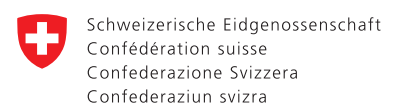


# MAPPING OF SUBSTANDARD ROMA SETTLEMENTS ACCORDING TO RISKS AND ACCESS TO RIGHTS IN THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

with Particular Attention  
to the COVID-19 Epidemic



This Analysis of the impact of the COVID-19 epidemic on Human Rights in the Republic of Serbia has been carried out within the "Surge II" initiative of the United Nations Office for Human Rights (OHCHR)



**Swiss Agency for Development  
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This publication does not represent the official views of the Government of the Republic of Serbia, or the Government of Switzerland.

All terms used in the publication in the masculine grammatical gender cover both the male and female gender of the persons they relate to.

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## GOALS OF THE MAPPING AND METHODOLOGY

Reports arising from the review of UN human rights mechanisms<sup>1</sup> as well as other relevant sources<sup>2</sup> have continuously highlighted the extremely vulnerable position of the Roma national minority in the Republic of Serbia.

Discrimination, widespread socio-economic marginalization, and social exclusion are just some of the risks thought to have become more exacerbated with the emergence of the coronavirus. Additionally, new risks have emerged that have particularly affected the poorest sections of the Roma community – those without sustainable income or access to essential services for basic living needs (safe drinking water, electricity, sewerage) and virus protection (protective equipment, sanitation, possibilities for social distancing).

- <sup>1</sup> Overview of the United Nations Human Rights Mechanisms, available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Countries/ENACARegion/Pages/RSIndex.aspx>
- <sup>2</sup> Annual reports of the European Commission on the Progress of Serbia, (2006-2019), available at: <https://www.mei.gov.rs/srp/dokumenta/eu-dokumenta/godisnji-izvestaji-ek>, Council of Europe, Fourth Periodic Report on the Implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities in the RS, 2019, available at: <https://rm.coe.int/4th-op-serbia-en/16809943b6>, Reports on the implementation of the Action Plan for the realization of the rights of national minorities, available at: <https://www.ljudskaprava.gov.rs/sh/node/21795>, IPA programs and projects for the inclusion, housing, and employment of Roma men and women in Serbia, available at: <http://europa.rs/eu-support-for-roma-in-serbia/?lang=en>





Following the declaration of the state of emergency<sup>3</sup> in response to the COVID-19 epidemic, the United Nations Human Rights Team, in cooperation with the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit of the Government of the Republic of Serbia and the Association of Roma Coordinators, initiated a joint process of mapping the risks to which residents of the most vulnerable Roma populations were exposed due to the appearance of coronavirus and the associated restrictions on movement, representing violations of their basic human rights and leading to the emergence of additional risks of exclusion, perhaps to even greater marginalization and poverty.



Total number of mapped substandard Roma settlements in the Republic of Serbia

702



Total number of local self-government units on whose territory are mapped substandard Roma settlements

94



Total number of inhabitants of the mapped substandard Roma settlements

167,975

<sup>3</sup> In the Republic of Serbia the State of Emergency issued in response to the COVID-19 pandemic came into effect on March 15, 2020 through the Decision to Declare a State of Emergency ("Official Gazette of RS", No.29/20), and was withdrawn on May 6, 2020 through the Decision to Lift the State of Emergency ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 65/2020). The process of mapping lasted from March until the end of September, 2020.

It is these increased risks and the need for an adequate and timely response to these pressing needs that have served as the impetus for collecting data in a human rights-based format in accordance with the principle of Leave No One Behind (LNOB). These efforts and data should also serve as a good starting point for planning recovery measures for, and preventing future risks to, the most vulnerable of the Roma population. In addition, these data are extremely important for updating the geographic information system (the so-called GIS database) on Roma settlements and monitoring the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in which Roma men and women are recognized as a particularly marginalized category of the population in Serbia.<sup>4</sup>

- The mapping encompassed substandard<sup>5</sup> settlements in Serbia inhabited almost exclusively by members of the Roma national minority. The categorical criteria employed for data collection included the access of residents of the mapped substandard Roma settlements to safe drinking water and sewage, electricity, and sustainable livelihoods. The mapping also included the predominant activities of the inhabitants of these settlements, especially in the context of the emergence of additional or increasing existing health risks from coronavirus infection.
- In the period from the end of March to the middle of September 2020, based on the previously mentioned criteria, data were collected on a total of 702 substandard Roma settlements<sup>6</sup> located within the territories of 94 local self-government units and inhabited by approximately 167,975 people.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Roma men and women are included in the MAPS Mission Reports on Serbia *National Development and Agenda 2030: Supporting Policies for Progress, as well as in The Voluntary National Report of the Republic of Serbia on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, in which they are recognized as a category of the Serbian population facing limited access to opportunities in virtually all areas, such as basic rights, health, education, housing, employment, and living standards, available at: <http://www.skgo.org/storage/app/media/uploaded-files/Dobrovoljni%20nacionalni%20izvestaj%20Republike%20Srbije%20o%20sprovodjenju%20Agende%202030%20za%20odrzivi%20razvoj.pdf>; [http://sdg.indikator.rs/media/1500/sdg\\_srbija\\_lat.pdf](http://sdg.indikator.rs/media/1500/sdg_srbija_lat.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> The United Nations definition of substandard settlements lists the following criteria as essential to their identification: 1) inadequate access to drinking water; 2) inadequate access to sanitation and other relevant forms of infrastructure (sewage network or septic tanks, traffic network, water supply network, and other communal services); 3) poor quality of housing units (housing units built using inadequate construction techniques and/or poor construction materials; also, housing units in disrepair due to poor maintenance, etc., which are potentially dangerous to the safety of residents); 4) overcrowding, in terms of the average population density per unit area of the settlement, i.e., in terms of a large number of members per household; and 5) uncertainty of the legal status of the buildings on the respective plots (including unresolved property and legal relations over the buildings and/or the land of the settlement).

<sup>6</sup> Data are missing for some city municipalities in the territory of the City of Belgrade, as well as a small number of settlements in rural areas in the territories of Vojvodina and of Central and Southern Serbia. According to the information obtained from the established institutional mechanisms for the inclusion of Roma men and women, there are no settlements on the territory of the municipalities of Čičevac, Petrovac na Mlavi, and Sečanj that are predominantly inhabited by the Roma population.

<sup>7</sup> This number does not include about 35,000-50,000 people who, based on the obtained data, were found to be only occasionally staying in the settlements

The data on substandard Roma settlements, their number of inhabitants, and risks were obtained in 86% of cases from established institutional mechanisms for the inclusion of Roma men and women at the level of local self-government units.<sup>8</sup> Where such mechanisms were not in place or where local governments lacked such data, information was collected from local civil society organizations (Roma and non-Roma) or activists (4%), and drawn from several available sources (9.2%). In addition, direct communication with representatives of local governments, local civil society organizations, and communities provided additional information.

## RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Analyses and reports from the period before the outbreak of coronavirus indicate the inadequacy of living conditions in substandard Roma settlements in Serbia, whose inhabitants face a lack of access to basic infrastructure and utilities (electricity, safe drinking water, and sewerage), education and health services, sustainable sources of income, etc.<sup>9</sup> The emergence of the coronavirus has further contributed to increasing the vulnerability of this category of the population, both in terms of health and socio-economic risks.<sup>10</sup>

covered by the mapping (they mostly work abroad, where they spend the majority of the year).

<sup>8</sup> The Mobile Team for the Inclusion of Roma Men and Women, which includes coordinators for Roma issues, pedagogical assistants, health mediators, representatives of the Center for Social Work and the National Employment Service; Office for the Inclusion of Roma Men and Women, Councilor in charge of Roma issues, etc.

<sup>9</sup> European Commission Serbia 2019 Report, pages. 30, 78, 83, and 89, available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/20190529-serbia-report.pdf>; Analysis of Conditions for Sustainable Housing Development in the Republic of Serbia - Starting point for the National Housing Strategy: Housing Exclusion and Housing for Vulnerable Groups, available at: <https://www.mgsi.gov.rs/lat/dokumenti>.

<sup>10</sup> Results of a joint survey of the United Nations Team in the Republic of Serbia (supported by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights OHCHR) and the Team for Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction of the Government of the Republic of Serbia conducted in June 2020 to assess the impact of the COVID-19 epidemic on vulnerable groups from the perspective of civil society organizations active during the epidemic and the state of emergency in monitoring human rights and providing support to certain groups of the population and organizations representing vulnerable groups; Special Report of the Protector of Citizens with recommendations: Conditions in Roma settlements in the state of emergency and the implementation of measures due to the coronavirus epidemic (COVID-19), available at: <https://www.ombudsman.rs/index.php/izvestaji/posebni-izvestaji/6608-19>

### Figure 1. Total number of inhabitants living in mapped substandard Roma settlements

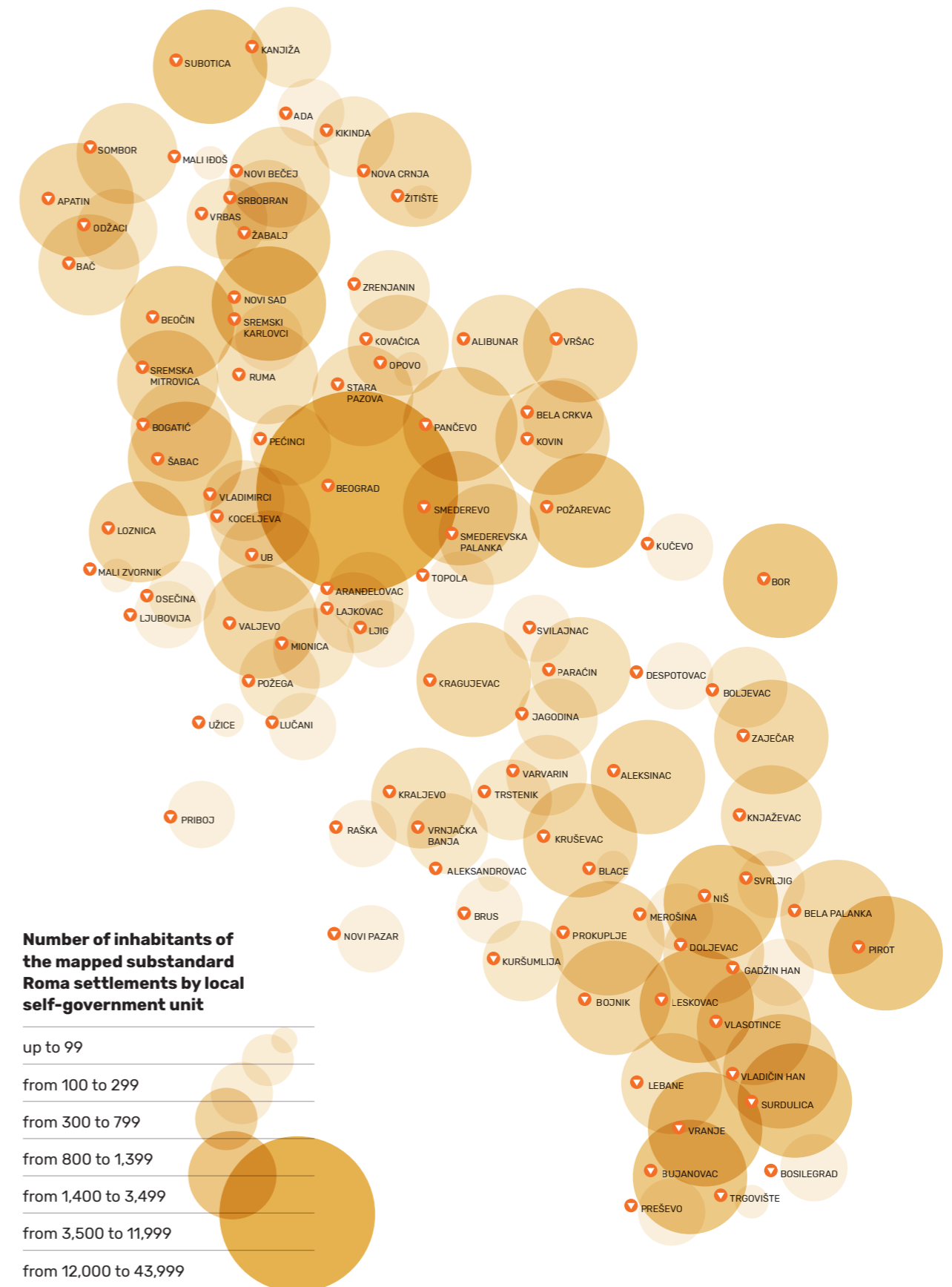
Map of the Republic of Serbia (cross-sectional data) - number of inhabitants living in mapped substandard Roma settlements by local self-government units on whose territory are mapped

Beograd	43,944	Alibunar	1,111	Merošina	268
Leskovac	11,830	Kraljevo	1,095	Gadžin Han	264
Niš	8,409	Doljevac	1,082	Kučevo	251
Vranje	4,480	Koceljeva	1,065	Novi Pazar	240
Požarevac	4,400	Loznica	1,033	Svrljig	227
Bujanovac	4,200	Sremska Mitrovica	1,032	Raška	210
Novi Sad	3,783	Bogatić	1,010	Osečina	210
Surdulica	3,780	Ruma	924	Ljubovija	181
Pirot	3,665	Smederevska Palanka	920	Ljig	168
Bor	3,664	Stara Pazova	920	Bosilegrad	162
Subotica	3,535	Ub	868	Ada	160
Smederevo	3,245	Novi Bečej	857	Brus	153
Bojnik	3,145	Knjaževac	800	Sremski Karlovci	147
Prokuplje	3,126	Kovačica	800	Despotovac	130
Apatin	3,025	Lajkovac	770	Lučani	124
Žabalj	2,740	Arandelovac	662	Topola	120
Kragujevac	2,400	Srbobran	629	Priboj	110
Kovin	2,335	Kuršumlija	612	Svilajnac	101
Kruševac	2,220	Odžaci	586	Blace	62
Pančevo	2,200	Vrbas	507	Žitište	58
Šabac	2,083	Zrenjanin	453	Opovo	45
Valjevo	2,041	Jagodina	422	Mali Zvornik	40
Zaječar	2,000	Trstenik	420	Aleksandrovac	30
Beočin	1,800	Vrnjačka Banja	401	Trgovište	25
Vršac	1,690	Pećinci	390	Užice	12
Aleksinac	1,681	Bela Crkva	385	Mali Idoš	8
Vladičin Han	1,570	Požega	375		
Vlasotince	1,462	Mionica	368		
Bela Palanka	1,400	Vladimirci	357		
Nova Crnja	1,400	Varvarin	315		
Bač	1,335	Kanjiza	300		
Sombor	1,200	Boljevac	300		
Paraćin	1,190	Kikinda	300		
Lebane	1,152	Preševo	270		



Inhabitants of the mapped substandard Roma settlements

167,975





## Figure 2. Total number of mapped substandard Roma settlements

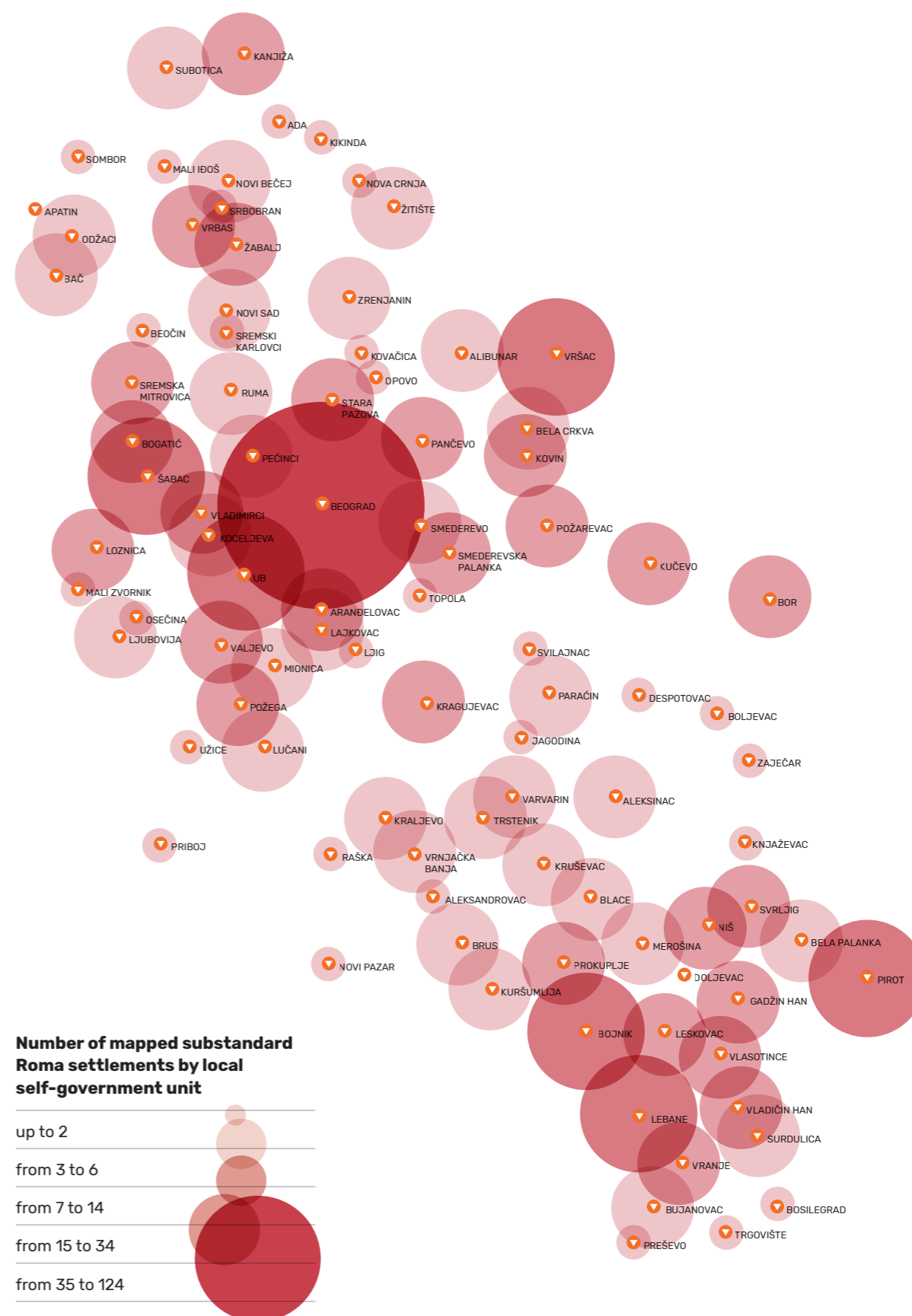
Map of the Republic of Serbia (cross-sectional data) - local self-government units on whose territory are mapped substandard Roma settlements

Beograd	122	Vladimirci	7	Boljevac	2
Bojnik	34	Alibunar	6	Despotovac	2
Šabac	25	Bujanovac	6	Jagodina	2
Pirot	21	Lajkovac	6	Knjaževac	2
Ub	21	Kraljevo	6	Mali Zvornik	2
Lebane	17	Novi Bečej	6	Preševo	2
Vršac	16	Novi Sad	6	Raška	2
Bogatić	14	Paraćin	6	Srbobran	2
Bor	14	Smederevo	6	Sremski Karlovci	2
Leskovac	14	Aleksinac	5	Topola	2
Niš	13	Lučani	5	Aleksandrovac	1
Kragujevac	12	Ljubovija	5	Beočin	1
Vranje	12	Pećinci	5	Bosilegrad	1
Vrbas	12	Ruma	5	Kikinda	1
Doljevac	11	Varvarin	5	Kovačica	1
Gadžin Han	11	Vrnjačka Banja	5	Ljig	1
Kovin	11	Bač	4	Mali Idoš	1
Kučevo	10	Brus	4	Nova Crnja	1
Požega	10	Koceljeva	4	Novi Pazar	1
Smederevska	9	Kuršumlija	4	Opovo	1
Palanka	10	Mionica	4	Osečina	1
Pančevo	9	Subotica	4	Priboj	1
Sremska Mitrovica	9	Žitište	4	Sombor	1
Stara Pazova	9	Bela Crkva	3	Svilajnac	1
Svrljig	9	Bela Palanka	3	Trgovište	1
Vlasotince	9	Blace	3	Užice	1
Arandelovac	8	Kruševac	3	Zaječar	1
Loznica	8	Merošina	3		
Prokuplje	8	Odžaci	3		
Valjevo	8	Surdulica	3		
Žabalj	8	Trstenik	3		
Kanjiza	7	Zrenjanin	3		
Požarevac	7	Ada	2		
Vladičin Han	7	Apatin	2		



Total number of mapped substandard Roma settlements in the Republic of Serbia

702





## ACCESS TO SAFE WATER

The human right to safe drinking water is recognized and guaranteed by the provisions of numerous international treaties concerning human rights<sup>11</sup>. In addition, safe water and sanitation are the stated aims of Sustainable Development Goal 6<sup>12</sup>, which designates a number of important targets, including achieving universal and equal access to safe and affordable drinking water for all and adequate and equal sanitary and hygienic conditions for all. Regarding the fulfillment of these guarantees, numerous recommendations of the United Nations human rights mechanisms have been issued to the Republic of Serbia<sup>13</sup> which unequivocally indicate that even before the outbreak, the lack of access to safe drinking water, food storage,

and personal hygiene was a very serious problem for residents in general and particularly for residents of numerous Roma settlements, who have been continuously exposed to increased risks of infectious, chronic, and other diseases. The appearance of the COVID-19 virus has exacerbated these existing risks, posing additional challenges to the inhabitants of these settlements, especially in fulfilling those recommendations of health institutions on the implementation of hygienic measures for prevention and protection against infection.<sup>14</sup>

For the purposes of this mapping, access to safe drinking water was defined as having a regular connection to the public water



Number (%) of local self-government units on whose territory were documented substandard Roma settlements whose inhabitants had either no access to safe drinking water or irregular access

51  
(54.26%)



Number (%) of substandard Roma settlements whose inhabitants were documented as having either no access to safe drinking water or irregular access

159  
(22.65%)



Number (%) of inhabitants of the 159 substandard Roma settlements who were documented as having either no access to safe drinking water or irregular access

32,843  
(19.55%)

- 11 International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (Article 11, paragraph 1, and related provisions of Article 12, paragraph 1, and Article 2, paragraph 2); Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (Article 14, paragraph 2.); Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article 24, paragraph 2); Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, General Comment No. 15: The Right to Water, General Comment No. 14: The right to the highest attainable standard of health, General Comment No. 4: The Right to Adequate Housing; Resolution of the United Nations General Assembly on the Human Right to Water (64/292), from 2010.
- 12 Sustainable Development Goals, SDG 6 - Water and Sanitation, target 6.1 - By 2030, achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all, target 6.2 - By 2030, achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all and end open defecation, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations, available at: <http://sdg.indikator.rs/sr-latn/area/clean-water-and-sanitation/>
- 13 Concluding Observations of the Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights on the Second Periodic Report of Serbia, para. 31- 32; UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Concluding observations on the combined second and third periodic reports of Serbia, para. 51- 52, Report of the Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing, para. 42, 95, 100(b)(V).

- 14 Leo Heller, the Special Rapporteur on the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation, available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=25738&LangID=E>, Leilani Farha, UN Special Rapporteur on adequate housing, available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=25727&LangID=E>, Results of a joint survey of the United Nations Team in the Republic of Serbia (supported by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights OHCHR) and the Team for Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction of the Government of the Republic of Serbia conducted in June 2020 to assess the impact of the COVID-19 epidemic on vulnerable groups from the perspective of civil society organizations active during the epidemic and the state of emergency in monitoring human rights and providing support to certain groups of the population and organizations representing vulnerable groups; Special Report of the Protector of Citizens with recommendations: Conditions in Roma settlements in the state of emergency and the implementation of measures due to the coronavirus epidemic (COVID-19); Appeal of the Initiative for Economic and Social Rights A11 to the European Court and local authorities regarding the urgent need to provide water and control coronavirus in the Roma settlement "Čukarička šuma," available at: <https://www.a11initiative.org/evropski-sud-za-ljudska-prava-uputio-a-11-inicijativu-da-zahteva-od-lokalnih-vlasti-u-beogradu-minimum-uslova-za-zivot-300-roma-ucukarickoj-sumi/>

supply network, which excludes: access to wells with technical water, those built without proper technical documentation and building permits and/or not maintained in accordance with valid regulations, and access to public fountains in yards or parks. Irregular access to the water supply network was defined as having a connection to the water supply network without the approval of the competent service.

Based on the collected data, 159 substandard Roma settlements, inhabited by at least 32,843 people (19.55%), demon-

strated not having access to safe drinking water or having only irregular access.

The gathered data indicate, **that partial access to safe drinking water** - defined as one segment of the inhabitants of the same settlement having access to safe drinking water with the other either not having access or having only irregular access, was existent in 35 mapped substandard Roma settlements, inhabited by approximately 11,829 people.



Number of local self-government units on whose territory were documented substandard Roma settlements with partial access to safe drinking water (one segment of the inhabitants of the same settlement having access to safe drinking water with the other either not having access or having only irregular access)

15



Number of substandard Roma settlements with partial access to safe drinking water (one segment of the inhabitants of the same settlement having access to safe drinking water with the other either not having access or having only irregular access)

35



Number of inhabitants of the 35 mapped substandard Roma settlements with partial access to safe drinking water (one segment of the inhabitants of the same settlement having access to safe drinking water with the other either not having access or having only irregular access)

11,829

3,779  
inhabitants without  
access to safe  
drinking water or  
irregular access

8,050  
inhabitants with  
access to safe  
drinking water

Finally, in a total of 9 local self-government units, all of the 38 mapped substandard Roma settlements located on their territory, inhabited by 3,599 residents, indicated having **no access to safe drinking water or having irregular access**.



Number of local self-government units on whose territory were mapped Roma settlements with all indicated as having no access to safe drinking water or irregular access

9



Number of substandard Roma settlements located on the territory of these 9 local self-government units, with all indicated as having no access to safe drinking water or irregular access

38



Number of people living in these 38 substandard Roma settlements having no access to safe drinking water or irregular access

3,599



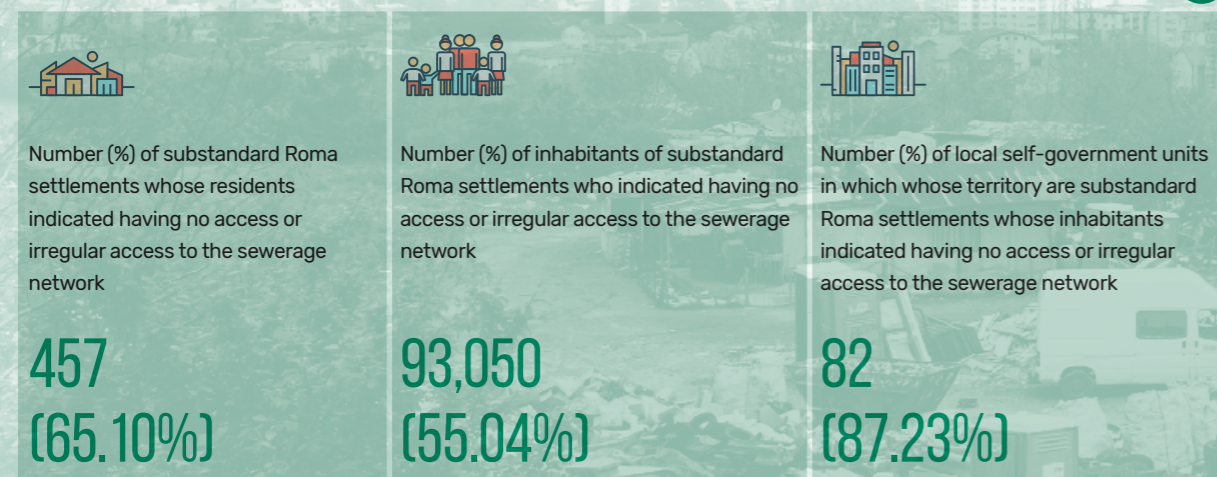
## ACCESS TO THE SEWERAGE NETWORK

The right to sanitation and access to other sanitary and hygienic conditions (derived from the right to an adequate standard of living), is guaranteed by various human rights instruments,<sup>15</sup> and their importance is indicated by the United Nations human rights mechanisms<sup>16</sup> as well as by Sustainable Developmental Goal (SDG) 6, especially target 6.2, regarding the achievement by 2020 of access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all and the ending of open defecation, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations.

Over 55% of the population (approximately 93,050 people) from 457 substandard Roma settlements indicated having no access to the sewerage network or irregular access, evidencing their living in very poor hygienic conditions. The establishment of adequate hygienic conditions is recognized as a critical element of

health care and, in the context of the coronavirus outbreak, as one of the indispensable preconditions for the control of infection and its effective prevention.<sup>17</sup>

For the purposes of this mapping, access to the sewerage network was defined as having a regular connection to the public sewage network, which excludes: connections to septic tanks built without appropriate technical documentation and building permits and/or not maintained in accordance with applicable regulations. Irregular access to the sewerage network was defined as having a connection to the sewerage network without the approval of the competent service.

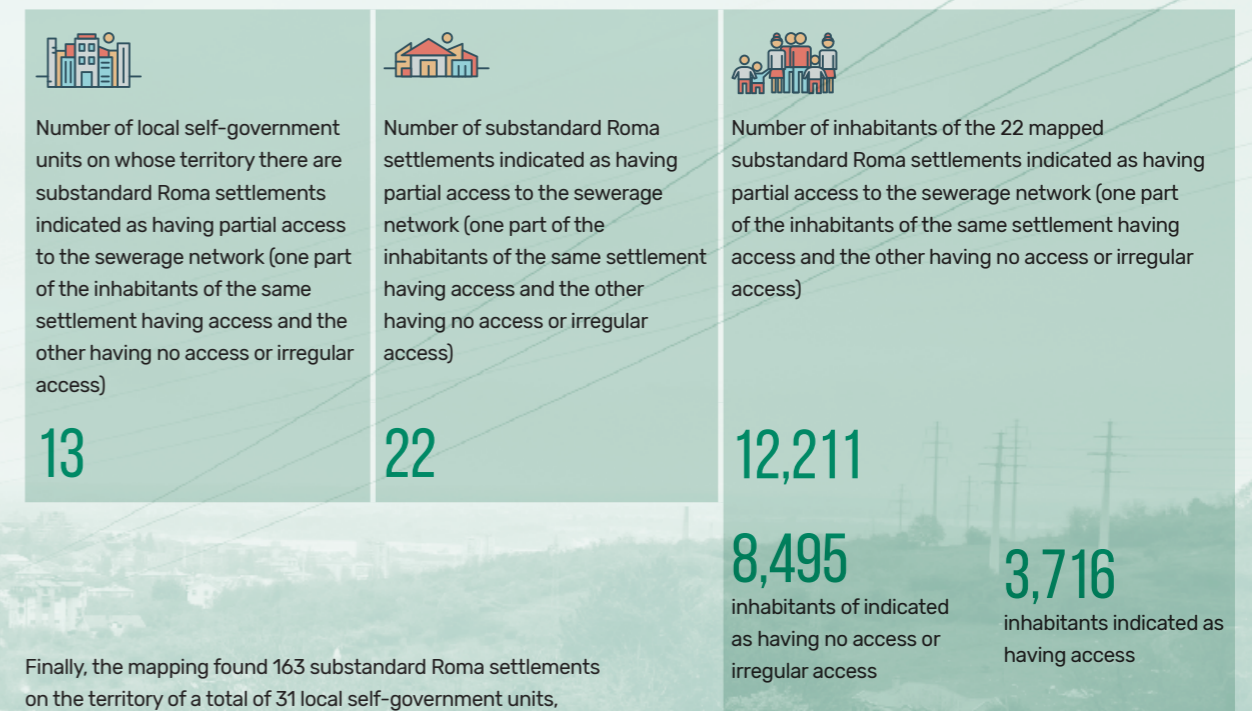


<sup>15</sup> International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (Article 11, paragraph 1); The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, General Comment No. 4: The right to adequate housing states that the right to adequate housing belongs to everyone and that, among other things, it necessarily implies adequate access to sewerage, and General Comment No. 14: The same Committee recognizes the right to the highest possible standard of health as an important element of the right to health and the right to adequate housing and, correspondingly, to safe water, sanitation, other sanitary and hygienic conditions; International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (Article 12).

<sup>16</sup> Concluding Observations of the Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights on the Second Periodic Report of Serbia, para. 31; Report of the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context, Mission to Serbia, para. 42, 82.

<sup>17</sup> Leo Heller, the Special Rapporteur on the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation, available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=25738&LangID=E>; Leilani Farha, UN Special Rapporteur on adequate housing, available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=25727&LangID=E>.

According to the obtained information, **partial access to the sewerage network** - defined as one part of the inhabitants of the same settlement having access and the other having no access or irregular access, was indicated in 22 mapped substandard Roma settlements, inhabited by 12,211 people.



Finally, the mapping found 163 substandard Roma settlements on the territory of a total of 31 local self-government units, where all indicated having either **no access to the sewerage network or irregular access**.



**The outbreak of coronavirus has endangered the right to health and access to appropriate health care of the inhabitants of substandard Roma settlements. This is evidenced most significantly in the suspension of the work of health mediators on the territory of the whole of Serbia during the state of emergency, the unaffordable price of protective equipment as a necessary precondition for access to health institutions, and the scheduling of medical examinations only online or by phone.**

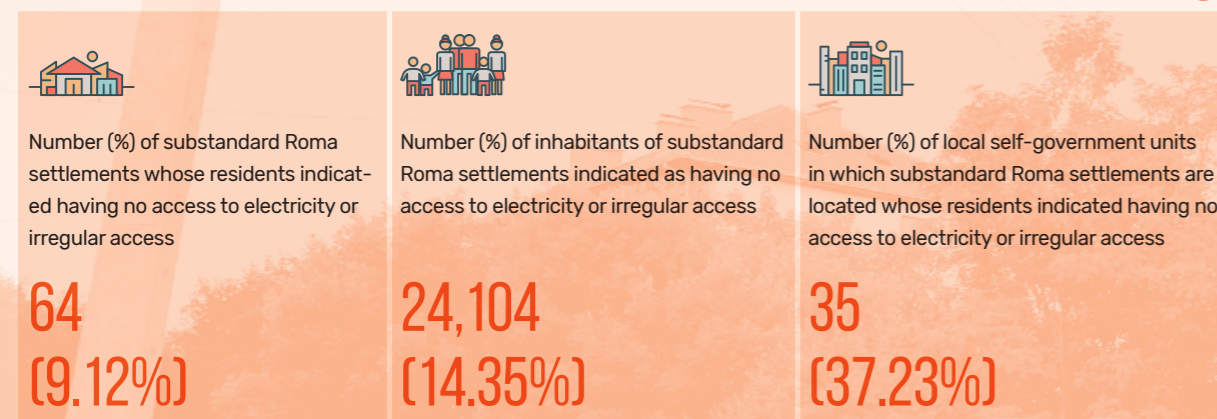


## ACCESS TO ELECTRICITY<sup>18</sup>

A lack of access to electricity has been the subject of concluding remarks and recommendations of numerous relevant United Nations human rights mechanisms, particularly regarding the poorest sections of the Roma community from substandard settlements.<sup>19</sup> Ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all is also a global development commitment under Sustainable Development Goal 7 and its target 7.1.<sup>20</sup> In the most recent period of evaluation in Serbia, numerous cases of irregular access to electricity sources, and their unaffordable prices, have been documented<sup>21</sup>, as have discriminatory practices in electricity distribution<sup>22</sup>.

For the purposes of this mapping, access to electricity was defined as a regular connection to the electricity distribution system, in accordance with applicable regulations. Irregular access to electricity was defined as connection to the electricity distribution system **without approval for the connection of the competent service**.

Based on the obtained data, 14.35% of the mapped population (approximately 24,104 people) living in 64 substandard Roma settlements indicated having no or irregular access to electricity, limited to certain times of day when the electricity network is least congested. This situation was particularly limiting in obtaining timely and adequate information regarding the epidemic and



<sup>18</sup> The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, in Article 14, paragraph 2 (h) guarantees the enjoyment of adequate living conditions, particularly in relation to housing... electricity, etc. International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (Article 11, paragraph 1): The Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, General Comment No. 4: The right to adequate housing states that the right to adequate housing belongs to everyone and that, among other things, it necessarily implies adequate access to electricity for cooking, heating, and lighting, and General Comment No. 14: The same Committee recognizes the right to the highest possible standard of health as an important element of the right to health and the right to adequate housing.

<sup>19</sup> Concluding Observations of the Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights on the Second Periodic Report of Serbia, para. 31; Report of the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context, Mission to Serbia, para. 42, 82, 88, and 95.

<sup>20</sup> Sustainable Development Goals, SDG 7, Target 7.1 - By 2030, ensure universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services, available at: <http://sdg.indikator.rs/sr-latn/area/affordable-and-clean-energy/>

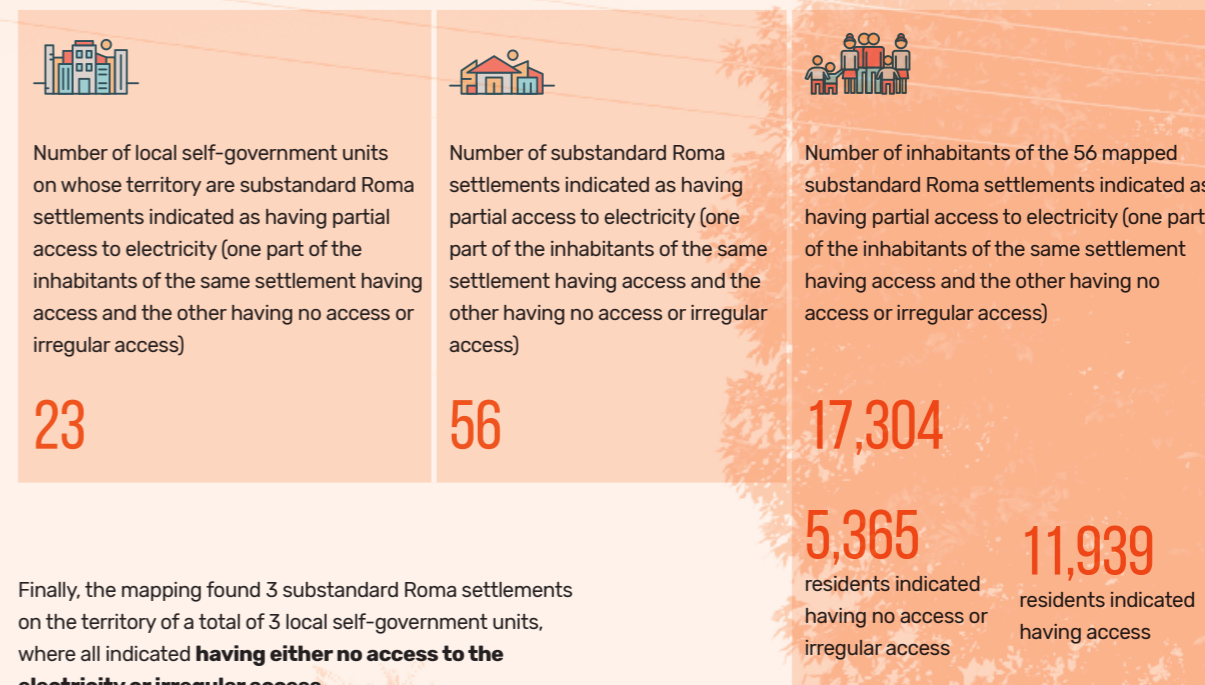
<sup>21</sup> Concluding Observations of the Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights on the Second Periodic Report of Serbia, para. 32.

<sup>22</sup> See the Opinion of the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality made on the complaint of the residents of Crvena Zvezda from Niš, available at: <http://ravnopravnost.gov.rs/rs/prituza-brupe-gradana-protiv-p-d-j-zbog-diskriminacije-po-osnovu-nacionalne-pripadnosti-u-oblasi-pruzanja-usluga/>.

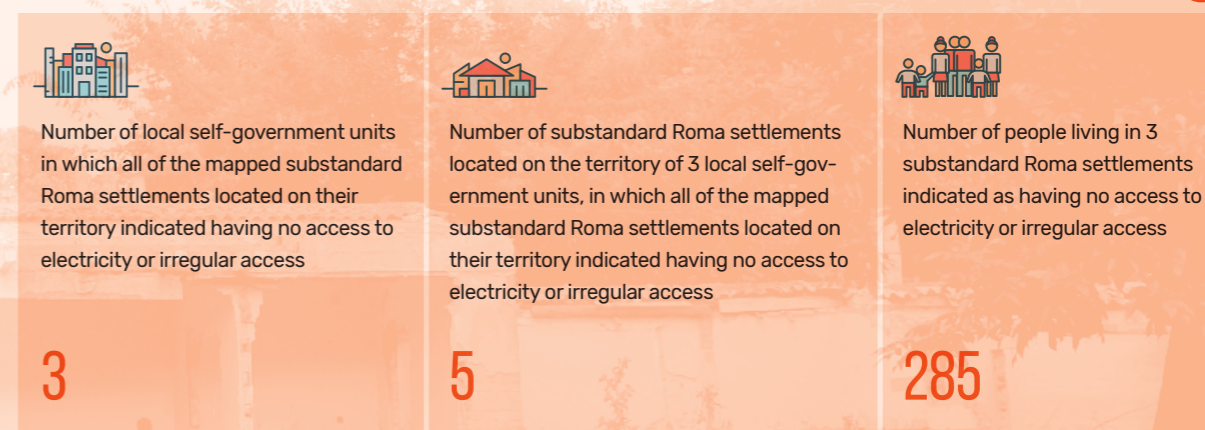
the Government's prescribed measures for preserving public health, as well as, for school-age children, in accessing classes that took place on national television channels. This, in addition to being denied access to quality education, further increases the risk of escalating already high rates of non-attendance and dropout from school for Roma children.<sup>23</sup>

According to the obtained data, **partial access to electricity** - defined as one part of the inhabitants of the same settlement having access and the other having no access or irregular access, was identified in 56 mapped substandard Roma settlements, inhabited by approximately 17,304 people.

<sup>23</sup> UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Concluding observations on the combined second and third periodic reports of Serbia, para. 54-55.



Finally, the mapping found 3 substandard Roma settlements on the territory of a total of 3 local self-government units, where all indicated **having either no access to the electricity or irregular access**.



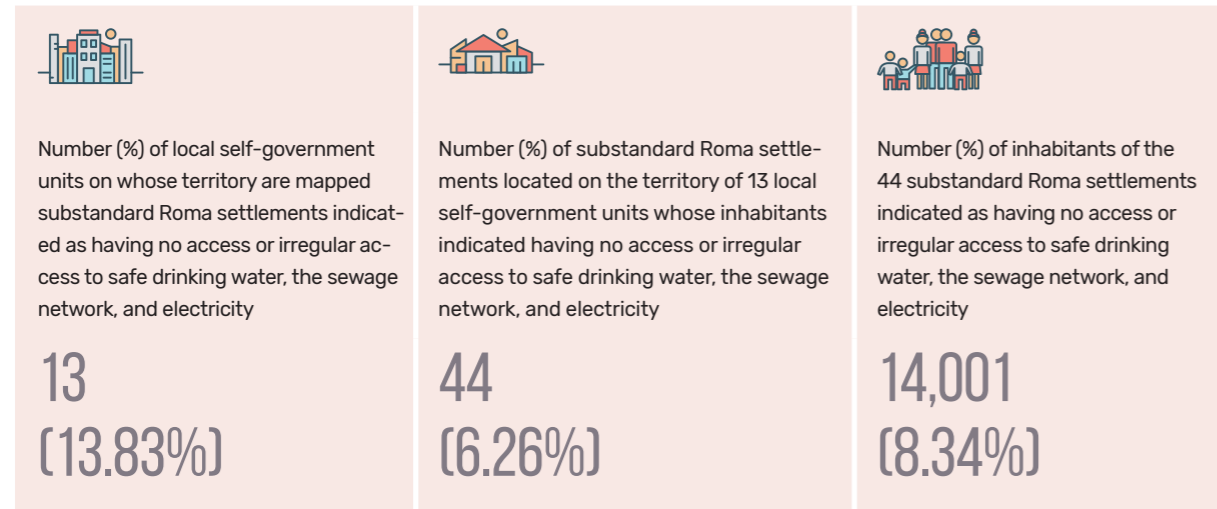
During the state of emergency, educational programs were realized at a distance through RTS television channels and internet learning platforms,<sup>24</sup> while the implementation of online classes was continued from September 1, 2020 in various combined formats.<sup>25</sup> These teaching approaches have excluded Roma children from substandard settlements lacking adequate access to electricity and other technical preconditions for attending online classes (internet, computers, tablets, smartphones), which has directly jeopardized their right to education.

<sup>24</sup> Decision on the suspension of teaching in higher education institutions, secondary and primary schools, and the regular work of preschool education institutions, "Official Gazette of RS," no. 30, March 15, 2020.

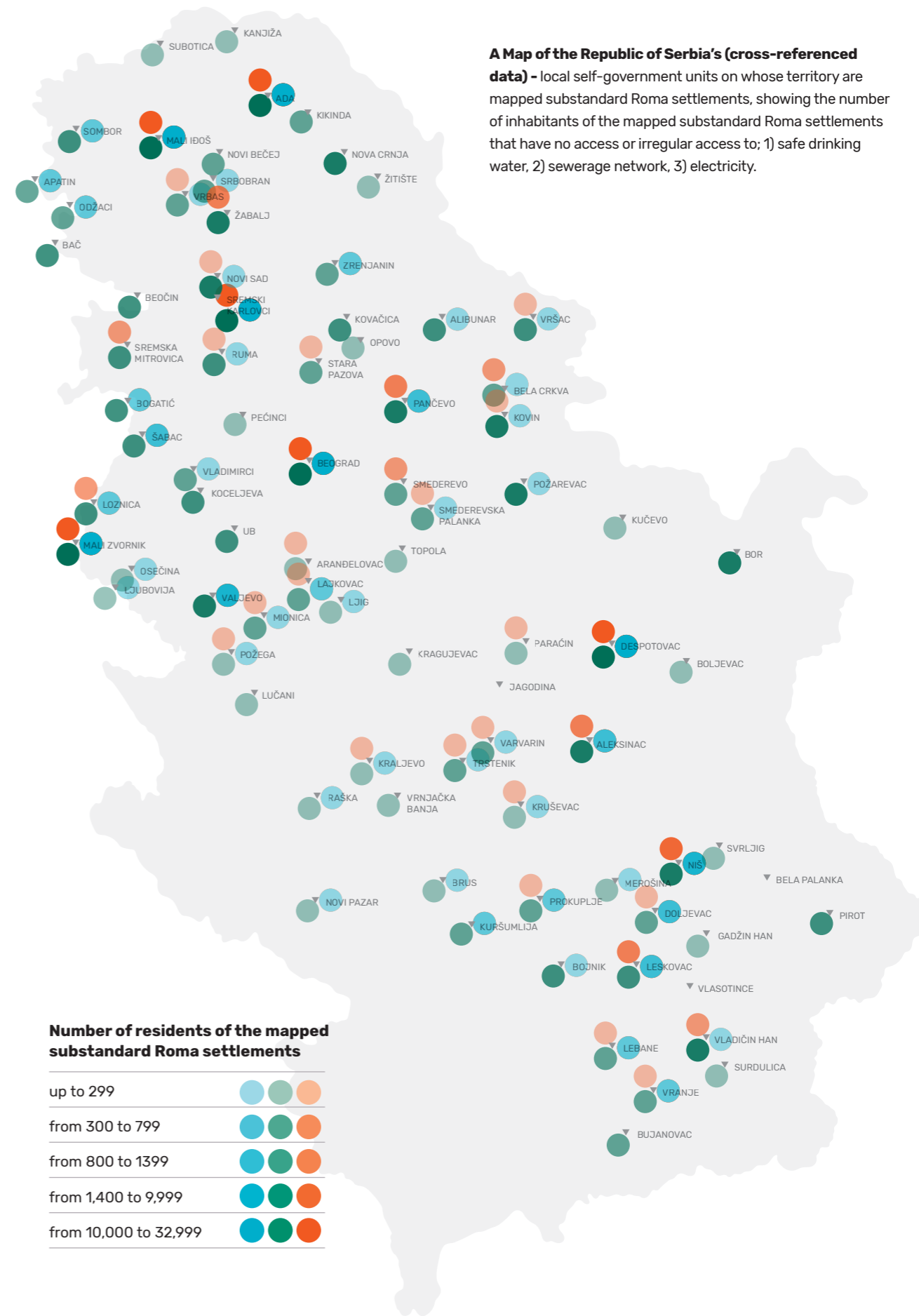
<sup>25</sup> On certain days of the week or every other week, school classes are to be organized, while on other days students are to be educated at a distance using RTS channels and online learning platforms.



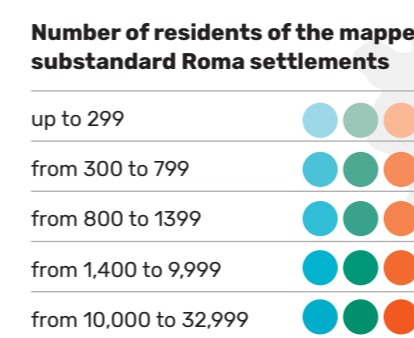
By cross-referencing the obtained data in 13 local self-government units, 44 substandard Roma settlements, inhabited by over 14,000 inhabitants, were identified as **having no access or irregular access to safe drinking water, the sewage network, and electricity.**



Also found on the territory of 3 local self-government units were 5 substandard Roma settlements, inhabited by approximately 285 people, where all indicated having either **no access to or irregular access to clean water, the sewage network, and electricity.**











**A Map of the Republic of Serbia's (cross-referenced data) -** local self-government units on whose territory are mapped substandard Roma settlements, showing the number of inhabitants of the mapped substandard Roma settlements that have no access or irregular access to: 1) safe drinking water, 2) sewerage network, 3) electricity.





Individual unit of local self-government on whose territory are mapped substandard Roma settlements	Number of residents of the mapped substandard Roma settlements who have no access or irregular access to safe drinking water	Number of residents of the mapped substandard Roma settlements who have no access or irregular access to the sewerage network	Number of residents of the mapped substandard Roma settlements who have no access or irregular access to electricity
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Beograd	11,159	32,004	10,361
Leskovac	950	2,850	1,359
Niš	5,150	5,380	4,749
Vranje	302	345	5
Požarevac	100	2,670	0
Bujanovac	0	400	0
Novi Sad	23	3,783	255
Surdulica	0	260	0
Pirot	0	1,170	0
Bor	0	1,491	0
Subotica	0	50	0
Smederevo	0	545	500
Bojnik	18	1,309	0
Prokuplje	380	435	286
Apatin	525	525	0
Žabalj	0	2,740	1,130
Kragujevac	0	75	0
Kovin	42	2,335	42
Kruševac	220	220	20
Pančevo	1,000	2,100	1,250
Šabac	2,083	2,083	0
Valjevo	1,791	1,791	0
Beočin	0	1,260	0
Vršac	153	1,204	153
Aleksinac	1,350	1,604	967
Vladičin Han	200	1,400	360
Vlasotince	110	212	0

			
Nova Crnja	0	1,400	0
Bač	0	1,335	0
Sombor	360	1,200	0
Paraćin	0	227	71
Lebane	338	447	12
Alibunar	9	909	0
Kraljevo	275	201	5
Doljevac	930	421	79
Koceljeva	0	885	0
Loznica	513	1,033	590
Sremska Mitrovica	0	976	662
Bogatić	535	1,010	0
Ruma	145	924	145
Smederevska Palanka	55	365	39
Stara Pazova	0	665	30
Ub	0	868	0
Novi Bečej	0	690	0
Kovačica	0	800	0
Lajkovac	300	468	11
Arandelovac	0	263	9
Srbobran	189	629	0
Kuršumlija	335	335	0
Odžaci	480	480	0
Vrbas	177	507	66
Zrenjanin	453	453	0
Trstenik	250	320	250
Vrnjačka Banja	0	296	0
Pećinci	0	224	0
Bela Crkva	95	385	310
Požega	10	36	10
Mionica	215	353	4



			
Vladimirci	120	357	0
Varvarin	125	315	31
Kanjžica	0	282	0
Boljevac	0	100	0
Kikinda	0	300	0
Merošina	188	268	0
Gadžin Han	0	242	0
Kučevo	0	139	0
Novi Pazar	240	240	0
Svrljig	0	29	0
Raška	63	99	0
Osečina	210	210	0
Ljubovija	25	181	0
Ljig	168	168	0
Ada	160	160	58
Brus	19	19	0
Sremski Karlovci	147	147	147
Despotovac	130	130	130
Lučani	0	67	0
Topola	0	120	0
Žitište	0	58	0
Opovo	0	45	0
Mali Zvornik	20	20	0
Mali Idoš	8	8	8
<b>Ukupno:</b>	<b>32,843</b>	<b>93,050</b>	<b>24,104</b>

## Access to sustainable sources of income / the primary occupations of the residents of the mapped Roma settlements

The human right to decent work<sup>26</sup> so as to provide income sufficient for an adequate standard of living<sup>27</sup> is recognized and guaranteed by numerous international human rights instruments<sup>28</sup> as well as by Sustainable Development Goal 8 its numerous targets aimed at achieving full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, equal pay for work of equal value, and the promotion of a safe and secure work environment for all workers.<sup>29</sup> The problematic lack of access to sustainable sources of income and work in the informal economy of Roma men and women are the subject of concluding remarks and recommendations of numerous UN human rights mechanisms<sup>30</sup>, especially regarding the poorest strata of the Roma community from informal settlements.

The mapping collected data on which activities the inhabitants of the mapped substandard settlements primarily engaged in, including in the context of existent risks and new risks posed by the coronavirus and the impact that measures to control infection had made on this category of the population. It must be emphasized that precise data on how many individuals of mapped substandard Roma settlements were engaged in certain occupations could not be collected from the established institutional mechanisms for the inclusion of Roma men and women at the level of local self-government units, nor from representatives of civil society organizations (Roma and non-Roma) at the local level, nor from relevant activists due to the lack of such records.

26 Decent work is defined as work that is productive and delivers a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for families, better prospects for personal development and social integration, freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives, and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men, International Labour Organization, available at: <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/decent-work/lang--en/index.htm>

27 The provisions of Article 11.1 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights recognize the right of every person to a standard of living adequate for his/himself and his/her family, including adequate food, clothing, and accommodation, as well as the continuous improvement of his/her living conditions.

28 International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, Articles 6 and 7; International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, Article 5(e)(i); Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, Article 11; UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, Article 32;

29 Sustainable Development Goals, SDG 8, available at: <http://sdg.indikatori.rs/sr-latn/area/decent-work-and-economic-growth/>

30 Concluding Observations of the Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights on the Second Periodic Report of Serbia, Para. 11-13, 17, 22, 24, 28; UN Human Rights Committee (HRC), Concluding observations on the third periodic report of Serbia, Para. 15; Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, Concluding observations on the fourth periodic report of Serbia, Para. 35, 36, 39-44; Report of the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context, Mission to Serbia, Para. 8

Based on the data obtained, the population of the mapped substandard Roma settlements was engaged in various activities, primarily in the informal economy. In almost 81% of the mapped settlements, the largest percentage of the population was engaged in seasonal labor as their primary occupation. The collection of secondary raw materials was listed as one of the predominant forms of labor in over 350 settlements, with approximately 90 settlements listing this as the primary form. The inhabitants of about 255 settlements were engaged in trade and market sales as their primary activities, the inhabitants of about 66 settlements were engaged in music, and residents in about 25 settlements were engaged in providing craft services. As nearly all these activities are largely carried out in the informal economy, it leaves the workers and their families without access to sustainable sources of income or to pension and disability insurance. In 11.4% of settlements, the primary activity was indicated as work in public companies, mostly utilities.

With the imposition of measures for protection against the coronavirus, all those whose activities were disabled (either partially or completely) by restrictions on movement and by the implementation of measures aimed at protecting public health (affecting trade, market sales, seasonal and craft jobs, music, etc.), including those whose activities were assessed as high risk upon the onset of the coronavirus due to daily contact with potentially contaminated raw materials (collection of secondary raw materials), were left largely without a source of income.

Thus, the onset of the epidemic, in addition to intensifying existing risks, also contributed to the emergence of completely new risks associated with infection and the implementation of measures to combat it, leaving a high percentage of residents of substandard Roma settlements without basic sources of income, further increasing their vulnerability and risk of poverty. Their risk of infection was also escalated by the unaffordable price of protective equipment and disinfectants, especially for the poorest layers of the Roma population.



The coronavirus epidemic has had a particularly devastating impact on the ability of the inhabitants of substandard Roma settlements employed in the informal economy to provide an adequate standard of living and sustainable income.

The results of the survey *COVID-19 and Work in the Informal Economy*<sup>31</sup> conducted by Ipsos Strategic Marketing at the request of the UN Human Rights Team (with the support of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights) show that **86% of respondents found themselves in a much more difficult financial situation than prior to the coronavirus epidemic. 80% had to suspend all their activities during the state of emergency or performed them only sporadically, with 46% of respondents stating this as the reason for not being able to meet their basic living needs to any degree. Consequently, 68% of the surveyed collectors of secondary raw materials had resorted to borrowing money, while 24% had relied on aid received from local self-government units, non-governmental organizations, and various donors. Regarding the use of protective equipment during the epidemic, 23% of respondents indicated not having used any protective equipment when collecting secondary raw materials, while 58% responded that they had managed to protect themselves independently, in different ways. Finally, 62% of respondents believed that the risks to their health and of infection were significantly higher than the rest of the population.**



### Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and the principle of Leave No One Behind

The Roma national minority has been recognized as one of the most vulnerable and marginalized social groups in Serbia, not only in the findings of UN human rights mechanisms but also in reports on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Thus, in the report of the MAPS Mission to Serbia *National Development and 2030 Agenda: Policy Support for Advancing SDG Progress in Serbia, as well as in The Voluntary National Review of the Republic of Serbia on the Implementation of the 2020 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, it is stated that Roma are a category of the Serbian population which faces limited access to opportunities in virtually all areas, such as fundamental rights, health, education, housing, employment, and living standards.

In this regard, we must not lose sight of the negative impact of all these risks, which have been further exacerbated by the pandemic, on the realization of the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, a landmark global consensus reached in 2015 by countries with the goal of creating a better, more prosperous, safer, and more stable world in which no one will be left out. The current situation and the multiplication of risks to which Roma men and women from substandard settlements are exposed due to the outbreak of coronavirus have a particularly negative impact on the realization of those sustainable development goals aimed at ending poverty (SDG 1), providing access to food (SDG 2), ensuring healthy lives and well-being (SDG 3), ensuring access to inclusive and equitable quality education for all (SDG 4), achieving gender equality and empowerment for all women and girls (SDG 5), ensuring availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all (SDG 6), providing universal access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all (SDG 7), promoting sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and

productive employment, and decent work for all (SDG 8), reducing inequality (SDG 10), making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable, ensuring access to adequate, safe, and affordable housing and basic services, as well as the improvement of irregular settlements (SDG 11), and promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, providing access to justice for all and building effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels (SDG 16).

For monitoring the achievement of the national realization of the 2030 Agenda and the achievement of its 17 goals of sustainable development, it is essential to define priorities at the national level, as well as to develop indicators for their monitoring at the national and local levels. Although some progress has been made in the past few years, such as the constitution of the institutional mechanism of the Government of the Republic of Serbia coordinated by the Interdepartmental Working Group with representatives of all line ministries, the organizing of the MAPS mission, the submitting of a voluntary national report and being involved in monitoring the implementation of the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, thus far these priorities have not yet been defined, nor have national indicators for their monitoring, and no progress has been made in starting the process of drafting the National Strategy for Sustainable Development and its financing.

Finally, for monitoring progress in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the work of the National Mechanisms for Reporting and Monitoring (NMRF) of the Implementation of the Recommendations of the United Nations Mechanism is of great importance. Given that the 2030 Agenda is based on human rights, the successful engagement and empowerment of vulnerable groups, including the Roma, has the potential to make a significant contribution to the successful realization of all its goals and targets. Regarding fundamental approaches to human rights issues, the Government of Serbia has ratified eight of the nine key international human rights instruments and is implementing good practice in its reporting and monitoring through competent bodies according to the terms of the relevant instruments and within the Universal Periodic Review. The NMRF in Serbia is one of the most effective in the region and represents an example of successful cooperation with both civil society and the United Nations.

## ANNEX

### International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights - Concluding Observations on the Second Periodic Report of Serbia (2014)

- The Committee encourages the State party to intensify its efforts to promote equality and combat discrimination against members of ethnic minorities... including Roma, and other marginalized groups regarding to access to employment, social security, housing, health, and education. (Para. 11, a), *in connection with Sustainable Development Goals: 10.3* - ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including through eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and actions in this regard, and **16.b** - promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development.
- The Committee is concerned about the prevailing discrimination against Roma as evidenced, inter alia, by disproportionately high unemployment, limited access to social security, accommodation in informal settlements, and inadequate health care and education. The Committee therefore regrets the shortcomings in the implementation of the Strategy for Improvement of the Status of Roma 2012–2014, as conceded by the State party, and the insufficient implementation of the nationally agreed priorities regarding Roma at the local level (Article 2). The Committee urges the State party to take further measures in order to overcome the prevailing discrimination against Roma in the enjoyment of economic, social, and cultural rights, including the revision of the Strategy for Improvement of the Status of Roma, by better reflecting the specific situation of Roma and ensuring that the nationally agreed priorities on Roma are duly communicated to the local authorities to be effectively implemented (Para. 12), *in connection with Sustainable Development Goals: 10.3* - ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including through eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and actions in this regard, and **16.b** - promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development.

31 Survey of the work of employees in the informal economy with special reference to the work of collectors of secondary raw materials, conducted in June-July, 2020.



- While noting the National Employment Strategy and its Action Plan, the Committee remains concerned about the high unemployment rate in the State party, which disproportionately affects women, persons with disabilities, Roma, internally displaced persons and people living in rural areas. The Committee urges the State party to intensify its efforts to reduce the unemployment rate through effective measures of active employment policy, including requalification, local employment initiatives, placement incentives, and tax benefits for employers, in order to promote the employment of persons from marginalized groups, in particular in rural areas (Para. 17), *in connection with the Sustainable Development Goal: 8.5* - achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men... and equal pay for work of equal value.
- The Committee recommends that the State party accelerate measures for ensuring that Roma have access to adequate and affordable housing with, inter alia, legal security of tenure, safe drinking water, adequate sanitation and electricity, including by improving the conditions of existing settlements or by constructing social housing units (Para. 31), *in connection with Sustainable Development Goals: 6.1* - achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all, **6.2** - achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all, and **11.1** - ensure access for all to adequate, safe, and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums.
- The Committee recommends that the State party undertake additional measures to implement water supply projects to ensure equal access to safe drinking water in all parts of the country. In that regard, the Committee invites the State party to take into account its general comment No. 15 (2002) on the right to water (Para. 32), *in connection with Sustainable Development Goals: 6.1* - achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all, and **6.2** - achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all.

#### UN Human Rights Committee (HRC), Concluding observations on the third periodic report of Serbia (2017)

- The State party should increase its efforts to: (a) promote non-discriminatory access to opportunities and services in all fields for members of the Roma community (Para. 15) *in connection with Sustainable Development Goals: 10.3* - ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including through eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and actions in this regard, and **16.b** - promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development.

#### International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, Concluding observations on the combined second to fifth periodic reports of Serbia (2018)

- Recalling its general recommendation No. 19 (1995) on article 3 of Convention No. 27 (2000) on discrimination against the Roma and in the light of its previous recommendation (CERD/C/SRB/CO/1, para. 14), the Committee urges the State party to eliminate de facto residential segregation and to vigorously pursue efforts to develop social housing programs for the Roma. The Committee also urges the State party to: (a) ensure that, where resettlement from informal settlements is necessary as a last resort, residents are consulted in advance and are provided with sufficient notice and adequate and appropriate alternative housing; (b) allocate and disburse sufficient funds to provide durable housing solutions for Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptians, so as to contribute to their enjoyment of their right to an adequate standard of living; and (c) provide information in its next periodic report on measures taken to achieve these actions and their results (Para. 23), *in connection with Sustainable Development Goals: 10.3* - ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including through eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and actions in this regard, **11.1** - ensure access for all to adequate, safe, and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums, and **16.b** - promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development.

#### Report of the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context on her mission to Serbia and Kosovo (2015)

- There are reportedly 583 informal settlements across Serbia, of varying sizes. Many of the Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptians living in settlements are originally from Serbia; others are internally displaced persons from Kosovo or the former Yugoslavia. Living conditions in settlements are often inadequate, with virtually no utilities or infrastructure such as electricity, piped drinking water, sewage, or regular garbage collection. In some cases, other essential services such as ambulances or public transport are not available. Many are isolated from employment, schools and medical centers. Some settlements that the Special Rapporteur visited were overrun with rodents; in others, children had nowhere to play except on garbage heaps, on broken glass, in complete squalor. These conditions are in violation of the right to adequate housing (Para.42), *in connection with Sustainable Development Goals: 3.8* - achieve universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health-care services and access to safe, effective, quality, and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all, **4.2** - ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care, and pre-primary education, so that they are ready for primary education, **6.1** - achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all, **6.2** - achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all, **7.1** - ensure universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services, **8.5** - achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men... and equal pay for work of equal value, **10.3** - ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including through eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and actions in this regard, **11.1** - ensure access for all to adequate, safe, and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums, and **16.b** - promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development.
- The disproportionate number of evictions of Roma and the authorities' failure to provide basic services or to guarantee legal security of tenure for residents in settlements reflect a stigmatization of and discrimination against Roma (Para. 44), *in connection with Sustainable Development Goals: 10.3* - ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including through eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate

legislation, policies and actions in this regard, **11.1** - ensure access for all to adequate, safe, and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums, and **16.b** - promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development.

- The deplorable situation of those living in informal settlements, without access to such essential services as electricity and water, contradicts the spirit and content of international human rights standards. This situation should be rectified without delay (Para. 95), *in connection with Sustainable Development Goals: 6.1* - achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all, **6.2** - achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all, **7.1** - ensure universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services, and **11.1** - ensure access for all to adequate, safe, and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums.

#### Convention on the Rights of the Child, Committee on the Rights of the Child, Concluding observations on the combined second and third periodic reports of Serbia (2017)

- The Committee urges the State party to Ensure that children living in rural areas have access to quality education and adequate health care and housing (Para 23, b), *in connection with Sustainable Development Goals: 3.8* - achieve universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health-care services and access to safe, effective, quality, and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all, **4.2** - ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care, and pre-primary education, so that they are ready for primary education, and **11.1** - ensure access for all to adequate, safe, and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums.
- While noting as positive efforts undertaken by the State party to address poverty and social exclusion, including through the Law on social welfare, the Committee remains deeply concerned that: (a) children in marginalized and remote and rural communities continue to be disproportionately affected by poverty, while Roma families, families with four or more children and families with children with disabilities are at higher risk of experiencing multidimensional poverty; (b) inadequate housing continues to be a problem, particularly for Roma families who are often subjected to forced evictions, which leaves children without access to basic services, including safe drinking water and sanitation, therefore rendering them vulnerable to serious health problems



(Para. 51, a, b), *in connection with Sustainable Development Goals: 1.3* - implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable, **6.1** - achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all, **6.2** - achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all, and **11.1** - ensure access for all to adequate, safe, and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums.

- The Committee draws the State party's attention to target 1.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals on implementing nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, and recommends that the State party strengthen the support provided to children living below the poverty line, in particular single-parent families, families with four or more children and families with children with disabilities, and ensure that social protection measures cover the real costs of decent living for the children, including expenses relevant to their rights to health, a nutritious diet, education, adequate housing, and water and sanitation (Para. 52), *in connection with Sustainable Development Goals: 1.3* - implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable, 2.1 end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round, 3.8 - achieve universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health-care services and access to safe, effective, quality, and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all, 4.2 - ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care, and pre-primary education, so that they are ready for primary education, **6.1** - achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all, **6.2** - achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all, and **11.1** - ensure access for all to adequate, safe, and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums.

**Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, Concluding observations on the fourth periodic report of Serbia (2019)**

- The Committee calls on the State party to make improvement in its education sector in line with the Committee's general recommendation No. 36 and recommends that the State party strengthen mechanisms for keeping Roma girls in the education system; continuously monitor the implementation of the Strategy for Social Inclusion of Roma (2016-2025) and assess its impact on the inclusion of Roma women in education; while pursuing its policy on inclusive education, enhance its efforts to promote and ensure inclusive school and pre-school education in regular classes for Roma children, especially girls, and girls with disabilities, while putting in place reasonable accommodation of school infrastructure and places for sport and leisure for the latter; accelerate the adoption and implementation of the National framework for monitoring inclusive education and the education quality indicators (Para. 34, d, e), *in connection with Sustainable Development Goals: 4.2* - ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care, and pre-primary education, so that they are ready for primary education, and 5.1 - end all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere.
- The Committee recommends that the State party conduct a study to assess the participation of women in the informal sector of the economy, their access to social security coverage and retirement schemes; based on the results of the study, review the implementation and analyze the impact of the current employment legislation and policy from the gender perspective, with a view to ensuring social protection of all women, including those employed in the informal sector of the economy (Para. 40,a), *in connection with Sustainable Development Goals: 5.1*- end all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere, 5.c- Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels, 8.5- achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men... and equal pay for work of equal value, and **10.2**- empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.

- The Committee recommends that the State party adopt measures, including temporary special measures, to ensure that rural women, including women employed in the informal sectors of the economy, have access to education, healthcare, housing, formal employment, social security and retirement schemes, life-long training opportunities, ownership and use of land on an equal basis with men, and that their specific needs are met (Para. 42, a), *in connection with Sustainable Development Goals: 3.8* - achieve universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health-care services and access to safe, effective, quality, and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all, 4.3 - ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university. 5.1 - end all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere, 5.a - Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws, 8.5 - achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men... and equal pay for work of equal value, **10.2** - empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status, and **11.1** - ensure access for all to adequate, safe, and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums.

**Recommendations from UN Member States in the Third Cycle of the Universal Periodic Review (2018)**

**6.72. Mozambik:** improve the situation of human rights of Roma minority, *in connection with Sustainable Development Goals: 10.2* - empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status, and 16.3 - Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all.

**6.73. Nemačka:** ensure the effective integration of Roma people into the Serbian society, in connection with the Sustainable Development Goal: **10.2** - empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.

**7.103. Albanija:** Take further measures to overcome the prevailing discrimination against Roma in the enjoyment of economic, social, and cultural rights, *in connection with Sustainable Development Goals: 10.3* - Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard, and **16.b** - Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development.

**7.84. Grčka:** Step up efforts in the goal of improving housing conditions for those most in need, in connection with the Sustainable Development Goal: **11.1** - ensure access for all to adequate, safe, and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums.



