

Coping with residential segregation in Romania's housing policy

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This project aims to encourage the public debate concerning ethnic segregation of the Roma population in Romania, by generating research data and by submitting them for public debates and policy-making.

Project fieldwork

In the first part of the project, from January to July 2006, I have visited three locations in which local authorities have built housing projects for Roma citizens: Dorohoi, Piatra Neamt and Roman. Piatra Neamt and Roman have also been included in my previous IPF fellowship as case studies, and therefore I could trace the evolution of the situation. The Dorohoi housing project is more recent, and I have visited the residents immediately after their relocation.

In the second part of the project, from July to December 2006, I visited housing projects in Radauti (Suceava district), the Roma community of Mimi-Ploiesti where a land allocation initiative was under way, and I have re-visited Dorohoi.

During field visits I realized several filmed interviews with residents and local authorities, interviews which will be used to realize several short films to illustrate the issue of residential segregation.

Connected research

During the previous year I used the opportunities related to other research projects in which I participated to *further the study of ethnic segregation in Romania along various lines of inquiry*. Several such projects are:

- 1) The Roma Inclusion Barometer, Open Society Foundation, Romania. I participated in the questionnaire design and in data analysis. The report has already been published (with Romanian and English language versions) and presented in a public conference by OSF in Bucharest.
- 2) The Task Force on Housing of the Open Society Foundation, Romania – where I participate together with Mariana Celac, Catalin Berescu, and Dan Adrian Nicolae in the elaboration of a report on housing in extremely poor communities.
- 3) The Research Department of the Technical Assistance for the Phare Project RO 2004/016-772.01.01.01 regarding the improvement of the Roma situation and public perception. As a local consultant I participate in the design of a comparative community study that will include, among others, information on Roma ethnical segregation and its consequences for quality of life, equal opportunities, social interaction with non-Roma, policy-making at local level etc.

Public presentation of research data

I have conducted other discussions on the topic of segregation with the following authorities and experts on Roma segregation:

- Mariea Ionescu, President, National Agency for the Roma
- Rita Toma, Expert, Ministry of Housing, Public Works and Transportation
- Constantin Cojocariu, European Roma Rights Centre
- Catalin Berescu, architect, who has designed the housing project in Dorohoi and who has coordinated a research on the topic of Roma housing together with Mariana Celac.

Research reports, photos and links to other research projects regarding segregation are available on the site www.basic.ro/romahousing. This site is meant to be a resource for the activists, mediators, researchers, and authorities etc which are confronting segregated Roma neighborhoods in their activities.