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## **Housing, urban planning and poverty: problems faced by Roma/Gypsy communities with particular reference to central and eastern Europe**

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### **INTRODUCTION**

**Points of departure.** This assignment results from Secretariat Memorandum MG-S-ROM (98) 11: Problems arising for Roma/Gypsies in the area of housing and town planning that was prepared based on decisions by the Specialist Group on Roma/Gypsies, adopted at its fifth meeting (March 5-6, 1998). The Secretariat Memorandum was discussed at the Group meeting held September 28-October 1, 1998 in Prague<sup>1</sup>. This document, and the ensuing discussion, presented the state of Roma housing in Europe, primarily in Central and Eastern Europe. The report from the study visit to the Lunik IX district of Kosice (Slovak Republic)<sup>2</sup> and the report from the study visit to the Valdemingomez area (Madrid)<sup>3</sup> were also discussed.

The findings on Roma housing and settlements presented in the Secretariat Memorandum are briefly the following:

- The Roma are living in extremely poor housing conditions which form an important component of their wider socio-economic deprivation;
- The social housing stock has decreased in many countries of Central and Eastern Europe; the Roma have become impoverished under the impact of transition and are less and less able to join the private housing market;
- The Roma live in several types of poor residential environments including: rundown old housing stock in central areas of cities, rundown areas of social housing on the periphery of cities, shanty towns on the periphery of cities;
- Poor housing is often inadequately equipped with infrastructures that are considered normal in other places in Europe, such as water supply, sanitation, paved streets, drains, electricity;
- There is also a problem of houses built without permits that turn into the problem of "illegal" areas; and the additional problem that many Roma do not have permits allowing them to live where they actually reside;
- The effect of this is that Roma housing zones are considered bad and the non-Roma population moves out of them, resulting in social segregation and further marginalization of their inhabitants;
- Anti-Gypsy discrimination has a significant role in preventing improvement of the Roma's housing situation;
- Authorities often do not know how to treat Roma districts and housing, believing that creating a ghetto through the concentration of Roma, or building low quality housing specially for Roma can be solutions.

The above findings and the questions raised in the Memorandum were the starting point for the assignment whose final text is before you. In it I have tried to respond to the problem as outlined in the Secretariat Memorandum, and to other new questions that provide additional information regarding the matter of Roma housing and settlements.

**The subject of this report.** The question of *Roma housing* has started to see the light of day. One or two decades ago the main inspiration for discussing Roma problems came primarily from the field of human rights, social relations, the problem of discrimination, segregation and intolerance, culture and language, while questions regarding welfare, or everyday life were only touched upon.

Unlike that time, the scope of today's topics is much broader<sup>4</sup>. Within vital areas such as health, the family, or a role of the woman, etc., questions are increasingly being raised today about housing, infrastructures, communal hygiene, settlements, the cities in which the Roma live, their rights and possibilities in an urban environment, their participation in urban and settlement processes and activities, etc<sup>5</sup>. The second part of the Secretariat Memorandum raises several questions about Roma housing that indicate a rise in interest in this subject. These questions are as follows:

- What are the paths to common living among the Roma and non-Roma in socially deprived districts?
- How widespread is discrimination against the Roma regarding housing?
- What is the role of social housing and what are the possibilities of bringing the Roma into private housing?
- To what extent can and should housing be adapted to the Roma's special housing culture?
- To what extent should the question of housing be resolved within comprehensive community development<sup>6</sup>?

Roma settlements and housing are written about most often from the ethnographic and sociological framework<sup>7</sup>. Roma apartments and housing, and their living environment, with a few rare exceptions, have not been examined through the prism of engineering disciplines - architecture and civil engineering above all - let alone from the viewpoint of town planning, or broader community development planning. We are not able to fill such a void at this time, but we can open up topics, raise questions or make some hypotheses.

This report presents the Roma housing in a sedentary lifestyle. Travellers are not covered by the report<sup>8</sup>. This text will primarily consider the question of the housing and settlements of poor Roma since they have the worst problems. Although MG-S-ROM (98) 11 does not limit the assignment on Roma housing solely to the housing and settlements of the poor, it is nonetheless clear from the entire Secretariat Memorandum that this is the principal concern. This text covers the problem of Roma housing and settlements primarily in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, and only in a few cases touches on the situation in Western Europe. The reason for this orientation is that in the past decade these countries have gone through social changes that are reflected in the living conditions of the Roma who live there.

Briefly stated, *housing* in this report will comprise *adequate shelter* (flats and houses/ apartment houses), *outdoor infrastructures* (water, sanitation, electricity, streets, etc.), *external housing space* (garden, yards, open space, recreational and green space) and *adequate inputs* (land, finance, organization, permissions)<sup>9</sup>. The apartment, in which Roma families live are grouped into several spatial units creating a *living environment* for smaller and larger social groups, more or less complex local communities. The main types of Roma living environments are *apartment buildings* (together with non-Roma families or without them), *city blocks*<sup>10</sup>, *district/ mahalas*<sup>11</sup>, and finally, the *Roma settlement*<sup>12</sup> inhabited solely by Roma.

***The intention of this report.*** This text will deal with Roma *housing today* and particular forms of *living environment*. The second part of the text will speak of different strategic approaches that are used in solving problems and difficulties that exist in this area. This section will also present newer approaches to the problem of Roma housing, those that are just taking shape today and might become the pillars of successful practice in the near future<sup>13</sup>. In the process, we will always bear in mind that the field of housing involves not only organizational, administrative, technical and economic matters, but deeply human matters as well, which are part of universal human rights<sup>14</sup>.

***Reference sources for the text.*** This text was written using secondary sources consisting of professional literature, and other sources - newspapers, journals, newsletters, etc., that offered credible data on phenomena and processes related to Roma housing and settlements. Reports compiled by experts for the work of MG-S-ROM hold an important place in this regard. These include reports from fact-finding missions, and previous issues of the Newsletter - *Activities on Roma/Gypsies*. Special attention is also given to publications from several international NGOs: *Project on Ethnic Relations*, *European Roma Rights Centre*, *Minority Rights Group International* and *SPOLU*. Material and publications from several NGOs were used: *Romani CRISS* (Romania), *Autonomia*

(Hungary) and from the Yugoslav *Society for the Improvement of Local Roma Communities*. The work also uses literature that describes the state of Roma communities in different countries in the manner of a monograph. This literature sometimes consists of government reports - such as the reports from the Czech Republic and Slovak Republic, and sometimes books, such as Tomasevic and Djuric's book *Gypsies of the World*<sup>15</sup>.

A special part of the reference material includes different documents, recommendations and best practice collections published by the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (HABITAT). Most of this literature deals with recommendations for strategies to improve the situation in the housing/shelter sector. An important part of these recommendations comes from the *Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000*, which was adopted by the General Assembly in 1988 under Resolution 43/181. Regarding settlement/housing/shelter problems, the *Istanbul Declaration on Human Settlements* is of special importance, published within the framework of the *Habitat Agenda* and adopted at the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) in Istanbul, Turkey, from June 3-14, 1996. *Adequate Shelter for All* and *Sustainable Human Settlements Development* are also from this conference. They should be seen as guides to solving the problem of settlements and housing in the next several decades.

Finally, it should be mentioned that I also used my field records from visits to Roma settlements within the framework of meetings where the problem of Roma housing was discussed. These were Vlasina (Yugoslavia) organized by SILRC, Pardubice (Czech Republic) organized by CLRAE, and the sixth meeting of MG-S-ROM in Prague (Czech Republic), and the visit to three Roma localities in Bucharest (Romani CRISS) within the framework of working on this assignment. I would like to express my gratitude to Mr. Nicolae Gheorghe for his assistance during my visit to Bucharest on 8 December 1998.

## **I. THE PROBLEM: POOR SETTLEMENTS AND HOUSING**

### POVERTY AND HOUSING

*The greatest problems* that the Roma have with housing spring from their poverty. Regardless of whether we are talking about the lack of a building permit, or the lack of the technically operating structural components of a building, or insufficient living space, we must always return to poverty as the basic cause of their inadequate housing situation and unsustainable housing. We will see that it is not just a simple lack of money, rather it is a complex phenomenon that appears in different intensities.

*The definition of poverty* we advocate here is that poverty consists of multiple deficiency in key spheres of life (food, employment, education, health, housing, social promotion, etc.) that are below the average possibilities of a community. This is a *relativistic approach* that sees poverty within the context of a specific socio-economic environment. "Individuals, families and population groups live in poverty if they do not have the means to buy the kind of food, participate in the activities and live in conditions with the facilities that are normal, or at least broadly accepted and approved, in the societies to which they belong... The norm as regards the nation is founded on relative poverty in terms of the conventions of a specific society."<sup>16</sup>

*The vicious circle of poverty* arises when separate forms of deprivation are linked together and form first a *circular flow* and then are transformed into a *spiral of poverty*. Handed down from generation to generation, it leaves behind a special cultural pattern and quite specific culture of poverty<sup>17</sup>. Poor Roma and their community are in just such a whirlpool of deprivation with increasing negative contents<sup>18</sup>. Different forms of deprivation lead to different patterns of vicious circles. One of the patterns that is found not infrequently in impoverished Roma settlements started with the lack of education, qualifications and skills; this leads to difficulties in finding and difficulties with regular financial income; the result is difficulties in permanently satisfying housing needs, which together with the previous factors creates an environment where skills and education are neglected even more... and taken all together this leads to even worse exclusion from economic flows in society. Thus one circle of

poverty is closed and another open. In this case, we clearly have a close relationship between the three key segments of life: education, employment and housing<sup>19</sup>. In terms of seriousness or intensity, poverty extends from life that is somewhat below the poverty line to the worst poverty that is at the very bottom of the means of survival, to those that are called *food-poor*<sup>20</sup>.

***Prejudice is an aggravating factor*** that has accompanied the Roma since they first arrived in Europe. There are particularly serious prejudices that speak of the Roma's own role in their poverty and destitution, in forming their impoverished housing. Prejudices that the Roma themselves are to blame for their position often end with the view that these people should not be helped or given any chances. Furthermore, this view can be turned into a distorted competition about whose poverty is worse, along the lines of "we have our own poor, the dominant society's poor, who should be helped first and funds should not be spent on those others, who are not ours".

***The lack of permanent income*** is directly reflected on the usability, comfort, appearance and safety of apartments and settlements in which the poor Roma live. Thus, the spiral of poverty leaves visible traces on apartments and settlements, too. The *Chanov* community<sup>21</sup> in the city of Most (Czech Republic), and the *Cartierul Zabrantii* community in Bucharest<sup>22</sup> are two examples in which the link between unemployment, lack of regular income and devastated living environment has led to painful housing poverty. Around 95% of the people in Chanov are unemployed, while even more, around 98%, are unemployed in Cartierul Zabrantii.

***Poverty gives rise to a lack of motivation*** to do anything with one's living quarters except to patch them up from time to time. The lack of motivation is one of the natural products of the culture of poverty<sup>23</sup>. It is closely connected to constant doubts about one's power to do anything more to improve the difficult times. The lack of motivation is reflected in all phases of the renovation process, particularly in which decisions are made. "I have never seen Gypsies involving themselves in the decision-making process. Other people are always making decisions for them"<sup>24</sup>.

***The decline in the quality of the settlement and housing*** in it is clearly visible in most impoverished environments. As time passes in a poor house, it gradually becomes ruined, the installations, if there are any, decay, garbage piles up in yards and in the settlement, and the general neglect and pollution increases. This is all quite different from the average settlement in which the building fund is maintained at some sort of initial level, or even higher, and from more affluent areas in which there is visible improvement and maintenance of physical structures. While average affluent and richer neighborhoods have a process of environmental evolution, the poorer settlements have the opposite effect - a course of involution arises. Even when efforts are made to repair the environment, to adapt it somehow to material conditions and their possibilities, there is no improvement rather a certain regression. New construction is often worse than the original, tainted by lack of skill, with less money and material and more improvisation. This is visible in all types of poor Roma settlements, both slums and high-rise apartments. Just as with the circles of poverty when greater poverty covers the older and lesser poverty, in the settlement environment itself a greater patch is placed over the older and smaller one<sup>25</sup>. This all creates one big patch that often resembles the poor Roma settlement or a group of houses where the Roma live.

***Difficulties of middle class and affluent Roma.*** In most countries the Roma community is not at all homogenous in terms of property. On the contrary, it is comprised of several levels. In general it can be said that the Roma population that settled earlier and has become integrated in the economic and social system of the country, that has its place in society and has become somewhat assimilated, belongs to the middle and upper class<sup>26</sup>. In certain cases, the middle class and affluent Roma have social, legal, ownership, financial and technical problems with their housing and settlements or with the authorities and their neighbors. However, these problems are part of the difficulties recognized by other, non-Roma parts of the population. Such difficulties, put simply, are individual and not part of a series. Even when there are more of them, they do not form a vicious circle of poverty. The spiral of poverty is the difference that divides the united Roma world in two.

## GROUPS OF POOR ROMA POPULATION

Today in different European countries it is possible to distinguish between several types of poor Roma populations, several *group types*. The division given here is probably not exhaustive or completely accurate, but clear enough to enable a better understanding of the housing and living environment problem. In other words, any interpretation of housing must be based on an interpretation of the relationship between the population and spatial structures, since such close links exist in reality. The groups are: *old urban population*, *foreign worker population*, *proletarianized Roma*, *pauperized Roma*, and finally *newly urbanised population*<sup>27</sup>.

**The old urban population** consists of members of the Roma and Sinti population whose ancestors settled in towns in the last century or even earlier. Like the dominant population, they have established urban habits, sometimes even relatively stable employment or a bearable property status; nonetheless they have a somewhat lower property status. This population is stable. Part of it is assimilated. Austria<sup>28</sup>, Germany<sup>29</sup>, Italy<sup>30</sup>, and France<sup>31</sup>, are examples of countries with members of this group. Spatially viewed, this population is mixed with the other inhabitants. Old urban Roma populations form separate settlements - mahalas - in cities in the Balkan region and in some East European countries.

**The foreign worker Roma population** arriving from the countries of Eastern Europe, including a considerable share of Roma from Yugoslavia, is a special class found in most of the above-mentioned countries. Foreign workers have completely different aspirations from the Roma and Sinti who have been living in their countries for centuries. Foreign workers are there to earn money and then return home, to the land from which they set out. Many do not fulfill their dreams either in terms of money or returning home. But one thing is certain: many of the Roma families invest the money they earned in Germany, Italy, Austria or elsewhere to improve their housing in their homeland. Therein lies the duality of these people's position: where they work they are poor in terms of earnings, where they live and the jobs they do. When they return home they become an affluent class envied by others<sup>32</sup>.

**Proletarianized Roma** are the third type of population clearly recognized in the populations of Eastern Europe. These people were included in the working and social processes of their countries while there were socialist regimes<sup>33</sup>. Some of the changes - the disappearance of assured factory work, the disappearance of prepaid rent, electricity and communal fees, the disappearance of a regular income, the disappearance of assured, free housing maintenance, etc., have currently left the Roma who were part of socialistic industrialization and the collective system of social welfare not only without financial assurance, but also without any serious economic and social prospects. With the collapse of the old system these Roma lost their social role, found themselves in the street and suddenly became poor. The Roma workers from Lunik IX<sup>34</sup> are an example of this.

**Pauperized Roma** comprise a special class in some Eastern European countries where society is undergoing a clearly visible process of decline. This is primarily the result of refusing a democratic orientation, as well as a lack of resourcefulness in overcoming the outmoded model of a socialistic economy and an unwillingness to shift to a market economy model. A great deal of the population in these countries has been affected by impoverishment, including a considerable number of the former middle class<sup>35</sup>, and an enormous number of urban Roma have been incontrovertibly exposed to pauperization and lack of perspective.

**The newly urbanised population** consists of a special group within the Roma population of a country. They have relatively recently, a decade or so ago, moved from a rural area to an urban environment. Driven from their rural environment by a life with no perspectives, they most often find no better perspectives in town. They and their children are in for a difficult period of adapting to new and completely unknown conditions. Unskilled at handling city life, without know-how and working abilities that can earn money, they are fated to merely surviving.

*Migrant workers* comprise a special part of this population: they have left their families in rural areas and will try to support them by working in the city. Many immigrant families or single migrant workers build hovels in slums

on the edge of town. An example is the Mali Leskovac mahala (Belgrade) built by emigrants from Kosovo in the 1980s<sup>36</sup>.

## ROMA LIVING ENVIRONMENT

**The typology of Roma living environments** is determined by their morphological characteristics and the communities that settle them. The previous section gave a review of several groups within the Roma population and this section will present the main types of Roma living environments that will be simultaneously connected with their position in the town.

**The morphological characteristics** of the living environment - the street type and street network, the shapes and types of blocks they form, plots within the blocks, types of buildings, the number of floors and apartments within them, the building material used, whether or not there is an infrastructure, etc., as well as the age, the degeneration level of the building and infrastructure, whether there is any greenery and its state, etc. - are some of the most important characteristics of the settlement or its individual parts, districts. The question of morphology is a key point in selecting the settlement's treatment, in deciding whether it will be torn down, repaired or rebuilt.

**The location of the Roma living environment** in the settlement is one of the elements that not only speaks of history, or some social relations in society, but is at the same time one of the important factors in possible processes to improve space. When they were formed, most Roma living environments had, roughly speaking, the same location with regard to the town or village - that is a *peripheral location*<sup>37</sup>. There is considerable agreement with the fact that Roma settlements were given the worst land, in addition to a peripheral location<sup>38</sup>. Later development of the dominant society's settlement overruns the Roma settlement with its fabric. The periphery shifts towards the outer open area, and the former separate Roma settlement becomes an enclave - part of the city inhabited by Roma that is surrounded by the dominant population. This course of development has resulted in the situation where a Roma living environment can be found in the *very centre* of a city. In addition, they can be found in the *middle city ring*, and certainly very often on the *periphery*.

**Population groups and type of living environment.** The Roma living environments we are concerned with are shown in the following table. Each of the types is actually just a physical answer to Roma group, as well as an answer to the place, the location, it holds in the city.

**Table 1: Survey of Roma groups, the position of Roma living environments in the city and the type of living environment**

| Group                      | City centre and space between it and periphery   | City periphery and urban-rural fringe   |
|----------------------------|--|---|
| Old urban population       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Urban Roma mahala</li> <li>· Scattered poor housing</li> <li>· Lodgings from necessity</li> </ul> | Usually not located here  |
| Foreign working population | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Scattered poor housing</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Periphery slums</li> <li>· New ghetto</li> </ul> |
| Proletarianized population | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Scattered poor housing</li> <li>· Devastated apartment blocks</li> </ul>                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Devastated apartment blocks</li> </ul>           |
| Pauperized population      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Urban Roma mahala</li> <li>· Scattered poor housing</li> <li>· Lodgings from necessity</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Periphery slums</li> </ul>                       |

Newly urbanised population · Temporary slums in the centre · Periphery slums · New ghetto

## TYPES OF ROMA LIVING ENVIRONMENTS

**Urban Roma mahalas** are enclaves located in the constructed fabric of Balkan towns and cities and as a rule date from the last century. The origin of these areas can be found in the organization of urban space and life during the time of Turkish administration in this part of the Balkans which was based on the mahala as the basic unit. The mahalas of the towns at that time were organized on a religious and ethnic basis<sup>39</sup>. As towns developed in the last century, became modernized, these divisions were lost and all that was preserved were the Roma mahalas - *ciganmaala*. In other parts of Europe there were also areas in which the Roma lived in special neighborhoods. These were the “gitanerica” in Spain<sup>40</sup>. The Roma communities that live in the mahalas of Balkan towns today are highly urbanized, regardless of their material or social status. These are people who have lived in an urban framework for generations; they work at city jobs, regardless of how marginalized, and have living habits connected to the city. The mahalas in today’s Yugoslavia can have from several hundred to several thousand inhabitants<sup>41</sup>. In Bulgaria there are even larger settlements that can have more than 15-20,000 inhabitants. The same is true of Skopje in Macedonia<sup>42</sup>. The physical appearance of these parts is an old street network filled with old ground-floor buildings that have only been partially renovated, without modern installations, often without sanitation. The city blocks and the plots are established. The houses are often made of unbaked brick and have a small surface area. Life in central city enclaves is linked to devastated building funds. Buildings that have not been maintained are often in streets without a water supply and sanitation since, in spite of their central location, such public works have not reached them yet. The material and financial value of such a building stock is small, although its good position in the city increases it somewhat<sup>43</sup>. For many long years such city neighborhoods were a reserve area for internal city development through considerable reconstruction that regularly presented a threat to the impoverished Roma population that they would be relocated<sup>44</sup>.

**Temporary slums in the centre** are the second category of settlements that can be found in central city zones. These are settlements made of the worst kind of shelter that their inhabitants have built for one or two seasons and intend to abandon whenever the city authorities force them to. Sometimes it is possible to postpone this for decades<sup>45</sup>. The retention of both types of enclaves in the city center is due to large developers’ lack of interest in building on the plots occupied by Roma. As with other poor neighborhoods, these are also threatened by relocation the moment the thought occurs to clear the land and undertake new construction.

**Scattered poor housing**, which includes the housing of Roma families is a special morphological type. Roma apartments and houses in this case are not concentrated in one place, on one street or block, but are distributed throughout a large part of the territory and mixed with other houses and apartments, sometimes poor and sometimes not. This mixture is found most often in the old city fabric that has not been renovated for several decades but rather has been allowed to gradually decline<sup>46</sup>, such as in the centre of Kosice (Slovak Republic). There is a similar situation in the old fabric of cities in Serbia called the *partaja* that are primarily inhabited by urban poor, including the Roma<sup>47</sup>. Roma in old city housing that has become delapidated over time live in the worst places such as auxiliary buildings in central blocks, basements, attics, and abandoned worn-out buildings<sup>48</sup>.

**The periphery slum** is a settlement in which the social and environmental situation is so bad that it has a negative influence on the health, social and psychological state of the inhabitants. This is an impoverished settlement<sup>49</sup>. In social and economic terms the slum is homogenous. Its population is uneducated, unskilled, qualified only for marginalized jobs that often border on semi-legal activities. The inhabitants are excluded or poorly integrated into the local and global society. The houses are most often very small, primarily built of the worst, non-construction and waste material. It is hard to recognize yards in them, although it can be seen that the open space in front of or around houses belongs to this or that household. The settlement does not have municipal installations, there is no

street network, and their approaches are not even paths at times. Slums often arise as improvised temporary shelter located on inconspicuous and sometimes poor places, but over time they turn into permanent settlements. The illegal construction of slums is motivated by the existence of abandoned land. The peripheral position is often linked to a difficult environmental situation. Spontaneously arising Roma settlements on the edge of city dumps, fire sites, bordering on industrial belts, on the edge of open mines, in warehouse zones, large parking lots, container depots, etc., are without exception exposed to environmental risk. The entire area can be covered with garbage and waste giving the overall atmosphere of not only extreme disorder and lack of maintenance, but also unhygienic living conditions. The neighbouring areas usually have a negative attitude towards such settlements.

**Newly built ghetto settlements** are those financed by the municipality administration or other institution within the framework of some city housing development programme<sup>50</sup> or solving some social housing problem<sup>51</sup>. These are legal settlements or groups of houses. They are substandard settlements that, like the slums, are often built on the edge of cities. Sometimes these settlements are of a temporary nature like those on the periphery of Turin (Italy) created by the authorities in the 1970-80s in order to “prevent the Gypsies from settling all over the city”. The Paolo Veroneze area was settled by the Sinti coming from Lombardy and Piedmont, and the Strada Druento settlement by Roma from Yugoslavia<sup>52</sup>. These settlements created on the very edge of the city and left to themselves afterwards, do not differ much in their final appearance regardless of their origin. Container settlements, just like temporary ones, very quickly turn into real slums, as happened with the containers in Snakova<sup>53</sup>. Most of these settlements, particularly in large urban environments where distances are considerable, are destined to a lonely life without any contact with the world. The lack of public city transport, its distant location or infrequent schedule, just a few times a day, are a difficult problem<sup>54</sup>.

**Lodgings from necessity** are a category that in the physical sense includes very different buildings. In *Cartierul Zabrantii* (Bucharest) these rudimentary lodgings<sup>55</sup> consist of extremely small housing units located in multistorey buildings. Judging by the functional characteristics and small surface area of the housing units, these were previously *lodgings for single people*. Lodgings from necessity can also be abandoned *barracks* that used to house workers during large construction undertakings, such as the barracks that were later called *Korea* (New Belgrade, Yugoslavia) where the most destitute Roma families lived. One more example of lodgings from necessity comes from Szekesfehervar (Hungary)<sup>56</sup>. In the past, city authorities allotted one-room apartments in a former *workers' shelter* at Radio Street 11 as “temporary” lodgings for poor families. In some cases, this type of housing can include houses from nearby villages purchased by city authorities at a low price to solve the problem of the poor.

**Devastated apartment blocks** are large settlements that arose in the period of socialist industrialization in some Central and Eastern European countries; during the transition period they gradually declined along with the impoverishment of their tenants. These settlements consist of freestanding multistorey buildings sometimes with a dozen floors that might have up to 100 apartments. These freestanding buildings of the high-rise or “horizontal block” type, with services such as a supply centre, school or day care, with a street network and large open spaces with some sports fields and playgrounds, formed a familiar picture of new residential areas intended for mass housing. Most of these areas have from one or two thousand inhabitants to five or ten thousand. Roma families moved to such areas owing to employment in state and socially-owned enterprises and factories, bringing the Roma into the same order as all other citizens. The Roma from Lunik IX<sup>57</sup>, Kosice, moved into the same spatial milieu as other non-Roma. In the city of Most the entire district of Chanov<sup>58</sup> was settled by Roma who were miners in the local mine. This approach had its origin in the USSR where it was used in particular after the 1950s when nomadic traditions were prohibited and seemed to have a positive reaction from the Roma there, at least those who had the role of officials<sup>59</sup>.

## ROMA APARTMENTS AND THEIR FACILITIES

Roma families in Europe use **different types of apartments** today. The apartments differ not only by sector (social, private, Roma), funds used to build them (proprietary, bank loan, special funds), and the organization that

built them (city, private, family or group of tenants) but also by their architectural features. There is quite a strong link between different architectural forms in which the Roma live and other characteristics of the apartment. Roma live in apartments that were professionally built in large residential buildings, in containers, in trailers, in houses on wheels, in shanties in unhygienic settlements, in devastated and abandoned buildings of the old city fabric, in dark basements and draughty attics, in humid dugouts, on unsafe river rafts.

*The housing conditions in which the Roma live* compared to some other situations are shown in the following table 2. The upper part presents *global shelter conditions* for five different income levels - from the lowest to the highest. The lower part of the table 2 presents three situations in three Roma living environments. The first is a settlement made of apartment blocks - the Chanov District, the second is a slum type of enclave - Veliki Rit, and the third is a traditional Roma mahala - Orlovsko Naselje.

**Table 2: Global shelter conditions and conditions in three Romany settlements**

|                                       | Floor areas<br>per person<br>(sq. meters) | Dwellings<br>with water<br>to plot (%) | Illegal<br>housing<br>stock (%) | House price<br>to annual<br>income ratio | Rent as %<br>of income        | Dwellings<br>owned by<br>occupants<br>(%) |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|---------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|---|
| Low-income<br>countries               | 6.1                                       | 56                                     | 64                              | 4.8                                      | 15                            | 33  |
| Low-middle<br>income<br>countries     | 15.1                                      | 74                                     | 36                              | 4.2                                      | 16                            | 52  |
| Mid-income<br>countries               | 22.0                                      | 94                                     | 20                              | 5.0                                      | 21                            | 59  |
| Mid-high<br>income<br>countries       | 22.0                                      | 99                                     | 3                               | 4.1                                      | 11                            | 55  |
| High income<br>countries              | 35.0                                      | 100                                    | 0                               | 4.0                                      | 15                            | 51  |
| Source: UNCHS, 1997b: UNCHS 1995, pp. |   |  |                                 |  |                               |   |
| Chanov<br>district<br>(Czech Rep)     | 6.0 - 8.0                                 | 50%<br>functions                       | 0                               | ?  | tenants<br>do not pay<br>rent | 0   |
| Veliki Rit<br>(Yugoslavia)            | 4.8                                       | 13                                     | 100                             | ?  | 30                            | 80  |
| Orlovsko<br>Naselje<br>(Yugoslavia)   | 10.0                                      | 49                                     | 48                              | 5.3                                      | 23                            | 31  |

Source: field investigations in Orlovko Naselje 1994; field visit to Veliki Rit 1997; field visit to Chanov 1998

This table indicates that the Roma housing situation is somewhere near or under the housing situation in low-income countries. There is evidence from different researchers that confirms that the housing of the poor Roma is worse than the most destitute among the dominant society. The housing space used by the Roma is often smaller

than the smallest space in structures that are sometimes dugouts, as in Poland, or caves as in Spain<sup>60</sup>. A comparative research<sup>61</sup> of the situation in poor Roma settlements and poor settlements of the dominant population in Belgrade<sup>62</sup> indicates that the latter are on average of a quality that is half again better than the former. Let us see two of different accommodation types.

**The flat in an apartment block** is the first type that will be described. In some of the countries in which there was real socialism, a considerable number of Roma families were settled in residential blocks with a large number of apartments. These buildings were constructed using several systems including the skeleton system, large-panel system and massive construction in brick. The *Chanov District*, city of Most (Czech Republic) is an example of the skeleton system and has nine buildings; the large-panel system was used to build seven buildings in *Cartierul Zabrantii* (Bucharest); and the classical massive system of brick walls was used to build a large number of buildings on *Maticni Street* (Usti nad Labem, Czech Republic) several of which have Roma families. I saw the apartments in Chanov only from the outside<sup>63</sup>. The apartments on Maticni Street are around 50 m<sup>2</sup> and consist of a kitchen and two rooms. The apartments do not have sanitary facilities; these are located in the basement and are shared by several apartments. An average of 5-7 people live in them, and some have up to 10 people. The apartment surface area per room is between 5-8 m<sup>2</sup>. The apartments are well-lighted and relatively well maintained<sup>64</sup>. The apartments in Cartierul Zabrantii are one order of magnitude smaller with 15 m<sup>2</sup> and consist of a room, a kitchen alcove and a separate toilet. The room has average light through the little kitchen. Families with 2-12 members live in this space. In one family with eight children, a baby was suffering from AIDS. The apartments are dirty, poorly furnished and poorly maintained<sup>65</sup>.

The problem with such a housing stock is the same everywhere, owing to some of the following circumstances. These types of apartments *were not built specially for the Roma*. They were built for all citizens and industrial workers equally (Chanov and Maticni Street). Roma live in these apartments since they corresponded to this category. No architectural or administrative endeavours were made to adapt this spatial framework to the Roma family, since this was not done for other families either. The second thing to emphasize is that these apartments are as a rule *medium size apartments*. They are not satisfactory for larger than average families which is often the case with Roma families. Third, the construction systems mentioned *cannot be developed and adapted* to the internal dynamics of a Roma family. Perhaps one note from Spain gives a good illustration of this: "The efforts to give them a roof over their heads were completely wrong: their settlement in Barcelona was torn down and they were relocated to tall residential buildings on the periphery. Unaccustomed to this type of life, they destroyed the building by tearing down walls between apartments in order to join with their relatives..."<sup>66</sup>. The fourth problem that is clearly noticeable in many cases is the *decline of the buildings* owing to the sudden impoverishment of their tenants.

**The slum house** might be called the worst type of housing stock. These are small ground-floor houses with a limited range of construction. Examples of such houses are part of the housing in the *Veliki Rit* slum, city of Novi Sad (Yugoslavia)<sup>67</sup>, and the *Barje-mesovito* mahala, city of Pirot (Yugoslavia)<sup>68</sup>. The buildings most often have a timber framework or some sort of solid construction. The roofs have gentle slopes and are two-pitch or one-pitch. The material to fill the framework is quite different, primarily waste building and non-building material. The second type of structure - solid - is built completely out-of-standard, most often of bricks with insufficiently thick walls. As a rule the houses do not have a foundation. The floors are either concrete or earth. Most often there are no installations - water, sanitation and electricity. Such a house is always built by the family itself with some kind of help from the side: family, neighbours or both.

There are most often two rooms, one used primarily for cooking and the family's daily life. Both rooms can be slept in. The house is heated by the stove that is used for cooking, heating bath water, washing clothes, etc. Most of these rooms are from 10-20 m<sup>2</sup>, so they have a total of 30-60/70m<sup>2</sup>. The number living in such houses ranges from 3-4 to 7-8. Larger families as a rule include several generations, although some have more children. The house is located on a small plot that is sometimes no bigger than 50 m<sup>2</sup>. The usual size is around 100 to 200 m<sup>2</sup>.

Next to the house on the plot is an auxiliary enclosure, usually attached to the house, and a latrine.

These houses do not provide good living conditions because they are cold, their roofs leak, they absorb ground humidity and do not have sufficient light. Since they are built primarily of light material with poorly joined structural elements, they are relatively resistant to moderate earthquakes. They are not resistant to fire or frost that can damage the filler and walls. In spite of all their drawbacks, however, these houses have numerous advantages. They are made with low technology and practically every family is able to build one by itself. The process of do-it-yourself building, although illegal, is well organized and managed. The houses can be enlarged and divided depending on family dynamics. The price of the house is in absolute correlation with the property situation of the family. Since these houses arise entirely as Roma families' indigenous response to specific external environmental conditions and economic and other possibilities, and owing to other characteristics - their lack of architectural design, absence of professional builders, relying on do-it-yourself construction, etc., - these houses are essentially *folk architecture*. They can and should be supported by society and their conceptual basis can be used to solve the housing problems of both the Roma and other poor.

## ROMA AND THE CONTINUING COURSE OF URBANIZATION

***Urbanization is a global process.*** Before we present some ideas on how to create a better practice to deal with Roma housing problems and settlements, we should take a look at one more factor: the continuing course of urbanization. A very simple definition of urbanization is a process in which a rural population is transformed into an urban one. The rising urban population is a global tendency, a process that in some countries is already nearing an end, while in others it is entering a phase of rapid growth<sup>69</sup>. Regardless of which case is involved, it is the development pattern of our civilization and each individual country. It is a process that cannot be stopped.

***Urbanization prospects in Europe.*** In European countries where the urbanization process has not ended, a further rise in town populations should be expected. Although some of these countries will probably work on slowing down this transformation, it will nonetheless take place in coming decades. It is very difficult to say what the final outcome of the urbanization process will be in European conditions, particularly in the conditions of Central and Eastern Europe. Estimates<sup>70</sup> are that in the next two or three decades, to the year 2025, most countries in Europe will enter the third phase of urbanization when two-thirds of the population live in towns. The Roma are included in urbanization, just like everyone else.

***The current urbanization level of the Roma population.*** The percentage of the Roma population that is urban out of the total Roma population today is most probably similar to that found in the dominant society. It might be somewhat lower. In medium urbanized countries such as Bulgaria, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, and today's Yugoslavia<sup>71</sup>, the Roma live more in rural areas than in towns. In the highly urbanized countries of Western Europe, they are primarily town dwellers. Such a situation in the level of urbanization indicates the following: countries today having a Roma population in both rural areas and towns should have national strategies that develop ideas in parallel corresponding to both one and the other spatial and socio-economic ambient. When developing ideas to improve Roma housing, at least these two large programme orientations should exist. The rural context is not included in this text, although some of the ideas presented herein can be used in such a situation too.

***Towns will receive new immigrant Roma families.*** Sometimes they will only be members looking for better work. The rise in the urban Roma population will also come from growth in the population of those already in towns today. The overall urban Roma population will thus increase. Regional differences in the growth of the urban Roma population will result from today's level of urbanization and the total number of Roma in individual European countries. There will not be a uniform rise in the urban Roma population in all European countries. Countries that are highly developed today and have a relatively low share of Roma such as Belgium, France, Germany, Ireland, etc. will have an insignificant rise in the urban Roma population. Other countries that have a

smaller degree of urbanization today and at the same time have a relatively large share of Roma in their population can expect to have the greatest rural-urban migrations. These countries include Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, former Yugoslavia, i.e. Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, Czech Republic, Slovak Republic, Spain and Turkey.

**Both rises and falls in the living standard** are equally possible under the influence of urbanization. Examples have been recorded of countries that did not experience a rise in the standard of living along with a rise in the level of urbanization. And this is where the most important questions appear. Will today's countries having the largest Roma populations be prepared in all respects to properly greet the new wave of Roma immigrants? How will they do this? Will they build new Roma districts and settlements or expand old ones, or mix the newcomers with the indigenous population? Will this be done taking ethnic affiliation into account or not, etc.? These questions become all the more complex when we bear in mind that the urbanization process, just like the act of migrating, essentially changes several basic features of the population. Urbanization in principle changes one's *profession* (from agricultural to industrial or the service sector), *living framework* (from relatively natural to highly artificial), *culture* (from rural-patriarchal to urban and cosmopolitan), etc. It remains to be seen whether the Roma's fate in the continuing process of urbanization will be the same as in much of the previous period - along with all the normal changes brought by urbanization, the Roma carried with them the eternal burden of marginalization.

## II. IDEAS FOR SOLUTIONS

### AN APPROACH TO SOLVING PROBLEMS

Is there any other possible viewpoint except simply continuing the way the Roma matter is treated today? Is it possible to create a framework that will give Roma communities greater prospects? Do ideas exist that will lead to a better utilization of national resources - human, legislative, administrative, financial? It seems that this exists in the documents of Habitat II dealing with housing and the environment. This part of the text will give a rough presentation of this basic framework.

**The evolution of a global housing policy.** As the reader might have noticed from the previous references, many of them are from the UN Center for Human Settlements. Habitat documents are the basic point of departure from which we will view the matter of Roma housing and its improvement. Solving the problem of a roof over one's head, as well as housing understood in a broader manner, has gone through several phases since World War II. In order to better understand the present and what should be done to solve the housing problem of poor Roma families, we will present the table 4 with phases showing the evolution of the global housing policy in the past few decades.

**Table 3 The Evolution of Housing Policy**

| Phase and approximate dates                             | Focus of attention   | Major instruments used  | Key documents                  |
|---|--|---|--------------------------------|
| Modernization and urban growth:<br>1960s to early 1970s | Physical planning and production of shelter by public agencies | Blueprint planning: direct construction (apartment blocks, core houses);<br>Eradication of informal settlements |                                |
| Redistribution with growth / basic needs:               | State support to self-help ownership on                        | Recognition of informal sector,   | Vancouver Declaration (Habitat |

|  |   |  |   |
|--|---|--|---|
| mid 1970s to mid 1980s   | project-by-project bases  | squatter upgrading and site-and-services; Subsidies to land and housing                                    | 1976 ); Shelter, Poverty and Basic Needs (World Bank, 1980); World Bank evolutions of sites-and-services (1981 to 1983); UNICEF Urban Basic Services  |
| The Enabling Approach/ Urban Management: late 1980s to early 1990s | Securing an enabling framework for action by people, the private sector and markets | Public/ private partnership; community participation; land assembly and housing finance; capacity-building | Global Shelter Strategy to the Year 2000 (1988); Urban Policy and Economic Development (World Bank, 1991); Cities, Poverty and People (UNDP, 1991); Agenda 21 (1992); Enabling Housing Markets to Work (World Bank, 1993) |
| Sustainable Urban Development: mid 1990s onwards                   | Holistic planing to balance efficiency, equity and sustainability                   | As above, with more emphasis on environmental management and poverty - alleviation                         | Sustainable Human Settlements Development; Implementing Agenda 21 (UNCHS, 1994)   |
| HABITAT II: 1996   | “Adequate shelter for all” and “Sustainable human settlements development”          | Culmination and integration of all previous policy improvements  | The Habitat Agenda (UNCHS, 1996); Global Report on Human Settlements (UNCHS, 1996)  |

Source: UNCHS, 1997b; UNCHS, 1995, p15.

***Relying on “Shelter for All”.*** The above table provides a very solid framework for understanding the present situation and the prospects of Roma housing and settlements. The essence of the value judgement that results from it lies in linking two key sets of recommendations - adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlement development. The centre of this connection is bringing together and linking all previous strategies to improve housing along with a more exemplary attitude towards the environment, which is a new consideration in global proportions since 1992 that must be emphasized. *Shelter for All* is the basic framework to improve housing... “the report has argued for a focus on ‘minimum standards’ of various kinds - a small core of policy guidelines which leave maximum room for adjustment at the level of detail while ensuring that key bottlenecks are addressed, pressure points are utilized, and basic needs protected. If this approach is to work, these core measures and minimum standards do need to be prosecuted vigorously...”<sup>72</sup>. Emphasizing the need for minimum conditions that are necessary for some of the activities is owing to the fact that a great degree of flexibility can lead to evasive action, abusing the elementary rights of those who are to benefit from a project that is undertaken, and diversity in order to cover exploitation. The minimum core that can probably receive support everywhere in solving housing problems contains three rather simple points:

- “strong ‘enabling’ of local authorities combined with properly functioning markets and independent civic organizations working within a framework of representative governance, clear accountability and culture of learning;
- a focus on key supply-side measures to bring increased amounts of land and finance to the market, applied consistently over the long term, overseen by government authorities at appropriate levels to achieve coherence in the expansion of the city and its infrastructure without undue externalities;
- making maximum use of the linkages which exist between housing and wider economic, social and environmental goals, especially the potential of housing investments to contribute to poverty reduction through labor-intensive construction and support to small-scale and community-based production”<sup>73</sup>.

Regarding the strategic specifications from “Shelter for All”, in addition to the previous elements about which international agreement has been reached, there are also certain disagreements, as shown through the following points at issue:

- The first controversial question is how to help the poor gain greater benefit from the improved housing that will come with indisputable urbanization. Urbanization creates difficulties in both the market and non-market sectors in the fair distribution of costs and benefits that appear during development;
- The second question, which is closely connected to the first, is how to find and maintain a true balance between market liberalization, government intervention and social mechanisms so that all are efficient in the utilization of resources and efficient on the road to fulfilling social and environmental goals.
- The third question is how to turn small-scale experiments and successful innovations into sustainable, large-scale solutions.

These questions seem clear, but not their answers<sup>74</sup>. The answers will most likely have to be sought not as absolute truths but as a series of options based on convictions and experience. If this is correct, then it is also probably true that the priority task should be finding answers on a local level through reasonable negotiations and compromise by all those involved. When the poor are involved, and here we are speaking of the poor Roma, then one of the goals must be to strengthen them in the process of negotiation and seeking acceptable answers to the above questions<sup>75</sup>. “The emphasis is on the ‘journey’ as well as the ‘destination’”.

***Support in definitions: adequate shelter and sustainable settlement.*** In order to discuss the topic of the prospects of Roma housing, we should define some of the concepts that will be used. We will start with the concept of housing. It has a number of components. Housing is defined in a comprehensive context as “physical shelter plus related services and infrastructure, including the inputs (land, finance, etc.) required to produce and maintain it”<sup>76</sup>. In order to understand this definition we need to add a definition of the concept of shelter that in Habitat II documents is regularly linked to the adjective adequate: “adequate” shelter.

“Adequate shelter means more than a roof over one’s head. It also means adequate privacy; adequate space; physical accessibility; adequate security; security of tenure; structural stability and durability; adequate lighting, heating and ventilation; adequate basic infrastructure such as water supply, sanitation and waste management facilities; suitable environmental quality and health-related factors; and an adequate accessible location with regard to work and basic facilities; all of which should be available at an affordable cost. Adequacy should be determined together with the people concerned, bearing in mind the prospect for gradual development. Adequacy often varies from country to country, since it depends on specific cultural, social, environmental and economic factors. Gender-specific and age-specific factors, such as the exposure of children and women to toxic substances, should be considered in this context”<sup>77</sup>.

Unlike the relatively simple definitions of shelter and housing, the definition of *larger spatial unit* in which the Roma apartments and houses are grouped is somewhat more complex. The wealth of forms of apartment groups<sup>78</sup> makes it hard to use one name. Thus we have used a rather imprecise expression in this text: *living environment*.

As with the definition of housing, we will also use the definition of *settlement* that comes from Habitat II. Some parts of this definition can be used for smaller settlement entities - district, city block, group of plots as part of a city block. Habitat II regularly adds the attribute *sustainable* to settlement. "Sustainable human settlements are those that, inter alia, generate a sense of citizenship and identity, cooperation and dialogue for the common good, and the spirit of voluntarism and civic engagement, where all people are encouraged and have an equal opportunity to participate in decision making and development. Governments at all appropriate levels, including local authorities, have a responsibility to ensure access to education and to protect their population's health, safety and general welfare. This requires, as appropriate, establishing policies, laws and regulations for both public and private activities, encouraging responsible private activities in all fields, facilitating community group participation, adopting transparent procedures, encouraging public-spirited leadership and public-private partnerships, and helping people to understand and exercise their rights and responsibilities through open and effective participating processes, universal education and information dissemination"<sup>79</sup>.

Regardless of the type of grouping, it is always necessary and possible to speak of sustainable conditions that must exist regarding supplies of energy, fluids, material, information, in terms of transporting people and commodities, in terms of the density of activities and the density of housing, the existence of appropriate social institutions, and fitting in to the city system of planning, design, finance, construction and maintenance. The settlement must be based on the natural conditions of the place in order to decrease the risk of earth slides, earthquakes, floods, high underground water level or other dangers that naturally occur in nature.

**Recommendations from "Global Shelter Strategy"**. If we want to discuss the prospects of Roma housing from a practical viewpoint, then the most important recommendations from the well-known *Global Shelter Strategy to the Year 2000*<sup>80</sup> should be included in the discussion. One of the possible interpretations of this strategy can be reduced to several key points<sup>81</sup>:

- The problem of the Roma's poor housing cannot be solved unless at least four participants are involved. These are the state, the municipality or town, the local Roma community with the housing problem and its Citizens Based Organisation (CBO) as the third participant, and finally, corresponding non-government organizations, both national and international.
- The division of roles among the actors is essential. The *state* should provide a general favorable legislative framework that the poor can easily use that will guarantee an enabling approach. It should also provide suitable funds to solve the housing of vulnerable groups and helpless poor. The *municipality or town* should provide heavy resources: land and infrastructure, and complete documentation necessary to build apartments (conditions, permits, designs). It should also provide part of the material, workforce and transport. The Roma, or *households and local Roma community* should provide the rest of the workforce, transport and material. *Non-government organizations* can act as intermediaries between the people, Citizens Based Organisation (CBO), and public authorities. Their role is to launch pilot projects and in some cases provide part of the workforce, transport, material or money.
- Money should be provided from a large number of sources including state and municipality funds for this purpose, bank loans and other sources that should be accessible to the poor, nonreturnable resources from foundations that help renovate poor housing, and the money of the poor families themselves.

The basic intention of the Global Shelter Strategy is to start considering the solution to the problem of the poor from the viewpoint of an enabling approach: to divide up the humanely important, financially difficult, organizationally complex and implementationally responsible job of improving poor neighborhoods and the housing situation of the poor. Not a single country would be able to solve this task by shifting the burden of poor housing to either the state, the poor themselves or some third party. Furthermore, the task of solving the problem of poor housing should be brought to the concrete level of every country. Each one should elaborate the basic assumptions of its shelter strategy by finding numerous adequate forms that correspond to its internal economic and social situation, traditions, climate, and its people's aspirations. In addition, the actual improvement of poor

housing takes place on the local, municipal or city level. This level should be qualified for the implementation process. Everything that has been said about poor housing holds completely for improving Roma housing, and holds for the countries of Europe<sup>82</sup>.

**Advice from the “Strategy for Sustainable Living”.** In the past five or six years two words have become firmly linked: conservation and development. The idea of perpetual human “advancement” along with squandering limited natural resources and devastating the ecosystem no longer exists. Owing to inertia, economic interests that cannot be abandoned overnight, ignorance regarding the proper way to approach ecosystems, organisms and the habitats they comprise, we are continuing to desecrate the only foundation we have - nature. In spite of this fact, today almost every individual, group or country will confirm the need to shift from the old way of understanding development to an understanding and practice of *sustainable development*.

At first glance one might say that this global theme does not have much to do with the topic of Roma housing. But this is not true. One study prepared in 1991 entitled *Caring for the Earth* submits numerous recommendations for successfully linking social development measures with measures to preserve the environment. Chapter 12 - *Human Settlements*, provides several recommendations regarding the problem of housing<sup>83</sup>. In particular... “municipal administrations should address major problems, especially:

- illegal settlements, by giving people secure titles to land and progressive access to basic services provided by public authorities;
- housing shortages, by encouraging people to participate in self-help housing schemes, and helping them to obtain, at affordable cost, resources such as sites, materials and credit so they can build or improve their housing within the framework of services provided by local authorities...”

Box 20 contains four basic suggestions on treating illegal settlements<sup>84</sup>. It says: “A successful strategy for dealing with illegal urban settlements:

- legalize them, arranging fair compensation for owners;
- accept the inhabitants’ own way of building. Don’t try to improve their houses. They will do that once their land is secure and they have basic services;
- provide water supply, sanitation, roads, other basic infrastructure and community facilities. This often motivates people to improve their own homes;
- identify “barefoot” architects, individuals with get-up-and-go in the community to organize maintenance, help install water, electricity, sewer lines, advise on laying foundations, and so on.”

**Changing the viewpoint on Roma housing.** This is not the place to present the history of resolving the problem of poor Roma housing in Central and Eastern Europe, or Europe as a whole. Instead, we would underscore the fact that different European countries at different times have tried in different ways, to a greater or lesser extent, to help the Roma. These efforts were not in the same direction or of the same intensity in all countries, if for no other reason than owing to the fact that there are differences in social policy provisions in Europe<sup>85</sup>. The existence of provisions, strategies, programmes, projects, etc., that treat housing in poor Roma environments is without doubt one of the essential prerequisites to resolving problems. But this is not enough. The daily practice is needed of *well-intended* implementation that provides *successful, clearly visible results*<sup>86</sup> in improving the reality of life for Roma families. Unfortunately, a good framework is not infrequently just an abstraction while in the field something quite different is happening. Practice is something that often speaks much more than regulations about how to solve the Roma housing problem. Different models of behaviour can be found in treating the Roma living environment and apartments. Some of them have practically disappeared today such as the *authoritarian model* or the model of *compulsory integration*. Some others are still present such as the model of *closing one’s eyes* or the model of *compulsory self-sufficiency* into which slum or illegal settlement inhabitants are pushed, the model of *minimum demolition* or the model of *unfulfilled promises*. A more complete analysis would certainly introduce

corrections to the above, and would probably add or remove something. On the other hand, there is new positive experience - in Slovak Republic, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Czech Republic, that might be used to create better models on how to treat Roma living environments.

Attention should be directed towards the tendency to change attitudes to resolving the housing and settlement problems of the Roma. This has happened in the last decade along with the birth of new democratic societies. Although there have been rumours that owing to transition and the introduction of new market mechanisms some of the old benefits have been lost - those that during socialism assured the Roma of some sort of living, such as free housing, guaranteed earnings in factories, etc<sup>87</sup> - it is still possible to understand that a change of approach and new practices, with further refinement and adaptation, might open new paths to the more successful resolution of Roma housing problems and organizing the settlements where they live. The table presented below offers part of the answer to questions directed at change. The far right-hand column dealing with a new approach that is slowly arising today is based on several different papers - ranging from government organizations, Roma associations, NGOs and academic proposals.

**Table 4: Changing the viewpoint on Roma housing**

| Model elements                      | Old model  | New model<br>in formation stage  |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| View of poverty                     | Poverty is living below a specific threshold   | Poverty is a life that is lower than the average possibilities of society  |
| Whose problems are solved           | As a rule the problems of the individual and family are solved   | Endeavours are made to solve the problems of the individual, family and local community  |
| Participants in solving the problem | Social welfare institutions give help to poor individuals and families                                 | Improvements are based on cooperation between the poor community, municipality and NGOs  |
| Role of the state                   | The state organized system and structure of welfare institutions and distribution of welfare           | The state creates a legislation ambience with strong enabling features opening possibilities for government institutions, welfare funds, NGOs, CBOs etc. |
| Role of the local Roma community    | The local Roma community has no role in improving living conditions - it is a passive recipient of aid | The local Roma community actively participates in the process of improvement, encourages individual initiatives and citizens' self-organization          |
| Characteristic of the strategy      | One strategy is used to solve the problems of different poverty areas                                  | Several strategies are used to solved the problems of poverty areas, each corresponding to a different type of area                                      |

|                                 |   |   |
|---------------------------------|---|---|
| Programmes within the strategy  | Primarily environmental measures are used to improve poverty areas                | Progress is based on the parallel resolution of economic, social and environmental problems   |
| Measures                        | Relocation with minimum standards   | Improvement, renovation, reconstruction with respect for the area's specific features   |
| Organization of problem solving | Existing social institutions are capable of solving the problems of poverty areas | Existing institutions should have the addition of new ones and new groups should be added that are willing to solve the problems of poverty areas |

Note: Adapted from Macura, V., Petovar, K., Vujovic, S., 1997, p95

## A PROPOSAL TO IMPROVE HOUSING

This part of the paper proposes a set of principles that might be the basis for a strategy to more successfully solve Roma housing problems. My proposal is based in the first place on research and conclusions made in my own country, as well as on ideas and approaches which have been developed by people gathered in the Society for the Improvement of Local Roma Communities. Although the ideas and conclusions mentioned here arose within a specific social and environmental context, in Yugoslavia, I strongly believe that with certain adaptations they could be used in some other European areas and regions where the Roma live in poor conditions. I say this because I have found views very similar to mine in a number of texts written by experts from different countries in order to solve various Roma problems. Different outlooks can be used in assessing the Roma's housing today and formulating a proposal for future improvement. My own personal views are basically founded on several simple affirmations which are presented below:

### ***1. Roma housing should be part of the housing system of society as a whole***

This housing system should regulate the matter of relations in the spheres of the market resolution of housing, social policy and practice, and the government's involvement, most probably in urgent cases. The system's solution should be equal for all citizens and all families, and for the Roma and their families. The housing market should be based on the same rules and principles that apply to the majority. Social housing regulations should be the same for those who are not Roma and have a difficult housing situation. The authorities should have instruments available that can be used in cases of sudden difficulties, catastrophes, epidemics, etc., in order to rescue some housing situation or return it to its former state.

### ***2. Advocating an integral, comprehensive solution is advocating a better apartment***

Roma housing problems should be considered and resolved within the context of other aspects of their life in general. Concurrent with solving the Roma's housing problem, other matters should be resolved as well, such as: employment through the improvement of their economy, education through improving the existing qualification structure and the better schooling of children. The recommendation to solve the problems of employment (economic issue), schooling (educational issue) and housing (environmental issue) concurrently has more of a methodological-procedural nature than the actual content of every specific project. Specific action requires proper research into the specific deprivation that is part of the poverty of a specific community. Sometimes along with material shortages there might be a poor health situation, or illegal building, or conflicts with neighbours about the land, or pressures from developers to relocate, or very unacceptable natural conditions of the location. Different communities have different problems and in practical work they should see that theirs are the problems that are actually being solved. Working on only one set of problems does not lead to results. Concentrating activities only

on housing is possible but it might happen that the problem is not solved and after a time the poor community is in an even worse housing situation than when they started. Concentrating only on employment not infrequently puts the Roma in the very worst jobs, and insisting only on schooling can easily end up with them quitting school. An integral, comprehensive approach is the key to successfully answering the Roma's housing problem.

### ***3. Solving the housing problem should be in line with other solutions***

The need to resolve the Roma's housing problem not only in the housing sector but within an integral project does not mean that all parts of the project - for example retraining, employment, solving the question of sanitation - must be taken up immediately, all at once. If the goal is clear then it is possible, with a good choice of priorities, distribution of activities and elaboration of a longer plan of action, that in terms of time housing appears at some later stage, although it might have been the immediate reason for launching the programme. The integral concept does not mean uncritically "attacking" all problems at the same time, does not mean "packing" activities, rather solving problem by problem or a group of problems. This creates a supporting and facilitating atmosphere for every subsequent solution that helps carry projects out. If it is assumed that in addition to a community's other problems it has people with illegal residence, then the resolution of this problem will create people's necessary security. The feeling of security that they will stay, removing the fear of expulsion, in this case would be a good support for all other activities. In this case solving the housing problem should find its place within the scheme of other activities.

### ***4. Legalizing illegal Roma living environments should be a priority***

In most cases, poor Roma are not illegal builders. The very fact that they belong to a powerless class and do not have any force indicates that for the most part they cannot be breaking the law on construction, either. When their housing has to be illegal since there is no other possibility, it is most often on abandoned land in fringe zones, often in places that few are interested in, land that has been neglected owing to its unhealthy characteristics. The other extreme consists of living environments that the authorities, using different legal procedures, have artificially declared illegal, temporary, places that should be torn down and the inhabitants relocated, places where life is unsafe. This status of Roma living environments is unsustainable. The reasons why these living environments have been declared illegal must be found for each specific case. Each case must be examined to see whether legalization is possible. The authorities should legalize settlements wherever possible since this status increases people's ability to improve their housing.

### ***5. When solving the Roma's housing problem, the type of living environment should be kept in mind***

When developing a programme to solve some housing matter, the morphological nature of the living environment should be kept in mind. It is not possible to have one single remedy for all types of settlements, districts, blocks, or collective buildings in which the Roma live. It is not possible to have one type of programme that is equally valid for the poorest slums in city centres and for large housing communities on the periphery. Programmes and projects are needed that are based on specific situations, on concrete street networks and plots, on houses and accompanying facilities, on the quality of the natural conditions and ecosystem where the living environment is located. Advocating that local conditions be respected and advocating solutions that suit each place does not mean advocating great diversity in the approach. There must still be a uniform strategy, a uniform framework for action for the Roma's different types of living environments. The existence of a minimum framework should help prevent arbitrary interpretations of the forms and functions, systems and structures of Roma settlements, should contribute towards a more or less recognizable orientation in treating the physical structures used by the Roma.

### ***6. Cooperation between the local Roma community and the dominant society is the basis of success***

It is a fact that the Roma are constantly working to improve their living environment and apartments to the extent provided not only by their financial resources but also by the often difficult legislative framework, the fact that they do not own the land and their hostile surroundings. On the other hand, it is also a fact that individual towns and municipalities are trying to solve the Roma housing problem as much as their monetary situation, the availability of other resources and their readiness to get involved in Roma problems allow. There is one more

factor: in spite of this work neither one nor the other has achieved very visible success. The situation in most Roma living environments clearly indicates this. Poor Roma cannot find their way in the systemic and structural finesses of the more affluent dominant society. The dominant society does not quite understand the aspirations and needs of minorities, often offering solutions that have nothing to do with them. The idea that people could live decently in army containers is as misconstrued as the assumption that closing them in the world of the impoverished Roma mahala could achieve something more than marginalization and ill will. The failures of both sides are evident. The situation can change under the assumption that the two sides join together. The Roma and non-Roma can voluntarily put together what they sovereignly and naturally possess: one side its traditional convictions, the other modern beliefs; one side skills that have sustained them for centuries, the other knowledge that has made them energetic, etc. Cooperation between the Roma and non-Roma can bear fruit for both sides' benefit, and joy.

### ***7. An individualized approach to solving Roma housing is needed and possible***

In most cases, the Roma living environments are relatively small. This seems to be the case regardless of the type of population, regardless of whether it is pure Roma or a mixed population. Large mahalas such as those found in Macedonia and Bulgaria are more an exception than the rule. If community development projects are undertaken, which can have several different orientations, it seems possible to form distinct teams of technical experts that can work with the Roma on a highly individualized basis. There is no substitute for direct human contact that develops special two-way learning: experts learn from the Roma, the Roma learn from the experts. The process of two-way learning at one moment leads to the homogenization of knowledge, approaches and ideas so that the rest of the work can be done like a well coordinated team. The idea behind the individualized approach is for the community to activate its best potentials and those potentials that are hidden.

### ***8. Full participation of the Roma in the improvement process is required***

The question of participation is the question of rights, democratic relations, and of money. It is wrong to assume that you can make a good apartment if you don't talk to the people it is intended for. It will not be built well or used well. The participation of the Roma in developing housing projects, just as the participation of any other population, means a simple rule: the more vital the question, the broader the dialogue. Great participation is always expected when the agenda has questions regarding town planning, devising employment programmes, analyzing and solving inter-neighbour relations and similar decisions; at the other extreme are technical questions in which there is greater participation of professionals and the opinion of the local community or its leaders is not sought. Participation in preparing projects to improve housing is one thing, another is to implement the project. Those with experience with the local population as a workforce will often emphasize that even in the poorest environments they found people who had enough talent to be "barefoot architects". These people were also able to mobilize other members of the local community to take part in construction work. Here is an observation: it seems that there is no readiness among professional enterprises - either from the dominant society or the Roma's, to take their workforce, even skilled artisans, from the local environment to work in that environment. Cooperation between professional building organizations and individuals is very difficult since their work interests are quite different. Self-help building and professional building should complement each other, not collide.

### ***9. A management group must exist for every project***

Complex projects such as self-help building projects, community development projects and similar projects must have a managing group that directs them in a professional manner. The group should consist of representatives from the local Roma community, best organized as a CBO, municipal representatives, representatives from appropriate state bodies, and representatives of NGOs. The managing group should have the role of decision maker above all, while regarding technical matters it should rely on internal help from the local Roma community itself, or the external help of either the public sector or any private agency. The management group is not part of the local Roma community's self-management but provides it with support.

### ***10. The identity of the Roma should be preserved in housing to the extent they so wish***

All steps in the process of solving the Roma's housing situation, and the process as a whole, should be conceived so that the Roma's ethnic and cultural identity are not jeopardized. The housing solution process, which includes the Roma themselves, should be based on their needs, viewpoints, opinions, understandings, desires, and even fears, and thereupon seek appropriate solutions in planning and designing, administration and financing, and later in using and maintaining the housing fund. This process, as well as housing in general, can help bring about the gradual loss of those elements of the Roma's identity that come from the culture of poverty, and make room for elements that are the product of indigenous cultural values. Housing should help the Roma become better integrated in the dominant society, should help the development of a multiethnic and multicultural society, and prevent the process of forced assimilation. In this regard, it should be emphasized once more that the atmosphere of mass housing in apartment blocks in high-rise settlements and dormitory communities on the outskirts of towns was completely unsuitable for the thousands of Roma families that lived in them, or still live in them today. These mass dormitories were nothing more than one of the means to forcibly change cultural patterns, value systems, and in some cases cause assimilation. Technical and design solutions should and can be such that they take into consideration the tradition of family life to the extent desired by the Roma community itself. The housing process should allow the Roma an unrestricted attitude towards individual elements of their own identity, and towards identity as a whole.

### ***11. Housing standards that apply to others should apply to the Roma***

The Roma housing environment should have the same treatment as the housing areas, settlements and towns of the majority. The standards used in supplying settlements and building apartments should be identical. *Identical standards* should apply to structural safety, earthquake resistance, fire prevention measures, thermal protection, waterproofing, protecting parts of the structure from freezing, and should allow micro climatic comfort to be achieved, i.e. temperature and humidity within the rooms, using sound material, etc. There is no question of creating "parallel standards", "double standards" or any regulations that would discriminate against any part of the population. Standards must be applied identically to the apartments of all members of society, thus to the apartments to be inhabited by Roma, too. The quality of the material that is built-in and the permanently visible parts of the apartment such as joinery, wall and floor coatings, installations, sanitary fixtures, technical equipment, etc., is directly dependent on the economic possibilities of the tenants, community funds, and ultimately the economic strength of society as a whole. The above requires that *minimum standards* be found within a country that will guarantee a healthy life, balanced family relations, better conditions for children, and good neighbourly contacts. The apartment surface area should correspond to the number of tenants, while bearing in mind normal human adjustment to the spatial framework. Since families are dynamic - increasing number of members, economic possibilities and cultural needs, changes in vital needs and the development of aspirations - the design and legal solutions must make it possible to follow these dynamics through easy adaptations, adding on, and improving the interior properties of the apartment. The rule should be introduced: if apartments are built below the average surface area - such as "minimum apartments", "mini-space", "one-room flat", an apartment with an "initial core", etc. - they must be designed in advance for expansion and enhancing. If a non-increased layout is used then concepts of minimization cannot be used. *Standards regarding the adaptability of the structure and surface size* should be introduced that will open up the technical possibilities of poor families starting with a modest, even overcrowded apartment that they can expand and valorize.

### ***12. The legality of the improvement process must be controlled***

The process of improving the housing of the poor is a complex and difficult job, especially if it is within a larger project. The large number of participants who do not know each other well, who have little work experience in common, different and sometimes unrecognizable interests, and the facility with which such projects can get stuck on a sidetrack and fail, requires a high level of control. In addition to controlling financial and technical accuracy, one important area is to control the accuracy of the process. Such controls should guarantee fair play for all participants. This control should protect all participants from any possible abuse, from the improvement process being conducted in a completely selfish way that is not suitable to the community, and finally should remove all doubt that the project has to do with something that will harm the neighbours, or damage the broader community.

Controlling the legality of the housing improvement process is the best way to protect the project from possible malicious rumours.

### ***13. Housing improvement should be financed from several sources***

There is a high level of agreement among different participants that solving the housing problem of the poor cannot rely on only one source. The cost of building new apartments, repairing rundown housing or buying used housing, regardless of how inexpensive, always requires more funds than the poor have. This is why all those involved in this matter should join forces, including the state, the municipality or town, non-government organizations, and the poor Roma families themselves. The idea behind this joining forces is for each party to bring the resources naturally available to him to the housing process. This does not have to be ready money or money alone. Municipalities and towns as a rule, regardless of the system of ownership of city construction land, always have plots available that can be given to solve the Roma's housing problem. Often the municipality has stocks or is whole owner of city infrastructure systems. On the other hand, the state has funds to purchase apartments for the vulnerable poor. The Roma families themselves have insignificant sums of money, but can bring their workforce to the process, and sometimes pay for part of the transport or construction material. Non-government organizations can also bear part of the expenses. Both domestic and foreign funds can be used. But what should probably be developed, and some projects in developing countries have managed to do so, is a banking system adapted to the poor. All aggravating circumstances should be removed - initial deposits, many years of saving as a prerequisite to receiving credit, proof of regular income, proof of permanent residence, etc. In some countries in which the Roma cannot reach banks, they still raise credit on the shadow banking market. This is a completely irregular supply, with exorbitant interest rates that these people must accept since there is no other possibility. Opening up such possibilities would strengthen the Roma's position in the process of solving their housing problems.

### ***14. Housing projects should be affordable***

The cost of the project is very often a restrictive factor to its implementation. Depending on their economic strength and other factors, countries can determine the borderline of costs that their national economy can bear, or simply put, how many annual incomes or revenues are needed for one apartment. And while the borderline cost is a question of the national economy's strength, the distribution of this cost is a question of social policy and market mechanisms, and ultimately a question of the relations between partners in the housing process. Housing costs can be reduced in different ways, ranging from building less expensive apartments, which is an architectural solution, to forming an atmosphere suitable for self-help housing. On the other hand, the process of paying the full cost can be drawn out by building houses in phases or building on credit. Finding ways to decrease apartment costs is a world problem and Roma programs have much to learn from the practice of countries in South America, Asia or Africa.

### ***15. The period of carrying out a housing project is relatively long***

The period of carrying out a housing project is relatively long. Numerous examples indicate that such projects, even when carried out in ideal circumstances and unburdened by unnecessary standstills or intrigues, take several years; the more complex the project, the more participants or money it requires, the longer its completion date. An accurate network plan must be elaborated that leads a critical path along the money line. It is not good to awaken false hopes and for anyone from the non-Roma world to promise that some project can be completed in several months. The local Roma community sometimes experiences a project as charity, as something given to them from some other world through the charity of some higher power. This often brings with it wrong assumptions that this "charity" does not require them to respect any rules or customary procedures, any laws. But they must be respected in reality. Otherwise it requires time and poor communities sometimes do not understand this. They think that everything is easier, faster and granted to the more affluent, which is actually not true. A realistic calculation of the time needed to carry out a project is a good prerequisite for making people aware of time and creating trust in the next project.

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Note <sup>2</sup> MG-S-ROM (98) 12: Gheorghe, N.: *Report from a study visit to the Lunik IX district of Kosice, Slovak Republic* (in preparation).

Note <sup>3</sup> MG-S-ROM (97) 8 rev, Rosenberg, D., 1997: *Report on a study visit to Valdemingomez (Madrid)*, Council of Europe, Strasbourg.

Note <sup>4</sup> Liegeois, J-P, Gheorghe, N., 1995 : *Roma/Gypsies: A European Minority*, Minority Rights Group International, UK

Note <sup>5</sup> Housing and similar community-oriented projects do exist as working programmes of SPOLU (Netherlands), Romani CRISS (Romania), Society for Improvement of Local Roma Communities (Yugoslavia) etc.

Note <sup>6</sup> MG-S-ROM (98) 11: *Problems arising for Roma/Gypsies in the area of housing and town planning*, p. 4.

Note <sup>7</sup> An exhaustive reference list could be found at Mirga, A., Mroz, L., 1997: *Romi - Razlike I netolerancija (Roma - Differences and Intolerance)*, Akapit, Beograd.

Note <sup>8</sup> MG-S-ROM (98) 11, p. 2.

Note <sup>9</sup> Darhsan Johan. Assistant Secretary-General, Acting Executive Director in the Forward in UNCHS, 11997b: *Shelter for All: the Potential of Housing Policy in the Implementation of the habitat Agenda*, Nairobi, UNCHS.

Note <sup>10</sup> An example of such a grouping are buildings in Maticni Street, District of Nestremice in Usti nad Labem (Czech Republic), *Newsletter - Activities on Roma/Gypsies*, No. 13.

Note <sup>11</sup> An example of such a grouping is Lunik IX, City of Kosice (Slovak Republic), *Newsletter - Activities on Roma/Gypsies*, No. 13.

Note <sup>12</sup> An example of such a grouping is the *village of Begaljica* in the vicinity of Belgrade (Yugoslavia).

Note <sup>13</sup> The first pages of the Secretariat Memorandum indicate the need for fuller information regarding the current state of Roma housing, and the remarks and questions at the end of the text point to the need to perceive strategic matters regarding the further advancement of Roma housing, MG-S-ROM (98) 11, p.4.

Note <sup>14</sup> The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, articles 12 and 25.

Note <sup>15</sup> Tomasevic, N.-B., Djuric, R., 1988: *Cigani sveta (Gypsies of the World)*, Jugoslovenska revija, Beograd.

Note <sup>16</sup> Townsend, P., quoted in: Haralambos, 1989: *Uvod u socioloiju (Introduction to Sociology)*, Globus, Zagreb, p. 144-145.

Note <sup>17</sup> Freuman, H. E., and Jouse, W.C., 1973: *Social problems - Causes and Controls*, *Sociology Series*, p. 68 quoted in: Mitrovic, A., 1990: *Na dnu - romi na granici siormastva (Roma on the*

*Bottom*), Naucna knjiga, Beograd, p. 36.

Note <sup>18</sup> Mitrovic, A., 1990: *Na dnu - romi na granici siromastva (Roma on the Bottom - Roma on the edge of the poverty)*, Naucna knjiga, Beograd, p.30- 36

Note <sup>19</sup> UNCHS, 1997a: *The Habitat Agenda*, Nairobi; Section IVC.3: Social development, eradication of poverty, creation of productive employment and social integration, para. 115.

Note <sup>20</sup> UNCHS, 1994: *National Experiences with Shelter Delivery of the poorest Groups*, Nairobi, p. 29-35.

Note <sup>21</sup> *Newsletter - Activities on Roma/Gypsies*, No. 13.

Note <sup>22</sup> Cartierul Zabranti is a Roma community of 330 families living in completely dilapidated multi-flat social welfare buildings. On November 15, 1998 UNDP launched an improvement program. At the moment a cooperative is working to repair apartments and installations. Mr Koko, an activist from the Romani CRISS, took me on a field visit to Cartierul Zabranti on December 8, 1998.

Note <sup>23</sup> Mitrovic, A., 1990, p. 38.

Note <sup>24</sup> Statement by Mr. B. Baker from the Leadership Institute in a discussion regarding Roma problems in Kosice. (Documentation of N. Gheorghe).

<sup>25</sup> It is clearly visible in the settlement composed of containers of Snakov locality (Stipek, M. et al., 1997: *Model building for Roma Community - Social housing project for four Roma families at Vysoky Myto - Snakov, Czech Republic*, photo documentation of the project)

Note <sup>26</sup> Tomasevic, N-B., Djuric, R., 1988, p 18-21

Note <sup>27</sup> In our conversation on December 8, 1998, Nicolae Gheorghe pointed out the following groups of Roma in Eastern Europe: proletarianized Roma, Roma from mahalas, Kalderasi, and middle-class Roma.

Note <sup>28</sup> Tomasevic, N-B., Djuric, R., 1988, p. 254

Note <sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 255

Note <sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 215

Note <sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 218

Note <sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 189

Note <sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 214

Note <sup>34</sup> MG-S-ROM (98)12

Note <sup>35</sup> Posarac, A., 1995: Pauperizacija stanovništva u Srbiji: jedan od osnovnih uzroka potisnutosti civilnog društva, u Pavlovic, V. (prijedjivac), 1995.: *Potisnuto civilno društvo* (Pauperization of the population in Serbia: one of the basic reasons for the repression of civil society, in Pavlovic: V. (editor), 1995: *Repressed Civil Society*, Eko Centar, Belgrade.

Note <sup>36</sup> Tomasevic, N-B., Djuric, R., 1988, p. 155.

Note <sup>37</sup> Mirga, A., Mroz, L, 1997, p. 121

Note <sup>38</sup> Mr. Milan Djuric, the father of Rajko Djuric, describes how his relatives, coming from Greece at the end of the last century, settled one of the worst locations near the village of Medjuluzja near Belgrade. (in Tomasevic, N-B., Djuric, R., 1988, p. 8)

<sup>39</sup> Kojic, B., 1976: *Balkanski gradovi , varosi i varosice (Balkan Cities, Towns, Villages)*, Gradjevinska knjiga, Beograd, p. 32

Note <sup>40</sup> Mirga, A., Mroz, L, 1997, p. 122.

<sup>41</sup> Macura, V, Petovar, K., Vujovic, S., 1997: *Siromasna podrucja Beograda (Poverty areas in Belgrade)*, Institut za arhitekturu i urbanizam Srbije, Beograd, p. 37.

Note <sup>42</sup> Tomasevic, N-B., Djuric, R., 1988, p.132, p.156

<sup>43</sup> Horvat, A., Setet, J., 1998: Szekesfehervar - Chronology of the Ghetto Affair, *Phralipe - Gypsy Literary and Public Review*, Vol.9., January 1998.

<sup>44</sup> This example is contrary to Principle 6 in the Chapter “Living in Urban Areas”, of the European Charter of Town Planners. Janic, M. (ed), 1996: *Urbanizam Evrope - Evropska urbanisticka povelja (Urban planning of Europe - European Urban Charter)*, Udruzenje urbanista Srbije i Urbanisticki zavod Beograd, Beograd, p. 33.

Note <sup>45</sup> An example of this zone is the Old Fairgrounds in Belgrade in which several Roma enclaves, no larger than 30-70 families, settled before the 1960s.

Note <sup>46</sup> MG-S-ROM (98)12

Note <sup>47</sup> Macura, V., Petovar, K., Vujovic, S., 1997, p. 24.

Note <sup>48</sup> Stipek, M. et al., 1997, photo documentation of the project, Figs. 1-4.

Note <sup>49</sup> An example of this is the Veliki Rit slum in the city of Novi Sad (Yugoslavia) that today has more than 3,000 inhabitants, arising from a very small nucleus existing there. These people have moved from Kosovo started to inhabit at the beginning of the 1970s.

Note <sup>50</sup> MG-S-ROM (97) 8 rev.

Note <sup>51</sup> An example of this is the settlement of Ledina in Belgrade (Yugoslavia) that the city authorities formed out of containers to lodge the Roma relocated during the process of rebuilding the central part of Belgrade.

Note <sup>52</sup> Tomasevic, N-B., Djuric, R., 1988, p. 215.

Note <sup>53</sup> Stipek, M. et al., 1997, photo documentation of the project, the locality of Snakov

<sup>54</sup> MG-S-ROM (97) 8 rev , Rosenberg, D., 1997: *Report on a study visit to Valdemingomez (Madrid)*, Council of Europe, Strasbourg

Note <sup>55</sup> Statement by Mr. Busa Joan, administrator of this community, given during a field visit, December 8, 1998.

Note <sup>56</sup> Horvat, A., Setet, J., 1998

Note <sup>57</sup> MG-S-ROM(98)12

Note <sup>58</sup> *Newsletter - Activities on Roma/Gypsies*, No. 13

Note <sup>59</sup> Tomasevic, N-B., Djuric, R., 1988, p 214.

Note <sup>60</sup> Mirga, A., Mroz, L, 1997, p. 121.

<sup>61</sup> Mitrovic, A., Zajic, G., Djeric, V., Rakic-Vodinelic, V., 1998: *The Roma in Serbia*, Centre for Anti-War Action and Institute for Criminological and Sociological Research, Belgrade, p.52-56.

Note <sup>62</sup> Macura, V., 1996: Thirty Roma enclaves - architectural-urbanistic description, presented at Symposium *Gypsies/ Roma in Past and Present*, Serbian Academy of Science and Arts, December 1996, Belgrade

Note <sup>63</sup> Field visit September 28, 1998. Mr. Ladislav Goral (Urad Vladi Czech Republic) did not consider it safe to visit these apartments, so upon his insistence I did not go there.

Note <sup>64</sup> Field visit and oral statement by Mr. Jano Petr, September 28, 1998, translated by Mr. Dragan Jevremovic (Romano Centro).

Note <sup>65</sup> Field visit and oral statement by Mr. Busa Joan, December 8, 1998, translated by Mr. Koko. On November 15, 1998 the UNDP launched a project in this settlement to repair the housing stock and make other improvements.

Note <sup>66</sup> Tomasevic, N-B., Djuric, R., 1988, p. 220 and photo from p. 250. Tomasevic does not reproach the architects here for not finding an answer to the Roma's needs, which should have been done, but reproaches the Roma for adapting the space to their needs!

Note <sup>67</sup> Field visit to Veliki Rit, Novi Sad, 1997.

Note <sup>68</sup> Society for the Improvement of Local Roma Communities, 1998: Sociological poll and architectural survey in the city of Pirot, carried out for the project *Improvement of housing conditions for Roma families in Pirot and Pancevo*.

<sup>69</sup> United Nations, 1989: *Prospects of World Urbanization, 1988*, UN, Department of International Economic and Social Affairs, Population Studies, No 112 (ST/ESA/SER.A/112), New York, p. 4 to 26.

Note <sup>70</sup> Ibid., p.78-204.

Note <sup>71</sup> Of the total Roma population in Yugoslavia, 48% live in

towns, while the remainder live in villages or mixed urban-rural settlements. This share of the urban Roma of the total Roma population is quite similar to the ratio of the overall urban population to the total population of Yugoslavia.

<sup>72</sup> UNCHS, 1997b : Shelter for All: The Potential of Housing Policy in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda, Nairobi, (HS/488/97E), Chapter VII, fourth para.

Note <sup>73</sup> UNCHS, 1997b, Chapter VII, para a) *Areas of Housing Policy Consensus*

<sup>74</sup> Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic, 1997: *Conceptual Intents Of The Government Of The Slovak Republic For Solutions Of The Problems Of Romany Population Under Current Social And Economic Conditions - Annex: .The Analysis Of Problems Of Romany Population And The Bases For Their Solutions*, Bratislava. This document is an example of finding an answer on the national level. On p. 43 it says that models of social housing for citizens with special needs should result from answers to the following questions: What share of the population is social housing intended for? What share of the housing fund should be social housing? What ownership types will social housing have? How will it be financed? What kind of construction, quality and equipment will it have? What will the criteria be for selecting social housing?

Note <sup>75</sup> UNCHS, 1997b, Chapter VII, para b) *Areas of Housing Policy Disagreement and Priorities for the Future*.

Note <sup>76</sup> Darhsan Johal, Assistant Secretary-General, Acting Executive Director in the *Foreword* in UNCHS, 1997b, p.1

Note <sup>77</sup> UNCHS, 1997a: *The Habitat Agenda*, Nairobi, UNCHS, para 60.

<sup>78</sup> Macura, V, Petovar, K., Vujovic, S.,1997, p.29, p.31

<sup>79</sup> UNCHS, 1997a : *The Habitat Agenda*, Nairobi,, Chapter II - Goals and Principles, para IV.

<sup>80</sup> UNCHS, 1992.: *Global Strategy for the Shelter to the Year 2000 - Improving Shelter - Actions by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)*, Nairobi, UNCHS,), pp. 1-5.

<sup>81</sup> Macura, V, 1998: Principi unapredjivanja siromasnih stambenih naselja u gradovima Srbije (Principles for improvement of poor city areas in Serbia), in: *Improvement of Housing '98*, Proceedings of II Scientific Meeting, Faculty of Architecture, Belgrade University, Belgrade, p. 238.

Note <sup>82</sup> One of the good national documents to solve the Roma problems is: Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic, 1997: *Conceptual Intents of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Solutions to the Problems of the Romany Population Under Current Social and Economic Conditions – Annex: Analysis of the Problems of the Romany Population and the Basis for Their Solution*, Bratislava.

Note <sup>83</sup> IUCN/UNEP/WWF, 1991: *Caring for the Earth - A Strategy for Sustainable Living*, Gland, Switzerland, pp. 104-109.

Note <sup>84</sup> Ibid., p.107

Note <sup>85</sup> Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic, 1997, *Conceptual Intents...*, p. 43. This part of the text explains the differences in regulations on social policies in the European Union countries.

Note <sup>86</sup> UNCHS, 1997b, Chapter VII, first para.

Note <sup>87</sup> MG-S-ROM(98)11, p.2.