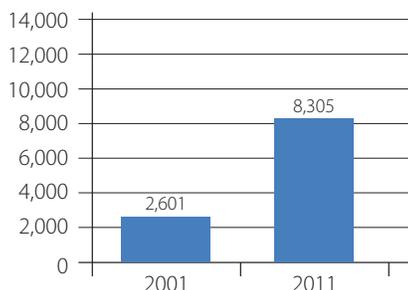


Roma Census Success

Roma census registration campaigns carried out by the Open Society Roma Initiatives Office and Roma communities are helping end the invisibility of Roma populations in parts of Central and Eastern Europe:

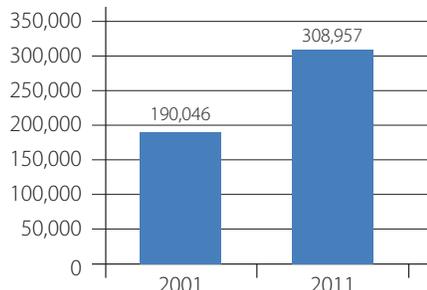
MONTENEGRO:



= 220%

increase in registered
Roma population

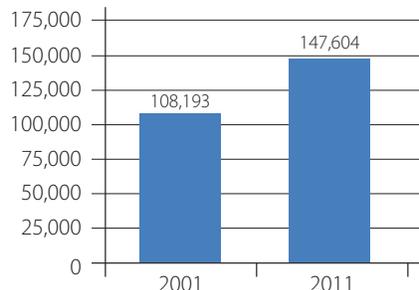
HUNGARY:



= 63%

increase in registered
Roma population

SERBIA:



= 37%

increase in registered
Roma population

WHY THE CENSUS MATTERS

No country in Europe has an accurate number for Roma citizens in their official census. Many Roma do not officially register their identity due to fear of discrimination, long-standing assimilation pressures, and lack of information on the benefits of registration.

The official invisibility of Roma people negatively affects public funding that could help Roma communities with healthcare, education, employment, and housing. This invisibility also undermines the potential for Roma political participation and Roma-led social change.

By working to increase their registration in national censuses, Roma are building confidence in their identity, helping develop more accurate official statistics that policymakers must take into account, and prevailing over fear and intimidation that once left them uncounted and marginalized. Roma registration campaigns have also disproved assertions by some observers that registration drives would result in fewer respondents identifying themselves as Roma.

IMPACT IN MONTENEGRO

The 220 percent increase in registered Roma in the Montenegrin census gives Roma communities new opportunities to participate in the budget process that directly relates to the official number of Roma. The increase also gives Roma more leverage in advocating for a more equitable distribution of public funding, and increased representation in Montenegro's administrative and political institutions.

IMPACT IN HUNGARY

In Hungary, the mobilization campaign We Belong Here engaged over 2,000 volunteers to reach out to more than 400,000 Roma, resulting in a 63 percent increase in the number of Roma registered in 2011 compared to 2001. This success is even more pointed against a backdrop of rising xenophobia in Hungary. Increased Roma representation in the Hungarian census will enhance Roma influence on public policy and on national and EU budgeting for public services. It will also help Roma establish local minority self-governments.

IMPACT IN SERBIA

The official number of Roma registered in the 2011 Serbian census increased by 37 percent, which represents the highest increase of all ethnic groups within the country. The Open Society Roma Initiatives Office built a network of 1,200 young Roma volunteers who visited more than 33,000 households and spoke with more than 120,000 Roma people. Increased Roma representation in the Serbian census will increase the rights of Roma to access jobs in public administration and public enterprises.

CENSUS REGISTRATION IN OTHER COUNTRIES

The Roma Initiatives Office also supported census campaigns for Roma in Albania and Romania, where the results have not yet been made publicly available, and in Macedonia, where the census was stopped.