

Summary

The results from an international comparative study on health status of the Roma and their access to the healthcare are presented in this book; the research was conducted in Bulgaria, Greece, Spain, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia and the Czech Republic in 2008-2009. *Fundación Secretariado Gitano* initiated the study funded by the European Commission, Public Health Programme.

Different factors affecting the health status of the Roma were studied: specific features of the Bulgarian healthcare system compared to the respective ones in the other six countries; the inclusion of the Roma in the health insurance system; their interactions with physicians and medical staff; their social-economic and educational status; spatial segregation; housing conditions; culture and family models. Data from other sociological surveys on the health of the Roma have been used (1992-1990) which disclose tendencies and unsolved issues concerning the healthcare access in Post-Communist Bulgaria. When possible, the data for the health status of the Roma are comparatively presented to the total population of Bulgaria. Recommendations for social policies and actions, aimed at improving the quality of the medical services and access to healthcare, have been drawn up.

The primary target group of this book comprises sociologists, physicians and medical staff, politicians, administrators on national and regional levels, non-government organisations and students.