

Replies of Slovenia

Questionnaire for Governments to inform the report of the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context to the 73rd Session of the General Assembly on the issue of informal settlements and human rights

Question 1

In the context of Slovenia the definition of informal settlements largely corresponds to some of the Roma settlements. Such settlements are rather small, located near other settlements or in direct contact with them but functionally practically separated. Their location is a consequence of historic settlement of Roma in Slovenia, deriving from times of transformation from nomadic or semi-nomadic life style to permanent settlement. Buildings in such settlements are mainly illegal, built on land not owned by the settlers and without connection to public infrastructure.

According to data gathered in studies which base on different research projects in the period from 2007 – 2017 the number of Roma settlements varies from 68 to 107. In spite of dynamic attitude of Roma toward space which in comparison with the majority population results in more frequent relocations the number of settlement agglomerations of Roma community in this period hasn't changed drastically. The data collected in 2017 shows that there are between 1.555 and 1.863 buildings in 83 Roma settlements where 6.755 inhabitants live.

Question 2

On the basis of results comparison from the Overview of Roma settlements condition in Slovenia in 2017 and Operative programme of drinking water supply for the period 2016-2021 the number of inhabitants in Roma settlements who are connected to public water supply is a bit lower than the national average. In Slovenia 88 % of all inhabitants are provided with water from public supply systems while in Roma settlements this percentage is 79 %. Other inhabitants have access to water either in private arrangement or by other way of provision.

On the basis of above mentioned overview and the data provided by the companies undertaking the obligatory communal public services in domain of sewage disposal, sanitation and wastewater cleaning the inhabitants of Roma settlements are connected to public sanitation system in lower percentage than the country's average. Namely, according to recent data (not yet officially confirmed) app. 73 % of all inhabitants are connected to public sanitation system, app. 19 % drain the wastewater through individual systems, mainly using cesspits while for app. 8 % of inhabitants there are no data in this regard and for 0,13 % we estimate that their wastewater flows directly to the environment without being cleansed. In the case of Roma settlements which partly or completely belong to agglomerations app. 43 % of inhabitants use the public sanitation system, 35 % use cesspits, while for app. 22 % of inhabitants there is no data available.

The data of electric utility supply network companies show that on the territory of Roma settlements there are 920 illegal connections to the electric supply system. As mentioned before there are 1.555 to 1.863 buildings in the Roma settlements. According to data collected by municipalities we estimate that due to very high number of illegal connections to electric supply systems we do not dispose with reliable data regarding the level of electric energy supply in the Roma settlements. There are 8 Roma settlements without connection to electric supply networks but in some of them the inhabitants provide electricity through generators.

All 83 Roma settlements are accessible by roads. There are 16 out of them which are connected to traffic network by non-categorized roads while almost half of these settlements (40 out of 83) are connected with public roads which are under municipal jurisdiction.

Question 3

According to police estimates the general security situation in Roma settlements is improving in the last years. Police efforts for close co-operation with the representatives of Roma and local

communities have yielded positive results in this context. The police crime records are not correlated with data on ethnicity.

Current health data collections do not include statistics regarding domestic violence and violence against women.

Question 4

The Government of the Republic of Slovenia adopted the National Program of Measures for Roma for the 2017 – 2021 Period, which defines measures regarding living conditions and access to housing. One of the important strategic objectives of this document is "to improve the living conditions of Roma, to speed up the arrangement of settlements with majority Roma population, to provide access to public goods, such as access to water and electricity, in accordance with national legal requirements and to promote the elimination of actual spatial segregation, resulting from the historic settlement of Roma and long-term exclusion from social life". One of its priority fields thus also includes "living conditions and access to housing", where six measures are anticipated to improve the current situation.

With inclusion of all Roma settlements in the general settlement system of Slovenia the local communities will be obliged to equally treat Roma settlements in the process of spatial planning and include them in the spatial development on their territory. At the same time they will be able to follow population and migration movements as well as other indicators regarding general development of the Roma community on the local level and beyond on the basis of analyze regarding the number and scope of Roma settlements, their location, infrastructure and standard of living.

On 11 May 2017, the Government of the Republic of Slovenia established an Inter-ministerial working group for resolving spatial issues of Roma. The objective of the Inter-ministerial working group is in particular to improve living conditions in the Roma settlements. Its tasks include:

- preparation of an examination of the spatial issues in individual Roma settlements in Slovenia;
- preparation of an examination and an analysis of best practices in the regulation of spatial issues and the living conditions of Roma;
- preparation of draft measures (legislative, organizational, financial, etc.) for the regulation of spatial issues and improvement of the living conditions of Roma.

On the basis of questionnaires submitted to municipalities, the Inter-ministerial working group began supplementing the record of Roma settlements and preparing an examination of the situation regarding spatial problems in Roma settlements in Slovenia. It furthermore prepared a questionnaire on practices of regulating Roma settlements for all municipalities with Roma settlements in order to obtain as many proposals as possible and experience about positively accepted measures. Detailed questions refer to spatial planning, regulation of land plots, supply of municipal infrastructure, and arranging of housing conditions. Decisions about management of Roma settlements and participation of the Roma community are discussed in greater detail. The questionnaire on practices when regulating Roma settlements also includes legislative proposals.

The intergovernmental working group has to submit its report to the Government by the end of May 2018 and present its findings and conclusions.

Question 5

Roma settlements are specific spatial-social phenomenon. As a part of the Slovene settlements system they are marked with some specifics regarding their form, location and structure which differ from other settlements in the country. This is a result of historic settlement of Roma in Slovenia in times of transformation from nomadic or semi-nomadic lifestyle to permanent settlement.

Government and municipalities authorities strive to encourage arrangement of Roma settlements and improve living conditions of Roma. Resolving the spatial issues and improving housing conditions of Roma is a process which can be successful only with close partnership of municipalities, Roma community and the state institutions where all of the stakeholders have to fulfil their obligations on the basis of their competence.

Question 6

Besides the Constitution and Law on the Roma community in the Republic of Slovenia the protection of Roma community is additionally incorporated also in other laws regulating specific areas. Namely, living conditions in Roma settlements are regulated by Law on local self-government, Law on Spatial Planning, Construction Law and Housing Law, as well as in different programs, strategies and resolutions in specific areas.

Question 7

Slovenia is not a recipient of international development assistance.

Question 8

In Slovenia, there are certain Roma settlements which represent example of their comprehensive arrangement and we can consider them as good practice examples. The Inter-ministerial working group for resolving spatial issues of Roma is examining them to find solutions to resolving specific challenges in other such settlements in the future.