

Research on Socio-economic Effects of Covid-19 on Roma Communities in Turkey



report

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Funded by
the European Union

 MEKSA vakfı



Zero Discrimination Association



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Cover Design: Buse Keysan and Kaan Keysan.

Bu proje Avrupa Birliđi tarafından finanse edilmekte ve Sıfır Ayrımcılık Derneđi tarafından yürütölmektedir.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This research aims at assessing the additional distresses that Turkey-based Romani people experienced due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and their possibilities and capacities in accessing the aid and support provided during the pandemic. The research focused on five cities in Turkey: Artvin, İzmir, Edirne, Gaziantep and Şanlıurfa. During the period of August-December 2021, in-depth interviews and focus groups were conducted with various groups of Romani people, and consultations were made with local representatives from relevant state institutions and municipalities. A total of 178 Romani people were interviewed. The outputs of the field research were then assessed in a workshop. Thereafter, a series of policies were formulated. The focus of the research was the additional problems that Romani people faced during the pandemic and to come up with policy proposals to make sure that their vulnerabilities are not aggravated in a possible future crisis.

As might be recalled, the government implemented a set of social policies to ease the impacts of the pandemic, as well as to increase the welfare of those segments who got adversely affected by its lock-down measures. The following four policies were of importance: Ban on lay-offs; short-time working allowance; support to unpaid leave; social assistance program for the poor.

The results of the field research indicate that Romani people experienced additional problems on the issues of employment, access to social assistance, education, accommodation, health and gender inequality, and that the barriers and injustices in relation to these issues got worse and more widespread during the pandemic. The results highlight that Romani people, the majority of whom work in the informal sector, were largely unable to access these support mechanisms. It was also suggested that there were problems in reaching the social assistance provided for the poor.

The following policies are suggested to ensure that vulnerabilities are not aggravated in a similar crisis: Moving from informal economy to formal one; a proper execution of a right-based approach in health and education; setting up a basic income scheme; measures to decrease households' living costs; establishing study centers for students in neighborhoods; widening adult education programs; establishing community centers at neighborhoods; setting up incentive mechanisms for education; emphasis on nursery/pre-school facilities; increasing resilience against crises; setting up partnership with NGO's and local governments; strengthening participatory mechanisms at local levels.

INTRODUCTION

Roma in Turkey have faced additional problems, especially economical, due to the Covid-19 pandemic. With this study, in order to determine the difficulties experienced by the Roma during this process and to create policies to reduce the negative effects of similar crises, field surveys were carried out in five provinces where the Roma population is dense. This report aims to present the results and the evaluation of this study.

This research, conducted as part of the Strengthening the Roma Dialogue Network Project, examines the challenges faced by the Rom, Dom, Lom and Abdal groups due to the pandemic and their ability to access assistance offered during the pandemic. The study presents the current situation in light of the findings gathered through interviews conducted with the opinion leaders and members of these groups, with local authorities and with municipal representatives, in the provinces of Artvin, Edirne, İzmir, Şanlıurfa and Gaziantep. Afterward, the measures taken against the pandemic and the level at which the Roma communities have benefited from these measures are evaluated. Short and long-term policy recommendations are presented to prevent the deepening of the fragilities of the Roma when faced with a similar crisis.

This study was carried out within the scope of the Strengthening the Roma Dialogue Network Project implemented by the Zero Discrimination Association with the financial support of the Delegation of the European Union to Turkey.

We would like to express our thanks to those who supported our work. We would like to thank Mehmet Caner Demir and Sema Kılıçer from the EU Delegation; the Heads of the Family, Labor and Social Services Departments in the provinces where we conducted field researches (Bilgin Özbaş, Hasan Bilici, Mustafa Yıldırım, Nesim Tanğlay, Şentürk Ağırbaş) and the Heads of relevant municipal units (Ayşegül Tekerekoğlu, Ekrem Ayaz, Ertuğrul Tanrıkulu, Soner Özvar, Turan Ateş, Ulaş Aydın); the opinion leaders who offered support in arranging field interviews (Abdullah Cıstır, Ali Yangır, Aziz Arslan, Deniz Arslan, Esra Şenkeman, Muammer Açıkpazu, Necla Buluter, Nevzat Azaklı, Nilay Karadeniz, Niyazi Buluter, Osman Ersoy, Selçuk Karadeniz, Sinan Kırçıçek, Sitem Kara, Soner Durmuş); the participants who contributed to the workshop on 01/02/2022; and of course, the Roma who hosted us in their houses, created a warm atmosphere and took the time for the interviews. The team of the Zero Discrimination Association made it easier for the project to advance. We would also like to thank Chairwoman Elmas Arus and researcher Ekin Çuhadar who supported our field work; Esin Ihlamur, Hemra Nida, Hülya Çokşen and Mine Genç Karakuş who contributed to the advancement of the project.

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February 2022, İstanbul

1. Purpose

This study examines the additional challenges faced by the Rom, Dom, Abdal, and Lom groups, known as "Roma" in the context of Turkey, due to the Covid-19 pandemic and their ability and capacity of access to the aid and support offered during the pandemic. In the study, the current picture was drawn based on the findings obtained through in-depth interviews, focus group studies, and interviews with the relevant local authorities and municipal officials of the provinces in Artvin, İzmir, Edirne, Gaziantep, and Şanlıurfa. Subsequently, an evaluation was made and a series of short- and long-term policy proposals were developed. The focus of the study is on the new difficulties faced by the Roma due to the pandemic or the deepening existing problems, and the policy proposals discussed what kind of steps can be taken to prevent the further increase of the vulnerability of the Roma in the face of a possible new crisis.

2. Conditions of Roma in Turkey

As is the case around the world, Roma groups in Turkey, which are subject to discrimination in various ways, are not officially defined as a minority and therefore there is no official information about their population. Considering the existence of people who tend to hide their Roma identities in the face of discrimination, it becomes difficult to estimate the figure. Some estimates on their population can be made, since the Roma living in Turkey are generally geographically ghettoized. Moreover, a recent development that complicates these estimates is the fact that Roma groups are also among the refugees Turkey has taken in recent years. The available estimates range from 500,000 to 5 million.¹

It is known that Roma groups which have been settled to a large extent, are concentrated in some cities such as Istanbul, Adana, Edirne, Tekirdağ, Düzce, İzmir; however, there are also those who live as nomads among Roma groups. The Roma community, which is subject to exclusion due to the discrimination they face in employment, works historically in entertainment places and meetings such as weddings as musicians. They mostly hold jobs with low income and insecurity, such as scrap and waste collection, blacksmithing, tin smithing, basketry and floriculture.² This situation brings with it unfavorable conditions such as having poor housing conditions, not having access to adequate and healthy food and not being able to benefit from social services to the desired extent. In addition, the young generation of Roma faces the problem of lack of access to quality and adequate education. It should also be taken into account that they are subject to additional discrimination within the education system itself. As a result, although their various rights are guaranteed by both domestic and international law, a significant part of the Roma population faces difficulties in housing, education and health. In addition, as Ulaş Karan strikingly states in his report *Ignored Inequality*, the limited data on existing inequalities and the different types of discrimination suffered cause the reproduction of the existing inequalities in public life.³

It is known that steps have been taken in recent years by both central and local governments in Turkey in order to bring solutions to the problems experienced by the Roma. As it will be remembered, in 2010, a government initiative known as the "Roma Initiative" was on the agenda for the first time to create development plans for Roma (with the main emphasis on the

¹ As it is known, data on ethnic origin are not collected in official censuses in Turkey. Therefore, there is no official data on the amount of the Roma population. On the other hand, while the population of Roma in Turkey is estimated to be around 500 thousand in various surveys, this number varies between 2 million 750 thousand according to the Council of Europe and between 2 million and 5 million according to various NGOs. For more information, see Alp, H. (2016). "Reproduction of Hate Speech Against Gypsies in Ekşi Sözlük". *Ankara University Journal of Ilf*, 3 (2): 143-172; Marsh, A. (2008). "About the history of the Gypsies of Turkey, We Are Here!". In it E. Uzpeder et al. (ed.) *We are here! Roma in Turkey, Discriminatory Practices and the Struggle for Rights*. Edirne Roma Association, European Roma Rights Centre and Helsinki Citizens' Association: Istanbul; <http://www.sifirayrimcilik.org/2014/11/avrupa-ulkelerinde-roman-nufusunun-karsilastirmali-sunumu/>; <https://tr.euro-news.com/2019/03/22/romanlar-bir-cuval-una-oy-verecek-degil-romanlar-31-mart-yerel-secimlerinden-ne-bekliyor>. For detailed information about the Dom communities migrating from Syria and living in Turkey, see: Development Workshop (2016). *Syrian Dom Migrants "At the Bottom": On the Migration Routes Between Poverty and Discrimination*, Ankara

² Şimşek, S., Ukuş, K. and Öner, G. (2020). "A Look at the Problems Experienced by Roma in Turkey from the Perspective of Roma, Local Administrators and Administrators", *Erciyes University Journal of the Institute of Social Sciences*, 3: 164-185.

³ Karan, U. (2017). *Ignored Inequality: Roma Access to the Right to Housing and Education in Turkey*. International Minority Rights Group (MRI) and Zero Discrimination Association, Istanbul. See also: Karacan, N. (2019). "Social Exclusion Based on Ethnic Identity in Working Life: A Study on Izmit Novels", Master's Thesis, Sakarya University; Şimşek, S., Ukuş, K. and Öner, G. (2020). "A Look at the Problems Experienced by Roma in Turkey from the Perspective of Roma, Local Administrators and Administrators", *Erciyes University Journal of the Institute of Social Sciences*, 3: 164-185.

need for housing). Although the work of the central government has slowed down in recent years, it is continuing. The most notable of these efforts is the *National Strategy Document for Social Inclusion for Roma Citizens (2016-2021)*, which was prepared under the coordination of the Ministry of Family and Social Policies. In order to implement the Strategy Document, the Phase I Action Plan (2016-2018) of the *Strategy Document for Roma Citizens, covering the first period of three years between 2016 and 2018*, was prepared.⁴ For the second three-year period between 2018-2021, *the Strategy Document for Roma Citizens (2016-2021) the Phase II Action Plan (2019-2021)* was put into force in 2019.⁵ In addition to these, in the cities where Roma live intensively, both the provincial organizations of the relevant ministries and the municipalities have been working on the issue. As an example, *Edirne Municipality* is the first local administration to include the phrase "Roma" in the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan.⁶ As an example of local initiatives, the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality (IMM), after conducting a series of expert meetings and field visits, held the Roma Workshop on 19 December 2019 with the participation of experts, Roma associations and citizens in order to determine the social, economic and cultural needs and demands of Roma living in Istanbul.⁷ In addition to the work of the central government and local governments, there has been an increase in the attempts of the Roma community and those who are sensitive to the problems faced by this community to organize, become associations and create supra-association platform(s) in the field of civil society in recent years. As of 2016, there are approximately 200 associations and 13 confederations across Turkey (some of which are inactive) based on the rights and issues of the Roma.⁸ Today, the number of Roma associations is estimated to be around 600.

Despite the steps taken in recent years, opinions on the continuing problems faced by the Roma community are being voiced. Although certain regulations and circulars have been arranged for Roma, and although sometimes strategy reports have been arranged to include Roma, as Mustafa Aksu underlined in his book, *Being a Gypsy in Turkey*, published in 2003, problems such as not being hired because of their identity, exposure to prejudices and vulnerabilities – as this study will discuss in the following pages – continue and intensify especially in times of crisis.⁹ Moreover, studies carried out before the pandemic show that there has been no positive change in the problems of Roma citizens in terms of access to services such as education, health, employment and housing.

The 2014 study, *Identifying Social Factors Affecting the Situation of Roma and Groups living like Roma in Turkey* by Ana Oprışan provides us with a detailed picture of the pre-pandemic period.¹⁰ The study conveys the problems experienced with the following headings

a) Employment

The majority of Roma continue to work in precarious, unskilled, and low-income jobs. This creates a spiral of poverty that encompasses the future generation. In such an environment, a working parent is unlikely to have their children receive good education, and there is also pressure on children to join the workforce to contribute to household income. Therefore, the new generation starts life with low human capital, and they can only find a place for themselves in precarious, unskilled and

⁴ Cetin, B.I. (2017). "Roma with Identities: An Evaluation of the National Strategy Document and the First Phase Action Plan for Roma Citizens in Turkey", *Journal of Management and Economic Research*, 15 (1): 85-112; Official Gazette (2016). *Strategy for Roma citizens*. <https://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2016/04/20160430-11-1.pdf> [last accessed 27.01.2022].

⁵ Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services (2019) "*Strategy Document for Roma Citizens (2016-2021) Phase II Action Plan (2019-2021)*", <https://romsid.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/roman-vatandaslara-yonelik-ii-asama-eylem-pl.pdf> [Last accessed 27.01.2022]

⁶ Çuhadar, E. (2020) *Assessing the Practicality of the Right to Education in Turkey through the Experiences of Roma Children: The Case of Edirne*, Unpublished Master's Thesis, Istanbul Bilgi University; Edirne Municipality 2020-2024 Strategic Plan http://www.edirne.bel.tr/images/Mevzuat%20ve%20Raporlar/2020-2024%20SP%2023_10_2019.pdf.

⁷ As an example of the work of municipalities in this regard, see https://calistay.ibb.istanbul/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/IstanbulRomanCalistayi_Dijital.pdf

⁸ Marrow, B. (2016). *Problems of Roma Citizens in Turkey and Studies on Solutions: Technical Assistance Project for the Operation to Support Social Inclusion in Areas Inhabited by Roma (SIROMA)*, <https://docplayer.biz.tr/49068264-Turkiye-de-roman-yurttaslarin-sorunlari-ve-cozume-iliskin-calismalar.html> [Last accessed: 27.01.2022]

⁹ Aksu, M. (2003). *Being a Gypsy in Turkey*. Ozan Publishing, Istanbul.

¹⁰ Oprışan, A. (2014). *Identification of Social Factors Affecting the Situation of Living Groups in Turkey such as Roma and Roma*. Zero Discrimination Association, Istanbul.

low-income jobs like their parents. It seems unlikely that this spiral can be broken without structural reforms. In addition, for structural reforms to be implemented, the issue of non-discrimination of Roma groups in the social policymaking and implementation processes in this regard should be taken into account.¹¹

b) Health

There are criticisms that the practice of family medicine (social security health program) in Roma neighborhoods offers a below-average service. Moreover, factors such as poor housing conditions, heating problems, unhealthy work environment, nutritional deficiencies should be expected to have negative effects on the health of Roma. In Roma children, growth retardation as a result of unbalanced and poor nutrition is common. In addition, the existence of a widespread drug addiction is known. It is also known that marriages at early ages that cause psychological distress are common. Besides, many Roma women may face barriers to accessing maternity care. Even when they have access to health care, they may be subjected to discriminatory ill-treatment based on their ethnicity, economic status, place of residence or language.¹²

c) Education

It is known that Roma children experience serious difficulties in accessing education due to multiple reasons such as economic difficulties, accompanying housing-heating-nutrition problems, discrimination encountered in school and in some cases being displaced from their homes or not having an identity document. This situation reduces the educational success of children and causes the opportunity and willingness to continue education to be adversely affected. In some cases, the fact that Roma children attend schools where only Roma children can enroll, known as "Roma schools", prevents non-Roma children from developing a culture of coexistence and from encountering Roma children without prejudices. It should be expected that the relations and ties between the Roma and other segments of the society will remain weak, and as a result, serious problems will be experienced in the future on issues such as the continuation of prejudice and discrimination against the Roma and the lack of a culture of living together.¹³

d) Housing

Roma live in extremely poor conditions due to insecurity and physical segregation, which underlie the economic impossibilities in which they find themselves. The settlements where Roma groups live are the most vulnerable areas to destruction and urban transformation. It is also known that most of the houses in Roma neighborhoods are in zoning diameter, but the residents of the households do not have the land deeds themselves. Urban transformation creates an additional layer of distress: Placing Roma in social housing away from the city centers, without taking into account their needs, inevitably cause additional problems.¹⁴

3. Economic Impacts of Covid-19 in Turkey

The economic effects of the Covid-19 pandemic in Turkey correspond to a totality of supply and demand difficulties. On the one hand, losses due to health problems and on the other hand, contractions due to the measures taken have affected the economy – as it is all over the world. In the one-and-a-half-year period between January 2020, when the pandemic began to take effect, and June 2021, when its impact decreased considerably, there were around 5,500 infections per 100,000 people in Turkey, and as a result, approximately 150 deaths occurred per 100,000 people.

¹² For more information on the employment situation of the Roma, see Çuhadar E. and Arus, E. (2020). *Local Advocacy Guide for Civil Society Organizations Working in the Field of Roma Rights*, YERELİZ Association, İstanbul, <http://yereliz.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/roman-rehber-03.pdf> [Accessed on 11.02.2022].

¹³ For more detailed information on education, see: Çuhadar, E. (2020) *Evaluation of the Practical Right to Education in Turkey through the Experiences of Roma Children: The Case of Edirne*, Unpublished Master's Thesis, İstanbul Bilgi University; Karan, U. (2017). *Ignored Inequality: Roma Access to the Right to Housing and Education in Turkey*. Zero Discrimination Association, İstanbul; Marsh, A. (2008). E. Uzpeder et al. in "Unequal Citizenship: Rights Violations Faced by Turkish Gypsies" (ed.) *We are here! Roma in Turkey, Discriminatory Practices and the Struggle for Rights*. Edirne Roma Association, European Roma Rights Centre and Helsinki Citizens' Association: İstanbul.

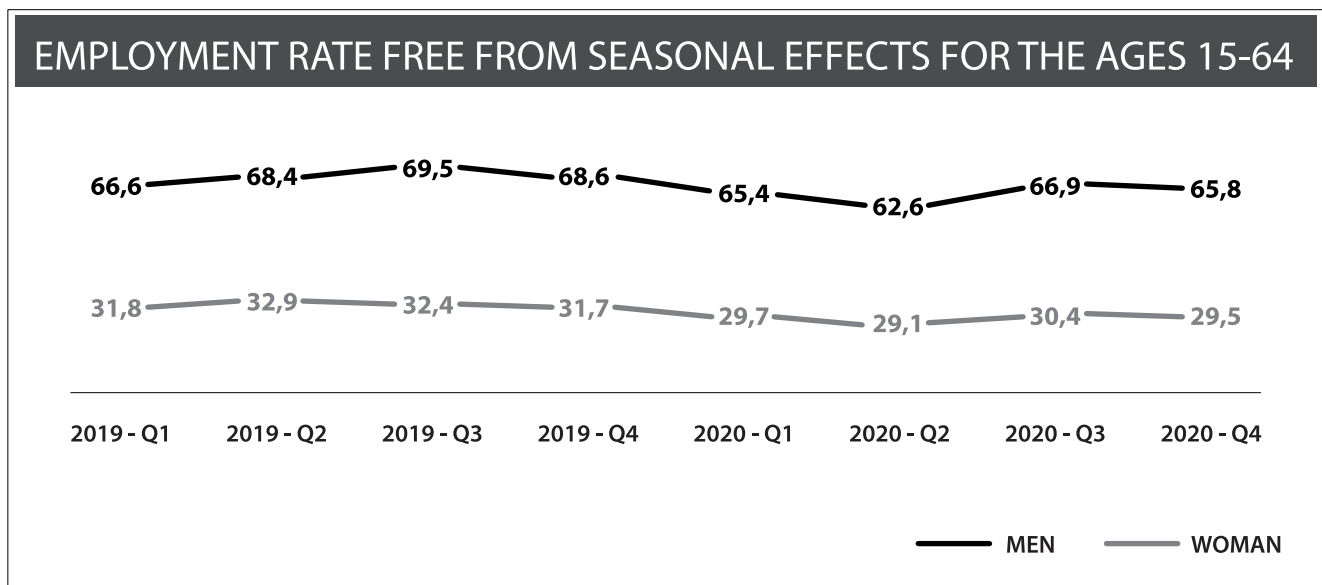
¹⁴ For more detailed information on housing rights and rights of Roma see: Çuhadar E. ve Arus, E. (2020). *Local Advocacy Guide for CSOs Working on Roma Rights*, YERELİZ Association, İstanbul, <http://yereliz.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/roman-rehber-03.pdf> [Son erişim tarihi 11.02.2022].

As in the whole world, the second half of 2020 was the period in which the impact on the economy in Turkey was the highest; the gross national product for this period decreased by 8.7 percent compared to the previous year. With the expansionary policies put into effect and the loans being made more attractive, the decline could be limited to the second period. Despite the increase in electricity consumption, food shopping and online shopping due to quarantine and curfews implemented due to health reasons, there were decreases in service and production in general during the period in consideration; these declines affected mainly airlines, accommodation services, travel agencies, retail shopping places, personal care places, restaurants and entertainment places.

As it will be recalled, since April 2020, the government has initiated social policy practices for the sectors affected by the pandemic and the measures taken against the pandemic with a series of economic measures and these measures have been continued until the summer of 2021. The following four measures have been noted:

- a. Restriction of layoffs,
- b. Short time working allowance,
- c. Support for unpaid leaves,
- d. Money transfers to the poor.

Between April 2020 and March 2021, the Ankara government spent about 50 billion TL (about 6.2 billion euros) on these four measures. If we look at the situation of the employees in the light of this information, we see the following table. It is speculated that the decline in working life is largely due to informal economy which is widespread throughout the country



Source: Eurostat

One explanation for the fact that the pandemic has hit the lower segments of the society more strongly in economic terms is the inequality of income distribution in Turkey. Let's remember that the GINI coefficient, which measures income distribution, is hovering around 0.40. This distorted distribution deteriorated further in 2020, when the pandemic hit the economy. According to the results of the research, in 2020, the share of the 20 percent group with the highest equivalent household disposable individual income from total income increased by 1.2 points compared to the previous year and reached 47.5 percent. The share of the 20 percent group with the lowest income decreased by 0.3 points to 5.9 percent (all data are from Turkish Statistical Institute).

Since it is generally known that Roma are able to find employment opportunities in informal areas, it should not be surprising to predict that they have been adversely affected by the pandemic to the highest extent. In the survey Roma Communities

and Poverty in Turkey, conducted jointly by the Social Democracy Foundation (SODEV), the Istanbul Planning Agency (IPA) and the Zero Discrimination Association, 65.9 percent of the 600 Roma citizens interviewed and surveyed stated that they were unemployed at least once during the pandemic. In addition, in the same study, the total rate of people who stated that their personal income decreased during the pandemic period and who stated they lost all their income was 88.9 percent.¹⁵

In the next section, a breakdown of the measures taken to reduce the economic effects of the pandemic and information on how beneficial these measures have been, based on the results of the field work carried out, is provided. However, without going into this, it is useful to convey the methodology of the fieldwork carried out.

4. Field Research: Methodology

A wide range of methodologies has been used in this research project. Since the study was conducted to develop policies for Roma living in Turkey, scientific literature related to Roma and vulnerable groups and relevant reports published by non-governmental organizations were examined. In addition, a list of social policies implemented by the central government in Turkey during the pandemic period has been drawn. The project team continued the literature research, which started with the desk work carried out during the preparation stage of the project, throughout the study in order to determine the scope and methods of the field work and to create an analytical framework for the analysis of the data obtained from the field.

The study was conducted between August and December 2021, based on in-depth interviews and focus group work in five provinces. In order to cover both different geographical areas and the different Roma identities living in these geographical areas, the following five provinces were visited:

- Artvin
- İzmir
- Edirne
- Gaziantep
- Şanlıurfa

In each province, detailed interviews were held with the Provincial Directors of the Ministry of Family and Social Policies and the departments of the municipalities working in the fields of social services. In-depth interviews were also conducted with Roma opinion leaders in the neighborhoods where the interviews were to be held. Opinion leaders were asked to choose people from different groups (age, gender, work status). Subsequently, focus group work was carried out with these groups.

With a total of 41 Rom people living in Artvin, 8 of whom were children and 33 of whom were adults; with a total of 32 Rom people living in İzmir, 6 of whom were children and 26 of whom were adults; with a total of 33 Rom people living in Edirne, 7 of whom were children and 26 of whom were adults; with a total of 50 Rom people living in Gaziantep, including 20 children and 30 adults; a total of 22 Rom people living in Şanlıurfa, 7 of whom were children and 15 of whom were adults, were interviewed. Collectively, during the fieldwork carried out between 15 August 2021 and 15 December 2021, a total of 178 Roma people, including 48 children and 130 adults, were interviewed. While in-depth interviews were carried out in households in Artvin, İzmir and Edirne provinces, focus group studies were carried out in Gaziantep and Şanlıurfa provinces. Focus group studies were carried out in an association in the Abdal neighborhood of Gaziantep and in Şanlıurfa at the home of the opinion leader of the community.

Fieldwork was designed by the Zero Discrimination Association and the neighborhoods were entered with the reference of traditional/opinion leaders who were in contact with the association before. Otherwise, it would be extremely difficult to work in Roma neighborhoods because trust in non-Roma "gacos" is generally low. Since households were contacted through

¹⁵ Social Democracy Foundation, Istanbul Planning Agency and Zero Discrimination Association. (2021, November). *Roma Communities and Poverty Survey in Turkey*, <https://sodev.org.tr/sodev-turkiyede-roman-topluluklari-ve-yoksulluk-arastirmasi/> [Last accessed 11.02.2022].

opinion leaders who were previously in the Roma Dialogue Network, no problems were encountered during the fieldwork. In addition, it is known that in the studies conducted in Turkey, the income declaration and the social assistance declaration received do not reflect the reality and are declared lower than they are in general. During this study, while receiving information about social benefits, it was observed that there were situations such as hesitation and making contrary statements at the beginning of the interviews, and as the interview progressed and as the environment of trust was built, the participants gave the right information about social benefits.

Draft report created after fieldwork was shared with a group consisting of representatives of the Delegation of the European Union to Turkey, relevant academics, representatives of international and national civil society organizations and representatives of relevant ministries (see Annex-1) and questions related to the following topics discussed in the final version of the report were directed to them:

- a. Basic income based on citizenship,
- b. Policies to improve the quality of education of Roma children,
- c. Possible contribution of in-neighborhood education centers to the educational life of Roma children,
- d. Roma initiative,
- e. Possible risks that can increase the vulnerability of Roma.

Finally, a workshop was held in Ankara on 01.02.2022 with the above-mentioned representatives and the answers given to the questions related to these topics and the text of the draft report were discussed in detail and the report was finalized by taking into account the policy recommendations expressed by the participants. (List of workshop contributors are included in Annex 1)

5. Measures Taken Against the Pandemic and the Degree of Benefits for the Roma Community

First, it is worth noting that since there is no payment policy against unemployment, there has naturally been no change in this regard during / after the pandemic. No measures have been taken to compensate for the economic losses caused by the disease during the pandemic, either. In the following lines, the measures taken are listed and the summary results of the field work carried out in five provinces are conveyed:¹⁶

Prohibition of dismissal

In accordance with this policy, which was launched on April 17, 2020, and ended on June 30, 2021, employers were prohibited from firing their employees, but they were allowed to leave on unpaid leave. This policy, which by definition applies to formal (insured) employment, does not cover informal workers. The information that a predominantly majority of Roma work in informal work has been confirmed in our field study.

Short time working allowance

Due to the pandemic, it was an application that provided income support to the insured for the period they could not work for a period not exceeding 3 months in case the working time applied in the workplace was reduced by at least one third or the activity was stopped completely or partially for at least 4 weeks without any condition of continuity. It was in effect between 15 March 2020 and 21 June 2021. This policy, which by definition, applies to formal (insured) employment, does not cover informal workers. It was known that the majority of Roma worked in informal jobs. This has been confirmed in our fieldwork.

¹⁶ Adaman F., D. Aslan, B. Erus ve S. Sayan (2021) *Social Protection and Inclusion Policy Responses to the COVID-19 Crisis*. ESPN Thematic Report, European Commission.

Cash wage support (unpaid leave)

It is the support paid to those who are put on unpaid leave. It started on March 1, 2020, and is implemented until June 30, 2021. In this application, which is known to benefit approximately 2.5 million employees, those who were put on unpaid leave were paid 39 TL per day in 2020 and 47 TL in 2021. This policy, which by definition applies to formal (insured) employment, does not cover informal workers. It was known that the majority of Roma worked in informal jobs. This has been confirmed in our fieldwork

Payment of health insurance premiums of those receiving cash wage support and their relatives from unemployment insurance

With this application, the health insurance premiums of those who were put on unpaid leave were paid by the state. It started on March 1, 2020, and is implemented until June 30, 2021. In this application, which is known to benefit approximately 2.5 million employees, those who were put on unpaid leave were paid 88.29 TL per month in 2020 and 107.32 TL in 2021. This policy, which by definition applies to formal (insured) employment, does not cover informal workers. It was known that the majority of Roma worked in informal jobs. This has been confirmed in our fieldwork.

Hospital access for those who owe insurance premiums

With this policy, it was ensured that those who owe health insurance premiums (provided that they deposit their premiums for the last month) were given access to hospitals. It is known that approximately 4 million people benefited from this policy, which was in effect between August 1, 2020, and June 1, 2021. It is known that people in the Roma community have had serious cash shortages with the pandemic and therefore there is a possibility that they have had difficulty in paying their last month's premiums.

Social aid program

In the spring of 2020 and at the beginning of summer 2021, this was aimed to provide financial support to households suffering from poverty (1,000 TL and 1,100 TL). It is obvious that this practice, which is known to benefit 6.3 million households in total, is extremely important for the Roma community. In the results of the field work, it was stated that there were problems in the application of this program. This will be discussed later in the following sections

Support for musicians

With this policy implemented in December 2020, a one-time support of 3,000 TL, in three installments of 1,000 TL each was offered to the musicians. It is obvious that this policy, which we know that approximately 25 thousand people have benefited, is extremely important for the Roma community. In the results of the field work, it was stated that there were problems in practice. This will be discussed later in the following sections

Increase of the minimum pension to 1,500 TL

With this policy, which was launched in April 2020, the minimum pension was increased to 1,500 TL. In order to benefit from this policy, which has affected 650,000 people, it is necessary to have worked in a formal job and earned retirement. This policy, which by definition applies to formal (insured) employment, does not cover informal workers. It was known that the majority of Roma work in informal jobs. This has been confirmed in our fieldwork.

“We Are Enough for Us, Turkey” Campaign

This application, which was initiated by the government between April and June 2020 and included a one-time payment of 1,000 TL, covered the poor. It has been observed that some municipalities have also delivered in-kind assistance to those in need with a similar application. It is obvious that this practice, which is known to benefit a total of 2 million households, is extremely important for the Roma community. In the results of the field work, it was stated that there were problems in practice. This will be discussed later in the following sections.

Work from home for the women civil servants with children under the age of 10

Launched in April 2020, it allows female civil servants with children under the age of 10 to work from home while schools are closed. It is known that the proportion of civil servants among Roma is very low. This has been confirmed in our fieldwork.

Normalization support

In the event that the people who have switched to short-time work or have been put on unpaid leave start to work normally, the first three months of social security premiums (1.103,60 TL per month) have been covered by the state. With this policy, which was put into practice in March 2021, payments were made for 3.2 million employees. This policy, which by definition applies to formal (insured) employment, does not cover informal workers. It is known that the majority of Roma work in informal jobs. This has been confirmed in our fieldwork

Support for small business owners

With this application, which started on January 15, 2021, a monthly support of 1,000 TL was given for four months to support small business owners. Rent support was also offered. 1.3 million small business owners have benefited from this application. Since it is known that there are very few Roma tradesmen who are registered as small business owners, the number of Roma tradesmen benefiting from this practice should be expected to be very low. As a matter of fact, the fieldwork has confirmed this.

Increase of the compensation period from 2 to 4 months

With this practice, which was put into effect in March 2020, the period of requesting additional labor supply to meet the lack of labor supply in previous periods has been increased from two months to four months. Since it is known that there are very few Roma tradesmen who are registered as small business owners, the number of Roma tradesmen benefiting from this practice should be expected to be very low. As a matter of fact, the fieldwork has confirmed this.

Postponement of rents on agricultural land

With this application, which started in April 2020, rents for the agricultural public land have been postponed for one year. It is estimated that Roma engaged in this type of agriculture constitute a very small percentage. As a matter of fact, the fieldwork has confirmed this.

Low-interest loans

With this application, which was launched in April 2020, it has been facilitated for both producers and consumers to borrow at low interest rates. It is known that the poor (and therefore the Roma) benefit from this practice. This issue has also been identified in our field work.¹⁷

6. Socio-Economic Effects of the Pandemic

The results of the field research show that, in general, Roma have experienced problems in terms of employment, social benefits, education, housing, health and gender inequalities throughout the pandemic, and that the problems, impossibilities and injustices that have been experienced for a long time regarding these issues have deepened and spread with the effect of the pandemic. Before going on to the detailed presentation of the research findings, it should be noted that Roma are generally in the most disadvantaged communities of society. This makes Roma highly vulnerable to the economic, social and health challenges brought about by the pandemic. In addition to the widespread and severe damage caused, the Roma have little capacity to repair it on their own. This can lead to the problems presented below becoming chronic and the permanent deepening of the injustices experienced. On the other hand, as the fieldwork indicates, disadvantages and vulnerabilities are not evenly distributed among the Roma. It is known that women and children are the groups most affected by the economic

¹⁷ Other applications (not directly related to the economy) that have been implemented during the pandemic period are as follows: 1) Household service (shopping, medicine, etc.) over the age of 80; 2) Pension-to-home service; 3) Distribution of cologne and masks over 65 years old.

and social problems during the pandemic. The research findings highlight the importance of taking into account the problems Roma face (during the pandemic) in the areas of employment, social benefits and livelihood, education, housing, health and gender, as well as inter-communal and inter-communal inequality and related vulnerabilities. As a result of the research, the detailed analysis of the problems identified in the mentioned areas is as follows:

a) Employment

As mentioned above, it is known that Roma are not generally in formal employment. Interviews conducted on the ground confirm this information. Note that only one in 130 adults interviewed worked in an insured job (but he was also on unpaid leave during the pandemic and received cash wage support) and only one person who had received the right to retirement was interviewed. During the focus group study conducted in Gaziantep, the low number of formal (registered) working people was stated as "one in a million" by the participants. If we consider the regional differences, it has been observed that the number of people in formal employment is higher than in other regions in connection with the earlier transition of Lom groups living around Artvin to settled life and the increase in average education periods. In the interviews conducted during working hours, male individuals who provide for the living of the house were not encountered, and information was obtained from the women of the house that their husbands were formally employed.

We have learned that a significant proportion of the adults interviewed were working in one of these four jobs before the pandemic:

- i) musicians (in general drum and zurna; at weddings and similar gatherings)
- ii) florists
- iii) house cleaners (for women)
- iv) junk and waste collectors

These jobs, as it is known, do not provide the opportunity to work remotely. It is labor-intensive and connected to the street economy, requires coming in contact with people. Therefore, due to the lockdowns brought by the pandemic and the restrictions that followed, the work opportunities of the Roma have been largely lost. One of the people we interviewed expressed this situation as "We live the impossible in the midst of impossibilities.". In an interview in Izmir, it was explained that there was no opportunity to work for a long time and that the probability of finding a job decreased in the post-closure phase of the pandemic as follows:

// My husband is a musician; He could not work at all for 1.5 years due to the pandemic. Sometimes they played in the streets, from time to time as a group, people threw money at them from their balconies. (...) During this pandemic period, I took out a loan, I took out other loans besides the pandemic loan. We continuously waited for the opening at that time, we could not earn proper income unless there was opening. When restaurants were closed during the pandemic, all the musicians were left out in the open; musicians who entertained everyone before can't take care of themselves now. **When a musician came home, he would come with his hands full; now he can't bring anything. //**
(İzmir, woman in her 30s)

There are concerns that the loss of jobs and the decrease in jobs resulting from the pandemic will not be specific to the pandemic period but will be permanent. For example, interviews say that with the ban on weddings during the pandemic, playing drum/zurna, one of the main sources of income for Roma, has become unperformable. It was also stated that despite the relaxation of the closure measures that started as of July 2020 and the partial opening, the ban on street weddings was not lifted, so the opening did not benefit them. It has been added that wedding halls have hired their own musicians, therefore Roma cannot find work in these places. In addition, there are also those who argue that cultural barriers and constraints have increased with the pandemic, which is an obstacle to their ability to find jobs. Both the Abdals we met in Gaziantep and the Doms we met in Şanlıurfa reported that a cultural attitude towards drum and zurna activities was formed during the pandemic and that they were far behind the old job opportunities despite the reduction of restrictions. There are those who think that drum and zurna are not welcomed in Sunnism and that this situation is reflected in the prohibitions. A musician from Şanlıurfa puts it this way: **"Now tambourine Mevlut is recited at weddings; the belief that the drum and the zurna are sins has become widespread."**

Some of the people we interviewed also informed us that several people who worked in insured jobs in their neighborhoods had been dismissed on trumped-up grounds. (However, this has not been confirmed). When we reminded that there were bans on dismissal during the pandemic, they said that these measures **"do not apply to them"**, pointing to the disadvantageous situation that they (and employees in general) are experiencing as Roma. Apart from this, unpaid leave has been shown to be a significant problem for registered employees. The information obtained during the interviews indicates that Roma groups do not have a good command of the legal rights seeking processes, that they do not have sufficient financial resources to initiate legal proceedings and that they are disbelieving that the rights seeking processes will lead to a positive outcome:

// We had working people. (...) The state give support to those employees. Did it give it to the employer or the employee? There are those who do not know this also, there are those who do not know. Employees worked exactly thirty days. But the insurances were shown over fifteen days, we had Roma people working in factories. They showed them in and out. I don't know, they called for three days, they sent me home for a week. They didn't get their money in full. What was the employer doing? He would work for a week and ten days, and then he wouldn't employ people. He was putting them on unpaid leave... How will he live on the money he has received for fifteen days for a month? Will he pay the bank? Is he going to support himself? //
(Edirne, man in his 50s)

On the other hand, we observed that among the Roma we interviewed, there were those who had practiced their profession from time to time, despite the restrictions, risking penalties. People we interviewed often stated that despite restrictions and prohibitions, they continued to make music, collect scrap and sell flowers on the street. At this point, it is stated that the security forces sometimes act leniently and do not impose fines, but at other times they impose fines. It is understood that in some places there are local practices that have been implemented to improve the situation of the Roma. For example, it is stated that during the pandemic, Izmir Metropolitan Municipality organized open-air concerts and Roma groups were offered the opportunity to play in these concerts.

b) Social aid and subsistence

In a situation where the work opportunities for the Roma families interviewed have been completely or partially exhausted, the extent to which the social aids have reached them is an important issue. We were informed that almost all the families interviewed were able to receive the first 1,000 TL of social assistance within the scope of the social support program, but the subsequent aid of 1,000 TL and the aid given within the scope of the "We Are Enough for Us, Turkey" Campaign were generally not reached. It was stated that a significant part of this situation is due to the difficulties encountered during the application process and the fact that they have not been qualified as "needy" as a result of the evaluations. While it was explained that they encountered social exclusion during the determination of poverty level for social aid program, it was said that having a refrigerator, LCD screen television at home or a worn-out vehicle used for scrap collection was an obstacle to access social aid. It was explained that during the detection process, the cabinets were opened and even what was inside was examined. There are those who say that the officers who come to the house **"embarrass"** and **"make them feel bad"**. In the interviews in Şanlıurfa, it is claimed that they were fired from state institutions such as district governorship and municipality because of their Dom identity, and there are those who say that they were subjected to psychological and/or physical violence.

They also claim that another reason for not being able to access social assistance is that practices such as "nepotism" and use of "influential contacts" are effective in the distribution of social aid. There are those who believe that social benefits are distributed through political party and acquaintance relations, rather than being given to those who are really in need according to predetermined rules and criteria. There are opinions that the process is not carried out transparently. Two of the people we interviewed in Artvin and Edirne summarize these views as follows:

// He applied, but he didn't receive. His wife didn't receive either, nor did those around him. (...) They didn't ask people. For example, does this citizen work? Is he married? Do they have children? He has to provide for his family. No such thing was asked. They gave it to whomever they liked. They gave excuses to ones they did not like. So, it's not transparent. Nothing. (...) He did not get anything. (...) If they gave the aid to real downtrodden; It would be very good, but they don't. That is, he distributes as he feels. And they brought politics into this? So, it is not

*working. If he is in need, you should give it to him. You cannot ask who is who. (...) Wrong. **We don't know what method they follow when they distribute their assistance;** these are the wrong methods. Unjust. **You rule, but unfairly.** //*

(Artvin, woman in her 50s)

// Roma are suffering a lot in the pandemic. Yes. Unemployment on the one hand, poverty on the other. They couldn't go out in this pandemic anyway. They couldn't go anywhere. How much has the state helped him? They reached thirty percent or forty percent. Sixty percent remained downtrodden. We didn't get most of the aid. In fact, we thought about it among ourselves. We said, because there is politics in this, are the ones close to the government receiving it? We also commented among ourselves. Some people didn't receive it. //

(Edirne, man in his 30s)

One of the complaints about the social assistance given during the interviews is the inadequacy of the amount of assistance. A person we interviewed in Edirne states that as Roma, they have suffered great financial difficulties due to the pandemic and that the aid in the amount of 1,000 TL is not enough:

// What he received was a thousand liras; how far a thousand liras go? That is also an issue that needs to be discussed. So, this pandemic has really affected our Roma people. //

(Edirne, man in his 40s)

Special assistance has also been provided to certain occupational groups that are in difficulty during the pandemic, such as musicians. We have said that music is an important source of income for the Roma and that their income has been drastically reduced during the pandemic. When we question the extent to which the support of 1,000 TL given three times for musicians has reached this segment, it is understood that there are serious disturbances in this practice. It is stated that there are two kinds of difficulties during the distribution of aid through musicians' associations: First, it is argued that this aid for musicians has been availed of by non-musicians (mechanics, barbers, etc.) and therefore has not reached the people to whom the aid should have reached, i.e., musicians. The allegations that rose in the interviews held in Izmir and the focus group meeting in Şanlıurfa, that some people made music videos to show themselves as musicians even though they were not musicians and that they unfairly benefited from these aids are quite striking. The second claim is that "nepotism" relations have an important place in the distribution of aid to musicians.

The second problem pointed out about social aid is that the associations that mediate in the delivery of the aid receive commissions on the aids. In addition, the fact that those who are not members of an association despite being musicians cannot benefit from the aid has been shown among the problems experienced. A person we spoke to in Izmir describes the role of musicians' associations in the distribution of aid with the following words:

// Support for artists and dancers went through associations. (...) Who did they choose and how did they choose them? There was deduction. For example, how much money? One hundred thousand liras. Association put fifty thousand liras in the pocket. Distributed fifty thousand liras. People were given money. But outside, on the back, inside the envelope, they took down nice money, saying support for the association. Five hundred each. They took from them whatever God gave. //

(Izmir, woman in her 30s)

On the other hand, the executives of the associations we spoke to, stated that they had to consider those who shot the videos (which were requested as proof of being a musician) as musicians, and emphasized that they had to make a "small deduction" for the expenses of the association from the aid money, but that they did not make any other deduction.

The last item to be evaluated in this section; are in-kind aids (mostly as food supplies), received mainly from municipalities. After the aid is delivered to the neighborhood, it is usually distributed through the mukhtar (neighborhood representative). During the meetings in Şanlıurfa, it was said that due to the widespread use of tribalism, the aid received was distributed by the tribes/landlords, so the aid did not reach them. A significant part of the people we talked to stated that there was

favoritism during this distribution and that most of the aid went to the relatives/friends, while the rest received little or no aid. The statement, "**A helping aid is given, 100 photos are taken, there are always the same people in those photos,**" summarizes the situation. A person we interviewed in Edirne explains his opinion that the distribution of aid is based on nepotism relations:

// I saw the injustice here. People who worked, who had money in their pockets, were given money again. So, money was given. There was also favoritism. Let me say this clearly. Let me show you an example if they want an example. No problem. How can this be? I need it. I couldn't receive. But my friend doesn't need it. He received it. So, such an injustice took place. Why did he receive it? I don't know, he has, how do you say it? Maybe he has an uncle in Ankara. Let me put it this way. Favoritism. It is favoritism. Their word has more weight. (...) Now we have not seen anything from the state. My brother, let me tell you clearly, a sack of potatoes and a sack of onions we received from the state. We didn't see anything. Okay, I also have a file in social assistance. I didn't get a thousand liras, I didn't get five thousand liras, I didn't get anything. Let me speak for myself. Who doesn't need it receives it. Who does need it doesn't receive it. I want to tell you this. //
(Edirne, woman in her 30s)

Another issue identified in the field is related to the quality of the materials distributed. Some interviewees also think that the quality of the aid supplies coming in is "bad." They stated that they could occasionally benefit from the parcels distributed during Ramadan, Red Crescent aid, and coal aid, but that this aid did not mean much in terms of their survival, that the provisions that came out of the boxes had sometimes "worms" and that "soil and ash could be mixed" into the sack of the coals given. Roma discrimination is also claimed to be behind this "bad" quality.

Some of the interviewees stated that the only income they had during the pandemic period was the "pension" given to the elderly/disabled individual(s) by the state. However, it is worth mentioning at once that although a few of the interviewed families have disabled individual(s) in their households, they have difficulty in receiving reports or in legal processes due to discrimination in order to access disability assistance, and that even disability pensions are given within the patronage relationship, by looking at their surname, etc.

During the pandemic, while they couldn't work, or lost their jobs, while they had difficulties in access to social aid, irregular and limited jobs were one way to earn a living for the Roma. Although they made some income, these irregular and short-term jobs have not been enough for their survival. The predominantly used way to make a living is to borrow. However, this situation deepens the state of poverty they are in. A person we interviewed in Izmir underlines that they could not pay the debts they received due to their lack of regular and sufficient income, and that they had to close the debt with debt:

// We were one of the most broke. We tried to deposit the loan with credit. Because the business situation never opened. As we thought, it is opening now, it is going to open tomorrow.... One month, two months, three months, four months (...) a long process. If I go to daily work: You go for a day, you sit for a month. What will happen if you go for one day? What will you buy? Because everything is already expensive. So, we are in very bad debt. //
(Izmir, woman in her 30s)

Another borrowing method that is often used to meet daily needs has been shopping on store credit. However, the possibilities of making purchases on store credit are also limited. The possibility of making purchases on store credit is determined by personal factors such as the attitude of business owners (grocery stores, markets, etc.) who trade products that will meet basic needs such as food and cleaning supplies and the nature of the relationships established with these people. It was also reported that in some neighborhoods, their debts were covered by businessmen who showed charity. However, aids were given in an irregular, arbitrary, and non-institutional way. Although the store credit books are closed in some neighborhoods this way, the effect of this is short-lived and the residents have to continue to meet their needs by borrowing. A grocery store owner we interviewed in Edirne describes the credit relations in the neighborhood where it is located, as follows:

// These people are hungry, poor. Three hundred meters away, there is a grocery store where they live. They come to me. They say, sister, give me two loaves of bread, I'll bring the money tomorrow. I tell them the grocery store is at your doorstep. They visited all the grocery stores. They'll visit me too. I say, sister, you have a grocery store there. There is Kuzey Grocery, there is Yilmaz Grocery, there is this, there is that you know? Why did you come all the way here to me to buy on credit? I have neighbors too. **Sister says I visited them all, they didn't give. I thought of you as the last resort. How can I not give bread to this person? And if you're merciless, don't give. But she says her kids are hungry. (...) For how long can you be a Robin Hood? Several grocery stores closed shop. Businessmen who love the neighborhood have paid off their grocery debts many times. You just asked. Debt was made to the grocery store. Those grocery store debts were also closed by philanthropists and the books were processed again. Otherwise, the grocery store will not be able to make a living. It was done to butchers in the same way. Debt to butcher was settled and then more debt to butcher was made again. People spun their wheels this way, or everyone would have starved to death, or the looting would have begun.** //

(Edirne, woman in her 40s)

c) Education

The fact that the problems experienced in education have deepened during the pandemic and that new problems have been added has been repeatedly emphasized by both parents and young people. At the top of the list of the problems related to education that have been experienced for a long time rank, the limited opportunities in the schools and the negative conditions; discrimination against Roma students by teachers, school administrators and other students; the current social and economic conditions that keep Roma children largely from attending school/education. In general, while the adequacy of the opportunities offered by schools to students and the quality of teachers are questioned, it is widely expressed by the Roma that there is constant discrimination against them and their children in an innumerable way. According to the views expressed in the interviews, the discrimination suffered by Roma takes place in two different ways: **direct** and **indirect**. **Direct** discrimination occurs when Roma children are subjected to negative characterization words such as "they don't understand and don't think about it anyway" in schools because of their ethnic identity, or when they are ridiculed over the neighborhood they live in and their identity. In addition, they are faced with forms of discrimination that can be considered indirect, such as their **inability** to attend physical education classes due to their dress code, which causes them to be unable to benefit from educational opportunities as a result of the combination of ethnic affiliation with other factors such as poverty:

// My [classes] were put on Thursday and Friday. He was always separating such clever people or something. The teacher didn't think I was smart at all. He thought I was bad. That was how he put me in groups without intelligence. We were few. There were a lot of people in the other group. [Discrimination] I feel it. **So, it's like not answering when you ask questions. So, the teacher was always yelling at us. He said, like the other group is very good, you can't do anything. It is. He called us a stupid and such insults. He threw pencil at us.** //

(Artvin, Girl in 3rd grade)

// Racism is the same as disease. Like gangrene. So, you don't know the guy, but you hate him. But if he's rich, he likes him. So, if you're rich, no matter what your race is. (...) **But here's what I know, this discrimination exists here as it does everywhere. Now it is not reflected in our faces, but imitating when they talk among themselves, imitating our speech, teachers in the school discriminate. I say it, so one teacher favors one child over another: for example, he says well done to one, not the other.** //

(Artvin, man in his 40s)

One of the most important findings that emerged is that almost all the households we interviewed pointed to the problem of absenteeism from school. Along with discrimination – direct and indirect – another reason for the inability to attend school (and education) is the very negative level of economic conditions and the inadequacy of schools in the places where Roma live. Due to the extremely low household income, the fact that families cannot afford school-related expenses such as food, school bus service, school equipment is one of the factors that prevent them from continuing education. In addition, it is

stated that the inadequacy of educational conditions and facilities in schools lead to children not attending school. On the other hand, It has been claimed that the authorities do not provide support or guidance in the face of children's non-attendance at school, even during the compulsory education period (grades 1 through 8), on the contrary, children with absenteeism are marked as present in classes.

// They don't go to school anyway. So, there's nothing to do. And there's nothing like breaking away from education just because they're having fun here. Children cannot lean towards education because they are already disconnected from education. As I said, there are no good teachers. You know like, they sent here especially the ones with bad record. Teachers don't come to class. There may be one or two among them. Warns you. As he warned me. Take your child. Don't send your child to this school [Referring to the school in the Roma neighborhood]. Take him out he said. So, I did. (...) Kids are sleeping right now. By the way it's five o'clock. Eighty percent of them are like this in this neighborhood. There is a gap. No activities for children, for example. I don't know, no folk dances, no sports. So, they can't relieve children's minds. I now say to the school, for example, why are the ones who go to conservatory studying successfully? They study because they love music. So, you're supposed to catch that kid's attention from somewhere. You'll find out what profession he likes and catch that kid from there. If there is guidance, these children here would not have absenteeism from school. **Children do not go to school in compulsory education. They go once a week and considered as having gone for the whole week. You have made the school permanent, otherwise the school will close. **Kids can't make it to the high school without learning basic math. They can't pass their exams.** Because they are unsuccessful. Didn't get a good education. Kids should be encouraged to get an education! (...) I wish there was an incentive. **Some, really, couldn't buy shoes. Kid doesn't have shoes. Can't go to school because of embarrassment. //****

(Izmir, Woman in her 30s)

// You need to give food money to the child. I can't afford this. Sometimes I say, I'm going to take the kids out of school and put them in a job. As long as I can't afford the cost of education, as long as my children are shedding tears, what difference does it make if they go to school or not. We are at this point. //

(Edirne, Woman in her 40s)

// We know ourselves. I told you. You know. His mother knows his father knows. Why shouldn't our governor know? Why shouldn't our district president know? Why shouldn't our mayor know? When they are going to deal with greater things, they should also take the time to deal with small things. They should ask for the certificate of achievement of the successful students. And later? Gather them around. Is it a lie? Gather them around. //

(Edirne, Woman in her 40s)

It is observed that all the existing problems related to education have increased exponentially and deepened when combined with the difficulties brought by the pandemic. The burden of school costs has increased further for Roma, who are already struggling financially due to falling household incomes and rising financial difficulties due to the pandemic. It is stated that the educational support provided by the state is insufficient. There are also those who say that children had to work to support household income during the pandemic.

When online education started during the pandemic period, problems already being faced accumulated with the digital gap which is caused by the lack of access to digital technology and by inadequate digital literacy; and gained a new dimension. Of the 48 children we interviewed in the field, only 6 said they were able to take the tablets supposedly had been distributed. A parent interviewed in an interview in Artvin claimed that tablets were distributed at the school where his child attended, but that they were given to those who could continue their classes online due to the insufficient number of tablets, and that they were not given tablets because they did not have internet access:

// If you bring three (tablets) to a school, whom can you distribute them to?? You give them to the most unfortunate. That doesn't come up to us. (...) But he wouldn't be able to access because of the internet, there is no internet! //

(Artvin, Woman in her 30s)

One of the biggest problems with distance education is that there is very limited or no access to the internet in households. When this situation is combined with the lack of information-communication devices used in homes in terms of number and quality, there are difficulties in following online courses and participating in classes:

// It would have been better without the pandemic, after all. We would be able to go to school. We would be able to see our friends. We would be able to play games with our friends. But we are doing it with online classes because of the pandemic. But because there was a long break to the classes, we forgot the subjects a little bit. Because of this, good things did not enter our heads. (...) By the way, my brother will also start first grade. There is only one phone at home. And we don't know what to do. //

(Artvin, Girl in high school)

// I already had only one phone. Either my daughter or son was connecting to class on my only phone. For this reason, they missed a lot of classes. My son sometimes said, mother, let Zeynep attend her class. Zeynep was attending. My son was being left behind. //

(Artvin, Woman in her 40s)

The fact that the physical facilities of the houses are not suitable for children to study is among the problems experienced with education during the pandemic. In the interviews, it is often stated that children had difficulties in following lessons online due to problems such as heating, space and sound/noise in the houses. Due to the limited heating facilities, only certain areas of the house are used. In households with more than one child, children have to attend classes simultaneously in the same room. On top of the lack of internet connection and electronic devices such as tablets, phones, computers, the necessity of attending classes in the same noisy room is one of the factors that make it difficult for children to follow their lessons:

// It was hard in the winter. In the room with the stove, the child followed the lesson. He has a brother also. So, I try to keep the silence, but how long can a five-year-old, four-year-old? He studies eight hours a day. Sometimes I hear it. I sit there, too. Both to ensure silence and to listen to the teacher. And it lasts eight hours. And sometimes the teacher says that the lesson cannot be done with this noise. He says it not only to my child, but to other children as well, but. (...) The plight of mothers is to try to silence children. So, it's more efficient for the child who has his own room. You know, the teacher says no one should stay with you. I am not in a position to throw the child into the cold room when I hear that. Yes, you go out into the cold room. You have to take the other child with you. Now sometimes you try to use a heater, but there is also the electricity bill. So, the bill has increased. //

(Artvin, Woman in her 30s)

The consensus of some of the parents interviewed is that the effects of the problems created by the pandemic on education will be permanent for their children. It is thought that the courses interrupted or continued in an unproductive way during the pandemic period, because of the economic and social reasons mentioned above are not compensated. "It is argued that the "wasted year was not compensated" and that children continue their education without losing a year – but without learning anything from the year they lost – by skipping a grade

// My child, this corona ruined the children. So, it alienated them from school. This disease is not a good thing, distance education is not either. Really, the kids are distanced from the school. Many of them forgot how to read. Do your lessons, improve yourself, read a book, I said. I said, don't follow other, follow your own life, it will end up good. Read and get a profession. Oku! //

(Edirne, Woman in her 50s)

d) Housing

In general, it is known that the housing conditions of the Roma are unfavorable, that they live in houses, shelters or tents that they have created, that they do not have the title deeds of the houses in which they live, that the places they live in do not have the necessary features and conditions for average health, comfort and good living standards, and that they live in a crowded state. During the field visits, many of these negative conditions and characteristics mentioned, are encountered. The people we interviewed generally live in homes with high energy poverty. It has been observed that some houses do not even have heating tools such as stoves. In the meetings in Edirne, Şanlıurfa and Gaziantep, those who had to get help for heating said that the coal aid had not yet fully reached their hands for that year, and that the incoming coal had negative effects on the health of children especially, because it was of very poor quality. In short, most of the people we interviewed live in unsanitary conditions in homes that are high in humidity and are not heated properly. It should be added that the other physical conditions of the houses are also not good. For example, in some houses, electrical cables hang down from the ceiling and walls in a way that can cause fire at any moment. Another problem with housing spaces is that the places where they live are small. The households of the people interviewed for the research consist of 4-5 people on average. However, it was seen that the visited dwellings were of a size and quality that was not sufficient for the total number of people living in the household. The occupations of the households also have an impact on the condition of the houses that are being lived in. For example, in households where scrap collection work is carried out, it is stated that the interior and garden of the house are used for sorting the waste. Finally, the vast majority of people we interviewed are tenants, and rent payments make up a significant portion of the household budget.

The negative physical conditions of the places where Roma are housed constitute an obstacle to live healthily. In the face of additional health-related problems brought about by the pandemic, this situation becomes even more grave. Social isolation and / or quarantine of people who are sick or at risk of becoming sick are at the primary measures to prevent the transmission of the Covid-19 virus during the pandemic period. It has been repeatedly emphasized that Covid-19 cases are common in the neighborhoods where Roma live, that there are physical impossibilities of the houses they live in and that there is no possibility of social isolation because they live together as a neighborhood. These information and opinions conveyed in the interviews are in line with our observations. Since most of the people living in the neighborhoods are relatives, it has been stated that other households take care of the children of those who are hospitalized and/or in intensive care. This has increased the risk of transmission. When there is an infected person at home, isolation is often not available. In addition, as a result of falling household incomes during the pandemic, the burden of rent payments on Roma has increased even more.

e) Gender

As a result of the interviews, we can say that in general, the pandemic has affected women more negatively than men. When the problems created by the pandemic are added to the existing gender-based inequalities, it is seen that women are under more burden and endure difficulties. It has been observed that women who already have to undertake more than one role such as work, undertaking domestic work, have their burden increased even more during the pandemic. In general, as a result of falling incomes, the task of meeting the basic needs of households is unequally more on women. In addition, it is seen that violence against women by men has increased. One person we interviewed, who suggested that the number of divorce cases in the surrounding families due to the pandemic has increased a lot, draws attention to the severe incompatibility that is often seen between couples during the pandemic and the increasing level of physical violence against women by their spouses:

// The man does not go to work. You get separated. Many have separated. There have been many separations because of Corona virus. Because there is no meal, no food. On top of that, there's beating. What are you going to do?? There are many women who endure this. Many. Believe me, there are too many. There are many people who did not break up their marriage. There are many who take care of their husbands. The husband sits at the coffee house, woman works. //
(İzmir, Woman in her 40s)

// Look, my husband received the benefits from social assistance using my address. He used my address. God willing, we will get a divorce. So, Corona broke up a marriage. I have a forty-one-year-old daughter. //
(İzmir, Woman in her 50s)

A negative situation experienced by Roma women during the pandemic stems from the problems experienced in education during this period. It is stated that the age of marriage among Roma women is low. There are those who state that young women quit school and marry at an early age due to the above-mentioned discrimination, poverty etc. Given that the relationship with education has been further weakened by the impact of the pandemic, we can expect an increase in the number of early marriages. Two people we interviewed in Izmir and Edirne, respectively, explain the increasing tendency of Roma young women to marry at an early age by linking the situation to the problems and negativities experienced in education:

// *The children have not dropped out of school, but most of the children do not go to school, they cannot go to school. Schools are also closed. What kind of job can a child do? Children don't go to work here anyway. There are almost no child workers here. In other words, there are no children forced to work here. Oh, what it could be? There are children who take up art. What kind of work can they go to? Belly dancing maybe, I don't know. There are no other jobs left. Just like that, little girls in the night life. Girls get married. You don't need to engage anymore; the era of engagement is over. They directly get married. (...) Fifteen. When she turns fifteen, she is gone. Thirteen. Sure. She becomes the mother of the house she goes to. And they get a hundred billion [expressed in reference to the old currency; corresponds to one hundred thousand TL] something. They get a loan. A year later, they get separated. Girl comes back. She gets the dowry too; they sell all their dowry. Later they get back together. They make another child, then get separated again. So, the second child has arrived. It goes on like this. //*
(İzmir, Woman in her 30s)

// *They get married at the age of seventeen. Fifteen! What is this? Marriage means responsibility. Why do homes keep getting broken? You take a burden. Yes. So, subsistence has become so hard. Don't you see? Femicides are happening. //*
(Edirne, Woman in her 40s)

f) Health

The field study found no additional difficulty or problem in accessing health services for Roma during the pandemic. On the other hand, it is known that before the pandemic, Roma had difficulties in benefiting from the health system and accessing health services. It can be said that the main reason for this is poverty and informality rather than ethnic affiliation. However, there were no people in the field interviews who reported particularly problematic health care, such as pandemic-specific testing, access to treatment and vaccines. On the other hand, it was also noted that there were some concerns and problems related to health due to the negativity of housing conditions. It is understood that because of the unfavorable conditions in the houses where people live, the measures that may need to be taken such as isolation and quarantine cannot be applied at an adequate level. A health issue that has arisen during the pandemic process is also related to the psychological state and mental health status of the people. It is often stated that practices such as lockdowns and economic difficulties during the pandemic cause people to feel uncomfortable and have psychological problems. This condition is especially common among women. During this period, there is a tendency to attribute the cause of the suicide cases around them to the economic and social problems experienced with the pandemic. Another problem that may concern the health issue is the widespread use of substances that are often mentioned in interviews. Some of the people we interviewed suggest that substance abuse has increased during the pandemic, especially due to disruption of education, unemployment and economic difficulties. A person we interviewed in Izmir summarizes this situation as follows:

// *For example, there is a lot of drugs. Number of young marriages are high. Under age. So, yes. There are a lot of unemployed people in the neighborhood. //*
(İzmir, Woman in her 40s)

7. Policy Recommendations

Roma are one of the most disadvantaged communities in society. They are faced with many problems such as discrimination and exclusion in the social and cultural sphere, informality, unemployment and poverty in the economic sphere and problem of representation in the political sphere. This shows that Roma do not benefit sufficiently from their fundamental rights to health, housing, education, employment and the like, and that they are experiencing injustices of distribution, recognition and participation. All these current injustices undermine the capacity of the Roma to avoid and repair the social and

economic damage that occurs in times of crisis. As confirmed by the findings of this research, the economic and social effects of the Covid-19 pandemic have had devastating effects on the lives of the already vulnerable Roma, deepening the inequalities and injustices they are experiencing. Undoubtedly, the implementation of measures and policies to eliminate the injustices they generally experience in the economic, political, social and cultural fields will enable Roma to become stronger in the face of the pandemic and other crises. Foremost among these is the fight against discrimination against Roma at work, school and in almost all areas of life, which is widely present in society at large. Implementation of anti-discrimination laws and developing new policies, in order to prevent discrimination, which is the main source of the injustices experienced by the Roma, are the basis for eliminating the disadvantages experienced both in general and in during crises such as the pandemic. On the other hand, starting from the pandemic-related problems experienced by the Roma, who are also the focus of this research, there are concrete steps to be taken to eliminate their vulnerability, especially in the face of crises. Based on the findings of the study, the policies that should be developed and implemented in order to mend the damage suffered during the pandemic and to increase the resilience of Roma in the face of similar crises in the future can be listed as follows:

1. Transition to formal employment: One of the structural problems mentioned in relation to the problem of unemployment is the existence of the informal sector. This issue should be carefully addressed as it includes problems such as the high rate of use of child labor, unhealthy and unsafe working conditions, low wages, and the preference of short-term security over long-term security. Instead of the methods currently applied (which cannot go beyond policing) within the scope of the fight against informal work, it is necessary to produce solutions related to the source of the problem (such as unemployment, obstacles in educational opportunities, etc.) with both legal regulations and macro-level planning.

2. True implementation of a rights-based approach to education and health: There are obstacles for the children of people in informal employment to reach a high level of human capital and break the chain of poverty after a good education. Therefore, it is necessary to detect the vicious cycle here and to design mechanisms to correct it. In order to break the cycle of poverty, in addition to providing formal employment conditions, the public must act with the responsibility of the social state and determine its priorities accordingly. In this context, education and health services should be regarded as basic rights and the basic needs in these fields should be met in a fair and equitable way (considering regional differences) by providing quality services without putting people in bureaucratic difficulties (and therefore in the rush to find acquaintances). Setting prospective qualitative and quantitative targets (such as determining the number of patients per doctor, school enrollment rates) will help to implement these requirements.

3. Citizenship income: Distribution of aids through determination of needs raises serious problems such as bureaucratic setbacks and further feeding of social exclusion. Instead of distribution of aid in such a way, switching to basic income will eliminate number of problems.¹⁸ It would be useful to consider the project of replacing the existing fragmented aid with the alternative of paying a regular sum that would keep the inhabitants of the whole society above the poverty line, regardless of their working status. Undoubtedly, this practice may differ according to the conditions and dynamics of the environment. However, in order to ensure equity, it is also important to take into account the unequal conditions and positions of communities coming from the past, as in the case of the Roma. In order to create and implement citizenship income that will make a positive contribution to the economic situation of Roma both in general and in times of pandemic and similar crises, it will be a necessary first step for different institutions, organizations and actors at national, regional and local levels to come together and conduct a comprehensive study on methods and content.

4. Cost-cutting measures: In addition to the income-increasing actions and policies described above, practices that will reduce the expenses of Roma to make a living, especially in times of pandemic and other crises, are also important. Throughout the pandemic, we have seen Roma resort to methods such as borrowing and credit shopping to meet their basic needs. However, while these individual efforts carried out through personal relationships proceed in an instant, non-generalized and irregular manner, they also fail to fulfill the purpose of meeting needs. It does not seem possible for them to get out of the debt situation they have fallen into through charitable acts that are fulfilled from time to time but do not depend on any criteria, are not institutionalized, and depend on the individual choice and initiative of the provider.

¹⁸ For more detailed information on citizen income: Ortiz, I., Behrendt, C., Acuña-Ulate, A. ve Nguyen, Q.A. (2018). *Universal Basic Income Proposals in Light of ILO Standards: Key Issues and Global Costing*, ESS - Working Paper No. 62, International Labour Office: Cenevre.

Moreover, such relationships are not accessible to everyone because they depend on personal networks. Those who can use methods such as shop credit and borrowing also enter a new kind of dependency relationship. In addition to income-increasing policies, in order to meet basic needs, the expenses in these items should be reduced and this should be designed in a way that is institutional, connected to certain criteria and methods and accessible to everyone. Here, the Suspended Invoice practice implemented during the pandemic is a good example. It should not be forgotten that in the event of the implementation of these and/or similar practices, the conditions, needs and demands specific to the Roma should be taken into account. With the implementation of such practices, which operate within the framework of certain rules and criteria, covering part of the expenses can make a more regular and continuous contribution to the improvement of the situation of the Roma. At the same time, charitable relations towards Roma will operate anonymously, not producing dependency relations and cease to be offensive.

5. Student study centers in neighborhoods: In the field of education, it is of great importance to open reading/study rooms for young people/children and thus to focus on social and cultural activities. Obstacles to access to distance education, which is a common problem during the pandemic period, can be overcome by establishing study areas with an internet connection, tablets, and computers in neighborhoods where low-income groups live. In addition to these physical facilities, services such as guidance/counseling and course follow-up to be provided in the study centers will contribute to the overcoming the difficulties faced by Roma children during their education and increase their ability to stay in school.

6. Adult education: Providing adult education as well as formal education is an important step. Education for adults can be addressed in different fields. For example, in addition to training and counseling services for parents on communicating with their children, training adults (especially women) on basic subjects such as literacy, digital literacy, financial literacy will make important contributions to increasing their capacity in both work and social life. In addition to these, the provision of basic health information such as women's health and children's health will ensure that Roma are better equipped in times of crisis as well as in general.

7. Neighborhood community centers: In addition to student study centers—or by including student study centers—the opening of multi-purpose community centers in neighborhoods will contribute socially, culturally, psychologically, and economically to the Roma. The provision of guidance, training and consultancy programs, and services in many fields such as law, health, education, and psychology, the provision of vocational training programs, and the implementation of cultural and social activities will contribute to the increase of the social and human capacities of the Roma and their knowledge on various subjects. These spaces, which will ensure a continuous interaction around concrete projects and issues, will allow for the sharing of knowledge and the transfer of experience among the Roma, at the same time will strengthen the relations of reciprocity and solidarity. If these community centers are designed through the spatial definition of poverty, it will provide a basis for them to come together with other disadvantaged groups in need and for different groups to get to know each other, deliberate about issues together, exchange ideas and experiences, and to develop solidarity ties. This will form the basis of solidarity practices and relations, which are increasingly needed, especially in times of pandemics and other crises.

8. Training incentive mechanisms: Establishment of mechanisms to promote attendance in schools (e.g., breakfast and/or lunch in schools); It should be considered that the necessary measures are taken to ensure that public schools are truly free, thus eliminating the expenses that families spend on education.

9. Daycare/preschool education: The dissemination of daycare/pre-school education (both for the pedagogical development of children and for the liberation of those who cannot work because they have to take care of their children at home) will be a crucial step.

10. Increasing strength against crises: In addition to the ongoing pandemic, it is obvious that we are facing many other risks such as climate change and earthquakes. Among these, it should not be overlooked that the climate crisis is still ongoing, that we are already exposed to its sudden and slowly developing effects, and that it has caused us to go through simultaneous crises combined with the pandemic. Due to the climate crisis, increasing in number, severity and range, extreme heat/heat waves, extreme weather events, wildfires, floods, drought, food and water crisis threaten disadvantaged groups in particular.

Roma, who face problems in many issues such as housing, heating, access to clean and healthy water will suffer the most from the climate crisis like other disadvantaged groups with limited adaptation capacity. It is therefore critical to ensure that Roma are protected from the devastating effects of the climate crisis, both during the pandemic and in the future. Apart from this, a large part of Turkey is in the earthquake zone; earthquakes also threaten the Roma, as they do all disadvantaged groups with adverse housing conditions, living in places with poor infrastructure and unable to escape the social and economic problems that arise in connection with disasters. For this reason, it is necessary to analyze the vulnerability of Roma in the face of risks such as climate crisis, earthquake and ongoing disasters, and to include actions towards Roma in Climate Action Plans and Earthquake Action Plans based on the comprehensive data collected. It is also possible to mention here another risk that concerns the Roma. Measures/adaptation steps taken in the face of crises such as climate change and earthquakes can work against disadvantaged groups. For example, green infrastructure applications or urban transformation projects in cities have led to the displacement of many disadvantaged groups, especially the poor. Urban transformation projects presented as a precaution against earthquake risk may result in the displacement of Roma as implemented. For this reason, it is critical to ensure participation in projects related to climate adaptation actions and earthquake risk in a way that takes into account the situation of the Roma, to take part in the preparation processes of these studies at local and national levels, and to design and implement actions and policies in a way that addresses the disadvantaged situation of the Roma.

11. Cooperation with CSOs and local administrations: In recent years, the fight against discrimination experienced by Roma has slowed down. Central and local governments should accelerate the fight against the ongoing exclusive attitude towards Roma in every field and should cooperate with CSOs on this issue. At the same time, it is important for local governments to include targets and actions aimed at improving the living, educational, economic and health conditions of the Roma under a separate heading in their strategic plans. However, the objectives and actions of local governments under the headings of disaster management and social assistance – as for other disadvantaged groups – should take into account the conditions and needs of the Roma. CSOs taking part in the achievement of these goals, working jointly with Roma rights advocate CSOs, will contribute to the process. Thus, locally organized collaborations and solidarity between CSOs and local governments will be a driving force from the bottom up for the policies that need to be established at the regional and national level.

12. Local participation mechanisms: In general, ensuring participation in political decision-making mechanisms has an important place in eliminating the vulnerabilities of disadvantaged groups. One of the findings of the field research is that the Roma think that their representation in the current political processes and structures at different scales is inadequate and limited. During the fieldwork, there were frequent complaints in many neighborhoods that "no one listens to them", "but that someone is stopping by the neighborhood at election time". The inclusion of Roma in political decision-making processes based on the principle of participation is critical for improving living conditions in general, eliminating the social and economic injustices they face, as well as for them to be less affected in times of pandemics and similar crises. In this way, they will be able to express directly and continuously the ongoing and emerging demands, needs and conditions both in general and in moments of crisis. Being partners in the formation of actions and policies aimed at solving problems will make the solutions more effective; it will lead to greater adoption by the Roma of policies and practices created together. Although Roma associations have collaborations with local governments and the central government within the scope of different projects, increasing the number of these collaborations, expanding their scope and ensuring their continuity is undoubtedly necessary in order to ensure political justice. However, beyond this, it is of critical importance to spread the principle of participation to the base and make it permanent in order to eliminate the effects of the current crisis and to take measures against new crises. This may be possible with mechanisms that can be used at the local level. City Councils can be considered as one of these mechanisms on a local scale. Roma Working Groups, in which the Roma directly participate in the City Councils to be formed within the City Councils working in coordination with the municipalities, will contribute to the permanent relations and cooperation with local administrations in an institutional process. The implementation of Neighborhood Assemblies in places where Roma live will similarly be an important element of the process of local political participation.

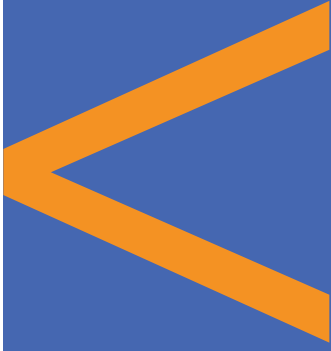
In closing, we would like to emphasize the importance of building all these policies and actions on principles such as transparency and participation, as well as the concept of intersectionality, based on the findings we have discussed in this report. Intersectionality can be considered in two dimensions. First, as seen in the field research and as underlined in the

report, the Roma do not have a monolithic structure. Among the Roma, there are different groups with higher vulnerabilities, such as women, children, people with disabilities, etc. In other words, ethnic identity, which is the main source of discrimination and inequality for Roma in the current situation, intersects with categories such as gender, disability, class and gender orientation, which are the source of discrimination, injustice and inequalities in society in general. As a result of this intersectionality, especially in times of crisis such as the pandemic, those who belong to more than one disadvantaged category experience more negativity. In other words, when gender inequality is added to the intertwined issues of Roma ethnic identity and poverty, Roma women are more negatively affected by the pandemic, as seen in the field research. Second, it is also possible to talk about intersectionality between the issues on which Roma experience injustice and inequality. Issues and problems in different areas such as housing, health, education and poverty are related to each other, feeding each other and causing them to be reproduced. For example, the problem of housing and health that Roma are experiencing, or the relationship between poverty and education issues and problems, discussed in more detail above. In crises such as the pandemic, whose effects are felt directly in many areas of life, the intersection between issues and problems becomes even more evident. For this reason, carrying out both the creation and implementation processes of policies, actions and projects for Roma by taking into account different intersections will produce more effective and equitable results. Another element that needs to be underlined about a holistic approach based on the idea of intersectionality is the need for policies and actions towards Roma to be implemented, together and simultaneously by actors at different scales (national, regional, local) such as the Ministry of Family and Social Services, the Ministry of Labor and Social Security, relevant government units, local governments, CSOs working on different issues and fields, opinion leaders.

ANNEX-1

Adriatik Hasantari	<i>ERGO Network</i>
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Burçay Erus	<i>Boğaziçi University</i>
Cemre Artan Koç	<i>Ministry of Foreign Affairs EU Directorate</i>
Demet Özkan Baltat	<i>Ministry of Foreign Affairs EU Directorate</i>
Didem Evci Kiraz	<i>Adnan Menderes University</i>
Elif Ekmekçi	<i>TOBB ETÜ Medical Faculty</i>
Eser Canalıoğlu	<i>EU Delegation to Turkey</i>
Ezgi Akbaş	<i>UN Woman Agency Ankara Office</i>
Gabriela Hrabanova	<i>ERGO Network</i>
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Hande Sart	<i>Boğaziçi University</i>
İtir Akdoğan	<i>TESEV</i>
Kumru Döne	<i>Ministry of Health</i>
Lida Kita	<i>European Training Foundation</i>
Melahat Güray	<i>EU Delegation to Turkey</i>
İsmet Koç	<i>Hacettepe University</i>
Defne Acar	<i>European Council Ankara</i>
Ertan Aksoy	<i>SODEV Chairman</i>
Fatma Zehra	<i>Ministry of National Education</i>
Günel Kurşun	<i>Human Rights Association</i>
Mehmet Caner Demir	<i>EU Delegation to Turkey</i>
Özge Berber Ağataş	<i>International Labor Organization</i>
Sema Kılıçer	<i>EU Delegation to Turkey</i>
Songül Koçer	<i>Ministry of National Education</i>
Tuba Burcu Şenel	<i>International Labor Organization</i>
Ulaş Bayraktar	<i>Kültürhane</i>
Yıldız Tar	<i>Kaos GL</i>





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