

**OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME
“DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES”**



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PROJECT
BG051PO001-7.0.07-0049-C0001
“Partnership for Equal Opportunities”

REPORT
On the conducted social experiment for
providing municipal social service
“COUNSELING AND HELP FOR
SOCIAL INCLUSION”

The project will be accomplished with the financial support of Operational Programme “Development of Human Resources”, co-funded by the European Union through the European Social Fund”

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I. INTRODUCTION

Aksakovo Municipality is a beneficiary in the project “Partnership for Equal Opportunities”, contract № BG051PO001-7.0.07-0049-C0001 under a scheme for grant “No Boundaries-Component 1-Phase 2” of the Operational Programme “Development of Human Resources”, co-financed by the European Social Fund of the European Union.

The aim of the project is creating a platform for social inclusion of vulnerable ethnic groups, with focus on Roma in Aksakovo Municipality through the exchange of experience with other EU Member States.

The common objective was accomplished through the following specific goals:

1. Developing a local strategy for social inclusion of vulnerable ethnic groups.
2. Creating a network of partners for cooperation in the implementation of projects and policies for social inclusion of vulnerable ethnic groups, with focus on Roma.
3. Conducting a social experiment based on studied best practices from other EU Member States, for social inclusion of vulnerable ethnic groups, with focus on Roma.

Working visits to municipalities from Spain and Romania were conducted and their useful experience in social mediation was studied. According to some special criteria for selection already defined by the project team and approved by the Mayor, seven young people not more than 29 years old were selected. They were all representatives of ethnic minorities with higher education or with specialized secondary education. They were offered six-month employment contracts for the implementation of the social experiment - provision of municipal social service “Counseling and help for social inclusion”. They were employed in accordance with the number of the population in the different settlements: two employees in the town of Ignatievo, two- in the village of Ljuben Karavelovo, two – in the village of Izvorsko, and one social mediator in the village of Vaglen.

One person was employed for the organization of the activities. The people who were selected finished a training course on the following topics: Civil registration, regulations and practical advice – Trail of the citizen; social and health insurance - legislation and practical advice - Trail of the citizen; discrimination, forms of discrimination , normative acts, organizations working in the field of protection from discrim-

ination; Effective communication; Motivation training of employees; Social services in the community in order to prepare for implementing the function “social mediators”.

Their role was to facilitate the dialogue between Roma, the representatives of vulnerable ethnic groups and the municipal and state institutions. The duties of the social mediators were related to raising their citizens awareness concerning their rights, the normative acts prohibiting discrimination, the organizations providing support for the discriminated individuals, victims of crime, human trafficking, exploitation of women, etc. They performed their activities by visiting the homes of their fellow citizens and conducted explanatory information campaign by completing questionnaires and studying the problems of the people. These individuals carried out transfer between representatives of ethnic minorities who had difficulties with Bulgarian language, did not know the normative acts and for these reasons had problems with health insurance, with obtaining housing (because they did not have address registration), their children did not attend school, and other problems leading to their social exclusion. They were engaged in filling in the documents of their fellow citizens which were required in the different institutions. They also studied and summarized the problems of the minorities, and presented them to the representatives of the local authorities. During the period of their involvement in the project, on specific days of the week, a special reception office was organized for the citizens of the municipalities of Izvorsko, Ljuben Karavelovo, Vaglen and Ignatievo. The next lines will present the results of the experiment and the effectiveness of the service provided. The experiment was conducted during the period from August 1-st, 2014 until January 31-st, 2015 under the project “Partnership for Equal Opportunities”, Operational Programme “Development of Human Resources”, co-financed by the European Social Fund of the European Union. Activity 3 included “social experiment for providing municipal social service, counseling and help for social inclusion “, with primary purpose of the activity - social inclusion of ethnic minorities through provision of innovative social service in the community.

II. ACTIVITIES FOR PROMOTING THE SOCIAL EXPERIMENT

On 15-th of August 2014, the social mediators participated in a working meeting during which the project manager presented the service “Counseling and support for social inclusion” to the mayors of the settlements, in which the service was going to be provided. Particular days were chosen for holding information meetings in the settlements in order to present and promote the service among the citizens. For implementing the activity for providing the service “Counseling and support for social inclusion”, all social mediators were supplied with laptops and printers.

They received office supplies and accounting documentary forms. For reporting their activities, the employees prepared individual reports for each work week, monthly reports and protocols for the services provided to each of the users. They were given Identification cards in order to identify themselves while working with users of the service. They also received T- shirts and caps with the logo of the project which they had to wear at work.

On the 19-th of August 2014 the social mediators participated in a meeting with the representatives of directorate “Social assistance” – the city of Varna, office Aksakovo. The purpose of the meeting was to achieve direct communication in order to guarantee social assistance activities for the socially disadvantaged citizens.

On the 20-th of August 2014 the social mediators had a meeting with the representatives of Labour Bureau, city of Varna, office Aksakovo. The purpose of the meeting was to achieve direct communication for securing the activities for social inclusion of the active unemployed population in the Municipality of Aksakovo. The social mediators, together with the mayors and the municipal officials organized information meetings. Posters with the telephone numbers of the social mediators were provided and information sheets were handed out.

On 26-th August, 2014, the social mediators who were employed in the town of Ignatievo participated in an information meeting which took place in Ignatievo municipality.

On 27-th August, 2014, the social mediator who was employed in the village of Vaglen, took part an information meeting which was held in Community center “Vaglen - 1884”.

On 28-th August, 2014, the social mediators who were employed in

the village of Izvorsko took part an information meeting which was held in Community center “Vasil Levski”.

On 29-th August, 2014, the social mediators who were employed in the village of Ljuben Karavelovo took part an information meeting which was held in Community center “Prosveta”.

All information meetings were attended by citizens - representatives of ethnic minorities.. The participants were informed about the service “Counseling and support for social inclusion”. They also received T-shirts, brochures with information and contact details of the social mediators.

The social mediators had meetings with the mayors of the different settlements in order to prepare lists with the names of the citizens who were in need of social mediation. Based on the lists monthly schedules were prepared for fieldwork during two days of the working week - Tuesday and Thursday in which the mediators visited the homes of their fellow citizens. Monday, Wednesday and Friday were selected for reception days in which citizens had the opportunity to ask for cooperation and assistance on the spot.

III. PROVIDED SERVICES

Acting as intermediaries between the target groups and the institutions, the social mediators held explanatory information campaign in the settlements. They informed the people about their rights and obligations as citizens of the Republic of Bulgaria, and about the Law on Protection against Discrimination. They presented the Commission for Protection against discrimination as organization providing support to victims of discriminatory practices, contributed to the social inclusion of their fellow citizens, and filled in all necessary documents for the various institutions. All services were provided on individual basis. During their field work they visited 440 households. (until the end of 31 December 2014).

According to the information from the protocols prepared by the social mediators regarding the period from 8-th January 2014 to 3-st December 2014, 746 services were provided.

They included the following:

1. Number of consultations on social inclusion on the labor market of unemployed people not supporting their registration in the labor office and / or not active in seeking employment – 131.

2. Number of registrations of unemployed people in Internet sites offering job vacancies - 6.

3. Providing information to job seekers on vacant jobs in the Internet space – 16.

4. Consulting people without professional qualification– 17.

5. Consulting people without any level of education - I ISCED level for acquiring educational attainment – 11.

6. Consulting people without any level of education - II ISCED level for raising their educational attainment – 68.

7. Providing explanatory information about the terms and conditions for enrolling in Universities – 8 .

8. Providing explanatory information about integrated education of children with special educational needs (SEN) in mainstream schools – 1.

9. Providing explanatory information about travel passes for students using local and inter-municipal buses – 1.

10. Providing explanatory information about procedure for establishing full legal guardianship of a child under 14 years of age – 2.

11. Preparing CVs and filling-in application forms for people who are applying for job vacancies - 5.

12. Checking the health insurance status of citizens on the Internet platform of the National Revenue Agency- 8.

13. Advising citizens with suspended health insurance rights on the conditions and terms for restoring their rights concerning the Regional health insurance funds RHIF – 193.

14. Consultations about the terms and conditions for receiving targeted benefits and tax concessions for purchasing devices and equipment for people with disabilities from NHIF- 2.

15. Providing information about the health rights of the citizens of the Republic of Bulgaria and the procedures for filing an appeal to the NHIF- 1.

16. Consultations about the terms and conditions for appearing before the committee TEMC of people with disabilities – 8.

17. Information provided from the Internet about healthcare professionals who practice in the city of Varna - 1.

18. Consultations about the terms and conditions for receiving targeted energy aid from the Agency for Social Assistance – 3.

19. Consultations about the terms and conditions for receiving monthly targeted aid from the Agency for Social Assistance – 3.

20. Providing explanatory information about procedure for receiving child benefits – 2.

21. Providing explanatory information about procedure for receiving social benefits for maternity – 1.

22. Providing explanatory information about the types of social services provided in the home to persons who were in need of care – 54.

23. Providing explanatory information about the terms and conditions to apply for the service „Home Social Patronage” – 8.

24. Providing explanatory information about the terms and conditions to apply for municipal housing – 5.

25. Given guidelines for consultation with legal entity for users in need of legal assistance – 3.

26. Given guidelines for consultation with the General Practitioner- GP, for a person in need of health care - 1.

27. Providing explanatory information to citizens who became victims of criminal offenses about the procedure for filing a complaint to the law enforcement authorities – 24.

28. Providing explanatory information about procedure for renewing identification document due to expired validity – 1.

29. Providing explanatory information about procedure for recovery of lost identification document – 2.

30. Provided consultations about social inclusion of individuals without identity papers– 6.

31. Providing explanatory information about the terms and conditions for changing address registration – 6.

32. Providing explanatory information about the Law for Protection against Discrimination and the Commission for Protection against Discrimination of individuals who have become victims of discriminatory practices – 59.

33. Providing explanatory information about the rights and duties of the citizens of the Republic of Bulgaria – 28.

34. Provided consultation on drawing up a power of attorney – 1.

35. Filling in the required documents for applying for social benefits for maternity – 1.

36. Filling in the required documents for receiving a single aid for a live born child – 1.

37. Filling in a request for certificate for the children born by one mother– 3.

38. Filling in an application - declaration for receiving student scholarship – 1.

39. Filling in the required documents for applying for targeted monthly allowance – 3.

40. Filling in the required documents for receiving child benefits – 5.

41. Filling in a declaration for preparing a social assessment by the Agency for Social Assistance - ASA, Aksakovo – 1pc.

42. Filling in the required documents for applying for targeted energy aid from the Agency for Social Assistance – 23 pcs.

43. Filling in an application form for receiving certificate of inheritance – 9 pcs.

44. Assistance with filling-in request for issuing of certificate for current address – 7 pcs.

45. Assistance with filling-in request for changing the address registration – 2 pcs.

46. Assistance with compiling an advert for selling a property – 1 pc.

47. Assistance with compiling a complaint to the law enforcement authorities – 3 pcs.

IV. RESULTS FROM QUESTIONNAIRE DISTRIBUTED AMONG THE USERS OF THE SERVICE

For the period August 1-st 2014 – December 31-st 2014, the users of the service “Counseling and aid for social inclusion” were 528 citizens distributed by sex, age structure, disadvantaged groups, achieved level of education and status on the labor market and presented in tables as follows:

1	USERS	Male	Female	Total
2	age structure	192	336	528
3	15 – 18 years	1	8	9
4	19 – 24 years	33	48	81
5	25 – 34 years	37	71	108
6	35 – 44 years	52	74	126
7	45 – 54 years	39	59	98
8	55 – 64 years	21	41	62
9	over 64 years	9	35	44
10	disadvantaged groups			
11	migrants	1	0	1
12	minorities	170	307	477
13	who identify themselves as Roma	8	30	38
14	People with disabilities	22	36	58
15	Achieved level of education			
16	without achieved level of education	21	75	96
17	Primary or lower secondary stage of basic education - I and II level according to ISCED	128	213	341
18	Secondary education - III level according to ISCED	43	48	91
19	Status on the labor market			
20	Employed people	59	40	99
21	of whom self - employed people	1	1	2
22	Unemployed	122	196	318
23	of whom long-term unemployed (over 12 months)	69	106	175
24	inactive people	30	81	111
25	of whom students	1	4	5

V. RESULTS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The citizens included in the project activity answered optionally 26 questions which were included in the questionnaire, whose purpose was to establish the level of satisfaction of the needs of the citizens in priority areas for their integration, such as access to education, employment, healthcare, housing provision, non-discrimination and equal opportunities.

479 people took part in the survey:

Number of respondents by settlements:

- The town of Ignatievo – 134 people.
- The village of Ljuben Karavelovo – 155 people.
- The village of Izvorsko – 131 people.
- The village of Vaglen – 59 people.

1. To the first question, “Do you want to specify your ethnicity?”, the following results were received for the different settlements:

settlement:	Bulgarian	Cubans	Turks	Ethnic group, speaking dialectalHindi	Ethnic group, speaking dialectal-Romanian language*	Did not wish to identify
The town of Ignatievo	19	0	2	33	80	0
The village of L. Karavelovo	11	1	0	10	122	11
The village of Izvorsko	0	0	0	0	112	19
The village of Vaglen	8	0	0	0	34	17
Total:	38	1	2	43	348	47
<i>* in the sample „Kopanari “and” rudari “are reflected in total, because of the synonymic name of the same ethnic group.</i>						

1.1. 432 people wished to identify their ethnicity. The results are as follows:

1.1.1. 7,93 % of all the people who answered the questionnaire identified themselves as Bulgarian. Some of

the citizens have commented that since they live in Bulgaria, they consider themselves Bulgarians ;

1.2.1. 82,25 % or 394 people who answered the questionnaire identified themselves as belonging to an ethnic group which is different from Bulgarian ethnicity

1.2. 9,81% of the people did not wish to identify their ethnic group.

2. The following answers were given to the group of questions from 2 to 5 whose purpose was to find out information about existing discriminatory practices:

Question 2: Were there any acts of discrimination against you during the last year?		
Yes		No
63		416
Question 3: Have you reported existing acts of discrimination?		
<i>Note: Only people who answered Yes” to question 2 have to answer this question.</i>		
Yes		No
1		62
Question 4: Do you have any information about existing organization which can offer support or advice to individuals who have suffered from acts of discrimination?		
Yes, I do	I have heard of such organization but I do not know what its name is	No, I have not heard of such organization
18	136	325
Question 5: Do you have information about a law which prohibits discrimination?		
Yes, I do	I know that such law exist but I do not know what its name is	No, I dont
18	137	324

2.1. Sixty three people (13,15 %) claim that they have been victims of acts of discrimination. Some of them reported more than one act of discrimination against their personality in different circumstances.

2.2. 63 of the people who answered the questionnaire report 67

acts of discrimination ,which are as follows:

- 2.2.1.** Racial discrimination: in restaurants, bars, caf  s ,etc.
– 5; in the workplace – 19; in health care institutions – 14; in public transport – 1; in shops - 10; in a state institution – 2;
- 2.2.2.** Age discrimination: when looking for a job – 16.
- 2.3.** Only one person from those who answered the questionnaire reported personally about manifested discrimination against him.
- 2.4.** 67,85 % of those who answered the questionnaire did not have information about organizations which give support to people who have become victims of discrimination , 28,39 % of the respondents had only heard of such organizations, and 3,76 % of the respondents were able to give the name of the organization.
- 2.5.** On the other hand, 28,6 % of those who answered the questionnaire knew about the existence of a normative act against discrimination in the Bulgarian legislation; only 3,76 % of the respondents were able to name it, and 67,64 % of the respondents did not know of such normative act.

3. The following results were reported regarding the answers to the question „Have you been a victim of crime in the last 12 months?“:

- 3.1.** 92,69 percent (444 people) of the respondents deny having been victims of crime during the last year;
- 3.2.** 35 citizens (7.31 percent) in total attested to 40 cases of criminal acts against them. They are as follows:
 - 3.2.1.** Theft of personal property – 23 cases;
 - 3.2.2.** Stolen vehicle – 1 case;
 - 3.2.3.** Assault / threat – 4 cases;
 - 3.2.4.** Psychological harassment – 5 cases;
 - 3.2.5.** Domestic violence – 2 cases;
 - 3.2.6.** Robbery – 4 cases;
 - 3.2.7.** Fraud – 1 case.
- 3.3.** Of the total number - 35 criminal acts were committed against 30 respondents in the town of Ignatievo; two criminal offenses – a robbery and a theft of personal property

were reported in the village of Vaglen; one robbery was reported in the village of Ljuben Karavelovo, and one of the respondents in the village of Izvorsko reported being a victim of fraud.

4. The following results were reported regarding the answers to the question „Have you participated in any forms of social inclusion?“:

- 4.1.** Very high proportion of the respondents claim that they had not been subject of social inclusion – 434 people (90,61 %).
- 4.2.** Subject of social inclusion were 45 people (9,39 %). They participated in the following forms (*more than one answer were given*):
 - 4.2.1.** 27 people participated in programs for temporary employment (up to 12 months);
 - 4.2.2.** 7 people participated in programs for permanent employment (for more than 12 months);
 - 4.2.3.** 5 people participated in social services provided in the community;
 - 4.2.4.** 6 people participated in political parties;
 - 4.2.5.** 3 people participated in cultural programs;
 - 4.2.6.** One person participated in a special interest club.

5. According to the sample of the inquiry participation in training courses after completion of their degree of education have taken 48 of the surveyed citizens or 10.02 percent, as follows:

- 5.1.1.** For raising their level of education – 11 people;
- 5.1.2.** For acquiring a profession – 32 people;
- 5.2.4.** For raising their professional qualifications – 3 people;
- 5.2.5.** Driving course (category higher than B) attended 2 people.

431 people or 89.98 percent of the respondents answered that they were not involved in any kind of training or educational courses.

6. The following results were reported regarding the answers

to the question about the health insurance status of the respondents in the NHIF:

- 6.1.** Health insured were only 230 people, which is less than half of the respondents or 48,02 percent.
- 6.2.** With suspended health insurance rights were 249 people, which is 51.98 percent of the respondents. The respondents gave the following reasons for not being health insured:
 - 6.2.1.** Lack of funds – 245 people;
 - 6.2.2.** Did not know where to pay – 4 people.
- 6.3.** During the survey some of the respondents who haven't paid their monthly health insurance contributions stated that they prefer, when necessary, to visit private medical practices. This fact indicates lack of information about their health rights and obligations as Bulgarian citizens. It also shows very low common health culture and respectively lack of prophylaxis and prevention of diseases with high risk factor.

7. To the question: “Do you have health problems that interfere with your social functioning?”

- 7.1.** More than three quarters of the respondents, which makes – 377 people or 78,71 percent, denied having any health problems which could prevent them from performing their usual everyday activities.
- 7.2.** 102 of the respondents (or 21,29 percent) stated that they had more than one predicament when performing the following activities :
 - 7.2.1.** Working – 89 answers;
 - 7.2.2.** Shopping – 34 answers;
 - 7.2.3.** Maintaining social contacts – 11 answers;
 - 7.2.4.** Maintaining personal hygiene – 29 answers.

8. The results from the answers given in the questionnaire showed good housing provision for the households in the analyzed settlements. A total of 186 people or 38.84 percent of the respondents live in more than two rooms. The largest is the number of two-bedroom homes - almost half of the total number. The number of rooms occupied in the homes of the respondents is as

follows:

- 8.1.** A home with one room have 69 of the respondents or 14.4 percent;
- 8.2.** A home with two rooms have 224 of the respondents or 46.76 percent;
- 8.3.** A home with three rooms have 156 of the respondents, respectively, 32.57 percent;
- 8.4.** A home with four rooms have 25 of the respondents or 5.22 percent;
- 8.5.** A home with five rooms have 3 of the respondents or 0.63 percent;
- 8.6.** A home with six rooms have 2 of the respondents or 0.42 percent.

9. To the question “What is not available in the home where you reside?”, the respondents stated that they do not have the following:

(to this question the respondents gave more than one answer)

- 9.1.** Electricity – 35 households (7,31 percent);
- 9.2.** Water – 39 households (8,14 percent);
- 9.3.** Street sewerage – 362 households (75,57 percent);
- 9.4.** Asphalt street leading to the dwelling– 188 households (39,25 percent);
- 9.5.** kitchen inside the home – 136 households (28,39 percent);
- 9.6.** Bathroom inside the home – 202 households (42,17 percent);
- 9.7.** Toilet inside the home – 324 households (67,64 percent).

The results from the questionnaire show very low level of provision of community infrastructure in the surveyed settlements.

On average nearly half of the homes (46.07 percent) do not fulfill to a satisfactory degree the conditions for favorable living environment based on the surveyed criteria

10. The results from the questionnaire show very low monthly income the households. In total 83.09 percent of the respondents declared income of up to 400 Levs.

The distribution of the income of each household is as follows:

- 10.1.** 192 households declared income of less than 200 leva, (which makes 40,08 percent);
- 10.2.** 206 households declared income between 201 – 400 leva, (which makes 43,01 percent);
- 10.3.** 73 households declared income between 401 – 600 leva (which makes 15,24 percent);
- 10.4.** 5 households declared income between 601 – 1000 leva (which makes 1,04 percent);
- 10.5.** 3 households declared income of more than 1000 leva (which makes only 0,63 percent).

11. According to the results of the questionnaire the income of the respondents is formed by:

(to this question the respondents gave more than one answer)

- 11.1.** Social aid – 46 people (which makes 9,6 %);
- 11.2.** Remuneration Under a Contract of Employment – 153 people (which makes 31,94 %);
- 11.3.** Remuneration for being hired for a short period (up to one week) – 147 people (which makes 30,69 %);
- 11.4.** Remuneration from seasonal employment (from 3 to 4 months) – 15 people (which makes 3,13 percent);
- 11.5.** Disability pensions – 72 people (which makes 15,03percent);
- 11.6.** Pension for old age and length of service – 42 people (which makes 8,77 percent);
- 11.7.** Survivor's pension – 1 person (which makes 0,21 percent);
- 11.8.** Child benefits – 26 people (which makes 5,43 percent);
- 11.9.** Compensations for temporary disability up to 6 months – 2 people (which makes 0,42 percent);
- 11.10.** Maternity benefits – 3 people (which makes 0,63 percent);
- 11.11.** Relatives abroad – 4 people (which makes 0,84 percent).

The income of the respondents which received as a result of employment constitutes 65,76 per cent of all declared income.

12. The questionnaire reports only one case (which makes 0,21 percent) in the town of Ignatievo where a child under 16 had to

work in order to provide a living for the family.

13. Most of the respondents – 458 people (95,62 percent) stated that there were no cases in which members of their family had gone to bed without supper due to lack of food.

The results presented by settlements are as follows:

- 13.1.** In the town of Ignatievo in three of the families – one person had gone to bed without supper. In four of the families two people had gone to bed without having anything to eat, in three of the families – three people had gone to bed without supper, in two of the families four of the members were starving, and in another two families – 7 people.
- 13.2.** In the village of Ljuben Karavelovo there were three cases in which one member of the family had gone to bed without having anything.
- 13.3.** In the village of Izvorsko in two of the families two people had gone to bed without supper, and in another family – three family members did not have anything to eat before going to bed.

14. To the group of questions included in the questionnaire which examine the involvement of the local authorities with the problems of the citizens, the respondents gave the following answers:

(to this question the respondents gave more than one answer)

- 14.1.** The Mayor has visited their neighborhood and is familiar with their problems – 412 answers (86,01 percent);
- 14.2.** The municipal councilors have often visited them and were willing to hear their comments and problems - 54 answers (which makes 11,27 percent);
- 14.3.** Nobody had shown interest in their problems – 64 answers (13,36 percent).

15. A large percentage of the respondents stated that they have representatives of their ethnic group in the local government:

(to this question the respondents gave more than one answer)

- 15.1.** We have municipal councilors – 78 answers (which makes

16,28 percent);

15.2. We have employees in the municipal administration and /or in the town halls – 436 answers (which makes 91,02 percent);

15.3. We do not have any representatives – 20 answers (which makes 4,18 percent);

15.4. I do not know – 16 answers (which makes 3,34 percent).

16. 122 people (which makes 25,47 percent of all the respondents) confirmed that they had requested assistance from the local authorities for solving a problem that had occurred. 95 of the people who asked for help (or 77,87 percent) stated that their problem had been dealt with. 27 people (which makes 22,13 percent) stated their problem had not been solved. 357 citizens (or 74,53 percent) did not seek assistance .

17. The people who have sought assistance, have turned to the local authorities with more than one problem. The results of the questionnaire are as follows:

17.1. Financial, providing financial assistance – 121 people (which makes 25,26 percent);

17.2. Housing, finding accommodation – 8 people (which makes 1,67 percent);

17.3. Communal and domestic (lack of electricity, water, asphalted streets) – 70 people (which makes 14,61 percent);

17.4. Problems with social services – 55 people (which makes 11,48 percent);

17.5. Problems with healthcare services – 54 people (which makes 11,27 percent);

17.6. Finding employment – 2 people (which makes 0,42 percent);

17.7. Theft of money – 4 people (which makes 3,81 percent).

Most often the respondents have asked for financial help (1/4 of all the people who were seeking support).

18. The respondents have given more than one answer when identifying the reasons for the problems they have encountered. For the problems of the respondents should be responsible, re-

spectively:

- 18.1.** The state – 247 people (51,57 percent);
- 18.2.** The local authorities (the municipality) – 19 people (3,97 percent);
- 18.3.** The financial crisis – 159 people (33,19 percent);
- 18.4.** The lack of education – 136 people (28,39 percent);
- 18.5.** The lack of employment – 172 people (35,91 percent);
- 18.6.** The language barrier – 8 people (1,67 percent);
- 18.7.** Lack of good social policy (free response) – 1 (0,84 percent).

19. The respondents suggested the following measures for improving the quality of their lives:

(to this question the respondents gave more than one answer)

- 19.1.** Raising the level of their education – 114 people (23,8 percent);
- 19.2.** Qualifying/retraining – 72 people (15,03 percent);
- 19.3.** Finding a job/increasing their employment income – 246 people (51,36 percent);
- 19.4.** Receiving social benefits – 92 (19,21 percent);
- 19.5.** Receiving social services in the community – 38 people (7,93 percent);
- 19.6.** Eliminating age discrimination when employing staff (free response) – 2 people (0,42 percent);
- 19.7.** Winning the National Lottery (free response) – 1 person (0,21 percent);
- 19.8.** Improving their health condition (free response) – 3 people (0,63 percent);
- 19.9.** Increasing the pensions (free response) – 2 people (0,42 percent).

20. The respondents have learned about the service “Counseling and support for social inclusion” from:

- 20.1.** The social mediators themselves – 254 people (53,03 percent);
- 20.2.** Neighbours and relatives – 33 people (6,89 percent);

- 20.3. Friends and acquaintances – 28 people (5,85 percent);
- 20.4. Employees working in the town hall – 162 people (33,82 percent);
- 20.5. Information meetings held in the settlements – 1 person (0,21 percent);
- 20.6. From advertisements and posters – 1 person (or 0,21 percent).

21. The questionnaire reports high levels of satisfaction with the service “Counseling and support for social inclusion”:

- 21.1. The answer: “After having listened to me, the employee gave me clear guidelines for solving my problem”, was chosen by 454 of the respondents (which makes 94,78 percent);
- 21.2. The answer “After having listened to me, the employee explained that he cannot give any guidelines because there is no problem”, was chosen by 11 of the respondents (which makes 2,3 percent);
- 21.3. The answer “After having listened to me, the employee explained that the solution of my problem was not in his powers”, was chosen by 14 of the respondents (which makes 2,92 percent).

VI. CONCLUSION

The social service “Counseling and support for social inclusion” was provided to 528 people (data by 31 of December 2014), with laid down as indicator 120 individuals for the duration of the experiment. The results show a high level of satisfaction with the provision of the service. The number of the individuals who have benefited from the service is indicative of the need for its implementation and for seeking opportunities for its funding.

The service which was provided helps to facilitate social inclusion and to prevent social exclusion of ethnic minorities.