

Helping the Roma in Bulgaria: Recommendations
to the Board of the America for Bulgaria Foundation

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Background: The Problem

The Roma people, the largest minority group in Europe and in many European countries, trail other ethnic groups in almost every characteristic that defines well-being.¹ Perhaps of greatest importance, the Roma are less educated than other ethnic groups. But they also suffer from excess health problems, high unemployment, poverty, and political weakness.² The Roma population of Bulgaria is certainly no less disadvantaged than the Roma in other countries. An especially poignant example of Bulgarian Roma disadvantage is that the death rate among children under age 1, a prime indicator of children's health in any nation, is 25 per 1,000 for Roma children as compared with 9.9 for children of Bulgarian ethnic origin.³ The mathematics of death almost before life gets started is a symbolic indicator of the Roma burden in Bulgaria. Similarly, research conducted for UNICEF by the University of York shows that the poverty rate among Roma children in Bulgaria is 92 percent, perhaps the highest poverty rate for any ethnic group in Europe. By contrast, the poverty rate among children of Bulgarian heritage is less than half as high at 43 percent.⁴

It is not surprising, then, that over at least the past decade, the European Union (EU) and most European governments, joined by the Open Society Foundation, the World Bank, and other organizations, have created important initiatives to address all these problems. It is possible to think that now is an historic moment in which European governments and dominant ethnic groups, after eight or nine centuries of the most pernicious types of discrimination against the Roma, are finally, albeit often reluctantly, admitting the problems facing their Roma populations and their own role in creating and sustaining these problems. Equally important, most of the Central and Eastern European (CEE) governments, where discrimination against the Roma has been and continues to be particularly intense,⁵ are gradually adopting policies to address the problems.

To the extent that the moment of Roma opportunity has arrived, perhaps the most important force moving Bulgaria and other CEE nations in the direction of integration and inclusion is the EU. In the period leading up to the ascension of Bulgaria and other CEE nations to membership in the EU, all the new member states were required to meet a host of conditions required by the EU as the price of admission. Among these conditions were laws outlawing discrimination and requiring equality of educational opportunity.

The CEE nations complied with the EU directive to pass such laws, but implementation of the laws in Bulgaria and other nations has been something less than aggressive.⁶

Nor is EU ascension the only force driving the CEE nations to reduce discrimination against the Roma and other minorities. The Open Society, the World Bank, and a number of other private organizations, including several Roma non-governmental organizations (NGOs), have initiated a sweeping program to promote inclusion of the Roma in the civil society of the CEE nations. Called the “Decade of Roma Inclusion” (2005-2015) the initiative is notable for getting all the CEE nations (plus Spain) to participate, to commit themselves to activities designed to promote inclusion and nondiscrimination, and to make a financial commitment to a fund administered by the World Bank to promote the initiative. As a part of the initiative, Bulgaria and the other participating nations originated ten-year action plans.⁷ The Bulgarian action plan, the purpose of which is to create a set of goals and activities that will promote Roma integration, includes proposals for education, health care, housing, employment, discrimination and equal opportunity, and culture.

An important part of the Decade program was the establishment of the Roma Education Fund in 2005. Eight nations (Canada, Greece, Ireland, Netherlands, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, and the UK), as well as several international agencies including the Open Society, pledged a total of 34 million Euros to support Fund activities during the Roma decade. The major goal of the fund is to “support policies and programs which ensure quality education for Roma, including the desegregation of education systems.”⁸

By joining the EU, Bulgaria and the other CEE nations brought themselves into a well-developed culture of inclusion and a complex system of interlocking laws and agencies that not only outlaw exclusion and discrimination, but provide funds to implement inclusion policies and to monitor the extent to which EU nations are aggressively implementing these laws. The laws and directives include the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, the Racial Equality Directive, and several others. It would be a mistake to conclude that every EU member, even the original 15 EU nations with relatively more advanced economies and longer histories as democracies than the CEE nations, faithfully implement every component of the various legal requirements of being an EU member.⁹

Even so, EU requirements and funds have initiated both profound legal changes and a host of programs to increase the social, economic, political, and cultural inclusion of the Roma as well as studies and evaluations that bring some light to the actual situation of the Roma and other minorities in member nations. Given the all but inevitable distance between the laws on inclusion and discrimination the CEE nations passed in order to join the EU and the actual implementation of those laws, studies commissioned by various EU agencies and NGOs illuminate the gaps between policies and implementation.

An excellent example of such illumination is a 2006 study commissioned by the Economic and Scientific Policy program of the European Parliament.¹⁰ The report is a hard-hitting assessment of the status of Roma throughout Europe with regard to their legal status and socio-economic conditions. The latter category includes assessments of Roma exclusion from employment, education, social services, health care, and community integration. The upshot of the report is that although there may be some progress in these important areas of integration, the Roma are still a second-class group throughout the CEE nations. Seemingly, good laws have not yet produced good results. Laws may be changed, but changing human behavior and culture takes longer.

CEE governments and their defenders are reluctant to admit the lamentable lack of progress in Roma integration. In part for this reason, the European Commission, based on extensive evidence from evaluations, surveys, and news reports of often ferocious discrimination against the Roma,¹¹ felt the need to publish “An EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020” in April 2011.¹² The need for a new framework is a clear signal that the EU Commission believes the CEE governments in general and Bulgaria in particular are not achieving the results the EU hoped for when it approved these nations for EU membership and is therefore trying to push the governments of these nations into further action.

Following publication of the Framework, the Open Society released one of the most thorough and provocative reports on the situation faced by the Roma in Europe and strategies that should be adopted to attack the wide range of Roma disadvantages. Appropriately entitled “Beyond Rhetoric,” the Open Society report includes entire chapters on two issues that I will examine in more detail below.

First, the Open Society strongly recommends that nations collect ethnically disaggregated data.¹³ Logically enough, the report holds that it is impossible to document the effects of policy initiatives on the Roma and other groups unless outcome data, including measures of health, education, housing, employment, income, and death rates by age, are collected for individual ethnic groups. So important are ethnically disaggregated data that the report goes so far as to recommend that, if necessary, governments should change their statistical systems to “incorporate ethnic data components into regular statistical surveys.”¹⁴ A second recommendation that deserves special attention is the report’s emphasis on early childhood education and care. Virtually every report about the Roma emphasizes the vital importance of education in fighting Roma exclusion, but the Open Society report strongly recommends that nations implementing the EU Framework should “give urgent consideration” to establishing an early child development fund to “support innovative early development programs and allow for scale up of what works.”¹⁵

Beyond these specific recommendations, the Open Society report emphasizes that the EU Commission stated explicitly in its Framework document that “member states do not properly use EU money for the purpose of effective social and economic integration of Roma.”¹⁶ As if this judgment, which seems to represent the views of many EU agencies, the World Bank, the Open Society, and many Roma groups themselves, needed additional reinforcement, a United Nations expert on minority issues visited Bulgaria this summer and called upon the government to “turn its policies on Roma integration into concrete action.” She went on to give what seems to represent the views of all these groups on the flaws in the Bulgarian government’s approach to fighting Roma exclusion: “Many policies seem to remain largely only rhetorical undertakings aimed at external audiences – official commitments that are not fulfilled in practice.” The result, according to the UN expert, is that “all the evidence demonstrates that Roma remain in desperate circumstances at the very bottom of the socio-economic ladder.” In particular, she mentioned that the access of Roma children to quality education “remains overwhelmingly unfulfilled.”¹⁷

If CEE nations are now entering a period in which governments will be working, often ineffectively or at a very modest pace, to improve the conditions of the Roma,

judging by the efforts of other nations to reduce discrimination against minority groups and by the stately rate of progress so far in the CEE nations, it can be assumed that the fight for Roma equality in Bulgaria will be measured in decades. In the U.S., for example, the Civil Rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s was largely successful. By the mid-1960s, vital court decisions had dismantled major parts of the system of legal discrimination against blacks and the federal government had enacted programs to ensure voting rights and other fundamental rights to blacks. To enhance the legal war on poverty and discrimination, the federal government also initiated an army of social programs designed to boost the education, health, employment, housing, and political participation of the poor in general and blacks in particular. Yet today, nearly half a century after achieving legal rights and the initiation of large-scale government inclusion programs, blacks (and Hispanics) still trail whites by large margins in education, income, housing, poverty levels, and health.¹⁸ Although achieving significant progress against discrimination may require decades or generations, discrimination will not diminish until strong legal, economic, and social forces are mobilized against it. Expecting a long struggle cannot be a reason not to begin.¹⁹

If the history of making substantial progress in overcoming ethnic discrimination in the U.S. can serve as a rough comparison to the situation of the Roma in CEE nations, several factors are going to be vital in the fight of the Roma to overcome discrimination and exclusion in Bulgaria and throughout Europe. These factors include an anti-discrimination plan, aggressive implementation of the plan by all levels of government, leadership by the Roma themselves, educational progress by Roma children and young adults, political activism by the Roma people, a media committed to accurate reporting and fairness, and a civil society that reflects underlying public opinion favoring integration and opposed to discrimination. Most of these factors appear to be present in Bulgaria, often in rudimentary and brittle form, but present and in many cases moving in the right direction nonetheless. The progress that is just now beginning can be greatly enhanced by the efforts of groups that have the resources, the will, and the vision to roll up their sleeves and help promote Roma inclusion.

Recommendations

The issue addressed in this report is what the America for Bulgaria Foundation, given its ample but nonetheless limited resources, can do to play the most effective possible role in this movement to help the Bulgarian Roma community achieve inclusion while improving their education, employment, health, and housing. America for Bulgaria can, by choosing its investments carefully, make a difference on one or more of these fronts. The material reviewed above shows convincingly that the Roma are discriminated against in every possible way in the CEE nations in general and by Bulgarian society in particular, but the government has, albeit in halting fashion and under considerable pressure from the EU, the Open Society, the World Bank, and the Roma themselves, taken modest steps along a path that can lead to integration and improved well-being for the Roma people. My goal in this section is to suggest investments the Foundation could make to strengthen the integration process.

Criteria Guiding Recommendations

I have considered several factors in deciding what to recommend. The first is how to fit the recommendations into a complex environment that includes both government programs (see Appendix B) and privately-sponsored programs aimed at advancing inclusion by boosting the education, health, housing, and civic participation of the Roma community. It would be naive to think that my recommendations are unique and that the Foundation could find a set of programs that are without precedent. Even a modest familiarity with recent history in Bulgaria and the other CEE countries shows that a wide and impressive variety of programs to integrate the Roma has been undertaken in education, employment, housing, and civil rights. Unfortunately, few of these programs have been evaluated based on their outcomes (as opposed to their procedures), so it is difficult to know whether they have been successful. However, given the status of the Roma people on the measures reviewed above, it would be impossible to claim more than minor successes so far. Still, in an environment with a lot of programs being implemented, I aimed for at least some originality in my recommendations so that they would do more than simply replicate activities already occurring.

A second consideration is that I want to make recommendations that have some coherence. If the Foundation were to make investments in a wide variety of areas, even if

the investments resulted in some payoffs, their collective impact could be less than might be achieved by making multiple investments in a single domain. On the other hand, as will become apparent, I believe there are many opportunities for worthwhile investments. Indeed, many of the investments currently in the Foundation's portfolio seem to be potentially of great value. Thus, I have tried to chart a course between making all the recommendations in a single area to promote coherence and spreading the Foundation's resources too thinly to make a significant difference. More specifically, my major recommendations are designed to boost the education of Roma children, especially young children, but I offer other recommendations that I believe could yield important returns. In the end, of course, the overall investment strategy will be determined by the Foundation Board and my role is simply to raise issues of strategy and to point to specific potential investments the Board should consider.

Not only is it wise to look for coherent investments, but it would be wiser still to make investments in an area in which success would make a major difference for the Roma. Thus, the third criterion I followed was to recommend investments that could, if successful, have a fundamental impact on the current and future well-being of the Roma people. To be frank, when I undertook this project, I assumed that education was the single most important need of the Roma population and that improved education would lead to broad, sustainable, and long-term improvement in the status and inclusion of the Roma population. Based both on my reading and my visit to Bulgaria, I saw nothing that would change my original assumption. As we will see, there are several types of investments that could bear fruit. I am still going to recommend some of these promising investments, but I place my biggest bets on related investments in education.

Another criterion I followed is that the recommendations be supported by empirical evidence that the Foundation's investment would yield positive returns. There is a regrettable lack of good evidence about the impacts of intervention programs in CEE countries, including Bulgaria. Thus, I considered high quality evaluations of intervention programs in the U.S. and other nations. Given that I have some knowledge of several types of intervention programs in the U.S. and Europe, this seemed like a reasonable approach. After all, a program that works in one country (and sometimes in more than

one country) has a decent chance of working in another country, although with appropriate modification to accommodate differences across settings.

It must be granted, however, that many intervention researchers with international experience, as well as a wide variety of researchers who try to explain phenomena like economic inequality, causes of poverty, and a host of other issues, emphasize the importance of cultural differences in accounting for the failure of explanations or of specific intervention programs to travel well across cultures.²⁰ I know of no way to guarantee that successful programs from the U.S. and other countries will translate well to Bulgaria, but I will address this issue in individual cases below.

Another preliminary consideration is that I fully acknowledge that I am not an expert on Roma issues or on Bulgarian social policy. As I understand the motive for the Board's decision to request this report, it was hoped that it might prove useful for someone with extensive experience in both studying and participating in the formulation of American social policy and in studying European social policy to examine the situation of the Roma and the nature and effectiveness of social policy in Bulgaria and make recommendations to the Board on worthwhile investments the Foundation could make to improve the wellbeing of the Roma population. To prepare this report, I have read hundreds of pages of research studies, government and NGO reports, and other written material on the Roma and on Bulgarian social policy. I also spent a week in Bulgaria visiting programs for the Roma (mostly programs supported by the Foundation), government officials, and Roma leaders. The itinerary for my trip to Bulgaria (Appendix A) was arranged by Sarah Perrine, the Director of Programs for the Disadvantaged at the Foundation. Ms. Perrine also provided a great deal of additional information pertinent to this report and answered many questions that I had about issues related to the Roma, Bulgarian social policy, and this report. Despite all the reading, the illuminating visit to Bulgaria, and the excellent tutoring of Ms. Perrine, I again urge the Board to keep in mind my limited experience with Bulgaria and the Roma.

Primary Recommendation: Education

Why Education? In 1965 during the height of the Civil Rights Movement in the U. S., Daniel Patrick Moynihan, then a bureaucrat in the U.S. Department of Labor and subsequently an ambassador and Senator, wrote an infamous article about the readiness

of American blacks to take full advantage of the growing opportunity for minorities then being achieved by the success of the Civil Rights Movement.²¹ The essence of Moynihan's argument was that, primarily because the dissolution of the black family had disrupted the development of black children, especially boys who were growing up without a sense of discipline because many of them had little or no paternal guidance, blacks would not be able to take full advantage of their new opportunities. Although Moynihan was pilloried for his bold argument, in the long run he turned out to be entirely correct.²² A variant of the Moynihan argument in the case of the Bulgarian Roma is that Roma children are being poorly prepared to seize the economic opportunities that seem likely to become increasingly – albeit gradually – available as the Bulgarian economy returns to growth following the recession and as Roma inclusion initiatives continue to produce slow progress.

A promising strategy that will ensure that Roma children are prepared for new opportunities is to make major investments in their development and education. The most important reason for investing in education is that the success of the movement for inclusion and full Roma rights demands that a major role be played by the Roma themselves. Thus, not only will education facilitate economic inclusion, but better education will expand the number of Roma who are prepared to play a leadership role in the inclusion movement and in creating an active and vigilant Roma civil society. The Roma should not and cannot wait around for the Bulgarian government to overcome its past and suddenly focus adequate resources and energy on Roma families and children. To date, it appears that the Bulgarian government is doing just enough to satisfy EU requirements, but not nearly enough to produce more than middling progress on any front. The government, in short, is being dragged kicking and screaming by the EU, the Bulgarian Roma community, and other advocates for the Roma to make even the most modest progress. A competent and aggressive Roma leadership, at both the municipal and federal level, must apply relentless pressure on the Bulgarian public, politicians, and the media to secure their rights and to ensure that wise investments are made in Roma children. The rights of minority groups are won by a combination of changes in the law, which in the case of Bulgaria has already mostly occurred, changes in the values of the majority culture and civil society, and pressure on the government and civil society by

minorities themselves. All of these processes can be stimulated by a minority group that focuses on developing competent and coordinated leadership and improving the education and productivity of individual members of the minority.

Another reason to focus on education is that there is good evidence that investments in education actually produce benefits in the long run that exceed the original cost of the education. Indeed, a study conducted by researchers at the Institute for Market Economics in Sofia found that investments in education programs specifically for Roma children in Bulgaria would produce benefits that far exceed costs. The authors conclude, for example, that if investments were made in the education of 30,000 Roma children, the net benefits produced would be more than 2.5 billion Euros. The benefits would flow from additional personal income tax payments, greater contributions to Bulgarian social insurance programs, reduced unemployment and welfare benefits, additional indirect taxes, and reduced incarceration.²³

The question then arises – how can the education of the Roma be improved, especially in view of the range of investments the Foundation is already making? I turn now to a discussion of three investments in education (two specifically in education and one in reducing early marriage and pregnancy that will promote educational opportunity) that could deliver long-term results and that could have broad application in Roma communities across Bulgaria and the CEE countries.

Home Visiting. There is little or no disagreement among researchers and practitioners that parents play a vital role in child development. In most cultures, including Roma cultures, mothers and fathers both are involved in child rearing, but mothers typically play a more direct role in the child's care and development. Given the central role of mothers in children's growth, it long ago occurred to those concerned with child development that helping the mother learn skills associated with children's growth and development could have positive effects on children. This insight is especially important in the case of poor and low-income families because a huge volume of research shows that the child-rearing practices of these mothers differ substantially from the practices of middle class mothers in ways that are correlated with child development.²⁴

It is neither necessary nor desirable to demean the child-rearing practices of poor and low-income mothers to conclude that exposing young children to a different regime

in their homes could boost the child's development. Head Start and other popular preschool programs in the U.S. and extensive preschool programs throughout Europe, for example, are justified in major part because poor and immigrant children will get the growth-inducing experiences – especially those involving language use²⁵ and social behavior – in a quality child care setting that they are often not receiving in their homes. Moreover, as we will see in greater detail below, there is strong evidence that children exposed to high quality preschool that emphasizes language development will acquire skills, including behavioral skills, that help them do better in school and in life.²⁶

An approach to ensuring that young children are adequately stimulated that is even more direct than providing improved preschool education is to intervene with the mother to teach her skills and behaviors that can improve her child's health and development as well as her own life, thereby creating a virtuous circle in which the child benefits both from the mother's improved child-rearing practices and from the mother's reduced dependence on welfare, greater economic success, and ability to control her fertility. There is now strong evidence from rigorous experiments showing that programs of this type can have major and long-lasting impacts on both mothers and children.²⁷ The best known of these programs is the Nurse-Family Partnership designed and tested by David Olds, a professor of medicine at the University of Colorado in the U.S. The Olds program, with some variations, has now been implemented with good results in at least 22 states in the U.S. and four other nations (UK, Australia, Netherlands, and Canada).

The agenda of the program is for nurses to visit the homes of expectant mothers during their pregnancy and then with decreasing frequency during the first two years of the child's life.²⁸ The nurse forms a close bond with the mother and serves as a kind of educator and advisor. The nurse focuses her efforts on strengthening positive, health-related behaviors during pregnancy and early childhood, teaching and demonstrating consistent and quality care of the baby, and stimulating the mother's personal development by controlling fertility, gaining additional education, and working. Unlike many programs, the well-trained nurses communicate clear, value-based messages to the mothers. These include don't smoke, eat properly, go to all pregnancy and well-baby checkups, do not use corporal punishment, and become self-reliant.

The Olds program has been thoroughly evaluated in several settings and with some modest variation in program format. In one of the most remarkable studies in the history of intervention programs, in 1998 in a leading medical journal Olds and his colleagues published a 15-year follow-up of mothers participating in his initial nurse visiting program. The study showed that, as compared with randomly-assigned controls, children whose mothers participated in the program were less likely to run away from home, less likely to be arrested, had fewer convictions and parole violations, fewer sex partners, smoked less, and drank alcoholic beverages less often.²⁹ In subsequent studies, Olds showed that his nurse visiting program produced similar impacts on white, black, and Hispanic mothers and children living in three different cities and three different regions of the U.S. (north, south, mountain west). The impacts included fewer second pregnancies, fewer injuries to children that reflect child abuse or neglect, greater work-force participation, increased school readiness, and reduced dependence on welfare.³⁰

Other home visiting program models have also been shown to have impacts on mothers, some through testing by rigorous evaluation designs, suggesting that the basic idea of working directly with mothers to teach them child-rearing skills and values associated with self sufficiency is a robust approach. What nearly all the models have in common is developing a close relationship between the mothers and a professional, usually either a nurse or a social worker. The professional visitor establishes a bond with the mother and provides her with advice about her personal health, about child rearing, and about the mother developing self reliance, especially in employment.³¹ The relationship between the mother and the professional is the heart of the program.

The Foundation should consider developing a program of this type for use with poor families in Bulgaria, especially with Roma mothers. The first step in developing the program would be to experiment with activities and protocols the professional visitor could use productively with mothers. The activities and protocols could be based on those used by Olds and by other home visiting programs. As the material is developed, it would be wise to consult with Olds or other program designers and to adapt their materials and protocol to the specific circumstances in which the Bulgarian Roma live.

Another initial activity would be attracting qualified home visitors and training them to use the activities and protocols that the Foundation is developing or adapting for

use in Bulgaria. Of course, it would be especially valuable if many of the home visitors were from Roma communities. As with creating the materials and protocol, a good place to begin is with the procedures and materials Olds and other home visiting programs have created to train their own home visitors. The material will need to be adapted to the Bulgarian context, but the developer will begin with a detailed understanding of what was done to train home visitors by successful programs.

Once the program protocol and training procedures are developed, they should be tested by conducting experimental trials in two or three Roma communities. Such a trial would set an example for the Bulgarian government and for NGOs about how to develop and test effective programs. In addition, the trial will show definitively whether the program is producing impacts and may suggest modifications that would make the program more effective. Following the path blazed by Olds and his colleagues, if the trial shows the program is producing impacts, the number of sites should be gradually expanded while program quality is continuously monitored and maintained. An important part of program expansion would be coordination with other NGOs, the World Bank, the EU, and the Bulgarian government in order to leverage their resources to expand the home visiting program to Roma communities (and other poor communities) throughout Bulgaria. Once the Foundation has scientific data showing that its home visiting model produces impacts on mothers and children, it would be more likely that potential funding sources would be happy to join forces with the Foundation.

Preschool Program.³² The research literature on preschool programs is vast and impressive. There are few if any interventions with children that show such powerful and long-lasting effects on developing children as high-quality preschool programs conducted during one or more of the first five years of life.³³ High-quality programs have been shown by many evaluation studies to have immediate impacts on children's language skills, math skills, and socioemotional behavior (e.g., ability to concentrate, listening skills, conflict-avoidance skills). Even more important, several programs have demonstrated long-term impacts on outcomes as diverse as achievement test scores throughout the public school years, special education placement, grade retention, high school graduation, college enrollment, delinquency and crime, welfare use, teen

pregnancy, and employment. It is little wonder, then, that benefit-cost studies show that some preschool programs produce benefits that significantly exceed their costs.³⁴

There is, however, a serious difficulty with this optimistic view of preschool programs. The best study of the U.S. Head Start program, published in 2009 and 2010, shows very modest impacts at the end of the Head Start year (or, for some children, two years) and virtually no impacts at the end of the first year of schooling.³⁵ The point here is that not every preschool program produces the short-term and long-term impacts that a few high-quality programs have shown to be possible. The key is program quality, and the single most important ingredient in program quality is the teacher.

The Foundation has funded at least seven grants that are related to preschool and kindergarten.³⁶ These are mostly small grants and none (with the possible exception of the grant to the World without Borders NGO in Stara Zagora) is given to provide high-quality preschool to children before they enter kindergarten. I propose that the Foundation develop a high-quality preschool program adapted for Bulgarian children, including Roma children, and teacher training guidelines to accompany the program. One way to proceed would be to identify a small group of perhaps three people who have worked with preschool programs in Bulgaria, including at least one Roma expert, and hire them on a consulting basis to develop the curriculum and teacher training guide. They should begin by surveying preschool curriculums now used in Bulgaria, as well as curriculums with good evidence of effectiveness from the U.S. and Europe. The goal would be to adapt these activities and materials for use with Bulgarian children, including the Roma.

When the curriculum and teacher training materials have been developed, the Foundation should conduct a controlled experiment testing the program in two or three Roma communities in Bulgaria. The experiment should follow the children for a minimum of three years including the program year, the kindergarten year, and at least one year beyond kindergarten. It would be better, of course, to follow the children longer, but a great deal can be learned in three years.

As with the home visiting program, the Foundation might be able to attract partners in an effective preschool initiative. The World Bank, for example, recently committed 40 million Euros to programs that provide social services to Bulgarian

children from 0 to 7 years of age from poor families.³⁷ In his announcement of the initiatives on May 31, 2011 in Sofia, Markus Repnik, the World Bank Country Manager for Bulgaria, explicitly mentioned the needs of Roma children for better preschool education. He also promised that if the projects were “successful,” additional funding would flow from the EU. This kind of funding opportunity would allow the Foundation to use its own funds to leverage World Bank funds by working with one or more of the municipalities that are being awarded funds. The timing in this instance may be off, but once the Foundation has proven preschool and home visiting programs, the opportunity to leverage funds would allow the Foundation to greatly expand its reach and influence.

Based primarily on what people I interviewed told me during my trip to Bulgaria, it is my impression that most Bulgarian preschool programs are not of high quality and none have been tested by high quality evaluations. It is impossible to know for certain without visiting a cross-section of the current preschool programs, but developing a high-quality curriculum that focuses on literacy, basic math skills, and socioemotional development and behavior would constitute a major leap forward and would, if done correctly, have broad application across Bulgaria.³⁸

Preventing Early Marriage and Early Pregnancy. In the U.S. and Europe, there is all but universal agreement that if births among teenagers and other young, unmarried women could be delayed, the young women (and perhaps the fathers) would be more likely to complete secondary education, obtain some post-secondary education, and then get a job before marrying and having babies.³⁹ Our research at Brookings shows that if young adults in the U.S. follow three rules of personal responsibility (complete high school, work full time, wait until age 21 and marry before having children), they will have only a 2 percent chance of winding up in poverty and a 74 percent chance of earning \$50,000 or more per year. By contrast, if they violate all three rules, their chances of winding up in poverty explode from 2 percent to 76 percent and their chances of earning \$50,000 or more plummet from 74 percent to 7 percent.⁴⁰ Given the differences in the educational and economic systems in the U.S. and Bulgaria, the specific figures in this U.S. analysis would not be expected to translate perfectly to Bulgaria. Even so, there is every reason to believe that these three rules of individual responsibility would have major impacts on Bulgarian, including Roma, adolescents and young adults. No matter

what the specific percentages might be, the Brookings study shows that progress without better decisions and harder work by individuals will be minimal. This is a succinct version of the Moynihan insight – even if societal conditions improve, individuals must be prepared to grasp the opportunity or progress will be minimal.

A key part of developing this kind of individual responsibility is avoiding pregnancy and early marriage as a teenager. A host of programs that help teenagers avoid pregnancy has been developed in the U.S. A thorough review of these programs by Douglas Kirby identified several programs that produced strong evidence of reducing sexual activity, reducing pregnancy, or both. Kirby also developed a profile of activities common to successful programs.⁴¹ Given Kirby's findings, as well as those of a recent comprehensive review of program models that have strong evidence of reducing teen pregnancy,⁴² it is hardly surprising that cost-benefit studies show that several approaches to reducing nonmarital births could save billions of dollars in spending on welfare programs in the U.S.⁴³

In the Bulgarian Roma context, a program to prevent pregnancy and early marriage should make sense, although great caution would be required to implement such a program. A prime tenet of European social policy is respect for all cultures. A component of Roma culture for centuries had been early marriage, often before age 15, although recent research in Bulgaria suggests the age of first marriage is increasing for the Roma.⁴⁴ Even so, when early marriage does occur, in most cases the young girl then drops out of school, leaving her with very little education and eligible only for jobs that require low skill levels such as street sweeping. In addition, although good data on this point are not available for the Bulgarian Roma, rates of divorce and poverty among adolescents who marry early are very high. As Bulgaria recovers from the financial crisis and, hopefully, returns to the rapid rate of economic growth that preceded the financial crisis, more and more jobs in the Bulgarian economy will require at least a high school education and many will require at least some post-secondary training. If the Roma are to participate on an equal basis in the Bulgarian economy, they must find ways to increase their level of education. Early marriage and childbearing are a direct threat to improving Roma education, especially among females. But since early marriage is a fundamental part of the culture of many Roma families, exceptional delicacy will be required to

construct programs that aim to at least get young people out of high school and employed before they begin to contemplate marriage.⁴⁵

It is reassuring that a number of important Roma leaders and organizations have tried to change the pattern of early marriage in Roma communities. When we met with Milen Milanov, the former coordinator for the Decade of Roma inclusion and an advisor to the Council of Ministers, he was firm in his conviction that reducing early marriages by young Roma women was a major goal underlying Roma inclusion. In fact, he told us that Bulgarian law prohibits marriage before age 18 and that he favored prosecuting parents who allowed their children to violate the law. The Amalipe Center (also called the Center for Interethnic Dialogue and Tolerance) in Veliko Tarnovo, a prominent Roma organization, has actually conducted a program to “prevent and reduce the number of early and forced marriage among certain traditional Roma communities in Bulgaria, Romania and Greece.”⁴⁶ Being conducted in cooperation with NGOs in Romania and Greece and supported by EU funds, the program aims to establish a network and partnership between NGOs and informal Roma leaders, conduct campaigns to increase public awareness of problems caused by early marriage, and work directly with Roma families to reduce early marriage.

A word is in order here about the importance of a careful consideration of early marriage and education for all young people in Bulgarian society. In traditional societies, early marriage and child bearing is not an impediment to the development of young women. In such societies, the role of women is often restricted to household duties and child-rearing responsibilities. But as advanced societies have become more and more dependent on technology, and as international competition and globalization have brought pressure on the economies of most nations to be efficient and productive, the value of education has increased substantially.⁴⁷ EU membership and free trade mean the Bulgarian economy will be forced to become more internationally competitive. Moreover, competition for the best jobs in Bulgaria will require post-secondary education. Not only will those who drop out of school be at a serious competitive disadvantage in this type of modern economy, but even those who complete high school will generally not be eligible for the best jobs. It does not follow that everyone should have a college education. But for large demographic groups like the Roma, complete

integration into society requires rough economic equality between the Roma and the Bulgarian majority which in turn requires rough parity in educational achievement. In modern economies, equal economic and social opportunity rest on equal educational outcomes.

Given the data reviewed above, a major goal of Bulgarian national policy and of the Roma community must be to help women get at least a high school education and then help as many women as possible work on post-secondary credentials. This journey will be made exceptionally difficult or impossible if Roma adolescents have extensive household responsibilities, including child rearing, that inevitably accompany marriage and child bearing.

The unfettered movement of Roma women into higher education and the workforce will have great advantages, not just for the women and their families, but for Bulgarian society. Experience in the nations with advanced economies shows that women make major contributions to every field of enterprise they enter. Women generally outperform men on measures of education and perform at least as well as men in most jobs.⁴⁸ It follows that any society or any ethnic group within a society that allows its females to have their education and workforce participation blocked will pay a steep price. An essential part of Roma economic integration and family economic stability will depend on the complete integration of women into educational institutions and the nation's economy. Early pregnancy is a huge threat to inclusion.

If the Foundation wishes to enter this difficult area of program intervention, any programs the Foundation might support should be built around three principles. First, the programs should be implemented with the Roma playing lead roles. Second, programs should approach both the community and young people with a message about the importance of schooling and the need to delay marriage and childbirth without demeaning the traditional practice of early marriage. The focus must be on increasing opportunity, not attacking traditional cultural patterns. Increasing choice for young women is the goal. The third principle follows – the programs should be conducted in such a way that they avoid compulsion. All children and families that participate should do so with full understanding of the goals and methods of the program and should do so at their own choice.

Research has shown that effective pregnancy prevention programs tend to have five characteristics. Specifically, to maximize effectiveness, programs should:

- Focus on both abstinence and contraception
- Provide information about the beliefs and norms surrounding sexual activity and the advantages of delaying sex and pregnancy
- Teach and rehearse skills in avoiding sexual advances by partners
- Provide mentoring by adults
- Offer opportunities to participate in community activities, especially during after-school hours.

It is difficult to know whether these characteristics of effective programs in the U.S. would translate well to the Bulgarian Roma context, but a reasonable way for the Foundation to proceed would be to provide a grant for experts, preferably with substantial involvement of Roma educators and community leaders, to develop a curriculum that emphasizes as many of the proven elements outlined above as seem appropriate to use with Roma teenagers. There are already a few pregnancy prevention programs now being used with Roma teenagers; these programs should be examined to determine whether some of the elements are similar to those above and whether the individuals and organizations using the programs support elements of their approach because they seem to work well with Roma teens. Once the curriculum has been developed, the Foundation should support clinical trials in two or three locations to determine whether the curriculum has an impact on sexual activity or pregnancy or other important outcomes. Within three or four years it should be possible to have a teen pregnancy prevention curriculum proven to reduce early family formation and pregnancy.

It might also be necessary to design a carefully constructed approach to introduce the program to Roma community leaders and parents. If the experience of the Foundation-supported program in Stara Zagora is an example, many Roma parents will be open to a message about how important it is to their child's development and well-being to avoid marriage and pregnancy until the child's education is completed. Working with Roma leaders like those in Stara Zagora and those from the Amalipe Center described above, will provide insights and concrete advice about how to approach Roma parents.

I regard teen pregnancy reduction as first and foremost an education program because teen pregnancy is a major threat to the education of young Roma girls. Taken together, the three programs recommended here – developing and testing a home visiting program, a preschool program, and an early marriage and teen pregnancy reduction program – would have major impacts on the education of Roma children. Combined with the Foundation’s other expenditures on education, implementing these proposals would constitute a formidable set of investments in the future of the Bulgarian Roma community.

Secondary Recommendation: Employment Programs

In both Europe and the U.S., welfare-to-work programs have become surprisingly popular since approximately the mid-1990s.⁴⁹ Often referred to as “work activation” in Europe, specific pro-work policies vary from nation to nation. What they have in common is that people who apply for public assistance – and in several countries unemployment benefits as well – are required to perform work for a certain number of days per month. The major purpose of this policy is to encourage people to exchange welfare benefits for employment. The underlying logic of the work requirement is that many people will realize that as long as they are required to work for their welfare benefit, which is usually of relatively low monetary value, they might as well find a real job on their own. The work requirement also has the effect of reducing the practice of some welfare recipients of collecting welfare while having a job that provides them with unreported income. In addition, many nonworkers (especially those who are young and have little work experience) need work experience so they can develop the skills and habits that are a prerequisite for productive employment. Another motivation for these programs is that most of the EU nations have elaborate social welfare policies that are threatening the financial solvency of their governments. For this reason, the EU countries, led in many respects by the Netherlands,⁵⁰ have changed their public insurance and welfare policies to save money by keeping as many people as possible in the labor force and off welfare or retirement programs.⁵¹

In addition to various requirements that encourage or require the able-bodied to work, the U.S. and almost all European nations have what are often called “work support benefits” which serve to subsidize the earnings of low-income workers. These programs

also provide a positive work incentive that draws workers into the labor force because they supplement earnings. In most countries, the level of welfare benefits and the package of work supports are designed so that work even at low wages produces more income (when earnings are combined with work support benefits) than staying on welfare.

Reflecting its consistency with these work activation policies of most EU nations, since 2003 the Bulgarian system of social benefits has, at least on paper, required work. Called “From Social Assistance to Employment,” the single biggest program run by the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, the program places unemployed people who apply for social benefits in jobs or in job preparation activities (see Appendix B). In 2010, about 39,000 people participated in the program. There are a total of 80 regional programs that provide these employment opportunities.⁵² Some analysts claim that the required work, such as picking up trash, street sweeping, and gardening is demeaning and that only the Roma are forced into these types of work.⁵³

Except by anecdote, there is no way to know whether this and similar charges about the program are correct. When we met with Rositsa Stelianova, the Executive Director of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy Employment Agency, who has overall responsibility for the program at the national level, we found that she made strong claims about the program’s impacts on employment. Unfortunately, it is difficult to tell whether the program is helping people get real jobs, how long they retain those jobs, and whether some people are diverted from social benefits because they have other options and want to avoid work. In short, like so many of the programs we have reviewed here, there is little reliable information about whether the From Social Assistance to Employment program actually increases employment, how long people stay in jobs, how much money they make, and whether some families are worse off because of program sanctions.

If the direction now being set by EU nations and the U.S. is any indication, organizing social programs so that program requirements and sanctions provide a negative incentive (losing benefits) for work while work support programs that provide a positive incentive (adding work support benefits to earnings) for work is the wave of the future. After years of allowing able-bodied people to believe they were entitled to

guaranteed welfare benefits, EU nations are now reforming their programs so that welfare benefits are not seen as an entitlement and more people work. As a result, the percentage of the adult population with jobs in many EU nations has reached the highest level ever.⁵⁴ It would be greatly to Bulgaria's advantage, and to the advantage of Bulgarian minority groups including the Roma, for the nation's public policy to do everything possible to encourage work. But to create and run work programs that are consistently effective, the programs must be evaluated and must have performance benchmarks that are reliably measured.

The Foundation could be of great help in this regard. Specifically, the Foundation should attempt to work with the national government and selected municipal governments to develop ways to evaluate these programs and use the results of evaluation to improve program performance. Given the emphasis of the EU on program evaluation,⁵⁵ and the EU Commission's enumeration of funds available from the EU for Roma inclusion programs, it should be possible to obtain funding for evaluations of this type. Perhaps the Foundation could provide seed money to collect and summarize available information on how the programs are now being evaluated and then develop a design for an evaluation that could be used to study the program in selected municipalities. As we have seen repeatedly, it is not enough to pass a law stipulating that people must work. The programs implementing the law must be evaluated and data that allow continuous monitoring of program impacts must be routinely collected. Again, there seems to be a good chance that EU funds would be available for conducting a rigorous evaluation of Bulgaria's work program.

Other Recommendations

Adoption. A large number of Roma children now live in Bulgaria's 130 specialized institutions for children.⁵⁶ These children are at high risk for a host of health and developmental problems. In fact, in nations with extensive research on children in institutions and street children, experts consider these two groups to be at greater risk of serious long-term problems than almost any other group of children.⁵⁷

Adoption holds the potential to reduce the number of unwanted children. Although not a panacea, it results in children leaving a difficult or even dangerous environment and entering the positive environment usually provided by an average

family. Research shows that the problems of children reared without their parents continue into young adulthood as they experience higher rates of unemployment, arrests, nonmarital births, suicide, and unemployment than adult children reared by their parents or parent.⁵⁸ Children reared by adoptive parents have a level of problems on most of these dimensions that falls between the level of children reared by their own parents and children reared in orphanages or children who wind up on the streets, and children adopted early in life look very much like children reared by their own parents.⁵⁹

In the U.S. and most European nations, adoption has long been an alternative for children whose parents abuse or neglect them. In 1997, U.S. federal policymakers, with considerable support from state and local governments, passed legislation designed to increase adoption rates. The legislation highlights the steps that governments can take to increase adoption rates:

- Take deliberate action within a reasonable period of time to terminate the rights of the biological parents and remove any other obstacles to making the child available for adoption;
- Have a system in place to investigate prospective adoptive parents to be sure they meet a set of criteria intended to eliminate parents who might abuse or neglect adopted children;
- Have a system in place to help adoptive children and parents adapt to each other, especially in the first year or two of the adoption;
- Provide cash incentives for families to adopt;
- Provide cash incentives to government agencies that increase their adoption rates.

Following passage of the 1997 legislation, information on changes in the frequency of adoption in which public agencies were involved indicates that the reforms, and especially the financial incentive to states, had a major impact on the frequency of adoption. Following the passage of the 1997 legislation, adoptions increased from 28,000 in 1997 to 51,000 in 2000 and have held more or less steady at the higher level since.⁶⁰

In addition to the measures designed to increase adoption rates included in the 1997 legislation, an effective and fair adoption system must ensure that biological parents are given a chance to end whatever problems brought them to public attention but without waiting so long that the child lives in suspension for several years. As a rough measure,

many states in the U.S. adopt the unofficial goal of reaching a decision about whether to terminate parental rights within two years (and in egregious abuse or neglect cases even sooner). A good system also includes procedures to ensure that adoptive parents can and will provide a positive rearing environment for their adoptive child and, especially in the case of adoptive children with special needs, provides counseling, health benefits, and other assistance to adoptive parents after the adoption is completed.

My short visit did not permit adequate time to examine current adoption procedures in Bulgaria. But especially now that Bulgaria is trying to close as many orphanages as possible, the need for effective adoption programs is greater than ever.⁶¹ If the Foundation elects to pursue the possibility of investing in a program that would increase adoption rates, I would strongly recommend a careful study of current adoption procedures in Bulgaria and interviews with officials, experts, and parents who have adopted children. Based on this information, the Foundation could develop a set of adoption guidelines and work with the government and private organizations to implement the guidelines as broadly as possible.

Building a Culture of Program Evaluation. Dr. Svetla Kostadinova, the Executive Director of the Institute for Market Economics in Sofia, told us that virtually no programs in Bulgaria had been well evaluated. Here it is necessary to draw a sharp distinction between program evaluation and process accountability. By all indications, EU authorities are rigorous about ensuring that funds are spent as intended. But ensuring against fraud and other misuse of funds is not program evaluation. Program evaluation is the systematic collection of evidence on program outcomes. In the case of education, important outcomes include years of schooling, grades, test scores, and college (or other post-secondary education) entry and graduation. In the case of teen pregnancy programs, outcomes include attitudes on sexual practices; age of sexual debut, frequency of sex, number of sexual partners; and pregnancy and abortion rates. In a high quality evaluation, these measures are compared between a group that participated in the program and a group that did not, with group membership determined by random assignment.

Many program operators and sponsors regard evaluation as a luxury that consumes resources that could be devoted to programs. But evaluation is not a luxury. There is no substitute for knowing what the goals of a program are and whether the

program is achieving its goals. This claim is especially true for foundations that are attempting to achieve social goals. Without evaluation, there is simply no way to be certain that investments are paying off. Equally important, without evaluation, foundations and governments will not know if their programs need to be reformed in order to achieve their goals.

I recommend that the Foundation insist on evaluation of most or at least some of its most important programs. Every program should have clearly specified goals, the goals should be stated in terms that are measurable, and program operators should collect and report data on those measures. In a perfect world, the Foundation would require that its major investments be evaluated by scientific evaluation designs, especially through the use of random assignment to an experimental and control group. The difficulty and expense of conducting scientific program evaluations means that not every program can be evaluated this way, but as far as I could tell few if any programs in Bulgaria have been evaluated by scientific designs. The Foundation would make a dramatic contribution to understanding social programs in Bulgaria if it would initiate a tradition of careful program evaluation. Indeed, if the Foundation adopted this recommendation, I would further recommend that after a year or two of evaluating its most important programs, the Foundation adopt the goal of trying to influence the Bulgarian government, the EU, the World Bank, and other program sponsors to require rigorous evaluation of their most important programs as well. The EU is already moving in this direction and my guess is that the EU officials would not only welcome the Foundation's emphasis on evaluation but would attempt to have its social investments evaluated as well. The Foundation could make a seminal contribution to the success of social policy in Bulgaria by establishing itself as the beacon for investing money in programs that are supported by hard-nosed evaluations of program success.

Developing Roma Leadership. Perhaps the part of my visit to Bulgaria that was the most encouraging was meeting accomplished and ambitious Roma leaders. I was fortunate to have talks with five impressive leaders (including one husband-wife team), most of whom I have corresponded with since returning to the U.S. Here is a thumbnail sketch of the five leaders I met:

- **Milena and Gancho Illiev.** This husband and wife team established the World without Borders NGO in Stara Zagora in 2000 and has originated and directed its programs ever since. Their home office and operations are located in the midst of the fourth largest Roma ghetto in Bulgaria. Their center works in association with a doctor who runs a clinic in the ghetto, organizes parents and grandparents to lobby for improved education for their children, has recently established a neighborhood child care center, and conducts a wide variety of activities to convince government to invest more in the schools. Gancho, who was raised in a Stara Zagora Roma neighborhood, has an MA in Social Work and Mediation. He currently heads the project “Effective Approaches to Promote Early Childhood Education in High-Risk Communities” funded by the Foundation. He also heads a health project in Stara Zagora funded by the Ministry of Health. He was recently selected to co-chair the Health Group of the Commission for Roma Integration that is writing a national strategy for Roma integration. Milena has a midwife degree as well as a BA and an MA in Social Management and is now working on a Ph.D. in education at Sofia University. In addition to working with her husband to run the World without Borders programs, she heads a project funded by the Ministry of Health designed to prevent tuberculosis among street children.
- **Nikolay Kirilov.** Mr. Kirilov heads a community-based organization called the Roma-Lom Foundation, founded in 1995 and located in a Lom neighborhood. Since arriving in Lom, Mr. Kirilov has not only established his NGO, but has also been active in local politics and has been elected to the Municipal Council. In 2003 he was elected by fellow members of the Council to be the chair. He has also convinced other Roma leaders to run for the Council and at least two of them have been elected. Kirilov was recently selected to co-chair the Employment and Social Inclusion Group of the Commission for Roma Integration that is writing a national strategy for Roma integration.
- **Milen Milanov.** Until recently, Mr. Milanov, age 33, was the coordinator for the Decade of Roma Inclusion and an advisor to the Bulgarian Council of Ministers. He resigned his position because of a lack of action or even serious attention to the Decade planning by the Council of Ministers. Mr. Milanov graduated from the

International Business School in Botevgrad in 2001 and has been active in several NGOs as project manager and has also served as a deputy mayor. He is now the national coordinator of a Roma NGO coalition that advocates and lobbies at the national and local level for Roma inclusion. He is also author of *Manual on Mentoring* which will be published in August of this year. He was recently selected to co-chair the Mechanism for Implementation and Monitoring Group of the Commission for Roma Integration.

- **Mitko Dokov.** Mr. Dokov is the founder of the Regional Roma Union Foundation. With a degree in social work from the Burgas Free University (Burgaski Svoboden Universitet), Mr. Dokov has been guiding the Regional Roma Union Foundation to assist the Roma people in the Burgas region for over 12 years with the primary focus areas of integration of Roma into Bulgarian society, HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis prevention, anti-trafficking programs, and assisting ex-convicts. Since he started the Foundation, Mr. Dokov has become a leader on the national level for addressing Roma issues. He is a member of the National Council for Cooperation of Ethnic and Integration Issues under the Council of Ministers. He is also a member of the Interdepartmental Expert Working Group to Develop a National Strategy for Roma under the Council of Ministers and a member of the Interdepartmental Expert Working Group to Develop a National Strategy to Combat Poverty and Social Exclusion to the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy.

It should be possible for the American for Bulgaria Foundation to help expand the number of Roma leaders and to help the leaders establish an organization that can attempt to bring some coherence to the various strategies that might be pursued to achieve further Roma integration. The Foundation is already investing in several programs that are aimed at helping Roma leaders achieve college and advanced degrees. The Foundation should do everything possible to nurture the growth of Roma leaders and to encourage them to establish their own goals for the Bulgarian Roma people.

In addition to continuing to fund or even expand support for programs that nurture the development of Roma leadership, it might be useful to appoint a small group of four or five Roma leaders to advise the Foundation on the home visiting, preschool, teen

pregnancy prevention, and work programs should the Foundation decide to implement any of the recommendations made here. The advantage of such an advisory group is that, if selected carefully, it can make useful recommendations about the substance of the intervention programs as they are being developed. In addition, all the interventions will require buy-in from local Roma communities. Having an advisory group of Roma leaders will increase the credibility of the various programs and advisory board members can help the Foundation establish relationships and consult with local Roma leaders in the sites in which the programs are implemented.

Land and Agricultural Initiative. Although it would be a mistake to boil down Roma inclusion to one outcome, under any set of assumptions Roma inclusion will not occur until a higher share of the population is employed and self sufficient. One of the more successful programs that has helped Roma families gain a substantial measure of financial independence is the Land and Agricultural Initiative that already enjoys support from the America for Bulgaria Foundation.

Over the course of more than a decade, the Land and Agricultural Initiative has developed an impressive set of procedures to help the Roma buy or rent land, develop a business plan, provide technical assistance in learning to farm productively, and provide participants with loans to buy tools needed to farm efficiently. Since 2001, Land has enrolled 153 families in its program and created contracts for land, equipment, or new businesses worth around 200,000 Bulgarian leva. About 100 of these contracts have been repaid by the Roma participants; the delinquent or late payment rate is only 15 percent.⁶² Land has increased the number of families with signed contracts every year for ten consecutive years, adding an average of about 14 families each year. There are now a total of 76 families actively involved with the program, and the Land Foundation believes it has full command of its approach and can increase the total number of families they work with as soon as they have the resources.

In a recent report to the World Bank and the Open Society, Land identified several factors that its leaders believe have led to success in their agriculture program. The first is that Land carefully selects program participants. There is not a program that accepts anyone who wants to participate. Rather, they study the background of the program applicants and determine whether they are capable of mastering the knowledge

about farming and business plans the Foundation will offer them. They also make a calculated judgment about whether the applicants are willing to take risks and to show the type of entrepreneurial zeal required to begin and maintain their own small farming business. Another vital factor for program success is the nature of the Roma community in which the participant lives. Years of experience have shown that if community leaders are not respected and involved in the program, it will be difficult to attract residents to participate. Similarly, if community leaders are divided into competing factions, successful implementation of the program will be hindered. Clearly, only an organization that knows the characteristics of individuals it intends to enroll and the nature of the community in which it works would be able to conduct a project as complex as this one.

A program of this complexity and high level of skill and experience by program planners and managers cannot be expected to suddenly expand to enroll thousands of Roma families. Rather, the program should receive enough resources to grow at a steady pace by working in additional communities over the next several years while gradually expanding their staff and training them. If done with caution and intense planning, the Land Foundation programs seem ripe for expansion. There are limits to the potential for expansion for a program of this type, but any program that promotes entrepreneurial activity and land ownership like the Land project can make a modest but important contribution to the development of the Roma community.

Gathering and Reporting Statistics. Most modern governments accept responsibility for collecting and reporting data that broadly define the status and condition of the nation. These data include information on the number of people by age, region, ethnic group, and other characteristics. Figures on the well-being of the population, again usually reported by age, region, and ethnic group, are of central importance and allow officials, researchers, and citizens to trace the nation's progress in promoting the well-being of the population in such important areas as years of schooling completed, average income, infant mortality, and many other basic measures of well-being. Without valid statistics of this type, broken down especially by ethnic group, it will be difficult or impossible to measure the effects of all the Roma initiatives now underway in association with the EU, the World Bank, the Open Society, the America for Bulgaria Foundation, and the Bulgarian government.

In several of our interviews with government officials, the view was expressed that statistics that identify specific ethnic groups are illegal to collect. Indeed, Article 5 of the Law on Personal Data Protection, enacted in 2002, does impose limits on handling of personal data. The law appears to allow some flexibility in collection and use of personal data, but the exact interpretation of the law is unclear. I would recommend that the Foundation obtain a legal analysis of the law that produces a clear specification of what data can be collected, by whom, and to what end. As a recent report from the EU Parliament argues, collection and use of population statistics by ethnic group is absolutely essential.⁶³ If the legal interpretation of Bulgarian law reveals that there are restrictions on the collection of data by ethnic group, the Foundation should explore ways to amend the law. The importance of this issue would be difficult to exaggerate; without data on the Roma and other ethnic groups in the Bulgarian population, evaluating the success of investments and progress in promoting Roma inclusion will be difficult or even impossible.

Conclusion

The entry of Bulgaria and other CEE countries into the European Union has had a radical impact on the policy of these governments on inclusion of the Roma and other minorities. Bulgaria has enacted a set of laws that, if fully implemented, would result in greatly improved inclusion in the social, educational, political, and economic life of the nation by the Roma and other minorities. However, virtually everyone who has studied the implementation of these laws and the current condition of the Roma population has concluded that the government is not aggressively implementing its own laws and that the situation of the Roma has improved only slightly if at all since the fall of the Communist government in 1989 and Bulgaria's entry into the EU in 2007. Some authorities even argue that their position has deteriorated in some respects.⁶⁴ But the lack of serious advances for the Roma is not a reason for despair. Rather, based on historical experience, progress in making momentous societal changes like those involved in integrating a previously outcast social group into society is measured in decades and not years. Continuing progress will depend on the actions of enlightened individuals and groups in their own spheres of influence to help the Roma achieve inclusion.

This prescription applies with special force to foundations, which have been and continue to be a voice of reason and progress in Bulgaria's halting attempts to achieve Roma inclusion. The America for Bulgaria Foundation has been especially active on many fronts to help the Roma advance their prospects and achievements as individuals and as a community. This report, based on visits to several Bulgarian Roma communities, Bulgarian NGOs, and government officials, as well as an extensive literature review and discussions with Roma leaders, identifies a set of programs and actions the Foundation could undertake to increase their already considerable influence in Bulgaria's movement to achieve Roma inclusion.

It is, of course, up to the Foundation's Board to make decisions about the most productive role the Foundation can play in Roma inclusion. However, developing programs that work – especially education programs – while modeling exemplary methods of program evaluation for others to follow, and forging relationships with other funders, NGOs, the government, and Roma leaders to expand the reach of the Foundation's proven programs is a potentially fruitful course.

Endnotes

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² Chiara Crepaldi and others, *The Social Situation of the Roma and Their Improved Access to the Labour Market in the EU*, Milano, Italy: Istituto per la Ricerca Sociale, 2008.

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⁴ Johathan Bradshaw and John Holmes, "Child Poverty in Bulgaria: A Report for UNICEF" (Working Paper No. EC 2409), York, UK: University of York, Social Policy Research Unit, March 2010.

⁵ Fonseca, *Bury Me Standing*, especially Chapter 8 and the Afterword; Amnesty International, "Document – Europe: Discrimination Against Roma," Media Briefing, October 25, 2007; available at <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/EUR01/012/2007/en/5277fd2a-d35c-11dd-a329>; Religious Tolerance, "Discrimination against the Roma: Recent Media Accounts & Human Rights Reports during 2009," available at: <http://www.religioustolerance.org/roma6.htm>.

⁶ Gerda Falkner and Loiver Treib, "Three Worlds of Compliance or Four? The EU-15 Compared with New Member States," *Journal of Common Market Studies* 46, no. 2 (2008): 293-313; Oliver Treib and Gerda Falkner, "Making Dead Letters Live: Strategies to Improve the Effectiveness of EU Legislation in Central and Eastern Europe," Paper presented at the EUSA's 10th Biennial International Conference, May 17-19, 2007, Montreal, Canada; for a strong criticism of the achievements of Bulgarian policy toward the Roma, see Ivan Ivanov, "No Progress on Roma Issues in Bulgaria," November 25, 2008, available at <http://www.erionet.org/site/print100122.html>.

⁷ For the Bulgarian plan, see: <http://www.romadecade.org/files/downloads/Decade%20Documents/National%20Action%20Plan-Bulgaria.pdf>.

⁸ See <http://wee.romaeducationfund.hu/rer-one-page>. The specific goals of the Roma Education Fund are to: 1) ensure access to compulsory education by Roma children; 2) improve the quality of education; 3) implement integration and desegregation activities for Roma children; 4) expand access to preschool education, and 5) increase access to secondary, post-secondary, and adult education

⁹ Gerda Falkner and Loiver Treib, “Making Dead Letters Live”; for a recent public episode of outright discrimination against the Roma in apparent violation of several EU principles and policies, consider French President Nicolas Sarkozy’s expulsion of Roma from France in July 2011, bringing to about 10,000 the number of Roma expelled from France in the previous year; see Matthew Saltmarsh, “Sarkozy Toughens on Illegal Roma,” *New York Times*, July 29, 2010.

¹⁰ Chiara Crepaldi and others, *The Social Situation of the Roma*.

¹¹ See endnote 5.

¹² European Commission, *An EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020* (Brussels: Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee, and the Committee of the Regions, April 5, 2011). Available at http://www.eu2011.hu/files/bveu/documnets/An_EU_Framework_for_National_Roma_Integration_Strategies_up_to_2020.pdf.

¹³ Rorke, *Beyond Rhetoric*, p. 27.

¹⁴ Rorke, *Beyond Rhetoric*, p. 31.

¹⁵ Rorke, *Beyond Rhetoric*, p. 21.

¹⁶ European Commission, *An EU Framework*.

¹⁷ Staff, “UN Expert Urges Bulgaria to Turn Roma Policies into Concrete Action,” *Sofia Echo*, July 12, 2011; available at: http://www.sofiaecho.com/2011/07/12/1121781_un-expert-urges-bulgaria-to-turn-roma-policies-into-concrete-action.

¹⁸ William Julius Wilson, *More than Just Race: Being Black and Poor in the Inner City* (New York: Norton, 2009).

¹⁹ In discussions of the U.S. civil rights movement and the Roma inclusion movement in Bulgaria, the question often arises of how comparable the situation of U.S. blacks in the 1960s is with the situation of the Roma in CEE countries after roughly 2000. My impression is that, as a community, the Roma are further behind their countrymen than blacks were and that discrimination against the Roma in the CEE nations seems more intense. But in many respects the situations of the two groups are similar, especially in their isolation in ghettos and rural areas, the lack of quality education, poor health status and poor health care, inferior housing, and the lack of adequate income and wealth in their communities. The need for self help, government help, and a more sympathetic civil society are also similar. A striking difference that allows some room for optimism about the fate of the Roma people in Bulgaria and throughout Europe is that at the time of the U.S. civil rights movement and since, the black family has been undergoing historic changes. Specifically, the decline of the married couple family, without question the best environment for rearing children, has been catastrophic for blacks and poor whites. Today, more than 70 percent of American black children are born outside marriage and about half of the rest experience their parents’ divorce before the age of 18. By contrast, the Roma family appears to have sustained its historic strength and the majority of Roma children live with and are reared by both their parents. As the success of Asian groups in nearly every nation to which they migrate shows, close and supportive families that value education can form the basis from which to launch educational and economic success for entire ethnic groups. The strength of Roma families could constitute an important resource in the battle to achieve inclusion. See: Ron Haskins and Isabel Sawhill, *Creating an Opportunity Society* (Washington, DC: Brookings, 2009), Chapter 10; Sara McLanahan and others, editors, *The Future of Children: Fragile Families*, 20, no. 2(2010); Brad Wilcox, editor, “Why Marriage Matters: Thirty Conclusions from the Social Sciences,” New York: Institute for American Values, 2011.

²⁰ Ruth Benedict, *Patterns of Culture* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1934), Chapters 2, 3, and 7.

²¹ Daniel Patrick Moynihan, *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Labor, 1965).

²² Lee Rainwater and William L. Yancey, *The Moynihan Report and the Politics of Controversy* (Cambridge, M.I.T. Press, 1967).

²³ Dimitar Chobanov, Svetla Kostadinova, and Georgi Angelov, “Expected Long-Term Budgetary Benefits to Roma Education in Bulgaria,” Sofia: Institute for Market Economics, June 2007.

²⁴ Haskins and Sawhill, *Creating an Opportunity Society*, Chapter 5; Jeanne Brooks-Gunn and Lisa B. Markman, “The Contribution of Parenting to Ethnic and Racial Gaps in School Readiness,” *The Future of Children*, 15, no. 1 (2005): 139-168; Annette Lareau, *Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race, and Family Life* (Berkeley: University of California, 2003).

²⁵ Observing in the homes of young children of professional parents and parents on welfare, Hart and Risley found, based on two and one-half years of observing and 1,318 transcripts of every word uttered to children in their homes over this period, that children of professional parents were exposed to about 8 million more words per year than children of parents on welfare; see Betty Hart and Todd R. Risley, *Meaningful Differences in the Everyday Experiences of Young American Children* (Baltimore, MD: Brookes, 1995).

²⁶ Arthur J. Reynolds and others, “Long-term Effects of an Early Childhood Intervention on Educational Achievement and Juvenile Arrests: A 15-Year Follow-up of Low-Income Children in Public Schools,” *Journal of the American Medical Association* 285, no. 18 (2001); Craig T. Ramey and Frances A. Campbell, “Preventative Education for High-Risk Children: Cognitive Consequences of the Carolina Abecedarian Project,” *American Journal of Mental Deficiency* 88, no. 6 (1984); Lawrence J. Schweinhart, Helen V. Barnes, and David P. Weikart, *Significant Benefits: The High/Scope Perry Preschool Study through Age 27* (Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope, 1993).

²⁷ Kimberly S. Howard and Jeanne Brooks-Gunn, “The Role of Home-Visiting Programs in Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect,” *The Future of Children* 19, no. 2 (2009): 119-146.

²⁸ A list of the program elements on which the program is based can be found at: <http://www.nursefamilypartnership.org/Communities/Model-elements>.

²⁹ David Olds and others, “Long-term Effects of Nurse Home Visitation on Children’s Criminal and Antisocial Behavior: 15-Year Follow-up of a Randomized Controlled Trial,” *JAMA* 280, no. 14 (1998): 1238-1244.

³⁰ For a comprehensive review of the Olds’ program and the results of three separate random-assignment studies conducted in three U.S. cities, see: David L. Olds, “The Nurse-Family Partnership: An Evidence-Based Preventive Intervention,” *Infant Mental Health Journal* 27, no. 1 (2006): 5-25.

³¹ Howard and Brooks-Gunn. “The Role of Home-Visiting Programs.”

³² I noticed during my visit to Bulgaria that there was some confusion over the definition of “preschool programs” and “kindergarten.” Here I follow the convention of using “kindergarten” to refer to the last year before entry to public schools (usually the fifth year of life) and “preschool” to refer to any program that enrolls children during any of the years before public school entry.

³³ James J. Heckman, “The Case for Investing in Disadvantaged Young Children,” in *Big Ideas for Children: Investing in Our Nation’s Future*, edited by Bruce Lesley (Washington, DC: First Focus, 2009); Haskins and Sawhill, *Creating an Opportunity Society*, Chapter 8; Robert C. Pianta and others, “The Effects of Preschool Education: What We Knew, How Public Policy Is or Is Not Aligned with the Evidence Base, and What We Need to Know,” *Psychological Science in the Public Interest* 10, no. 2(2009): 49-88.

³⁴ For an overview of benefit-cost studies, see Lynn A. Karoly, M. Rebecca Kilburn, and Jill S. Cannon, *Early Childhood Interventions: Proven Results, Future Promise* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 2005), Chapter 4.

³⁵ Michael Puma and others, *Head Start Impact Study: Final Report*, Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, 2010; see also Ron Haskins and W. Steven Barnett, editors, *Investing in Young Children: New Directions in Federal Preschool and Early Childhood Education* (Washington, DC: Brookings, 2010).

³⁶ The grants are: One step to the Future; Education – The Basic Code for Success; A World of Games and Learning; Access to Kindergartens for Roma Children in Sofia; Effective Approaches for Encouraging Early Education in High-Risk Communities; Together in Kindergarten, Together in First Grade; Equal Start on the Threshold of First Grade. The Dimitrovgrad project also included children who had never enrolled in kindergarten because their family did not have the funds to pay the fee needed to enroll. Half were 5 year olds and half were 6 year olds; the 6 year olds are considered “preschool” or pre-first grade. The Equal Opportunities Association also brought new children into kindergarten/preschool who were not previously attending. Again, these were mostly older kids aged 5 or 6. The World without Borders program enrolled the youngest children (either 4 or 5 years old, with a few totally unprepared 6 year olds that needed help before transitioning to a “real” kindergarten.) Foundation funds have been devoted to simply increase the

number of children in preschool or to increase their attendance if they are already enrolled. No Foundation funds have been devoted to curriculum development.

³⁷ See “33 Bulgarian Municipalities Receive Funding for Social Services to Small Children from Poor Families,” World Bank, May 31, 2011, available at <http://www.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/ECAEXT/BULGARIAE>.

³⁸ Recent research in the U.S. has shown that periodic coaching of preschool classroom teachers by master teachers is effective in improving the teachers’ classroom skills. At least one study has also shown that the children’s test scores increased after the teachers’ skills had been improved. See Donna Bryant and others, “The Quince-PFI Study: An Evaluation of a Promising Model for Child Care Provider Training,” Chapel Hill, NC: FPG Child Development Institute, September 2009; Jean I. Layzer and others, “Evaluation of Child Care Subsidy Strategies: Findings from Project Upgrade in Miami-Dade County,” Cambridge: Abt Associates, March 2007.

³⁹ Carmen Solomon-Fears, “Nonmarital Childbearing: Trends, Reasons, and Public Policy Interventions” (Order Cold RL34756), Washington, DC, Congressional Research Service, 2008.

⁴⁰ Based on calculations conducted by my Brookings colleague Isabelle Sawhill using the Annual Social and Economic Supplement to the U.S. Census Bureau’s Current Population Survey. See also: Adam Thomas and Isabel Sawhill, “For Richer or for Poorer: Marriage as an Anti-Poverty Strategy” *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* 21, no. 4 (Autumn 2002): 587-599.

⁴¹ Douglas Kirby, *Emerging Answers: Research Findings on Programs to Reduce Teen Pregnancy* (Washington, DC: National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, May 2001).

⁴² See: <http://www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/index.html>; click on “Teen pregnancy prevention”; then click on “pregnancy prevention research evidence review”; then click on “Programs for replication- intervention implementation reports;” this website gives the results of a comprehensive review of the teen pregnancy intervention literature by Mathematic Policy Research; the review uncovers 28 model programs that have evidence of producing impacts.

⁴³ Emily Monea and Adam Thomas, “Unintended Pregnancy and Taxpayer Spending,” *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health* 43, no. 2(2011): 88-93.

⁴⁴ Amalipe Center, “Women Destinies,” Sofia: Author, undated. Available at http://amalipe.com/files/publications/jensky_sydbi_eng_1.pdf.

⁴⁵ During my interview with Milen Milanov, the former coordinator for the Decade of Roma Inclusion for the Council of Ministers, Mr. Milanov told me that the law in Bulgaria was that people had to be age 18 before they can marry. He takes this law and the importance of delaying marriage for the development of Roma girls so seriously that he favors prosecuting parents who allow their children to marry before age 18.

⁴⁶ Amalipe Center, “Women Destinies.”

⁴⁷ Claudia Goldin and Lawrence F. Katz, *The Race between Education and Technology* (Cambridge: Harvard, 2008).

⁴⁸ Hanna Rosin, “The End of Men,” *Atlantic*, July/August 2010.

⁴⁹ Ron Haskins, “Balancing Work and Solidarity in the Western Democracies,” Berlin, Social Science Research Center Berlin, 2010.

⁵⁰ Jelle Visser and Anton Hemerijck, *The Dutch Miracle: Job Growth, Welfare Reform and Corporatism in the Netherlands* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University, 1999).

⁵¹ For an overview of the workfare policies in several EU nations and the U.S., see Ivar Lodemel and Heather Rickey, editors, ‘An Offer You Can’t Refuse:’ *Workfare in International Perspective* (Bristol, UK: Policy Press, 2001).

⁵² Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, *Yearbook 2010* (Sofia, Bulgaria, Author, 2010), p. 28.

⁵³ Ekaterina Marinova, “From Social Assistance to Social Employment: New Trends in the Application of the Bulgaria Social Assistance Act for Low Income Families and Social Assistance Users from Roma Origin,” CARE International, Sofia, Bulgaria, 2004; available at:

<http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/nispacee/unpan018444.pdf>.

⁵⁴ Haskins, *Balancing Work and Solidarity*, p. 25, Figure 4a.

⁵⁵ European Commission, “Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, Brussels: Author, May 2011, pp. 13-14.

⁵⁶ According to the Bulgarian State Agency for Child Protection, 5,698 children lived in these institutions. Unfortunately, official statistics do not include data on how many of the children are Roma. See <http://sacp.government.bg/programi-dokladi/dokladi/>.

⁵⁷ Judith Samuels and others, "Homeless Children: Update on Research, Policy, Programs, and Opportunities," Washington, DC, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, May 2010.

⁵⁸ Nicholas Zill, "Adoption from Foster Care: Aiding Children while Saving Public Money," Washington, DC: Brookings, 2011.

⁵⁹ Rose M. Kreider, "Adopted Children and Stepchildren: 2000," Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau, October 2003; see also <http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~adoption/topics/adoptionstatistics.htm>.

⁶⁰ Zill, "Adoption from Foster Care," p. 3.

⁶¹ <http://sacp.government.bg/programi-dokladi/dokladi/>.

⁶² Land Foundation, "Land – Source of Income Program: 1997 to 2011," Sofia, Bulgaria, Author, undated.

⁶³ Chaira Crepaldi, "The Social Situation of the Roma and Their Improved Access to the Labour Market," Brussels: EU Parliament, Committee on Employment and Social Affairs (EMPL), October 2008.

⁶⁴ Elena Marushiakova, "The Bulgarian Gypsies: Searching their Place in the Society," *Balkanologie* 4, no. 2 (2000).

Appendix A
RON HASKINS- Trip Itinerary

Monday, May 30

13:30 Flight arrives
15:30 Meet Sarah Perrine at the Radisson
16:00-17:00 Meeting with Ivailo Ivanov,
Executive Director of the Agency for Social Assistance
Yanta Manolova, Deputy Executive Director
Agency for Social Assistance, within the Ministry of Social and
Labor Policy (MSLP)
17:30-18:00 Quick meeting with Sarah at the Radisson to discuss the week's
schedule

Tuesday, May 31

9:00 Meet Sarah at Radisson
9:30-10:30 Maria Stambolieva, Head of "APIO" ("Administration, laws, &
information services") Division, Agency for Social Assistance,
within the Ministry of Social and Labor Policy (MSLP)
12:00 Plovdiv-- Ivan Penov, Executive Director, Land Source of Income
Foundation and Mike Lynch, Peace Corps Volunteer
13:30 Depart Plovdiv
15:00 Lozenets, Stara Zagora (Bulgaria's 4th largest Roma Quarter)
Milena and Gancho Milievi (and their team), Association "World
Without Borders"
Focus Group with Roma mothers/grandmothers from the
community—representing both mothers/grandmothers of children
attending the Roma school, mothers/grandmothers of children
involved in the desegregation program, and mothers/grandmothers
that had participated in social assistance programs
Local GP (working in Roma neighborhood)
Elana Resnik, Fulbright Research Fellow
19:00 Depart Stara Zagora
20:30 Return Sofia

Wednesday, June 1

10:00 Meet Sarah at Radisson
13:30 Lom (NW Bulgaria—one of the poorest regions in Europe)
Nikolai Kirilov, Chair of the Managing Board (and his team),
Roma Lom Foundation
Lom Municipal Representatives: Director Social Policy and
Integration, Manager of Humanitarian Activities Directory
(Angelo Ivanov), and Head Specialist for Social and Demographic
Activities
Labor Bureau Representative: Ginka Borisova, General Manager
of Active Policy for Employment

MSLP/ Agency for Social Assistance, Local Representative: Asen Metodiev, Deputy Director of the Social Assistance Directory
 Educators: Desislava Alexandrova, Principal of Hristo Botev School (1st-8th Grade) with all Roma students, Roma art teacher, and Roma Assistant Principal of a high school
 Two Roma health mediators
 18:00 Depart Lom (dinner on road)
 21:00 Arrive Sofia

Thursday, June 2

9:30 Meet Sarah in Radisson lobby
 10:00 Meeting with Rositsa Steliyanova
 Ministry of Social and Labor Policy, Head of Employment Agency
 12:00 Lunch meeting with Mihail Ivanov
 Former head of the National Council for Ethnic and Demographic Issues
 and expert in the field of Roma integration
 13:30 Desislava Dimitrova, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Health
 15:00 Meeting with Svetla Kostadinova
 Executive Director, Institute for Market Economics
 16:30 Meeting with Milen Milanov
 Until recently National Coordinator for the Decade of Roma Inclusion and Adviser to the Minister of Social and Labor Policy
 19:00 Dinner with ABF President, Frank Bauer and Executive Director, Desislava Taliokova; Meet in Radisson lobby

Friday, June 3

8:00 Meet Sarah in Radisson lobby
 9:45 Flight departs for Burgas
 11:30 Pavel Todorov, Executive Director, Business Center Burgas
 Mitko Dokov, Executive Director, Regional Roma Union Foundation
 Chris Callaghan, Peace Corps volunteer
 MSLP/ Agency for Social Assistance, Social Assistance Directorate Burgas: Diyana Videva, Director
 Women's Crisis Center and Shelter (site visit)
 Burgas Municipality-- Dr. Loris K. Manuelyan, Deputy Mayor-
 Public Health, Preventions, Social Services, Employment and Sport
 Burgas Region-- Zlatina Dukova, Deputy Regional Governor
 19:25 Flight departs for Sofia
 20:25 Arrive Sofia

Saturday, June 4

12:00 Depart

Appendix B

Overview of Major Bulgarian Social Programs and Spending

Unemployment Insurance	60% of salary with maximum of 2,000 Leva per month; after 9 months, recipient must join From Social Assistance to Employment program (see below)
From Social Assistance to Employment	Benefit of at least 65 Leva per month; mandatory work 14 days per month; those without jobs are divided into four groups: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have education and can get a job; give them job search assistance 2. Have education or job experience but are having trouble finding a job; some job search and some training 3. Little education and trouble finding work; give some training and work program for 28 hours per week; 8 percent get a job as result of work program; some people stay in program for 3 years; at the end of 3 years, they go back on welfare 4. Little education; been in work program for 3 years; give welfare
Short-term employment program	Minimum monthly wage (240 Leva per month) for: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Long-term unemployed nearing employment; may be hired by municipality for low-skilled jobs such as guarding municipal apartment blocks 2. Subsidies to employers for people nearing retirement who would otherwise be laid off 3. Personal Assistance Program; limit of 1 year; provide home care for disabled people 4. Youth program for young adults up to 29 years of age six months of apprenticeship and training
Child Allowance	35 Leva per month per child; only for those with income under 350 Leva per month per family member (pursue fathers to make them pay child support; and can take up to 50% of fathers' income for child support)
Law for Child Security	One-time birth subsidy of 250 Leva for first child; 600 Leva for second child; 200 Leva for each child after second child
Birth payment	Moms who are university students only; one-time payment of 1,200 Leva
Law for Integration of	Cash benefit of 9.25 Leva per month; mom gets 75% of

Disabled People	minimum wage if she keeps disabled child at home
Law for Social Benefit	One-time cash payment to extremely poor; in addition to other social benefits; recommended by local social workers; 65 Leva per month minus earnings; maximum is five payments per year or 325 Leva
Social Services	A variety of social services for the poor given by local agencies
Universal Health Care	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adults; Funded by insurance payment of 8% of income (4% by employer; 4% by employee; covers everyone who is employed) 2. Children 0-18; universal coverage financed out of general revenues 3. Elderly (over age 65); also financed out of general Revenues 4. Pregnant mothers have universal coverage (but must prove they are pregnant; they must pay for pregnancy test which some cannot afford)
Child care	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. For ages 0-7; family share is 20 Leva – 35 Leva per month; run by municipalities and paid out of local taxes 2. Program that pays someone who cares for kids so mom can work
Food Program	Food packages given to poor families four times per year (about 260,000 people get the packages)
Heating help	Generally same people who get food packages (about 260,000 families)

Note. In addition to the programs outlined above, the Ministry of Education provides extensive services that include scholarships, teacher training, data collection, dropout prevention and help for dropouts, and assistance for children under age 6. The education programs and the programs in this Appendix are supported by taxes on Bulgarian citizens and businesses. In addition, the European Union provides over 2 billion Leva of financing to Bulgaria for its education and social programs. These EU funds include 940 million leva for the employment, 670 million leva for the Ministry of Education, 180 million leva for the Agency for Social Assistance, and 344 million leva for the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy.