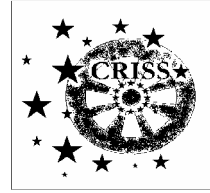




European Roma Rights Centre



Romani CRISS

SHADOW REPORT

United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of
Discrimination against Women in Romania for its consideration at
the
35th Session
15 May to 2 June 2006

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Romani CRISS and European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC), respectfully submit this report on the situation of Romani women in Romania for consideration by the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, (the “Committee”) at its 35th Session.

The ERRC is an international public interest law organization engaging in a range of activities aimed at combating anti-Romani racism and human rights abuse of Roma. The approach of the ERRC involves, in particular, strategic litigation, international advocacy, research and policy development, and training of Romani activists. The ERRC is a cooperating member of the International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights and has consultative status with the Council of Europe, as well as with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. Further information on the ERRC is available at www.errc.org.

Romani CRISS is a Bucharest-based non-governmental organization, established on April 4, 1993, which defends and promotes the human rights of Roma in Romania. Romani CRISS provides legal assistance in cases of abuse and works to combat and prevent racial discrimination against Roma in all areas of public life, including the fields of education, employment, housing, and health. Romani CRISS represents Roma clients and beneficiaries by engaging in legal defence and advocacy before domestic and international authorities, and assists community development on a local level.

This document is a synthesis of two documents originally provided to the Committee by the ERRC and Romani CRISS respectively. The chapters below have been provided as follows: Chapters 2, 3 and 4 were provided by Romani CRISS. Chapter 5 was provided by the ERRC. Recommendations brought by the two organisations have been combined into a new Chapter 6.

Chapter 2: Overview of the Situation of Women Rights in Romania, provided by Romani CRISS

Women belonging to the Roma minority face multiple discrimination, particularly in the field of education, health, employment or participation in public and political life. There is a strong concern regarding the lack of efficient solutions addressing the situation of Roma women and children. At the same time, the fact that gender equality is far from being addressed by Romani women activists should constitute a matter of concern.

The employment rate among the Roma population in Romania is much lower than the majority population at national level (47% in comparison to 61.7%). There are four times more Roma housewives than majority women, which indicate the low participation in the labour market of Romani Women. The higher level of unemployment among Romani

women (37.1%) than among Romani men (15.3%) can also reflect the lower access to education and qualifications that Romani women suffer².

Another recently published study of the UNDP, “Faces of Poverty, Faces of Hope”, shows that 35% of the Romani women in Romania, aged between 25-54, are unemployed, four times more than majority women.

These differences are the result of low levels of education, lack or poor professional training and discrimination by the employers.

On the other hand, Romani women have not been yet explicitly put on the agenda of national and even international institutions, mainstream political parties, although Social Democrat Party referred to the improvement of health status of the Roma population and “Dreptate si Adevar” (“Justice and Truth”) Alliance included in their electoral offer programs on health, education and employment.

In the present government, there are only three female ministers and just 13.3% of the secretaries and deputy secretaries of state are women; there are no Roma ministers in the Romanian government and only one male Roma Member of the Parliament³. In 2005, a Roma woman has been appointed Secretary of State as the President of the new established National Agency for Roma.

There are 12 Romani women out of 41 local experts, appointed by the Roma Party in 2003 for the Prefectures within the Roma County Offices. The Romani women representation seems to mainstream other fields of actions such as: health, education and local administrations.

There are approximately 180 Roma health mediators, all of which are Romani women who mainly assist the Roma population in obtaining medical insurance.

Representatives of Roma political parties hold 189 seats as local councillors. Romani women’s political participation as voters, party members, candidates and elected candidates is much poorer than among the majority. They tend not to vote, and if they do they are often caught in the so-called “family voting”.

The electoral law still doesn’t include any quota system for women participation on candidates’ lists although 2004 municipal elections few mainstream parties have included a greater number of women on their lists. The Conservative Party (Former Romanian Humanist Party) included 40% women on their candidates lists. Compared with the previous elections, there has been more public debate on women’s participation to politics.

² Indicators on Roma community in Romania 0 ICCV 2002.

³ For further details, see www.gov.ro.

Chapter 3: Legal Framework on Gender Equality

In Romania, the legal framework concerning the promotion of equal opportunities for women and men has been significantly improved over the past three years.

Gender discrimination is addressed both by anti-discrimination and equal opportunities laws. Law 202/2002 has firstly the role of sending a political signal regarding the seriousness to which this issue is acknowledged and addressed.

The legal framework on equal treatment between women and men is currently under revision. In 2004, the Government of Romania passed the Government Ordinance no. 84, which modifies the 202/2002 law, on equal opportunities for women and men. In February 2005, a revised version of the Equal Opportunities Law was published, transposing more coherently the EU Directives provisions⁴.

This year, law 202/2002 is to be amended, but still there are *important* gaps:

- The proposed law maintains the Agency for Equal Opportunities under the coordination of the Ministry of Labour which does not meet the requirements for independency or for a distinct independent budget.
- The lack of impact of such legal instrument in the absence of resources that support the provisions' implementation.
- The Law refers only to equal opportunities between women and men, without considering opportunities for women from disadvantaged groups and minority women.
- The law does not promote or support, for instance, balanced participation of women belonging to different groups.

The structure of the Agency for Equal Opportunities, as foreseen by the Law, does not promote diversity and women's multiple identity in the Romanian society and does not take into consideration the involvement of women from disadvantaged and minorities groups.

The G.O. no. 137/2000 on preventing and sanctioning all forms of discrimination⁵ has been subsequently modified three times. The discrimination deeds covered by the antidiscrimination legislation are only those of administrative nature; for the criminal offences there are separate legal provisions.

The antidiscrimination legislation envisages and sanctions direct and indirect discrimination and victimization on 14 grounds, **including gender**, exerted in all fields of public life.

⁴ For details, see (See: http://www.mmssf.ro/domenii/asistenta/1501_04.htm).

⁵ Governmental Ordinance no. 137 of 31 August 2000 on preventing and sanctioning all forms of discrimination, approved by law 48/2002, modified by Governmental Ordinance no. 77/2002 and approved by law 24/2004.

According to its 2005 Activity Report⁶, the NCCD has received a number of 382 cases, out of which it has ruled decisions in 360. Out of the 360 resolved cases, there have been imposed administrative sanctions (warning or fine) in 60 cases and 22 cases have been mediated.

24 (9 complains received from victims and 15 complains self-noticed by NNCD) out of the total of 360 cases have been related to discrimination on the basis of gender.

At the moment, the roles of both structures in terms of ascertaining and sanctioning the acts of discrimination on gender criterion are unclear.

Chapter 4: Matters of Concern in the field of Health with respect to Romani Women in Romania, provided by Romani CRISS

Roma exclusion from public health-care services is caused, firstly, by the inequitable geographic distribution of health-care units, by the malfunctions of the health-care system and by discrimination on ethnic criteria.

The health status of Roma is generally weak in Romania, and there is little information about the health needs and interests of Romani women.

The level of training of Roma on health is rising. In communities where health mediators work there are training sessions organised on regular basis, on different topics that raise awareness of Roma women in the field of health. The institution of the health mediator has a significant impact on promoting women participation in matters pertaining to their own health.

Many Romani women use contraceptive methods that contribute to the improvement of the health condition and to the decrease of abortion rate. According to “The health status of the Roma population and their access to health care services” study⁷, 48% of Roma have heard of at least one method of contraception (51,4% of the male subjects and 42,9% of the female subjects).

On the other hand, according to data sent by the health mediators, the contraceptive methods most often used in Roma communities are the DIU and the injectable contraceptive.

The distribution of free hormonal injections in Roma communities, not in the presence of a specialised physician (gynaecologist) that should prescribe these injections, constitutes a matter of concern raised by the researcher Maria Mailat in an independent evaluation report at the end of 2005.

⁶ 2005 National Council for Combating Discrimination Activity Report, page 5-6. The full version of the report is available at www.cncd.org.ro.

⁷ Sorin Cace and Cristian Vladescu, 2004

Romani women choose these contraceptive methods because these are often free (through the national programs implemented by the Ministry of Health). This method is popular among Romani women as they it is perceived as safer and do not require much effort. For instance *“it’s much better to go to the doctor and have an injection instead of going through the pain of abortions. It gives me headaches, but there is nothing else I can do. The injection is free and it’s better for me if I stay and think of my situation.”*- declaration of a Romani woman.

The interviews of researcher Maria Mailat with the specialist physicians led to the conclusion that the use of injectable contraception for a longer period of time put the Romani women at risk of not getting pregnant anymore. The risk of becoming sterile is particularly high among young Romani women aged 18-35 who use this contraceptive method and do not know or are not aware of its consequences.

A significant problem faced by Romani women in relation to the medical personnel is discrimination. Cases of Romani women hospitalised in “special” rooms of the hospital where only Romani Women are placed has been reported to Romani CRISS in a number of occasions. This practice seems to be more common in maternity wards.

Romani CRISS findings in March 2006:

In the last months, a practice of segregating Romani women in different rooms has been encountered in the Obstetrics - Gynaecology ward of County Hospital Constanta, at the 7th floor of the hospital. In the above-mentioned ward, Romani women are placed in two rooms (7113 and 7114). Besides the fact that Roma women are separated of the rest of the non-Roma patients, the medical and extra-medical services (hygienic services, changing of sheets, etc) are not appropriate, according to the patients’ declarations. They are not satisfied with the fact they are placed in special rooms and that the medical services are visible different, in quality, in their wards, given that all patients there benefit of medical insurance from the National Health Insurance House.

The practice can be proved by the fact that Romani women are being systematically placed in these wards. According to our information this practice started about a year ago.

From the legal point of view, this is a violation of article GO 137/2000, with its subsequent amendments and modifications.

Romani CRISS identified similar cases in other counties too, and it will continue monitoring them thoroughly and addressing complaints to competent bodies, including to the court of justice.

Chapter 5: Summary of Legal Cases concerning episodes in which Romani women have fallen victim of violence, provided by the ERRC

The focus of this chapter is singly and solely episodes in which Romani women have fallen victim of violence. In some cases, this violence appears to be specifically gender- and/or racially targeted. In other cases, it appears part of a wider pattern of violence in Romania, not checked or remedied adequately by the actions of the state authority.

The list of cases provided below fits a wider pattern – and indeed is indicative of – systemic practices of human rights violations directed at Roma in Romania. These systemic practices are incompatible with the Convention’s promise of equality, as well as with the Romanian state’s obligations to guarantee equality and to suppress actions degrading to women, including minority women. The ERRC’s 2001 Country Report “State of Impunity: Human Rights Abuse of Roma in Romania”⁸, documented comprehensively the system-wide issues of human rights deprivation facing Roma in Romania. The cases which follow below focus specifically on instances in which Romani women have fallen victim of violent assault by other individuals. Some of these cases are derived from the 2001 ERRC report, while others are more recent cases from the ERRC case files. In nearly all of the episodes concerned, no adequate remedy has been provided to victims.

The ERRC believes that the upcoming session of the Committee offers an opportunity to highlight some of the most significant respects in which the government of Romania has failed to fulfil its commitments under the Convention.

This chapter is divided in two sections. The first section covers cases in which Romani women have been targeted for violence and/or cruel, degrading or other forms of demeaning treatment explicitly as women. The second section covers cases in which Romani women have fallen victim of attack as a result of a general climate and culture of unremedied violence in Romania, and in particular as a result of intense anti-Romani sentiment frequently giving rise to unremedied violence.

Section (5)1: Violence and/or cruel, degrading or other forms of demeaning treatment of Romani women; cases indicating specific targeting as women

Ms. M.I. and Others:

Doctors of the Gynaecological-Obstetrical Department of the Constanta County Clinical Hospital failed to provide Ms. M.I. with adequate treatment, resulting in severe harms to her person. Doctors and other medical staff repeatedly ignored her requests for assistance when she appeared to be suffering an infection after giving birth by caesarean section on February 23, 2004. According to ERRC research, conducted in co-operation with the Bucharest-based organisation Romani CRISS on March 7, 2004, medical staff disregarded her reports of abdominal pain, headaches and nausea. On February 27, 2004, two junior doctors and one doctor removed Ms M.I.’s uterus without her consent, and then failed to inform her of the details and consequences of the operation. A complaint was filed with a medical professional body. To date she is yet to receive an answer to the complaint.

Ms. G.S and Others

According to witnesses accounts given to the ERRC, on November 1999 in a late night raid police reportedly broke into the house of Mr M.S. located in Sector 3 of Bucharest through the back-door window, while his children were alone at home. The police called G.S., the fourteen-year-old daughter of the family, a “prostitute” and threatened to take her with them. When Mr M.S. went to the police station to inquire about the incident two days later,

⁸ The report can be found at: <http://www.errc.org/db/00/1E/m0000001E.rtf>

he was told that the police “did not know who these men were.” Mr M.S. did not file a complaint against the police.

Section (5)2: Cases in which Romani women have fallen victim of attack as a result of a general climate and culture of unremedied violence in Romania, and in particular as a result of intense anti-Romani sentiment frequently giving rise to unremedied violence;

Pogrom at Casinul Nou, Harghita County

The original incident took place on August 11, 1990, in Casinul Nou, a hamlet in the village of Plaiesii de Jos. On that day, approximately 60-400 predominantly ethnic Hungarian villagers chased out the entire Romani population and burned or otherwise destroyed their houses and property, including the house of the Ms. G.I. and her personal/household possessions. As a consequence approximately 150 people were left homeless, while many others, including Ms. G.I. and her four underage children, faced a very real threat of being lynched. During the summer of 1992 the individuals who destroyed the Romani Casinul Nou settlement rebuilt the Romani houses – the house of the applicant included. Ms. G.I. herself, however, for reasons of her own as well as her children’s safety, decided not to return to Casinul Nou but chose instead to stay with family and friends in the nearby village of Plaiesii de Sus. Ms. G.I. has to date not been compensated for the destruction of her personal/household possession. A complaint in the matter is currently pending at the European Court of Human Rights.

Pogrom at Plaiesii de Sus, Harghita County

Following two violent incidents involving six members of the Romani community on June 8, 1991, a public notice appeared on the outskirts of the Romani settlement, informing the inhabitants that on June 9, 1991, their houses would be set on fire. Local Roma informed the police about the threat who “advised” them to leave their houses for their own safety. On the afternoon of June 9, the Romani community, including several women and children fled from their homes. Then, an organised group of non-Romani villagers set all of the 28 Romani houses on fire. For approximately one year following the incident, Roma from this community, including small children, were forced to live in stables which had no heating or running water. In the aftermath of the incident, the Harghita County Police Department allegedly started an investigation in which the Roma were blamed for the incident. A complaint in the matter is currently pending at the European Court of Human Rights.

Pogrom at Hadareni, Mures County

On September 20, 1993, a mob killed three Romani men and subsequently destroyed fourteen Romani houses in the village of Hadareni in Mures County, northwestern Romania. For many years after the event, the victims were forced to live in degrading circumstances. Following an altercation in which a non-Romani youth was killed, a mob of non-Romani villagers hunted down the alleged perpetrators (all men) and set fire to the house in which they were hiding. Two were brutally murdered when they tried to escape, and the third burned to death in the house or was also beaten to death and then his corpse was thrown back into the house (eyewitness accounts differ on this point). The mob, including members of the local police force, went on to destroy 14 additional houses of Romani families. Following the events of 1993, the surviving victims, including Ms. Otilia Rostas, Ms.

Eleonora Rostas, Ms. Maria Lacatus, Ms. Ghioloanca Lacatus, Ms. M. Marianna., Ms. Rozalia Rostas. Ms. Silvia Moldovan, Ms. Melenuta Moldovan, Ms. Maria Moldovan, Ms. Valentina Rostas, Ms. Lucretia Rostas, Ms. Florina Maria Zoltan, and Ms. Dorina Persida Rostas and others were forced to live in hen houses, pigsties, windowless cellars, in extremely cold and overcrowded conditions. These conditions lasted for several years and in some cases are still continuing. As a result, many fell ill. Diseases contracted by the victims included hepatitis, a heart condition (ultimately leading to fatal heart attack), diabetes, and meningitis. The ERRC has defended 12 women from Hadareni in complaints before the European Court of Human Rights. In final decisions rendered in July 2005, the Court found that the Romanian Government violated a number of articles of the Convention and ordered that compensation in the sum of 500,000 Euro be paid to the victims.

Ms. Roza Kanis and Others

According to a report by the non-governmental organisation Liga Pro Europa, an ERRC local partner in Romania, during the night of November 10, 2001, in Acațari village, Mureș County, two police officers entered the house of Ms. Roza Kanis, 82, and beat eight Roma present in the house, three of whom were minors. According to testimony by Mr. Peter Balog, his sons Csaba, 17, and Zoltan, 13, Laszlo Vass, 15, Mr. Marton Szabo, 26, his partner Ms. Carmen Cacula, 25 and their son, Marton Szabo, 7, were traveling by cart on their way to the market in Bălăușeri. The group arrived in Acațari at around 6:30 PM and met Mr. Lehel Kanis, who proposed that the group stay the night at his mother's place. According to Mr. Balog's statement, at approximately 1:00 AM on November 11, 2001, Mr. Petru Solovăstru, Chief of Police of Acațari, Mr. Csaba Radu, a police officer, and a third man in plainclothes, entered Roza Kanis's home, in a drunken state, by force and without a warrant, destroying the door. After entering the house, Police Chief Solovăstru grabbed Laszlo Vass and Zoltan Balog from the bed in which they were sleeping and began repeatedly hitting them with his fists and head-butting them. Police Chief Solovăstru then reportedly proceeded to grab Carmen Cacula by her hair and pull her out of bed and then began slapping her face repeatedly and kicking her in the stomach. Police Chief Solovăstru then grabbed Ms. Cacula's son and pushed him hard against a wall and threw him outside the house. Police Chief Solovăstru then allegedly climbed on the bed in which Lehel Kanis was sleeping and began kicking him. Mr Kanis allegedly then managed to push Police Chief Solovăstru away and escape from the house. At the same time, Csaba Balog tried to run, but was caught by Mr Solovăstru, who hit him in the face and kicked him in the stomach repeatedly. At this point, the Police Chief Solovăstru forced everyone to leave the house, except for Mr. Marton Szabo Sr. Mr. Solovăstru reportedly began hitting Mr Szabo in the face, and only stopped when Carmen Cacula yelled that he was epileptic. He then allegedly forced Mr. Szabo and Csaba Balog to undress to the waist, searched their pants pockets and stole the money they were carrying. A complaint was filed shortly after the incident, but it was subsequently withdrawn after threats to the complainants.

Ms. Mina Stănescu and Others

On February 2, 2002 at 6 a.m., during a police raid in the village of Zanea, Iași County, during which a Romani woman, Ms Mina Stănescu, approximately 50-years-old, was hit by a rubber bullet shot by police, according to documentation by the Tirgu-Mures based non-governmental organization Liga Pro Europa. Liga Pro Europa reports that, according to official statements issued on February 4 and 5, 2002, by the police department, at 6:00 AM on February 2, 2002, 125 police officers, 200 gendarmes and a local prosecutor conducted a

raid in the Romani settlement in Zanea, because of tensions between the state electricity provider and Roma in the settlement over alleged illegal electrical connections. The police had a general warrant to search for illegal electrical connections, found on the outside of houses. According to official statements, police found it necessary to use arms, including blank charges and rubber bullets, when thirty Roma reacted violently to police checking their connections by throwing rocks and other objects at police officers. According to the February 9, 2002, testimony of Mr B.S. to Liga Pro Europa, hundreds of masked officers raided the village at approximately 3:00 AM. Masked officers allegedly entered houses forcefully, causing panic among the inhabitants, and searched the houses. Mr B.S. also reported that, contrary to official statements, no Roma attacked the police. According to testimony given to Liga Pro Europa on February 9, 2002, by Mr Viorel Stănescu, a 54-year-old Romani man with a heart condition, at 3:00 AM on the evening in question, between twenty and thirty masked officers forcefully entered his home, telling him that they would search the house. Mr Stănescu stated that he then began to suffer heart pain, and at approximately 7:00 AM, was taken for treatment to the hospital by an emergency vehicle. Mr Stănescu alleges that he returned home on February 3, 2002, from the hospital to find that twenty gold coins – his daughter’s wedding dowry – were missing from his home. His family told him that they had been thrown out of the house by the masked officers, during which time the coins went missing.

On March 24, 2002, the ERRC and local counsel filed a complaint with the Iasi Military Prosecutor’s office on behalf of 104 victims of the raid. The case was subsequently closed by the prosecutor without anyone being convicted.

“Buhusi Case”: Killings by Police Officers

No one has ever been brought to justice in connection with the December 2002 massive assault by public officials on the Orbic Romani neighbourhood in the northern Romanian town of Buhusi, an attack which resulted in two deaths and a number of injured persons, among them Romani women.

On December 5, 2002, at around 11:00 a.m., fifteen police officers from Buhusi and approximately thirty special troops from Bacau and Neamt Counties and twenty gendarmes raided the Orbic Romani Neighborhood in the town of Buhusi, Eastern Romania, fatally shooting two Romani men and injuring four other Roma including an elderly woman and a child. According to police, the raid was undertaken with the purpose of detaining three individuals suspected of robbery. According to the police, during the raid locals became violent, leading to the lethal use of firearms, which the police claims was entirely legal. Extensive eyewitness testimony by locals contravenes the claims of police, and indicates massive indiscriminate violence by public officials, including wanton herding of large groups of persons, indiscriminate beatings, and the shooting with firearms of persons neither armed, nor of any immediate threat to themselves or any other persons. A complaint on the matter is currently pending with the European Court of Human Rights.

“Pandele” Case

On 24 January 2006, the ERRC filed an application with the European Court of Human Rights against Romania, concerning a case of excessive and unjustified use of force by the

police against a Romani family, as well as the subsequent failure of the authorities to conduct an effective investigation into the incidents.

The case involves the Pandeale family, a Romani family of four -- the two spouses and their two sons -- living in Targu Frumos, a small town situated in northeastern Romania. The Pandeales used to own a fruits and vegetables stand in the food market of Targu Frumos, which was built on a space leased from the municipality. Shortly before the police intervention at issue took place, the municipality agreed to extend the lease contract for twenty-five years. For obscure reasons, the municipality decided however to cancel the lease contract shortly after having agreed to extend it. Legal procedures concerning the abusive cancellation of the lease are still pending domestically in Romania.

On 19 August 2003, four days after the lease contract had been terminated, the municipality decided to evict the Pandeale family from the food market. The Pandeales, together with a number of their relatives and friends, staged a peaceful protest against the decision of the municipality.

Responding to calls made by employees of the municipality, a number of agents of the Police Detachment for Rapid Intervention (“the DPIR”) arrived at the scene and started beating the applicants. At the time when the incidents took place, the DPIR officers concerned were wearing black uniforms and head masks, and were equipped with shotguns and “Kalashnikov” assault rifles. All of the applicants were brutally beaten with rubber truncheons, baseball bats, fists and boots and were threatened with firearms. Two of the applicants were then taken to the Targu Frumos police station where they were again physically abused and threatened. They were also fined for “disturbing the public order” and eventually released.

On 15 September 2003, Ms. Roxana Prisacariu, the applicants’ legal representative, filed a complaint with the Prosecution Service of the Iasi Court of Appeal asking for an investigation into the case and for the punishment of those responsible for the beating. The prosecutor charged with the investigation summarily dismissed the complaint and gave a non-indictment decision, stating that the use of force by the police officers was lawful. That decision was upheld through a series of appeals and became final in May 2005.

On behalf of the four Romani applicants, the ERRC has taken this case to the European Court of Human Rights, alleging violations of Article 3 (prohibition of torture and inhuman and degrading treatment), Article 6 (right to a fair trial), Article 10 (freedom of expression), Article 13 (right to an effective remedy) and Article 14 (prohibition of discrimination).

Chapter 6: Recommendations for Government Action

- Integrate Romani women issues in the national policies of the Government and on the agenda of the Gender Equality bodies, Commissions in Romania

Health

- Initiate and implement programmes and projects in the field of health for Roma, mainly women and children, bearing in mind their status of disadvantage due the extreme poverty and low level of education, as well as the inadaptability of the formal public health system to the cultural differences; (as recommended by 57th CERD session, 2000- “General recommendation XXVII on discrimination against Roma “)
- Involve Roma associations and communities and their representatives, mainly women, in designing and implementing health programmes and projects concerning Roma groups. (as recommended by 57th CERD session, 2000- “General recommendation XXVII on discrimination against Roma”)
- Design programs in order to increase the degree of tolerance and acceptance of the doctors, the suppliers of medical services in general, and to change the attitude and specific behaviour of Roma patients.
- The decade for Roma Inclusion gave a particular emphasis on the need for governments to create Health Action Plans. To include the gender component in the process of implementation of the Decade Health Action Plans at local level.

Participation in Political and Public life

- Consider the possibility of amended the actual electoral legislation by including a quota system for women and minorities
- Include in the political agenda of the Government and political parties issues faced by Romani women
- Include in Romanian regular reports, in an appropriate form, data about the Roma communities, including statistical date about Roma participation in political life and about their economic, social and cultural situation, taking into account a gender perspective (as recommended by CERD 57th session, 2000- “General recommendation XXVII on discrimination against Roma”)

Labour and employment

- Create programs that would provide employment opportunities and increase the quality of life for Romani women.

Violence

- As a result of a culture of violence in Romania, in which women and minorities are particularly exposed, Romani women are extremely vulnerable to acts of violence. Perperators include public officials, members of other ethnic groups, Roma, and indeed close family. The ERRC hopes that the CEDAW Committee will use the occassion of the current review to urge the Romanian government to undertake thoroughgoing reforms once and for all to end these issues.