



# Health Mediation in Bulgaria

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Association National Network of Health Mediators

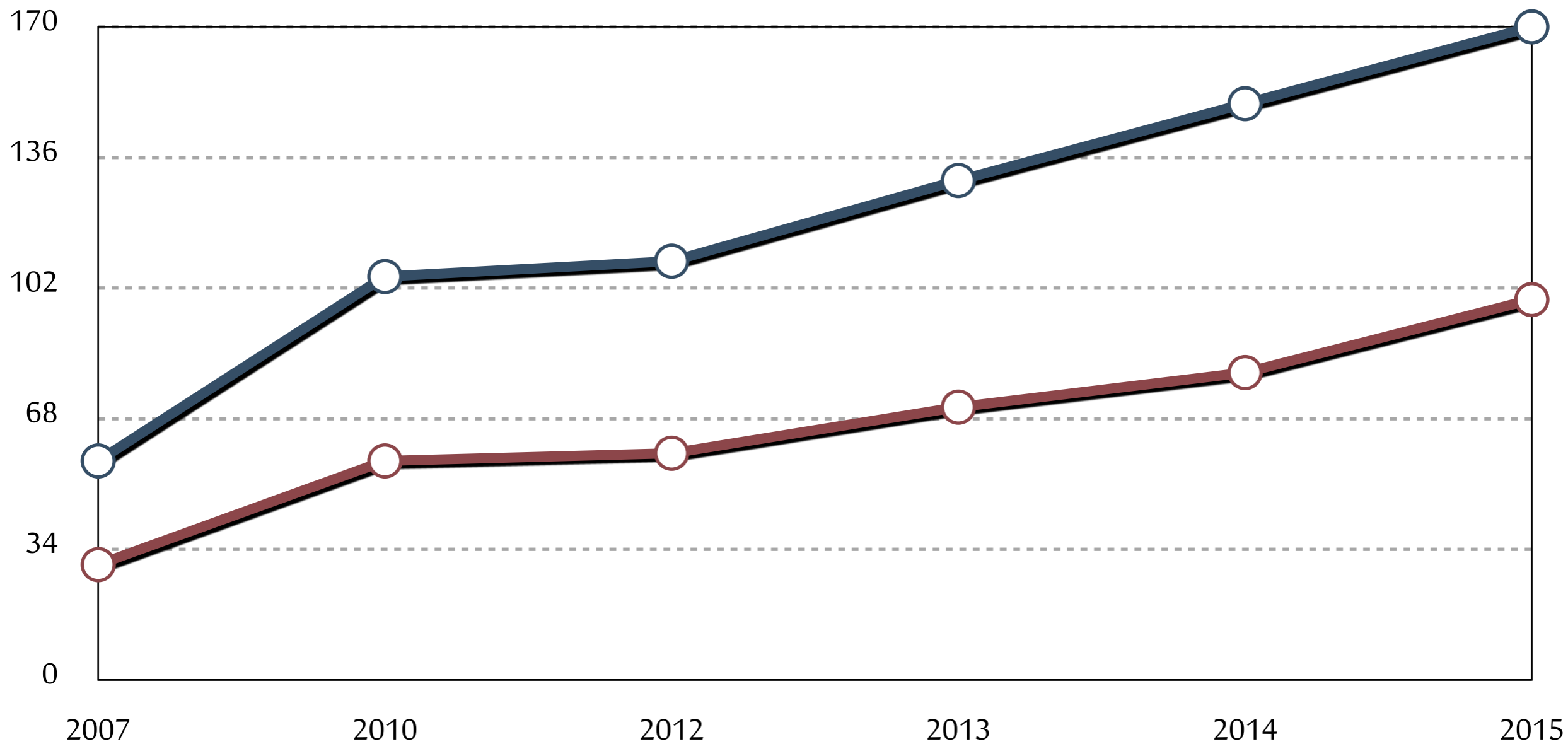
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# Few facts:



- In Bulgaria, the health mediation model was launched in **2001** by the team of Ethnic Minorities Health Problems Foundation.
- In **2007** Health-mediation programme is already a national policy. **57** Health mediators were appointed at work in 30 municipalities financed by the state budget.
- In **2007** Association National Network of Health Mediators was founded by Health mediators, trainers of HMs, doctors, experts in public health to advocate for expansion of the HMs programme. In 2015 the members are more than 170 and it is the **biggest public benefit organization in Bulgaria whose members are daily on the field**, helping the most vulnerable groups of the population.
- **NNHM implements projects in which HMs are key figures** - aimed at better healthcare, better education, qualification of HMs in different topics.
- In charge of the Health-mediation program are **National Council of Ethnic and Integration Issues at the Council of Ministers** (NNHM is a member of the Council); **Ministry of Health; Ministry of Finance; Municipalities**. NNHM communicates with all listed institutions, monitors and assesses the work of HMs on voluntary principle.

# Number of HMs, employed by the Municipalities



○ Number of HM ○ Number of Municipalities



# HMs Profile

- Men or women
- Graduated secondary education
- Belong to the local vulnerable community and speaking its language (Roma, Turkish)
- Communicative and well accepted by the community
- Computer literacy - Internet, MS Office
- Able to travel for 14-day initial training, annual meetings of HMs, willing to participate in additional trainings/projects/meetings.



**Radka Gatova, HM from Yablanitsa, trained in 2014.**



# Main Tasks



HMs are **connecting** Roma communities, medical specialists and health/social institutions. For them is obligatory to **work daily on the field** among community. HMs have official job description adopted by the state and included in the National Classificatory of Professions. HMs have to:

- Collaborate with GPs for obtaining high immunization coverage and more prophylactic check-ups.
- Search for and identify people with disabilities/chronic illness, young mothers/pregnant women who are not health insured.
- Assist illiterate people to submit documents to health and social institutions.
- Organize group informational activities, meetings and discussions for increasing the health culture and awareness, including in schools and kindergartens.
- Take a part in: additional trainings on health/social issues; exchange visits with other HMs; regional/annual meetings of NNHM; in national healthcare campaigns organized by Regional Health Inspectorates/ hospitals/ medical specialists.
- Provide information and assistance to women who are willing to use IUDs (HMs receive free of charge IUDs from the Bulgarian Association for Family Planning).
- Report cases of discrimination.

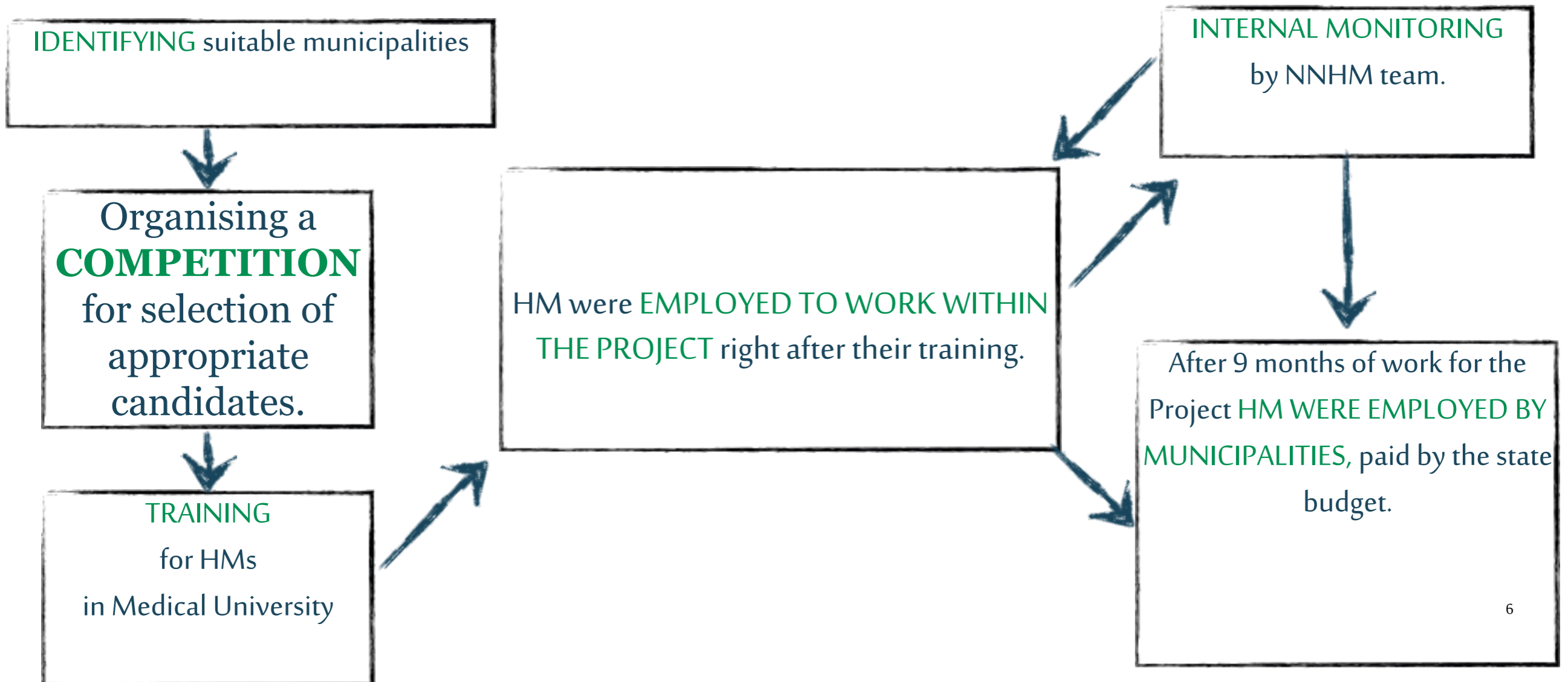


# Project "Together for Better Health - for us, by us" 2012 - 2014

**COMMON GOAL:** Better access to healthcare for socially excluded Roma communities in Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary, and Slovakia.

**MAIN OBJECTIVE FOR BULGARIA:** Development and expansion of health-mediation programme.

## OUR ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE PROJECT:





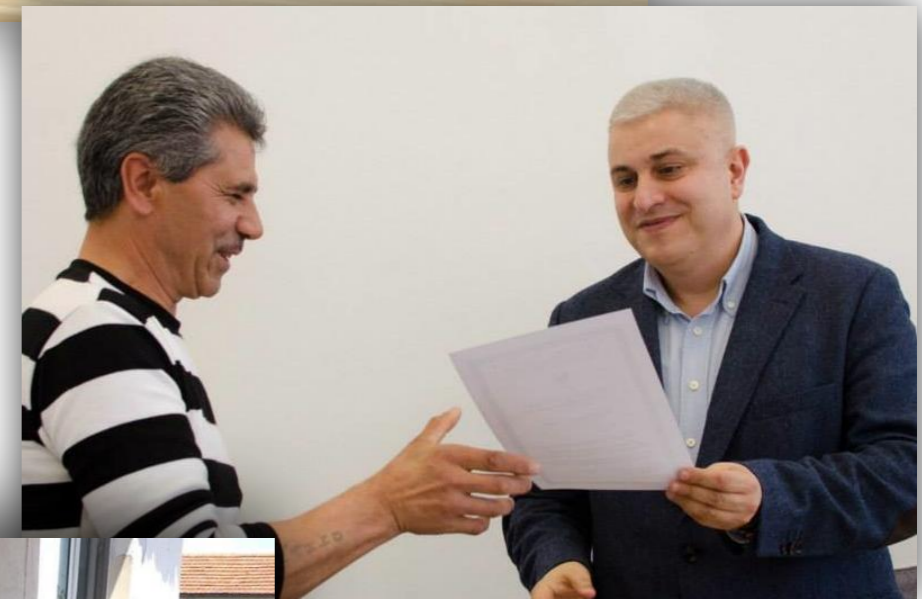
## Achievements for the last 3 years:

- Increased number of Health mediators.
- Established contacts with municipalities where the profession was not introduced.
- All HMs in Bulgaria are selected in a competition by a commission with NNHM participation.
- In 2015 for fourth consecutive year new HMs were trained jointly by Faculty of Public Health at the Medical University-Sofia and National Network of Health Mediators.
- Improving the HMs training programme by organizing an exchange of experience between new and experienced HMs.



# Challenges

- Difficult communication with some of the municipalities due to their unwillingness to organize competition for HMs.
- Low salary and discriminatory attitude discouraged newly trained people.
- Despite the proven and acknowledged success of the HM's programme throughout the years the Ministry of Health still do not support it with additional (European) funding for trainings, continuing education and monitoring.





For more information:

[www.zdravenmediator.net](http://www.zdravenmediator.net)

[www.togetherforbetterhealth.eu](http://www.togetherforbetterhealth.eu)



Thank you!