



Standpoints of Roma and Egyptians and other national communities about the DECADE and the status of Roma and Egyptians in Montenegro



Podgorica, January

This research is the part of the project Monitoring of civil society of implementation of National Strategy of Integration of Roma and the Action Plan of the Decade, conducted by Civic Alliance in partnership with Forum MNE, Center for Roma Initiatives, NGO Ruza and Association of Egyptians, with the support of Foundation for Open Society. The project financially supported Secretariat of the Foundation of Inclusion of Roma Decade. Nouns in this report are related to both male and female gender. The content of the report is responsibility of the author, and does not necessarily represent standpoints of the Open Society Foundation.

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About the sample

The research was conducted from 1 until 20 December 2013, in Podgorica, Nikšić, Berane, Bijelo Polje, Herceg Novi, Kotor, Tivat and Ulcinj. The goal of the research was determining standpoints of Roma and other national communities in Montenegro about the status of Roma, and their level of informing about the measures the Government undertakes for Roma integration in the society. We used questionnaires for the needs of this report. The research covered two samples.

The first sample comprised Roma and Egyptians (in further text sample **Roma**). In Roma settlements, 533 persons were questioned. Percent of respondents in towns is described as follows:

Podgorica	Nikšić	Bijelo Polje	Berane	Herceg Novi	Kotor	Tivat	Ulcinj
56,8%	14,8	2,1%	10,1%	6,9%	0,9%	6%	2,4%

There was 55,7% men in this sample and 44,3% of women, out of the overall number of respondents. They were 16 to 75 years old. Most of them were unemployed - 56,4%, housewives 24%, employed persons 17,3%, retired persons 1,5%, and 0,8% of students. Also, 63,5% of them had no education, 24,8% finished elementary school, 10,9% finished high school, and 0,8% finished faculty.

On question about their nationality, we received the following answers:

Roma	56,3%
Egyptians	22,9%
Ashkali	0,6%
Montenegrins	0,8%
Undeclared	19,4%

The second sample included citizens of other nationalities – Montenegrin, Serbs, Bosniaks, Muslims, Albanians, Croatians and others (in further text sample **Others**). We questioned 507 citizens. Percent of respondents in towns is described as follows:

Podgorica	Nikšić	Bijelo Polje	Berane	Herceg Novi	Kotor	Tivat	Ulcinj
42,1%	17,9%	11,8%	9,0%	5,7%	5,5%	3,3%	4,8%

There was 49,3% of men and 50,7% of women, out of the overall number of respondents. They were 18 to 82 years old. Most of them were employed 50,1%, 24,6% were unemployed, 9,6% were students, 9,4% retired persons, and 4,4% housewives. On this question, 2% did not provide answer, 0,9% had no education, 5,2% finished elementary school, 55,7% finished high school, 33,4% finished faculties and 2,6% had magisterial and doctorate, while 2,2% of them did not answer to this question.

On question about their nationality, we received the following answers:

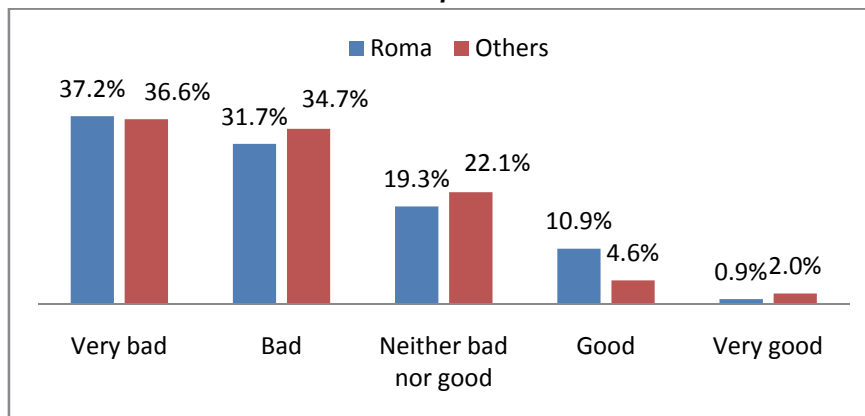
Montenegrin	45,2%
Serb	26%
Bosniak	9%
Muslim	5,5%
Albanian	4,7%
Croatian	1,6%
Undeclared	8%

Results of the research

Assessments and standpoints of respondents from both samples on all questions from the questionnaire are almost the same. Answers show that respondents from both samples believe that Roma are generally endangered and that authorities do not undertake measures important for integration of Roma and Egyptians in the society.

1. Status of Roma and Egyptians in Montenegro, respondents assessed as follows:

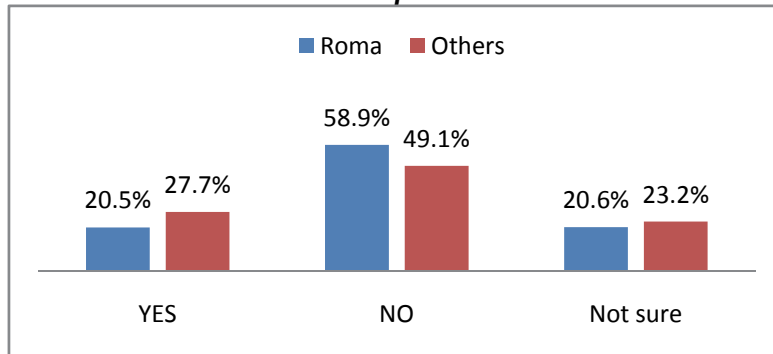
Graph 1



As described, respondents from both samples generally agree on this issue, but the percent of difference between their standpoints is very small. It is interesting that the largest difference in opinions is in answers that the status of Roma and Egyptians is *Good*. This difference is higher than 50%, and 10,9% of Roma believe that their status is *Good* while 4,6% of other citizens believe the same. Difference in standpoints on this matter can be the result of overall conditions of life of Roma and Egyptians, personal experiences of respondents, direct interrelations, frequent media reporting about poor status of Roma and Egyptians and actualization of their legal status.

- There was the question “Have you heard about the implementation of Decade of inclusion of Roma and Egyptians in Montenegro”, with the aim to measure informing of respondents about the Decade.

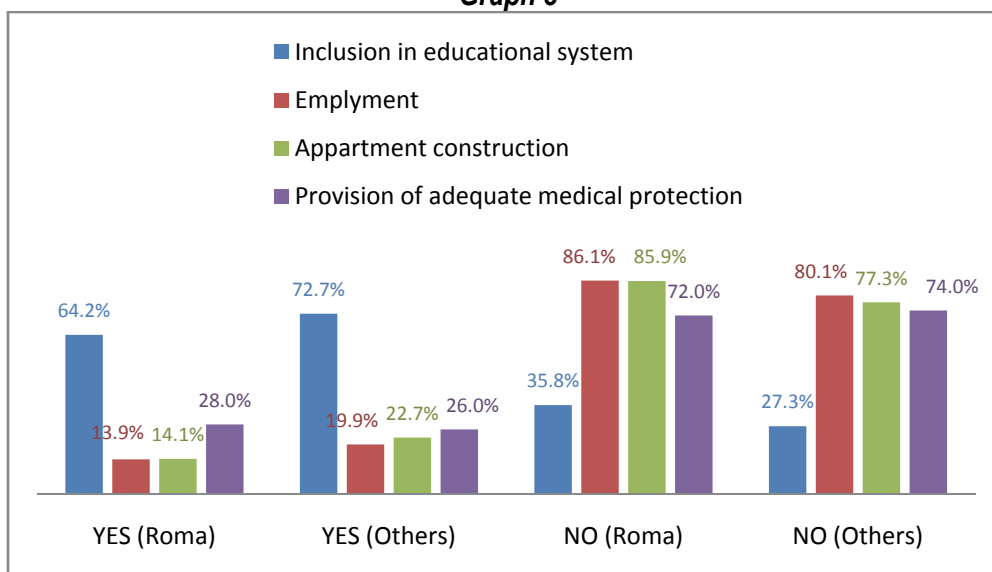
Graph 2



As described, almost 58,9% of respondents from the sample **Roma** said they had not heard about implementation of the Decade of inclusion of Roma in Montenegro, but 20,6% were not sure or did not know to give answer on this question. Data that almost 79,5% were not introduced with the implementation of Decade of inclusion of Roma is concerning, bearing in mind that measures of the Decade implemented by authorities, are related to Roma and Egyptians. On the other hand, we also see that almost half of respondents or 49,1% of them from the sample **Others** were not introduced with the implementation of the Decade in Montenegro. This number is significantly larger, if we bear in mind that 23,2% of them were *not sure or did not know*.

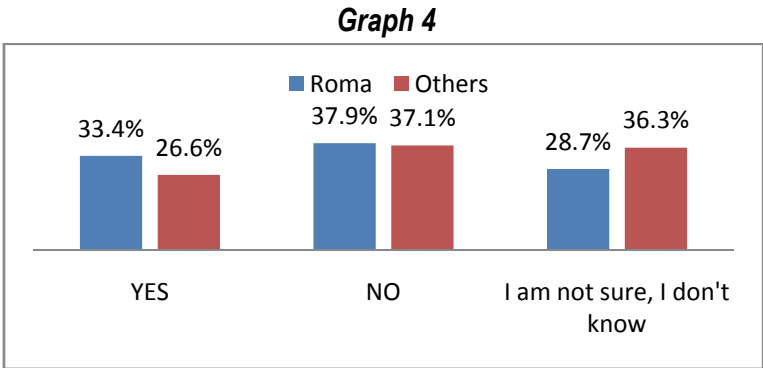
- We asked respondents to tell us if they were introduced with the measures in the field of education, employment, construction of apartments and health care. On question *if they knew for any measure implemented by the country aiming at preventing discrimination of Roma and Egyptians*, we have received the following answers:

Graph 3



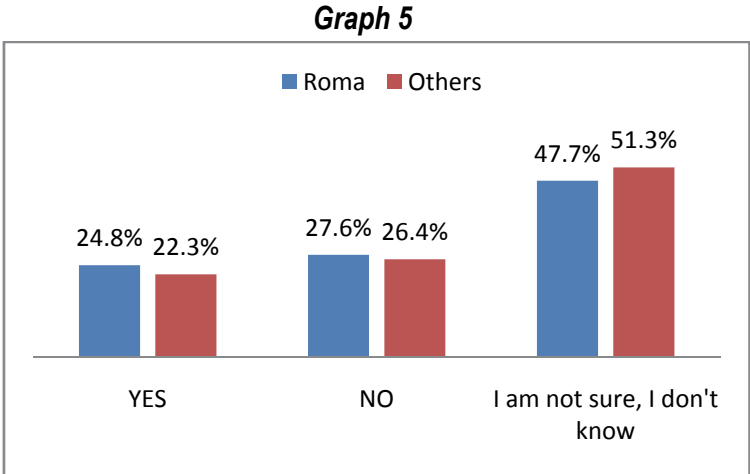
As described, respondents from both samples were mostly introduced with measures implemented by the country in the field of inclusion in the system of education. Respondents from the sample *Others* were slightly more introduced than Roma and Egyptians on which measures that was all about. On the other hand, we see that respondents were poorly introduced with the measures implemented in the field of employment, construction of apartments, and providing of adequate medical protection. As in previous answers, there were no significant discrepancies in standpoints of respondents from both samples.

4. On question if they were introduced with the initiatives and measures of the Government for increasing the number of participants in schools, respondents largely provide positive answers:



However, out of overall number of those who gave positive answers, only 12,6% of Roma knew some initiatives and measures for increasing the number of students at schools. They mentioned different measures such as free books and other school material, school mediator, high school scholarships, additional classes and seminars, and work with parents.

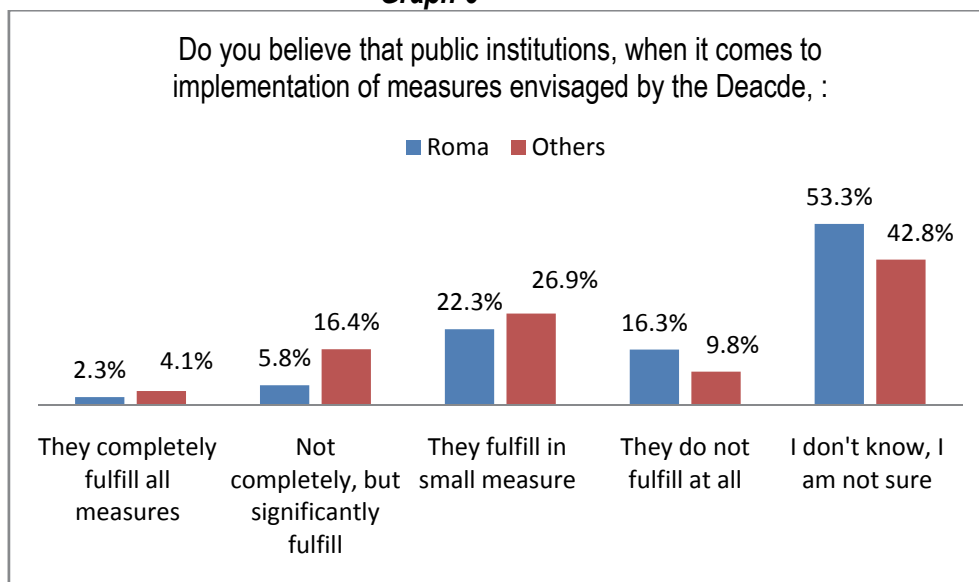
5. We asked respondents if authorities undertook any measures for resolving problems of discrimination in access to education and discriminatory treatment of Roma students in schools.



As described, number of those who surely knew or did not know that authorities undertook some measures for resolving problems of discrimination in access to education and discriminatory treatment of Roma students in schools was almost equal. However, number of respondents who were not sure or did not know to answer the question was the largest, and it was half of respondents. When asked to mention specific measures, respondents from both samples mostly mentioned that authorities implemented measures related to improving of material status of Roma students: provision of free books, scholarship program, free transport to kindergartens, provision of free clothes, provision of free food. Also, they said that mediators who came from Roma families contributed to prevention of discrimination of Roma children at schools.

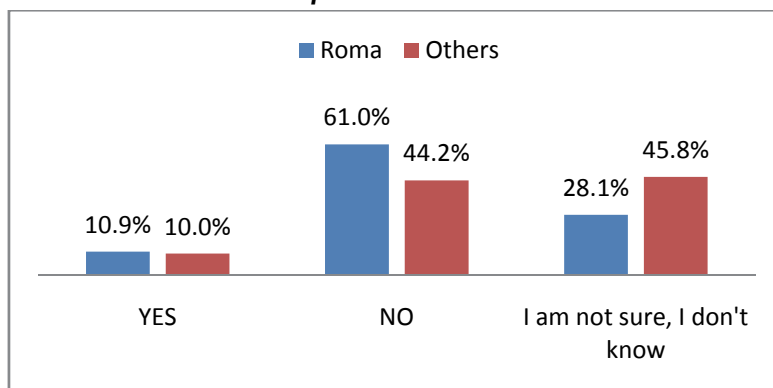
6. Respondents mostly did not know or were not sure if public institutions fulfill measures envisaged by the Decade but higher percent of them believed that all measures were not fulfilled. Overall answers are described in this graph:

Graph 6



7. We asked respondents whether they believed that the country allocated enough money for implementation of measures envisaged by the Decade.

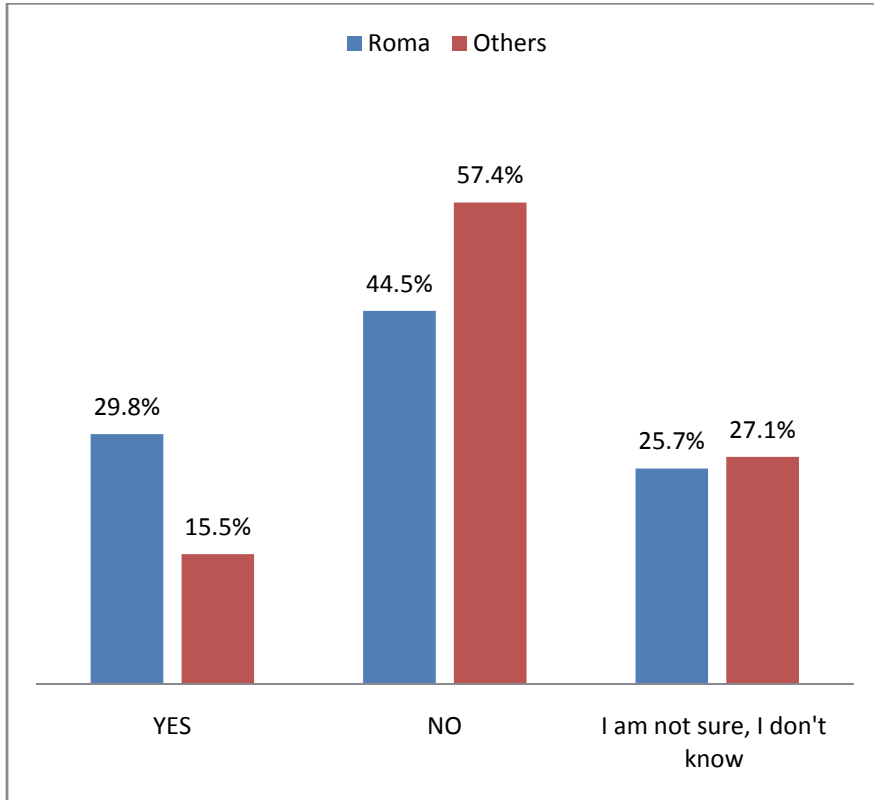
Graph 7



As described, the largest number of respondents from both samples believed that the country has not allocated enough finances, only 10,9% but 10% believed in opposite. It should be emphasized that respondents from the sample *Roma* believe more that the country does not allocate enough finances than respondents from the sample *Others*.

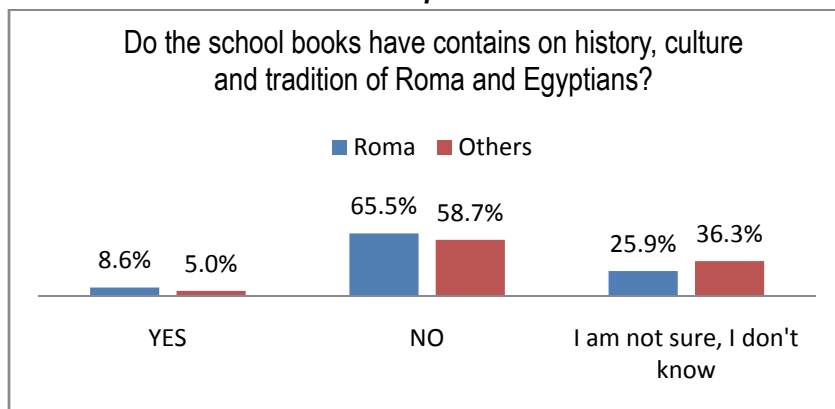
8. In order to measure perception of respondents on relationship of the country and the overall public opinion when it comes to integration of Roma in the society, we asked them if they were thinking that the country worked enough on increasing the level of understanding of public of integration of Roma and Egyptians in the society. We believe that this question is very important, bearing in mind high level of ethnic distance, on which indicated previous relevant researches. However, data show that respondents believed that the country insufficiently worked on increasing the level of public understanding of integration of Roma and Egyptians. Smaller percent of citizens of other nationalities believed that the country did enough (15,5%) to increase the level of public understanding of integration of Roma and Egyptians in the society, while 57,4% believed opposite. Perception of Roma and Egyptians is slightly different, so three thirds of respondents considered that the country works enough on improving of public understanding of this issue.

Graph 8



9. To that end it would not be helpful even if the state should introduce contents on history, culture, and tradition of Roma and Egyptians. In the following graph, we can see how respondents assessed previous measures and initiatives:

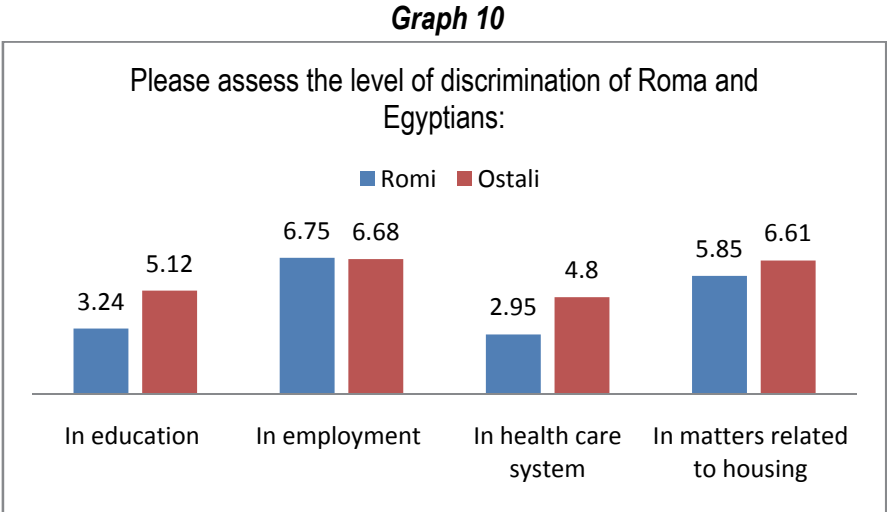
Graph 9



As described in the graph, very small percent of respondents believed that contents on history, culture, and tradition of Roma and Egyptians have been introduced in books. Introduction of these

contents in plans and programs in books, will surely contribute to higher level of understanding of integration of Roma and Egyptians and of course, lower level of their discrimination.

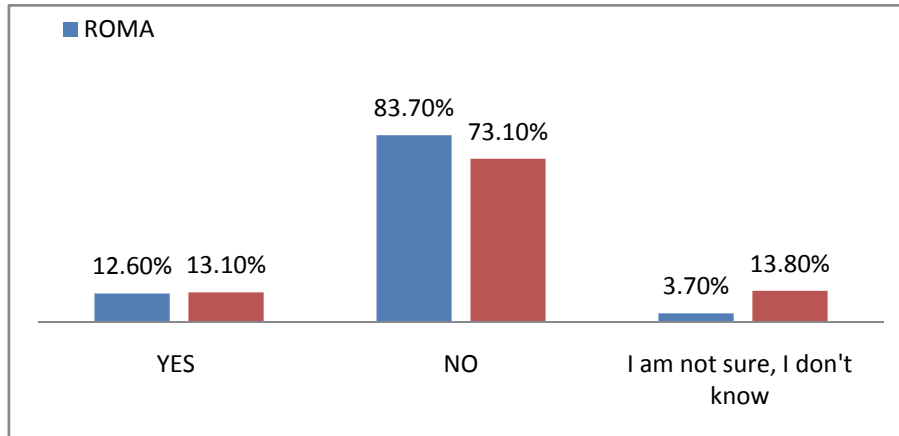
10. Roma and Egyptians, and also citizens of other nationalities are aware that discrimination is still present in specific areas, which show answers on question: "Please, assess the level of discrimination of Roma and Egyptians". Respondents rated the level of discrimination at the scale from 0 to 10. The following graph presents median ranking in four areas, in education, employment, health care system, and in the housing area.



According to opinion of respondents from both samples, Roma and Egyptians are mostly discriminated in areas of employment and housing, in education area and the least in health care area. It is interesting that respondents of other nationalities, in comparison with Roma and Egyptian respondents, gave higher ranking in all areas, except in the employment area.

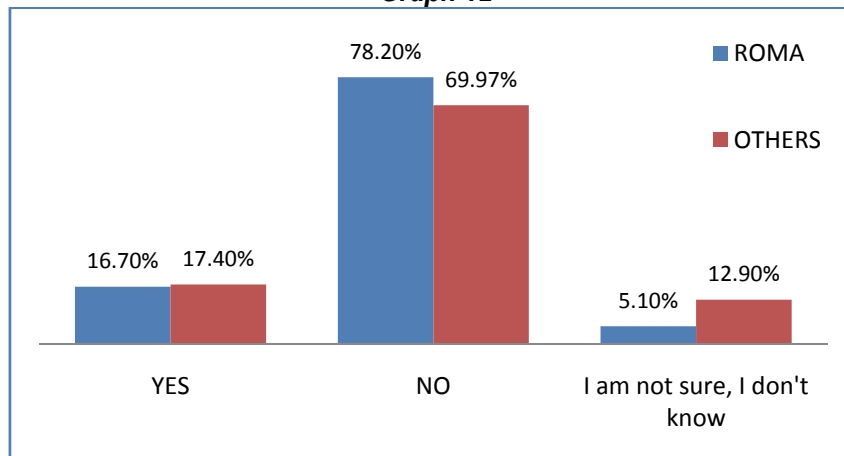
11. On question whether they think that Roma and Egyptians have equal chances for employment like other citizens, answer of respondents from the sample Roma saying they do not have equal chances is 83,7%, and from the sample Others is 73,1%. This clearly indicates that respondents largely believe that there is specific level of discrimination in the employment process of Roma and Egyptians. Such data are similar to available data about representation of minorities in public institutions, especially Roma and Egyptians which is very low.

Graph 11



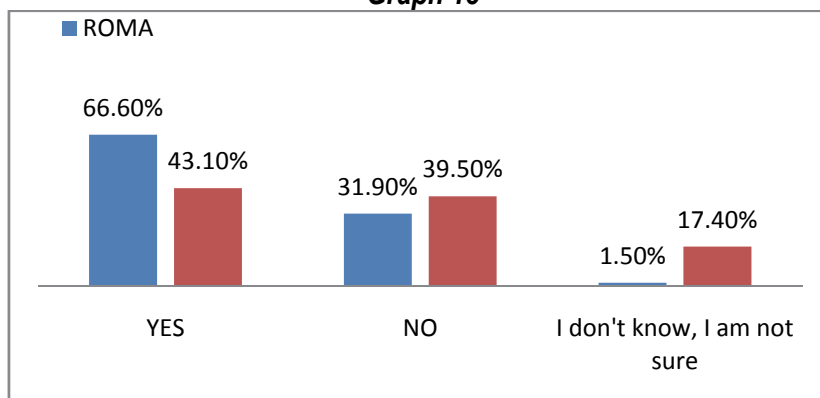
12. Respondents, besides employment process, believe that Roma and Egyptians have very unfavorable status in regards to housing issues. Answers on question “Do you think that Roma and Egyptians have equal housing conditions like other citizens?” are presented in the following graph:

Graph 12



13. Although slightly less assessed level of discrimination, according to respondents, Roma and Egyptians are facing considerable discrimination also in health care system. On question whether Roma and Egyptians have equal conditions and right to health care protection like other citizens, in the following graph can be noticed that representatives of Roma population (66,6%) believed that they had the same health care protection, but 31,9% still believe that conditions were not equal. Respondents from the sample Others or 39,5% of them think that conditions are not equal.

Graph 13



14. We also left possibility for Roma and Egyptians to share with us some concrete experiences and problems. Problems they mentioned were poor material conditions, barriers such as, as if not direct, then surely indirect discrimination. Experiences we have received testify that some Roma and Egyptians work in public utility company for six, seven or eight years but that they still have not received labor service and insurance, that representatives of this community, who are disabled persons, did not have adequate living conditions, they also did not have citizenship, register of births, insurance, right to social assistance for families, inadequate housing conditions, or inadequate health care protection of people who have serious health problems.

15. At the end, we asked respondents if they thought that integration of Roma and Egyptians is advantage for the overall society. We received encouraging answers on this question. Namely, we received positive answer from significantly large number of respondents, but it is very important that 65,9% of respondents of other nationalities believed that integration of Roma and Egyptians represented advantage for overall society.

Graph 15

