

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION BULLETIN 2/2007

1. POLICIES, INITIATIVES AND PUBLIC DISCOURSE

Tenth International Steering Committee Meeting of the Decade of Roma Inclusion

The Tenth International Steering Committee Meeting of the Decade of Roma Inclusion chaired by Bulgaria was held on 12-13.06.2007 in Sofia. The Bulgarian Prime Minister, chairpersons of parliamentary committees, deputy ministers responsible for issues related to the Roma integration were invited to attend the event. The Chairman of the Open Society Institute George Soros was among the distinguished guests at the meeting. In his opening address to the participants the Bulgarian Prime Minister Mr Sergey Stanishev said that Bulgaria could hardly cope with the integration of Roma without the financial and the managerial instruments of the European Union. He marked the successes of Bulgaria in the fields of education and employment of the Roma.

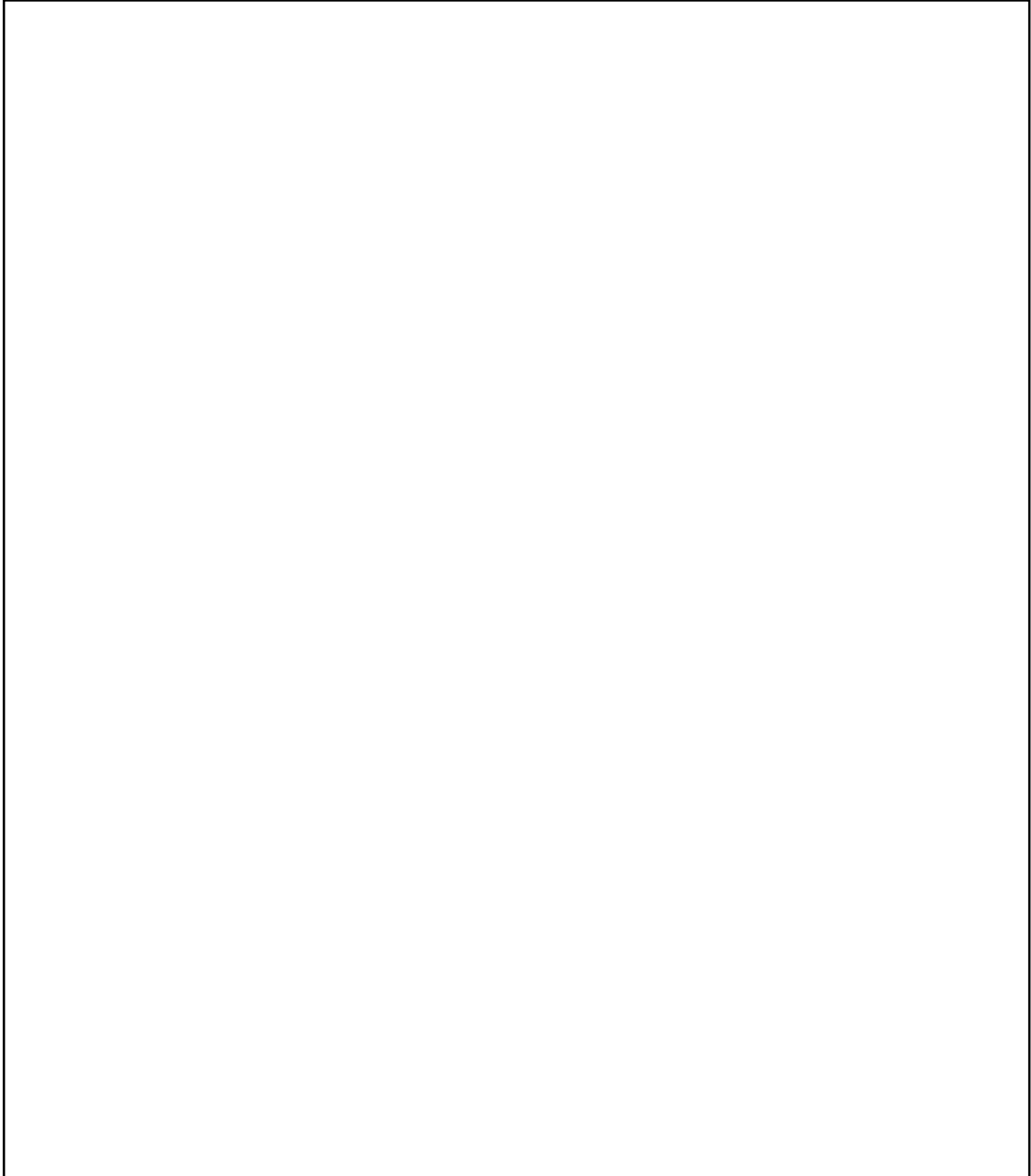
http://www.osi.bg/?cy=10&lang=2&program=1&action=2&news_id=68

Framework Agreements Signed by the Commission for Protection against Discrimination

On 22.06.2007 the Commission for Protection against Discrimination signed framework agreements for cooperation with the Agency for People with Disabilities and the non-governmental organisation Bulgarian Center for Not-for-Profit Law. The parties to the agreements share the common will to cooperate on issues related to the prevention of and protection against discrimination.

http://www.kzd-nondiscrimination.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=blogsection&id=1&Itemid=67

2. LEGAL DEVELOPMENTS AND AWARENESS-RAISING CAMPAIGNS



3. RESEARCH

DecadeWatch Country Report on Bulgaria

The DecadeWatch monitoring report was presented at the Tenth International Steering Committee Meeting of the Decade of Roma Inclusion, held in Sofia on 12-13.06.2007. The report has been developed by teams of Roma civil society leaders since the launch of the Decade of Roma Inclusion in 2005. It provides an assessment of the governments' actions on introducing measures in the four Decade priority areas (education, employment, health, and housing) as well as institutional arrangements and anti-discrimination legislation. Country reports were prepared by Roma civil society alliances. Bulgaria is ranked second most advanced country in terms of institutional arrangements and policies.

The report criticises the Bulgarian institutions for issuing a too bureaucratic Decade of Roma Inclusion Action Plan due to the limited budget funds set aside for its implementation. It is also critical as regards the implementation of the program in the focus areas of education, employment, healthcare and housing.

[http://demo.itent.hu/roma/portal/downloads/DecadeWatch/DecadeWatch%20-%20Bulgaria%20\(English;%20Advance%20Printing\).pdf](http://demo.itent.hu/roma/portal/downloads/DecadeWatch/DecadeWatch%20-%20Bulgaria%20(English;%20Advance%20Printing).pdf)

Report on Equal Access to Quality Education for Roma

The EU Monitoring and Advocacy Program of the Open Society Institute issued a report entitled "Equal Access to Quality Education for Roma". The report marks the main obstacles to Roma integration in Bulgaria in the field of education and recommends specific measures for overcoming the problems. The document also stresses on the issues of the continuing segregation of Roma children in the so called "Roma schools", the low attendance of pre-school education by Roma children, the poor knowledge of Bulgarian language, and the low drop-off age among Roma students.

http://www.eumap.org/topics/minority/reports/roma_education/national/bulgaria/romeduc_bulgaria.pdf

4. Official / unofficial statistical data

National Deliberative Poll on Policies Towards the Roma

During the Tenth International Steering Committee Meeting of the Decade of Roma Inclusion the Centre for Liberal Strategies in partnership with the Open Society Institute – Sofia, Alfa Research and Bulgarian National Television presented the results of the public debate on policies targeting Roma integration, held in April 2007. "Less than 20% of the population is ready to support segregation of Roma" the report says. The document explains that the public as a whole reacts very pragmatically towards Roma integration policies. For example, as a result of the debate, the percentage of the participants who believed that Roma children should be included in the educational system since their early childhood and no defined quotas should apply, has increased.

http://www.osi.bg/downloads/File/Deliberative%20Poll_ENG.pdf

Publicly Announced Data by the Commission for Protection against Discrimination

The Bulgarian Commission for Protection against Discrimination registered lower number of discrimination complaints based on ethnicity, said the Commission's Chairman at a special press conference. Nine complaints of a total number of 165 filed for the period since January until June 2007 were related to ethnic discrimination. The ethnic discrimination cases represented 28 per cent of all cases in 2006, and about 50 per cent in 2005.

www.segabg.com (in Bulgarian)

5. Upcoming events

