Development Component and in this regard, the measure 3.2 foreseen with the OPHRD 2007 – 2013 will facilitate integration of the Roma representatives excluded from the labour market through enhancement and strengthening of their employment potentials, as well as through facilitating trainings in line with individual needs and conditions, of the Roma, Albanian and Turk women. The identified overall objective of the operation is strengthening and enabling women from minority groups to improve their employment potentials.

The Multi-beneficiary Programme under the IPA Transition Assistance and Institution Building Component for the year 2010 aims at providing assistance under the Priority axis 1 - Political Criteria for supporting the Regional initiative for Roma Integration. This project is designed to improve the quality of life and access to rights of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian (RAE) communities in the Western Balkans. The regionally focused support aims to: Improve living conditions, in particular housing in Roma settlements, access to health care and social welfare systems for RAE communities, and raise awareness about the importance of education and equal opportunities (gender equality) within RAE communities; Improve capacity, in particular of community coordinators, and empowerment among Roma for addressing community issues; Reduce number of RAE individuals at risk of statelessness; Promote and support coordination between relevant administrative bodies in the region; Increase efficiency of public services in dealing with RAE populations and addressing related issues such as legal advice and assistance, delivery of personal documents as well as land planning / property documents; Raise awareness among relevant authorities as well as the general public regarding Roma issues and improve perception; and Enhance visibility at European level of regional actions in the field of Roma inclusion in the Western Balkan.

⁷ Information available on other donor funded project at: <http://cdad.sep.gov.mk>

Other donor related projects

The Roma Educational Fund from Budapest (REF) supports financing of the projects in the area of the education of Roma, and related to its priorities in the region, during 2010-2011 is supporting the inclusion of Roma children in pre-school institutions, their integration and socialisation in the country. The project activities include: Ensuring financial assets for stay of Roma children aged one year till start of the primary education in the kinder-gardens in the local self-government units with bigger number of inhabitants from Roma ethnic community; Ensuring financial assets for teachers from Roma ethnic community working in the kinder-gardens; and Strengthening the cooperation with the Roma civil organisations in implementation of the activities for increasing the inclusion of Roma children in the pre-school education.

The Operational Plan for Active Labour Market Measures for 2010 and 2011 (supported by the Government of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the budget of the MLSP, and implemented by UNDP) includes a Programme for support of Roma. The measure is aimed at training of the registered unemployed Roma persons for gaining working skills, in order to increase their employability.

Refugees and IDP's

Displaced persons who are final beneficiaries of this project are refugees and persons under subsidiary protection who fled 1999 Kosovo crises and internally displaced citizens of the country from 2001 civil internal conflict.

UNHCR Skopje continues to facilitate voluntary repatriation of persons from Kosovo residing in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. In 2010, 127 persons were facilitated to voluntary return to Kosovo. MoI and UNHCR will continue to collaborate with all relevant actors to facilitate their repatriation to Kosovo / Serbia. In parallel, UNHCR and MLSP are following regional developments on durable solutions for persons affected by 1991-1995 conflicts (including Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro) to optimise solutions and available resources to end displacement on a regional level.

From March 2010, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP) assumed its financial responsibilities for provision of social protection for persons holding the subsidiary protection or recognised refugee status and meeting the social vulnerability criteria.

The 2009 Participatory Assessment conducted by UNHCR, the implementing partners, the government counterparts and refugees themselves confirmed that housing and employment are the main needs and priorities for refugees in terms of the local integration in the country. Participating refugees emphasised their current accommodation problems and the need for long-term housing solutions prior to any other integration element such as employment, education or social protection. Likewise, the conclusions of the UNHCR led Vulnerability Assessment conducted in the period March-August 2009, also confirmed the sustainable housing and employment as the main priorities when refugee families were asked about conditions for local integration. As the report indicates, many families live in substandard living conditions with a negative exposure on the health of the refugee population livelihood.

Addressing the unemployment issue, the MLSP piloted employment programmes that started in November 2009, and had assisted a total of 41 direct/indirect beneficiaries who had established small businesses or attended vocational trainings. By May 2010, pending final

projects approval, it is expected that a total of 16 direct/indirect beneficiaries will benefit from small businesses or vocational trainings.

Since November 2009 when the MLSP's Centre for Integration become operational, it had carried nearly 1500 consultations to support refugees access to and benefits within social protection, accommodation, employment, education, etc. The Centre is also intensively supporting various branches of the Centres for Social Work (CSW) in their administrative and logistic refugee's case management. Besides the general information campaigns, the Centre conducted integration camping in September 2010 when the process of formal registration for integration had began. The role of the Centre is to conduct formal registration of applicants and develop Family Integration Plans with consequent action plan to implement supporting activities across all the sectors.

At the moment, the Government's efforts are focused at the closing of the court proceedings where the IDPs are requesting financial compensation for the material and non-material damages following the 2001 conflict. Despite the effort to accelerate and close these proceedings, there is still a group of IDPs who cannot prove property ownership pre-2001 and consequently cannot start court proceedings for compensation. Meanwhile, this group continues to receive accommodation and financial support while the Government is searching and making efforts for long-term solution also for the IDP group.

While politics, policies and commitment to support integration are evident, insufficient financial resources, high unemployment, limited social housing capacities, and poorly funded welfare structures render achieving the sustainable solutions for the refugee integration process.

The proposed activities are linked to the projects started during 2009 and continued to be implemented in 2010. The 2010 project-related activities are financed by the UNHCR under the Sub-Agreement signed by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP) and the UNHCR. With a view of future cooperation, the MLSP regularly cooperates and coordinates activities with UNHCR, including fundraising activities to avoid any overlapping within the external support toward the implementation of the Integration Strategy.

The national budget covers the costs arising from the rights of refugees derived under the Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection, including the social protection and financial assistance for their provided and rented accommodation.

The specific projects implemented and funded by the UNHCR during 2009-2011 for the integration processes of refugee and foreigners are mainly in the form of technical assistance provided as an operational support of the Ministry and the Centre for Integration and refugees through small projects. In addition, the CARDS programme likewise aided the equipment of the Asylum Seekers Reception Centre.

3.7 Lessons learned

Following recommendations were underlined from the experience gained via implementation of the activities started from November 2009:

- Institutional capacity building and strengthening of the integration framework on the level of policy makers and practitioners is paramount for the success of the overall process. These activities will also facilitate the networking and exchange of information/best practices between the country's and European institutions;

- Provision of comprehensive support and counselling via Centre for Integration allows direct beneficiaries and responsible institutions to have a “focal point” for facilitation of integration process across sectors;
- Numerous field surveys and individual family assessments confirmed that housing is the main need and a priority of displaced population. Provision of housing is also the main component on sustainable living and integration providing also the important element of long-term prospects on integration vs. unstable and short-term prospects limiting beneficiary’s projection and planning capacities;
- Along with housing, employment and increased employability are important elements of increased self-reliance and sustainability of integration;
- Providing suitable equipment and furniture in the social housing units constructed by respecting the national and international legislation and relevant standards.

4. Indicative Budget (amounts in EUR)

| | | | SOURCES OF FUNDING | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|--------|---------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|-----------|------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|------------------------|--------------|---------|-------|
| | | | TOTAL EXP.RE | TOTAL PUBLIC EXP.RE | IPA COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTION | | NATIONAL PUBLIC CONTRIBUTION | | | PRIVATE CONTRIBUTION | | | |
| ACTIVITIES | IB (1) | INV (1) | EUR (a)=(b)+(e) | EUR (b)=(c)+(d) | EUR (c) | % (2) | Total EUR (d)=(x)+(y)+(z) | % (2) | Central EUR (x) | Regional/Local EUR (y) | IFIs EUR (z) | EUR (e) | % (3) |
| Technical Assistance Contract | X | / | 1.000.000 | 1.000.000 | 900.000 | 90 | 100.000 | 10 | 100.000 | | | | |
| TOTAL IB | | | 1.000.000 | 1.000.000 | 900.000 | 90 | 100.000 | 10 | 100.000 | | | | |
| TOTAL INV | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| TOTAL PROJECT | | | 1.000.000 | 1.000.000 | 900.000 | 90 | 100.000 | 10 | 100.000 | | | | |

NOTE: DO NOT MIX IB AND INV IN THE SAME ACTIVITY ROW. USE SEPARATE ROW

Amounts net of VAT

(1) In the Activity row use "X" to identify whether IB or INV

(2) Expressed in % of the **Public** Expenditure (column (b))

(3) Expressed in % of the **Total** Expenditure (column (a))

5. Indicative Implementation Schedule (periods broken down per quarter)

| Contracts | Start of Tendering | Signature of contract | Project Completion |
|------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Service contract | Q3 2014 | Q4 2015 | Q3 2017 |

All projects should in principle be ready for tendering in the 1st Quarter following the signature of the FA.

6. Cross cutting issues

6.1 Equal Opportunity and non - discrimination

Ensuring the gender participation, respect of equal opportunities and non-discrimination practices through the project implementation will be guaranteed. The competent institutions involved in the project implementation will observe equal opportunities of women and men in the human resources development and capacity building activities. The beneficiary will ensure equal access of men and women to the project activities and results and all the forms of discrimination will be eliminated. Moreover, the equal opportunities will be considered and monitored in the process of implementation, i.e. the outputs and results indicators, will be broken down by gender, where appropriate, for the purposes of project monitoring.

6.2 Environmental considerations

The environmental issues will be taken into account in the project implementation, where relevant, considering the project includes capacity building activities only. Furthermore, all the activities carried out in the framework of the project will be carried out in compliance with EU environmental legislation.

6.3 Support to minorities and vulnerable groups

Equal representation of minorities and vulnerable groups will be guaranteed through the project implementation and the institutions involved will observe providing the equal opportunities for all the citizens regardless of their ethnic and religious background, as well any type of occurrence of social risk faced by the persons of concern.

6.4 Civil Society development and dialogue

Considering the important role of the social partners and the civil society sector, especially in the fields related to the employment policies, labour market, social insurance etc., substantial efforts will be dedicated to the purpose of regular informing and involvement, whenever possible of the civil society organisations and social partners, as well as any other institution/organisation as parties concerned regarding the project implementation., outcomes and results achieved.

6.5 Good governance, with particular attention to fight against corruption

The Government is strongly determined to fulfil all the criteria needed for EU accession and membership, and all the necessary actions are being taken to reach the aim. Through transparent policies and involvement of different stakeholders in the process of policy design the accountability and responsiveness vis-à-vis the citizens will be strengthened at any phase of the project implementation.

ANNEX 1 - Logical framework matrix in standard format

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| LOGFRAME PLANNING MATRIX FOR Project Fiche: Local integration of refugees, internally displaced persons and minority groups | Programme name and number National programme for IPA Component I TAIB for 2011 CRIS no: 2011/ | |
| | Contracting period expires two years from the date of the conclusion of the Financing Agreement | Disbursement period expires one year from the final date for execution of contracts. |
| | Total budget: 1.000.000 EUR | IPA budget: 900.000 EUR |

| Overall objective | Objectively verifiable indicators | Sources of Verification | |
|--|--|--|---|
| To enhance the state administration and implementation capacities for further strengthening and supporting the local integration process and inclusion of the displaced persons (refugees and internally displaced) and minority groups, as well increasing the sustainability of their reliance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quality of life had improved contributing to sustainable local integration; - State administration had increased capacities to support integration process. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comprehensive report compiled across sectors (CI); - Report adopted by Inter-Ministerial Body; - EU reports. | |
| Project purpose | Objectively verifiable indicators | Sources of Verification | Assumptions |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To contribute in supporting process of the displaced persons access to provision of comprehensive state administration services; - To increase self-reliance via participation and inclusion of the displaced persons. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 100% of integration applicants who fulfil the conditions have access to state services; - Improved employability and economic conditions for displaced persons. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Report/statistics by Employment Agency; Centres for Social Work, Health Fund, Integration Centre; - Reports from vocational training providers, Employment Agency and Integration Centre; - Assessment reports by Centre for Social Work and Integration Centre. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government commitment to creating conditions for local integration process and inclusion of the persons of concern (displaced persons, refugees, etc.); - Political and socio-economic environment continuously improves and enables the process to develop; - No major setbacks caused on a global and regional scale due to the recession which would endanger employment market. |
| Results | Indicators | Sources of Verification | Assumptions |

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| <p>Results under Component 1: Support to the implementation of national and local public policies for Roma inclusion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implemented training plan for capacity building of relevant institutions on the Local Action Plans (LAPs) within the implementation of the Roma Strategy and Decade; - Enhanced capacity for all the relevant stakeholders for implementation of Roma Strategy and Decade and memorandum for cooperation with the municipalities; - Local Action Plans for Roma. <p>Results under Component 2: Institutional Capacity Building and Access to Labour Market for refugees, IDP's and Roma minority</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased capacity of state institutions and policy makers to deliver integration policies and facilitate access to services; - Achieved economic sustainability; - Increased employability; - Gained experience and best practices in the area of refugee integration. | <p>Measurable indicators under Component 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developed training need assessment and training plan; - Number of received trainings and number of people trained from all the relevant stakeholders; - Four round tables per year organised; - Two workshops on policy advise per year organised; - Revised and adopted Local Actions Plans for Roma; - Decreased racial and gender discrimination; - Increased rate of education completion; - Increased rate of employment in Roma youth. <p>Measurable indicators under Component 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of trainings delivered; - Number of employment consultations made as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Number of work permits issued; o Number of employment/vocational training consultations; o Number of companies contacted; o Number of facilitated employments; o Number of field visits; - Number of employments (till the project end at least 20 families benefit from employment); - Number of vocational trainings organised per market demand (till the project end at least 30 families benefit from vocational trainings/increased employability). | <p>Sources of Verification for Component 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training reports (provider), participants lists, evaluation reports; - Employment analyses report (AE);employment records (AE); - Market/job needs report (AE); certificates/diplomas issued by VT provider; - Work Permits (AE), consultation and field reports (CI). | <p>Assumptions for Component 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Willingness of persons of concern to formally participate/apply for integration; - No obstacles are detected in facilitation of the access to rights and services of state administration across sectors; - Business and market environment is favourable for established businesses. |
|--|--|--|--|

| Activities | Means | Costs | Assumptions |
|--|-------|-------|--|
| <p>Activities under Component 1: Support to the implementation of national and local public policies for Roma inclusion:</p> <p><i>Activity 1: Supporting the national institutional structure of the Strategy for Roma and Decade of Roma Inclusion</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capacity building activities for the responsible institutions; - Revision of the existing policies for Roma; - Analysis of the current legislation, procedures and practices in terms of delivering services for improved access to subsequent registration, regulation of status, acquisition the personal documentation for Roma; - Recommendation for improvement of the legal framework, procedures and services of the responsible institutions; - Improving the coordination among the responsible institutions; - Awareness raising and breaking negative stereotyping ; - Capacity building and support of Roma women in terms of decreasing both racial and gender discrimination; - Specific measures targeting Roma children with special accent to Roma street children; - Capacity building and support to networks with different international and local NGOs for integrated and complementary approach. <p><i>Activity 2: Supporting the local institutional structure for creation and implementation of Roma policies</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capacity building activities of local stakeholders (municipalities, institutions, Roma civil sector, etc.); - Policy advice to the municipalities; - Building network of stakeholders in order to coordinate actions for implementation of local policies; - Creation of (workable, realistic and durable) local policies for Roma; - Analysis of the current state of service delivery of the local public administration | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sufficient number of persons had required employment consultation; - Sufficient number of persons is willing to apply for employment or vocational training; - Applicants are truly motivated to actively engage with employment or complete vocational training; - Position costs of the Centre for Integration are covered. - Sufficient state free-of-charge land is provided; - Costs covered from other sources. |

| | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| <p>institutions;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creation of recommendation for improvement of the service delivery; - Awareness raising and breaking negative stereotyping. <p>Activities under Component 2: Institutional Capacity Building and Access to Labour Market for refugees, IDP's and Roma minority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organisation and delivering of 3 tailor made capacity building trainings; - Provision of detailed information on access to employment rights and procedures; - Provision of assistance to open application and submit documentation to obtain personal work permits with Employment Service Agency; - Provision of information on market demand and jobs availability; - Provision of information on available qualification and prequalification opportunities; - Organisation of related coordination meetings; - Developing and implementation of modalities of employment program for the persons of concern for assistance in starting-up small businesses, mediation in employment via subsidiary assistance for hiring companies and provision of vocational trainings; - Personal needs assessment profiled from personal integration plan – employment sector; - Provision of assistance in application procedures and development of employment plan or plan for attendance of vocational trainings; - Coordination of the screening and selection process with Employment Service Agency; - Implementation of vocational trainings via training providers; - Implementation of subventions (employment) via Employment Service Agency; - Monitoring and evaluation of approved employment/VT plans. | | | |
|---|--|--|--|

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|

Preconditions

- Centre for Integration and Asylum Seekers is functional and has human resources available to support project implementation.

If the conditionalities are not met, suspension or cancellation of projects will be considered.

ANNEX II - Amounts (in €) Contracted and disbursed by quarter for the project

| | 2015 | | | | 2016 | | | | 2017 | | | |
|-------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------------|-----------|----------------|-----------|----------------|-----------|----------------|------------------|-----------|
| Contracted | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
| TA Contract | | | | 1.000.000 | | | | | | | | |
| Cumulated | | | | 1.000.000 | | | | | | | | |
| Disbursed | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
| TA Contract | | | | 300.000 | | 300.000 | | 300.000 | | 100.000 | | |
| Cumulated | | | | 300.000 | | 300.000 | | 300.000 | | 100.000 | 1.000.000 | |

ANNEX III - Description of Institutional Framework

The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy is the responsible party to implement this project.

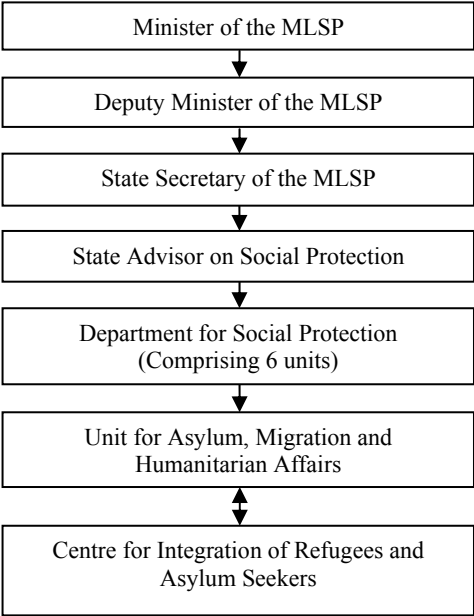
The **Unit for Implementation of Roma Strategy and Decade** is organisational unit within the Department for coordination and technical assistance of the Minister. In accordance with the ministry systematisation, 5 working positions are foreseen: Head, 2 (two) Advisors and 2 (two) Junior Associates. Starting from August 2008, this unit is formed as a reflection of the Government determination and as well of the Ministry, for proper and improved coordination of all the activities of the line ministries undertaken in direction of realising the goals of the Roma Strategy and its National Action Plans. The unit's work is focused on improvement of the coordination of the activities between the line ministries regarding their projects and programmes implemented, informing of the National Coordinator and the National Governmental Coordination body, ensuring cooperation with the local self-government units and the Roma civil society organisations. So far, two persons have been employed at the following working positions for Advisor and Junior Associate, one person has been hired as a volunteer, and there is one more person deployed as Project Assistant. In accordance with NPAA, employment of 2 more persons is foreseen for this unit.

The important role in developing integration related strategic documents and policy guidance has the Government with establishing the **Inter-Ministerial Body for Integration of Refugees and Foreigners** comprised of representatives of the following governmental institutions: the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (Chairperson), the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Local Self-government, the Secretariat for European Affairs, and the Association of Local Self-government Units.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP) is the lead institution mandated in steering and implementing process of integration of displaced population. Different social issue specialised agencies within the MLSP, such as the Centres for Social Work and Employment Service Agency are responsible for implementation of social protection and employment policies.

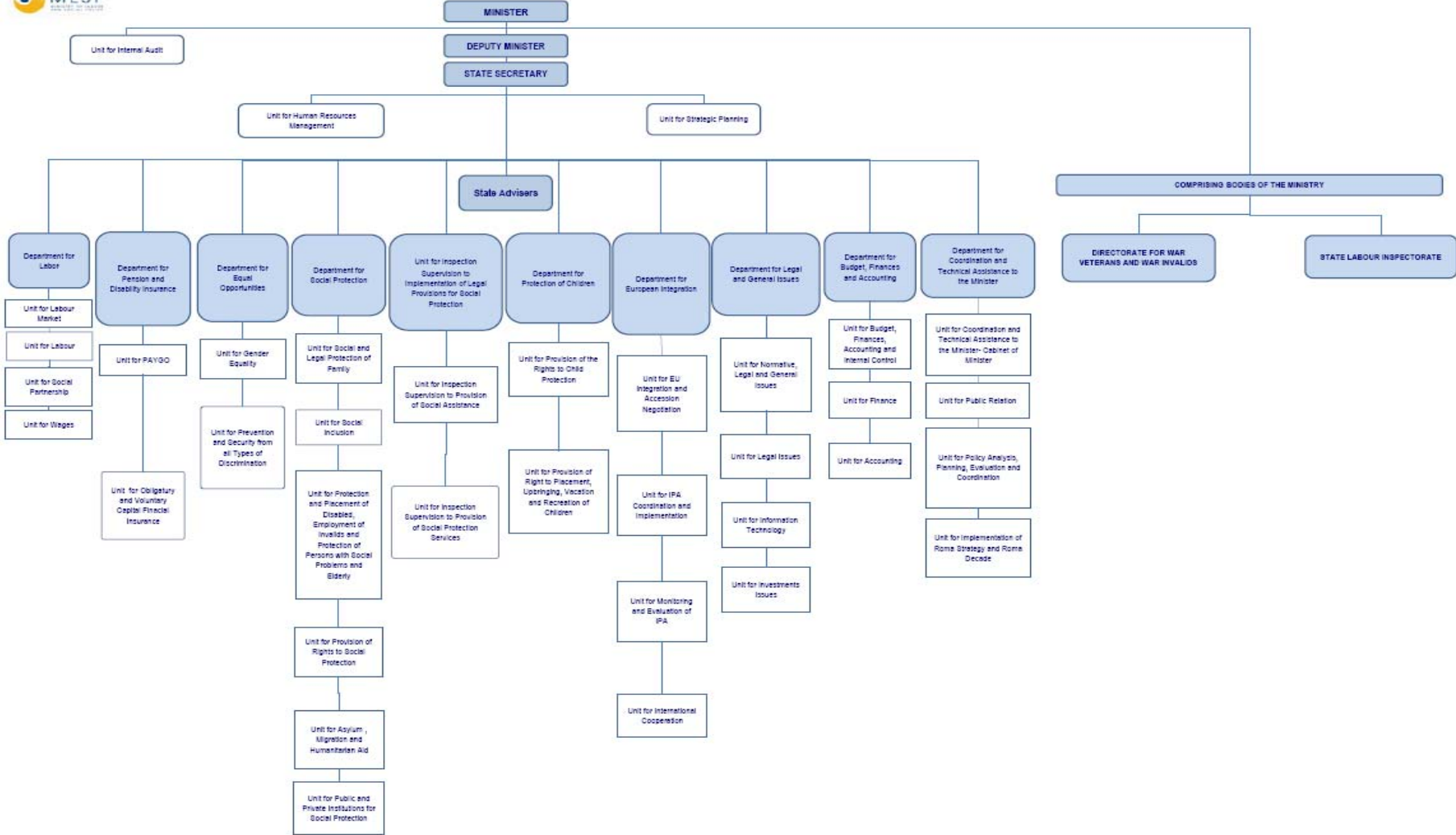
Specifically, the MLSP's Unit for Asylum, Migration and Humanitarian Affairs structured under the Department for Social Protection is responsible for re/integration issues of displaced population and migration in general. Under the same Unit for Asylum, Migration and Humanitarian Affairs, the MLSP has established a project unit – Centre for Integration of Refugees and Foreigners supporting implementation of the National Action Plan across sectors. The Centre for Integration is specifically responsible for operational level of integration and implementation of specific projects as well as provision of comprehensive counselling and information across sectors for the end-beneficiaries of the integration process – refugees, displaced and foreigners.

Chart of institutional framework on refugee integration and IDPs



In MLSP’s overall coordination role, other institutions are responsible for their sectors, e.g. Ministry of Health for health protection, Ministry of Education for access to educational system, Ministry of Interior for issuance of personal documents and status, etc.

Organisational chart of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP)



ANNEX IV - Reference to laws, regulations and strategic documents:

Reference list of relevant laws and regulations in the area of Roma inclusion:

- Law for the organisation and work of the bodies of the state administration, 2005;
- Law on primary education, 2005;
- Law for social protection, 2009;
- Law on secondary education, 2005;
- Law for health protection, 2008;
- Law for local self government, 2002;
- Law on ombudsman, 2003.

Legal and Policy Framework in the area of refugees and IDP's

The Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection (LATP) had been first adopted in 2003 and since then it had been revised to meet relevant international and EU standards, with the latest adoption in 2009. The LATP is the “umbrella” law that governs people of concern status and consequent rights and entitlements such as right to social protection, accommodation, health protection, education, etc. The Law on Social Protection further details rights and entitlements from social protection and those are equal to the country's Citizens. The Regulation on Accommodation (regulation in support to the law on social protection) details rights and procedures on provision of accommodation for refugees. Revision of the Law on Health Insurance done by the Ministry of Health is currently pending the Government adoption (expected to end by December 2010) where refugees' access to health insurance will be equal to the country's citizens. The current Law on Housing in its general framework regulates the issue of housing of socially vulnerable persons, as well as of refugees. The Law on Employment of Foreigners and Regulations give refugees access to labour market equal to the country's citizens. The Law on Primary and Secondary Education provides refugee access to attend primary and secondary schools equal to the country's citizens.

On 29 December 2008, the Government adopted the Strategy for Integration of Refugees and Foreigners in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 2008-2015, providing a national policy framework to implement an integration process targeting recognised refugees and persons under humanitarian/subsidiary protection and other vulnerable categories. In November 2009, the National Plan of Action (NAP) was adopted by the Government outlining the activities for integration of refugees and foreigners within six-core components, as per the strategy: Housing; Education and Training; Employment and Vocational Skills Training; Health Care; Social Services and Protection; and Community Engagement and Development. The NAP component for housing has been further supported by the MSLP issued Housing Policy Paper (June 2010) that provides policy framework on the models of long-term and durable housing solutions for refugees who will register for local integration.

Following 2001 crises, there are 617 IDPs remaining, whose rights are defined by the Government's Decision and Conclusions. According to these decisions, IDPs have right to be accommodated in collective centres or privately rented apartments paid by the Government and receive financial assistance based on the number of family members.

Reference list of relevant laws and regulations

Relevant national laws published in the Official Gazette:

- Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection;
- Law on Foreigners;
- Law on Employment and Work of Foreigners;

- Law on Citizenship;
- Law on Social Protection;
- Law on Family;
- Law on Child Protection;
- Law on Employment and Insurance in Case of Unemployment;
- Law on Health Insurance;
- Law on Elementary Education;
- Law on Secondary Education;
- Law on High Education;
- Law on Citizens Associations and Foundations;
- Law on Public Protests;
- Law on General Administrative Procedure;
- Law on Administrative Disputes.

Relevant International regulations:

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has accepted all the relevant international or regional instruments for protection of the defined target group, i.e. the Convention on the Status of the Refugees from 1951, and its Protocol from 1967 by means of succession on the 18 January 1994, and furthermore, the UN Convention Against Torture and other Forms of Cruel, Inhuman or Discriminating Behaviour or Punishment (CAT), the International Pact for Civil and Political Rights, the International Pact for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the UN Convention on Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Children and its two Optional Protocols, the Geneva Conventions from 1949, including the Protocols I and II, the European Convention on Human Rights and Basic Freedoms (ECHR) and its Protocols 1,4,6,7, 11-14 and the European Convention Against Torture, Cruelty, Inhuman or Discriminating Behaviour or Punishment.

In 2004, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia ratified the European Social Charter from 1961 and the Protocol of 1991 which amends the European Social Charter. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in the same manner has adopted the Optional Protocol of the UN Convention for elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, which helped introduce a procedure for treating independent cases and additionally has ratified the European Convention on Statehood of 1997, including the UN Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime, and its two Protocols, which are normally referred to as the Palermo Protocols.

Reference to AP/NPAA/EP/SAA

The Project will contribute towards the implementation of the Article 2 of **SAA** on the respect for the democratic principles and human rights as the core principles of this Agreement. One of the goals of the SAA is the goal to support the efforts for development of the economic and the international cooperation and the harmonisation of legislation with the Community legislation in whole. The cooperation between the parties shall also include the adjustment of the national legislation, so as to enable more complete legal regulations with reference to this issue, in accordance with the standards which have been prescribed with the EU regulations.

The **National Programme for the Adoption of Acquis 2010** foresees further harmonisation of the national legislation with the Acquis and continuous capacity building of the relevant institutions. The Integration Strategy and the Action Plan for refugees and foreigners will be continuously implemented by the relevant institutions; the staff within the Shelter Centre and Unit for asylum, migration and humanitarian aid within the Ministry of Labour and Social

Policy (MLSP) will be continuously trained; the National unit for comparison of fingerprints is planned to be established until the end of 2012.

The project will address the following **Accession Partnership** priorities:

- Promote access to education, justice and social welfare for members of minority groups;
- Ensure administrative capacity to implement social inclusion and social protection policies;
- Sustain effective implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement with a view, *inter alia*, to promoting inter-ethnic confidence-building.

Reference to MIPD

According to the MIPD 2011-2013, continued efforts have to be undertaken to support promotion and protection of human rights and improvement of the living standard of different vulnerable groups (socially excluded persons or persons living in risk, such as displaced persons), as well strengthening the institutional capacities for the management of *migration and visa issues*, as well as guidelines for processing asylum cases. Additional efforts are also necessary to address more effectively the conditions of the Roma, which remain very difficult. Support for the implementation of the Ohrid framework agreement will continue to be a priority where concrete results are expected in equitable representation and education.

Reference to National Development Plan

N/A

Reference to national/sectoral investment plans

On 29 December 2008, the Government adopted the 2008-2015 Strategy for Integration of Refugees and Foreigners in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, providing a national policy framework for implementation of an integration process targeting recognised refugees and persons under humanitarian/subsidiary protection and other vulnerable categories. In November 2009, the National Plan of Action (NAP)⁸ was adopted by the Government outlining the activities for integration of refugees and foreigners within six-core components, as per the strategy: Housing; Education and Training; Employment and Vocational Skills Training; Health Care; Social Services and Protection; and Community Engagement and Development. A Government established Inter-Ministerial Body for Integration of Refugees and Foreigners comprised of representation of various line ministries and agencies as an important role in developing integration related strategic documents and policy guidance. The Body is chaired by the MLSP and might serve as a platform for overall coordination of integration activities.

The project implementation also corresponds to the priorities defined in the following development strategic documents:

- National strategy for alleviation of poverty and social exclusion 2010-2020 ;
- Strategy for inclusion of Roma in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – Action Plan on housing within the Decade for inclusion of the Roma;

⁸ Further supporting the actual implementation of the activities defined with the Integration Strategy and the NAP, in November 2009, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP) established a project unit within the Department for Social Protection, under its Unit for Asylum, Migration and Humanitarian Aid – the Centre for Integration of Refugees and Foreigners. The Centre for Integration of Refugees and Foreigners acts as multidisciplinary information and counselling centre built on the functional model developed in other European countries.

- Resolution on Migration Policy of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 2009-2014;
- Programme for building and maintaining the buildings under the state owned property.

Reference to Progress Report 2013

Some developments took place in the field of **migration**. The Law on Foreigners was amended, simplifying the procedure for foreigners, employed by businesses of crucial importance to investment in the country, to obtain a permit for temporary stay. The database on foreigners covering asylum, migration and visas, is still in the testing phase. In 2012, 682 irregular migrants were detected in the country, with the highest numbers continuing to be detected at the border with Serbia. The strategic capacity for managing migration flows is insufficient, in terms of staff and equipment, to cope with the increasing numbers of migrants transiting the country. Border controls have not been effective in detecting irregular migration into the country from Greece and onward transit from the country towards Serbia. In 2012, 1067 people were returned under the EU readmission agreement and it continues to be implemented well. Readmission agreements with Montenegro and Switzerland entered into force. In this area, the legislative and institutional framework is in place, but significant efforts are needed to improve both implementation and strategic planning.

As regards **asylum**, the Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection was amended with a view to further alignment with the *acquis* laying down minimum standards for reception conditions for asylum seekers and on procedures for granting and withdrawing refugee status. The amendments extending the Law on Free Legal Assistance and the Law on Health Insurance Guarantees to asylum seekers entered into force. The centre for integration, which provides services to recognized refugees and persons under subsidiary protection, continued to build its capacity by extending its premises. In 2012, 527 new applications for asylum were made, a decrease from 740 in 2011. In 504 cases (95%) the asylum procedure had to be stopped due to the applicants leaving the reception centre prematurely. Efforts should be stepped up to prevent asylum centres from being targeted and used by organised crime groups involved in smuggling of migrants. The capacity of the asylum unit in the Ministry of Interior was improved slightly by the addition of two more staff. Some progress was made on speeding up the process of providing asylum seekers with ID papers, with more than double the number of persons being issued with documentation during this reporting period, compared with the previous one. Difficulties persist in providing access to interpreters during interviews with asylum seekers. In this area, the country is advanced.

As regards **regional issues and international obligations**, in March 2013, there were 2 240 **refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs)** in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, of whom 1 043 were Roma from Kosovo. 59 persons were voluntarily repatriated to Kosovo and Serbia in 2012 and 2013. The unresolved legal status of the majority of the refugees limits their access to basic services and full local integration. Court procedures concerning IDPs relating to damages claims from the 2001 conflict are still ongoing and the majority are still housed in collective centres.

As regards **social inclusion**, implementation of the Strategy for Roma Inclusion for 2012–2014 is slow. Discrimination against and separation of Roma pupils in schools continues. The drop-out rate for Roma children from primary education, despite legal obligations, remains significant. The problems of Roma without personal documents remain an issue - in more than 400 recorded cases, less than one quarter obtained documents.

As regards **fundamental rights**, there was an increase in state allocations for the implementation of the **Roma** strategy, related to the construction of an educational facility in Šuto Orizari; however the overall implementation of the Roma strategy has slowed. The sustainability of ongoing projects in the area of health, education, employment, housing and social welfare is at risk, as they are mainly donor funded. Evaluation and monitoring mechanisms are weak and ineffective. The unit for implementation of the Roma strategy in the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy remains understaffed. Segregation of Roma in schools still persists. No comprehensive measures have been taken to address the overrepresentation of Roma children in special schools, nor to mainstream street children into education. Open discrimination against the Roma continues, particularly in employment. Legislative measures still need to be taken to address civil registration and personal identity documentation. The Roma continue to live in a cycle of poverty and unemployment, and in substandard living conditions.

As regards **consumer and health protection**, under the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015, Roma health mediators continued to provide health counselling to Roma people, which has so far resulted in about 1 200 Roma families being covered by essential health and social services. The yearly national programme for treatment of *rare diseases* has been adopted but the budget is still low.

ANNEX V - Details per EU funded contract:

Management and contracting arrangements

- 1 service contract will be concluded for the implementation of Component 1 and 2 of the project. The value of the contract will be in amount of 1.000.000 EUR, out of which 900.000 EUR as IPA contribution and 100.000 EUR as national contribution. It is expected the services under this arrangement to be delivered within 20 months. Contract signature is envisaged for Q4 2015.

Project Management and Administration

A team leader (key expert) will be responsible for the overall project management, representation and reporting. The co-ordination of activity development in the different components of the project is important. The team leader is responsible for appropriate management of resources. Advisory services will be provided to the beneficiary. A pool of short-term expertise will be made available to assist the key expert and to carry out the activities in the areas of concern, if necessary.

During the inception phase of the project, a detailed deployment plan will be developed under the coordination of a Steering Committee in which each co-operating national institution will be represented to ensure appropriate inclusion. The project Steering Committee will be established to oversee the implementation process of the project activities. The project Steering Committee will be chaired by the Minister of Labour and Social Policy and will include at least one representative of the primarily involved beneficiary services and the Ministry of Finance. The Delegation of the European Union and the Secretariat for European Affairs shall be invited to participate with Observer status. The Steering Committee shall meet not less than once per three months.