

# The prospect and health of Roma women – challenging path

Implemented by RHP-Budapest  
and NCR-Macedonia



NATIONAL ROMA CENTRUM



## Research Goals

The goal of the research is to determine the current situation and priority problems of access to healthcare system for Roma women in Macedonia.

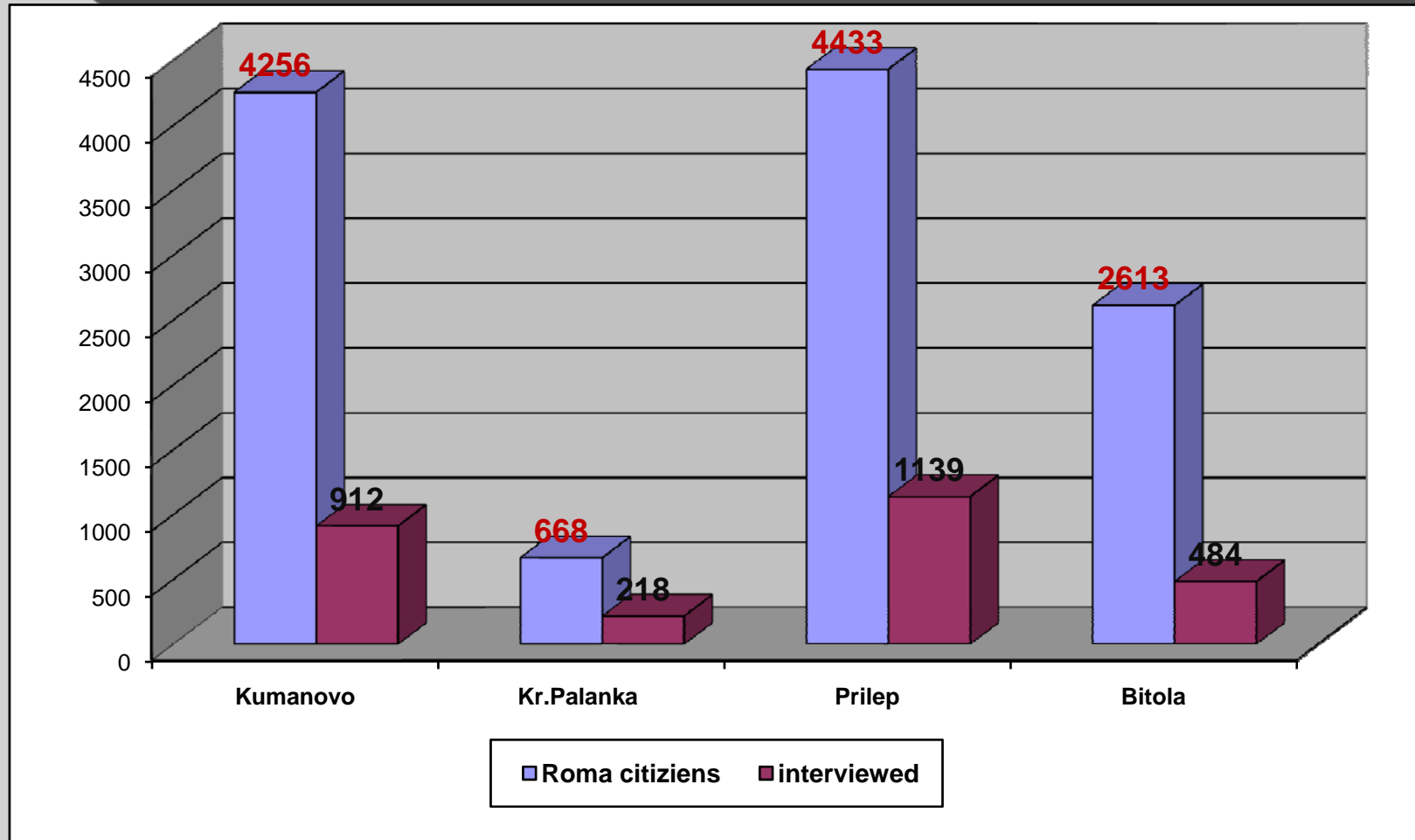


Towns where the research has taken place: Kumanovo, Kriva Palanka, Prilep and Bitola.

## Research Goals:

- To determine the scope of basic healthcare services and problems that Roma women face from health aspect, the influence of economic and social factors and their importance for access to healthcare services, through monitoring, with the aim to identify so called 'grey areas' in enabling quality and effective healthcare protection system.
- Lack of information based on ethnic background as an obstacle for the state to identify the real problems of Roma women living in Macedonia. Therefore, there is accumulation of serious problems in creating effective policies for improving the current health situation of Roma women.

## Number of respondents (by town)

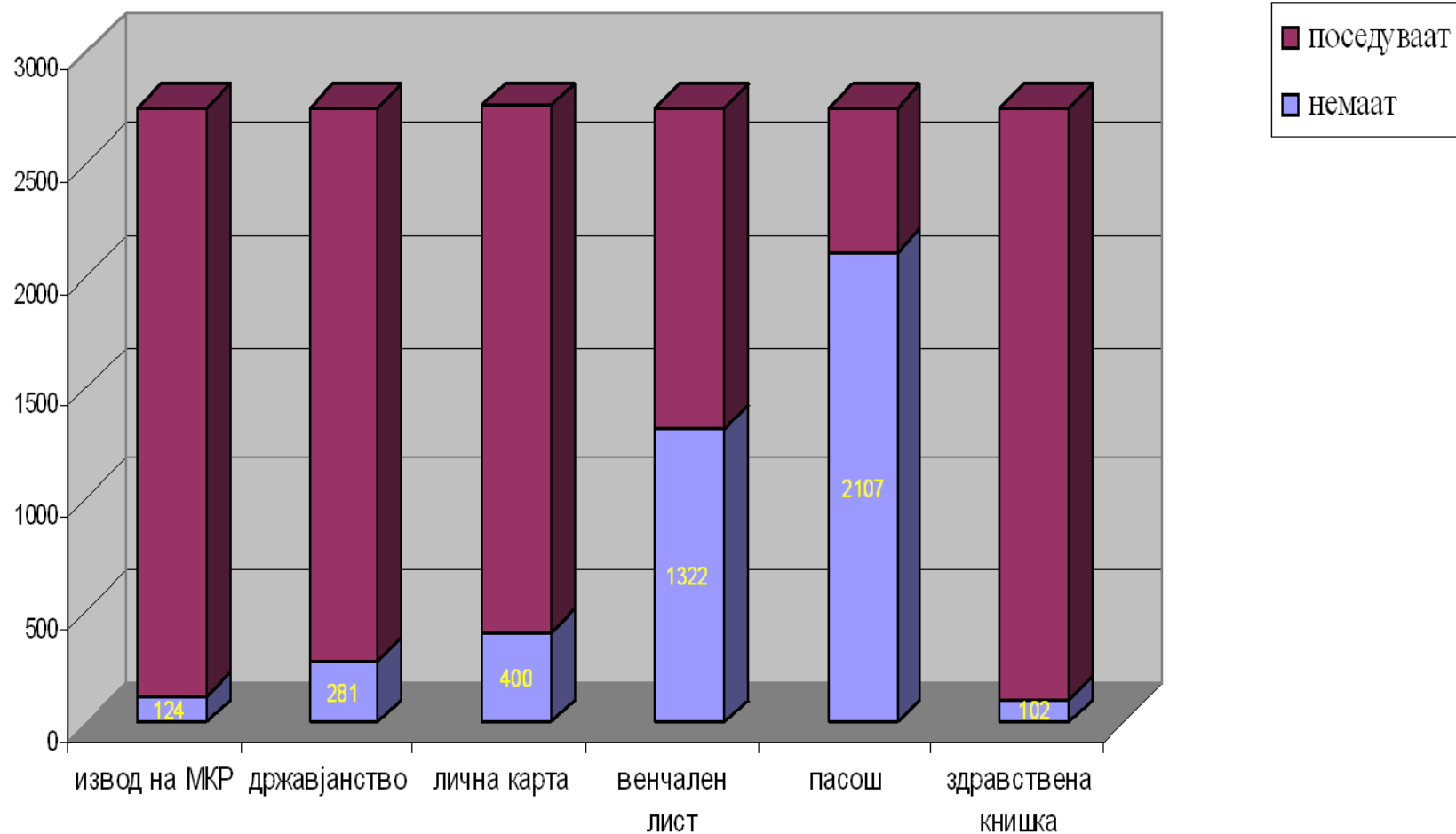


➤ Total number of interviewed women is 2756; interviewed are of age 15-70.

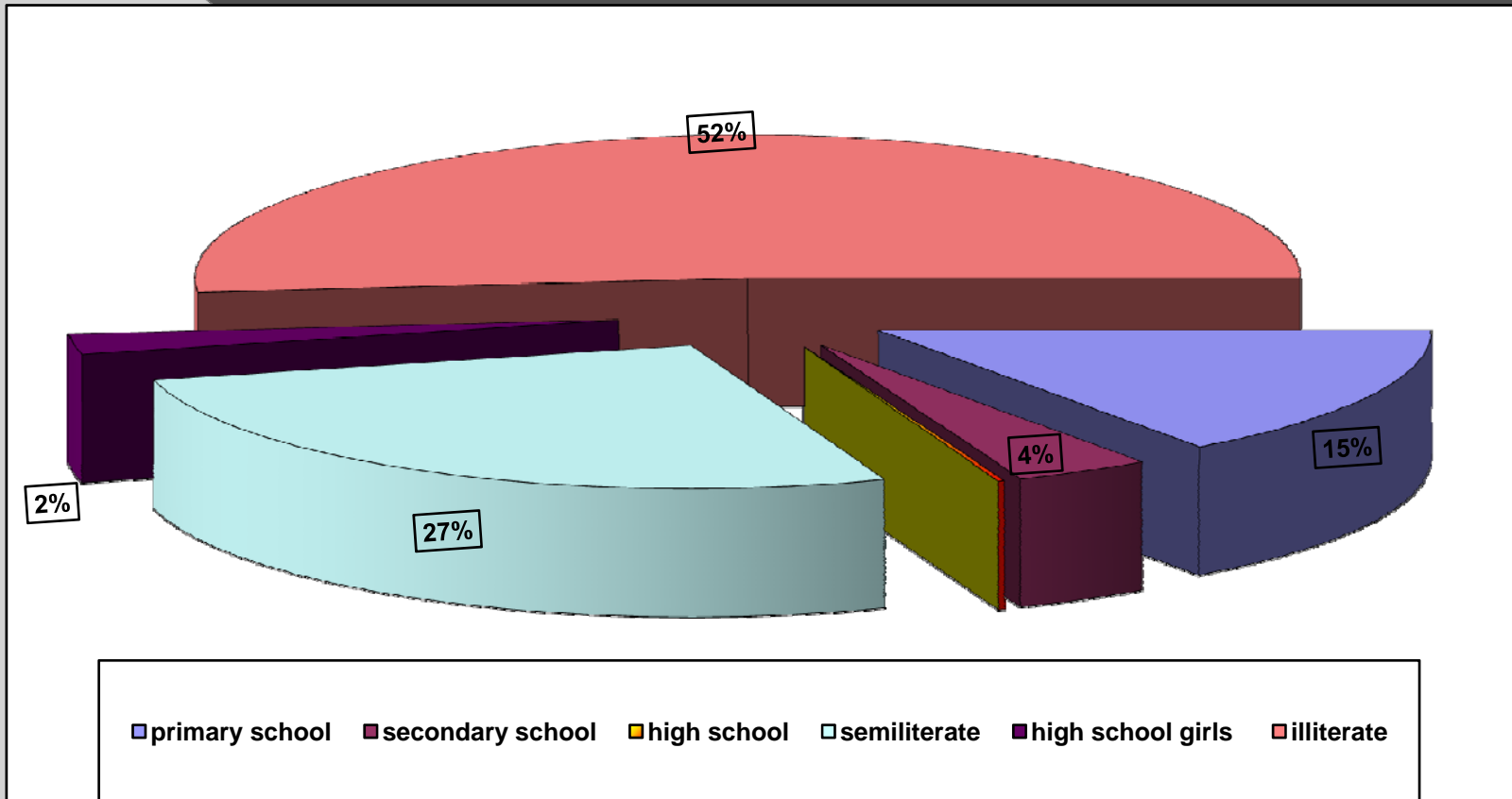
Within the frameworks of the research, data has been gathered based on the civil status and possession of personal documents with the respondents.

- **48%** of the respondents do not have marriage certificate. This problem is due to the fact that large number of Roma women live out of wedlock;
- **11%** do not have citizenship;
- **14,5%** do not have personal identification cards, problem that leads to lack of registration of their children in the book of births. The spiral of social exclusion with those persons continues to the next generations, a fact that represents great handicap.

## Situation of possession of personal documents in all 4 towns



## Level of education within the target group



**Out of the overall number of respondents, 1,779 women receive social benefits and none of them is employed.**



During the interview there was a question about the level of information that Roma women have for vaccination and the importance of vaccination as well as education of the community. Out of total 2.226 women with children, 86,4% said that they regularly take their children for vaccination, 80,4% know that vaccination is mandatory and there are penalties if it is ignored. 83,3% of the respondents answered positively to the risks of lack of vaccination and 14,5% have received notifications for vaccination.

**Vaccination in school**

<b>Positive answers</b>	<b>Kumanovo</b>	<b>Kr. Palanka</b>	<b>Prilep</b>	<b>Bitola</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Regularly go to school</b>	365	123	338	193	1019
<b>Children vaccinated even though they do not go to school</b>	24	42	50	24	140
<b>Children vaccinated 'hypothetically'</b>	389	165	388	217	1159

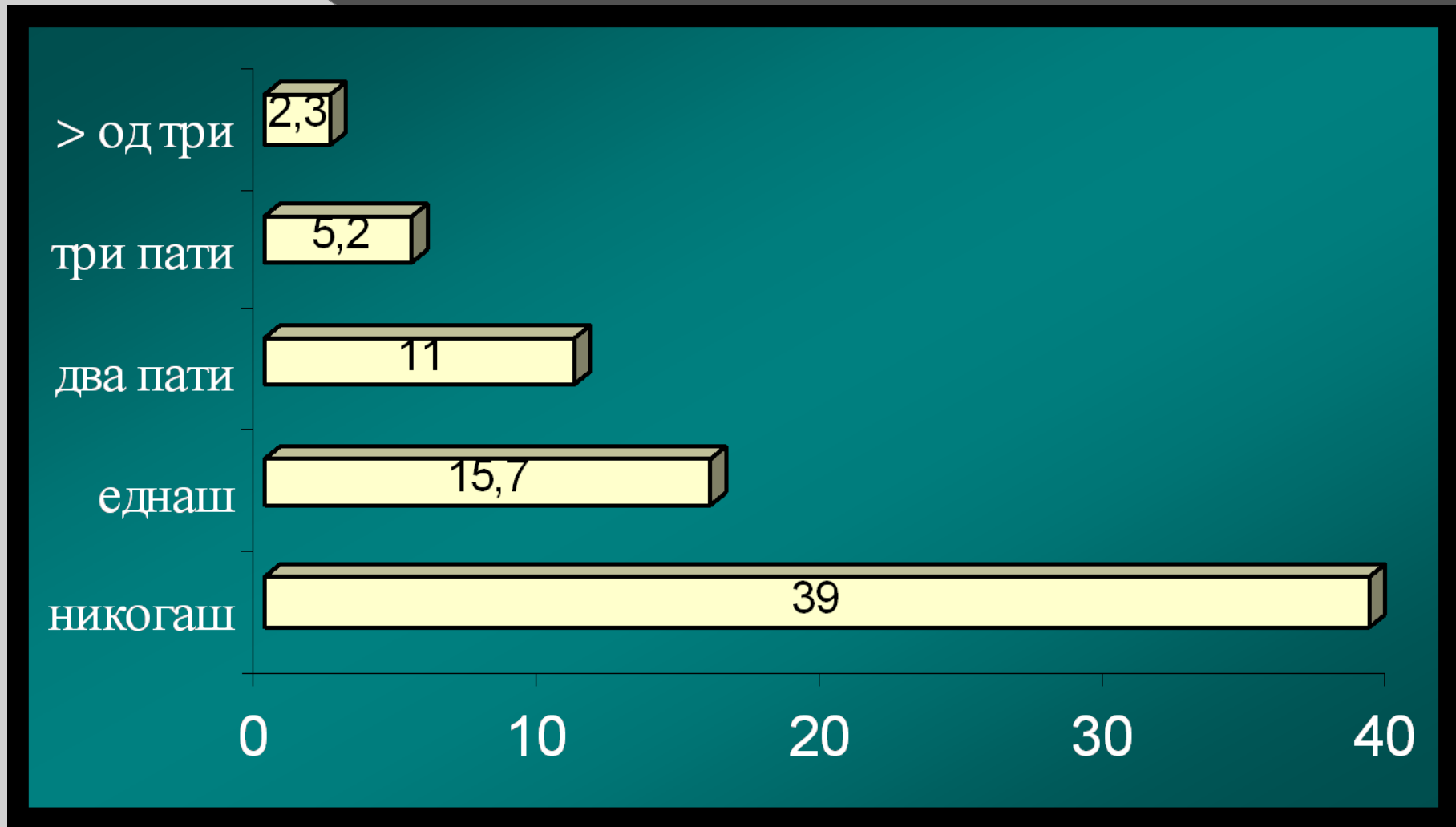
➤ 2.584 of interviewed Roma women live in solid-built houses, of which 244 live in one room (area of max 16sqm), 319 live in two rooms (area of 40 sqm). 20,9% of interviewed Roma women live in minimal area. The analysis per town shows that 24,8% of interviewed in Prilep and 20% in Kumanovo live in minimal area.

➤ Out of total 2.756 women and girls, 2.619 responded that their home has running water and 1.995 have sewerage connected to their homes. 226 responded that they get water from other sources (neighbors, friends, etc).

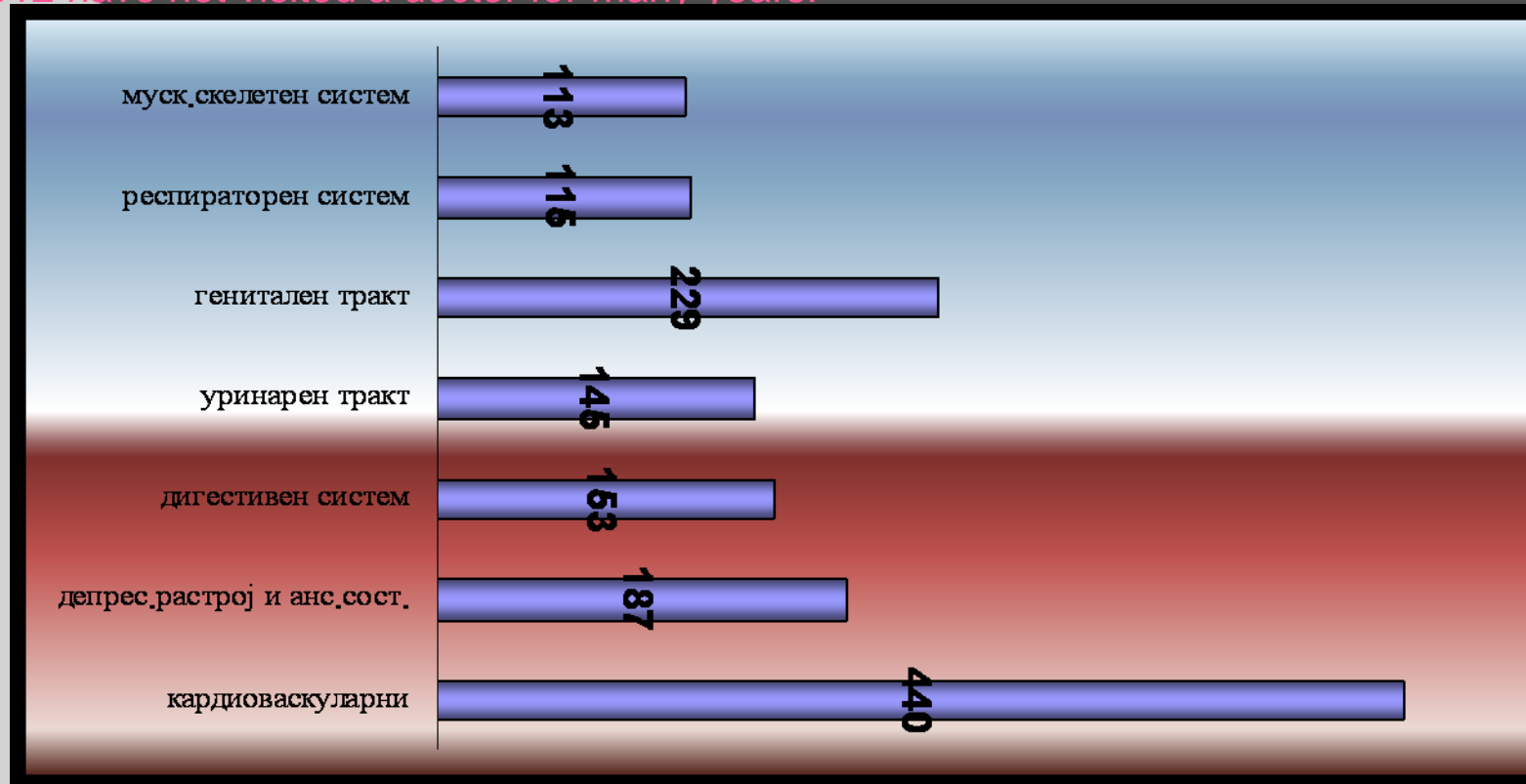
➤ 95 Roma households have well out of which 53 are being controlled.

➤ 63,8% have information about the water that they drink.

The diarrhea as a symptom of infectious diseases has been manifested often in the Roma population. According to the interviewed women 943 have had symptoms of diarrhea or vomiting.



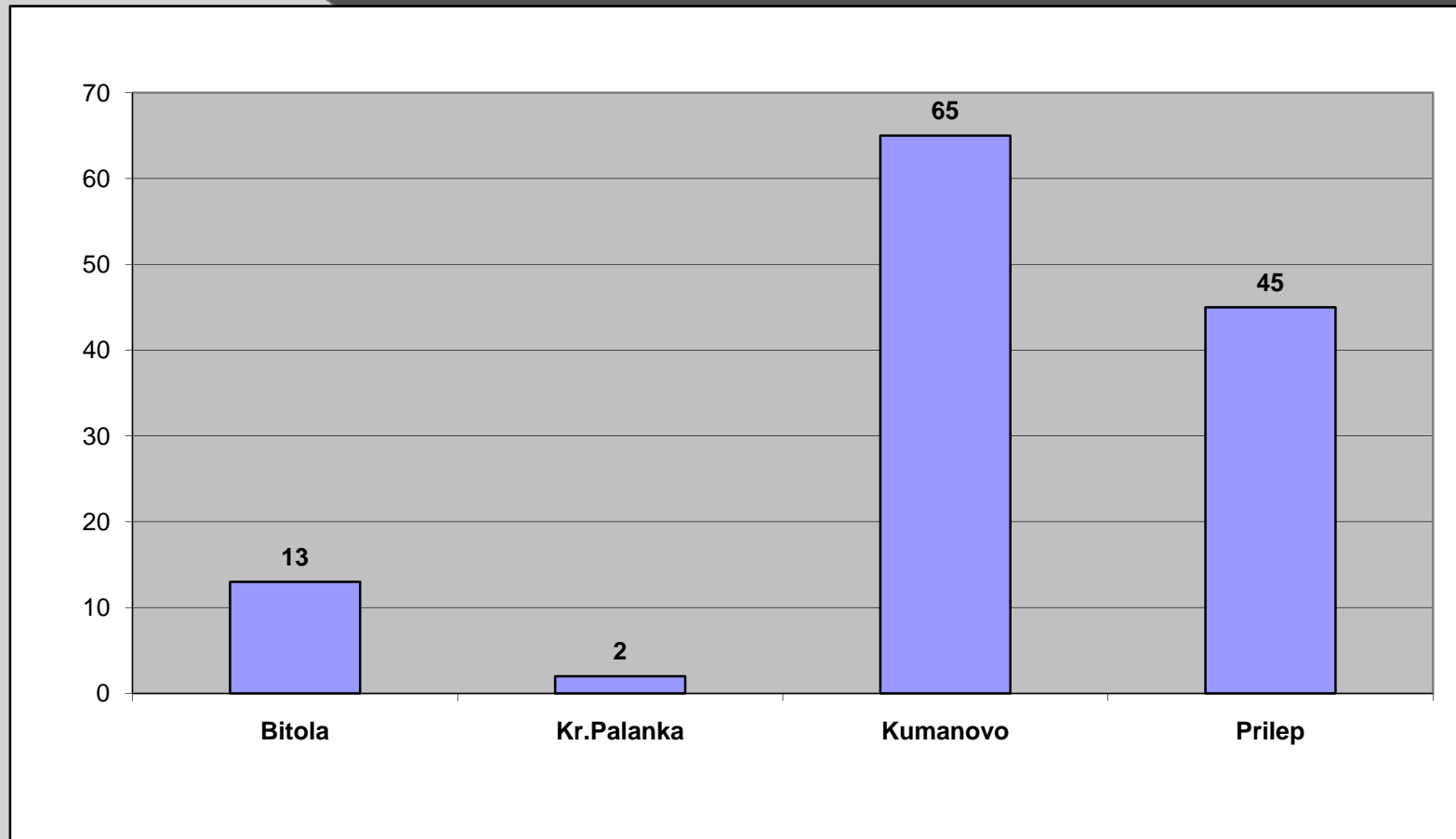
1.021 of the respondents visit a doctor once a year, 1.220 have never visited a doctor and 512 have not visited a doctor for many years.



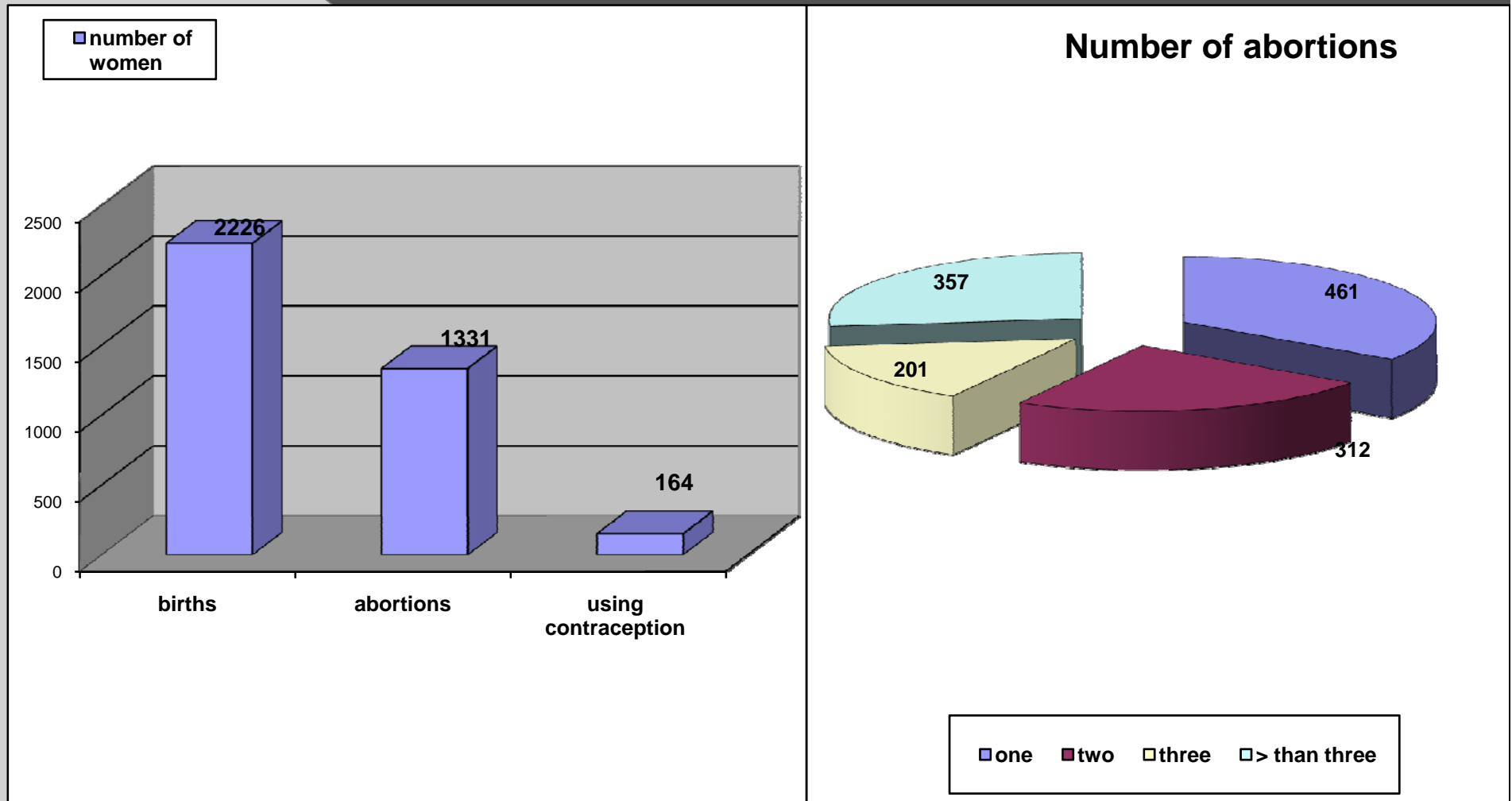
- 440 Roma women stated that they feel heart problems and have high blood pressure.
- From the known respiratory illnesses most common are asthma and chronic bronchitis reported by total of 115 women.

- 187 women felt symptoms of depression.
- Urinary tract illnesses have been described as kidney pain, infections, etc. They are present among 145 respondents.

Large number of asthma patients or persons whose parents died of asthma are present in Kumanovo. This situation is due to the sub-standard housing conditions, with emphasis on high humidity as factor. 125 parents of respondents died of asthma.



In the recent years, there has not been a reproductive health strategy in Macedonia and lack of information for using contraceptive measures. 2.026 Roma women stated that they know about the risks of abortion, however the statements show high degree of abortions.



# Activities

- 6 assistants were trained and involved in the field research and how to inform Roma women about the possibilities for free medical examinations and tests.



- The project was officially supported by the Republic Institute for Health Protection (RHIP)
- The legal analysis was conducted by two lawyers
- The collected data was analyzed by social medicine doctor.

- 20 lecturers took active participation in the information center and there were 250 participants in all 4 towns.
- 20 women per day used the services of the information center, receiving legal advice how to exercise their right to healthcare services in Macedonia.





