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Summary Report of UNDP Bratislava Regional Centre (BRC) Mission to Ankara and Istanbul

December 9-11, 2013

I- GENERAL CONTEXT AND MAIN FINDINGS

Over the last years, the issue of Roma inclusion has increasingly come to the fore with the marked opening towards the complex nature of socio-cultural issues in Turkey in the past decade. This process has most recently culminated in the adopted democratization package in which provisions for Roma are also included – namely, the establishment of a Roma language and cultural institute, and the promise to design new housing built for Roma in the framework of urban transformation projects in ways meeting the particular needs of Roma.

As the issue of Roma inclusion is increasingly recognized as important and strategic by an expanding array of public and civic stakeholders in the country, there is at present a sufficient momentum for entering a new phase of addressing some of the challenges related to poverty and disadvantaged groups in Turkey including Roma. UNDP's approach is to work the Roma issue not only with human rights perspective but also promoting inclusive development i.e. explicitly but not exclusively targeting disadvantaged Roma in Turkey.

The proposed complex integrated development approach that UNDP could bring forward is important because:

- Relevant line ministries have been addressing Roma issue through the theme and prism of inclusive services, but almost exclusively employing a sectoral approach.
- NGOs/Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) working on Roma issues and especially Roma NGOs in Turkey have approached the issue through an overly human rights approach.
- There are other disadvantaged groups in Turkey who have not been able to benefit from the positive international and EU impact to the same extent as Roma to articulate their needs.

Thus the Roma inclusion model programme of UNDP, pioneering complex interventions on Area-Based Development (ABD) for social inclusion, explicitly but not exclusively targeting disadvantaged Roma communities, has the ability to offer a model for the inclusive development processes for other disadvantaged groups in Turkey and not only for Roma.

This summary report was prepared by international experts of UNDP Bratislava Regional Centre who conducted a recent fact-finding mission in Ankara and Istanbul in December 2013. The document gives a general overview of the situation of the Roma issue in the country from the perspectives of the different stakeholders, based on meetings conducted during the mission highlighting some of the most important structural features: need for data/information; legislative and policy framework; Government and NGOs/CSOs plans and activities; and locates the opportunities for entering such a new phase.

The document also intends to create a basis for an approach to the issue of inclusive development targeting explicitly but not exclusively Roma which is constructive and sensitive to socio-political

realities, in order to enable the establishment of a broad partnership initiative welcomed by both the UNDP Turkey Country Office (CO) and other UN agencies like UNICEF, line ministries and other government bodies in Turkey.

1- Definitions and data

Roma mapping and data

There is scarcity of reliable data on the numbers and situation of Roma and Roma-like communities (Rom, Dom, Lom, Abdal) in Turkey today. The fluctuation scale of the estimates of Roma communities of Turkey is very wide, ranging from 500.000 by official estimates up to 5 million. Government representatives estimate the number of Roma people in Turkey as being less than 1 million. Roma and other non-governmental organizations, researchers and activists suggest an estimate of between 3-5 million. In its reporting, the Council of Europe's Roma and Travellers Division uses the average of the range of estimations, according to which Turkey's many Roma communities make up approximately 3.83% of Turkey's total population of close to 72 million people¹². Subject to less debate is the geographical location of these groups-- Roma communities in Turkey are concentrated mostly in the regions of Marmara, the Aegean and Mediterranean regions, while the Lom and Dom groups mostly live in the South Eastern and Eastern Turkey³. Roma communities are concentrated mostly in Tracia, Marmara, Aegean and Meditarrenean Regions of the country whereas Lom groups in Black Sea and in a small part of Central Anatolia; Dom groups in Eastern and Southeastern Region and lastly Abdal groups in Central Anatolian Region.

Poverty map

A poverty map per se does not exist, but human development related data are available for the provinces (enrolment rates, income levels). The Ministry of Development website publishes a list of ranking based on composite indices of provinces by income. Additionally, the DG of Regional Development is developing a new study (National Strategy for Regional Development Study) focusing on access to services. Data exists for districts, but it does not include all the indicators. The EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (SILC) survey on income and life conditions is available for Turkey since 2006.

Relation between Roma data & mapping and poverty mapping

Whatever the numbers, having a better picture of the numbers and socio-economic situation of Roma in Turkey could greatly improve the ability to formulate comprehensive and sustainable policies and programming. However, Turkey does not collect data on ethnic origin, due to multiple sensitivities

¹<http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/romatravellers/>

² The current population is calculated as 76.6 million, as per the Address-based Population Registry System (<http://tuik.gov.tr/PreHaberBultenleri.do?id=15974>)

³ERRC 'Turkey Country Report 2011-2012', available at <http://www.errc.org/cms/upload/file/turkey-country-profile-2011-2012.pdf>.

surrounding this issue. Nationwide statistics are in general based on census results, and since the mid-1960s there are no questions regarding ethnicity in population census⁴based on Lausanne Treaty.

2- Government Policies and activities

- **During our mission, meetings were organized with the Ministry of Development: Meeting with Mr. Yusuf Yüksel , Head of Income Distribution and Social Inclusion Department**

The Ministry of Development coordinates the Development Plan of the Government and has an overall 'clearing role'. The Ministry has no programs exclusively designed for Roma, but has a regional Social Support Program (SODES), targeting 30 cities + 4, mainly covering the South East and East of Turkey. It offers social inclusion services including those for seasonal workers, new migrants to big cities and other groups. SODES is the only program implemented by the Ministry of Development, which otherwise manages the investment budget, prepares the investment program budget for all other ministries and guides them in the programme formulation and coordination.

Ministry of Development underlined the approach of the Government on social inclusion, which since 2011 rests with the newly established Ministry of Family and Social Policies. Policy documents pertaining to social inclusion do not specify certain segments of society, but try to address the issues of those living in poverty and in the margins of the city, with lack of access to education and social services. The approach the government follows is designed—for all socially excluded people, issue by issue (and not group by group). There are however certain specific projects for disadvantaged groups implemented by the line ministries and development agencies.

Mr. Yüksel also strongly emphasized the need of reliable data for the formulation of policies and programmes. Because of this necessity, and due to the various sensitivities of the socio-political context, he encouraged UNDP to begin with information collection through a survey, and expressed the belief that ensuring the preparation, alignment and mutual understanding of the parties would make the process possible.

The Ministry stated that a project prioritizing inclusion where partner or leading partner is UNDP, would be considered favourable. Firstly, it will be of benefit to Roma directly, and it can also guide other line ministries to improve their work. The Ministry of Development considers the survey as an opportunity provided that it is designed as a qualitative, local level and independent survey. Collected data would allow insight into the nature and extent of the issue ('how the problem exists, and how much') and would be highly valuable even if not publishable by the government.

- **Meetings were also organized with the Ministry of Family and Social Policies (MoFSP), with the following participants: Mr. Ercan Doğan, Deputy General Director of Family and Community**

⁴ The concept of ethnicity is closely linked to minority, which is in turn still officially linked to the Lausanne Treaty of 1924, granting rights to the three officially recognized groups of non-Muslim minorities (Armenian Christians, Jews, and Orthodox Christians/Greeks). The legal system does not recognize any other minority group in Turkey.

Services; Zeynep Han Akin Nurcan Alsancak, - Family and Social Policy Experts **and Ahmet Murat Altuğ**, Head of Department of Social Inclusion,; **Ayşe Şenel and Ramazan Güler-Sociologists for the Ministry.**

The Ministry of Family and Social Policies highlighted the present period as an important learning process. According to the Ministry, the opening process which was initiated in 2009 under the leadership of the Prime Minister for handling the issues of social inclusion for Roma, was a fact-finding process, as much as one of providing solutions.

The Ministry explained its adopted approach is service-based, not identity based, extended to all the citizens of Turkey in the areas of education, safety and security, employment, health, housing, and social policies, which they also see as a way for working with the Roma communities. The separate activities which the Ministry has started implementing in each of these sectors are to be brought together and integrated under a National Strategy Document and Action Plan.

The Strategy and Plan are currently being prepared in a consultative process and will be finalized soon, in the frame of subsequent stakeholder consultations. Participants of the meeting emphasized that the Government is also holding ongoing successive meetings with governors of municipalities with high Roma population. Governors of 18 municipalities participated in the first workshop. The current focus is on 22 provinces, with a Roma coordinator designated at each province.

In this learning process, the MoFSP also expressed the issue of the unavailability of data, but emphasized they are trying to identify densely populated Roma areas in order to start implementing some concrete projects after 2014. The Ministry expressed its openness and enthusiasm to cooperate with UNDP, and would like to benefit from UNDP expertise, by learning more about the good practices in other countries. During the meeting, which lasted more than two hours, the participants actively inquired about UNDP experience and approach to integrated development for social inclusion targeting explicitly but not exclusively disadvantaged Roma groups. They expressed high interest in continuing this discussion and invited UNDP representatives to visit some of the Ministry's pilot project locations. They also requested feedback and technical support to the National Strategy Document and Action Plan for Roma Inclusion, the preliminary final draft of which will be elaborated during the first quarter of 2014.

Initiatives in focus:

"Education has perhaps received the highest attention in the area of social inclusion, crystallized since the recent political opening. A national strategy and Action Plan on Roma is still under preparation. Education, employment, health, housing, social assistance and problems on social services together with the purposes and goals will be included in the national strategy under preparation.

A number of units under social services center is operational in 5 provinces densely populated by Roma in the fields of education support for children, family education for adults, vocational training etc. Other training programmes and courses are carried out in cooperation with other Ministries. Two pilots are ongoing in 2 provinces as well. It is noted as well that these units are separate ones than the centers under a EU funded project (IPA IV) "Promoting Social Inclusion in Densely Roma Populated Areas". Apart from that there exist other social support centres in 12 provinces supported by foundations under DG of Social Assistance.

The above-cited EU funded project will start in early 2014 with a budget of 10 million Euros and will run for a 3 year period, and cover 12 pilot provinces. At the end of the project, the goal is to come up with a model to be disseminated and applied more widely in Turkey."

3- NGO/CSO Activities

Meetings in Istanbul were organized with prominent local Roma NGOs and activists

- **Hacer Foggo, Local Activist and Human Rights Monitor for the European Roma Rights Centre, and Coordinator for Turkish Roma Rights Forum**

Local activist Hacer Foggo is coordinator for the Turkish Roma Rights Forum (ROMFO), one of the three main civil society groups in Turkey working on the issue of Roma inclusion. Founded by over 70 associations and 6 federations (including Edirne Roma Association/EDROM), statedly it represents 3.5 million people in Turkey. The Forum opens opportunities for Roma communities to be represented in local decision-making processes, mainly through frequent meetings and coordination visits to line Ministries and relevant institutions.

- **Elmas Arus, President and activist, Zero Discrimination Association**

One of the main Roma NGOs in Turkey, Zero Discrimination Association also established a common working platform for 34 NGOs and 2 federations with strong focus on both Roma and Roma-like groups (Dom, Lom and Abdal), called Public -Civil Society Group for Roma. The purpose of this working group is not only to raise right-based, socio-economic problems, cultural exclusion and discriminative policies of Roma but also to propose solutions. The group also contributes to organisation of Roma communities and their proper representation under an umbrella of "public-civil NGO dialogue group" with representatives of line Ministries, Rom, Lom, Dom and Abdal communities, foundations and experts in the field with the aim of social policy making. 6 Ministries' and İŞKUR representatives participate in this working group.

Ms. Arus informed that there are 210 Roma NGOs and 11 Federations. Among these NGOs only one of them is representative of Lom groups, 2 of them of Dom groups and 5 of them of Abdal groups. There are different arrangements in Turkey in this particular field and provided some further details as below:

The Public-Civil Society Group for Roma includes 34 NGOs and 2 federations representing Dom, Lom and Abdal communities (<http://www.iskur.gov.tr/default/RomanVatandaslari.aspx>)

Turkish Roma Rights Forum (ROMFO) is made of more than 70 foundations and 6 federations. (<http://medyaroman.blogspot.com.tr/2012/11/turkiye-roman-haklar-forumu-kuruldu.html>)

Turkish Roma Platform works with 70 foundations and 4 federations (<http://www.medyakesan.com.tr/gundem/turkiye-roman-platformu-kuruldu-h284.html>)

Turkish Roma Confederation includes 95 Roma Foundations and 9 federations with representatives of Roma NGOs (<http://www.haberler.com/turkiye-romanlar-konfederasyonu-kuruldu-5150975-haberi/>)

Apart from there, there are 2 federations and an unknown number of foundations.

Ms. Arus placed high emphasis on the need of promoting tolerance and civic peace in the face of growing socio-economic differences and statuses, and countering discriminative sentiment across Turkish society. Particularly strong is the need for conflict mediation in poor urban neighbourhoods where sizeable communities of migrant refugees from Syria have moved in and settled. Drug use is another urgent problem of Roma settlements to be addressed. Ms. Arus insisted on the high need to set up rehabilitation centres implementing quick impact interventions for drug use.

Summary of main findings from meetings with Roma NGOs and activists

- Based on interviews, the main approach adopted by the most prominent civil actors working on Roma inclusion is the Human Rights approach.
- To the extent there are local development initiatives (ex. small business development), they are small and lack an integrated approach and scale.
- Local activists and CSOs generally expressed belief in the good intention of the Government, but highlighted the lack of knowledge about Roma communities and their problems. They pointed to the need of reliable data.

An expressed need was also the establishment of a working link between local administrations and Roma NGOs. Better vertical communication links should also be established—activists experience that awareness on national political level is not matched at local level, in part owing to the absence of comprehensive and sustainable policy at national level.

4- Meetings with Potential Donors and Partners

- **A meeting was organized with Pelin Bardakçı, Program Manager, responsible for Roma Programmes at Open Society Foundation in Istanbul**

The Open Society Foundation is one of the main stakeholders and sources of financing for Roma inclusion in Turkey and the region. The main finding and issue from this meeting is that there is a high fragmentation within the NGO community (and particularly among Roma NGOs), and a very low capacity for absorption of available funds for social inclusion from third party (non-governmental resources).⁴

- **UNDP Mission to Istanbul in December 2013 also included a meeting with Ayla Göksel, CEO of the AÇEV (Mother and Child Education Foundation), part of Özyeğin Foundation Group.**

The Özyeğin Foundation is one of the key development organizations in Turkey with a solid experience in integrated rural development from a multi-sectoral, rights and social justice approach to development. Based on this experience, it aims to present a local model of integrated development to be replicated in Turkey, including successful practices of data collection and Monitoring and Evaluation. The Foundation is open to cooperation with UNDP and to sharing its model and approach of a holistic, integrated ABD

with stakeholders of Roma inclusion. Their contribution of pioneering field experiences in integrated local development for social inclusion from Turkey, methodology, and insights, could be highly valuable.

- **Meeting with Fatma Uluç, Education Officer of UNICEF was also facilitated by UNDP CO Ankara**

UNICEF supported implementation of catch-up education with most disadvantaged groups (beyond a narrower focus on girls) starting from 2008, some of them addressing the high concentration of Roma in schools or classrooms. UNICEF also facilitated the process of developing 'Action Plan for Roma Education' led by Ministry of National Education in 2010. There have been previous attempts to establish a partnership between UNICEF, led by the Ministry of National Education (MONE) in 2010. However due to changes in the main beneficiary structure of the project, whereby MoFSP became the beneficiary and MONE became the implementing partner, UNICEF's involvement remained with the initial project preparation phase. However, starting from 2014, UNICEF plans to be involved in more targeted interventions on the ground in the area of education, with Roma populated areas in mind. UNICEF representative was enthusiastic about the potential UN/UNDP initiative and partnership and sees it as an opportunity for joint action.

II- MAIN CONCLUSIONS

The general conclusion of the mission is that the present moment may be a turning point, a time when government agencies are ready to open up to seek partnerships and receive expertise to design and launch inclusive development programmes targeting explicitly but not exclusively disadvantaged Roma -- and learn by doing. Our experience during the December mission has located significant receptivity, recognized need and openness for partnership and learning. The present moment, and building up of cooperation between the UNDP and Turkish government will also present a potential for new engagement in a wider partnership for UN agencies, and bring for a lasting policy and social impact.

1- Main messages we received

1. **Data collection** on various population groups is not carried out due to the sensitivities and issues of trust between citizens and data collectors, where UNDP could play a vital role with its proven track record and expertise in trust building.
2. **Capacity Development** Both visited ministries (or at least the meeting partners) expect UNDP's concrete proposal in articulating new ideas and approaches, and services to be added to already existing ones. In addition to providing a survey methodology, the Ministry of Development sees a particular potential for UNDP as a neutral non-governmental actor, to facilitate communication with the media and public for alleviation of the low trust atmosphere and concerns about government intentions, placing high emphasis on building relationships of trust.
3. **There is lack of coordination** in relation to information, data, experience on implementation, partnerships of all stakeholders (the government, NGOs/CSOs and donors), who do not regularly

communicate and exchange information with each other. During UNDP mission, the new EU funded project became emblematic for this lack of information, whereby everyone knew of its existence, but not much of what is expected or its current status.

4. **There are different sensitivities surrounding the Roma issue:** One sensitivity is based on the fact that Roma are not recognized as minorities and hence Roma issue is not identified as a priority issue to be focused on, although sectoral interventions have already started addressing the Roma population. At the moment there is an added political sensitivity due to the upcoming local elections in March 2014. There is also sensitivity between different cultural groups, and it is needed and important to speak not only of Roma but other groups as well, with an inclusiveness approach. Based on the conducted discussions, UNDP's integrated approach of inclusive development targeting disadvantaged Roma explicitly but not exclusively, could contribute to the mediation of all of these sensitivities.
5. **Lacking experience of implementation on all levels:** Although in the last 4-5 years the Roma issue has been increasingly visible (through conferences, meetings, workshops convened by the Government agencies), this has been accompanied by very limited implementation of inclusion initiatives. This lack of experience relates not only to national, regional and local authorities, but also on part of NGOs/CSOs and stakeholders. It then translates into a very weak capacity for absorption of available funds for social inclusion. There is a clear and important need for UNDP's contribution to build capacity for integrated programming for social inclusion, and above all to offer a model for the inclusive development processes for Roma and all other disadvantaged groups in Turkey.

III- **SUGGESTIONS FOR AN INTEGRATED UNDP TURKEY CO (in cooperation with other UN agencies) INITIATIVE**

The suggested model represents a comprehensive triangle of programme activities, with three main pillars of the long term process. The main aim of the long-term process is to contribute to the change of attitudes patterns and policies relevant to all disadvantaged groups in Turkey.

The triangle

1. **Pilot data collection** with a focus on life quality and social needs in highly Roma populated areas. These surveys could provide analysis to the social, territorial and economic situation. This model could later be replicated to collect and analyze information and the situation of other disadvantaged groups as well. The methodology on pilot data collection has been created and implemented in existing area-based development (ABD) for Social Inclusion pilots in frame of the regional ABD initiative. This methodology would be aligned with and adapted to the Turkish context during the preparatory phase.
2. **Initiate a capacity development process on cross-cutting levels and issues:** providing guidance for national, regional and local stakeholders and actors on the fields of training, developing of a common language, partnership and trust building, modeling, providing best practices and

lessons learned from model integrated local development processes implemented to date by UNDP through its regional initiative on Roma inclusion.

3. **Establish ABD pilots** targeting Roma (explicitly but not exclusively), through the selection of pilot areas with high concentration of Roma communities. This ‘learning by doing’ would be most conducive to and efficient in increasing the capacity of government, institutions, CSOs/NGOs and other stakeholders in the preparation of policies and programmes for social inclusion.

Goals

1. In the frame of the programme to be proposed, increase the capacity of national, regional and local level stakeholders to be more efficient in the development of policies and programmes for inclusion.
2. Increase the absorption capacity of CSOs/NGOs and actors who are stakeholders to the social inclusion process – particularly important as more and more social inclusion funds become available in Turkey, as we see.
3. Piloting/ modelling – improve the situation of Roma and other disadvantaged groups in pilot areas, and provide a model to improve the situation of disadvantaged communities elsewhere.

UNDP’s critical role would be expressed in implementing ‘the corners of the triangle’, on national, regional and local levels, through facilitation, coordination and piloting.

IV- ACTION PLAN: STEPS FORWARD

The current regional ABD for social inclusion initiative implemented by the UNDP BRC (with the remaining timeframe January- July 1st 2014) could be used for the coordination and facilitation of a 3-step process with view of developing a long term Inclusive Development Pilot Programme in Turkey. Specifically, these entail:

- **‘Zero phase’**, in frame of the given half year (January-June 2014) to provide coordination and facilitation, with contribution of the team of the regional ABD for Inclusion initiative, to setting up the minimum conditions to a preparatory phase of a longer-term development process in Turkey (*see table below*).

UNDP’s own contribution will cover all the expenses in this phase.

- **‘Preparatory phase’** for a longer-term development process in Turkey, with the duration of 7-8 months (July 2014-February 2015), during which all necessary conditions for a longer term integrated development process will be established:
 - conduct discussions, specify and reach agreements on programme details with all partners;

- And prepare the project document, coordinate donors, establish communication with relevant EU bodies, select pilot municipalities, train stakeholders, and link this initiative to other initiatives on national and EU level.

UNDP will seek for donor contribution in the form of a seed fund, to be agreed on at an earliest time possible.

- **Integrated Development Programme for Social Inclusion** (March 2015-2017): the preparatory phase will be followed by implementation of an Integrated and Inclusive Development Pilot Programme targeting disadvantaged Roma communities in Turkey explicitly but not exclusively. We suggest implementing the ‘Triangle’ Integrated Development Model based on the three corners developed above: data collection models; capacity development process for national, regional and local stakeholders; and implementation of ABD pilots for Social Inclusion in selected municipalities. Based on the clarifications and decisions reached during the preparatory phase, activities will also ensure the scaling up, highest feasibility, efficiency and sustainability of the initiative.

Donor coordination and governmental partnership is necessary to the long term implementation of the integrated programme.

Timeframe of activities suggested for Zero Phase

Timeframe	Zero Phase Activities
January 2014	Distribute the finalized report of UNDP mission to Ankara /Istanbul to partners
February 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Organize 2 partnership building events (‘pre-pact meetings’): ● In Ankara – with the aim of introducing the planned timeframe of activities, presenting UNDP CO’s decision to become involved in inclusion issues, and establishing partnerships with government bodies (obtaining formal endorsements, joint coordination for future action) ● In Istanbul – meeting with stakeholder NGOs and donors to discuss the concrete opportunities of the cooperation
March 2014	Prepare preparatory project proposal and obtain necessary approvals from all relevant stakeholders
April- May, 2014	Set up the conditions, including financial conditions, for the preparatory phase (a 7-8-month process to prepare the conditions for the longer-term integrated development process)
June-July 2014	Begin the ‘Preparatory phase’ for the longer-term inclusive and integrated development programme in Turkey.

SECTORAL ANALYSIS

Education:

"Education has perhaps received the highest attention in the area of social inclusion, crystallized since the recent political opening. National Roma Strategy and Action Plan is still under preparation. Education, employment, health, housing, social assistance and problems on social services together with the purpose and goal will be included in the national strategy under preparation.

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Health: Based on interviews during the mission, in general the health situation is far better than other sectoral issues, as until recently most Roma had green cards which provided access to public healthcare services. The system changed in early 2012, as green card holders became integrated to the General Health Insurance, according to which individuals with a monthly income lower than one third of the minimum wage can access public healthcare services. There is no research as to how this change impacts Roma. Civil activists working on field pointed to the increasing urgency of drug use issues (as a general trend in Turkey but affecting poor urban neighborhoods with high Roma concentrations acutely).

Employment: The government has also taken actions towards the increased employability of Roma, who are usually engaged in the informal labor market, low skilled professions and temporary jobs. In March 2012 the Employment Agency (İŞKUR) provided temporary employment of public benefit to 1365 Roma (of 1500 targeted) from 47 provinces for 8 months. 537 persons received vocational training certificates, and a special quota was announced to be introduced within employment programs. Activists have pointed to the temporary nature of the courses and employment and the general lack of information about the program, as well as the necessity of medium and long-term planning to improve the employment conditions for Roma individuals.

Housing: The domain of housing is recognized (including by government representatives during formal meetings) as the weakest link of the social inclusion issue to date. The Ministry of Family and Social Policies stated that housing projects for Roma are included in the agenda, in two main directions: rehabilitation of currently existing settlements, and the construction of new social housing. In recent years, some social housing developments have been realized. NGOs/CSOs in Turkey recognize some good examples (Canakkale, Biga, Uzunköprü), where housing is constructed in proximity to the city, albeit separated, and with favorable payment conditions, and where field research indicated Roma

communities positive experience of redevelopment and relocation. Some other cases, however, have brought criticism of social flats located far away, with low installments but excessively high maintenance costs, not suitable to the culture of poor people, who are most typically relocated without prior preparation; the erosive effect of the dissolution of communities are also a stated concern. Nevertheless, it is a promising sign that in his speech announcing the Democratization Package for the country in September 2013, Prime Minister Erdoğan vowed that the new housing to be built for Roma in the framework of urban transformation projects would be designed to meet the particular needs of Roma.