

The Open Society Foundation – Sofia traditionally supports projects targeted to facilitating the integration of Roma in society.

The idea to conduct a research on the health status of Roma was born as a result of our grant-making and monitoring activity on projects carried out by various organizations. We realized that there is a bulk of valuable information collected throughout these projects, which needs to be systematized in order to be preserved and made useful.

The present pilot research was conducted by a team of experts following a seminar on Roma health organized by the Public Health Program of the Open Society Foundation – Sofia in December 2001. The purpose of the seminar was to attract the attention of the institutions responsible for solving the health problems of vulnerable social groups.

The idea was to encourage state institutions to take decisive measures for improving the health status of minority groups in the country.

One of the steps in this direction would be to conduct a national representative research on minority needs and cultural differences that would create conditions for adequate health promotion. Another possible approach would be to start collecting ethnicity-specific information on the health status of Bulgarian population standing by all principles and norms of medical ethics. Such information, for example, is being collected in the United States.

We sincerely hope that our initiative would lead to real, measurable results.

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