



# **Baseline Study on Roma Housing in the Municipality of Shtip**

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## List of Acronyms

ESA - Employment Service Agency of the Republic of Macedonia

SSO - State Statistical Office

EIDHR - European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights

LGU - Local Government Unit

PE - Public Enterprise

LLG - Local Leader Group

MoLSP - Ministry of Labor and Social Policy

IMCSA - Inter-municipal Center for Social Affairs

MoES - Ministry of Education and Science

NAP - National Action Plan

UN - United Nations

UNHCHR - United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

HRBA - Human Rights Based Approach

RIC - Roma Information Center



# 1. Introduction

This Baseline Study is part of the project “Roma Housing Rights for Sustainable Urban Development” implemented by “Habitat Macedonia” in collaboration with “Roma S.O.S.” - Prilep, “Sumnal” - Skopje (Chair) and “Cherenja” - Shtip. This project has started in December 2015 and is financed by the European Union, under the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR). The Project is being implemented in three municipalities: Prilep, Shtip, Chair (Skopje). The project’s aim is to strengthen the inclusion and participation of local Roma communities in social inclusion processes in the area of housing. The project will strengthen the local mechanisms for collaboration and networking, motivate participation of Roma in decision-making processes at local level, in the community development process, urban development and social inclusion. Under the project, *inter alia*, is implement the following activities:

- Establishment of Local Leader Groups (LLG) in the three municipalities;
- Mentor support for LLG during the project implementation;
- Conducting over 15 workshops and trainings at local and national level;
- Preparing and publishing three baseline studies for Shtip, Prilep and Chair, that will give an overview and analysis of the housing situation and the level of urbanization in the so called Roma settlements;
- Preparing a Study on the Sustainable Urban Development of Sub-standard Settlements, which will analyze the status of housing and urban development, with a focus on local and national policies in the fields of housing and urbanization processes.

The general aim of this Baseline Study is to define the conditions in the housing and urbanization of Roma settlements in the municipality of Shtip.

The specific objective is to determine the problems related to the housing, right to housing and access to local authorities in relation to the urban development of Roma in the aforementioned municipalities.

The basis for the development of the Baseline Study was the survey conducted in 336 families who live in the so called Roma settlements in the municipality of Shtip. During the development of the Baseline Study, a series of meetings was organized with citizens and





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responsible persons in the municipality of Shtip and relevant institutions, a questionnaire was conducted and analysis of current legal solutions that regulate the housing was made. With this Baseline Study, we will try to present the current situation of Roma in the municipality of Shtip and help to better understand the problems and needs of Roma community related to the housing. Moreover, the Baseline Study should serve as a basis for defining the priority needs of the local community, for mobilization of citizens and their inclusion in the decision-making processes at local level, as well as for increasing the involvement of local authorities in the housing area and sustainable urban development.

In all three municipalities where the project is being implemented, i.e. in the so called Roma settlements, a certain improvement of housing conditions has already been noticed. This is due to several factors: increased awareness of citizens regarding the housing and change of living habits of Roma community, as well as increased number of initiatives of the local government for improving the living conditions in the suburb settlements.

## 2. Municipality of Shtip

The municipality of Shtip is located in the middle part of the drainage-basin of River Bregalnica, in the heart of Eastern Macedonia. This city is located amongst the hills Isar, Meri and Kumlak, along the banks of the River Otinja. It is located at an altitude of 300 m. It spreads on an area of 893 km<sup>2</sup> and according to the latest Census, in the entire municipality there are 47,798 citizens, and in the city itself 46,625 citizens. The city covers an area of 13.5 km<sup>2</sup> and consists of 34 settlements. There are 4 primary schools, 5 secondary schools, 1 university, 1 clinical center and 1 industrial zone.<sup>1</sup>

The municipality of Shtip is located in the drainage-basin of River Bregalnica. Shtip is a center of the Eastern Planning Region and borders with seven municipalities: Radovish, Konche, Negotino, Gradsko, Lozovo, Sv. Nikole and Karbinci, with a good geographical position and road connections.

**Table 1.** Total number of citizens in the municipality of Shtip (by gender and national structure)<sup>2</sup>

	Total	Macedonians	Turks	Roma	Vlahs	Serbians	Albanians	Bosnians	Other
<b>Total</b>	47.796	41.670	1.272	2.195	2.074	294	12	11	265
<b>Women</b>	23.876	20.935	612	1.039	981	153	4	6	146
<b>Men</b>	23.920	20.735	660	1.156	1.093	144	8	5	119
<b>RM (%)</b>	2.36	3.21	1.63	4.07	21.39	0.83	0	0.06	1.26

The road network in the municipality of Shtip is 377 km long, of which 47 km (12.45%) are arterial roads, 22.4 km (5.94%) are regional roads and the remaining 308 km (81.61%) are local roads. Out of the total road network of the municipality of Shtip, 230 km constitute the street network in urban settlements. The remaining 147 km are roads connecting the populated settlements in the municipality.

Arrival in Shtip is via the arterial road M-5 (Shtip - Kochani - Delchevo), which is connected to the motorway E-75 (Skopje - Gevgelija) thanks to the connection Shtip - Veles. There are also re-

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.stip.gov.mk/index.php/mk/profil>.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.stip.gov.mk/index.php/mk/profil/demografija>.

gional roads R-601 (Shtip - Mountain Plachkovica) and R0526, which passes through the city and connects to the arterial road M-5. In near future, there is a plan for construction of a new road (Shtip - Miladinovci), which will shorten the trip to the capital city - Skopje.<sup>3</sup>

The territory of Shtip<sup>4</sup> spreads mainly on mountain and hill terrain. It is located in an area with moderate continental climate with a certain influence of changed Mediterranean climate. The average annual temperature is 12.9 degrees Celsius.

The municipality of Shtip consists of 71 populated settlements, some of which are: Baltalija, Brest, Vraskovo, Gorachino, Dobroshani, Dolani, Dragoevo, Edeklerci, Jamularci, Kalapetrovci, Koshevo, Krivi Dol, Lakavica, Leskovica, Lipov Dol, Ljuboten, Nikoman, Novo Selo, Penush, Piperovo, sarchievo, Selce, Skandalci, Sofilari, Star Karaorman, Stepanci, Suvo Grlo, Sudikj, Sushevo, Tanatarci, Testemelci, Toplikj, Tri Cheshmi, Hadji-Redjepli, Hadji-Sejdeli, Hadji-Hamzali, Creshka, Chardaklija, Chiflik, Shashavarlija, Shopur etc.

The Roma settlement "Cherenja" is included in the urban plan of the municipality of Shtip, but its development was not according to the plan. The reasons for this are several, and the most important one is the spontaneous construction of dwellings in areas where the basic living conditions had not been provided, such as sufficient light and ventilation of their homes. The unplanned development of the settlement also reduces the possibilities for urban development, which makes these settlements inappropriate for living, with scarce opportunities for development of the individual, family and community.

Roma population have one representative in the Council of the municipality of Shtip, and two employees in the local self-government, of who one is employed through the project Civil Information Center.

Out of the total number of Roma population in Shtip (2,195), 80% live in two settlements "Cherenja" and Czar Samoil" or former "Radanski Pat" and "Kosovska", whereas the remaining 20% live in other parts of the city. Representatives of Roma community think that the current number of Roma population is higher than in 2002, when the Census had been conducted. There are different estimates and they range from several hundred to several thousand Roma citizens more than in 2002.

The general impression about Roma settlements is that most of the main streets are covered with asphalt. They also have access to city sewage and water supply, as well as connection of power supply grid. Nevertheless, most of the side-streets are not asphalted, and the

3 <http://www.stip.gov.mk/index.php/mk/profil/infrastruktura>.

4 <http://www.stip.gov.mk/index.php/mk/profil/prirodni-resursi>.

power supply in some parts of the settlements has a lower voltage. Also, the water supply and sewage networks need to be repaired in some areas.

Most of the homes are individual houses, but there are also families who live in substandard conditions, and only a small number live in residential buildings. The interest for legalization of homes in the municipality is very big, especially among Roma population. Namely, more than 200 homes have been legalized so far, approximately 500 are in the process of completing their documentation, whereas during the extended period, additional 100 new documents for legalization have been filed.

During the past several years, a number of infrastructural works were conducted in parts populated with Roma population. Of course, the municipality still has a lot more to do in order to improve the conditions in the so called Roma settlements.

### 3. Home and Housing

Home is where one starts from - Thomas S. Eliot said. After this, we could add the general impression that the home is the “safe place”, a place where we feel protected and surrounded by people we love and respect.

Living in a decent home enables the further human development. A number of documents, reports and declarations emphasize the fact that the housing represents a basis for the human development, as it has an impact on his/her health condition, social security, education, working and earning income, as well as on many other primary needs and rights for decent living.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the Organization of the United Nations, in Article 25 highlights that “everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing, medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control”.<sup>5</sup>

According to the National Strategy for Reduction of Poverty and Social Exclusion of the Republic of Macedonia, “social exclusion in terms of housing is a rather complex social phenomenon strongly interrelated with other forms of social marginalization. The three primary barriers to decent housing - economic, cultural and legal, are concomitantly in relation with persons who face social exclusion on these grounds, as well as with the places of living which are marginalized due to certain social circumstances”.<sup>6</sup>

In everyday life, housing is most often linked only with the place where the individual or the family lives, without linking it with other aspects of the social and economic development, such as the health, education, economic activity, social capital, community development etc.

The problem of poor housing in the Republic of Macedonia is particularly prominent during the past years. Housing in substandard conditions, both in urban and rural areas is mainly a consequence of the long process of transition of the society, which caused impoverishment of the majority of citizens. Families whose members were capable to work lost their jobs, especially those living in cities, and despite the fact that they are owners, they are not capable to invest

5 Article 25(1), Universal Declaration of Human Rights, OUN, 1948, according to: <http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html>.

6 The National Strategy for Reduction of Poverty and Social Exclusion of the Republic of Macedonia 2010 - 2020 p. 30.

in maintaining their homes, or invest in construction or buying new homes. Thus, most of the families in urban areas live in small flats which are overpopulated because they accommodate several generations. They have weak thermal insulation both on the walls and windows and have not been well maintained, which is the main cause of a wide range of problems related to the internal infrastructure of buildings.

According to the research of the World Bank<sup>7</sup> of urban housing, substandard living conditions are causing:

- loss of physical capital due to devaluation of the home,
- impairment of social capital,
- impairment of opportunities for finding a job and economic security,
- impairment of physical and health security,
- inability to use the home as a source for generation of income.

When analyzing the housing problems, it must be viewed from two standpoints - social and individual. Nevertheless, it must also be highlighted that these two different stand points are also inter-related. When analyzing the housing from a social stand point, the following should be taken into consideration: demographic changes, quality and locations of current residential fund, construction of new flats, purchasing power of population and economic development of the community. The individual, bearing in mind his/her own needs is interested in the quality of the supply and how affordable it is.

Of course, demographic characteristics of population, including the contemporary transformation of families, family income, culture of living, age structure and size of the family are also important when defining the housing needs. Other factors with significant impact are the following: infrastructural coverage, price of utilities and security of the adjacent surrounding of the flat, protection of residential right, protection of the environment etc., the ensuring of which should be supported by various entities, but most of all y institutions of the system.

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7 <http://go.worldbank.org/M0LW0G49O0>.

## Housing of Roma population

Housing conditions of Roma population, which is an extremely endangered category of citizens, are utterly unfavorable and represent risks for the health, social security, education and employment, thus placing this category of citizens on the margins of the society.

The report “Roma Community in the Republic of Macedonia - Conditions and Challenges in Housing and Health” highlights the following: “Roma families very often live in inappropriately built substandard homes, with no proper water supply system for drinking and sanitation; homes of Roma families are small, planned only for performing and satisfying the basic needs, with a living space of less than 5 square meters per family member in more than 50% of this population. As high as 77% of families have toilets (or outhouses) in their yards, and 58% use a tap for water supply outside of their home; furthermore, almost 10% of the Roma population do not have a water supply system for drinking water and daily hygiene. It is estimated that approximately 50% of these families still do not have an appropriate solution for the waste water from their homes”<sup>8</sup>

According to the last census in the Republic of Macedonia (2002), the entire population counts approximately 2 million citizens, of who 53,879 or 2.66% are Roma. Almost 60% of the entire population of the Republic of Macedonia live in cities. This is also typical for the Roma population, who mainly live in cities, with some minor exceptions. The census shows that 43% of Roma live in the capital, and half of them are citizens of the municipality of Shuto Orizari.

The documentation that has been developed during the ten-year work of “Habitat-Macedonia” on improving the substandard housing highlights the following problems related to the housing of Roma in the Republic of Macedonia:

- living in illegally built houses,
- overpopulated homes, with several generations living in the same house,
- discrimination in using the right to housing,
- substandard quality of homes, which is a risk for the health and safety,
- non-citified settlements and problems related to utilities,
- insufficient initiatives (on national and local level) for overcoming the problems related to the housing of Roma community.

8 Roma Community in the Republic of Macedonia - Conditions and Challenges in Housing and Health, Milevska-Kostova Neda, Eminova Enisa, 2008

Realization of **the right to housing** requires active inclusion of the entire community, first of all, inclusion of national and local authorities, as well as leaders of Roma community. Mechanisms for participation of citizens in decision-making processes are insufficiently developed, as well as the capacities of citizens who do not know well their housing rights.

Living in substandard dwellings, inappropriate sanitation, ghettoization, lack of plumbing, sewage, power supply, deteriorated health conditions are frequent problems of this community.

The housing right is contained in numerous international documents which impose to the signatory countries obligations for undertaking activities for improving the living conditions for all citizens in the country. This right has been globally accepted by the United Nations and other world forums, which resulted with its incorporation in a number of conventions for human rights. At the same time, the ratification of these documents reflects the readiness of the state to respect and ensure the human right for housing, thus obliging itself to recognize the right to a relevant housing standard.

The efforts of the United Nations in regard to the housing rights and urban planning are the most evident in the three conferences “Habitat” which have been organized since 1976 until present. The first “Habitat” conference (“Habitat I”) took place in Vancouver, United States of America in 1976. The outcome was the Vancouver Declaration for Human Settlements, by which governments have started to recognize the need for development of sustainable human settlements and the consequences of fast urbanization, especially in developing countries. The second “Habitat” conference (“Habitat II”) took place in Istanbul, in 1996. Its focus was on the right to appropriate housing. The adopted document imposes an obligation to the states to develop action plans, which includes the obligation of the Government to help the population in resolving their housing issues. As a result of the reached agreements at the special session of the General Assembly of the UN, a “Declaration on cities and other human settlements in the new millennium” was adopted in June 2001<sup>9</sup>. This document has once again confirmed the commitment of states to ensure access to adequate housing, which implies healthy, safe and financially affordable housing which also includes basic utilities, traffic accessibility, opportunity for free choice, and legal security of users of flats<sup>10</sup>. The third “Habitat” conference (“Habitat III”) on housing and sustainable urban development was held in October 2016, in Quito, Ecuador, and ended successfully with the adoption of the New Urban

9 “Declaration on cities and other human settlements in the new millennium”, June 2001.

10 Housing Strategy of the Republic of Macedonia, 2007-2012, p. 6, MoLSP, 2007.



Agenda. This New Urban Agenda is a document in the form of an action plan, which establishes new global standard for achieving sustainable urban development throughout the world and reviews the current ways of living in cities.

In the International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the General comment no. 4 which refers to Article 11<sup>11</sup> of this Convention, the Committee for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of the United Nations, inter alia, defines the term “adequate housing” as a legal security in housing<sup>12</sup>.

Bearing in mind the overall transition process in the country, the modern style of living caused a number of changes not only in the housing, but also in other areas of life, which are following the contemporary trends. As mentioned in the Housing Strategy of the Republic of Macedonia (2007-2012), the transition towards market economy imposed a different valuation system, where the apartment is not only a social category, but first of all, a market category. However, it does not mean that the Republic of Macedonia, which is defined as a social state by the Constitution, will not take care of its own citizens. This commitment, which is also defined in the Constitution, must be achieved by harmonizing the legislation and institutions in charge of the housing, while at the same time continuing the privatization process of the housing stock by establishing a holder of ownership.

The Law on Housing regulates the types of facilities for housing, management of residential buildings, relations among owners of separate parts and third parties, community of owners, database of apartments, tenancy relations in housing, manner of managing and maintaining facilities, rights and obligations of the state, municipalities, municipalities in the City of Skopje and the City of Skopje in relation to the housing, inspection and management supervision and other housing related issues<sup>13</sup>. This law is particularly important for the citizens because it precisely regulates the management of residential

11 Article 11, paragraph 1 reads: “States, signatories of this Convention, recognize the right of every person and his/her family to adequate standards of living, which includes adequate food, clothing and housing, and constant improvement of living conditions. States, signatories of this Convention will undertake relevant steps for ensuring this right, recognizing that the international cooperation is of crucial importance if based on a freely express will”. (Housing Strategy of the Republic of Macedonia, 2007-2012, p. 6, MoLSP, 2007)

12 Housing is expressed in various forms, including renting public or private accommodation, joint housing, leasehold, possession, accommodation in emergencies, informal settlements, including taking over a territory or property. Regardless of the type of housing, all persons should have a certain level of security in their housing, which guarantees legal protection against forced eviction, mistreatment or other threats. (Housing Strategy of the Republic of Macedonia, 2007-2012, p. 6, MoLSP, 2007)

13 <http://www.domuvanje.org.mk/03.php> (last time visited in October 2016)

buildings and stipulates the rights and obligations for the owners of separate parts; relations among owners in a residential building, as well as between owners and third parties; defines the rights and obligations of communities of owners; rights and obligations of license managers of buildings and prescribes sanctions for failing to respect the legal provisions.

Issues in the area of housing at local level are part of the scope of work of a large number of institutions. According to the competences and responsibilities of the Local Government Unit, the Council and Mayor<sup>14</sup> are the key bodies in the municipalities. The local self-government is directly in charge of the local economic and urban development of the municipality. See more on the jurisdiction and competences of the municipality in Annex 1.

Housing of Roma is defined as one of the sectoral priorities of our state. During the Roma Decade, national actions plans for housing had been developed, which in some municipalities were further developed into Local action plans for housing adopted by the municipal councils. In general, these plans are focused on improving the conditions of Roma through legalization of houses built without construction permits and enhancing the infrastructure and living conditions in Roma settlements.

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14 Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia no. 5/2002, Law on Local Self-Government.

## 4. Housing in the Municipality of Shtip

According to the 2002 Census, there are 53,879 Roma<sup>15</sup> (i.e. 2.66% of the total number of population) living in the Republic of Macedonia. According to the State Statistical Office's projections of 31.12.2015, the total population in the Republic of Macedonia is 2,059,794 citizens<sup>16</sup>, of whom 54,871 are Roma.

The municipality of Shtip is populated with 47,798 citizens, of whom according to the latest census, 2,195 are Roma; however, the representatives of Roma community say that this number is higher. The Council of the Municipality of Shtip has adopted documents which pertain to Roma problems, such as the Local Action Plan for implementation of Roma Decade in Shtip in the areas of education and housing for the period 2012-2015.<sup>17</sup> This action plan addresses the problems and needs of Roma population in relation to the housing and envisages construction of street infrastructure, upgrade of water supply network and urbanization or dislocation of substandard homes.

Unemployment is one of the biggest problems of Roma population not only in the municipality of Shtip, but also in general, in the whole country. It has a direct impact on the living conditions of Roma, including the housing. The inability to earn income for living prevents the further development of the individual, the family and the community. According to the latest data from the Employment Service Agency (ESA) regarding the unemployment in Shtip, a total of 2,063 unemployed people were registered by 31.12.2016, of who 258 are Roma, of who 133 are women. (See Table 2 and 3 for a presentation of the level of education of unemployed Roma citizens in the Municipality of Shtip and their age structure.)

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15 <http://www.stat.gov.mk/publikacii/knigaIX.pdf>.

16 <http://www.stat.gov.mk/OblastOpsto.aspx?id=2>.

17 Local Action Plan for Implementation of Roma Decade in Shtip in the areas of education and housing for the period 2012-2015, p. 4, Municipality of Shtip, 2012.

**Table 2.** Level of education of unemployed Roma in the municipality of Shtip<sup>18</sup>

Municipality	Total unemployed Roma		No education and primary education		Incomplete secondary education		Completed secondary education		Post-secondary education		Higher education	
	are	Women	are	Women	are	Women	are	Women	are	Women	are	Women
Shtip	258	133	242	125	6	0	7	7	0	0	3	1

**Table 3.** Age structure of unemployed Roma in the municipality of Shtip<sup>19</sup>

Municipality	15-19		20-24		25-29		30-34		35-39		40-44		45-49		50-54		55-59		60 +	
	are	W	are	W	are	W	are	W	are	W	are	W	are	W	are	W	are	W	are	W
Shtip	11	3	31	15	23	16	23	15	32	18	36	16	35	15	27	17	29	14	11	4

Considering that 4.5% of population in the municipality of Shtip are Roma, and 10% of registered unemployed persons in the ESA are Roma, it can be concluded that unemployment among Roma population is much higher compared to others. One portion of unemployed Roma do not register in the local employment centers.

As concerns the use of employment measures by Roma population, ESA's data show that in Shtip, in 2016, 56 Roma applied for some of the measures from the Operational Plan of ESA, whereas contracts for use of these employment measures were concluded with 37 of them. Also, there is general impression that they consider the social welfare as a certain source of money, and in order not to lose this benefit their interest for the measures is rather low.

The majority of Roma population in the municipality of Shtip live on the streets "Radanski Pat", "Kosovska", "Sutjeska", "Duzlachki Rid" and "Shirok Dol", in houses not built according to the urban plan, with inappropriate infrastructure, inappropriate approaches, open

18 Data are obtained from the Employment Service Agency of the Republic of Macedonia through a request for access to information of public nature.

19 Data are obtained from the Employment Service Agency of the Republic of Macedonia through a request for access to information of public nature.

storm water drain channels, inappropriate water supply and sewage network, low quality power supply, insufficient number of telephone landlines and insufficient street lighting.

To present, the local self-government of the municipality of Shtip has been undertaking a range of measures for improving the housing conditions and urban development in these so called Roma neighborhoods, but these efforts are insufficient. The main changes were made in the area of infrastructure, such as placing asphalt on streets, constructing sewage, water supply networks and street lights and improving the conditions in the primary school in the settlement.

Legalization of illegal houses is one of priority issues related to housing of Roma. Only under the project Legalization of Housing of Roma implemented by “Habitat Macedonia”, applications for a loan for legalization of their homes were filed by 178 families in Shtip, and 170 received an approval for a loan.

Roma civil society organizations operating in the municipality of Shtip play a very important role in improving the quality of life of Roma population. One of these organizations is the association of citizens “Cherenja”, which works on improving the living conditions of Roma in Shtip by advocating for their rights and interests and strengthening the capacities of the local population. Also, the association “Cherenja” has been actively involved in the implementation of Roma Decade on local level, through independent programs and initiatives, as well as through networking with other organizations. The greatest progress in terms of the Roma Decade in Shtip was accomplished in the education sector, followed by health, employment and housing. Association “Cherenja” recognizes the housing as one of the biggest problems of Roma in the municipality of Shtip, and it will focus its future activities in addressing this problem by following the best practices in the country and region. Moreover, the Multicultural Center that operates under this organization, serves as a platform for integration of Roma in the society and fostering the cohabitation of different communities.

The Sector for Urbanism and Planning of Construction Land, Utilities and Protection of the Environment, which operates within the municipal administration, is competent for housing related issues. The sector consists of the following units: Unit for urbanism, construction, residential issues and protection of the environment, Unit for utilities and Unit for planning of construction land, regulation and geodesy.<sup>20</sup>

In addition to the aforementioned institutions that have general and specific responsibilities regarding the housing issues, the coop-

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.stip.gov.mk/index.php/mk/administracija/3191-organizaciona-shema>.

eration with the regional unit of the Agency for Real Estate Cadaster of Republic of Macedonia is also important.

Due to the long-term neglect, and considering the uncontrolled growth and development of so called Roma settlements, the municipality of Shtip in particular needs to further work on improving the housing conditions, such as asphaltting streets, legalization of homes, and installation of street lighting, providing space for leisure and recreation and construction of parks.

## 5. Methodology for Development of the Baseline Study

Baseline Study on the Status of Roma Housing in the Municipality of Shtip, in essence is a participatory analysis, prepared via a survey of 336 citizens who live in the so called Roma settlements in Shtip, semi-structured interviews with representatives of the local self-government and regional units of relevant ministries and representatives of the civil society, consultations with the Local Leader Group (established under this project), contribution of individuals and people involved in the activities of the association of citizens “Cherenja”, use of data, opinion and analysis of published documents and alike.

The excellent cooperation with the association “Cherenja” was of crucial importance for the successful development of the Baseline Study, since it worked on the implementation of the project, as well as with the local self-government of the municipality of Shtip.

Another important factor that contributed to the successful development of this study was the involvement of representatives of the Roma community in the implementation of the survey. Namely, members of the local leader group, after having completed the training, were the actual interviewers who visited the homes of their townsmen, and through a conversation with them, they filled in the questionnaire. This method of work contributed in acquiring higher level of knowledge about the housing, especially among the members of the Local Leader Group. They are expected to continue with their efforts to make the so called Roma settlements a decent place for living, providing opportunities for development to each individual and to the entire community. The survey among the population was conducted during August 2016 and was coordinated by the civil society organization “Cherenja” and the project manager. The survey was divided in three sections. The first section covered general data, the second section covered the situation of the home, and the third section covered the adjacent local environment.

The questionnaire included the following variables:

- number and composition of households,
- level of education,
- social and economic situation of households,
- infrastructure conditions in the adjacent surrounding.

Among the surveyed individuals, 40% were women and 60% men. Percentage of surveyed Roma living in the municipality of Shtip was 15.31 %. The survey was participatory and the initial findings were presented to the Local Leader Groups and involved representatives of the local self-government, hence, their remarks and comments have been included in the recommendations.

The entire process of the survey was conducted in several phases.

## 5.1. Consultative Meetings

### *Meetings with representatives of the local-self government*

Three meetings were organized with a representative for public relations with citizens of marginalized groups of the local self-government of the municipality of Shtip. The meetings had the form of semi-structured interviews.

The first meeting was organized prior the beginning of all activities, with the main purpose to obtain information about the activities and documents of the municipality related to Roma population and Roma settlements, as well as to hear about the plans of the municipality referring to Roma population and the settlement where this population live.

The second meeting was held prior the implementation of the questionnaire, in order to find out what the actual situation is in relation to the process of legalization and the cooperation between the municipality and civil society organizations.

The third meeting was held after the implementation of the questionnaire and its analysis. At this meeting, data and answers were obtained regarding the citizens' interests, stemming from the analysis of the questionnaire, which are necessary for the final analysis.

### *Meetings with LLG (Local Leader Group)*

The Local Leader Group worked on the implementation of the questionnaire. Three meetings were organized with the Local Leader Group:

The first meeting was just to meet the group and to get an overall impression about its commitments and information about the territory where the questionnaire was to be implemented.



The second meeting was prior the implementation of the questionnaire. The aim of the meeting was to discuss about the training and the manner of conducting the survey.

The third meeting was after the implementation of the questionnaire with the aim of obtaining information from the LLG members about the process of implementing the questionnaire, the response of population, problems and comments during the survey.

The Local Leader Group is a non-formal body of the Roma community which participates in the process of identification of local priorities in the area of housing and works on their integration in development strategies on national and local level through their training, field research and advocating their needs before the local government, i.e. decision-makers.

The Local Leader Group is a link between the planning processes on local and national level in the light of realization of housing right of Roma population and overall fight against poverty.

The Local Leader Group established direct cooperation with the aforementioned representatives of LGU by their inclusion in workshops and meetings, with the aim of heaving constructive discussion about potential solutions and overcoming the problems of Roma community.

During the establishment of the Local Leader Group, three key criteria were taken into consideration for achieving proportional representation by gender, age and place of living. Identified persons are active and well-known in the Roma community in Shtip, that is, they have a prior experience in similar activities implemented by the association “Cherenja”.

### ***Meetings with local population and representatives of civil society organizations***

Meetings and interviews were organized with the local population in order to obtain more data and information. The responses were similar to the responses in the questionnaire, but also other issues were addressed so as to make a comparison between the results from the survey and the interviews and define the findings.

Also, meetings were organized with representatives of the association “Cherenja”, which contributed to obtain relevant information and determine the situation of Roma community in the municipality, the activities of CSOs in relation to improvement of living conditions, presentation of the experiences from the cooperation with the local government and other public institutions.

## 5.2. Analysis of Documents

A number of legal documents adopted by the Assembly and Government of the Republic of Macedonia were analyzed, as well as local documents adopted by the municipal council. The following documents were analyzed: Roma Strategy of the Republic of Macedonia 2005-2015; Housing Strategy of the Republic of Macedonia 2007-2012; Action Plan for Implementation of the Housing Strategy 2007-2012; National Action Plans for: education; health; employment (2005-2015); Local Action Plans for Housing; Local Action Plan for Employment of Roma 2012-2015; Local Action Plan Health of Roma Population; Laws on: housing; social care; financing the local government units; acting upon illegally constructed object; subsidizing credits for purchase of house/flat; territorial organization.

## 5.3. Survey

The questionnaire was developed by the project team of “Habitat Macedonia” and “Roma S.O.S.”, in cooperation with the team hired for the development of the Baseline Study, according to project’s needs. The questionnaire was prepared and implemented after the first meetings with LSGU and LLG.

The research was conducted by way of site survey - interview “face to face” in households in Shtip, where Roma population lives - settlements “Cherenja” and “Czar Samoil”, during August 2016, on a sample of 336 respondents, by trained persons from the Local Leader Group. The research was conducted on an eligible sample bearing in mind that only Roma households were covered<sup>21</sup>.

The questionnaire for determining the housing conditions consists of 3 sections and 43 questions in total. The first section contains 6 questions pertaining to demographic data about the respondent (age, gender, education, place of living). The second section contains 25 questions pertaining to the conditions in the respondent’s home and they help to analyze the social and economic status of the family, the physical condition of the dwelling (number of rooms, windows and alike), access to services such as water supply, sewage, waste col-

<sup>21</sup> For the purposes of this analysis, the term “household” was defined according to the definition used by the State Statistical Office of the Republic of Macedonia: Household is any family or other community of persons who state that they live together and jointly spend their income for basic living needs (housing, food etc.) whether or not all members are permanently located in the place where the household is settled or some of them temporarily stays in another place, i.e. abroad, for working, studying or other reasons, where the stay abroad is no longer than 1 year.

lection and access to power supply grid. The third section of the questionnaire contains 12 questions pertaining to the living conditions in the community. These questions analyze the condition of roads, access to institutions, green areas, as well as the potential threats in the place of living in relation to the housing. A total of 336 questionnaires were equally distributed in all parts populated with Roma population ("Cherenja" and "Czar Samoil") in order to get a clear picture about the conditions in the local environment populated with Roma.

Prior the implementation of the questionnaire, a pilot-testing was conducted in order to check its applicability. That is, to check whether the questions were clear enough, what the opinion of citizens was about it and how much time was needed for its implementation. The pilot-testing was carried out by individuals from the Local Leader Group.

### ***Analysis of questionnaire***

Analysis of the questionnaire and entering of data in the database was carried out by the team hired for the development of the analysis. The team analyzed only the primary responses to the questions, not making any cross analysis or comparison, i.e. it did not determine the dependent relations among them. The analysis was only a presentation of obtained data, not making any additional statistical processing. The presentation of data in percentages is presented in 21 Graphs.

### ***Development of the Baseline Study***

The development of the Baseline Study actually includes all prior steps. However, the actual writing of the Baseline Study is a description of the conditions in the municipality through the description of the settlement - the community, population in the municipality, ethnic map, employment, education, followed by a comparison with the data on national level, and of course, separately for the Roma population, description of the landscape and infrastructure in the municipality and settlements, characteristics of homes and alike. The Baseline Study contains the results of the implemented questionnaire and ends with conclusions and recommendations.

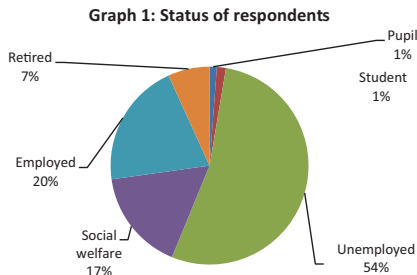


#### **5.4. Presentation of the Baseline Study on the Housing and Urban Development of Roma Population in the Municipality of Shtip**

This meeting was attended by representatives of organizations which implement the project, “Habitat Macedonia” and “Cherenja”, the Local Leader Group which implemented the questionnaire, representatives of the Center for Civil Initiative which developed the analysis, representatives of the local self-government unit Shtip. The presentation of the analysis was followed by a discussion upon it. This meeting ended with a range of recommendations directed towards competent institutions.

## 6. Survey Findings

### 6.1. Structure of Respondents

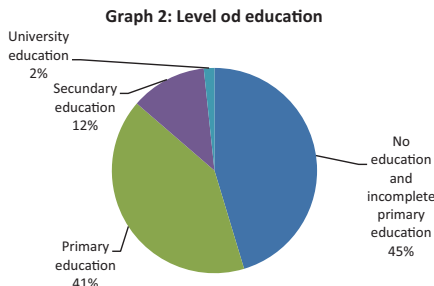


Regarding the conditions in the home and local environment, a questionnaire was implemented among a group of 336 Roma, on the entire territory populated with Roma, at an average age of 37 years.

Out of the total respondents, 60% were men and 40% women.

As concerns the status of respondents, 54% are unemployed, 17% are users of social welfare, 20% are employed, 7% are retired, and 2% are still in the process of completing their education.

According to the level of education, 27% have no education at all, 19% have not completed primary education, 41% are with primary education, 12% with secondary education and 1% with higher education.



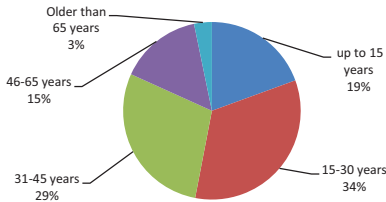
According to the status and education of respondents, the majority of them have low level of education or have no education at all, they are beneficiaries of social welfare and unemployed.

According to the number of family members, the average Roma family consists of five members, and according to respondents opinion, more numerous are families living in the settlement "Czar Samoil".

As concerns the family members of respondents, the results show that 79% are members of a family consisting of parents and children, 17% are members of a broader family, i.e. families where in

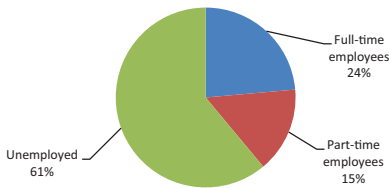
addition to parents and children, there are also grandmother, grandfather, uncles, aunts and alike, 3% are single parents, 1% are more families living together. These results indicate that Roma families in Shtip are quite independent and that there is a tradition of parents to live only with their children and to be fully responsible for their upbringing.

Graph 3: Members by families by age



According to their age, the most numerous in the families are individuals at the age of 15 to 30 - 31%, followed by the age group of 31 to 45 - 29%, individuals by the age of 15 - 19%, age group from 46 to 65 - 15% and 65 years - 32%.

Graph 4: Employment status



In the families with population capable to work, the biggest portion (61%) are unemployed, 15% work only occasionally, and 24% are employed on regular basis.

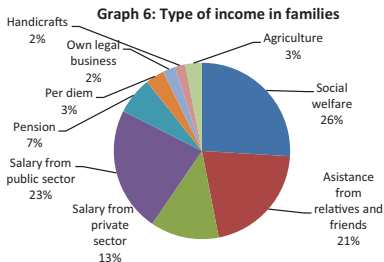
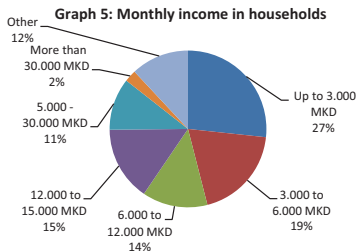
About 50% of respondents assessed the economic status of their family as very bad, 28% as average, 21% as good and 1% as excellent.

## 6.2. Home Conditions

The purpose of questions in the second section of the questionnaire was to determine the home conditions from financial point of view, the living conditions and alike.

### *Family income*

The income of 27% of respondents reaches 3,000 denars per month, to 19% ranges from 3,000 to 6,000 denars, and to 14% from 6,000 to 12,000 denars, to 15% from 12,000 to 15,000 denars, to 11% from 15,000 to 30,000 denars, whereas only 2% of respondents earn more than 30,000 denars per month.



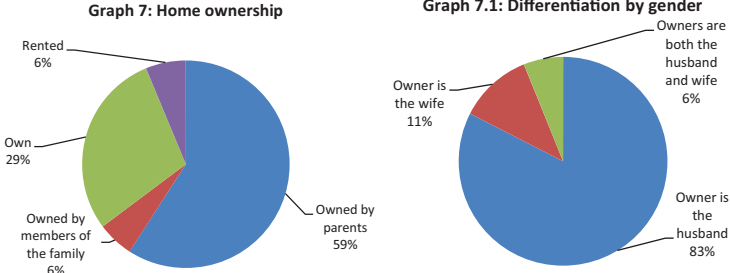
The type of income of surveyed families is the following: 26% receive social welfare, 23% receive a salary from the public sector, 7% receive pensions, 13% salary from the private sector, 3% from agriculture, 2% from handicrafts and 21% receive financial support from relatives and friends.

These numbers reveal that the monthly income of Roma families is diverse, and there are families who live only with 3,000 denars per month, but also there more families who earn more than 30,000 denars per month. The diversity is also present in the type of income. One-fourth receives social welfare, and also one-fourth received salary from the public sector. The positive thing about this group is the diverse income, which encompasses not only the social welfare and salaries from the public sectors, but also income earned from running a legal business, employments in the private sector, agriculture etc. The assistance from relatives and friends is also present in this group of surveyed families. On one hand, this points to the fact that some families faces shortage of finances, hence they have to rely on assistance from their relatives and friends, on the other hand, it is an indicator of the support which is provided, the cohabitation and the highly evaluated family relations.

Roma men in Shtip, traditionally, earn money to support their family by working physical work, predominantly cutting wood and season work on fields, although, lately there are tendencies of changing this tradition. Roma women usually work in factories for ready-made clothing or season work on fields.

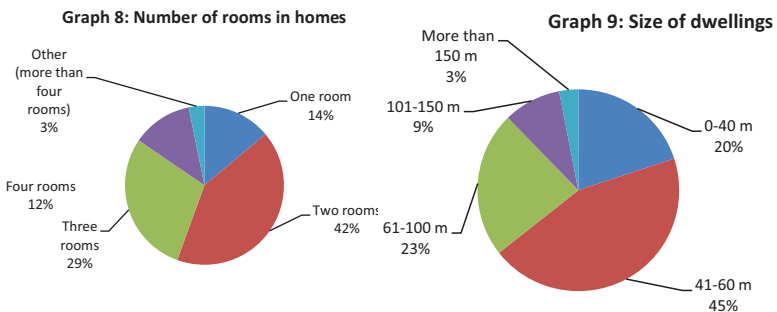
### **Types of dwellings**

The majority of respondents - 90% live in their own houses and 10% live in huts. In this part of the city, not only the Roma population, but also the rest of the citizens live in houses.



As concerns the ownership of homes where they live, in 83% of cases, the owner is the husband, in 11% - the wife, and in only 6% of cases - both the husband and wife are owners of their homes. In 59% of cases, the parents are owners of the house, in 6% owners are members of the family, 6% live in rented flats, and 29% live in their own homes. These data show that in the Roma community in Shtip, still according to the tradition, owners are either the husbands or their parents. The positive aspect of this picture is that 88% live in their own homes. But in what kind of homes do they live?

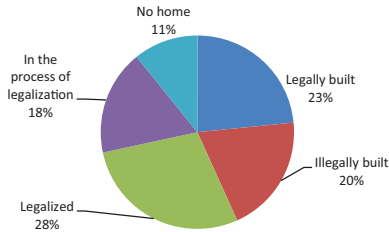
Almost half of the respondents live in homes of approximately 50 square meters, consisting mainly of two or three rooms. About 20% live in homes of up to forty square meters, and nearly the same percentage live in homes from sixty to one hundred square meters. Another 12% live in homes bigger than 100 square meters. This information shows that Roma community live in homes consisting of two or three rooms with the size of approximately fifty square meters.



Approximately 23% of respondents live in legally built houses, 28% managed to legalize their illegal homes, 18% are in a process of legalization, and 20% live in illegally built houses, and 11% have no home at all.



**Graph 10: Home status**



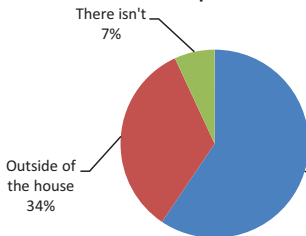
The toilet, bathroom and the kitchen are rooms which unfortunately are still not available in each home of this community, or they are located outside of their homes, in sheds, as separate room.

The obtained data show that 59% of respondents have toilets in their homes, 34% have toilets in their yards and

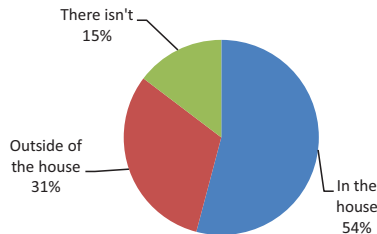
7% of respondents do not have toilets at all. As concerns the bathrooms, 64% have a bathroom in their houses, 31% have a bathroom outside of their houses and 15% do not have a bathroom at all. 54% of respondents have a kitchen located in the same area with the living room, 31% have a kitchen separate from other rooms, and 15% have no kitchen at all.

In addition to the toilet and bathroom, the number of windows is also a problem because not all rooms in the respondents' homes have windows. Namely 73% have windows in all rooms, whereas 2% do not have windows at all.

**Graph 11: Toilet**



**Graph 12: Bathroom**

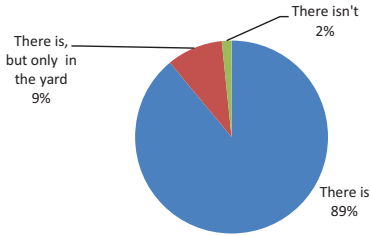


What are the conditions in their homes in relation to the sewage, water supply and power supply? The general impression of citizens is that the conditions are good, but here are the results obtained from the questionnaire.

***Water supply and sewage***

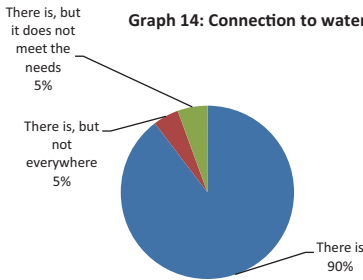
The local self-government informed that this part of the city is fully covered with water supply and sewage networks. In the neigh-

**Graph 13: Connection to sewage supply**



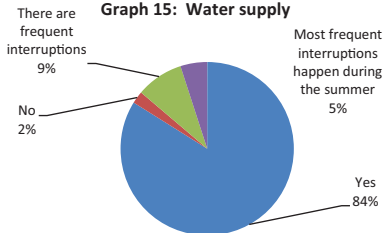
regarding the coverage of water supply and sewage network in the local environment. According to the survey, 84% of the local environment is covered with sewage network, while the rest of them answered that they had problems with these networks.

**Graph 14: Connection to water supply**



plies of respondents, 90 %, say that there is water in the local environment, whereas the remaining ones say there is water, but not everywhere or that it does not meet the needs of the local environment.

**Graph 15: Water supply**



lar the drinking water supply is, 84% say they have regular water supply, 2% say not regular, and the remaining 14% say that there are interruptions in the water supply.

borhood named “Cherenja” there is also a reservoir and a station which provide constant supply with drinking water for the citizens.

The responses to these questions are contradicting, because there is a larger number of citizens who said that they had water supply and sewage connections in their homes than the responses re-

About 98% of respondents say they have a connection to the sewage network: 89% of respondents say that they have a connection to the sewage network in their home, 2% do not have a connection and 9% have a connection to the sewage network only up to their yard.

According to re-

As concerns the water supply network, 92% are connected in their homes, 1% are not connected to it, whereas the remaining respondents are not connected everywhere in their homes, but either in their yard, or in their kitchen, or only in their toilet.

As concerns how regu-

According to the information provided by the local self-government, there is 100% water supply in the local environment.

### ***Power supply***

Out of the total number of respondents, 89% say that there is power supply in the local environment, whereas the remaining 10% say there is, but not everywhere, or that it does not meet the needs.

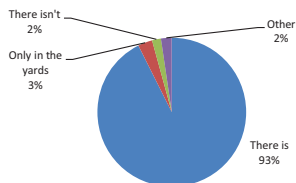
As concerns the individual power supply, 93% of respondents say they have power supply in their homes, 2% do not have power supply at all, and the remaining ones have only in their yard or did not answer the question.

The information obtained from the local self-government and meetings with citizens indicates that the entire region is electrified. The remarks pertain to certain areas where the voltage is lower than it should be. The most problematic areas are those located above “Cherenja” where the number of illegal houses is the highest, that is, houses which do not have the necessary infrastructure.

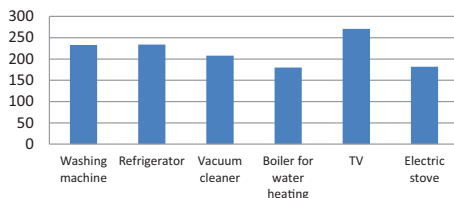
The survey confirms that the availability and use of water supply, sewage and power supply networks in the area of Shtip populated by Roma population is on a rather high level. In this area of Shtip, one cannot identify a neighborhood, street or area which is worse than the others. According to the survey, the conditions and the access to water supply, sewage and power supply are the same almost everywhere.

The use of various domestic appliances, such as washing machine, refrigerator, stove boiler, TV and vacuum cleaner is almost equal in all households. They all use almost the same appliances. The most frequently used appliance in Roma homes in Shtip is the TV, and the least used are the electric stove and boiler for water heating.

**Graph 16: Connection to power supply**



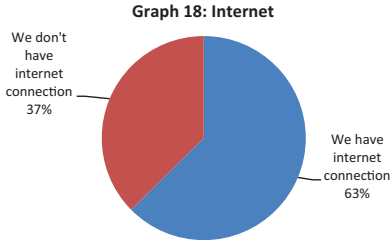
**Graph 17: Electric appliances used in homes**



Regarding the heating, it is organized on an individual basis, and the highest percentage of them 53 % use hard fuels such as wood, coal, pellets, whereas the rest of them electricity and gas.

In Shtip as well as in other cities in Macedonia, with the exception of Skopje, the heating is on individual basis and majority of citizens use wood. The same refers to the Roma community in Shtip.

### ***Internet***



Nowadays, the Internet in the world is most often used for communication, information and lately also for shopping, payment, education and alike. Sixty percent of respondents have and use the Internet, thirty percent do not have access to Internet, do not use it or do not have the necessary skills to use

it, whereas 9% use the Internet a little. These numbers indicate that in this part of Shtip, the Internet is available and the number of users is not small; it is estimated that it is mostly used by the younger population.

### ***Floor and furniture***

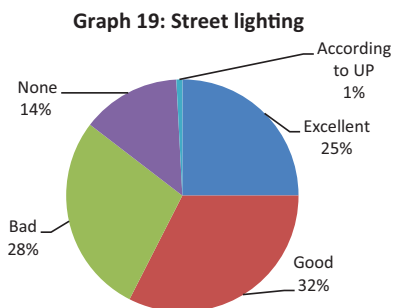
As concerns the floor in Roma houses, 10% of them have earthen floor, 37% have cement floor, 29% have laminate and 24% parquet. About 83% of respondents have sufficient furniture, 16% have insufficient furniture and 1% have extra furniture in their homes.

The most frequent problems in regard to the home infrastructure are the humidity in their rooms - 25 %, leaking from the roof - 22% and the small living space - 20 %, whereas 25% have no problems of this kind.

Half of the respondents think that they need to refurbish their homes, whereas the other half think that they have good living conditions and there is no need for any redoing of their home. Only 25% of them have refurbished their homes and 75% have never done that. About 12% of citizens used loans for refurbishing their homes, whereas of those who did not use loans, 42% did not want to use loans, 52% were unemployed and not eligible to apply for a loan and 6% applied for a loan but did not get an approval. This information point to the fact that among the citizens in this part of Shtip there is no tradition of refurbishing their homes, and majority of them use the loans not for this purpose or for buying a new home.

### 6.3. Local Environments

Living conditions include both the home conditions and condition of the immediate environment, i.e. local environment. Since the immediate environment is under the direct jurisdiction of the local self-government, we will make a cross-cutting of answers to questions with the statements of interviewed representatives of the local self-government.



Almost 60% of respondents think that there is a good or excellent street lighting in the local environment, whereas the remaining ones think it is bad or there is no street lighting.

According to the officials in charge of this issue, the street lighting in this area of the city has been installed in all places equipped with the necessary conditions. Respondents who are not satisfied with the street lighting live in areas where there are no basic conditions for installing street lighting, however, at the moment there are ongoing activities for resolving this problem.

As concerns the streets and infrastructure, 17% think that they were built according to the urban plan, 11% think they were not built according to the urban plan, 33% say that the streets are asphalted, 10% say that there is a blanket course of crushed stone on the streets, 26% say that the streets are earthen and 3% think that there are no streets in their local environment.

According to statements given by officials, all main streets in this part of the city were asphalted. They had problems asphalted the smaller streets because of their size, i.e. width, the position of infrastructure and alike. The temporary solution for these streets was placement of cement, which was funded both by the municipality and local citizens.

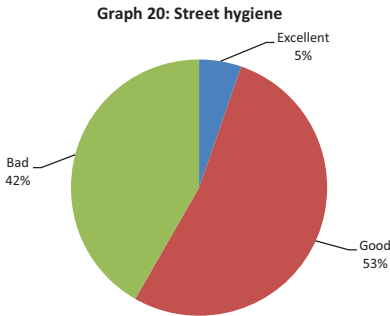
It is worth to mention that over the past several years, there were more activities for asphalted and arranging the streets, which were mainly initiated by the local population and local civil society organizations.

About 40% of citizens think that the parks in this part of the city are excellent or good, another 40% think that there are no parks

or that they are in a bad condition, and the remaining ones think that there are insufficient green areas and parks.

The number of parks and green areas in this part of the city is conditioned by the density of houses, most of which are illegally constructed, as well as by the interest shown by local population.

Of the population who live in this area and which was included in this survey, 30% are not satisfied by the waste collection, whereas the rest of them are satisfied and say that the waste is collected once a week, and in some places even several times a week. Citizens use family waste bins and collective dumpsters.



The collection of waste is also organized by the public utility enterprise. The truck for waste collection passes along the streets once a week, always on the same day of the week, so that citizens can plan when to dispose their waste. Based on the terrain conditions, collection is made in different types of dumpsters. One part of the waste is collected in dumpsters, and other part in family waste bins.

As concerns the street hygiene, more than half of respondents in this part of the city say that it is good 53% about 5% think it is excellent and 42% are not satisfied with the hygiene of streets and parks. The hygiene of streets is most often the responsibility of the citizens who live there, especially the streets in settlements on the edge of the city. The public utility enterprise is in charge of the hygiene the on main streets in the city.

In the area populated by Roma people in Shtip there are primary school, outpatient clinic, kindergarten, and nearby there is also a secondary school. To the question about the type of health services offered in their place of living, 56% of respondents say that there is a general practitioner, 24% - a dentist, 20% - a gynecologist and a public visiting nurse.

The following facilities were mentioned as places for recreation and leisure most frequently used by the local population: sport facilities - 45 %, park - 19 %, internet cafe - 19 %, cultural center - 12 % and cinema and other facilities - 5 %.

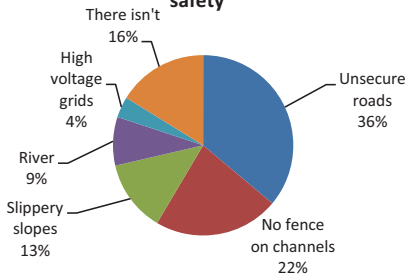
As concerns the distance of facilities from their homes, the citizens were given the options to determine it both in kilometers and in minutes.

This is how the respondents assessed the distance of education and health institutions: 40 % think that their school is far 10-30 minutes' walk, i.e. no further than 5 km, 36 % think it is far up to 10 minutes' walk, and 24 % think that it is far more than 30 minutes' walk from their home.

Health care institutions are at a distance from 10-30 minutes' walk to 46% of respondents, 10 minutes; walk to 21%, over 5 kilometers to 25% of respondents, and 8% have no health institution near their home.

As concerns the question about the living conditions and infrastructure, 45% of respondents say they live poorly, 48% say that they live a good and average life, and 7% think that they have insufficient means for a decent living.

**Graph 21: Objects that endanger the safety**



Facilities which they consider as dangerous in terms of the safety of population in this part of the city are the unfenced road and channel.

In relation to the safety, citizens who live in this part of Shtip would like to get support mainly for fencing the road and the channel. Another big problem highlighted by this community is the creation

of new jobs. The next problem is finalizing the asphaltting of streets in the neighborhood, improving the street lighting and building new parks.

The municipality of Shtip has already started resolving the identified problems. The first area where interventions were made was the industrial zone, which created new jobs. Every year, in their annual program they introduce new streets for asphaltting, installation of street lights and construction of parks and sport fields.

The findings regarding the housing conditions and urbanization of Roma settlements in the municipality of Shtip by members of the local community, representatives of the local self-government, and project partners are summarized in the conclusions and recommendations which are a constituent part of this Baseline Study.

## 7. Conclusions

1. Roma families in the municipality of Shtip mainly consist of five members who live in a household of parents and children. They are young population, consisting mainly of unemployed people with low level of education or without completed primary education 46%. The majority of Roma families in Shtip live with a monthly income lower than 6,000 denars. Their income mainly comes from the social welfare or assistance from their relatives and friends. There is also a significant percentage of families who earn their income from regular employment 36%, that is income from employment in the public sector 23% and in the private sector 13%.
2. A high percentage of Roma in the municipality of Shtip possess their own homes, mainly in ownership of the male members of the family (husband or parent). A significant number of homes 12% are larger than 100 m<sup>2</sup>, and almost 70% of their homes are legalized or in a procedure for legalization. However, there is still a large number of families who do not have a toilet and bathroom in their houses. Also, another problem that can endanger their health is the humidity in their homes.
3. Almost all houses are connected to the water supply sewage and power supply network and possess the basic household appliances. In certain parts of these Roma settlements, there is a lower voltage in the power supply network than the standard one.
4. Roma settlements in Shtip are densely populated, with small green areas and insufficient space for leisure and recreation. Streets are mainly covered with gravel, but there is also a high percentage of asphalted parts, whereas the utility services are on a satisfactory level. The access to health services is good, but the education institutions are far and there is no organized transport for the students.
5. One part of Roma neighborhoods are not included in the detailed urban plans, which impede the urban development of the settlement.
6. Legalization in the settlement “Cherenja” has already started and according to the survey, this procedure should be completed for approximately 500 homes.
7. Citizens of the settlement “Cherenja” think that their safety would improve if the problem with the unfenced road and channel is resolved. Namely, 22% of respondent think that



the unfenced channel is a threat for the safety of citizens, and 36% think such a threat is the unfenced road.

8. Respondents also think that there are still possibilities for improvement of street lighting in the settlement “Cherenja”. Namely, 28% think that the street lighting is bad, whereas 14% think that there is no street lighting at all. These are mainly areas where there are no conditions for installation of street lights, and the local self-government unit of Shtip keeps working on resolving this issue.
9. Respondents think that the public hygiene could also be improved, that is, 28% think that instead of once a week, the waste should be collected several times a week.

## **Recommendations stemming from the Participatory Evaluation held on 05th December 2016, in Shtip**

1. Roma families accommodated temporarily in the former Neurology Department of the old hospital should be accommodated in appropriate habitats. Currently, they are living in very bad conditions, isolated from the local community.
2. Some of the Roma neighborhoods are still not part of the urban plan of the city. The recommendation is either to change the current urban plans or to find another permanent solution for their accommodation, as well as to stop the unplanned construction of houses without any basic infrastructure. This particularly refers to some neighborhoods of the settlement “Cherenja”.
3. In order to improve the quality of housing of Roma population in the municipality of Shtip, it is recommended to provide favorable financial instrument through which the population will be able to renovate their homes and provide decent homes to their families. Namely, 15% of respondents say that they have no bathroom and the same percentage say that they have no kitchen.
4. According to the survey results, about 61% of Roma population in Shtip are unemployed. Hence, we can conclude that measures should be undertaken to reduce this high percentage. A measure which can contribute in reducing the unemployment is to stimulate Roma population to apply for the measures for employment through the Employment Service Agency.
5. The survey shows that 24% of respondents highlighted that the distance from the primary school was more than 5 km. Hence, the recommendation is to introduce organized transport for students living further than 5 km from the school.
6. Population should also be educated about the protection of the environment and public goods.
7. More frequent waste collection and cleaning of streets, as well as timely clearing of small dumps from streets. This also implies increasing the awareness among citizens of Shtip, in order to be more careful with the waste dumping.
8. Installation of street lights in Roma neighborhoods in Shtip. This will increase the safety of citizens during the night hours.

9. Improve the traffic control, especially on the street “Radanski Pat”, where citizens drive “wildly” and out of control, thus imposing the pedestrians to increased risk of traffic accidents.
10. Development of a Local Action Plan for Housing of Roma in the Municipality of Shtip, which will reflect the objectives of the National Action Plan for Housing of Roma 2016 - 2020, where priority should be given to local priorities identified by the Local Leader Group established under the project “Right to Housing of Roma for Sustainable Urban Development”.

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## Annex 1. Competences of the Municipal Council and the Mayor

Pursuant to Article 32 of the Law on the Local Government, (1) the Council is a representative body of citizens which decides under the competences of the municipality. (2) For reviewing questions and determining proposals in a certain area, the council may establish permanent or temporary committees consisting of representatives from the council. (3) The composition and manner of election of members of committees referred to in paragraph (2) of this Article are regulated by a statute. (4) The composition of committees referred to in paragraph (2) of this Article should be in compliance with the proportional representations of political parties in the council.

Article 36 of the Law on Local Self-Government – 1. The Council adopts the statute of the municipality and other regulations; 2. Adopts the budget of the municipality and annual account of the municipality. 3. Determines the amount of own sources of revenues for financing the municipality, within the scope defined by law; 4. Establishes public services within the competences of the municipality and supervise their work; 5. Appoints members in managing boards of public services; 6. Adopts operational programs and financial plans for financing the public services established by the municipality; 7. Adopts the reports for implementation of the budget and annual accounts of the municipality; 8. Makes decisions for issuing licenses for performing activities of public interest and local importance, in compliance with the law; 9. Adopts reports on the conducted work and annual accounts of public services, established by the committee; 10. Decides about the manner of working with the property of the municipality; 11. Decides about the manner of performing financial control of the municipality's budget, in compliance with the law; 12. Selects the person to manage the regional unit of the Ministry of Internal Affairs in the municipality, in compliance with the law; 13. Reviews and adopts the annual report for public security of municipal area, and delivers it to the Minister of Internal Affairs and the Ombudsman; 14. May give recommendations to a person on managerial position in the regional unit of the Ministry of Internal Affairs in the area of public security and traffic safety and 15. It performs other activities stipulated by law.

The Mayor, on the other hand, is directly responsible for implementation of policies defined by the Council, however, he is also authorized to initiate adoption of certain regulations by the Council. The Law on Local Self-Government, or more precisely Article 50

stipulated his/her competences.

Article 50 Competences of the Mayor (1) The Mayor: 1. Represents and acts on behalf of the municipality; 2. Controls the legality of Council's regulations; 3. Publishes Council's regulations in the official journal of the municipality; 4. Ensures the enforcement of Council's decisions, 5. Ensures the performance of activities delegated to the municipality by law; 6. Initiates and proposes adoption of regulations that fall within the competency of the Council; 7. Proposes the annual budget and annual balance sheet of the budget of the municipality; Executes the budget of the municipality; 9. Elects managers of public services established by the municipality, on the basis of a public job announcement; 10. Regularly informs the Council on the performance of his/her competences in accordance with the statute; 11. Resolves administrative matters regarding the rights, duties and interests of legal entities and natural persons in accordance with the law; 12. Adopts a regulation for organizational structure and job positions in the municipal administration; 13. Manages the municipal administration; 14. Decides on employment, rights, duties and responsibilities of employees in municipal administration, unless otherwise stipulated by law; Ensures proper and legal use, maintenance and protection of municipal property, in compliance with the law and statute and 16. Performs other activities stipulated by the law and statute. (2) The Mayor may authorize a responsible official of the municipality to take on the proceeding and to make decisions in administrative matters, as well as to sign acts.



## **Annex 2. Persons involved in preparing the Baseline Study on Roma housing in municipality of Shtip**

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