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Constructing Roma Migrants

European Narratives and Local Governance

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Editors

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For Godot,
whoever you are

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Chapter 1
Roma Westward Migration in Europe: Rethinking Political, Social, and Methodological Challenges

Stefano Piemontese and Tina Magazzini

The idea for this book stemmed from two symposia that brought together scholars from a range of different countries and disciplines to reflect upon the political and legal context of the mobility of Romani citizens in Europe. Our interest in this topic started with the adoption of a EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies in 2011, when Member States were requested to develop integration strategies that were *explicitly yet not exclusively* targeted at their Roma populations (European Commission 2011). Even though this policy scheme represented an effort to overcome the inadequacies of the anti-discrimination directives[1] to address the social and institutional discrimination suffered by Roma people in Europe, tangible results of such measures have so far been lacking. The symposia, titled "Roma Westward Migration in Europe: Rethinking Political, Social, and Methodological Challenges",[2] addressed the emergence of Roma-specific policies alongside an increasing concern about migration and diversity management. The drive to bring

[1] These are the Council Directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000, implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin, and the Council Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000, establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation.

[2] Under this title, two symposia were organized during the *VIII Congreso sobre Migraciones Internacionales* (Granada, September 16–18, 2015). The first panel aimed at promoting a reflection and debate around the political and the legal context of "Roma migration" within the EU. The second panel aimed at addressing the research gap on the same phenomenon from a more anthropological perspective, and especially through the theories of migration. Both symposia were co-organized with Dr. Giuseppe Beluschi Fabeni and Dr. Elisabeth Gómez Oehler and have been supported by the Marie Skłodowska-Curie *INTEGRIM* Initial Training Network and the FP7 *MigRom* Project.

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together different disciplinary and methodological approaches to "Roma migration"[3] in Europe, and to explore how such phenomenon has been narrated, policed, politicized or ignored was – and is – rooted in four main considerations. Firstly, we are convinced that putting the focus squarely on the so-called "Roma westward migration" and problematizing the assumptions that underpin such a label contributes to uncover the structural inconsistencies of the European "Roma integration" framework and to question its overall political approach. Secondly, the intersections and overlaps between the categories of "Roma" and of "migrants" show how the classifications of deservingness and of access to welfare resources have shifted in recent years, making explicit the under-studied link between inclusive and securitarian policies. Thirdly, we believe that "Roma migration" provides a unique testing ground to understand how those portrayed as "the others" in contemporary Europe cope and develop counter-strategies in a system in which their options are limited. Fourthly and finally, we strongly support ethnographic accounts as a useful means to evaluate public policies at the local level, as they offer rich data that cannot be captured by national statistics or by surveys alone.

1.1 Problematizing the Assumptions

Regarding the need to problematize "Roma migration", this is a desideratum which has in recent years been shared by many Romani scholars and social scientists interested in equality policies in order to overcome the dangers of a narrow and self-serving knowledge-production (Baar and Ivasiuc 2019; Law and Kovats 2018; Matras and Leggio 2018; Surdu 2016; Yıldız and Genova 2017). Within this strand of research, this book emerges from the awareness that a variety of understandings and definitions exist about "who the Roma are", and that this diversity triggers very heterogeneous political approaches and actions. The scope and limits of a EU common framework aimed at promoting "Roma integration" are largely conditioned by the divides between Western and Eastern European countries, between colour-blind and identity-policy traditions, between the understanding of "Roma" as a domestic or European issue. The question of migration becomes therefore ever more salient.

A departing consideration of the reflections that can be found in this volume is that the international mobility of the Roma has strongly contributed to the Europeanization of the "Roma issue" (van Baar 2015, 2017b; Vermeersch 2012). It was largely the political response of local and national governments to the arrival of foreign (albeit EU citizens) Roma in their territories that convinced EU institutions

[3] While the term "Roma migration" can be found at times in brackets and at times not throughout the volume, it should always be understood as a political category, which emerged in the interplay between media narratives, institutional categories and integration policies. This understanding does not negate the existence of the Roma minority nor of the fact that a number of Roma have migrated in the past and continue to do so. It does however challenge the idea that all Roma migrants share common characteristics and that "Roma migration" is a phenomenon that is somehow organized, cohesive or coordinated amongst different groups and countries.

to adopt a common strategy for "Roma integration". However, the formal recognition of "Roma people" as a transnational minority, as well the adoption of "Roma ethnicity" as an organizing principle for the redistributive policies pursued by the European Union, raises some conceptual questions related to the incorporation of ethno-specific policies in colour-blind policy settings. In translating the EU framework into national strategies, Roma transnational mobility reawakens and shifts the policy and philosophical debates on the dialectic relation between socio-economic redistribution and identity recognition from a multi-national to a local context. Furthermore, the coexistence of both "national" and "immigrant" Roma on a same territory, as well as under the same policy framework, is challenging the making of a pan-European Roma identity, with potential repercussions that stereotyped and racialised perceptions of the former may have on the development of policies for the latter, and vice versa. These incoherencies emerge strongly with regard to the crafting of public policy practices developed at a local level, as well as in terms of legal framework. Roma migration emphasizes the existent gap between the rigid understanding of ethnicity embedded in the policies for Roma on the one hand, the wide heterogeneity of national approaches towards "Roma diversity" (from national majorities) on the other hand, and Roma inner diversity itself.

Migration from Central and Eastern Europe triggered policies towards Roma at the EU level and raised the issue to the international agenda more than any poverty level or discrimination that the Roma might suffer could have done. In spite of that, as Iulius Rostas put it, "That's the irony of it. Roma were put on the agenda because of migration, but migration isn't dealt with in the strategy" (in Ryder et al. 2015: 176). Indeed, the EU framework for National Roma Integration Strategies does not make any distinction between national and non-national Roma minorities, leaving Member States free to define the target population of their Roma-targeted programs according to their domestic priorities and political concerns. In practice, while the "Europeanization of Roma representation" (van Baar 2017a) provided a solid discursive rationale for the development of an EU "Roma integration" strategy, it also required to categorize a wide range of very heterogeneous groups within the single administrative category of "the Roma".

The progressive incorporation (or lack of incorporation) of Roma migrants in the Roma-targeted policies of European countries who host both national and non-national Roma groups is influenced by various financial, ideological and political elements, as the chapters of this book show. The increasingly accepted categorization of "the Roma" as a transnational population fostered the "trickle down" adoption of the EU official discourse on Roma people. This is a narrative that sees them as both victims of racism, discrimination and social exclusion and as a "true European minority" (Council of Europe 1993) – Europe's largest (European Commission 2012a: 2). However, the distribution of EU funding for "Roma inclusion" coupled with the need to give a policy response to the freedom of movement of impoverished Romanian and Bulgarian Roma citizens, resulted in a puzzle of measures of both inclusion and securitization of the "new" Roma.

1.2 The Securitarian Shift of "Roma Integration" Initiatives

Alongside the development of policies for "Roma integration" we also witnessed a proliferation of restrictive policies implicitly addressed at this population, mainly in the form of administrative regulations. Since 2014, after 7 years of labour rights' restrictions for EU citizens from Romania and Bulgaria,[4] several countries started applying ever more restrictive legal frameworks to the freedom of movement of EU workers, limiting their access to basic public services. Meanwhile, the mechanisms of identification that are inherent to the targeting procedures of "Roma integration" policies have either tended to exclude "Roma migrants" from the opportunity to benefit from integration programs, or pushed local administrations to establish a strict criteria to access institutionally-defined paths of "social inclusion". As a result, the interventions aimed at impoverished Roma from other EU countries have mostly involved forced evictions, voluntary return programs, and begging bans: "exclusive but not explicit" initiatives that both mirror and subvert the targeted-approach advocated by the European institutions (Magazzini and Piemontese 2016). All of this takes place in a context which has seen an escalation of public and political discourses that openly reject "Roma migration", encourage expressions of Antiziganism, and is accompanied by culturalist interpretations of residential mobility, housing conditions and economic strategies that spill over into policies.

The chapters included in this collection show that EU citizens of Roma ethnicity end up being recognized as beneficiaries of specific actions – of both inclusion and securitization – only when their presence is perceived as a threat to public order. But the securitarian facet of the "Roma integration" programs is neither accidental nor surprising: it rather represents the inevitable consequence of the original yet untold concerns towards the control of "Roma migration" which informed the design of the "Roma integration" policies in the first place, and which keeps shaping a wide range of policy measures addressed to Roma. Against this backdrop, we interpret the development of a legal framework for "Roma integration" as a policy device that has allowed local government to legitimize pre-existent administrative practices of deservingness and to create additional criteria of accession to social rights for ethnically-defined groups of people. The current framework has often been used to distinguish between "deserving" and "undeserving" Roma, much in the same way in which States attempt to create a demarcation between "real" and "bogus" asylum seekers, in short between those who are granted the right to be included and those who are not.

[4] According to the "Treaty concerning the accession of the Republic of Bulgaria and Romania to the European Union" (Treaty of Accession 2005), old member states have the right to impose a transitional period of 2 years on labour rights of the new member's citizens, extendable for additional 3 years, and of 2 more years in case of serious proof that labour from new member states would be disruptive to the market. Many old member states (France, Germany, Spain, Austria, Belgium, Netherlands, Luxembourg, United Kingdom) made use of all the extensions possible to delay allowing working permits to Romanian and/or to Romanian nationals. Since Romania and Bulgaria joined the European Union in 2007, such transitional period ended in 2014.

Building on the contradictions triggered by the encounter between benevolent policies for "Roma integration" and the politics of "Roma securitization", this book aims to untangle the ethno-political construction of "Roma migrants". While we lay no claim on defining who "Roma migrants" are, the administrative category is produced by specific narratives mobilised at a European level and by policies implemented in local contexts. The interplay between these two dimensions is of considerable importance. On the one hand, the "Roma issue" became of policy and scholarly relevance greatly through the EU impulse, which has in turn shaped national and local discourses and practices. On the other hand, the local governance of the "Roma issue", with its bordering policies around access to services, reveals much of how such policies work in practice (van Baar 2017a; Vrăbiescu and Kalir 2017). As the chapter of Vera Messing will argue, key issues and terms dealt with in this volume, such as "Roma" and "migrant" are not objective or unproblematic: every minority group is at least to some extent a social construct and the process of categorizing who is an immigrant, who is a Roma and who requires integration is an important aspect of how identities are created. Thus, the red line that connects the single contributions of this volume – both to each other and to the different levels of analysis – is the construction of the "Roma migrant" as something that is produced and maintained by public discourse, and whose imaginary informs, at the same time, both the design and the implementation of local policies towards people who are identified as such.

1.3 Coping Strategies and Counter-Narratives

If the mainstream European narrative of who these "Roma migrants" are is one that has been characterized mainly by a welfarist and emergency-driven approach, such an approach is not the only account available. Alternative counter-narratives exist which are made up of individual perspectives, experiences, and interpretations, and these are the stories that this book provides a space for.

With the emergence of the "Roma issue" as a politically constructed problem in Europe, the concerns of the European Member States and of their institutions regarding the phenomenon of "Roma migration" have become a testing ground for how we conceive and negotiate "the other", both nationally and internationally. It is our opinion that research on the management of the so-called "Roma issue" has much to contribute to the understanding of the discourses, procedures and potential solutions that have to do with the so-called "refugee crisis".[5] Similarly, research on low-income immigrant Roma and their relations with local public policies, can shed light on broader neoliberal welfare/workfare policies in times of (financial and democratic) predicament.

In this respect, the developmentalist approach of the Roma Framework, with its sectorial compartmentalization in education, housing, employment and healthcare,

[5] For a problematisation of the term "refugee crisis" and "migration crisis" see Cantat (2015a, b).

raises important interrogations about the portraying and targeting of Roma people as "victims of racism, discrimination and social exclusion" (Fundamental Rights Agency and UNDP 2012: 3). This approach contributes, at least to some extent, to corroborate the idea that Roma identity and social exclusion are two overlapping categories. One might also suggest that the Roma Framework opted for a welfarist narrative rather than an identity or anti-discrimination one in order not to interfere with a very heterogeneous range of national approaches towards the management of ethno-cultural diversity in Europe. Still, the adoption of "Roma ethnicity" as an organizing principle for the redistributive policies pursued by the European Union leaves us with a fundamental problem: ethno-specific programs are difficult to implement in colour-blind political settings. How do those who find themselves caught in such definitions and policies react to them, use them, reject them or hide from them?

Moving from these considerations, this volume aims at offering an alternative perspective on the normative claims about Roma minorities as belonging within a "deficit" or "marginalised" paradigm (either in cultural or socio-economic terms), which effectively constructs *them* as a policy problem, rather than the regimes of inequality upon which our societies are built, and of which Roma individuals are part and parcel of. As Salman Rushdie wrote on race relations in the United Kingdom and on the so-called "problem" of the integration of minoritized groups:

> You talk about the Race Problem, the Immigration Problem, all sorts of problems. If you are liberal, you say that black people have problems. If you aren't, you say that they are the problem. But the members of the new colony have only one real problem, and that problem is white people…Racism, of course, is not our problem. It's yours. We simply suffer the consequences of your problem. (Rushdie 1982)

While there are important differences between (and within) Roma minorities in contemporary Europe and black people in the United Kingdom of the 1980s, the issue of narrating the problem as one of the majorities, rather than of the minorities, remains painstakingly relevant. In keeping with this approach that sees as a pressing necessity the investigation of what "European identity" is understood to be, and how categories of exclusion from such "Europeaness" are constructed (Yıldız and Genova 2017), the present volume does not claim to advance any novel finding about the nature, character or identity of Roma minorities or of migrants. Rather, we aim at exposing some of the dynamics through which categories of inclusion and exclusion are created are maintained, thus contributing to rethinking European societies and identities through an exploration of "our problem", racism. In this respect, we feel that it is only fair to acknowledge that none of the authors of this volume are Roma, and while we welcome feedback, input, criticism and help in solving this problem from Roma scholars interested in these issues, we can only recognize that academia is by no means immune from structural discrimination. In practical terms, while we received a considerable number of what we considered to be valuable contributions in response to our call for papers for the symposia "Roma Westward Migration in Europe: Rethinking Political, Social, and Methodological Challenges", none of them came from Roma scholars. This may well be blamed on our incapacity to reach out to those Roma authors whose work we look up to and engage with; on

the economic and time constraints imposed by academic conferences; or on both. Be it as it may, this book hopes to be part of a conversation that does not appropriate or overlook the work being carried out from critical perspectives by Roma scholars on similar issues (Bogdan et al. 2018: 5).

Rather, we present a cross-disciplinary and wide-ranging collection of policy analysis and case studies, including practical experiences of social intervention, in the hope to render more mainstream the usage of ethnographic accounts as a tool for policy understanding and evaluation.

1.4 The Contribution of an Ethnographic Approach to "Roma Migration"

As above-mentioned, one core driver of this book is that ethnographic studies, which are generally not associated with policy evaluation, can offer an insight into the effects of the European legal and political framework on the life of "Roma migrants" in western European countries. Over the past decades, the integration of minorities and of migrants in Europe has become a highly topical and politicized issue, often framed as a social problem. This has fuelled a rich academic production on ethnicity, cultural rights and migration, but such studies tend to remain compartmentalized according to academic fields, groups and territories analysed. Also, as a result, the two fields of diversity management and migration have so far generally been studied in isolation from each other (de Jong 2016). This volume's aim is to contribute to bridge the existing gap between these two fields, to move beyond methodological nationalism focusing more on the local dimension, and to offer concrete examples of local governance associated to "Roma migration".

In short, moving from the intellectual need to put some order into the wide heterogeneity of approaches towards "Roma diversity", we intend to integrate legal, political and sociological perspectives with critical ethnographic accounts. This choice is rooted in our understanding of social anthropology as a valuable tool for assessing the implementation of public policies. The ten Common Basic Principles on Roma Inclusion (a guidelines toolkit developed by European Commission for both policy makers and practitioners' in charge of programmes and projects for Roma) stress the importance of policy evaluation to make the Roma initiatives "appropriate to the situation on the ground" (European Commission 2012b). Yet, the strategic approaches that end up being adopted often are inherently skewed towards universalistic tools, such as "best practices", which need to be evaluated carefully as their replicability rests on local contexts which vary significantly. Conversely, ethnographic accounts bring human behaviour back into the picture, and connect political and academic debates back to the reality experienced by their subjects of intervention or research. In a broader sense, the proposed book represents an attempt to assess, both conceptually and empirically, the implementation of the 2011 EU framework for "Roma integration". Until now, country-specific evaluations have been realized by civil-society organizations. This book is meant to be an

assessment, from an academic standpoint, of the over 7 years of the common framework for "Roma integration".

Finally, the book endeavours to establish a link between the micro, meso, and macro-level of inquiry. "Roma migration" has been a key issue in contemporary European cohesion policies for over a decade, but its multifaceted and complex dynamics have seldom been considered in connection with each other. This, in our opinion, has prevented a comprehensive theoretical and empirical understanding of current trends for local level action in the challenging processes of Roma migration management in Europe. This book's perspective is that there is a need to transcend the current conception of the local level as an insular space suited to micro-level studies of multicultural experience in favour of an understanding of local governance as a nodal point in multi-level and transnational exchanges. The key objective of the volume is therefore to analyse the dissonances, overlaps and synergies that characterize the design and implementation of policies for "Roma" in Europe: EU institutions, local and national administrations, third sector organizations, and the agency of both Roma and non Roma populations themselves. To this end, the structure of the book is organized in a general-to-particular way.

1.5 Book Structure

The results of our call for considering different disciplines and experiences in Roma integration processes are presented in the proposed volume in the following, tripartite structure.

A first part (Chaps. 2, 3, 4, and 5) analyses the different "frames" – methodological, legal, policy, and media – that exist among expert knowledge on "Roma migration". The book opens with **Vera Messing**, who gives a critical overview of the conceptual and methodological aspects of researching "Roma migration". In doing so, she raises the issue of research ethics and of the responsibility of researchers during the processes of knowledge production about migration of Roma citizens. Although research in Romani studies have long been in the constructivist paradigm, "Roma migration" risks spurring new tendencies of essentialisation of the Roma, and this contribution aims at warning against such a risk. The second chapter by **Nuno Ferreira** questions the legal adequacy of EU actions with regards to Roma minorities. His contribution aims to explore how the EU legal framework has developed in relation to "Roma issues" beyond free movement and forced expulsions. In doing so, this contribution goes beyond the usual disjointed analysis of discrete policy aspects and puts forward a comprehensive and critical analysis of the key Roma-related EU initiatives and norms. Building on the analysis of a broad range of legal instruments, policy papers and case law, the author questions the social integration approach and advocates for a more holistic approach. Moving from a legal to a policy-centred analysis of EU initiatives, **Tina Magazzini**, **Enrica Chiozza** and **Monica Rossi** reflect on the shortcomings of the emergency management of the "Roma issue" from a policy implementation perspective, tracing the soft policy

actions that led to a framework for the National Roma Integration Strategies (NRIS). They find that the efforts of implementing the NRIS and of investing integration funds at the local level encounter significant obstacles in the lack of administrative capacity, political will, and practical challenges to identify the needs and match them to sustainable solutions. Their chapter describes how EU initiatives work in this field, focusing on the need to involve the local level through the concrete case of the ROMACT programme. In Chap. 5, which analyses how the UK media portrayed Roma migrants in the build-up to the British EU referendum, **Viktor Leggio** shows how the mobilisation of images about Roma migrants to the UK contributed to reshaping the debate around the impact of migration on the welfare system. By combining textual analysis of national media reports, parliamentary debates and national law with observations at the local level, the author highlights how the narrative shifted from the need to reform the benefit system, to the need to reduce migrants' access to the system. The analysis covers the period between the enlargement of the EU to Romania and Bulgaria (January 2007) to Cameron's announcement of his agenda for the negotiations with the EU (November 2014).

Building upon these broad frameworks, the remaining contributions are largely based on ethnographic case-studies and are divided into two sections.

The second part of the book (Chaps. 6, 7, 8, and 9) focuses mainly on the links between integration and securitization policies that are targeted at "Roma migrants". This section opens with the chapter by **Marianna Manca** and **Cecilia Vergnano** who enquire into how a local inclusion project (*La Città Possibile*) that was aimed at ensuring the right to housing to the dwellers of a "Roma camp" in Turin, Italy, has contributed to create new boundaries between deserving and undeserving "Roma migrants". The chapter also highlights the limits of the selective, ethnically-targeted housing policies, and reports the conflicts that such policies produce in a context where the "housing crisis" is increasingly affecting wider cohorts of the population. **Ioana Vrabiescu**, in the following chapter, provides a critical account of the politics of repatriation presented as politics of benevolence in Spain. Taking the city of Madrid as a case study, this chapter documents and analyses temporary devices of governance that both limit and force the mobility of Romani families from Romania. Implemented by local authorities through specific policies, temporary devices of governance deliver an enforced pressure on Romani migrants who are seen as prospective "failed" subjects of integration and potential returnees. Chapter 8, by **Eberhard Raithelhuber**, investigates the socio-material production and regulation of the ethno-political figure of the "Roma beggar" through the prism of a regime-of-(im)mobility approach. Based on an ethnographic study, core aspects of this regime for "Roma beggars" are analysed on a micro-scale: criminalizing transport, invisibilising borders, educating beggars, victimization, stillness and deportability. His chapter investigates the everyday social and physical infrastructures and logistics for (im)mobility, imaginaries of (im)mobility and discursive technologies. The key insight is that the "stilled, able beggar" is the only legitimate form of begging in the light of a community of good and able citizens: as this figure is practically unrealizable and deceptive, it flips into the "Roma beggar". In Chap. 9, **Joanna Kostka** examines the discourse on "Roma exclusion" in the context of European migration

policy, presenting key findings from the case study of Romanian Roma migrants in the city of Wroclaw in Poland. Building on equality scholarship, this chapter argues that portrayal of Roma as "welfare migrants" who move across Europe exploiting the generosity of welfare states, legitimizes hostile public interventions that negate official commitments to the Free Movement principle.

The third part (Chaps. 10, 11, 12, and 13), while it has much in common with the second group of chapters in terms of methodology and tools employed, shifts the attention from the policies targeted at "Roma migrants" to the coping strategies and the counter-narratives of those who find themselves treated as "objects" of these initiatives. Picking up from the British narratives on Roma migrants described in Chap. 5, **Veronika Nagy** reflects on the role of UK welfare surveillance and on the outsourced social services that deal with Central European Roma. The long-standing prejudiced perception of Roma as profiteers unwilling to integrate became the basis for concerns about a "threatening flood" of Roma westward. As a result, control strategies allegedly aimed to ensure security, have legitimated excessive policing and surveillance of migrants. The "mechanisms" applied for sorting and excluding unwanted Roma communities gradually replaced migration policies as a new process of selection regarding undesired European migrants from A8 countries. This chapter provides an empirical analysis of the effects of these sorting measures and on how the targeted groups either comply or circumnavigate these regulations in London. In Chap. 11, **Jovana Kzenevic** investigates the ways in which Roma from Serbia who sought and have been denied asylum protection in Germany, exert their agency as social actors and, challenging structural constraints, contest the tendency to "victimize" Roma populations. The seeking of asylum by the Roma from Serbia, as one of the main patterns of their migration, has come to the centre of the debate about the rights of obtaining asylum within the existing EU asylum policies, while enforcing the discourse of "false asylum seekers" and "welfare migrants". By revealing the complex reality within which Roma from Serbia choose to migrate in the form of asylum seekers, the study challenges the discourse of "false asylum seekers" and overcomes the simplification caused by this labelling. In Chap. 12, **Camilla Ida Ravnbøl** looks at the economic coping strategies developed by Roma from Romania in the marginal economy of homelessness in Copenhagen, as surviving mechanisms to deal with existing bureaucratic constraints. The chapter proposes the concept of "patchwork economy" to frame the micro economic strategies that the *badocari* ("bottle people") engage in. Besides illustrating how debt constitutes the background quilt against which the patchwork economy is continuously reconfigured, the chapter presents analytical insight into the interconnectedness between the micro economy of the Roma household and the broader social and political context of Romania. Finally, in the last chapter, **Julija Sardelić** traces life histories of Slovenian citizens who identify as Roma and have been mobile between Slovenia and Austria because of employment opportunities. The general aim of her chapter is not to point out a pattern that could be labelled as either Romani migration or mobility, but rather to show that there are alternative narratives to what is usually seen as "Romani migration" in Europe. The chapter seeks to point to differing mobility

practices by Roma in the EU, which are usually not discussed in public debates and are not connected to "Romani migration".

1.6 Conclusion

This book is based on the assumption that the policy and philosophical debates on the international mobility of Roma people should be approached from a multi-scalar perspective. Since the 1980s, geographers have used "scale", "rescaling" and "multiscalarity" as analytical categories, meaning that "localities are places constituted within multiple intersecting trajectories of power" (Çağlar and Glick-Schiller 2015). This also means that "the geographical scale at which political power and authority is located does not constitute a natural order, but rather is constructed and subject to change" (Leitner in Sheppard and McMaster 2008). Building on this tradition, this volume aims at exploring how the processes of mutual constitution of the local, regional, national and global have constructed "Roma migrants".

In doing this, we believe that there is a strong need to overcome the "ethnic frame of reference" which, more or less consciously, characterizes much of the research on integration and migration policies whenever it comes to both Roma people and to migrant individuals (Tremlett 2009, 2014). In our opinion, a targeted approach in research – if it is constantly and solely associated to social marginalization – runs the risk of contributing to problematize an ethnic group which is already under the spotlight, while at the same time normalizing the adoption of categories of ethnic classification to describe social phenomena that are better explained in the broader framework of the management of socio-economic diversity in the era of neoliberalism. Against this background, the question is not only how much of the imaginary about the "Roma migrant" is reproduced by European discourse and local practices, but also how much of this representation is reproduced in our research. Both this volume and the event that inspired it obliged us to face important ethical questions concerning our positioning as researchers regarding the so-called "Roma issue".

Neither the conference panels nor this book were intended to be about Roma themselves, but rather about the policies that concern them. We wanted a collection of contributions that showed how policies for "Roma inclusion" work in practice, and how they intersect and overlap with policies aimed at migrants, but we ended up collecting contributions mainly on policies of securitization and control of impoverished Roma from other Member States. Are we contributing to reproduce the imagery of the "Roma migrant" that we had set out to help deconstruct? Or do the individual and collective stories told in this volume reveal that policies tend to address Roma migrants specifically only when they are perceived as a menace?

As several chapters show, looking at the relation between European policies and the subjective experience of those people who could potentially benefit or who suffer from them, represents in all respects a way to research non-Roma alongside Roma. However, in the words of Vera Messing (in this volume) it is exactly the vagueness of "Roma migration" that makes this phenomenon "suitable to be used as

a symbol to call forth society's deep, historic fears of the Other rooted in racialized prejudice". Then, before being a symbol, we must consider that Roma are first of all the target of specific discourses, actions and policies. Such narratives and policies hold the potential to either reduce or to reinforce existing inequalities, and in observing their dynamics and effects we hope to contribute to the former. One could indeed argue that, if the impact of the "targeted" policies leaves much to be desired, perhaps we should do away with them altogether, and focus instead on the universalistic welfare programs that have the advantage of applying indistinctly to all citizens who meet the minimum requirement of residence. As some of the chapters in this volume will show, this is however a bitter-sweet hope.

Nowadays, at a time in which the current model of European integration is questioned by newly born populisms charged with an old rhetoric on state-sovereignty, it is essential to move a constructive critique to those European policies that hold the potential to both promote social justice and shed light on the existing contradictions between the national and local levels.

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Part I
Methodological, Legal, Policy, and Media Debates

Chapter 2
Conceptual and Methodological Considerations in Researching "Roma Migration"

Vera Messing

This chapter provides a critical overview of research trends on "Roma migration" as they developed over the last decade, contextualizing the issue and setting the stage for the following chapters. Due to the alleged increase in the number of Roma individuals exercising their mobility rights from Eastern European countries to Western Europe –mainly after the 2004 and 2007 EU accession – researchers' interest has shifted towards this new topic. Many scholars have started focusing in the past decade on the causes and consequences of Roma's migration patterns, their life in the new countries, and the legal, citizenship and policy questions posed by the appearance of non-Western Roma in Western Europe. Although Romani studies have long been in the constructivist paradigm, "Roma migration" has spurred new tendencies to essentialise Roma groups, at least in political and public debates. This chapter reflects on the conceptual and methodological aspects of researching "Roma migration". This main question will be addressed through the following sub-questions: What kind of analytical and conceptual tools do researchers employ in order to understand the current migration trends of Roma citizens? What approaches do we adopt, and how do we use 'old' concepts, such as "Roma" or "migrant"? In this chapter I also raise the issue of research ethics and of the responsibility of researchers during the processes of knowledge-production on "Roma migration".

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2.1 The Multiple Faces of the Concept of "the Roma" and "the Migrant"

The aim of this chapter is to deconstruct the key concept of this book, the "Roma migrant", and to present the dilemmas that as researchers in the field we need to reflect upon. There is a large pool of literature explaining the varieties of the concept of migration. Not only the concept (migration as a category of analysis), but the actual phenomenon that it describes (migration as a category of practice) is extremely complex, and this complexity is embedded in various discursive fields related to migration: the statistical, the legal and the academic, but also the political and public policy discourses. Definitions of "the migrant" are all but self-evident; they vary across different data sources and datasets as well as documents. However, policy makers and politicians are in dire need of reliable and comparable data about migration as it is a basic condition to manage migration, design policies and monitor their outcomes. Similarly, the academic and policy literature on the Roma is diverse in terms of how researchers conceptualize the group. The historically developed terminology is deeply rooted in the way majority societies or political elites have related to this community in a homogenizing, generalizing and often stigmatizing manner. The terminology itself has political, policy and social meanings and consequences (Surdu 2016), as does the conceptualization of this category in research and data collection (Messing 2014).

In the past decade "Roma migration", or, rather, the migration of Roma people, reached the forefront of political and media discourses and raised heightened emotions and tensions within the European public sphere (Fox et al. 2012; Yildiz and Genova 2017; van Baar 2011). In order to provide a fair and critical approach to this phenomenon, it is of utmost importance to acknowledge and address the conceptual and methodological dilemmas of researching "Roma migration", and to provide a framework that can allow us to hold an academic discussion of this phenomenon.

In the next section I will discuss the inherent ambiguities present in the conceptualization and in the methodological decisions that stem from the concepts of the two categories this volume aims at exploring: the "Roma" and the "migrant". In the third section I will offer a concise overview of the existing data sources and emerging literature on "Roma migration". The fourth part will consider the consequences of the conceptual and methodological choices supporting the main argument I put forward in this chapter: namely, that the interjection of the concept of migration into the complex and vague category of Roma has spurred a new essentialisation of the Roma. Such reflections will be summarized in the conclusions, where I argue that such essentialization is, to a large extent at least, the product of a political demand to measure, to control and to manage the mobility of Roma on behalf of the European Union. Policing and legislating "Roma migration" as separate from the mobility of non-Roma citizens is therefore inherently controversial; yet studying why such differentiation between "Roma migration" and "EU mobility" is produced and reproduced is necessary.

2.2 Roma and Migrant: Two Similarly Complex and Contested Concepts

A wide range of academic and policy literature describes the ways in which different data, by adopting various definitions of the "Roma", can result in the "Roma" constituting an utterly different population in terms of size and compositions (Rughinis 2010; Messing 2014; Surdu 2016). Against this background, I would like to address three issues with regard to the conceptualization of the category of Roma in research: the heterogeneity of the Roma (is it at all possible to speak of a unified ethnicity – "the Roma"?); the multiple nature of identity and their consequences for policy making and research; and the possible variations depending on the agent that makes the identification.

When trying to circumscribe a population in a discussion, the actual ethnic heterogeneity of the Roma population is often omitted or glossed over. Although ethnic majorities imagine the Roma as a homogenized and unified group, the demographics of those who self-identify as Roma vary significantly according to various factors of identity-construction such as language, tradition, visibility of racialized features and level of social inclusion. It is questionable whether we can regard groups that are so diverse in cultural, linguistical and ethnic terms – for example, the Gabor Roma in Romania, Romungo Gypsies and Vlah in Hungary, Gitano in Andalucia, Gens du voyage in France and Travellers in the UK – as one homogeneous ethnic group. Therefore, many scholars, as well as the working definition adopted by the EU, argue that Roma/Gypsy may rather be understood as an umbrella term denominating population groups with very different ethnic identities even within the same country, and definitely across Europe (Csepeli and Simon 2004; Ladányi-Szelényi 2001; Fleck and Rughinis 2008; EC 2011).

Another issue to consider here is that individual ethnic identity and Roma identity in particular can be seen as fluid, situational and multi-layered: it may include different meanings in various contexts, may change over time or depending on the situation (Surdu 2016). In practice, this may result in the same people identifying themselves as Roma at one point of time in a certain situation, while at another point of time, or situation, they may identify themselves as belonging to the ethnic majority. Simonovits and Kézdi (2016: 4) in their panel study of Roma youth documented "high levels of instability in ethnic identification both within families and for the same individual" and found that ethnic identification strongly correlates with social status: "increased economic hardship is associated with an increase in the likelihood of Roma identification" (ibid).

Also, a large share of Roma possesses multiple identities and gives account of multiple belongingness (Neményi 2007; Dupcsik 2009). This is not a fundamental scientific dilemma but rather a consequence of centuries' long turbulent waves of assimilation, integration and racial exclusion. Roma who assimilated or who were born in mixed-marriage families, or those who have national and ethnic identities simultaneously are likely to be unable to answer identity questions in terms of exclusive categories. The latest Hungarian census (2011) provides an eloquent

example of this phenomenon. Following the modification in the question on ethnic identity, which introduced multiple identification of ethnic belonging, the number of Roma as measured by the census increased by 53% from one census (in 2001) to the other (2011) (KSH 2014). Even though most authors are aware of the complex nature of Roma identification, academic work very often objectifies "the Roma", and does not reflect upon its complexities and the diversities that come along with these complexities.

The third – and in my view the most important – issue with the definition of the concept of "Roma" relates to the agent doing the identification: Who defines who is a Roma/Gypsy? (See Tremlett and McGarry 2013; Surdu 2016). There are basically two approaches to identifying Roma ethnicity, resulting in only partially comparable "realities". In one interpretation, the Roma minority is composed of those who identify themselves as Gypsies/Roma ("self-identified Roma"), while the other concept embraces all those who are regarded as such by their environment ("ascription-Roma") as they are the ones who are victims of anti-Roma prejudice and discrimination. There is a rather wide consensus among researchers, that ethically only the first option – self-identification – is valid. No one can be regarded to belong to any ethnic group, unless they declare to the same effect. However, there is also a consensus that due to the above described factors, such as situational, fluid and multiple ethnic identities for most Roma in addition to historically accumulated fear of being stigmatized and prosecuted, self-identification excludes many of those who in one way or another have Roma/Gypsy identities or roots. Hence, for instance, census data that uses self-identification significantly under-measures the size of the ethnic group compared to sociological research data, which often uses a combination of various approaches.

The most important question that precedes and underpins all stated above is: What is the purpose of identifying Roma in research or policy? (See Tremlett 2009; Tremlett and McGarry 2013; Surdu 2016). This question is fundamental as the answer leads to diverging conceptual and thus methodological decisions. Applying a definition based on the perception of ethnicity by the direct environment might be useful if the research intends to identify mechanisms and consequences of stigmatization, the working of majority-minority relations, or the functioning of discrimination. The purpose in this case might be to investigate or to intervene in majority societies' or institutions' treatment of those whom they presume to belong to Roma communities, or to explore interethnic relations. Thus, it is legitimate to target such research or policy to the population segment that is identified as Roma/Gypsy by the (direct) environment. Research and policies regarding Roma cultural identity, opinions and attitudes, living circumstances and opportunities, empowerment and political participation, require instead adopting an approach based on self-identification. Measurements that conceptualize Roma differently obviously will produce significantly different outcomes regarding the most essential data and indicators such as the size of the Roma population, educational levels, employment rates, household size and composition, and living circumstances (Messing 2014; Rughinis 2010).

Migration is an even more complex phenomenon and its conceptualization differs significantly across data sources depending on the purpose of the producer of

data: whether it is the management of migration flows, designing inclusion policies for migrants or considering experiences and consequences of discrimination. The data that refers to the category of migrant may refer to a static situation reflecting a certain point in time and in a specific geographical locality (stock) or to the dynamic process of mobility (flow). Either way, the category may comprise a quite different and only partially intersecting population depending on the definition adopted. Looking at various key data sources of migration in the European sphere we find rather different approaches: some classify migrants based on foreign citizenship, others based on foreign ancestry, and a few others on place of birth or language. In public discourse it is even racialized or ethnic groups, which are used as synonyms to migrant background. There is a significant literature on how political and public discourses in European countries seem to mislabel legal citizens of colour as migrants, or as "second- third generation migrants", while identifying whites as migrants in political and policy discourses is quite rare (Fox et al. 2012; Mukkamala and Suyemoto 2018). The differences in the sizes of migrant populations stemming from using these diverging approaches to conceptualize the category of migrant also applies to large variations concerning the composition of the population in terms of their socio-economic status, basic demographic characteristics, language skills or level of inclusion.

A further important element (or discursive frame) of the conceptualization of "migrants" and of "migration" is the way in which regulations target various groups of migrants in terms of control and legislation. This is particularly important with respect to the type of migration and of integration policies and practices that this book aims to analyse and to discuss: namely the migration of Roma citizens of EU Member-States within the European Union, and the initiatives aimed at them. In this context – the free movement of EU citizens within the boundary of the EU – the movements of Roma within the EU borders should not even be considered as migration but as mobility, because the principle of free labour mobility enables citizens of an EU Member State (obviously including citizens from the Roma ethnic background) to enter the territory and the labour market of other Member-States.

This section separated the two terms that lay at the core of this book and investigated their respective conceptual ambiguities. Because of merging these two concepts, the category "the Roma migrant" appears to be too opaque to enable its use in an academically sound way. This is not to say that migration of Romani individuals or families does not exist; instead it is to say, that when talking about "Roma migration", or of migrants of Roma ethnic background, various parties may consider completely different population groups. Injecting migration into the already problematically simplified category of Roma results in a notion that essentializes an overly complex and diverse phenomenon. It therefore becomes necessary to analyse the reasons why politicians, opinion leaders or scholars single out the mobility of Roma from the general intra-EU mobility and discuss it as an autonomous phenomenon.

2.3 Literature and Statistics on Roma Migration

Having established that both key concepts of this book are highly complex and contested and that, based on the choice in definitions they may represent completely different populations in terms of size and composition, it is relevant to raise the following questions: What definitions and methods do studies and statistics use when discussing the phenomenon referred to as "Roma migration"? And do researchers reflect critically on the consequences of their conceptualization?

2.3.1 Statistics on "Roma Migration"

Looking at the statistics available about "Roma migration" it is hardly surprising that there is very little data on the phenomenon, despite it having been extensively discussed in the past decade in European politics and media (Kroon et al. 2016). At a European level, the European Union's Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) collects data on Europe's Roma population with the aim "to measure the progress of integration policies, and work with Member States to develop monitoring methods able to compare the situation of Roma across Europe" (FRA homepage).[1] None of the surveys includes data on Roma migrants; only data about the migration potential[2] of Roma and of Roma living in the proximity of Roma across Europe are collected. The FRA's survey was titled "Marginalized Roma survey", which is a fair description of its mission: to investigate Roma who live in marginalization, a phenomenon in strong correlation with residential segregation. The methodological strategy was to sample settlements and/or settlement parts where the share of Roma population exceeds the national average according to the census. They identified Roma through "implicit validation" while the situative/fluid nature of Roma identity was not addressed in the data collection.[3]

> The results [of the FRA/UNDP data collection] are therefore representative for the areas where the research was undertaken, while also serving as a proxy for Roma at risk of exclusion. (UNDP/FRA 2012: 29)

Such surveys are thus more likely to over-represent Roma individuals and families who live in social and geographical exclusion and marginalization, while they underrepresent Roma that are integrated in the society. The FRA data tells us that less than one sixth of Roma in Europe considered the idea of moving to another

[1] Surveys were conducted in 2008, 2012, and 2015.

[2] Migration potential is measured through questions investigating whether the respondent considered migrating in the future and how serious this consideration was.

[3] The essence of this technique is that the interviewer approaches a potential respondent, who is presumed to belong to Roma community, and introduces the research telling that the survey was conducted with the aim to investigate living circumstances and opinion of Roma. Acceptance of participation in the interview was interpreted to mean that the respondent was Roma.

country. This share however is not significantly different from those of non-Roma living in the vicinity of Roma (12%). There are substantial differences in potential for migrations across countries, however. There are only four countries, where over a fifth of interviewed Roma considered the possibility of moving abroad: Poland, Hungary, Slovakia and the Czech Republic.

At the same time, academic literature reveals that the gap between desired migration and actual migration is huge, and especially so for low skilled sectors of the population. Docquier and colleagues (2014), based on a 30-country sample, found that individuals without secondary-level education are ten times less likely to fulfil their migration plans than those who have secondary or tertiary level education. Thus, the numbers showing the share of Roma considering migration are not a good reflection of those who actually migrate; the latter being those who have the financial, networks and human capital to move and settle in another country. Although the FRA conducted research "about the situation of Roma citizens moving and settling in other EU Member States" in 2009, this research did not aim at estimating the size of Roma's migration but rather to uncover the experiences of Roma mobility through interviews with Roma migrants, local authorities and NGOs in five EU Member State destination countries. The study investigated the push and pull factors and the local policy responses to this phenomenon (FRA 2009).

Another estimation about the extent of the phenomenon referred to by politicians and by the media as "Roma migration" was provided by OSCE (Cahn and Guild 2010). The conclusion of its report was that the phenomenon is of negligible scale: mass migration of Roma as narrated or presumed by some politicians and by the media has never occurred, as most Roma are too powerless and lack the funds to be mobile. The report provided some estimates on the number of migrants of Roma ethnic background based on EU member counties' inflow migration data. It analysed the migration and ethnic statistics of the main destination countries –Austria, Germany and Italy– and established that only a share of the anyways small numbers of Roma populations refer to Roma born outside of the country. In the UK, where fear of "Roma migration" provoked both extensive and racist press coverage as well as explicitly discriminatory measures by the government, the estimates are vague (ibid.: 39).

Other statistics or estimations about the number of "Roma migrants" are rare. In view of the challenges of identification of the target population and of the lack of sampling frames, statistical agencies and research hubs have abstained from such data collection. Even in countries that possess traditionally well-developed, extensive and refined infrastructures of regular surveying of their populations (i.e. Germany's household panels, France's household budget survey, General Household Survey in the UK), to my best knowledge there are no datasets that include both migration background and ethnic identity variables.

One exception is a research carried out at the University of Salford, Manchester, which provided an informed estimation about the number of Roma migrants in the UK. The study built on a questionnaire that was distributed to local authorities across the UK asking for their estimates of the size of the migrant Roma population. However, a total of 151 questionnaires were returned out of 406 issued, thus

estimations based on these surveys may be considered as vague and non-representative. They "estimated that as of 2012 there are at least 197,705 migrant Roma living in the UK" (Brown et al. 2013: 7). In addition to the low response rate (two thirds of the municipalities did not respond and there is incomplete information about how non-response was managed), there is no information about the methods used by local authorities in estimating the number of Roma in their municipality, particularly with respect to the question of determining a person's identity as Roma.[4] It is therefore no surprise that findings provided by the study were fiercely criticized by the academic community (for example, see Matras 2015), even though such criticism did not stop politicians from using it as a reference point in their narratives and claims that restricting migration from A2 countries was necessary (see Leggio in this volume). The study is an example of how an academic actor attempted to generate data where it was obviously lacking but missed to carefully consider the implications that such data–collected with several methodological question marks–might be used as "objective evidence" in a highly hystericized political environment. The question is therefore whether it is worth to produce such vague and methodologically uncertain data about a population that is often in the spotlight in a stigmatizing and stereotypical way. This is particularly consequential when researchers are not certain as to whether the users of the data they produce will reflect upon the vagueness of the data itself, even if the results' shortcomings and ambiguities are described fairly in the study. To put it simply: is bad data better than no data?

2.3.2 Academic Literature on "Roma Migration"

Compared to the small size of the "Roma migrant" population, there is a prolific academic literature on this subject. Over the past decade, numerous journal articles have discussed Roma migration. A Google scholar search on the term "Roma migration" and "Europe" produced 138 hits between 2016 and 2018 alone. Some influential journals dedicated special issues to the topic: Ethnic and Racial Studies; Social Identities; Population, Race and Space; Migration Letters; Local Economy. Similarly, entire books addressed the same issue (for example Matras and Leggio 2017; Bigo et al. 2013; Guy et al. 2004; Vidra 2014). We may conclude that "Roma migration" has become a part of the mainstream scholarly discourse.

While survey and statistical data, by their nature, essentialize the categories of population they focus on, qualitative research is suitable to overcome such an approach. A look to recent academic publications shows us that most studies use an in-depth qualitative methodology or a case study approach to explore the experiences of individuals or of families who have experienced migration and who identify themselves as Roma. There is a wide pool of knowledge collected about the

[4] The question on the base of which estimation were made is the following: "We understand that it may be difficult for you to provide accurate data; however, we would be grateful if you could provide responses to these questions even if it is based on anecdotal information".

motivations that lead Roma citizens to migrate (Vidra 2013; Kovats 2002; Grill 2012; Manzoni 2017; Pantea 2012), showing that in most cases we are talking about circular migration that is induced by employment opportunities, housing conditions and children's schooling options. Many studies analyse the pull and push factors of circular migration, as well as the precarious situation that Roma find themselves in, in both the sending and receiving countries. Studies such as the EU funded project MIGROM have investigated the impact of migration of Roma families and individuals on both the communities of origin and on the communities of destination, while also paying attention to the policy responses to the phenomenon (Matras and Leggio 2017).

An important part of the scholarly literature discusses conceptual challenges related to the essentialization and objectification of the phenomenon that is referred to as "Roma migration", including those that have discussed the representations and perceptions of the phenomenon. Magazzini (2018) in her study on causes and consequences of labelling and thus constructing Roma in Italian and Spanish inclusion policies analysed four waves of the framework convention for the protection of national minorities and arrived at the conclusion that the two countries framed Roma in completely different ways. This in turn has critical consequences on policy actions towards the Roma. Spanish inclusion policies framed Roma in terms of socio-economic disadvantages, while Italian policy documents framed it in terms of cultural otherness.

> However, the differences go beyond the economic-cultural dichotomy and two additional aspects that emerge as prominent in the reports are those of the migrant or foreign status and the "complexity' or "exceptionality" character attributed to the Roma minority. (Magazzini 2018:10)

Fox and colleagues' (2012) study of the policy and tabloid media's discourse on East European migration, including Roma's migration to the UK, revealed the significance of perceived race and colour in the treatment of migrants by policy and the media. They concluded:

> Whiteness thus comes in shades, as it is reflected by the changing imperatives of British immigration policy. […] The Roma frame is particularly effective because it taps into and fleshes out long history of both local and imported anti-Roma prejudice. (Fox et al. 2012: 685, 688)

Van Baar (2011, 2017) discusses the historical roots, the present processes and the consequences of irregularisation of Roma migration in the setting of the European Union. This approach to studying Roma migration exposes a very important aspect of the phenomenon, which might explain the reasons for such a relatively minor social phenomenon (at least in terms of numbers) receiving a significant scholarly, as well as political and mediatic, attention. The interest may lie not in "Roma migrants" or "Roma migration" per se, but in how European citizens, governments, and local authorities and institutions treat it and find legitimations to differentiate "Roma migrants" from other EU citizens:

> Processes of irregularisation have become an integral part of the current movement to legitimize treating Roma differently to other EU citizens; to relegate them to substandard,

> segregated or provisional housing, education, health care and, in the most extreme, increasingly normalized cases, to evict them from their houses or sites and expel them from countries. (van Baar 2017: 9)

Yildiz and De Genova put forward a similar point of view in the introduction to their 2017 special issue on (un)free Roma mobility in the EU:

> Furthermore, this volume shifts the focus conventionally directed at the academic objectification of "the Roma" as such, and instead seeks to foreground and underscore questions about "Europe", 'European'-ness, and EU-ropean citizenship that come into sharper focus through the critical lens of Roma racialisation, marginalisation, securitisation, and criminalisation, and the dynamics of Roma mobility within and across the space of "Europe". (Yıldız and De Genova 2017)

Kóczé (2017) has argued that debates on the migration of Central and East European Roma that haves created a rhetorical – and material – distinction between Roma and non-Roma EU citizens may be understood in the framework of neoliberal Europe. She argues that migration studies "tend to focus on either on the irregularisation and securitization or on the impact of right-wing exclusionary discourse" (Kóczé 2017: 2). Taking this thought one step further we may understand why the merging of the two categories – "Roma" and "migration" – has resulted in a primarily securitizing approach of the political and policy discourses.

2.4 Conceptual and Methodological Considerations

Research, policy, and media give shape to problems. Whether we like it or not, they are agenda setting fields. By framing research on "Roma migrants" we create a group that – regardless of our intentions– will be treated as an objective construct. Although Brubaker in his work "Ethnicity without groups" (2004) put forward that ethnicity can and should be studied without groups, what we see in the arena of public policies is that Roma are mainly treated as a group. Brubacker suggested doing away with "groupism" when studying ethnicity, arguing that it is inaccurate to portray ethnicity in terms of "discrete, bounded groups as constituents of social life" thus treating "ethnic groups, nations and races as substantial entities to which substance and agency can be attributed" (Brubaker 2004: 8). A concise overview of the scholarly literature on "Roma migration" shows that while public policies still refer to Roma in often essentializing terms, Brubaker's basic idea has found good grounds in the research community. Even quantitative empirical research (surveys), which use pre-constructed categories, consider the complex nature of Roma identity at least to some extent. However, empirical sociology (as well as public policies) by its very nature needs to think in terms of groups. While anthropology can study people without assigning them into groups, sociology and public policy, which aim to provide explanations for social phenomena in more general terms, rely on group categories. Against this backdrop, it is legitimate to study ethnicity in terms of groups as long as we as researchers reflect on the problems that might stem from our conceptual and methodological choices. Given that "Roma migrants" and "Roma migration" are especially opaque categories, it is crucial to carefully consider the

consequences of the definitions and research methods employed. We otherwise run the risk of objectifying "Roma migrants" a group that is even more vague and inconsistent than the two separated concepts of "Roma" and "migrant".

An alternative way to studying "Roma migration" is to approach the field in terms of intersectionalities (Krizsán and Zentai 2012). The "Roma migrant" represents an intersection of various vulnerabilities and of two overlapping targets of stigmatization. Based on the European Social Survey data it is evident that "Roma" is the most rejected minority in the European public opinion, while the label "migrant" also carries stigmatized connotations in many countries. Additionally, both "groups" suffer from a wide range of social inequalities, vulnerabilities and a lack of empowerment. Despite reflecting a situation characterized by complex inequality, an intersectionality approach can however result in empowering and emancipatory debates and experiences, as the flourishing discourse on Roma gender studies and Romani women's struggles stand to testify (Kóczé et al. 2018; Kóczé 2009; Vincze 2014). The question for further potential research is whether treating the mobility of Roma individuals within the framework of migration studies – rather than, as most research currently does, within the framework of Romani Studies – could contribute to the de-essentialization of Roma identity. The fact that this volume is part of a research series on migration, aims at advancing an approach that regards Roma as one group among many others that engage in mobility for a variety of reasons. This chapter's proposal is that employing an intersectionality lens to the mobility of Roma individuals might drive the entire field towards a fairer, more critical and less essentializing discourse.

2.5 Conclusion

As shown in this chapter the conceptualization of the category of "Roma migrant" is extremely vague and fraught with ambiguities. The few existing estimates on "Roma migration" suggest that the mere size of the phenomenon is insignificant and cannot account for the extensive political discourse and media coverage it has attracted. What is it about "Roma migration" that might therefore explain the vast academic and policy literature on this topic, and the extensive and hostile media attention it has received? I argue that it is exactly the vagueness of "Roma migration" that lends it to be used as a symbol for society's deep, historic fears of the 'other' rooted in racialized prejudice. In short, the heightened interest towards "Roma migrants" has little to do with the actual migrant population of Roma origin, while it has much more to do with the public perception of what Roma migration represents to the European politics and public. "Roma migrants" are a racialized minority in a highly precarious position who have been constructed as a threat to the public, to culture, to wealth, and to the safety of the country (van Baar 2017). In this sense, "Roma migrants" serve as a perfect subject to represent the "ultimate other": they are difficult to circumscribe in objective terms but are easy to demonize using deeply rooted stereotypes. This might explain why hostile political and media discourse spreads so efficiently. Albeit with different objectives and approaches, this

might also be the reason why social science has taken such an interest in this phenomenon: The study of the conceptualizations, of the constructions and of the discussions around "Roma migration" are an apt lens to explain the (dis)functions of our own societies, rather than about the migrant population of Roma origin.

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Chapter 3
A Roma European Crisis Road-Map: A Holistic Answer to a Complex Problem

Nuno Ferreira

3.1 The Persistence of the Roma Crisis

The Roma are recognized as being deeply discriminated against throughout the European Union (EU) and in all areas of life (European Commission – Directorate-General for Communication 2015). The matters that have been most publicized and made the headlines concern the expulsion of Roma individuals from countries such as France and Italy, and the limitations imposed on the free movement of the Roma. These matters are undoubtedly of extreme seriousness and have a significantly detrimental impact on the well-being of the Roma affected. The gravity of the situation and inadequacy of both Member States and European organisations, particularly the EU, in dealing with these matters have already been addressed by several authors (O'Nions 2011; Ferreira and Kostakopoulou 2016). It is therefore important to shift the focus to all other problems faced by the Roma, especially considering that the latest economic crisis seems to have disproportionately affected the Roma (European Commission 2014).

This chapter thus aims to explore what the EU law and policy have been in relation to Roma issues beyond free movement and forced expulsions. In doing so, the chapter will determine the line of action EU institutions should adopt regarding Roma matters. In particular, it questions the social integration approach and advocates in favour of a more holistic approach. To achieve this aim, this contribution goes beyond the usual disjointed analysis of discrete policy aspects and puts forward a comprehensive and critical analysis of all key Roma-related EU initiatives and norms beyond free movement and EU citizenship. Building on the analysis of a broad range of legal instruments, policy papers and case law, this contribution offers a logical narrative that integrates considerations of a legal, social, economic and cultural nature, thus putting together all the jigsaw pieces that currently contribute

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to the EU Roma policy. This, in turn, allows for the clear identification of the limitations of the current state-of-affairs and for the production of novel policy recommendations, something facilitated by references to and insights from the Council of Europe (CoE) activity in this field woven throughout the analysis.

The analysis starts by considering what competences and scope for action the EU possesses in relation to Roma issues, as well as the EU's approach and increasing number of initiatives in this field (Sect. 3.2). The chapter then moves on to considering particular areas of interest in this field, in particular discrimination law and policy (Sect. 3.3) and broader (individual and collective) human rights law and policy (Sect. 3.4). This will indicate the insufficiency of limiting EU action to particular, orthodox areas of intervention, which justifies considering a range of other aspects that can ensure a holistic approach to Roma issues (including matters such as participation, mainstreaming and funding) (Sect. 3.5). It will gradually become apparent throughout this contribution that a holistic approach is required from the EU in this field, one that combines participation and responsibility to foster both empowerment and responsibilization. Consequently, it will become clear in the conclusion what future directions in the EU's Roma law and policy can secure more humane and effective results.

3.2 The European Union's Scope for Action and Initiatives

The potential of the tools available to the EU in the fight against Roma social and economic deprivation has been recognized from early on by the EU institutions (European Parliament 2008; European Commission 2010a). The EU treaties, in particular, are rich in references to values that should guide EU action, namely human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities (Article 2 Treaty on European Union (TEU)), the rights, freedoms and principles set out in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU (CFR), European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and the constitutional traditions common to the Member States (Article 6 TEU), the promotion of a high level of employment, adequate social protection, the fight against social exclusion and a high level of education, training and protection of human health (Article 9 Treaty on the Functioning of the EU, TFEU) and combating discrimination based on racial or ethnic origin, amongst other grounds (Article 10 TFEU). The EU also possesses clear competences in anti-discrimination (Article 19 TFEU), social and labor policy (Article 153 TFEU), education and vocational training (Articles 165 ff TFEU), culture (Article 167 TFEU) and health (Article 168 TFEU), which may all be used in an obvious and direct way to address the issues faced by the Roma.

Additionally, the EU possesses competences in other fields that may complement those mentioned above to support a holistic approach to the issues affecting Roma communities and individuals. These include the Economic, Social and Territorial Cohesion policies (Articles 174 ff TFEU) and the European Neighbourhood and Enlargement policies (European Commission 2012). More than a mere matter of legal competence, this is a matter of policy relevance: there are four million Roma

in Turkey and one million in the Western Balkans (European Commission 2014: section 4), which means that a possible future enlargement to these regions will considerably increase the Roma population in the EU, with all the inherent socio-economic consequences.

To overcome the limited competences of the EU, its institutions can also resort to Article 352 TFEU, the 'flexibility clause' that allows the EU to adopt the necessary measures to achieve the Treaties' objectives when the necessary powers have not been enshrined in the Treaties. This range of competences, although limited, puts the EU in a potentially excellent position to devise a holistic approach to its Roma policy. In exercising these competences, the EU sees itself as a 'coordinator of national policy and facilitator of policy dialogue' (Reding 2010), in a context of joint responsibility and complementary competences (European Commission 2010a). This has determined the exact degree of intervention that the EU has been willing to undertake in this field.

All EU institutions have contributed somehow to the EU's Roma policy, but the Commission and Parliament clearly stand out as the most active in the development of an EU Roma policy (see Magazzini's, Chiozza's and Rossi's contributions to this book). Key highlights include the 2009 launch of the European Platform for Roma Inclusion, which brings together EU institutions, international organizations, domestic authorities and civil society stakeholders, in an effort to exchange best practices and ensure effective cooperation (European Commission 2010a). Another highlight occurred in 2010, which brought the Commission's Communication "The social and economic integration of the Roma in Europe" (European Commission 2010a), followed by the 2011 Communication "An EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020" (European Commission 2011a). By establishing targets in the fields of poverty reduction, employment and education, the 2011 Communication established a link between an EU Roma policy and the Europe 2020 strategy.

The year of 2013 brought a follow up Communication entitled "Steps Forward in Implementing National Roma Integration Strategies" (European Commission 2013a). In this document, the Commission made its second assessment of the Roma integration strategies. It highlighted the need for Member States to involve more effectively local and regional authorities and civil society, allocate more resources from national budgets to the Roma strategies, monitor and enable policy adjustments (including the production of impact indicators), fight discrimination more forcefully, and endow the national contact points with the necessary status, capacity, resources, mandate and political support. In its 2014 report (European Commission 2014), the Commission not only assessed progress regarding education, employment, healthcare and housing, but also regarding the fight against discrimination and the use of funding. The overall assessment was cautious, to say the least: "progress, although still slow, is beginning to take shape in most Member States" (European Commission 2014: section 3). In relation to all aspects covered by the report, Member States were asked to step up their efforts, as so much remained to be done. The subsequent 2016 report did not bring any good news: the focus remained on education, employment, health and housing (European Commission 2016a). Worryingly, some Member States (namely Denmark, Luxembourg and the Netherlands) did not report to the European Commission on the measures (if any)

taken in this field, without any apparent consequences. And despite some positive trends (including in relation to early childhood education and use of funds), the overall picture has become even bleaker. What is striking in all these policy papers is the almost complete absence of allusion to "hard law" instruments and actual EU sanctions, which gives the EU Roma policy a rather weak tone. A holistic approach, as advocated in this contribution, requires a more prominent role for "hard law" instruments in the Roma policy, as will be considered further below.

The European Parliament has also enthusiastically contributed towards the formation of an EU Roma policy, especially with strong-worded texts regarding the fingerprinting of the Roma in Italy (European Parliament 2008). The 2011 resolution on the EU strategy on Roma inclusion immediately preceded the Commission's "An EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020", but whilst the Parliament prompted the Commission to concentrate on fundamental rights, education, culture, employment, housing, healthcare and political and civil participation as priority areas (European Parliament 2011), the Commission opted for only four priority areas (education, employment, housing and healthcare) (European Commission 2011a), leaving aside fundamental rights, culture and political and civil participation. This runs counter to the holistic approach advocated by this contribution, which, as will be seen below, requires a more thorough consideration of human rights and political and civil participation.

Despite its apparently broad substantive scope, EU Roma policy in fact falls considerably short of a holistic policy backed up by effective enforcement mechanisms. It is in the aftermath of this succession of policy initiatives and inter-institutional dialogue in which we now find ourselves. Much has been discussed and proposed in these documents, but it is crucial to assess what tangible legal tools have been made available to the Roma to fight their socio-economic deprivation. The obvious starting point is discrimination law tools.

3.3 The Limitations of a Discrimination Policy Approach

The potential to use the Race Equality Directive to address several of the problems affecting the Roma is apparent.[1] Indeed, Article 3 of the Race Equality Directive brings within its scope the prohibition of discrimination on race or ethnic grounds in relation to forced evictions, lack of provision of adequate housing, school segregation and discriminatory provision of services. These are still urgent matters, as such practices are still common in some Member States (Amnesty International 2015).

And it is, perhaps, regarding educational segregation that the Race Equality Directive – in conjunction with the CFR (namely its Articles 14, 21, 22 and 24 on the rights to education, prohibition of discrimination, respect for cultural diversity and rights of the child respectively) – has the greatest potential in the context of

[1] Council Directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000 implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin, OJ L 180, 19.7.2000, pp. 22–26.

Roma deprivation. The Commission has rightly made use of this Directive in the context of school segregation by issuing letters of formal notice against Hungary, Czech Republic and Slovakia and subsequently initiating proceedings against the latter two owing to their legislation and administrative practices leading to Roma children being over-represented in special schools for children with mental disabilities and being segregated in mainstream schools (European Commission 2016a, b). The effective use of this legal tool before the Court of Justice of the EU (CJEU) by victims of this form of discrimination may lead to a powerful synergy between the case law of the CJEU and of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) on this matter. This seems to be well illustrated by the decisions in *DH and other v Czech Republic*,[2] *Sampanis and others v Greece*,[3] and *Oršuš v Croatia*,[4] where the ECtHR referred to the Race Equality Directive to support its understanding of the legal principles applicable to the instances of school segregation before them. This approach can be used as an example of many other aspects of Roma lives that may be improved by a more systematic coupling of specific anti-discrimination legal tools (such as the Race Equality Directive) and broader human rights instruments (such as the ECHR). It remains true that the EU lacks competence to organize domestic educational systems, so its ("hard law") intervention is mostly restricted to anti-discrimination measures. Yet, the potential of this intervention can be far-reaching, in the light of the lack of margin of appreciation and limited role of parental consent in the context of the application of this Directive (as opposed to the ECHR system) (Stalford 2012: 164).

The Parliament has also highlighted the role of Article 18 TFEU (that prohibits discrimination on grounds of nationality) in the context of discrimination between EU citizens of Roma origin and other EU citizens, particularly regarding fingerprint collection by Italian authorities (European Parliament 2008). Although this treaty norm is ancillary to market building (as opposed to an inherently anti-discriminatory provision), it constitutes part of the EU anti-discrimination arsenal and should thus be used whenever appropriate.

Yet, anti-discrimination law is nowadays consensually seen as an insufficient and inadequate instrument to address the historical and wide-spread institutional and social discrimination suffered by the Roma. The limits pointed out tend to relate to discrimination law's scope and enforcement (including monitoring and sanctioning). O'Nions, for instance, argues that the Race Equality Directive's formal approach, coupled with a lack of focused strategy and with the principle of subsidiarity, have left Member States to deal with those policies that could ensure greater social equality (O'Nions 2011: 363). It may be questioned how formal EU anti-discrimination policy really is and how much the EU is lacking a focused strategy. Still, it remains true that the current discrimination law framework relies on an individual claim model, which does not address collective, deeply-entrenched socio-economic disparities, so a more holistic approach to Roma policy-making is urgent.

[2] Application No. 57325/00, Judgment of the Grand Chamber, 13 November 2007.

[3] Application No. 32526/05, Judgment of 5 June 2008.

[4] Application No. 15766/03, Judgment of 16 March 2010.

It is also crucial to examine how particular groups of Roma are discriminated against. It has been confirmed that Roma women are victims of multiple discrimination (even to a greater extent than other ethnic minorities), and are affected particularly with regards to education, health, employment, and participation in public/political life (Corsi et al. 2010; European Parliament 2011). Contentiously, though, some of the sources of such multiple discrimination have been located not only externally (health services, educational structures, potential employers, etc.), but also internally, i.e., in connection with 'the role of women in Roma culture and family structure' – in particular with having caring tasks from a very early age, marrying at a young age, and giving birth to a high number of children (Corsi et al. 2010: 12). The range of social, cultural and economic factors that interact to produce the current reality is vast and complex, which requires not only gender mainstreaming, but also an enhanced degree of intercultural sensitivity and possibly evolution, again highlighting the importance of a holistic approach to Roma policy-making.

Similarly, Roma children have been recognized as particularly vulnerable to discriminatory practices, being amongst the most socio-economically deprived within the Roma minority (European Parliament 2011). This is starkly illustrated by reports of exclusion of children from French primary schools (ERRC 2014). This state-of-affairs has warranted several EU initiatives, including requests for particular regard for children in the monitoring systems of the implementation of the National Roma Integration Strategies (European Parliament 2013: par. 12).

Bearing in mind all of the above, the measures required to develop anti-discrimination law into a more appropriate tool to improve the lives of the Roma thus include: (i) broadening the scope of the current discrimination legal framework as to cover more fields of life; (ii) bringing within its scope instances of multi and intersectional discrimination; and (iii) promoting affirmative/positive action (namely in the fields of education and labor) (Committee of Ministers 2008: section VII.2; European Commission – Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities 2010; European Parliament 2011: para. 4(c), 68, 76–78). The EU could go as far as amending the Race Equality Directive to require Member States to introduce affirmative action measures to address socio-economic inequality, rather than leaving this to the discretion of domestic authorities. A shift of mindset is required to more fully incorporate affirmative action into the EU legal framework – not just as tolerable, but as a necessary good as part of a more holistic approach to Roma policy-making.

No matter how good an anti-discrimination legal framework may be, it is of limited value if there is insufficient awareness of its existence. The lack of current awareness by Roma individuals of their right not to be discriminated is striking: in an EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) survey, 73% of the Roma individuals interviewed replied that they believed that there was no law forbidding discrimination against ethnic minorities or that they did not know whether there was such a law (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights n.d.). Awareness-raising is thus an essential element of a holistic Roma policy to effectively use discrimination law to improve the situation of the Roma.

At any rate, the overlapping layers of discrimination and rights deprivation that affect the Roma cannot be addressed by a traditional, unimaginative and classic paradigm of discrimination law that relies on individual claims and negative obligations. An effective approach to this complex phenomenon will require a much more holistic approach, including political leadership and shaping public discourses to promote the need to respect and value diversity (European Commission 2014: section 3.5). Yet, not even a broader public and political discourse about diversity will suffice – an even broader framework, one entailing human rights and minority protection discourses, is required in this context. That makes it vital to consider how the wider EU human rights framework can be used to address the problems that affect the Roma.

3.4 Looking for the Answer in Human Rights and Minorities' Protection

In the light of the acknowledged insufficiency and inadequacy of anti-discrimination law to comprehensively address the difficulties suffered by the Roma, a broader framework protecting the fundamental rights of the Roma is often seen as a more appropriate tool to help the Roma improve their lives – something (at least to some extent) within reach of the EU on the basis of Article 6 TEU. This has been recognized by the European Parliament, which also highlighted the relevance of Article 7 TEU in this context, thus hinting at the possibility of the EU, as a last resort, declaring a clear risk of a serious breach of the fundamental rights of the Roma by a Member State and even suspending that Member State's voting rights (European Parliament 2011). Crucially, the CFR establishes the principles of non-discrimination (including on grounds of race, color, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, membership of a national minority and birth; Article 21) and of respect for cultural, religious and linguistic diversity (Article 22). The use of broader human rights discourses by EU institutions in the context of Roma policy can thus be very powerful. Even if these may not afford new competences to the EU (Article 51 CFR), they can ensure more comprehensive analyses and appropriate policy-making.

A key example of how the EU human rights framework can be used to defend the fundamental rights of the Roma regards the census and fingerprinting of the Roma in Italy on the basis of their ethnicity. Indeed, this initiative constituted a violation of the fundamental rights of the Roma affected, including their personal dignity (European Parliament 2008: par. N). The CoE Commissioner for Human Rights concluded that the EU Data Protection Directive had been violated by the Italian census targeting the Roma, as none of the exceptions in that Directive could apply to the case in question (Hammarberg 2009: par. 59).[5]

[5] Directive 95/46/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 1995 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, OJ L 281, 23.11.1995, pp. 31–50.

Another example of how EU law designed to protect fundamental rights can be used to defend the Roma concerns hate speech. Recital 6 of the Council Framework Decision on Combating Racism expressly acknowledges that racism and xenophobia cannot be addressed exclusively by criminal law, as a more comprehensive framework is required for those purposes.[6] Still, this is an essential instrument to ensure that across the EU all forms of racist and xenophobic offences, including instigation, aiding and abetting (Article 2), are punished by criminal law and that their racist or xenophobic nature constitutes an aggravating circumstance or at least is taken into consideration in the determination of the penalty (Article 4). The future may also bring improvements to this Decision, namely the prohibition of any crime committed with a discriminatory motive and the obligation on states to investigate any allegation of discriminatory motive (Amnesty International 2014: 31).

Human rights concerns relating to minorities, including the Roma, have also permeated EU's neighbourhood and accession policies. Yet, the pre-accession level of scrutiny regarding the respect afforded to the rights of the Roma has been considered poor and at the post-accession stage such matters ironically become much harder to monitor and control (O'Nions 2011: 366). Consequently, although the "carrot" of accession to the EU was used to introduce some improvements in the lives of the Roma in accession countries, its full potential was far from exhausted and the Roma within accession countries remained generally socio-economically deprived (O'Nions 2011: 367).

Limiting one-self to these instruments produced by the EU only offers patchwork protection to the Roma, so the EU needs to go beyond its own human rights instruments and rely on the international – especially regional – human rights framework. In the light of Article 6 TEU and its allusion to the ECHR, the obvious complement and support to the EU's own framework is the rich array of tools produced by the CoE. The CoE has developed a web of conventions, recommendations, resolutions and case law that can be effectively used by the EU to enhance the protection that its own framework offers the Roma. The EU – an economically and politically powerful organisation – can rely on the relatively strong standards produced by the CoE (Ahmed 2015), which often lacks the EU's political and economic leverage. Key examples can be found in the work of several CoE institutions, with the Committee of Ministers being particularly prolific in this field.[7] The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) has naturally also paid attention to the plight of the Roma.[8] All this policy activity has been offered a

[6] Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA of 28 November 2008 on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law, OJ L 328, 6.12.2008, pp. 55–58.

[7] For example, Recommendation CM/Rec(2012)9 to member States on mediation as an effective tool for promoting respect for human rights and social inclusion of Roma, adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 12 September 2012 at the 1149th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies.

[8] For example, ECRI General Policy Recommendation no. 3 on combating racism and intolerance against Roma/Gypsies, adopted on 6 March 1998.

useful and coherent umbrella under the 1995 Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (ETS No.157).

Yet, the most prominent aspect of the CoE activity in supporting the human rights of the Roma has been the case law produced by the ECtHR. The Court has made judgments on a range of very grave violations of ECHR rights affecting the Roma, including school segregation (discussed above, Sect. 3.3), beatings, violence by police, public harassment, state-sponsored discrimination, forced sterilisation and lack of investigation of violation of rights of the Roma.[9] Another significant line of case law relates to caravan-settlements in the UK.[10] The Court generally found that the UK's rules on caravan-settlement and town planning were neutral (hence non-discriminatory), within the allowed margin of appreciation, and sufficiently sensitive to the needs of the Roma. This has been done at the cost of criminalising the Roma for parking their caravans on the properties owned by themselves (Barth 2007: 383), which seems to indicate an instance of indirect discrimination that is hard to justify. This is even more the case if one recalls the special protection that cultural practices of minority groups deserve and that nomadism is an extremely relevant cultural practice, which, despite having been historically slandered as "vagabondage", actually reflects a "sophisticated commercial trading system" (Barth 2007: 397 ff). It is possible that a more stringent assessment of instances of indirect discrimination under the Race Equality Directive, supported by Articles 21 and 22 CFR, could lead to greater protection of the Roma caravan-settlement practice.

In an attempt to follow the lead of this arsenal of tools developed by the CoE, the EU institutions have occasionally adopted a human rights, minorities and culturally sensitive tone, arguing in favour of the protection of the cultural and linguistic identity of the Roma, the value of their cultural heritage to richer and more diverse societies, and the need to take into account cultural diversity in the context of policy-making and implementation, namely in the context of education and healthcare (European Parliament 2011: para. 4(c), 12, 79, European Commission 2014: sections 3.1 and 3.3). The value of cultural diversity, however, clearly also has its limits, as the human rights and cultural relativism debate has evidenced for a long time (Donders 2010). A clear sign of this dilemma is the attempt to reconcile intercultural sensitivity with the wish to prohibit cultural practices that are harmful to children, such as child marriages and child labour (European Parliament 2011). Whilst it is legitimate not to go

[9] See, for example, *Velikova v Bulgaria* (Application No. 41488/98, Judgment of 18 May 2000), *Nachova and Others v Bulgaria* (Applications No. 43577/98 and 43579/98, Judgment of 6 July 2005), *Anguelova v Bulgaria* (Application No. 38361/97, Judgment of 13 June 2002), *M and others v Italy and Bulgaria* (Application No. 40020/03, Judgment of 31 July 2012), *Stoica v Romania* (Application No. 42722/02, Judgment of 4 March 2008), *Assenov and Others v Bulgaria* (Application No. 90/1997/874/1086, Judgment of 28 October 1998), *V.C. v. Slovakia* (Application no. 18968/07, Judgment of 8 November 2011), and *Lăcătuş v Romania* (Application No. 12694/04, Judgment of 13 November 2012).

[10] For example, *Buckley v UK* (Application No. 20348/92, Judgment of 29 September 1996), *Varey v UK* (Application No. 26662/95, Judgment of 21 December 2000), *Coster v UK* (Application No. 24876/94, Judgment of 18 January 2001), and *Jane Smith v UK* (Application No. 25154/94, Judgment of 18 January 2001).

as far as letting cultural relativism justify child labour or child marriage, a more culturally sensitive approach could be adopted regarding very precise and practical matters. For instance, the proof of sufficient resources and of residence, for the purposes of fulfilling the requirements set in the Citizenship Directive,[11] should be carried out in the light of the cultural specificities of some Roma communities, namely the fact that individuals may be solely engaged in the informal economic sector and may be camp dwellers (Ferreira and Kostakopoulou 2016).[12]

A human rights and minority protection perspective of the EU Roma policy can do much to overcome some of the limitations of a purely anti-discrimination framework. Still, a human rights framework is itself plagued with limitations (O'Nions 2007: 19), and it cannot address a range of non-individual/human rights aspects that a Roma policy requires. A more holistic framework is thus required, as it will now be seen.

3.5 Adopting a Holistic View of EU Roma Law and Policy

The need for adopting a holistic approach to policy-making regarding the Roma is patent if, besides all aspects discussed above, one considers the inter-connectedness of all problems afflicting this minority. For instance, segregation in schools leads to poor education, which in turn leads to reduced chances of success in the labour market, lower income and, more generally, lower socio-economic status, which also leads to a lack of ability to access healthcare and articulate one's needs at all levels (including political), leading to further exclusion, discrimination and segregation (European Commission 2014: section 3.3). The complex and web-like vicious circles described here are extremely hard to address by isolated or sectoral policies, and thus require a holistic, complex and dynamic approach by the EU institutions.

The notion of mainstreaming, so familiar in the field of EU discrimination law (in particular with reference to gender), is key here and has been adopted regarding the needs of the Roma (Committee of Ministers 2008: section VII.6, European Commission 2010c, 2014: section 2). Indeed, in any legal and policy-making activity, the EU institutions (alongside domestic and regional authorities) should bear in mind the needs and interests of the Roma and the impact of any decision on the Roma (or any other socio-economic-cultural minority group, for that matter) (European Commission – Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities 2010). This has been reflected in EU initiatives in a range of fields, including regarding youth, culture, education, employment and housing policies (European Commission 2010a). Mainstreaming, however, only improves pol-

[11] Directive 2004/38/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 29 April 2004, on the right of citizens of the Union and their family members to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States, OJ L 158, 30.4.2004, p. 77–123.

[12] Also suggested by Rec(2005)4 on improving the housing conditions of Roma and Travellers in Europe (adopted on 23 February 2005) and Rec(2004)14 on the movement and encampment of Travellers in Europe (adopted on 1 December 2004).

icy that already exists for other purposes, and the needs of the Roma require targeted policies, so it is necessary to engage with more complex and sophisticated targeted policies (European Commission – Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities 2010). These policies should target all actors of Roma discrimination, deprivation, hostility and disadvantage, be them private or public, Roma or non-Roma, European or domestic.

To support such targeted policies funding is essential, which accounts for funding having become a recurrent theme in EU policy-making. The different EU funds have come to be seen as tools with great potential to address many of the problems the Roma experience. This is also reflected in the creation of the European Network on Social Inclusion and Roma under the Structural Funds. The Commission has been clearly keen on seeing EU funds being used in Roma-specific projects or, at least, projects that have the Roma as potential beneficiaries, and has changed the applicable rules to address, amongst others, the needs of the Roma, such as housing (European Commission 2010e). The use of EU funds in this context is, however, also plagued with problems, including difficult and time-consuming application procedures, lack of local administrative and technical expertise, limited capacity to co-fund by domestic authorities, insufficient use of funds ("lack of absorption capacity") by Member States, inappropriateness of the projects funded, limited impact of the funds used, and lack of involvement by civil society and Roma communities themselves (European Commission 2010d, European Parliament 2011: para. 36, 49, 55). The Parliament has summarized many of the issues at stake in this regard, by calling on the Commission and Members States to launch "more target- and development-oriented, complex, flexible and sustainable programmes with a longer time coverage and greater territorial relevance, focusing on the most disadvantaged micro-regions in their geographical, socio-economic and cultural context, while also addressing the problem of suburban and rural poverty and segregated Roma neighbourhoods" (European Parliament 2011: par. 36).

To address the shortcomings identified throughout time in relation to EU funding, the Commission proposed changes to the cohesion policy 2014–2020 that allow a combination of EU funds, private and third sector resources, and urged Member States to use resources on social investment (European Commission 2013a: 7, 12–13). A significant proportion of the funding made available by the EU is to be dedicated to "investment in human capital, employment and social inclusion", which necessarily includes projects that benefit the Roma, such as housing schemes (European Commission 2014: section 3.6). As the Commission sums it up, there is the need for a "multi-sector, multi-stakeholder and multi-fund approach" (European Commission 2014: section 3.6). Funding has also been seen as a potentially useful tool to endow the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) process with greater effectiveness, as associating funding mechanisms with the peer-review processes may encourage domestic authorities to be more proactive and prone to change (European Parliament 2011: par. M).

As with the use of EU funding, the problem with many other strategies and measures relating to the Roma relates to the lack of monitoring and evaluation of the implementation stage. EU policy-makers have thus highlighted the importance of

monitoring and enabling policy adjustment (European Commission 2013a: par. 1), including the collection of reliable data and evaluation of results (European Commission 2010d). Similarly, to ensure adequate and effective implementation of projects funded by the EU, the role of mediators has been recurrently highlighted, particularly in the context of schools and the healthcare sector (European Parliament 2011: para. G and 4(c), European Commission 2014: section 3.3). According to CoE's guidance, mediators should be chosen in consultation with the communities in question, and serve as contact persons for both authorities and communities for the purposes of disseminating information, facilitate policy-making and assist in the implementation of measures (Committee of Ministers 2008: section VII.3). Yet, rather than relying on mediators on a long-term basis, communities and individuals should continue to be empowered and educated to be able to dispense with mediators in due course (Committee of Ministers 2008: section VII.3.ii).

Crucially, the focus throughout EU and domestic Roma strategies is placed on integration. An illustration of that is the Commission's belief that "all Roma policies should aim at integrating Roma into standard schools, labour market and society rather than creating a parallel society" (European Commission 2010c). Integration, however, is far from being the best approach. Integration, or even inclusion, is an unfortunate focus for any approach to address the difficulties experienced by the Roma, as it directs minds to ideas of the smaller group being absorbed by the larger group, losing its identity and changing its characteristics for the sake of fitting into the homogenising supra-structure – thus raising fears of a return to past assimilationist policies (O'Nions 2007: 5–6). Although "integration" is seen by integrative communication theory as requiring a much lower degree of absorption into the host society than "assimilation" does (Berry 1997), the EU policy-makers seem to see "integration" as demanding much more from the Roma than mere respect for the key values of the host society. This has been put down in words in a rather unfortunate way by Commissioner Reding, by stating that "[w]e need dedication (…) from Roma communities to be willing to integrate and to be willing to have a normal way of living" (Reding 2014: 35:15). Yet, the "normalising" pressure lacks any sort of legitimacy unless any illegal activities are in question.

Contrarily, one should favour alternative notions that require a smaller degree of abdication of one's own cultural identity. For example, a much better theoretical and policy-making framework for the Roma and other socio-economic-cultural minorities may be simply *convivencia*, as Commissioner Reding herself mentioned at the Second European Roma Summit – *convivencia* understood as a form of harmonious cohabitation or coexistence impregnated with respect and tolerance for other cultures and religions (Reding 2010). This framework would be much closer to recognising the importance of intercultural dialogue and pluralist approaches, as highlighted in current scholarly debates on social relationships (O'Nions 2007: 18–19 and 174ff, Kostakopoulou 2009, Mansouri 2017). The Parliament has also highlighted the value of intercultural dialogue (European Parliament 2011: par. 74), and has even offered a positive example of a dynamic understanding of *convivencia*, in the context of education: those children of families wishing to maintain a nomadic life style should be offered the possibility to attend school in a less rigid format, possibly by offering educational activities in Roma camps (European Parliament 2011: par. 89).

Such an approach based on intercultural dialogue would favour greater equality and dignity. This would not, however, mean that communities would remain isolated and detached; on the contrary, this approach would be necessarily accompanied by a dialogical strategy, in the sense that communities should enter into dialogue and cooperate to contribute towards the common good, even if retaining different cultural traditions (Goodwin 2009: 147). At the very least, the EU should adopt a richer and broader understanding of "integration", along the lines of the CoE, which intertwines integration with community empowerment, capacity building, intercultural awareness of the rest of society, and respect for the Roma and Traveller identity (Committee of Ministers 2008: section II). Accommodation of cultural differences within the limits of the rule of law is paramount to create a harmonious and peaceful society, one that truly values, respects and promotes cultural diversity. But we may actually be going in the opposite direction. The Commission's campaign "for Roma with Roma" – fighting Roma stereotypes and promoting cultural understanding – is a positive step (European Commission 2016a: 2.2), but EU official documents need to similarly reflect that mind-set.

One may legitimately fear that EU law and policy on the Roma is, in fact, distancing itself from culturally sensitive and socially embedded initiatives, in favour of a more utilitarian view of these matters. As alluded to above, in 2010 Commissioner Reding opted to focus on *convivencia*, allied with participation, equal rights and equal opportunities for the Roma – something akin to an intercultural dialogue or "living together in dignity" approach. Yet, the Commission's subsequent outputs on this topic have increasingly shifted the focus towards the economic benefits of social integration. Although references to these economic benefits may have been made *en passant* in the early outputs of the Commission (or at least only after the fundamental rights, social and moral reasons to act had been mentioned) (Andor 2010; Reding 2010; European Commission 2011b, c), those references have become increasingly pervasive, until almost overtaking the basic rationale for undertaking any initiative in this field. For instance, the 2013 Commission's memo on the International Roma Day goes as far as to list a range of reasons of material nature ("productivity", "investment", "growth") as to why "Roma inclusion makes sense", failing to mention rights, social or moral imperatives a single time, and simply dropping the word 'equality' towards the end of the memo (European Commission 2013b). The "cultural and historical factors and gender roles" (Reding 2010) that required so much attention in 2010 are nowhere to be found in more recent papers from the Commission.

This shift seems to have been influenced, at least partly, by the adoption of the Europe 2020 strategy, so often referred to in the Commission's work on the Roma. The focus is currently on "delivering growth", with aims in the areas of employment, innovation, education, poverty reduction and climate/energy (European Commission 2010b). The most recent European Commission report on assessing the implementation of the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies reiterates that message by stating that the "Commission has linked monitoring progress in Roma inclusion to its wider growth agenda, Europe 2020" (European Commission 2016a). The apparently benign nature of these aims is tainted by the disproportionate emphasis on the economic benefits of Roma integration (amounting to around

EUR 0.5 billion a year) alleged by the World Bank in a policy note presented in 2010 (World Bank 2010) and used by the EU in several documents (European Commission 2011b, c). Even if this trend may occur due to the relatively anodyne political strategic aim of harnessing support for the "Roma cause" or couching EU's action more safely within the remit of EU competences, the message conveyed is still that it is imperative to support the Roma for the sake of the rest of the society, not for the sake of the Roma themselves. This can hardly be interpreted as a humane approach to such matters. And even if, for some reason, this may be considered a caricature of the real state-of-affairs, it cannot be denied that the EU's policy has distanced itself from a fully-fledged humane, culturally sensitive and morally righteous policy.

This worrying trend is compounded by the fact that, more generally, the Commission highlights the "benefits of diversity" (European Commission 2014: section 3.5), rather than the need to respect and value it for its inherent moral good, which may be interpreted as diversity only deserving respect if it brings benefits. The danger of this approach is that diversity will stop deserving attention and support if it is proven that no tangible economic or otherwise material benefits derive from it. This inappropriate emphasis on the (economic) benefits of Roma integration and diversity contrasts sharply with the CoE's emphasis on protection from racism and discrimination, participation and mediation. Indeed, the CoE's approach to the Roma seems more culturally sensitive and less prescriptive. This is not to say the EU institutions are not capable of such an approach. For example, in the field of education, the Commission has shown a good degree of cultural sensitivity (European Commission – Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture 2012). Yet, such an approach by the EU has become rarer. Even if a clear reflection of the different histories and mandates of the CoE and the EU, such a difference in these organisations' approaches requires adjustments for the sake of the dignity and autonomy of the Roma.

Perhaps a way of bringing EU law and policy on the Roma back to a more humane approach would be to allow future initiatives to be informed by the capabilities approach developed by Sen (1992, 2010). Hints at this approach can be read between the lines in some EU policies on the Roma: for example, Commissioner Reding has talked about "strengthening the capacity of potential beneficiaries" (Reding 2010), and Commissioner Andor has spoken of strengthening capacity and ownership and of Roma inclusion having "to be done with the Roma communities, not for them – and certainly not instead of them" (Andor 2010). This focus on capabilities and capacity-building is inextricably linked to the promotion of the civil and political participation of the Roma to a greater degree, a fundamental rights issue in itself (O'Nions 2007: 236, European Commission – Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities 2010; Ferreira and Kostakopoulou 2016). Despite the Parliament's emphasis on the importance of participation (European Parliament 2011: par. 4(a)) and the Commission's realisation of that importance (European Commission 2010d), the EU initiatives in this field have neglected the importance of this policy dimension. For now, participation is very much limited to the platforms that the Roma themselves have successfully created, such as the European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC). A greater degree of civic

and political Roma participation is necessary to ensure that Roma interests are appropriately considered, and that the Roma are empowered to take part in all decision and policy-making affecting them.

An analysis of EU law and policy regarding the Roma may not, however, simply conclude with the preference for a holistic approach. In other words, a holistic approach entails more than simply the consideration of a range of factors that should affect the choice of policy and action by the EU: consistent with the importance of Roma participation, attention also needs to be placed on what is required from the Roma themselves. Although frequently avoided, for the sake of not falling into the trap of blaming the Roma for their own plight, some institutional and academic actors have been bold enough – in a culturally sensitive way – to highlight the need for the Roma to also assume their fair share of responsibility and initiative in this process, something looked at by some scholars from the perspective of "exit barriers" and "entry barriers", i.e., the "cost of exit from the traditional Roma community and the cost of entry into the mainstream society" (Ciaian and Kancs 2016). The Parliament, for example, has asserted that "true integration of the Roma is possible only by means of mutual recognition of the rights and *obligations* of the communities concerned" and that "concerted action and *responsibility* should be taken throughout the whole process *by Roma* and non-Roma organisations" [emphasis added] (European Parliament 2011: para. J and 22).

Although the Parliament resorts to the "integration" terminology, it does so in a balanced way, by stressing that "integration is a two-track exercise and that every integration effort implies shared but asymmetrical responsibilities of the parties in light of their capacities and their economic, political and social resources" (European Parliament 2013: par. 28). Yet, as discussed above, integration may not be the way forward, at least not in the narrow way it is often understood. Any attempt to restrict Roma freedom and identity should be limited to the extent necessary to enforce the rule of law – anything beyond that is illegitimate social and cultural engineering.

3.6 In Conclusion

Most discussions about issues relating to the Roma make for depressing reading. Indeed, the gravity of the issues, allied with the lack of prospects for improvement any time soon, is extremely worrying. Nevertheless, there have also been positive developments and no lack of examples of success in the lives of the Roma. The difficulties along the way have been foreseen since the beginning by policy-makers and academics alike. To manage these difficulties as effectively as possible, the CoE has rightly adopted a "rights-based, comprehensive, dynamic and integrated approach" (Committee of Ministers 2008: section III.i), which reflects the need to consider the range of aspects discussed in this chapter. Stalford clearly summarizes the importance of a complex and nuanced approach to the needs of the Roma by stating that the "multifarious nature of discrimination and social exclusion, even within particular communities, reinforces the need for a mixed strategy at European

level: one that deploys a blend of legal and non-legal initiatives, including top-down legal prescription, coupled with the OMC and complemented by bottom-up awareness-raising and grass-roots advocacy" (Stalford 2012: 164). O'Nions also aptly concludes that we require a "complementary approach to human rights which emphasizes the importance of cultural identity and autonomy in addition to the prevention of discrimination and promotion of equality" (O'Nions 2007: 279).

The key, therefore, seems to lie in a combination of participation and responsibility to allow empowerment and responsibilisation. Whilst illegal activities by Roma individuals should obviously not be allowed, all instances of commission or complicity with anti-Roma violence, harassment or discrimination must also be vigorously fought against by the police and other public authorities, namely by using the Framework Decision on Combating Racism (discussed above in Sect. 3.4). Moreover, the Commission's powers to enforce the Treaties and ensure respect for EU law (especially Articles 17 and Article 258 TFEU) need to be used not only in instances of lack or seriously deficient transposition of directives, but more broadly to address many of the problems the Roma suffer in the context of housing, education, employment and more generally services. In this context, the Parliament has already alerted the Commission to the need to rely on stronger monitoring and enforcement mechanisms, including infringement proceedings (European Parliament 2013: par. 2). In the light of the infringement procedures launched in 2014 against the Czech Republic (Amnesty International 2015) and in 2015 against Slovakia (ERRC 2014), the Commission seems to have tried to address the subsisting segregation of Roma children in schools. In order to have available a single, comprehensive "hard law" instrument to ameliorate most of the issues identified in this chapter, the idea of a directive specifically aimed at Roma integration could be revisited.[13] Yet, this directive would need to be wary of assimilationist trends and reflect the relevant CoE case law, standards and recommendations.

The shortcomings of EU law and policy analysed in this chapter should not completely obfuscate the valuable work that has been carried out and the strategies that have been developed at EU level. Nonetheless, the large majority of the Roma are still in a situation of socio-economic deprivation that needs to be urgently addressed. Most importantly, it remains true that there is a "powerful EU framework of legislative, financial and policy coordination tools already available to support Roma inclusion, but […] more can be done to make them work more effectively" (European Commission 2010a). Yet, the success of the future of EU Roma policy requires greater depth (in the obvious policy fields of employment, education and discrimination, for instance) and breadth (to make better use of all competences afforded to the EU, as analysed in Sect. 3.2). Furthermore, in the light of CoE's knowledge and experience on Roma matters, cooperation with the CoE remains essential across all fields of the well-being of the Roma. In any case, the ultimate relevance of the EU Roma policy depends, in the end, on fundamental changes to mind-sets – including

[13] Proposed in 2004 by the European Union Network of Experts in Fundamental Rights (European Union Network of Experts in Fundamental Rights 2004) and supported by the European Commission (European Commission 2004: 44–45).

shifting the focus from "integration" to respect for "diversity". Only by adopting a holistic approach based on intercultural dialogue will the EU enact the values enshrined in Article 2 TEU and Article 22 CFR, thereby truly protecting its peoples and cherishing their cultural contributions, for the enrichment of everyone.

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Chapter 4
Conformism or Inadequacy of Roma Inclusion Policies? Missed Opportunities at the European and Local Levels

Tina Magazzini, Enrica Chiozza, and Monica Rossi

4.1 Introduction

The Roma in Europe have been the object, over the past centuries, of a variety of (mostly discriminatory) policies, and more recently the target of integration strategies into mainstream (majority) societies. After experiencing a relative bettering of standards of living from the 1960s to the 1970s and 1980s, in the last two decades we have witnessed a general rise in the levels of both socio-economic exclusion[1] as well as of anti-Roma sentiments on behalf of majority populations (Kovats 2001; Sigona and Treheran 2009). The Roma minority attracted significant European funds and attention over the past decade, the clearest expression of which has been the creation of policies that explicitly (even though not exclusively) target these groups. The policies that have been put into place so far, however, do not seem to have significantly bettered the situation, or at least not to the desired levels.

To understand why it is so, this chapter offers a brief overview of the EU soft policies in the field of Roma integration, and a look at how these efforts have translated into actions and programmes. Through the concrete case of ROMACT, we point at some of the hurdles and obstacles that are responsible for the so-called "implementation gap" (Stone 2001) of Roma integration measures.

[1] The precarisation and worsening of working conditions is by no means limited to Roma individuals, but members of Roma groups have been particularly and disproportionally affected by Central and Eastern Europe's shift to neoliberal market economies.

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Our departing point is that Europe's freedom of movement played an important role in the development of political interest on this topic. During the years immediately following the 2004 and 2007 EU enlargements, the concern about the potential migration of impoverished Roma from Central and Eastern European countries to wealthier European Member States triggered measures towards marginalized Roma on behalf of many EU-15 countries. These measures, in turn, compelled European institutions to develop guidelines for the inclusion of Roma, defined as a general ethnic category.[2]

Already in the mid-1990s, a small group within the European Commission had attempted to bring the issue of widespread discrimination against Romani individuals and groups to the forefront of the discussion. An internal exchange between European Commission officers in 1996 reads:

> You know that I have been working rather hard at raising awareness inside the Commission and also on a wider front about the situation of the Roma particularly in central and eastern Europe but elsewhere too. Largely through my instigation, the Parliament is hosting a round table this 12th July and Nicolae Gheorghe will be interviewed by *Europe Today.* The problem is how to continue the work especially after I am gone. Whilst it is true that a number of individuals like myself […] have taken a close interest in this and been extremely supportive, I don't think we can go on working informally without backing from a political level. Indeed 'my' informal working group has been the subject of some mild criticism from colleagues. […] It is my view, rightly or wrongly, that this issue is a potential time bomb and that, in its own way, is a form of treatment for these people, which is at times blatant and intolerable racism. When it comes to accession negotiations, it may prove to be a stumbling block if it is not addressed now. (Extract of an email sent on 9 July 1996, provided to the authors by the sender)

While such warnings did not translate into any major political action on behalf of European institutions in the 1990s, the presence of considerable Roma minorities in central and eastern European countries did indeed prove to be a heated topic of discussion one decade later, during accession talks. The international dimension alone would however leave us with an incomplete picture, since the interplay between the different levels of policy (European, national, and local) proved just as important. While the international dynamics accelerated the political concern about the situation of Roma minorities in the early 2000s at the EU level, as showed by Nuno Ferreira in this volume, the EU power in the field of minority protection and promotion is limited. In practice, this means that the local implementation of policies and practices is where, ultimately, the success or failure of integration measures lie.

This chapter is therefore structured in the following way: we will start by giving a bird's eye view on how the EU policies in the field of Roma inclusion developed as a European concern, then make a case for the relevance of data collection, move on to analyse the use of Structural Funds in this field, and conclude by looking at the

[2] The EU for National Roma Integration Strategies adopted in 2011 by the European Commission employs the term "Roma" the same way as it did in the 2010 Commission Staff Working Document 'Roma in Europe: the Implementation of European Union Instruments and Policies for Roma Inclusion': "as an umbrella which includes groups of people who have more or less similar cultural characteristics, such as Sinti, Travellers, Kalé, Gens du voyage, etc. whether sedentary or not" (SEC(2010)400).

importance of administrative capacity-building at the local level through the ROMACT case.

4.2 The Marginalized Roma: A European Union "Issue"

In December 2007, the European Council invited Member States and European institutions to use all means available to improve Roma inclusion. To this end it invited the European Commission to examine existing policies and instruments and to report to the European Council on the progress achieved before the end of June 2008. In July 2007 the European Commission published the Communication on non-discrimination and equal opportunities as a renewed commitment to combating discrimination through both legislative and policy tools (European Commission 2008b). This represented a first official acknowledgement that better tools were needed to promote Roma inclusion. The widespread unemployment and dramatic living conditions in which many Roma were (and still are) living were declared unacceptable from a fundamental rights perspective, as well as from a social cohesion standpoint (Thorbjørn 2015).

In 2008 the European Commission committed to achieving progress at European and national levels in key areas, such as awareness raising, non-discrimination mainstreaming, positive action and data collection, in collaboration with civil society and social partners. Data showed that Roma were unemployed by margins that were hardly comparable with majority populations, and that amongst those employed, Roma were overrepresented in occupations that involved underemployment or exploitative occupations in the informal economy. The discussion triggered by the ten Common Basic Principles drafted in 2009 by the European Commission represented an important push for all the successive actions taken by the Council of Europe, the Fundamental Rights Agency, the OSCE office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the OCSE High Commissioner on National Minorities and other international organizations in support of Roma communities, especially the marginalized ones. The agreed upon ten Common Basic Principles were:

The Ten Common Basic Principles on Roma Inclusion

1. Constructive, pragmatic and non-discriminatory policies;
2. Explicit but not exclusive targeting;
3. Inter-cultural approach;
4. Aiming for the mainstream;
5. Awareness of the gender dimension;
6. Transfer of evidence-based policies;
7. Use of European Union instruments;
8. Involvement of regional and local authorities;
9. Involvement of civil society;
10. Active participation of the Roma.

Further coordinated efforts were however needed to extend the scope of the Roma issue—mostly treated at the European level as a pure equality and antidiscrimination issue—to include an explicitly socio-economic angle.

In this regard, the inclusion of Principle 8 ("Involvement of regional and local authorities"), Principle 9 ("Involvement of civil society") and Principle 10 ("Active participation of the Roma") were strategic to trigger a more active involvement of Member States and regions by making Structural Funds available.[3]

The "Roma issue" slowly started becoming a shared responsibility between the European Union institutions, Member States and regions. Against this background, the Structural Funds constituted the main financial tool available to design and to implement actions in support of Roma integration at the local level. The funds' regulations did not, however, explicitly target Roma communities, nor did it provide data, guidance or good practices on how to design effective programmes and projects. In short, due to the principle of subsidiarity, no concrete way could be put in place to exercise leverage toward those Member States that might use the tools and funds ineffectively. This "enforcement blind-spot" created, and continues to create, a gap between the intentions expressed in EU planning documents and their translation into effective and measurable policies and programmes.

4.2.1 Data Collection for Evidence-Based Policy Development

In 2010, the Open Society Foundations (OSF) published a report outlining the situation of data collection in the Roma Decade countries[4] and pointing at the fact that progress is difficult to achieve—and impossible to measure—in the absence of reliable data (Open Society Foundations 2010).

To date, as highlighted by Vera Messing in this volume, important gaps remain on the data that is available regarding the employment, level of education, housing and healthcare of Roma versus non-Roma citizens. The reasons for the lack of data vary: in some cases, the national legislation forbids to collect census or administrative data based on ethnicity; in other cases, data is collected but only partially; in yet other countries there is more freedom in data collection, but restrictive data protec-

[3] Article 158 of the Treaty establishing the European Community states that, in order to strengthen its economic and social cohesion, the Community aims at reducing disparities between the development levels of the various regions—although it could be argued that, in practice, EU fiscal consolidation and austerity policies have produced effects in the opposite direction. Article 159 of the Treaty requires actions aimed at reducing regional inequalities to be supported by the Structural Funds, which can be used to promote equality and combat discrimination, including racial and ethnic discrimination.

[4] The countries which were part of the 2010 Decade on Roma inclusion are: Albania, Bosnia Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia and Spain.

tion legislation limits the access to such data in practice. Unfortunately, the consequences of reliable hard data on how Roma fare, comparatively to non-Roma, are similar in all countries: the investments aimed at improving the socio-economic conditions of marginalized Roma groups, when and where they take place, are carried out based on perceptions rather than on measurable indicators, and no impact assessment can be carried out.[5] The result is that policy-makers rely on general Council of Europe estimates, often to design policies on poverty migration or on socio-economic inclusions that they want to carry out anyways for political reasons, without stemming from actual evidence of a policy need.

For some years now, reports published by several international organizations have raised the alarm about the poor life conditions in which many Roma live, and the violations of the fundamental rights they suffer from. Such reports however offer very limited disaggregated and comparable data to localize and address the problem (Fundamental Rights Agency 2009; UNDP 2003). What is missing is therefore a formalized and structured dataset that would allow for the creation of composite indicators. One effort to remedy such knowledge-gap was a joint project launched by the European Commission in 2010 in partnership with the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme and the Fundamental Right Agency aimed at collecting data on the socio-economic aspects of marginalized communities. The project was carried out in 11 European Member States and in neighbouring countries with surveys which identified the differences in living standards and in access to services between Roma and non-Roma families, all of whom lived in "marginalized" areas (Fundamental Rights Agency and UNDP 2012).[6] By adopting a residential approach, the survey moved the focus away from a purely ethnic-based counting and profiling—which encounters obstacles in the legislation of many European member states. The evidence collected could thus be used for an "explicit though not exclusive" evidence-based policy in support of marginalized Roma communities in such localities, yet, in doing so, it also stressed the socio-economic marginalized condition of the Roma groups targeted by the study, with the risk of reinforcing an "ethnic" imagery that overlaps with one of "deprivation". Moreover, the use of quantitative indicators and of surveys, if taken at face value, have been widely criticized (Rossi 2016).

What might offer a more balanced source for information on which to base policy design is triangulating a range of different methods, such as those employed by the cited pilot study, combined with more ethnographic approaches and with social services datasets. In 2001, for instance, the European Council agreed on a list of

[5] Measuring the impact of programmes and policies is a requirement for ESIF funds 2014–2020, nonetheless in many countries (notably southern Europe) there is a certain resistance to the adoption of such procedures. The same can be said about the feasibility studies that must be carried out before implementing the interventions, which are crucial when it comes to planning policies and programmes.

[6] The 11 EU Member States where the survey was conducted were Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Greece, Spain, France Hungary, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia.

social indicators to guide the fight against poverty. If such "Laeken" indicators were to be adopted by Member States, they could represent a good opportunity to design and implement more evidence-grounded policies (European Commission 2008a) to monitor the evolution of Roma disadvantage over time and in different European territories.

4.3 The European Parliament Pilot Project on Marginalized Roma Inclusion: Defining the Problem and Identifying Areas of Action

In the European Union context, the European Parliament was a decisive actor in starting a discussion on Roma socio-economic inclusion and antidiscrimination. In 2009, the European Parliament entrusted the European Commission Directorate General for Regional and Urban policy with a pilot project[7] whose objective was to explore innovative and integrated approaches to tackling the multidimensional problems facing Roma groups. The project explored ways in which Roma inclusion could be promoted, mainly through education and microfinance initiatives. It also proposed new methods and tools for data collection, monitoring and evaluation. These tools would ultimately represent the baseline for evidence-based policy development in the field of socio-economic inclusion of marginalized Roma in five EU Member States: Hungary, Slovakia, Check Republic, Romania and Bulgaria.

The project undertook a careful review of the early learning environment faced by Roma children at home, in their neighbourhoods and at school, including a review of national policies and local programs. In particular, new evidence showed that the gap in access to learning opportunities starts early. While more than 75% of all children aged 3–6 were in preschool during the years covered by the study (2010–2012), the large majority of Roma children were not. In Bulgaria only 45%, in Romania 37%, in the Czech Republic 32%, and in Slovakia 28% of Roma children aged 3–6 were in pre-school. The outlier amongst the five countries was Hungary, where preschool is compulsory and where the government supports poor families by covering out-of-pocket expenses and school lunches, which resulted in 76% of Roma children being enrolled in preschool (World Bank 2012). However, in spite of anti-segregation laws, Roma pupils are still often subjected to school segregation and they are vastly overrepresented in the category of "pupils with special needs" in all of the above-mentioned countries.

The Roma pilot project also assessed the scope for leveraging microcredit schemes to increase self-employment, with the ultimate goal of reducing the large employment gaps between Roma and non-Roma. The findings pointed at the num-

[7] The European Parliament pilot projects are defined as schemes of an experimental nature designed to test the feasibility of an action and its usefulness.

bers of self-employed Roma being relatively low, even though many of the participants expressed interest in becoming self-employed[8] (The World Bank 2012). Unsurprisingly, the vast majority of unemployed Roma and non-Roma expressed a desire for stable jobs,[9] and many of the Roma participants expressed an interest in starting a business. However, most Roma interested in becoming self-employed faced significant obstacles in accessing the credit to start a business. One issue is that not many suppliers of microfinance loans target start-up businesses in general, and even fewer are reaching Roma entrepreneurs. A key reason is that many potential Roma entrepreneurs do not qualify for credit in light of lack of savings or indebtedness, low levels of education (even when compared to the segment of the general population that is being refused credit) and lack of employment experience in the formal economy. In short, what would be needed is a comprehensive approach to financial inclusion that goes beyond strictly providing microcredit and tackles multifaceted obstacles—limited outreach of financial service providers in Roma neighbourhoods, lack of access to savings technology, low financial literacy, and so on. In the absence of such a comprehensive approach, there is little hope for improvement.

Related to the residential dimension, the employment dimension emerged to be strongly intertwined to the housing one: both "involuntary segregation" and institutionalised forms of segregated housing (such as the encampments in Italy) represent huge obstacles to any kind of integration action.

Last but not least, the project identified the need for a holistic and comprehensive approach towards Roma socio-economic inclusion. Combining interventions across more than one of the identified critical areas is essential, as it is to set objectives and priorities in order to avoid incoherence, the fragmentation of activities and unsustainability of the approach. The customization of interventions to specific local needs and the involvement of the community (both Roma and non-Roma) also proved to be essential elements for a sustainable and effective socio-economic inclusion.

The project identified that the cycle of poverty is reinforced by frequent segregation—in housing but also schooling—misperceptions, and discrimination, which go hand in hand with high levels of unemployment. In short, for the first time a project pointed with data at the fact that Roma suffer from multiple, interlinked vulnerabilities. As a result, raising the employment rates amongst Roma was identified as an economic necessity for Eastern European countries and a priority for the EC.[10]

[8] Among the employed Roma, the share that is self-employed is low in the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Slovakia, while noticeably higher in Bulgaria and Romania.

[9] This data reflects the statements of the interviewees, which can however be contested on the basis that there is little proof of job-seeking attempts.

[10] According to de Laat (2010), while majority populations are aging, approximately 7–20% of new labor market entrants in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, and Slovakia are Roma.

4.3.1 The European Structural Funds 2007–2013

A 2008 staff-working document that accompanied the above-mentioned Communication underlined the enormous potential that the Structural Funds and the pre-accession instruments hold. It also identified specific measures to be implemented at the Member States level such as capacity-building of local administrations, project monitoring and participation of the stakeholders. However, during the negotiation of the Structural Funds 2007–2013 the potential of this unique investment tool was only partially earmarked for Roma inclusion. The main pitfall of this integrated approach laid in the distribution of those funds that were going to indirectly target Roma communities among six different operational programmes. Out of the initial impressive allocations, only about one fourth were eventually spent, and no requirements were in place during that programming period that allowed the European Commission to monitor how many Roma benefited from the interventions, and in which localities.

The high ambitions set at the European level were met with significant obstacles at the implementation level in local contexts. The most common difficulty had to do with the lack of administrative capacity, scarce involvement of Roma beneficiaries, and no strong political will nor commitment on behalf on the mayors or regional administrators. In this programming period, as had happened in other occasions, the exception was Spain, with a Roma population of approximately 750,000 (Ministerio de Sanidad Servicios Sociales e Igualdad de España 2012). Spain, where Roma suffer a comparatively limited level of marginalization, was able to coordinate the implementation of the Structural Funds, in particular the European Social Fund, in a quite effective way. Capacity-building and a territorial approach, coupled with a receptive and overall non-discriminatory society helped the national and regional authorities in the eradication of slums, the enrolment of kids in schools, and schemes to increase skills of unemployed Roma. The success of the Spanish example is also linked to the Secretariado Gitano, an independent foundation created in 1982 which is very well rooted in the different autonomous regions and is able to push both the national and regional authorities to take action on the basis of consolidated strategies and action plans. Despite the strong presence of the Secretariado Gitano and of numerous other Gitanos associations, which could lead to think that the key to Spain's (at least relative) success lays in the fact that it has taken a specific approach, however, the main Spanish achievement with regard to its Roma population arguably lays in the mainstreaming of inclusion policies (Kostka 2015). The housing and education reforms carried out during the 1980s, in particular (way before the 2012 National Roma Integration Strategies), rendered social housing and public education widely available to the most marginalized sectors of the population, of which the Roma happened to be a large component. Similar initiatives took place in Italy during the 1970s, with the destruction of historical shanty towns and with the access to social housing of a large part of the population (including many Italian Roma) who were previously living in precarious and marginal settings, but this trend was unfortunately reversed with the creation of encampments for (especially foreign) Roma.

How and why was this possible? Without dismissing the criticism of the shortcomings that have emerged on the so-called "Spanish model" (Ovalle and Mirga 2014), the focus in the Spanish case has always laid in poverty and in socio-economic marginalization, which has been therefore tackled through poverty-eradication measures that tend to be less controversial than those regarding cultural diversity.[11]

4.3.2 The National Roma Integration Strategy as Precondition for the European Structural and Investment Funds Investments

As we saw in the previous sections, between 2010 and 2011 some progress was made at the European policy level. The Roma agenda was high in the European Commission priorities and both the European Commission and the European Parliament started to gather some evidence on the dramatic situation of Roma in Europe. In April 2010 (the 7th of April, one day before the second Roma Summit was held in Cordoba during the Spanish Presidency) the European Commission adopted a Communication on the social and economic integration of the Roma in Europe (European Commission 2010). This was the first official recognition that the "Roma issue" was not only a matter of discrimination, but also of social cohesion, and that allowing the situation to deteriorate for an already vulnerable sector of the population would have wide negative economic and social implications on society as a whole. Such acknowledgement and the active implication of European institutions did not however emerge from economic preoccupations alone, nor would they have emerged with such force in the absence of a dramatic trigger. On the 30th of August 2010,[12] the French government announced that 128 "illegal settlements" had been dismantled and that the Roma families who inhabited them were going to be returned to Romania and Bulgaria, either voluntarily or by force, due to their irregular situation in France. Reactions from several international and European institutions and NGOs pushed the European Commission to act, in order to prevent an escalation of the phenomenon. On the 5th of April 2011 a breakthrough Communication was adopted by the European Commission calling on Member States to present each a National Roma Integration Strategy, and to create Roma National Contact Points by the end of December 2011 (European Commission 2011). France, while claiming that it is unable to design and carry out a strategy based on ethnic profiling, agreed to present a strategy which would address issues of discrimination and poverty.

[11] This issue is however different for those non-Spanish Roma that recently migrated to Spain, and who are experiencing harsh difficulties in integrating (Magazzini and Piemontese 2016).

[12] For more details, see the «Communiqué faisant suite a la reunión ministerielle de ce jour sur la situation des gens de voyage et des Roms»: http://medias.lemonde.fr/mmpub/edt/doc/20101021/1429059_2147_2romscommuniqueelysee28juillet.pdf

While the European Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies saw some delays, it has been for the past 7 years a major reference for European Roma inclusion policy. What makes it noteworthy—apart from the fact that it is the most ambitious and wide-ranging inclusion policy addressed at Europe's Roma minority—is its funding provisions. The way in which the Framework was designed links it to the European Structural and Investment Funds, and in particular to the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF). While said funds generally require some level of co-funding on behalf of national or local authorities, they however represent a significant asset which hold the potential of developing inclusion policies which would otherwise not be feasible.

As of 2019, it is still premature to assess the impact that the European framework has had on the structural funds investments programmes. The major and most persistent obstacle, in practical terms, seems to be the lack administrative capacity at the local level. Mindful of such challenge, the European Commission (in partnership with the Council of Europe) launched in 2012 a pilot initiative—ROMACT—aimed at strengthening the skills of local administrators in dealing with European-related projects, with the involvement of local NGOs and of Roma communities. The ROMACT project has been now ongoing for 6 years and is currently being implemented in six EU Member States (Slovakia, Romania, Bulgaria, Italy, Hungary, and Check Republic), but has so far led to mixed results. The following section is therefore devoted to analysing a bit more in depth such programme, raising some of the issues that remain to be solved.

4.4 ROMACT: Administrative Capacity at the Local Level

There is widespread agreement amongst researchers and experts who have been engaged with the "Roma issue" over the last decade that one of the main factors hindering the inclusion of this minority at the local level has been the lack of political commitment and an adequate administrative capacity. This interpretation requires however some nuance, if we are to understand what has worked and what has not, and to propose new viable ways forward.

As mentioned, the ROMACT Programme is a joint initiative implemented by the Council of Europe and financed by the European Commission, which aims at promoting the inclusion of Roma at local and regional level. Stemming from the conviction that the involvement of local authorities in the integration of their Roma residents is pivotal to bettering living standards, ROMACT was presented as a programme which could finally offer concrete practical help to local administrations, by strengthening their capacity to design and implement viable projects for Roma inclusion. The program explicitly aimed to contribute in this way to the implementation at local level of the National Roma Integration Strategies: its mandate is to reinforce the capacity of local authorities and to help develop and support those mechanisms and processes that can better the implementation participatory planning processes.

The participation of Roma stakeholders to policy-making that affects them has been widely advocated from Roma organizations and EU institutions alike, and it is only natural that it would constitute a prerequisite of the local policies. Yet, the translation of this principle (which was also included as a methodological indication in the National Strategies) into actual policy has proven to be often complex in the absence of clear tools or devices to assess who and how to include in such processes. In order to effectively guarantee a real Roma participation, rather than producing a mere rhetoric of Roma representation, there must be some degree of "homogeneity" or shared interested among group members, as well as accurate information available about what European funding is available, what kind of constraints it entails, and what the options available are in terms of viable and sustainable projects. In countries such as Italy, for instance, where many stakeholders are either illiterate or lack the information regarding what the National Roma Integration Strategy means and involves, their participation to National, Regional and local tables has resulted in generalized failure. The risk is therefore that fostering Roma participation without actively supporting the tools necessary to actively engage in the process and put forward proposals that can be financed may induce a double-binding effect.[13]

Political participation and engagement are elements that typically arise either from cultural emancipation through education, or from within the working context (such as unions). ROMACT, instead, so far seems to have adopted a "minority rights to diversity" approach, avoiding framing the marginality issue in terms of urban poverty. The choice of the Eastern and Central European model of integration, which bears similarities with the Anglo-Saxon communitarian perspective based on identities and on a stress on diversity, has replaced a more universalistic approach to goods and services. In practice, this has shifted the language from class to race or ethnicity and framed the focus of Roma integration in terms of "culture" and "ethnicity". This approach is however built upon a Framework which, as outlined above, is mainly concerned with access to services and with socio-economic disadvantage.

This might be the reason why the ROMED-ROMACT programme has so far offered mixed results and has performed particularly poorly in Italy. In Italy, public administrators of large cities were not eager to join the program. The team and the methodology itself failed to attract interest among city authorities and the main interventions have been limited to small towns. Such failure should not be considered exclusively as an indicator of the lack of administrative capacity of local authorities, but it suggests that the ROMACT-ROMED programme, as presented, was not seen as an asset by those administrators that were supposed to benefit from it. One reason for this, other than the widespread reluctance to engage with Roma

[13] The Roma Plan for Rome (Deliberazione Giunta Capitolina n. 105, 26 Maggio 2017, Piano di Indirizzo di Roma Capitale per l'inclusione delle Popolazioni Rom, Sinti e Caminanti) was preceded by a 2-month phase of consultations with Roma NGOs. A list of Roma NGO was offered by UNAR (Italian Equality Body) and the Plan was sent to them for observations. However, not one single viable proposal emerged from this short survey. Contributions were for the larger part either critiques that did not propose alternative projects; or invitations to involve their own NGO in projects which were not sustainable, such as the idea to create Roma cooperatives for the copper trade.

inclusion (as a topic which is unpopular with the electorate) is the idiosyncrasy between the need for technical help for anti-poverty policy design and monitoring on the one hand, and the focus of cultural recognition on the other. Additionally, the approach of the Council of Europe representatives has been interpreted at times as a confrontational one, rather than one offering professional support in project management. On the ROMACT website, the main issue to be tackled appears to be Antigypsysm, lamenting "paternalistic attitudes on the side of the local authorities, who tend to consider that they know better what Roma need and discount the possibility of a real dialogue, often combined with an attitude of dependency and acceptance on the side of the Roma community members; mutual mistrust and mutual blaming between Roma and public institutions". While such attitudes, where present, certainly constitute an obstacle to constructive engagement and inclusive policies, the generalised assumption that local authorities tend to be racist can in itself foster a negative blaming-cycle which only reinforces mutual distrust.

Some issues may also result from the misconceptions or partial understandings that stem from taking at face value the available surveys or interviews on the aspirations and plans of those Roma who live in segregated camps. Such data invariably paints a picture in which all Roma want to leave the encampments and gain access to apartments (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights 2011, 2016), if it weren't for financial constraints. The picture is rendered however more nuanced by the fact that, in some cases, certain families prefer to remain in the camps even if according to the municipality their economic situation would allow them to rent an apartment (HuffPost 2017). Such choices can have multiple causes, ranging from the difficulty in renting an apartment (because of discrimination from private house-owners) to cultural norms, preferences or traditions (many Sinti in northern Italy have applied for micro-areas rather that apartments), to engrained dynamics that make it difficult for individuals to leave a known reality.

Another potential risk of the ROMACT approach, if used as an advocacy tool rather than a technical resource, is that it has on occasions contributed to spread the idea that there are certain resources earmarked for Roma inclusion at the European level that can be mobilized at will, while all European funding still requires national or local co-funding and an evaluation-based application process (Corriere della Città 2017). Additionally, even once resources have been allocated in the Programming Arrangements (PA) and in the following Regional Operational Programming (ROP), the schemes can be changed even after these have been issued, and interventions can always be re-programmed, which means there must be a continued and consistent commitment to Roma integration in order for the implementation phase to be carried out as initially planned. Italy's Lazio Region, for example, declared that it would invest a certain sum in Roma inclusion within the Regional Operational Programming 2014–2020 under Thematic Objectives (OT) 9 and 10.[14] These resources were however substantially diminished in a second phase, and Roma inclusion has since more

[14] OT 9 was 'Promoting social inclusion, combating poverty and any discrimination', while OT 10 was 'Investing in education, training and vocational training for skills and lifelong learning'. See http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/policy/what/glossary/t/thematic-objectives

or less vanished from the Regional Agenda, in spite of what stated in official documents. Finally, one additional note of concern which, at least in Italy, has become associated to the ROMACT programme, is the lack of definition of what skills are required to be considered a "Roma inclusion specialist", with the risk of ethnic categorization and tokenism being adopted by either single individuals or NGOs who see this as a funding opportunity. In this sense, the fact that the National Project Officer of ROMACT in Italy happens to be a well-known Roma activist who, while appointed as ROMACT's National Programme Officer, was at the same time campaigning for a national law to recognize Roma in Italy as a linguistic minority, has not helped. The risk, in such a situation, is that on the one hand local authorities end up with all the blame for failing to include the Roma, and on the other hand it gives Roma a kind of "negative visibility" that no other group has, which in countries where Roma are a small, unrecognized minority, can exacerbate the already existing conflicts among Roma and non Roma, resulting in a negative effect on the social cohesion of the local territories and on increased Antigypsism.

Again, the issue of the reliability of data comes back as one of the most pressing. The use of an appropriate methodology for data-collection at ground level is of crucial importance, especially if this data is to be fed into the design and implementation of effective inclusion policies. The broad on-going discussions on what constitutes "truth" and "falsehood" in ethnography is out of the scope of this chapter, yet it is noteworthy that ethnographic studies and tools are too seldom used to feed into policy-making, which tend to rely to survey-data that is taken at face value instead.[15] In this process, what often gets overlooked is that field data for applied use must be carefully interpreted to ensure that the inferences made stem from the daily observation of reality, even though this requires lengthier processes than simply constructing indicators based on unproblemised survey answers.

Ultimately, data used for policy-making must capture the picture of the field at the residential and neighbourhood level, and such in-depth knowledge cannot be acquired with short visits to the Roma dwellings nor with thematic interviews to their inhabitants alone. Such studies are at times presented as ethnographic inquiries, but they lack the central component of the ethnographic process,[16] which is the engagement of the researcher combined with the *direct and prolonged observation of social contexts*. In our opinion this aspect is necessary to counterbalance the information that the informant is offering to the researcher, but the long timelines required for these types of studies to be carried out are almost always incompatible with the tight deadlines imposed on both researchers and international agencies.[17]

[15] The self-representation of subjects is an important part of any anthropological work, and in some cases, even a single life-history can be telling of the wider picture. See for example the representation of the Moroccan migration to Europe through a single life-history in Crapanzano (1980).

[16] This is why we should use the expression 'ethnographic process' rather than 'ethnographic technique'.

[17] For instance, the OECD came to Rome in 2016 to carry out "fieldwork visits" in Roma encampments and refugee reception facilities. Yet, all the data was collected over a 4-day visit in which the field visits consisted of approximately 1 h in each site, which can hardly allow to get a sense of the issues at stake.

4.5 Conclusions

Over the past decades, the severe conditions and discrimination that Roma individuals suffered in Europe have created a EU internal phenomenon of so-called poverty migration. This has, in turn, triggered a political momentum and willingness to act on behalf of Western Europe Member States and of the European institutions at large. In France, for instance, some municipalities have started twinning projects with the municipalities of origin of Roma who migrated from Romania and Bulgaria. These initiatives are quite spontaneous and have resulted in small projects that, with the involvement of local NGOs, aim at improving the conditions of Roma in the municipalities of origin, and thus disincentive westward migration. However, the economic crisis and the increase in the number of at-risk-of-poverty population in several EU Member States (both Roma and non-Roma) has made Roma affirmative action quite unpopular. In countries with a high level of informal economy, such as Italy or Greece, the difficulty in carrying out ethnically-based policies has exacerbated conflicts among the Roma and non-Roma, and has on occasion resulted in contradictory policies at the local level. The result has been a series of fragmented initiatives, which on the one hand aim at promoting Roma integration to comply with EU guidelines, and on the other hand promote a "securitized" and policed approached which part of the electorate advocates for.

In this respect, there is little doubt that the interest of local authorities in Roma inclusion has often subsided to political concerns, and that structural discrimination in institutions (and not only among the electorate) is a component that must be accounted for. The position of this chapter is that, however, as has been argued elsewhere (Law and Kovats 2018) the focus on non-discrimination alone cannot address the entrenched inequality which characterizes the Roma situation in Europe.

In other words, in order to achieve concrete results, it is essential to bridge the gap between the EU and the local level. If from their side the EU and the national level can design and finance policies aimed at bettering the socio-economic situation of the too many Roma who find themselves in poverty, the local authorities have a responsibility to identify concrete projects that can be accepted and endorsed by both Roma and non-Roma residents. For this purpose, more work is needed to build local administrative capacity and to support local authorities in designing and implementing sustainable projects that can trigger a permanent change.

The lack of results, 6 years after the launch of the National Roma Integration Strategies and 5 years after the ROMACT programme, means that we must rethink the ways in which Roma integration has been approached and addressed. In order to do so, it is necessary for policymakers, EU institutions and NGOs alike to adopt new epistemological tools, abandoning a terminology that often does not reflect the dynamics on the ground. In short, new and fresh inputs into the Roma issue must nudge both pro-Roma organizations and local institutions to abandon an identity-based confrontational approach, and engage with practical, local-based

solutions. These inputs should set the basis for a new solidarity among our globalized, mixed societies, bringing in a new spirit of citizenship rights and citizens' education, giving less space to the pro-ethnic approach that has dominated so far. The spirit that animated the ROMED-ROMACT programs is based on a vision that has, in practice and maybe unintendedly, reinforced particularities rather than fostered solidarity.

The issue of Roma integration must also be understood as part and parcel of a neoliberal approach that, rather than tackling generalised problems such as housing scarcity, treats minority disadvantage as an emergency situation. Housing and job precarity have however become a widespread normalcy for a sector of the population in which Roma individuals are overrepresented. In many countries, the European Structural Funds represent the sole available financial resource to achieve the objectives set out in the National Roma Integration Strategies by EU Member States, yet they often end up competing with the needs and claims of other marginalized groups.[18]

All this comes at a time in which Europe is struggling against centrifugal forces that are trying to undermine the long process of peace among and within nations. For these reasons, programmes and policies financed by the European Union should ensure the diffusion and adoption of universalistic values, or at least ensure that they are not perceived as promoting ethnic-based welfarism. What can be gathered from an assessment of the policies carried out so far is that a ROMACT project is indeed needed. The need is however for a ROMACT programme that carries out technical support, trying to avoid getting into politics or confrontation with local authorities. If such interventions manage to capitalize on the willingness of those municipalities that want to take advantage of European funds to achieve practical and durable solutions, then the EU soft policies efforts might indeed be of some practical use. The building blocks are set, it is now time to make sure that the money is spent on viable and sustainable projects, and that their implementation is adequately monitored. For such practical goals, we might need the help of ethnographers: as detailed accounts and in-depth understanding of the local dimensions and dynamics can provide ways forward where statistics alone cannot.

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[18] The NRIS represent an ex-ante thematic condition to the use of funds in support of Roma marginalized communities.

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Chapter 5
'Modern-Day Fagins', 'Gaudy Mansions' and 'Increasing Numbers': Narratives on Roma Migrants in the Build-Up to the British EU Referendum

Daniele Viktor Leggio

5.1 Introduction

The increase in migration flows within and into Europe has been accompanied by a growing policy focus on migration management, namely on the development of effective tools to select those migrants that can best contribute to productivity and economic growth. This technocratic concern is part of public debates about the perceived inability of national and EU actors to deal with the causes and impacts of migration. As in any policy debate, actors are mobilising both factual claims and assumptions about the problems to be tackled and the population groups involved, in turn fashioning narratives that shape the concrete policies intended to solve the identified problems (cf. Ricoeur 1984; Roe 1994; Banerjee 1998).

This kind of policy narratives will be the focus of the present article. More specifically, I will show how the mobilisation of images about Roma migrants to the UK contributed to reshaping the debate around the impact of migration on the welfare system. I will highlight how the policy narrative shifted from the need to reform the benefit system, to the need to reduce migrants' access to the system.

I will combine textual analysis of national media reports, parliamentary debates and national law with observations at the local level, precisely in Manchester and drawing on the author's engagement in the MigRom research team, which has worked with the local City Council in the development of their Roma Strategy (cf. Leggio and Matras 2017: 12–17 for details about the project and its engagement with local authorities and Roma migrants). The analysis will cover the period between the enlargement of the EU to Romania and Bulgaria (January 2007) and

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Cameron's announcement of his agenda for the negotiations with the EU (November 2014). I will first introduce the analytical framework proposed by Boswell et al. (2011) to describe how cohesive policy narratives develop and become accepted in the face of conflicting knowledge claims put forward by actors such as policy makers, pressure groups, researchers and the media. I will also provide an overview of how Roma migrants have been presented, and stigmatised, in the UK and in the rest of Europe. I will then move on to analyse the policy narratives, showing how, following a small number of benefit fraud cases involving Roma migrants from Romania, images of Gypsies as criminals were mobilised. These images merged with a highly mediatised attempt to secure additional funding for Roma integration through the publication of academic research on the numbers of Roma migrants present in the UK and the likelihood of their increase following the lifting of employment restrictions on A2 migrants in January 2014. I will argue that these images and claims, although resting on weak factual bases, appeared plausible as they matched well established stereotypes and fears about the Gypsies. The emergence of this narrative led prominent politicians to argue for, on one side, the Roma to change their behaviour and, on the other, for measures to curb "welfare tourism". The public pressure eventually led the then Prime Minister Cameron to include this last issue in the agenda of items to be renegotiated with the EU prior to the British referendum on EU membership in June 2016. In the conclusion, I will consider how, in the case of Roma migrants, popular stereotypes play a crucial role in shaping policy narratives, often to the point that facts emerging from academic research are misinterpreted, if not taken out of context, and end up as arguments in favour of restrictive policies. Given this risk, I will argue that researchers working on Roma migrants should avoid sensationalising their findings in an attempt to gain support for inclusive policies.

5.2 Migration Policy Narratives

It is undeniable that debates around migration see conflicting views on issues of culture, values and interests. Ideological clashes on these topics, however, are only a part of the debates about migration. Equally crucial, especially in a time of austerity and budgetary cuts, are seemingly technocratic concerns about the most effective tools to select those migrants that can best contribute to productivity and economic growth. These concerns fuel popular anxieties about the perceived inability of national and EU institutions to deal with the causes and impacts, particularly on existing services, of migration.

It has been observed that, when faced with popular concerns and anxieties, policy makers develop policy narratives, in an attempt to stabilise "the assumptions needed for decision making in the face of what is genuinely uncertain and complex" (Roe 1994: 51). Through narratives, policy actors offer an account that "groups together and integrates into one whole and complete story multiple and scattered events" (Ricoeur 1984: x), in turn identifying "causal relations between actions"

(Banerjee 1998: 193). Policy narratives thus offer a coherent account of complex phenomena which can gather support for concrete policies intended to solve the identified problems.

Boswell et al. (2011) note how this potential to motivate action is also characteristic of policy frames (cf. Schön and Rein 1994), but that narratives can nonetheless be distinguished based on their cognitive content: narratives focus on facts while frames represent the set of ideas informing policy actors' beliefs, perceptions and appreciations. In this respect, they argue, the concept of policy narratives offers a better lens to understand how factual claims, and the knowledge behind them, can inform the development of policies.

In the case of migration policy, Boswell et al. suggests that narratives revolve around three sets of claims, in turn drawing on sources ranging from lay or populist arguments, to expert and practitioner knowledge or academic research. A first set of claims attempts to define the problem to be addressed, that is, its nature and scale and the characteristics of the population involved. A second set of claims is instead about the causes of the problem and the extent to which it can be controlled. These claims often establish causal links, implying the attribution of blame to determined factors or actors. Finally, there are the claims about the possible solutions to the problem: how interventions have affected or will affect the problem. These, in particular, are the claims that "not only construct a specific reality, but also call for action upon this reality" (ibid.: 5).

At any given time, many competing narratives, and the claims around which they revolve, will be mobilised. Boswell et al. note how policy actors tend to adopt those narratives that match their predetermined interests. However, they are careful in stressing how interests and narratives are mutually constitutive. While interests shape the way in which actors produce and deploy narratives about migration, narratives can, in turn, shape actors' perceptions of interests. Crucial in this regard, are the cognitive features of any given narrative. To be successful, and potentially alter actors' perception of interests, a narrative must "fit" with available facts. That is not to say that narratives must be representationally accurate, rather they have to appear plausible. A further condition making a narrative successful is its persuasiveness, how much understandable and compelling it appears to a variety of actors.

Boswell et al. furthermore argue that these three conditions – actors' interests, internal plausibility and persuasiveness – not only make a narrative successful, but also influence its potential to spread to other policy sectors. In particular, actors trying to secure legitimacy or resources, might embrace new narratives which are available to them through regional and international fora or the media. The diffusion of narratives, however, is not a neutral, catch-up process and the content of policy narratives is often developed or reinvented as they spread.

Since policy narratives revolve around factual claims, a fundamental role in their construction and diffusion is played by the knowledge produced by researchers. This role has been further accentuated by expectations that policies should be 'evidence based' and the resulting proliferation of research units within both governmental and non-governmental bodies. Boswell (2009), furthermore, notes how research on migration is often used not to change narratives and thus adjust policy

outputs. Rather, its deployment appears to serve symbolic functions such as providing support for pre-existing narratives or to enhance the legitimacy of actors and organisations. As a consequence, much migration policies very often still respond to popular pressures or simply rely on the practical knowledge of front-line officers and bureaucrats.

The framework proposed by Boswell et al. (2011) emphasises the mutual relationship between actors' interests and the cognitive content of policy narratives. Analysing this relationship, however, does not aim to assess the value or effectiveness of narratives in order to produce better ones. Rather, they suggest, the point of a policy narrative analysis is to describe how and why only some of them become widely accepted and actually influence policy interventions. Furthermore, it offers a tool to study the role that research can play in the development of policies. In particular, it can allow to shed light on those cases in which research is mobilised for political ends different, if not diametrically opposed, from those originally envisaged by the researchers.

5.3 Representation and Stigmatisation of Roma Migrants

The first instance in which Eastern European Roma migration to the UK attracted national media attention was the arrival of Czech and Slovak Roma as asylum seekers in 1997. Although Home Office figures amount to a total of around a thousand applications during the entire year, Clark and Campbell (2000) note how "no one newspaper source had a clue as to the 'true' numbers" (ibid: 35) and how they engaged in wild speculations, resulting in the impression that the UK was hit by a "trickle", "flood" or "invasion" of Roma. Similarly, they note, the press devoted much attention to the estimation of the cost of such an "invasion" for the British asylum and welfare systems. At the same time, Roma migrants were presented, particularly by tabloids, as "Gypsies", drawing on an imagery about local English Gypsies and Irish Travellers as criminals and fraudsters dating back to the Victorian period (cf. Clark and Taylor 2014). These discursive strands, the authors argue, were combined in the stigmatisation of Roma as 'bogus refugees' engaging in an organised racket to take advantage of the British asylum system and to access a number of welfare benefits. As a consequence, Clark and Campbell argue, the then Labour government proposed far-reaching policy changes to the British immigration and asylum system. The representation of Czech Roma as criminals taking advantage of British asylum law even featured in a private letter, dated 4 July 2002, by the British Prime Minister warning the Czech counterpart of the consequences of continuing arrivals of Roma from the then EU candidate state (Sobotka 2003: 113–4).

At the local level, Grill (2012) and Clark (2014) note how in a working-class, multi-ethnic neighbourhood in Glasgow, Roma migrants were similarly associated by other residents with various kind of anti-social behaviour, petty crime and the

exploitation of children and prostitution. These representations, they found, were common in popular discourses even if data by the police did "not indicate any statistical increase in levels of crime […] since the arrival of the new EU migrants" (Grill 2012: 44). The persistence of these images, even if unsubstantiated in official data, is taken by Clark (2014) as an indication of the Roma status as the racialised scapegoat in a neighbourhood struggling to cope with the consequences of budget cuts to public and voluntary sector services. Furthermore, Grill (2012) notes how problematic behaviours are regarded as stemming from Roma culture and thus attributed to all Roma, homogenising the population irrespectively of the actual backgrounds of individuals. He shows how this supposed "cultural distinctiveness" of the Roma has become a central concern for both governmental and non-governmental institutions, resulting in two approaches to Roma migrants. A paternalistic one attempts to understand the cultural source of Roma behaviours in order to change them. The other instead demonises Roma culture as the source of the Roma own problems and presents them as "a menace to any neighbourhood where they are to be found" (ibid.: 51).

It is worth noting that representations of Roma migrants "as a serious and dangerous 'threat' to the existing social order" (Clark and Campbell 2000: 38) and the co-existence of patronising and demonising approaches are not limited to the British context. Stewart (2012) links increasing xenophobia, feelings of loss of sovereignty and disillusion with political elites felt by citizens across Europe to the proliferation of populist movements that "turn the Roma into a suitable 'target population'" (ibid.: xxxviii), leading to a rise in ethnic violence and hate crimes and to the increasing acceptability of disparaging depictions of Roma people. Matras (2015a), on the other hand, notes how the simultaneous representation of Roma as a threat to others and to themselves because of their cultural difference is characteristic of EU institutions' approaches to Roma migration and inclusion. In this climate, the promotion of mediation programmes has gone hand-in-hand with increased control measures. At the national and local levels, this tendency can be observed in the simultaneous implementation of unprecedented measures such as ethnic profiling, expulsions of EU citizens from another member state (van Baar 2014) or of containment in dedicated Roma settlements (Clough Marinaro and Daniele 2011; Nacu 2012) and of targeted social support interventions in the fields of employment, education and access to services (Timmer 2010; Cools et al. 2017). The implementation of these measures, as they acted upon stereotypical images of the Roma rather than rejecting them, has further entrenched stigmatisation, whether the Roma were presented as criminals (Maestri 2017) or as victims of their own culture (Leggio 2017).

Clearly, the tendency in the UK to represent Roma migrants through references to well established stereotypes is a wider, European phenomenon. Common to both contexts are paternalistic attempts at changing Roma behaviours to favour their "integration". However, while in the rest of Europe control measures have largely focused on removal or segregation, in the UK, as I will show below, the focus has been on the Roma access to the welfare system.

5.4 Migration, Benefits and the Roma

5.4.1 Early Developments at the National Level

The first mention of a connection between migration and the British welfare system appears in a briefing paper published by the right-wing think tank Migrationwatch UK in January 2008.[1] By comparing the net income of British citizens relying exclusively on benefits and that of British citizens working for the minimum wage, the paper argued that, given the minimal differences, the benefit system acted as a disincentive to move into employment. The Chairman of Migrationwatch further added that, unlike British citizens:

> Poles have very strong financial motivation [to get into employment]. On the minimum wage in Britain they are earning 4–5 times what they would earn at home and, by living in multi-occupancy, they can afford to send considerable sums of money back to their families.

The report concluded that:

> The problem of a lack of financial incentives for work is a perverse effect of attempts to lift families out of poverty rather than a direct result of immigration. However, it is made more difficult to tackle by large scale immigration which, according to the Bank of England, has reduced inflationary pressures by holding down the wages of the lower paid. There would be very substantial benefits in policies which encouraged the employment of indigenous workers.

Among the advantages, they suggested, there would be a reduction of pressure on the welfare as less British will require support. Migrationwatch UK thus argued that changes to the welfare system were needed not to discourage migrants from coming to the UK, but to encourage British citizens to compete with them for jobs. It is also interesting to note that, at that point, there was no mention of Roma, rather Poles were used as an exemplar category.

The report by Migrationwatch UK came as the then Labour government was consulting local authorities as part of their revision of migration policy. In the plan[2] that preceded the approval of the Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act 2009, it was stated that:

> Despite the rising claimant count, people are still finding work. Large numbers of people are still moving off benefit and into jobs with 244,000 people moving off Job Seekers Allowance in January 2009. […] Our aim is to increase the skills of the existing population to ensure that employers can find the talent they need in the UK workforce and decrease their reliance on migrant labour.

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[1] Migrationwatch UK, 02/01/2008. Incentives for work. *Employment & Welfare Briefing Papers.* https://www.migrationwatchuk.org/Briefingpaper/document/27, accessed 16/11/2017.

[2] Department for Communities and Local Government, 19/03/2009. Managing the impacts of migration: Improvements and innovations. http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20120919213058/http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/1179350.pdf, accessed 16/11/2017.

While essentially rejecting suggestions that there was a need to revise the welfare system, in the same plan the government also acknowledged that "migration can place short term pressures on local public services including councils, schools, NHS and the police" and launched the Migration Impacts Fund to support local authorities.

While these debates were ongoing, issues about Roma migrants were brought to Parliament by Conservative MP Anthony Steen, at the time chairman of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Human Trafficking which, since 2006, had been working on an Action Plan on Tackling Human Trafficking.[3] The plan did not specifically highlight Roma as a problem population but it mentioned that "child trafficking for labour exploitation or domestic servitude, benefit fraud and organised street crime has also been the subject of intense anxiety".

On 6 February 2008 Mr. Steen called a Commons Debate on the subject of enforced criminal activity of children[4] and informed the parliament that

> […] organised crime networks are trafficking Roma children into Britain and other EU countries […] and using them to milk the benefit system and for criminal activities such as shoplifting, pickpocketing and ATM theft […] The police believe that there are between 1000 and 2000 trafficked Roma children in the UK.

He expressed his concern over insufficient police resources in fighting criminal gangs, arguing that "the trickle of Gypsies will increase to a flood. Free right of access across EU frontiers makes it possible for the first time for the Roma communities to come from across Europe".

Mr. Steen's intervention followed police raids conducted as part of Operation Caddy, the first stage of Operation Golf, a partnership between the London Metropolitan Police and the Romanian police. Founded in 2007 by the EU, Operation Golf was intended to tackle a suspected child trafficking ring coordinated by Romanian Roma from the town of Ţăndărei.[5] Throughout the communist period, these Roma had engaged in informal adoption practices, referred to in local police files as cases of 'child kidnapping'. Similarly, official documents from the same period presented the Roma of Ţăndărei as a savage, untamed and anti-social population and regularly associated them with begging and crime (Toma et al. 2017).

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[3] Home Office, March 2007, UK Action Plan on Tackling Human Trafficking. http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+/http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/human-traffick-action-plan.html, accessed 16/11/2017.

[4] Commons Debate, 06/02/2008: Column 235WH. Enforced Criminal Activity (Children) https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200708/cmhansrd/cm080206/halltext/80206h0001.htm, accessed 16/11/2017/.

[5] Operation GOLF – A UK and Romanian Joint Investigation Tackling Romanian Organised Crime and Child Trafficking. https://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/eu-projects/operation-golf-%E2%80%93-uk-and-romanian-joint-investigation-tackling-romanian-organised-crime_en, accessed 16/11/2017.

Between 2008 and 2010 Mr. Steen joined police raids conducted by Operation Golf, as he reported on 5th February 2010 during the second reading of the Anti-Slavery Day Bill he was sponsoring[6]:

> In another case involving trafficked children, a gang is believed to have forged documents for the purpose of at least 500 claims worth £4.5 million. In all, some £300 million is thought to be involved in benefit frauds.
>
> Let me explain how the system works. These people are European Union nationals. A couple will bring in perhaps three or four children claiming that they are theirs, sometimes with forged passports. […] A house that I visited during a police raid in east London conveyed no sense that it had been lived in other than by the nine or 10 children – in one instance, there were 12-sleeping on the floors with rugs, upstairs and downstairs. It was quite a Dickensian picture.

In both debates, Mr. Steen was using the information received by Operation Golf as part of a wider narrative to gain support for his campaign to introduce legislation to tackle human trafficking. The campaign was successful, leading to the Anti-Slavery Day Bill becoming law[7] and to the UK joining EU legislation on the topic.[8] At the same time, Mr. Steen campaign introduced a connection between Roma migrants and suspected cases of benefit fraud. At the time, this connection did not influence debates about migration, but as I will show below it was to resurface later on.

5.4.2 Local Developments: Ţăndărei Roma in Manchester

Roma families from Ţăndărei had also settled in Manchester, some arriving as early as 2000, most of them, however, after Romania's accession to the EU in 2007. In the spring of 2009 the leader of the Liberal-Democratic opposition, Mr. Simon Ashley, forwarded a petition on behalf of a small group of residents, accusing the Roma of littering, truancy, anti-social and criminal behaviour. The Council response was the setting up of a dedicated Roma Strategy Group (Cools et al. 2017).

The Roma Strategy Group commissioned a report from the Romani Project at the University of Manchester. Based on interviews with the Roma and published in October 2009,[9] the report highlighted the language problems of the Roma and the

[6] Commons Debate, 05/02/2010: Column 536. Anti-Slavery Day Bill, Second Reading. http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmhansrd/cm100205/debtext/100205-0004.htm, accessed 16/11/2017.

[7] Anti-Slavery Day Act 2010. http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/14/pdfs/ukpga_20100014_en.pdf, accessed 16/11/2017.

[8] Directive 2011/36/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims. http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:101:0001:0011:EN:PDF, accessed 16/11/2017.

[9] Matras, Y., Beluschi Fabeni, G., Leggio, D. V. and Vránová, E. (2009) The Roma community in Gorton South, Manchester. Manchester: Romani Project, The University of Manchester. http://romani.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/downloads/2/report.pdf, accessed 16/11/2017.

restrictions on employment imposed at the time on Romanian and Bulgarian nationals as barriers to employment. The latter, combined with low levels of education, meant that most adult Roma were limited to self-employment as scrap-metal collectors or vendors of the Big Issue, a magazine published by the Big Life Group, a nationally active charity. This self-employment, however, the report noted, allowed the Roma to access welfare support. The report also emphasised that all interviewed Roma expressed their ambition to find employment. However, minutes from the Roma Strategy Groups noted that

> […] the issue of benefits policy remains a major concern both in terms of continuing inward migration and risks to community cohesion. [We] need to consider whether the self-employment [sic.] being declared can be considered genuine work. (22 January 2010)

According to conversations with members of the Roma Strategy Group, these concerns had been expressed by Councillor Ashley. He confirmed that in an email interview dated 21 March 2017:

> Yes. I met privately with senior officers of the Big Life Group with senior Council Officers [sic.]. I also met with senior Labour Executive members and Council Officers, who agreed that the Big Life Group should be asked to review their policy. The Big Life Group Officers felt that it was the Government's job to close any loopholes in the law.

In February 2010, the Roma Strategy Group wrote to the Big Life Group, asking to exclude the Roma as vendors of the Big Issue. The letter reported that research commissioned by the Roma Strategy Group had shown that Roma used the Big Issue to establish themselves as self-employed to be able to claim state benefits, but that they did not intend to seek alternative employment. The Big Life Group, having consulted the Romani Project's report, regarded the letter as misrepresenting it and sought legal advice from Cherie Blair, human rights lawyer and wife of former Prime Minister Tony Blair. In a statement from March 2010 she wrote:

> In my opinion, this attempt to use the public order powers of the Council to achieve a reduction in the benefits given to Roma only vendors is both for an improper purpose and discriminatory and therefore void and the Big Issue is entitled to refuse to comply.

The Big Life Group thus continued to allow Roma to sell the Big Issue. Furthermore, in May 2010 they decided to implement the recommendation contained in the Romani Project's report for a short-term investment in capacity building to train young Roma as interpreters. Once trained, the young Roma were hired as freelancers by the Council and third sectors agencies working in partnership with it thanks to the availability of resources from the Migration Impact Fund (see above).

The subsequent developments of the Manchester Roma Strategy and its overall positive effects on the local Roma have been described in detail elsewhere (cf. Cools et al. 2017; Leggio 2017; Matras and Leggio 2017). What is relevant for the present article is to highlight how the Romani Project's report was used in an attempt to deny Roma migrants access to benefits, but the intervention of an influential figure like Cherie Blair prevented that. Furthermore, the Big Life Group commissioned Ciara Leeming, a free-lance journalist, an article to present the training for young Roma as an example of good practice. Besides being published in the Big Issue, the

article appeared on the reporter's personal blog and on the Travellers Times Online[10] in September 2010. The article also featured an interview with Councillor Ashley:

> I believe The Big Issue in the North is allowing itself to be used as a gateway to benefits dependency. Fundamentally, these people aren't homeless – they are all in houses. But because they've found a loophole which gives them access to benefits, selling the magazine is now an end in itself and not about genuine self-employment.

5.4.3 The Big Issue "Loophole": From Local to National Concern

As the confrontation between the Big Life Group and Councillor Ashley was developing, national media covered the court cases stemming from Operation Golf's investigations. In one case, a Romanian Roma activist employed as outreach worker by the Big Issue in London had provided false references and employment contracts to Roma migrants, allowing them to claim almost £3 in benefits.[11] In July 2010, a Sunday Express article[12] covering the case reports the following statement by Matthew Elliott of the TaxPayers' Alliance, an influential right-wing pressure group campaigning for lower taxes:

> This highlights the need to reform the welfare system as the introduction of better checks and balances would prevent one person costing the public so much money in future.

In September 2010, the Daily Mail reported on the trial, taking place in Romania, of trafficking suspects identified by Operation Golf. Titled In the dock: Modern-day Fagins who "sent 200 Romanian children to beg and steal in UK",[13] the article revealed how the suspected gang operated from Ţăndărei and sent children to the UK "to beg, steal and commit benefit fraud".

Ţăndărei was mentioned again in October 2010, when following more arrests for exploitation of children for criminal activity and benefit fraud, Superintendent Bernie Gravett, lead officer of Operation Golf, declared[14]:

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[10] Leeming, C. (2010) Minority report. The Big Issue 842, 20/09/2010. http://www.ciaraleeming.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/BI-ROMA-PROJECT-2010.pdf, http://travellerstimes.org.uk/News/A-promising-land.aspx, accessed 16/11/2017.

[11] BBC News, 08/11/2010. Roma rights campaigner jailed for £2.9m benefits scam. http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-11347134, accessed 16/11/2017.

[12] Sunday Express, 27/07/2010, Gypsy in £3 million benefit scam. http://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/189378/Gypsy-in-3-million-benefit-scam, accessed 16/11/2017.

[13] The Daily Mail, 28/09/2010, In the dock: Modern-day Fagins who 'sent 200 Romanian children to beg and steal in UK'. http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1315672/Modern-day-Fagins-sent-200-Romanian-children-beg-steal-UK.html#ixzz4vC8xNjIc, accessed 16/11/2017.

[14] The Independent, 12/10/2010. Police smash Romanian 'child trafficking ring' http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/police-smash-romanian-child-trafficking-ring-2104694.html, accessed 16/11/2017.

> The most visible aspects of the profits being sent back to Romania are the building of large houses, the purchase of expensive vehicles and the possession of large amounts of disposable cash.

Commenting on the same arrests, Ms. Beddoe from ECPAT UK (a global network of civil society organisations dedicated to ending the commercial sexual exploitation of children) explained to the BBC[15]:

> If they are good, the children are traded between gangs. It is like the Faganism of children trained to be pickpockets in the 19th Century. […] Tandarei [sic.] is relatively small and impoverished. But the criminals have lives of luxury. There is a juxtaposition between the villagers living in shanty town huts with unmade roads and horse-drawn carriages. […] Then you have criminals in Gypsy palaces; you see high-value cars, many with British number-plates.

These arrests prompted the Cambridge Centre for Applied Research in Human Trafficking, a network of academics, social entrepreneurs, enforcement personnel, third sector organisations and political lobbyists, to publish a blog entry about their research on the "growth in the deployment of children for Fagan style personal theft, street robbery and social security scams on the streets".[16]

BBC's Panorama also devoted attention to these cases. In a documentary broadcasted in October 2010,[17] the programme crew followed Roma children begging on the streets of London, and visited the newly built villas of the supposed gangsters in Ţăndărei.

A second conviction for benefit fraud was achieved by Operation Golf in November 2010. Although the convicted was a Ţăndărei Roma, the media did not mention it, but indicated how the fraud profits had been invested in the building of a nine-bedroom house.[18]

All the prosecutions emerging from Operation Golf were discussed in a BBC Radio 4 reportage,[19] on 7 February 2011. The reporter, attempting to offer a balanced picture, highlights how "[w]ith restrictions on work, and without automatic rights to benefits, many live in poverty. Increasingly Roma now sell the Big Issue magazine to make ends meet" and how "poverty leaves them open to exploitation by criminal gangs in their own community". The Big Life training programme in Manchester was also presented, through interviews with some of the trainees, as an attempt to break barriers. The reportage also featured interviews with Superintendent

[15] BBC News, 12/10/2010, Roma children 'fund gangster luxury'. http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/mobile/uk-england-london-11524734, accessed 16/11/2017.

[16] CCARHT, 18/10/2010, Romanian child trafficking – the challenges for the future. http://www.ccarht.org/blog/2010/10/hello-world/, accessed 16/11/2017.

[17] BBC Panorama, 19/10/2017, The secret lives of Britain's child beggars. http://news.bbc.co.uk/panorama/hi/front_page/newsid_9618000/9618038.stm, accessed 16/11/2017.

[18] The Express, 20/11/2010. Gypsy 'child smuggler' jailed for benefit fraud. http://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/212558/Gypsy-child-smuggler-jailed-for-benefit-fraud, accessed 16/11/2017.

[19] BBC radio 4, 07/02/2011, The truth about the Roma. http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00y5htm, accessed 16/11/2017.

Gravett and Councillor Ashley, both of them making the same points presented above. On the same day, the Telegraph[20] picked up on the reportage, but exclusively focused on the link between self-employment as Big Issue sellers and the possibility to claim benefits, flagging it as a revelation in the article sub-heading:

> Romanian immigrants are becoming Big Issue sellers in order to gain state benefits through a tax loophole, it has been disclosed.

As evidence for their claim, the author also reported, in their entirety, Councillor Ashley's declaration from Leeming's article in the Big Issue.

A couple of months later, Leeming herself republished Councillor Ashley's statements on the Guardian, in an article titled Efforts to integrate Roma people are under threat from cuts.[21]The article came as a reaction to the newly elected Cameron government's decision to discontinue the Migration Impacts Fund[22] which was negatively affecting the third sector agencies collaborating with the Big Life training programme for Roma in Manchester.

Following the third, and last, conviction for benefit fraud of a family from Ţăndărei in mid-May 2011, the Telegraph reported the following statement by the sentencing judge:

> This was a major undermining of the UK benefit system. It was a professional fraud that occurred over a significant time frame and resulted in a very serious loss to the UK authorities.[23]

Two Sunday reportages appeared immediately after, both featuring Councillor Ashley's statement from Leeming's original article. The Telegraph's one[24] included a statement from a Home Office spokesman:

> We are determined to protect the interests of the taxpayer and the benefit system from possible abuse. This government will push for stringent controls on workers from new member states being able to access our labour market.

The reportage on Mail on Sunday, titled Benefits Boulevard: Gypsies' gaudy mansions built in Romania... with YOUR money [emphasis in the original][25] featured

[20] The Telegraph, 07/02/2011, Romanian immigrants 'sell Big Issue to gain benefits'. http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/romania/8306850/Romanian-immigrants-sell-Big-Issue-to-gain-benefits.html, accessed 16/11/2017.

[21] The Guardian, 27/04/2011, Efforts to integrate Roma people are under threat from cuts. http://www.theguardian.com/society/2011/apr/27/roma-manchester-tensions-big-issue, accessed 16/11/2017.

[22] The Guardian, 06/08/2010, Fund to ease impact of immigration scrapped by stealth. https://www.theguardian.com/uk/2010/aug/06/fund-impact-immigration-scrapped, accessed 16/11/2017.

[23] The Telegraph, 18/05/2011, Gypsy gang jailed for 'sophisticated' £800k benefit fraud. http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/law-and-order/8520031/Roman-gypsy-gang-jailed-for-sophisticated-800k-benefit-fraud.html, accessed 16/11/2017.

[24] The Telegraph, 21/05/2011. Romanian families use Big Issues loophole. http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/immigration/8527950/Romanian-families-use-Big-Issue-loophole.html, accessed 16/11/2017.

[25] Mail on Sunday, 21/05/2011. Benefits Boulevard: Gypsies' gaudy mansions built in Romania... with YOUR money. http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1389282/Benefits-boulevard-Built-Romania%2D%2DYOUR-money.html, accessed 16/11/2017.

interviews with British vendors of the Big Issue who complained about the competition from Roma. The article ended with the following statement:

> Roma gypsy people who blatantly use this magazine to milk our welfare state, deprive the real homeless and have spawned a huge criminal industry.

An attempt, based on the same arguments about genuine work used in 2010 by Manchester Roma Strategy Group, by Bristol City Council to deny housing benefits to a Romanian Roma vendor called new attention to the 'Big Issue loophole'. As a court rejected the attempt in January 2012, the Daily Mail presented the case in indignant tones and emphasised the amount of benefits claimed by the vendor. The article reported the opinion of Chris Grayling, minister for employment:

> We disagree with the court's decision. We have to remain in line with our national and international obligations. However, it is absolutely necessary to protect the taxpayer and the benefit system from possible abuse.[26]

The Mail on Sunday then published a reportage, featuring interviews with British vendors. Based on their declaration, it presented Romanian Roma as wealthy gangsters muscling their way into a "[j]ob once reserved for Britain's homeless".[27] The reportage also presented the position of Iain Duncan Smith, Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, which said:

> The British people will understandably wonder how on earth it can be fair for people to come here with no job, but enjoy the right to access our benefit system.

Similarly, Conservative MP David Davies was quoted as saying that

> The Big Issue was set up to help the homeless, not as a racket to allow people to migrate over here so they can play on people's generosity and claim benefits.

Finally, the report raised concerns that the numbers of Roma might escalate once Romania and Bulgaria achieved full membership of the EU in 2014.

5.4.4 Benefits as a Pull Factors and the "Roma Flood" Scare

As Operation Golf had come to an end with the convictions in 2011, specific mentions of Roma migrants almost completely disappeared from the public debate. However, concerns about the arrival of large numbers of Romanian and Bulgarian citizens characterised public debates throughout 2012. These concerns were ignited by the formalisation of Cameron's electoral pledge to reduce net migration to the

[26] The Daily Mail, 19/01/2012. Romanian Big Issue seller given legal right to claim housing benefit (on top of the £25,000 she already claims). http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2087857/Romanian-Big-Issue-seller-given-legal-right-claim-housing-benefit.html, accessed 16/11/2017.

[27] Mail on Sunday, 03/02/2012. One-third of Big Issue sellers now Romanian: Job once reserved for Britain's homeless has been swamped by Eastern European immigrants. And many of them have homes AND claim benefits. http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2090012/One-Big-Issue-sellers-Romanian-homes-AND-claim-benefits.html, accessed 16/11/2017.

tens of thousands.[28] An influential intervention was, once again, a report by Migrationwatch UK.[29] By comparing the income from benefits between Poland and the UK, the report argued that the British benefit regime acted as a pull factor for European migrants and raised the alarm for the potential increase of Romanian and Bulgarians from 2014. The Migrationwatch chairman argued:

> In fairness to the hard-pressed British taxpayer, this must be changed. […] The whole EU benefit regime must be renegotiated otherwise there is a clear risk that the number of East European migrants coming to seek work in Britain will shoot up placing even greater strain on our public services and putting the government's immigration objectives at considerable risk.

These debates culminated with Cameron's pledge, in January 2013, to renegotiate the relationship between the UK and the EU and to put the results of such negotiation through a referendum if the Conservative Party had won the general elections in 2015.[30] At this stage, Cameron did not mention what powers he intended to attempt to repatriate. Concerns about an influx of Eastern European migrants and their impact on services, however, persisted and were successfully used by the anti-EU UK Independence Party (UKIP) and its leader Nigel Farage to gain an unprecedented level of support at the May 2013 local elections.[31]

Roma migrants were brought back into the debates on 30 October 2013 when researchers from Salford Housing & Urban Studies Unit (SHUSU) at the University of Salford exclusively shared their latest report with Channel4 News.[32] Commissioned by Migration Yorkshire, a consortium of local authority and voluntary sector agencies, the report[33] presented a "conservative" estimate of the number of Roma migrants in the UK at around 200,000, placing it far above than the official estimate of 50,000. The report also suggested that it was "likely that this population will continue to increase" and that there is "a strong demand from local authorities for help in working with migrant Roma communities". During the interview that accompanied the report's release, the lead author, Philip Brown, argued that local authorities were struggling to cope with such numbers due to the cuts implemented

[28] BBC News, 14/04/2011. In full: David Cameron immigration speech. http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-13083781, accessed 16/11/2017.

[29] Migrationwatch UK, 04/04/2012. Benefits Regime Makes UK Attractive Destination for East European Migrants. http://www.migrationwatchuk.org/press-release/318, accessed 16/11/2017.

[30] BBC News, 23/01/2013. David Cameron promises in/out referendum on EU http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-21148282, accessed 16/11/2017.

[31] The Telegraph, 03/05/2013. Local elections 2013: Nigel Farage's Ukip surges to best ever showing, winning 150 seats. http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/ukip/10036463/Local-elections-2013-Nigel-Farages-Ukip-surges-to-best-ever-showing-winning-150-seats.html, accessed 16/11/2017.

[32] Channel4 News, 30/10/2013. UK Roma population one of biggest in Europe. https://www.channel4.com/news/immigration-roma-migrants-bulgaria-romania-slovakia-uk, accessed 16/11/2017.

[33] Brown, Scullion and Martin (2013). Migrant Roma in the United Kingdom: Population size and experiences of local authorities and partners. http://www.salford.ac.uk/research/care/research-groups/shusu/projects-migration-and-integration/migrant-roma-in-the-united-kingdom-population-size-and-experiences-of-local-authorities-and-partners, accessed 16/11/2017.

by Cameron's government. He then added that knowing the actual number of Roma migrants was needed for local authorities and third sectors agencies to better target EU funds and compensate for the lack of governmental support. The interview was accompanied by a reportage from a neighbourhood in Sheffield, emphasising tensions between the local residents and Slovak Roma.

Although the study's methodology was opaque in several respects and the data on which it was based inaccessible and unverifiable (Matras 2015b), its highly mediatised launch was effective in getting the attention of senior politicians. On 12 November, the former Labour Home Secretary David Blunkett and MP for Sheffield, speaking to the BBC,[34] warned that

> We have got to change the behaviour and the culture of the incoming community, the Roma community, because there's going to be an explosion otherwise. […] We've got to be tough and robust in saying to people you are not in a downtrodden village or woodland, because many of them don't even live in areas where there are toilets or refuse collection facilities. You are not there any more, you are here – and you've got to adhere to our standards, and to our way of behaving, and if you do then you'll get a welcome and people will support you.

Quoting the SHUSU report, he criticised the government for not acknowledging the scale of the problem and thus preventing accesses to EU funds to replace the discontinued Migration Impacts Fund. On 25 November, Mr. Blunkett also signed an Early Day Motion, tabled by Labour MP Jeremy Corbyn and sponsored by representatives of all parties, calling on the government to acknowledge the significance of SHUSU's report and asking for a review of the government approach to Roma migrants and to EU funds available to tackle their inclusion.[35]

The BBC report also included the reply to Blunkett's comments by a government spokesman:

> Salford University figures should be treated with extreme caution, as they are estimates based on replies from only a third of local authorities and rely on anecdotal information […] Coalition ministers did not view the [Migration Impacts Fund] scheme as particularly effective or value for money, especially given the need to tackle the budget deficit inherited by the government.

Farage's reaction was also included in the coverage:

> Mr. Blunkett should be admired for the courage he has shown by speaking so plainly on this issue. Of course, the type of language he has used I would have been utterly condemned for using. […] My question is if they [ministers] won't listen to the dangers of opening the door to Romania and Bulgaria next year when UKIP speak out on it, will they listen to David Blunkett? I certainly hope so.

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[34] BBC News, 12/11/2013. David Blunkett riot fear over Roma migrant tensions. http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-24909979, accessed 16/11/2017.

[35] House of Commons, 25/11/2013. Early day motion 788: Roma migrant communities. https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/business-papers/commons/early-day-motions/edm-detail1/?edmnumber=788&session=2013-14, accessed 16/11/2017.

The day after, deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg, also an MP for Sheffield, defended the government's decisions. When talking about the tensions in Sheffield, however, he argued that

> We have every right to say if you are in Britain and are coming to live here and you are bringing up a family here, you have got to be sensitive to the way life is lived in this country. If you do things that people find intimidating, such as large groups hanging around on street corners, you have got to listen to what other people in the community say.[36]

Blunkett's comments also led to the emergence of previous comments by his predecessor as Home Secretary, Jack Straw. Writing for a local newspaper a few weeks before, Straw had declared that the immediate lifting of restrictions on citizens from countries that joined the EU in 2004 had been a "spectacular mistake" as it had led to the rocketing of migration.[37]

Exactly as these declarations were coming out, YouGov UK carried out a poll for The Times, highlighting growing popular discontent on migration policies, their impact on services and increasing demands for the government to renegotiate the rights of EU migrants.[38] The poll results were commented upon on the Telegraph which also anticipated that Cameron

> has promised to clampdown on "welfare tourism" and is due to unveil more details proposals [sic.] to limit EU migrants rights to benefits [sic.][39]

This was confirmed on 27 November, when Cameron listed the measures he planned to introduce and, in an article on the Financial Times,[40] argued that the EU had to reform "to regain the trust of its people". He demanded "new arrangements that will slow full access to each others' labour markets until we can be sure it will not cause vast migrations" and declared his intention to put the issue at the centre of his proposed renegotiation of Britain's relationship with the EU.

While there was no mention in Cameron's article of any particular group abusing the system, it became clear that the concern about Roma accessing benefits had influenced the decision when, in April 2014, Iain Duncan Smith announced the details about the restrictions. He stated:

> we have taken action to make sure our economy delivers for people who want to work hard, play by the rules, and contribute to this country. These reforms will ensure we have a fair

[36] The Guardian, 14/11/2013. Nick Clegg: Roma in Sheffield have to listen to others in community. https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2013/nov/14/nick-clegg-roma-community-sheffield-migrants-britain, accessed 16/11/2017.

[37] The Guardian, 13/11/2013. Jack Straw: Labour made mistake letting Poles in early. https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2013/nov/13/jack-straw-labour-mistake-poles, accessed 16/11/2017.

[38] YouGov UK, 25/11/2013. What we believe about immigration. https://yougov.co.uk/news/2013/11/25/what-we-believe-about-immigration/, accessed 16/11/2017.

[39] The Telegraph, 23/11/2013. Cameron to clamp down on migrants' rights to benefits. http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/immigration/10469625/Cameron-to-clamp-down-on-migrants-rights-to-benefits.html, accessed 16/11/2017.

[40] The Financial Times, 27/11/2013. David Cameron launches attack on EU migration. https://www.ft.com/content/b2b10574-56c3-11e3-ab12-00144feabdc0, accessed 16/11/2016.

> system – one which provides support for genuine workers and jobseekers, but does not allow people to come to our country and take advantage of our benefits system.[41]

Similarly, as Cameron announced his full agenda for renegotiation with the EU on 28 November 2014, he noted that "this Government has already taken unprecedented action to make our welfare system fairer and less open to abuse, all within the current rules" and stated his intention to negotiate the introduction of "longer re-entry bans for all those who abuse free movement including beggars, rough sleepers, fraudsters and people who collude in sham marriages".

5.5 Concluding Remarks

The case of the British debates around the impact of migration on the welfare system highlights how pervasive stereotypes about the Roma are. Both narratives on the criminal nature of Roma migration and those about a sudden influx of Roma in 2014 (which never materialised) matched well-established images about the "Gypsies". This, I will argue, made both narratives convincing as they fitted expectations about the Roma, to the point that their very weak factual basis was essentially ignored.

Furthermore, the case shows that, as suggested by Boswell et al. (2011), policy narratives can migrate from one context to another. Operation Golf and Mr. Steen, respectively looking to secure resources (EU grants) and legitimacy (for the anti-slavery campaign), embraced the Romanian communist authorities' narrative about the Ţăndărei Roma as involved in crime and child trafficking. According to the London Metropolitan Police's reply to a Freedom of Information request submitted by the MigRom Project, Operation Golf resulted in just 12 arrests for child trafficking, of which only 8 resulted in convictions. However, the three uncovered cases of benefit fraud brought the Ţăndărei Roma to the public attention as an organised network of "modern-day Fagins".

This representation, combining the stereotypical image of Roma as organised criminals with one of the most despicable characters in Dickensian literature, I would argue, made the narrative about the Ţăndărei Roma compelling for the British public. This was further enhanced by the broadcasting of images and publishing of descriptions of the "gaudy mansions" built by some Roma in Ţăndărei. The building of large houses in the village of origin is a practice common among Romanian Roma migrants which in this way display their success both to Roma and non-Roma and, more importantly, achieve territorial de-segregation from mono-ethnic neighbourhood (Benarrosh-Orsoni 2015; Tesăr 2016; Toma et al. 2017). However, again against the background of stereotypes about Roma criminality, British media presented that as the result of fraudulent behaviours.

[41] The Guardian, 19/02/2014. EU migrants face new barrier to accessing UK state benefits. https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2014/feb/19/eu-migrants-welfare-benefits-earnings, accessed 16/11/2017.

The way in which Roma self-employment as Big Issue vendors came to public attention shows how, as argued by Boswell (2009), actors can appropriate research to enhance their legitimacy. In our case, the Roma Strategy Group, under pressure from the leader of the political opposition in Manchester City Council, attempted to use the Romani Project report to legitimise an attempt to exclude Roma migrants from the benefit system. Notwithstanding that the attempt failed and that later developments have been considered positive by Manchester City Council (Manchester City Council Equality Team 2016), the publication of Ashley's statements by Ciara Leeming and the Big Issue brought the "Big Issue loophole" into the public discussion. The publication of Ashley's statements was most likely intended, at first, to offer a more rounded picture of the problems faced by Roma migrants and, later, in an attempt to avoid the discontinuation of funding for support. However, picked up by right-wing tabloids, they ended up reinforcing the narrative about Roma migrants as fraudster and firmly linked it to their representation as a threat to the welfare system.

The latter point shows the risks involved in academic attempts to influence policy making and those deriving from the mediatisation of policy debates. These risks are even more strongly exemplified in the consequences of the attempt to push Cameron's government to reconsider its funding priorities. Research commissioned by local policy actors that had seen their funding cut, although methodologically questionable, was sensationalised to achieve maximum effect. That a cross-party motion was put in parliament, asking the government to acknowledge this research, could be considered a success, if it was not for the ways in which politicians, including one of the signatories of the motion, presented the Roma. This led, on one side, to senior politicians that had always been in favour of migration, to publicly reconsider their positions, in turn giving further ammunitions for arguments in favour of a crackdown on migrants' access to the benefit system. Popular pressures stoked by the UKIP and confirmed by polls, not only led the government not to reconsider its funding priorities but also to include the questioning of the right to free movement, with the attached rights to employment and welfare, in the renegotiation of the UK membership of the EU.

It is true that the SHUSU team later acknowledged that their communication strategy backfired (Brown et al. 2014), yet their botched attempt is a clear warning to researchers working on Roma migrants. Because of the pervasiveness of stereotypes, it is crucial that whenever we write about Roma we avoid, on one side, generalisations that might reinforce such stereotypes. On the other, and more importantly, we should at all cost avoid sensationalising our findings, even if this is seen as an attempt to gain support for more inclusive Roma policies.

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Part II
Securitization and Integration Policies

Chapter 6
When Housing Policies Are Ethnically Targeted: Struggles, Conflicts and Contentions for a "Possible City"

Marianna Manca and Cecilia Vergnano

In November 2011 the Italian Council of State declared unlawful the state of emergency concerning Roma settlements that had been in force since 2008. This decision gave rise to a new political phase, which started in 2012, characterized by a new National Strategy for the Inclusion of Roma people. One year later, in the city of Turin, the still unspent financial resources that had been assigned to the 'emergency' were converted into funds for 'Roma inclusion'. This chapter addresses the question of how the implementation of the National Strategy at the local level was influenced by the so-called 'Roma emergency' politics. Through fieldwork in the informal slum of Lungo Stura Lazio, which has turned into the biggest rehousing project ever implemented in the city, called *La Città Possibile* (The Possible City) we were able to detect the persistence of an emergency, punitive and strongly selective logic at work, applied to a neoliberal approach to housing policies. The role played by local NGOs has been particularly significant in the reproduction of this logic, through the arbitrary selection between "good" (deserving) and "bad" (undeserving) Roma. The investigation was carried out between 2011 and 2016 and is based on ethnographic fieldwork and in-depth interviews with 25 camp dwellers, 12 civil servants, 11 social workers from private NGOs, and 4 civil-society actors from grassroots movements.

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6.1 Introduction

At the end of December 2014, the former homeless shelter of *via Traves*, on the outskirts of Turin, was re-inaugurated as a temporary collective housing structure for deprived families living "in emergency situations", within the framework of a local rehousing project called *La Città Possibile* (The Possible City), funded by the Italian Ministry of Interior. Since then, the building has hosted Romanian Roma families who had been recently evicted from their makeshift barracks on the banks of the Stura River as well as homeless Italian families. This cohabitation between Roma and non-Roma families was not originally planned in the project that was instead strictly addressed to Roma beneficiaries. Indeed, project specifications only envisaged, at most, the possibility of a residential mix of Roma families and "young Italian people interested in experiencing new forms of cohabitation" (Città di Torino 2013: 24). However, the presence of Italian families resulted from their "contentious politics" (Ataç et al. 2016): they occupied the newly refurbished structure on the night of 01 December, just a few weeks before the scheduled inauguration, with the support of militants of far-right groups and the local councillor of the right-wing party *Fratelli d'Italia*. Their action was both a response to an unsolved housing need and a protest against the assignment of a public structure to "non-Italian" families – and, what is more, of Roma ethnicity.

The structure, located in the suburban district Le Vallette, was inaugurated a few days before Christmas.[1] However, few elements marked a Christmas atmosphere; among them, red Santa Claus hats worn by some of the prostitutes working in that street. It was a cold, sunny day, and the local NGO AIZO, in charge of the management of the housing structure, had organised some outdoor leisure activities for the children who were to live in the building. Some local authorities attended the ceremony, among them the Councillor for Social Services and the Bishop of the city. Next to them, a tired old man dressed as a clown had just taken off his wig and lit a cigarette. After having entertained the children with some numbers, it was the turn of AIZO's social workers, who activated competitive games with the Italian and Romanian children. Since the toys collected for the occasion were not enough to go around, they organised prize competitions in which only those who came in first place won the toy at stake. In fact, this was an unintended metaphor of the competitive mechanisms at the basis of The Possible City. Around the group of children playing with the AIZO volunteers, each parent supported his or her own child. This grotesque scene, in which each child was incited to come first in order to obtain his or her Christmas present, strengthened the sense of competition against immigrants that moved the Italian families to occupy the building just a few weeks before.

This chapter is based on two ethnographic investigations on Roma housing policies carried out in Turin between 2011 and 2016. The first one focuses on the mismatch between residential strategies of Roma camp dwellers and Turinese local

[1] Only 3 years earlier, in the same neighbourhood, a demonstration against Roma resulted in the setting fire to a temporary Roma settlement just next to *via Traves* (Vergnano 2014).

housing policies addressed to Roma (Vergnano 2015), while the second illustrates the impact on Roma families of different housing projects, beyond Roma-camps, promoted by the local administration (Manca 2017). Building on two episodes of public conflict, the aim of this chapter is to highlight the limits of selective, ethnically-targeted housing policies, as well as the reactions these policies may produce in a context of general 'housing crisis', increasingly affecting wider cohorts of population excluded from the housing and labour markets.

We move from the conception of the camp and camp-like institutions as political spaces constituting new political subjectivities, where the acts of citizenship (Isin and Nielsen 2008) performed not only by dwellers, but also by neighbours and activists, trigger new emerging processes of subjectivation and question selective programs of rehousing in a context of welfare cuts and housing crisis. Participant observation has been carried out inside and outside the slum of Lungo Stura Lazio (hereinafter "the slum"), inhabited by Romanian families (mostly of Roma ethnicity) from 2011 until 2015, before and during its dismantling. In addition, we carried out participant observation in two collective housing structures where some of the slum dwellers were rehoused, as well as in a building squatted for 2 weeks by Roma families excluded, for different reasons, from The Possible City rehousing project. Between 2012 and 2015, we collected, recorded and transcribed 58 in-depth interviews with slum dwellers (30 men and 28 women, both those benefitting and those excluded from the rehousing project, all Italian speaking), 17 with civil servants from the Municipal Social Services and Municipal Police, 13 with social workers from private NGOs and 4 with civil-society actors from neighbourhood associations supporting the clearance of the slum.

The pioneering nature of Turin concerning Roma housing policies makes this city an especially suitable choice for detecting new governance models of Roma groups in the Italian context. Indeed, Turin was the first Italian city where an official camp was created on an ethnic basis as a housing solution for a group of Sinti (Italian Roma) families, in 1978. The camp was managed by a special municipal office called 'Nomad Office.'[2] Several years later, in 1982, a special police patrol was created as part of the Municipal Police Department: the "Nomad Patrol". Currently, there are four official Roma camps in Turinese suburbs and several informal settlements or slums, also popularly known as "Roma camps". During the 1980s and 1990s, the camp model introduced in Turin was reproduced in several large and medium sized Italian cities (see Sigona 2002, 2005a, b): in fact, in 2000, the European Roma Rights Centre defined Italy as a "campland" (ERRC 2000). In 2008, the Italian government declared a 'Roma emergency' in relation to the

[2] The term "nomad" has been used in Italy at political, administrative and media levels to refer to Roma and Sinti groups, as a strategy of "political correctness" to avoid racist language. Resulting from the consideration of nomadism as an intrinsic feature of 'Romani culture', the use of the term "nomad" contributes to hiding a reality of forced migration and displacement. It also provides a discursive justification for the adoption of specific housing policies addressed to Roma groups, such as camps (see, among others Piasere 2006; Sigona 2002, 2005a, b, 2011) and can be therefore considered as a sign of the deep-rooted democratic racism (Palidda 2009) towards Roma and Sinti groups in Italy.

settlements of "nomad communities" in different Italian cities (Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri 2008), motivated by "public security reasons"; however, at the end of 2011, the Council of the State declared the emergency illegitimate and, in 2012, the new National Strategy for Roma Inclusion up to 2020 (NSRI) was officially approved. Starting in 2013, Turin was the first Italian city to implement a rehousing project addressing Roma families living in makeshift settlements, under the inclusive framework of the NSRI, thus once again confirming its pioneering character in the local governance of Roma groups.

6.2 Going Beyond Camps in the "Crisis" Context

The Italian "Roma question" is a longstanding issue which can be defined with more precision as a 'camp question' or, in other words, a complex set of ethnopolicies and social conflicts resulting *in* and *from* the spatial segregation of poor Roma families.

The origin of the camp as a housing solution for underprivileged families of Roma ethnicity must be sought in the late 1970s, when prohibitions against the settlement of (mainly) Italian Sinti and Roma in urban and suburban spaces were proliferating in many Italian municipalities (Sigona 2011). The planning and equipping of camps in Italy resulted from the heated debate, beginning in the 1960s, concerning the conflictive presence – at the local level – of mobile stigmatised groups, namely of Sinti and Roma ethnicities, both native and immigrant. Compared with previous municipal bans against "nomad" settlers, the first regional laws of the 1980s for the "protection of Romani culture" (which established the need for creating specific "settling areas") were considered a necessary step by civil and religious organisations for Roma rights. However, camping areas (or camps) soon resulted in marginalised and segregated spaces, which institutionalised "nomadism" as an intrinsic dimension of "Romani culture" (and therefore, paradoxically, permanent temporariness as an intrinsic dimension of Roma housing). Indeed, following Agamben's formulation, Piasere (2006) defined the conditions of Roma camp dwellers in Italy as a form of "inclusion by exclusion".

During the 1980s and 1990s, camps became a very popular residential model for both native and immigrant Roma in several Italian cities. The number of Roma living in camps has increased over the last 20 years, reaching approximately 40,000 (Dalla Zuanna 2013) as the conditions of these camps have continuously worsened, negatively impacting the social and territorial stigma of this already-stigmatised ethnic minority. Political manipulation of such conflicts for electoral purposes culminated in 2008 with the declaration of a "state of emergency" regarding Roma settlements by the Italian government in three large cities: Milan, Rome and Naples. The declaration of emergency provided local prefects with special powers and ministerial funds,[3] mainly used for clearing out informal settlements and building new

[3] Approximately 5 million euros for Milan in 2008, 7.8 million euros for Rome in 2009 and 10 million in 2011, and 10.4 million for Naples. See the report by Berenice et al. (2013) "Segregare costa".

camps in peripheral urban areas (Daniele 2011; Pasta et al. 2016; Vitale 2008), and was extended to Turin and Venice in 2010.

Since the emergency was declared illegitimate at the end of 2011, the NSRI was approved in 2012, under the EU framework for National Roma Integration Strategies until 2020. The NSRI recognises the substantial failure of a four-decade camps policy and promotes the social inclusion of Romani groups through the design of policies following the controversial common EU principle of an "explicit but not exclusive approach" (European Commission 2012). This sudden switch from "Roma emergency" to "Roma integration" is connected to the need to adapt to European directives and offered unexpected support to different voices from civil society and third sector organisations requesting a new approach to Roma housing. However, it does not result in direct improvement of national and local policies, as the Turinese example of The Possible City illustrates. Indeed, until today, the NRSI appears to be just a formal plan, largely overlooked and mainly used for rhetorical answers and the creation of consensus (Bontempelli 2014).

As a consequence of the NSRI's recognition of the failure of the "camp policy", Roma become an additional category among an increasing number of others – the poor, the young, single-parent families, migrants – that express specific housing needs and have no access to affordable accommodation in the private real estate market or public housing. Indeed, the historic matter of housing access for pauperised groups is now disputed in a contemporary scenario, quite different from the context in which "nomad camps" were conceived at the end of the 1970s. Housing deprivation no longer exclusively concerns traditional low-income families: it also involves new, numerous and heterogeneous population cohorts and groups, previously not affected by this problem (Tosi 2008; Governa and Saccomanni 2009). It is important to note that in 2012 Turin achieved the bitter record of the Italian "capital of evictions", with 4000 eviction notices affecting families with rent arrears, and a long waiting list of 9000 requests for allocation of social housing (Redattore Sociale 2013; Minister of Interior 2013). The same record was once again achieved in 2016, with 3388 executions of eviction orders (Minister of Interior 2017).

The emergence of new forms of housing deprivation is connected to wider dynamics of transition towards a post-industrial and neoliberal city. Indeed, in the last decades, rental deregulation and the reduction of public housing stock (Ascoli and Sgritta 2016) has had a deep impact on the housing supply. The radical restructuring of social housing provision, justified through a hegemonic discourse aimed at undermining the legitimacy of the social housing sector and promoting homeownership, was accompanied by a process of financialising housing that culminated in a global crisis of the housing market in 2008 (Aalbers 2015). Even if in Italy the ratio of household mortgage debt to net disposable income is lower than in other European countries (García Lamarca and Kaika 2016), rising levels of unemployment weigh on the capacity of an increasing number of households to afford their own housing.

In this context, those economically excluded from access to the labour and housing markets have been subjected to specific forms of governance. Recent studies on developments in housing policies (Blessing 2016) point to the emergence of a new marketised and privately financed model of "affordable rental" on a time-limited basis, especially addressed to low- and moderate-income groups with income growth potential in the medium term, such as students or young couples. "Affordable rental may thus be understood as a strategy of "backing winners'", based on the notion of 'economic opportunity' rather than charity, or any universal right to housing" (2016: 18). These developments support a broader agenda of neoliberal social service reforms, according to a new model of citizenship based on a contractualisation of the relationship between the individual and the state, whereby the entitlement to rights is conditional and can be earned after proving one's activation and responsibleness (Clarke 2005; van Baar 2012; Suvarierol and Kirk 2014). In addition, the retrenchment of public sector investments has been partially replaced with private investments on the basis of different welfare mix formulations and decentralisation dynamics towards the local – especially the urban – level.

While recent housing policies aimed at providing temporary "affordable rental" are mainly addressed to low- and moderate-income people, what happens to those vulnerable social groups, not even able to afford an "affordable rental"? As Sassen (2014) has convincingly shown, wider dynamics of expulsions are characterising the current extractive economic logic in many fields usually analysed as separated, from the social realm to the biosphere. "Anything or anybody, whether a law or civic effort, that gets in the way of profit risks being pushed aside—expelled. This switch in economic logics is one major systematic trend not fully captured in current explanations" (ibid.: 213). In this sense, van Baar (2016) introduced the notion of "evictability" to define the permanent possibility of being evicted from a sheltering place that certain groups of 'border crossers' (not only migrants, but also those national citizens perceived as an internal danger, such as homeless, Muslims, Roma or inhabitants of urban areas experiencing gentrification processes) ordinarily experience.

This is the context in which the NSRI is being implemented. In a structural context of "housing crisis", however, ethnically targeted housing policies manifest their intrinsic paradoxes between the enlargement of housing demand and the contraction of supply on limited categories. Therefore, both the conflicts among pauperised social groups (such as those that took place in the housing accommodation of *via Traves*) and the political concerns on electoral results contribute to shape and influence the various levels of implementation of local policies for Roma housing. Moreover, these kinds of ethno-policies trigger new emerging processes of subjectivation among camp dwellers and other groups excluded from housing access. Indeed, as many scholars have argued, Roma camps (and their geographical and social proximities, we may add) are not only "spaces of exception" but also contested spaces of citizenship where processes of political subjectivation take place (Maestri 2017; Maestri and Huges 2017). Roma dwellers, and other non-Roma homeless, are not only passive beneficiaries of exclusionary or allegedly inclusive measures, but they are also – and similar to any other citizen – autonomous subjects,

who make decisions about their necessities and preferences between different housing solution and opportunities.

In fact, the individual freedom of being and acting in order to achieve personal objectives can be considered a fundamental aspect for achieving social inclusion and individual well-being (Sen 1985). According to Sen's "capability approach", well-being is intended as agents' capacity to promote their own aims through a production process of real opportunities to choose, with an active transformation of choices and resources into results. In this sense, social actors cannot be considered as simple recipients or beneficiaries of social intervention: on the contrary, they are active parts of the process of evaluation, choice, and construction of their own personal pathway of inclusion.

In fact, the ethnic and selective character of the alleged "inclusive" Municipal intervention on Roma housing has been contested by different social groups, both Roma and non-Roma, even from opposite political areas. The dynamics and purposes of their contestations are illustrated in the following paragraphs.

6.3 Seeking the Right to Be Included in the Possible City

How did Roma slum dwellers arrive in *via Traves*? As mentioned, from December 2013 until November 2015, a massive re-housing project promoted by the Municipality of Turin, *La Città Possibile*, was implemented in the slum of Lungo Stura Lazio. This settlement, the largest in the city, was defined as an informal Roma camp by local authorities and was the home of approximately 1000 Romanian citizens mostly of Roma ethnicity.

The project was drafted by the local Prefecture and Municipality between 2010 and 2011, during the so-called "Roma emergency". The declaration of illegitimacy by the State Council in 2011 put the city of Turin in a difficult situation, since the ministerial funds assigned to the management of the "emergency" (approximately 5 million euros) had to be returned to the Ministry of Interior. After the approval of the more inclusive normative framework of the NSRI, the same ministerial funds were re-assigned to the city of Turin. The Possible City was aimed at reducing city slums by moving their inhabitants through massive rehousing and 'voluntary' returns to Romania.

A first selection phase of the potential beneficiaries of rehousing took place prior to the implementation of the project (Spring 2013), when a series of expulsions and arrests within the slum was conducted. In that period, the police conducted massive controls inside the settlement: 298 controls in 6 months, approximately 2 per day – often early in the morning and blocking all access routes. The controls permitted the identification of 1057 people. Seventeen were arrested, 52 had charges pressed against them and 29 were affected by expulsion orders (Prefettura di Torino 2015). Of utmost importance, the police operations were extensively covered by the local press, thus giving rise to a process of criminalisation of the inhabitants of the slum. As a former employee of the Nomad Office told us,

> They carried out hundreds of police controls in the months before the project, identifying the people living in the slum. *Hundreds of censuses*. We have no way of knowing, but everything seems to indicate that at the end of that period, having hundreds of different census, they asked themselves: "Which census can we choose for implementing the project?", and they obviously answered "This one!". I mean, the smallest one [the census with fewer people]. [emphasis added] (18/10/2013)

According to the official census, there were 800 slum dwellers. However, police data reveals that more than 1000 people were identified in the slum before the implementation of The Possible City. According to our personal observations, we consider the latter data more adjusted to reality. The hypothesis of the interviewed former staff of the Nomad Office partly explains the arbitrary nature of the exclusion of dozens of dwellers from The Possible City: they were missing in the final census simply because they were not in the slum that day. The second selection step was the evaluation by the Prefecture and Municipality of personal legal requirements, which resulted in a "list of beneficiaries" that remained secret (and only in part negotiated with NGO workers) over the entire duration of the project.

The inclusion project was funded with €2,465,859 from the ministerial funds originally allocated for the "Roma emergency" in Turin. Local NGOs participated in a call for tender aimed at implementing the project. One of their main tasks was to contribute to providing private apartments to selected families and promoting "voluntary returns" to Romania. Indeed, they directly managed rental contracts and payments. Rehoused families had to pay rent through growing quotas until the end of the project, while the remaining part was to be paid with project funds. Since the clearance of the slum was carried out progressively throughout the whole project, the families that were rehoused first benefited from a longer period of subsidies compared with those who were rehoused at the end, when the project was almost finished. Once the project was finished, the families were expected to be able to meet the rent of a house at market prices with their own means.[4] On the other hand, families choosing to voluntarily return to Romania received the ticket for the trip and were involved in a 6-month project of labour reintegration in the country of origin, managed by local non-profit organisations selected as partners of The Possible City.

Rehoused families were mostly moved to collective housing (such as the one of *via Traves*), and some individual apartments in urban and suburban areas. Indeed, difficulties in finding affordable housing were solved by third sector organisations by mean of concentrating dozens of families in the same building, or using private apartments of charity organisations involved in The Possible City as project partners. Collective housing units were composed of minimal spaces – single or double rooms per family – generally equipped with fundamental services (sometimes without utilities such as heating systems, private spaces, electric systems compliant with legal standards), inhabited exclusively by Roma families and managed by third sector social workers for daily activities. It is worthy to note that the largest of such

[4] This mechanism was also experimented, unsuccessfully, in the project "Abit-Azioni" in 2010 (Manzoni 2013).

collective housings, the building of *corso Vigevano*, did not comply with legal habitability criteria (Italiano 2016).

The beneficiaries of The Possible City were requested to sign an "inclusion agreement" with a series of commitments, including the respect of Italian law and the specific rules of the project. The agreement was called *patto di emersione*, literally, "pact of emergence", referring to the need to "emerge" from the informal sphere of housing and labour to the formal one. Not respecting the agreement was punishable with expulsion from the project – the sanction affecting the entire family. As part of a symbolic process of re-education to the social norms of civilised society, each selected family had to demolish their shack and dispose of the building material as a step prior to being rehoused, while the Red Cross guarded the evicted areas in order to avoid reoccupation by former dwellers excluded from the project. A specific budget of €457,985 was allocated for this surveillance activity.

The clearance of the slum took place progressively from December 2013 to November 2015. While being included in the beneficiary list of The Possible City entailed two possibilities (the acceptance of rehousing, on the one hand, or the acceptance of return, on the other), exclusion was simply tantamount to being evicted without alternatives. In spite of the decisive impact of these different possibilities on the "inclusion process" of each slum dweller, the criteria according to which families were either selected or excluded, on one side, or (in case of having been selected) proposed to either access alternative housing or return to Romania, on the other, were neither transparent or questionable for anyone but the project's heads. NGO workers interviewed during the fieldwork provided different explanations. Some among them recognised that the only criteria employed was the attempt to "match" a family's characteristics with the housing supply available in a given moment.

The families who were selected as beneficiaries but refused to return to Romania or to pay high rents for housing, had no possibility of negotiating the terms of their inclusion in the project and were simply considered "undeserving". Therefore, most of the weakest and poorest families were excluded from the project.

In any case, the lack of transparency, participation and communication contributed to the creation of a tense atmosphere of rivalry between the families during the implementation of the project. As mentioned, their moment of accessing the project would significantly influence the opportunities that were offered to them: families living in the area that was cleared first benefited from a longer rent allowance than the last families to be rehoused; in addition, the last inhabitants removed from the camp, only received proposals for voluntary return to Romania, as at the final stage of the project alternative housing solutions were no longer available. What this meant, on the ground, was that as each day passed, there was a mounting anxiety and anguish felt by those remaining in the slum.

The area was cleared progressively, the shacks demolished and the dwellers were either rehoused, sent to Romania or evicted. At the end of the project, 643 individuals out of 1000 inhabitants were included in the project: according to the final report, 97 "inclusion agreements" were signed for rehousing (equivalent to 378 individuals) and 85 "return agreements" (equivalent to 265 individuals). However, after

5 months from the end of the project 23 families were still relying on rental support, 25 were in single apartments rented on the private market, 14 were in Romania[5] and 13 were squatting the same temporary housings in which they had been rehoused, as they were not able to afford the payment of the full rent. After the end of the project in November 2015, the Municipality extended another year of economic support for rent payment only for 24 families, but after this extra period the Municipality stopped all economic contribution, maintaining just a monitoring of the families from November 2016. At that moment, 1 year after the end of the project, only six of these families were able to afford the rent of their houses on the private housing market. Among the others, some were defaulting debtors in the private housing market, and some were hosted in free accommodations by local NGOs and other charity associations.[6] Their difficulties were, again, the costs of housing payments on the private real estate market, and the lack of regular jobs for economic autonomy. The long-term sustainability of this "emergence" process was, in fact, insecure and questionable.

The remaining 350 dwellers were simply evicted without alternative solutions. Most of them moved to precarious shacks in another city slum. They were defined "not adapted" for the project; however, neither selection criteria were clear for the dwellers and the external observers, nor were they communicated to the families.

6.4 Contesting the Ethnic Character of the Project: The Occupation of *via Traves*

In order to rehouse about 600 beneficiaries, according to project specifications, the Municipality of Turin only provided one public building: the former 24-bed homeless shelter on *via Traves*. The rest of the housing solutions were found by involved NGOs in the private market.

The former homeless shelter was a sheet-metal container, located in the suburbs of Le Vallette, on the outskirts of Turin. Le Vallette is a working-class neighbourhood, traditionally isolated from the rest of the city and strongly stigmatised due to a deep-rooted perception of insecurity and criminality, in which the current unemployment rate is among the highest in Turin, according to the last available census: 33% among adults, 46% among young people (Caprioglio 2011). Even if between the 1970s and 1990s, most of the public housing assets of the neighbourhood were sold very cheaply to their tenants, not all the households have been able to access ownership of their houses. As a result, some of the poorest families are currently facing the impossibility of affording rent.

[5] In a survey conducted among returned families, 60% declared their intention to not remain in Romania, changing their migratory project towards a new country. Data provided by the executive director of the Possible City project during an interview.

[6] Only a few families have regular permission for residence because most of them do not have health insurance, bank accounts or regular jobs, as required by European standards.

According to tender specifications of The Possible City, the refurbishment of the shelter of *via Traves* had to be participative: Roma families involved in the rehousing process had to directly participate in the renovation; moreover, as already mentioned, tender specifications included the possibility of a residential mix of Roma families and "young Italian people interested in experiencing new forms of cohabitation" (Città di Torino 2013: 24).[7]

However, upon implementing the project, the involved NGOs operated in a different way. The refurbishment of the building was entrusted to external specialised companies, financed with approximately €100,000 (part of the budget of the CP project). No dweller of the slum took part in the refurbishment.

As already mentioned, on the night of 30 November, 3 weeks before the inauguration of the renovated transitional shelter, four families of Le Vallette, evicted from their houses, squatted the building. As the coordinator of the project explained,

> They did it in a crucial moment, because [the refurbishment] was just finished. Everything was ready, except for the furniture. The heating system had been inaugurated on Friday, the installations had been tested on Thursday, the only things missing were the baseboards. So it was a very special moment, because if they would have entered in the previous week they would have found a very different situation as for installations and facilities. And if they would have decided to enter the next weekend, they would not have been able to, because they would have found Roma families inside (13/12/2014).

Therefore, on Monday morning, when the social worker appointed to open the site arrived, he found the external gate locked with a chain, and two Italian flags hanging on both sides of the gate. The people inside were declaring through the window their intention to not let anybody in: "The police have already been notified, we won't let anybody in", "We have occupied this place because we are Italian families and we don't have anywhere to go".

As mentioned, a few militants of the far-right movement *Gioventú Nazionale*, together with a far-right municipal councillor of the political party *Fratelli d'Italia* quickly arrived on the scene, claiming housing rights for "Italian families", thus appropriating the action within a far-right discourse. As an NGO worker told us,

> The intention of strategically hitting *right there*… this is political stuff. It doesn't belong to these families. I know them, they are good people, but they are really vulnerable, really in difficulty. I mean, they don't think in a strategic way, about going in a place rather than another. They have a problem of daily survival, every place is good for them. I think that they found somebody who told them "look, that is a good place for many reasons, go there, go on that day". I don't think that it was their target, of their own will. Their aim was just to find shelter. These families had been sleeping in a tent for one month, and then another month in a car, with children between 5 and 9 years old… Even our Roma families, when they knew their situation, said that the decision of squatting that building was right. They were dead tired and exhausted (15/12/2014).

It is noteworthy that the assignment of shelter to Roma families was surprisingly criticised by one of the same NGOs taking part in The Possible City project, "Terra

[7] Both requirements (participation and cohabitation) were based on the reference model of *Il Dado*, a collaborative shelter project for Roma and non-Roma families on the outskirts of Turin, usually presented as a "good practice" or a "social innovation" (Vitale and Membretti 2013).

del Fuoco". About 1 month before the occupation, the NGO sent an open letter to the mayor of the city, strongly criticising the ethnic criterion of assignment of housing and highlighting the danger of creating social tensions between pauperised ethnic groups:

> For public opinion, providing housing with public money is equivalent to allocating social housing without formal requirements. […] Creating competition between Italian families in difficulty and Roma families involved in the project is a source of social tension' (President of Terra Del Fuoco, reported by Guccione in *La Stampa,* 25/10/2014).

The potentially discriminatory character of local Roma housing policies was especially conflictive in the context of the "housing crisis" affecting Turin, the Italian "eviction capital". As the mayor of Turin admitted in a public meeting about the final outcomes of The Possible City, "it is difficult to present this project to citizens, because it is unpopular".[8] Indeed, the claim of the squatting families of *via Traves* was immediately recognised as legitimate by public authorities and responsible NGOs. Immediately after the occupation, the Municipality entrusted AIZO, one of the NGOs involved in The Possible City, with mediation tasks. Two of the four squatting families were involved in the same "pact of emergence" proposed to selected Roma families, by which NGOs and rehoused families undertook a series of mutual commitments, including a rent allowance until the end of the project scheduled for December 2015 (starting from this date the two families were expected, like the others, to be able to pay the entire rent on their own). The other two families chose a different solution for their housing needs, since they moved to another building on the outskirts of the city, already squatted by other militants of far-right groups.

6.5 Contesting the Selective Character of the Project: The Occupation of *via Asti*

Neither was the occupation of *via Traves* the only protest action carried out during the implementation of The Possible City, nor were the four families of Le Vallette, together with far-right groups, the only protesters. Indeed, at the end of 2015, a few days before the end of The Possible City project, 26 Roma families, supported by some local anarchist and anti-racist activists, entered the former military base "La Marmora" in *via Asti*, located in an affluent neighbourhood close to the city centre, and squatted some empty buildings with the intention of making their home there. Some of these families were excluded from The Possible City (and therefore were going to be evicted from the slum without alternatives), others were temporarily rehoused in some apartments on *corso Vigevano* as well as in *via Traves*, but – now that the project was almost finished – they were unable to afford the full rent.

[8] Piero Fassino, at the meeting "Evaluation of the project 'La Città Possibile' and future prospects". Turin, 22/01/2016 (available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q_nrKYiKjy0&t=1s)

Nevertheless, these families were not the only and first squatters of the abandoned site: indeed, the structure had already been occupied, 6 months earlier by a local NGO claiming the spaces for social and cultural events. And it was not just any NGO, it was "Terra del Fuoco", one of the organisations involved in the implementation of The Possible City, the same organisation that criticised, 1 year earlier, the ethnic criterion of the allocation of housing at the basis of the project.

This news received great attention in local media (Rocci 2015; Caracciolo 2015), thus giving visibility to the families and also the opportunity to speak publicly about their reasons and requests. The Municipality and the NGOs involved in the dismantling of the slum were thus compelled to listen to their voices, and their message was strongly critical against them. Among many empty buildings in the city, that group of former slum dwellers chose to enter the only one where they could meet the social workers considered responsible for their eviction. This act, and the following declarations, were visible forms of political acting of usually invisibilised people.

The occupation started with a meeting between the two groups of squatters (the Roma group and Terra del Fuoco group), aimed at finding a common solution in spite of their different objectives and needs. Roma families complained about the destruction of their shacks and the forthcoming evictions from the buildings in which they had been rehoused. They highlighted that, even if their shacks were precarious and unsafe, these were the only homes they had, and they lost them either for not being selected as deserving beneficiaries or, if selected, for not being able to pay rent without regular jobs. The promised alternative homes and the professed inclusion project were, in fact, more precarious than their old shacks. As Marianna wrote in one of her field notes:

> When I ask George if they know the other occupants, he smiles and answers "do you know Rossella? And do you know where she lives?" I reply that I know Rossella, that she is a social worker for The Possible City project and she lives in Turin. George becomes serious and says, "she lives here, on the other side of the courtyard. She should have found a house for us, but she didn't do it and now she doesn't want us to stay here. They say that we have to leave because there's no water and electricity here, but we lived for years on the riverside" (5.11.2015).

In fact, this was the squat of a squat, a political claim that took the place of a previous claim, a claiming by a group of "deviant squatters" within and against that of a group of "moral squatters" (Piemontese 2016). Indeed, the Roma were strongly critical of the social workers: they claimed their right to a home and contested The Possible City, as they wrote in an open letter[9] addressed to the neighbours. On their side, the "moral" squatters of the NGO appeared embarrassed and uncomfortable with their new Roma neighbours. "We are not the owners of this building – they declared in the meeting – and we are not the ones who decide who has the right to stay here; we can help you, but we are not the owners". "Here we are, we don't have another place to go", a Roma woman replied (Tessarin 2015).

During their stay, the families worked hard to make the spaces comfortable with furniture and domestic objects, also for children and the elderly. They opened it to

[9] The letter was published on by le local on-line magazine Nuova Società (November 3, 2015).

all external people curious about their situation and supporting their claim. The common space of the structure, a large central courtyard, was physically separated between the two occupant groups, and used for different activities during the day and the evening. The Roma hoped that the presence of the "moral squatters" would protect them from eviction. But this expectation was disappointed: 2 weeks after their arrival, Roma families were forcibly evicted together with the NGO squatters by a large police deployment (Manca 2015). They had very little time to gather their objects and leave the building, and they decided to organise a demonstration in the city centre to express their disappointment and their fear about the future. In the following weeks, the Roma received solidarity and attention from different parts of civil society, but nothing changed in administrative policies. When The Possible City project ended, no solution was provided for most of those families still living in the slum, whose shacks were simply demolished without providing any alternative accommodation for them.

6.6 Conclusions

Fieldwork research illustrates the crucial character of the local dimension as a fundamental arena for policies, in which the limits of politics, available resources and different implementation levels directly face local realities and resistances. It is not only recipient and beneficiary potentialities and needs, but also social tensions between different groups of stakeholders (Roma and non-Roma homeless people, far-right militants, anti-racist activists and NGOs, slum dwellers and local authorities) that emerge at this level, and are intensified, in a particularly critical economic phase, by insufficient political responses.

The Possible City is an example of how budgetary cuts affecting social policies and social services, externalisation and processes of fragmentation of the social demand through specific (ethnic) targeting may undermine the inclusive effects of social intervention and their sustainability (Clarke 2005). The contracting of social groups involved, on the basis of specific characteristics (such as ethnicity) is connected to wider logics of individualisation and contractualisation of social protection devices, both for people involvement and governance.

The connection between austerity policies and the dismantling of the welfare state, on one side, and the recognition of the need to promote more 'normalised' housing policies for Roma, on the other, has turned the Roma issue into a sort of taboo, an increasingly unpopular argument for local administrations. The emergency approach here plays a fundamental role, since it modifies quality standards through ethnic definitions (Harrison 1998) and reduces generalist services by means of separation from general assistance (Le Méner and Oppenchaim 2012).

In this context, implementing a rehousing project for slum dwellers of Roma ethnicity requires a series of rhetorical justifications, a discourse aimed at dividing "deserving" and "undeserving" beneficiaries according to morally defined criteria (having a criminal record or stable employment) rather than more "neutral",

administrative ones. This kind of framing fabricates "the Roma" as a special object of intervention, by differentiating them from other groups similarly excluded from housing access. The language of crisis, emergency and exception legitimates strongly vertical forms of politics and the demarcation of groups as deviant, unworthy or unfit to be present in public, while it delegitimises some forms of agency and agentive responses. At the same time, the "emergency" or "exception" discourse led to highly specialised forms of humanitarian intervention that may appear incongruous in a social context of rising deprivation and inequalities affecting increasing population cohorts, regardless of ethnicity. Because the shelter of *via Traves* is located at the centre of a particularly underprivileged area, Le Vallette, the omission of the "indigenous poor" from the rehousing intervention was more obvious. The Possible City, indeed, is a good illustration of the exclusionary effect of the discourse on deservingness, affecting both Roma and non-Roma homeless.

As a collateral effect, vertical, selective and differential policies may catalyse different forms of resistance to/of acts of citizenship (Isin and Nielsen 2008), such as the occupation of *via Asti*. The controversial character of this kind of "benevolent" social intervention, non-transparent, non-participative and based on previous processes of exclusion, can be easily questioned by excluded social actors for a wide range of reasons and arguments.

As the different accounts from *via Traves* and *via Asti* reveal, a competitive situation concerning basic needs can be converted into an opportunity for excluded people to centralise the margins and make visible the invisible through radical acts of citizenship. The recipients of social intervention, even if formally excluded, sought to conquer a space for speech, and in this sense, they managed to occupy a political space denouncing the paradoxical effects of ethnically targeted interventions, retrenchment of public interventions and arbitrary selection processes. At the same time, Roma migrants and other native marginalised groups become political capital and electoral merchandise for local and national powers, as the political character of the two occupations actually received a very different recognition from local authorities: the Italian families were allowed to remain in the former homeless shelter in *via Traves* they irregularly occupied, while the Roma migrants were quickly and brutally evicted from *via Asti*, even if a previous occupation of the same building by NGO workers, with much more symbolic and social capital, was tolerated until that moment and was presumed to somehow be able to "protect" and legitimise their presence.

The housing exclusion of impoverished Romanian Roma is not unique or exceptional: it is linked to other forms of exclusion that become stark when differential and selective policies are activated. It powerfully exposes existing social divisions, such as those between native and migrant poor, and temporary alliances (between evicted families and different groups of activists and political militants). These various forms of mobilisation reveal different episodes where excluded groups construct their own housing and biographic paths between constraint and opportunities, starting from their resources and preferences, with different capacities of activation in different conditions. They use public space to express their needs and opinions about personal and public questions, revealing the contradictions of differential welfare housing schemes.

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Chapter 7
Dwelling in Limbo. Temporality in the Governance of Romani Migrants in Spain

Ioana Vrăbiescu

This chapter engages with the current debate on Romani mobility and Spanish state practices of implementing socio-educational programs and camp housing to migrant EU citizens. Taking the Madrid city as a case study, this chapter documents and analyses temporary devices of governance that both limit and force the mobility of Romani families from Romania. Implemented by local authorities through specific policies, temporary devices of governance deliver an enforced pressure on Romani migrants who are seen as prospective "failed" subjects of integration and potential returnees. While deterring migrants from accessing territorial social benefits, local authorities and private companies acting as state proxi assign Romani families a "social contract" that aims for their integration. The authorities not only implement problematic policies, but they interpret and label the mobility of Romani as a characteristic of their "provisional" way of living and dwelling. Following Cabot (2012) and Ringel (2016) on the temporality of governance and scholarship on the anthropology of time (Munn 1992; Fabian 2014), I aim to show two entangled processes in local governance: the subject formation of Romani migrants as an *ethnicized mobile minority*, and the long-term adverse results of project-based, profit-oriented social work. Romani migrants have become the target of a new type of social engineering by bringing into question the establishment of citizenship: agreeing to the social contract not only presumes that Romani migrants are not members of the same community, but also suggests that their lives have a different temporality.

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7.1 Introduction

Authors who have problematized time and temporality have pointed to the contradiction between empirical research and the way the representation of time develops and informs our knowledge (Fabian 2014; Hodges 2008). This results in a broad conceptualization and categorization of time and temporality in social science (Munn 1992; Bastian 2014) that reflects and (re)produces state-pivoted categories through specific "temporal narratives, projections and expectations" (Ringel 2016). Scholars have explained how multiple organizations of time in different cultures shape temporalities and make them functional (Verdery 1996). Others have zoomed in on the concept of temporality, explaining how "temporal variations not only exist between different groups, but that multiple temporal models coexist within societies, varying between individuals and across contexts and the life-course" (Griffiths 2014). Temporality is embedded in laws, regulations and politics, and reflects the ethics and mechanisms structuring society (Cabot 2012; Grabham 2016).

Focusing on colonial entanglement between time and temporality, some scholars have shown how standard time has created temporal paradigms that are culturally specific. They argue for a discrepancy between Western time – a structural-temporality reflected through punctuality and technology – and a slower, looser temporality expressing an "underlying opposition between culture, religion, spirituality on the one hand and technology, materiality and instrumental rationality on the other" (Barak 2013: 3). Several scholars have signalled that temporality is missing in the study of mobility and migration (Cwerner 2001; Griffiths et al. 2013; Griffiths 2014). However, the significance of temporality in the context of migration has been problematized in migrants' experience of "waiting," being in "limbo" or having life put "on hold" during bureaucratic processes of admission, recognition of status or integration (Mountz et al. 2002; Robertson and Runganaikaloo 2014; Boccagni 2017).

In this direction, the present chapter tackles temporality as essential to understanding the entanglement of migration, social inclusion policies and bureaucratic exclusion practices for Romani migrants. Temporality plays an important role, both in imagining and representing the mobility of Romani migrants (Trumpener 1992), as well as in portraying them as a target of social inclusion initiatives. I bring to the fore the vicious construction of temporality in relation to social inclusion initiatives addressed at marginalized Romanian Romani migrants living in Spain. Disjunctive temporalities embedded in social inclusion programs are based on state categorizations of dwelling facilities and a normative understanding of the life course (Elder et al. 2003), which together create an administrative and existential limbo for Romani migrants. To build my argument, I analyse institutional guidance and constraints as well as the ways in which social workers make sense of their contribution while taking decisions and implementing policies in El Gallinero shantytown and the related temporary camps program.[1] Between 2014 and 2016, I conducted

[1] Hereafter I refer to the project APOI, initiated by the Red Cross and ACCEM as an "in-camp" housing program that in fact developed temporary camps for Romani migrants.

non-continuous fieldwork in the Madrid region, covering the shantytowns of El Gallinero, Cañada Real Galiana and Delicias. I had extensive talks with civil servants working in the municipality of Madrid and in the Madrid Autonomous Region, as well as social workers employed by religious and secular for- and non-profit organizations. Our meetings left ample room for the interviewees to present their own vision about their work and the programs they were participating in. As we will see, their views and interpretations not only seem to justify their interventions under the guise of professionalism, but also appear to legitimate and reinforce the ethics of the institutions or organizations they work for.

Exposing the position and reasoning of civil servants and social workers while interacting with Romanian Romani migrants, I highlight the discrepancies associated with the use of temporality in their daily work and implementation strategies. One the one hand, social workers perpetuate a problematic vision of migrants' temporality, and on the other hand, they impose an unquestioned temporality through embedding it in social programs. The state works with a definition of temporality in managing migration that, by categorizing people as highly mobile or being in continuous movement, determines short-term planning and policy intervention. The prospect of social integration – measurable over a 1-year timeline – suspends the (a) temporality of citizenship, one that is given by the social contract.

Allegedly, social programs in the Madrid region aim for the integration of marginalized and poor Romani migrants, addressing their basic needs underpinned in research reports, policy documents and local funding initiatives (Piemontese and Beluschi Fabeni 2013). However, these programs are shaped by the ways in which the state and non-state agents in charge of their implementation understand *temporality*. These programs disclose public administration practices of sorting out housing projects for Romani migrants, while exhibiting a colonial understanding of migrants' temporality as being ingrained in their life course and territorial mobility. While several state policies addressing issues involving work, family life, housing or health reveal degrees of mismatch between the state's categories and the migrants' capabilities, I will focus on the temporality of "life course" and "housing," both of which reveal to a great extent the complexity of the unbalanced power relation. With the term "life course" I refer to phases of the lives of migrants, such as childhood, teenagehood or adulthood; these phases are familiar to the social workers insofar as they correspond to state-designated categorizations. The cultural temporality of the "Other" and the description of Roma as "different" inform the decisions of street-level bureaucrats who have the discretionary power to define categories and to include or exclude individuals.

The structure of this chapter reflects the chronological and conceptual stages that characterize the civil servants' assessments of the informal dwellings inhabited by Roma migrants. At first, street-level bureaucrats struggle to understand the mobility of Romani and to determine the identity of the dwellings' inhabitants: who are these people, why did they come, where do they come from, and why did they choose this particular city. Secondly, they design and implement social inclusion programs characterized by temporal and budgetary limits, institutional tasks and measurements. As a result, many actors operating in shantytowns develop competitive or

overlapping projects based on different philosophies of social integration and in response to different funding entities. For example, while the school bus service supports children's school attendance, other programs develop children's alternative skills (Real Madrid football club program for youth); while mothers are encouraged to learn the language and follow sanitary classes, no childcare support is offered that would allow them the time to follow such pursuits; some programs allow migrants access to provisions after measuring their commitments and accomplishments, while others offer basic provisions without imposing any tasks or background checks.

Deconstructing the institutional and organizational logic in which the practices of civil servants and social workers are embedded, I will point to the temporal aspect of mobility that justifies and rationalizes state interventions. My argument takes into account two different representations and understandings of temporality in qualifying mobility and migration: first, civil servants' interpretations of the place inhabited by Romani migrants (informal dwelling) and of their life course shapes the "temporality of migrants" (Courgeau 2014); second, this temporality justifies state intervention in the form of child protection and programs for family integration. Notably, state bureaucrats associate the precarious dwelling of Romani migrants with an unwillingness to "settle down" and a preference for living temporarily in one place—another metaphor for nomadism. At the same time, temporal and budgetary limitations often get ignored in the assessment of the success or failure of project-based social intervention. The design of social programs entails a rhythm and temporality that corresponds to the ethics and politics accepted by mainstream society and supported by state policies. These two dimensions of interpreting temporality have been defined as *bio*-temporality and *structural*-temporality. The former encompasses the life course and time lived at a human scale in a temporality coordinated by life events, biological limits and a subjective approach (Amir 2007), whereas the latter has been defined as the objective state categorization and standard of time, often imposed in a colonial manner (Barak 2013). I will use structural-temporality to refer to the form embraced by state agents when assessing the integration process, in opposition to the lived temporality of migrants. In migration management, the problematic categorization of one's life course is conceived and assessed by state agents according to a normative timeline determined by the state (Grabham 2016). This chapter questions how migration management works in the Madrid region as a result of a specific conception of temporality embedded in policies and programs for Romani migrants, and of social workers' understanding of migrants' temporality. In doing so, I aim to analyse how Romani migrants are marginalized through the realization of "objective" and colonial (structural) temporality embedded in social inclusion programs.

In the first two sections, I will investigate the construction of Romani migrants as an *ethnicized mobile minority* through the temporality of inhabited space and that of the life course. The state's working category for the Roma becomes *mobility*, and associating them with this cultural attribute – i.e., nomadism – determines a particular understanding of temporality with respect to how they live their lives. Labelling Roma as "highly mobile" problematizes their temporality against that of

mainstream society. Two aspects resulting from this state categorization will be discussed further: ethnicized life course and temporal location. My study underpins the observation of Bowker and Star (2000) that through "filiation" Romani migrants become subject to a state category, "ethnic mobile group," and immediately thereafter to a set of bureaucratic practices. In the third section, I will describe temporary devices of governance that incorporate a certain understanding of temporality embedded in laws and policies. Translated into inclusion programs for Romani migrant families, projects are limited in time and budget and often result in predictable failures with respect to their target group (Vrăbiescu and Kalir 2017). These projects encourage a definition of temporality that is presented as uncontested and deceivingly normative. In the last section, I will analyse the "in-camp" housing project for Romani migrants conditioned by the signature of a formal contract for inclusion, which is called "social contract." The 1-year timeline of this program determines and prolongs the limbo in which Romani migrants are forced to live. Based on the temporality embedded in the program, I will explain the ways in which this social contract acts first to de-humanize Romani migrants – excluding them from the (a)temporality of citizenship – and second creates their practical exclusion on the basis of family migration. This approach to social inclusion leads not only to harsh marginalization, but to a form of citizenship dispossession.

7.2 The Temporality of the Inhabited Space

Circular and return migration are essential tenants of the EU's mobility framework, entrenched in the right to the freedom of movement. In spite of such a right, member states employ strategies directed at containing the mobility of Romani migrants. On the one hand, the intra-European mobility of Romani people has been proven to have consequences for national and international politics (Sigona and Vermeersch 2012; Yildiz and De Genova 2017), as well as for the social life of Roma and non-Roma communities in both countries of origin and of destination (Vullnetari 2012; Maestri 2017). On the other hand, throughout European cities Romani ethnics have been subjected to different forms of forced (im)mobility, both at local and international levels (Piemontese 2015; van Baar 2015; Sardelić 2017).

In order to justify the failure of programs and actions developed by the state and private initiatives for Romani migrants' integration, civil servants and private social workers create their own interpretations that tend to absolve the state of any blame where intervention is concerned. The failure of integration projects tends to be attributed to the "problematic and precarious" temporality of Romani migrants' settlements and migrants' allegedly short life course phases. There are two types of discourses used by civil servants to justify their interventions. First, the "temporality" found in shantytowns, especially the high mobility and precarious shacks, demonstrate the failure of social housing policies and Romani migrants' integration. Second, the same "temporality" is interpreted as being the result of deviant social behavior by Romani migrants, which demands special intervention by the state. In

addition to offering basic social provisions (health courses for women and lessons in childcare), the state takes a punishing approach towards the shantytown population (police raids, dismantling of shacks, or offering support for so-called voluntary return).

Romani migrants from Eastern Europe are represented in the Spanish institutional imaginary as Romanian and Bulgarian nationals, being identified mostly by their precarious housing or "their way of living" and subjected to several policies and programs for social integration[2] (Magazzini and Piemontese 2016). This institutional imaginary is very often perpetuated by mass media, which reproduces an image of destitute and criminal Romani migrants (López Catalán and Aharchi 2012; Piemontese et al. 2014), reinforcing a political need for scapegoating (Beluschi Fabeni et al. 2014). The social actors operating in the Madrid region refer to Romani migrants living in shantytowns as their biggest problem to be solved. During my interview with the freshly appointed clerk in charge of designing and implementing politics for Cañada Real Galiana, he explained that his priority is to eradicate the shantytown and to resolve the poor housing situation of people living in El Gallinero because they represent 90% of Romanian Roma migrants living in Madrid. This attitude is echoed at the social and institutional level where projects and policies for social inclusion flourish to the extent that they overlap and compete with one another. At the same time, civil servants who have already been working for some years in several projects unreservedly show their dissatisfaction with Romani migrants and their social and material situation, expressing bewilderment that after so much social intervention, still nothing has changed in their living conditions. The interpretation of this failure has neither been questioned nor problematized by social workers; nor has it been criticized politically or institutionally, but rather accommodated and redirected to blame the same subjects of integration policies.

Explaining the poor housing and material conditions that Romani migrants have been dealing with for a long time in the shantytown, one of the social workers abruptly said, "They don't do anything to improve their situation despite living here for more than ten years!" (interview with Marcus, Madrid, November 2015).[3] It is not surprising to see the correlation between civil servants' opinions and official reports, even if some of these documents have been delivered by private researchers or NGO-sponsored initiatives. The rhetoric in at least one of the NGO reports sounds very similar: "We asked ourselves why these families keep travelling from so far away looking for a better future, if once they arrive here they do not live in better conditions than in their country of origin" (Gutierrez Sanchez 2015: 31). Beyond manipulating a stereotyped explanation and blaming the victim, social workers justify the existence, "integration" and "failure" of Romani migrants, and simultaneously justify their own social work. Civil servants and private social workers' contribution to the (non-)integration of Romani migrants reflects their

[2] i.e. National Roma Integration Strategy, Plan Integral del Pueblo Gitano in Catalonia.

[3] While I preserved the anonymity of my informants by changing the names in the text, I felt it important to display the gender of the person for further interpretation.

opinions of migration, the meaning they give to their work and the applied ethics of the institutions they represent.

Ignacio, the manager of public housing services in the Madrid region, spent most of his professional life relocating precarious and vulnerable people to social houses. He explained the existence of El Gallinero in a public talk he gave in Barcelona, introducing "temporality" as the lens through which the very presence of shantytown could be justified. According to him, the temporal dimension is reflected in the way of living and provisional dwellings Romani migrants seem to prefer. Bringing up the shantytown's spatial proximity to Madrid, he pointed to two photos of a very simple shack built with "the trashiest materials one can find" and another "improved" version of a shack, looking more like a poor house. The first shack allegedly belonged to Romani migrants from El Gallinero, whereas the other one belonged to autochthonous Spanish Gitanos from Cañada Real Galiana, the neighbourhood nearby what is traditionally known as the cattle glen, which remains the poorest part of the Madrid region (Monografia Comunitaria 2016). Both examples of shacks are located equally close to the metropolitan area and thus there is no apparent reason why they are constructed so differently. Why would the Romani migrants not want to improve their dwellings? The manager continued to spell out his theory about the difference being so remarkable, advancing the idea of "provisional living" as the background reality of the migrants who do not want to settle and do not want to build better houses for themselves.

> The hypothesis that I am referring to is the provisional status of these families who live in this shantytown. […] I think that because these people [Romani migrants] live in a situation of continuous passing through, they do not build, let's say, slightly more comfortable shacks [like those of the Spanish Gitanos] (Ignacio, Barcelona, 2016)

Mobility is thus explained not only in terms of travelled space, but also in terms of temporal horizon (Griffiths et al. 2013). These two components of mobility contribute to civil servants' need for making sense of the difficult life conditions of Romani migrants. The countless projects carried out in El Gallinero, through which millions have been invested and wasted, could not change their living conditions. Civil servants' own work over the years failed because it tried to force the impossible integration of migrants characterized by high mobility, viewed as an irregular and unreasonable spatial movement or an unhealthy, unsafe, and short phase of the life course. The failure of social programs for Romani migrants' inclusion ultimately became self-explanatory for social workers: Romani migrants themselves, who "live in a situation of continuous passing through," make it impossible for social workers to help them improve their living situation. As part of the habit of blaming the Romani migrants, social workers also claim difficulties and even the impossibility of communicating with their target group. Nevertheless, social workers often overlook state abuse and somehow seem not to consider the recurrent vicious acts of dismantling Roma dwellings. Public authorities, be it either the local or the regional authority, act upon court orders and command the police to demolish "some" shacks (see García Santacruz 2017; Vrăbiescu 2018). Such an act of discretionary and hazardous home destruction is paradoxically met with the triumphant

conclusion of street-level bureaucrats: Romani migrants do not improve their dwelling places because they only want to stay temporarily in the host country.

The notion that Romani migrants live in a precarious and uncertain temporality can also be used as a justification for why the number of inhabitants is unknown, or touted as the real reason why Romani migrants are present in Madrid. This metaphor of instability and unsettledness illuminates and exempts the malpractice of social workers. The shantytown, the place where Romani migrants live, is perceived by social workers to be nothing but a halt – a momentary stop in the migrants' continuous movement. This perception of a fluid place prevents the shantytown from remaining a part of an administrative territory. The place itself becomes subject to another type of bureaucratic and state management. Once public administration is no longer directly responsible for the coordination of the shantytown's territory, social services act according to a different logic. Social services do not consider housing provision to be a viable option for a population that has been considered mobile, and they may offer (only) support to an *ethnicized* minority, such as the state category of Gitanos. This relegation of responsibility to social services, very often done without sufficient funding, results in a challenging organization of social work on the ground and an even more twisted sense-making of such interventions by the social workers themselves.

7.2.1 The Perceived Temporality of Migrants' Life Course

Even when research reports and decades of social interventions by state authorities and NGOs point to the lack of housing for Romani migrants, the projects for social integration sanctioned by the state omit precisely this dimension. Instead, a plethora of social workers, both commissioned by the state and working in local and regional state structures, have implemented programs in El Gallinero that mostly aim at child protection. In the analysis of some of these difficulties and contradictions, two particular prejudices seem to be commonly used as justification for the alleged high-mobility and specific temporality of Romani migrants: (1) gendered abnormal social behaviour that determines temporary settlements; (2) negative evaluation of childcare and too-short life course phases.

The bare existence of El Gallinero, a poor and precarious place allegedly because it is inhabited only temporarily, influences Spanish institutions' management of Romani migrants' mobility. The perceived temporality of migrants, of their life in the shantytown, marks the cause and effect of Romani social behaviour, which is categorized as deviant. Social workers explain this deviant social behaviour by condemning the Romani resilient patriarchal structure as well as the widespread precariousness of childhood. Social workers defend their difficulty in categorizing, organizing and developing projects in the shantytown due to migrants' "wrong lifestyle" and deeply unequal gender relations:

> El Gallinero is the place where an indefinite number of people live. [Indefinite] because they are mobile. This mobility is given by different factors that are not always controlled by

> the most vulnerable persons belonging to this community: the boys and girls, and the women. The factors [determining mobility] are men: it is the men that either give reasons for leaving and looking for a better life somewhere else, or force [family members] to stay and live in the shantytown. This mobility is determined by men. (Ignacio, Madrid, 2016)

Civil servants link the concept of mobility to the patriarchal structure of traditional Romani society and to the delinquent behaviour and practices perpetuated by Romani migrant men. However, pointing out the vulnerability of women and children from a marginalized community rather than explaining the structural and intersectional discrimination that occurs ends up harming that community rather than helping it (Vrăbiescu and Kalir 2017). Civil servants are aware of how difficult it must be for those left behind to make ends meet after a police arrest, for example. These mostly single-parent families struggle to obtain state subsidies, since not receiving them—which is the case more often than not—pushes women to go and beg on the streets. In conclusion, Ignacio summarizes: "with men... it is impossible to work." These gender-biased interpretations are being used here to explain the negative effects that Romani migrant men, who are perceived as patriarchal, traditional, violent and backward, have on their community, families and their children (see also Griffiths 2015).

In the same vein, another social worker told me how men are difficult to work with and that a successful social intervention is basically impossible when men are within the family. Describing what happened in a family before and after the arrest of the father, she reveals her understanding of gender roles within the Romani migrant family and the institutional approaches that follow:

> Now that the men are not there, we try to intervene more with women. We realized that when the husband is not at home, the dynamic within the family changes a lot—in that the women make decisions, and they do make decisions that their children will benefit from. For example, we worked with a family with three children, out of which two had been expelled from school for being absent too much, and because they were older than 16 years old. The third one was smaller but had already quit school three years prior. We worked with this family using every method that you can imagine: awards, punishment, guidance. We worked with the school, and the tutors came to talk to the family to convince the parents that… but the child did not want to go. The father was not very supportive. The mother she wanted the kid out but she did not hold this capacity to… well. The father went to prison… at the end of last summer. So, in September we returned to work with the family, with the mother, [regarding] the importance to have the child registered in the school and indeed, the children got registered. Because the father was not there… You know, because she wanted him to [attend school], but the father did not want to force the boy. So, now, since the father was not there, the mother had to take these decisions. She does not have to share them with her husband, nor does she have to accept whatever the husband says, so... it was 'easier' to register the child. However, it was still complicated to register a child of ten in the school, but we could see that the mother had good intentions. And the mother was strong and stood her ground, that the child will go to school. This would not have been possible with the father present. So, you can note when men are not there (Estela, Madrid, 2015)

Civil servants and social workers are quick to talk about the mobility of Roma in a racist and sexist way, based on a spatial interpretation of migration that they see as the cause of the precarious dwellings (Picker et al. 2015). In addition, migration management evaluates the temporal dimension of mobility, concluding that (high)

mobility determines shorter phases of their life course, which is unhealthy and dangerous. In explaining the problematic aspect of domestic violence and normalized violence against community members in El Gallinero, a social worker explained what was in her opinion a decisive factor restraining Romani migrants' inclusion: the very short childhood:

> […] the children from [El] Gallinero have a very very very short childhood. They stop being children very fast. This [the violence among their parents] is something a small child of three, four, five years old will talk about [if asked]. After that [age], they already know what they should not tell. Because at twelve, thirteen years old they are already adults. At 14 years old they already have their own child. The childhood is very very very short. They stop being babies very soon, they stop being children very fast. (Estela, Madrid, 2015)

Once the topic shifts from economic needs to child protection, the entire explanation of social intervention can often gain another level of depth: the focus on children's safety changes the responsibility of the state towards migrants. The fortified child protection system in Spain often affects migrant children disproportionately, and in a perverse way also the safety of Romani migrant families (Humphris 2017; Vrăbiescu 2017). Following the design of social projects that focus on children, funding is channelled in the same direction, attracting experts, social workers, NGO and private initiatives to compete in offering services. One of the NGO workers clarified to me how they choose the focus of their projects, and how the NGO took the initiative to work with Romani migrants in El Gallinero:

> [T]he important thing was to work with children, with teens. Because the summer holidays were designed for children and there were a lot of activities [to offer] for children. (…) We started with a photo exhibit that [Romani children] created themselves and this had a great result and a media impact. The press was talking about us. El Gallinero is a very mediated place! And then we received funding for two years from the Ministry of Social Affairs. (Amalia, Madrid, 2015)

Instead of acknowledging structural social exclusion, social workers prefer to look for cultural discrepancies in raising children, such as deviant behaviour and lack of knowledge in childcare. Seemingly disregarding the widespread illiteracy among Romani, they promote classes where young mothers are taught to record all the details about the evolution of their baby in the first year of life. Social workers develop and implement programs according to the normative state plan for child wellbeing as a way to try to educate Romani parents. From their point of view, and against the norm for child protection, the responsibility to go to school ends up being better held by the children themselves:

> Initially, the parents [were responsible], but now it is the child's responsibility if s/he wants to go to school or not. If s/he does not want to go, nothing happens, if s/he wants to go, then s/he will go. Of course, all this is complicated. We make sure that the parent does not oppose. (Estela, Madrid, 2015)

This remark was made while explaining the program that integrated children into the schooling system. Romani migrants match a target group to a social inclusion project based on social workers' understanding of migrants' temporality and their prevalent misunderstanding of how mobility plays out in the life course generally,

and in childhood and family life in particular. By contrast, the temporality embedded in national, regional and local laws and regulations has a direct effect on integration programs' frameworks. Yet this passes unnoticed, since it is widely ignored by those who work on the ground with Romani migrants.

7.3 Temporary Devices of Governance

Emily Grabham (2016) describes temporalities as being created through relationships between humans, things and matter, while she emphasizes "the strange qualities of legal time [to] produce specific effects" (2016: 47). Following her insight into the role of law in organizing social time and how "legal temporalities produce as well as govern," I will argue here that the social programs implemented in El Gallinero have designed and determined the life of Romani migrants. Time is shaped for Romani migrants through social programs that bring "law" into their lives. The legal and political temporality shaped by the social integration programs hold in place a particular understanding of Romani mobility and spatial unsettledness. The form of the law itself, the administrative regulations and political practices, materializes time "alongside and in relationship with human legal subjects" (Grabham 2014). The law and its implementation programs restructure the social life of Romani migrants, by explaining how their mobility is a negative factor for inclusion.

The formation of Romani migrants as ethnicised mobile subjects determines not only the ways in which they are perceived by authorities, but also allows public servants to create, approve and implement projects that do not respond to the actual needs of migrants. Social projects are conceived in a standard timeframe and Romani migrants are required to fit into the "normalized" temporality of the integration process. The "deviant" temporality of mobility perceived and registered by social workers has contributed to shaping these projects for social inclusion. For example, instead of addressing the issue of precarious housing, namely offering social housing for homeless people from families that live in the shantytown, social projects end up excluding the target population from state provision and protection. Implicitly and explicitly this problematic implementation of social projects steered state authorities to withdraw existing social provisions and in return to encourage voluntary return programs. Romani migrants from Romania are driven into an administrative limbo that has very direct material consequences for their lives, repeatedly throwing them to the margins of society with little chance to live anywhere else but in the shantytown. Not acknowledging the impossibility of accessing basic needs is one strategy deployed by social workers to claim that the system of integration is faultless. This permits them to easily blame Romani migrants for their own destitution, both in terms of housing or access to social services:

> The thing is that in Madrid anyone can register (*empadronar*) on a bench, at a tree. This is legal. It can be done. They [people that do not have local registration] go to a registration office and ask to register their shack. They go to the local administration (junta municipal)

> and say that they want to register. In order to do that, local police go to the shack and verify that the person lives there. (…) Then the police sees the family living in that house and then they can register. In the local administration of Villa de Vallecas. After that, once the members of the family are registered, they can ask for social benefits. (Estela, Madrid, 2015)

By contrast, another social worker who works in a different and complementary social project explained to me that people who only have an ID (or passport) from their country of origin and the residential permit (*empadronamiento*) cannot, in fact, ask for social protection. She confirmed that Romani migrants cannot obtain any social benefits if they do not have a valid residency permit (*NIE/tarjeta residente*), which is conditioned by a work contract and, in case of unemployment, proof of actively looking for work (*demanda de empleo*). These work conditions are, however, hardly likely to be fulfilled by Romani migrants.

In Spain, the formal procedure requires people living in an informal dwelling (*chabolas*) to be considered "at risk" and consequently to be attended by the municipal social services. The social workers have the task to evaluate the family's socio-economic situation and to initiate a "mediation process" with the broader aim of ensuring their access to family social inclusion programs. When certain conditions—such as residence permit, health insurance, personal documentation or school registration—are missing, then they are supposed to "find a solution" for Romani migrants. In practice, social workers offer support for these situations, altering social policies by implementing an emergency approach. The state creates social programs, interprets laws and implements policies that work with a different temporality than the perceived "temporality of migrants." State intervention is often based on social workers' suspicion regarding the migration plans of the Roma and their "real" reason for living in the shantytown. Rhetorical questions and supposedly flawless explanations in fact reveal a circular logic that endorses doubt about Romani migrants' provenience or purpose of migration. Eliza, one of the social workers who worked in El Gallinero for 4 years, expressed her disbelief in this paradoxical way:

> Why do they come? We have already been working with them for eight years and still we do not know why they come, why they go. If you talk to them you do not understand. We do not know for sure. There are economic reasons, that's clear, for which they come. But why do they decide to come to Madrid? Why do they not want to escape from where they are living? We know by now a lot of things about them. I think it is important to know where they come from. We know that they come from the same town. They are all from Țăndărei. The majority. So, what is it like there that makes them come here? The majority maintain their house there, and also send money from RMI[4] to maintain the house. So?!... I am not saying that they had good conditions [in Romania] but they are not like here. Because here there are no houses with running water [and] all of them are built from wood and plastic. They are not like other informal places, because they [Romani migrants] do nothing to improve [their shacks]. (Eliza, Madrid, 2015)

[4] RMI is *Renta Minima de Inclusion*, which is given to a few of the inhabitants of *El Gallinero,* but no one living in Delicias receives it. It is not enough to have a residence in the Madrid region and to prove that one is unemployed to receive the subsidy from the state; it requires proof that a person is actively engaged in looking for work or already has a promise of work.

Social workers' mistrust of the Roma living in El Gallinero regarding the real purpose of their migration is clear. In their understanding of mobility there are proofs to distinguish a real migrant, one who invests in the arrival destination, from a counterfeit migrant, one who sends money "back home." In their view, Romani are not honest migrants who wish to integrate, but instead use their poverty to claim social benefits. Due to their dishonesty, Romani migrants will use this money to build houses in their country of origin and do nothing to improve their housing situation in the country of migration. Subsequently, making sense of Romani mobility in such a way, social workers normalize evictions and start to recommend voluntary returns (Vrăbiescu 2016).

Even when poverty is a reality for people living in the shantytown, social workers need a deeper explanation to ultimately make sense of their work. When state and private actors have exhausted all options for the integration process, the failure of Romani migrants seems self-explanatory. Civil servants and social workers believe they did their best and "they tried everything," therefore expulsion instead of desertion is seen as a redemptive solution. This logic reveals the intricacies of the development-security nexus, showing how the state shifts policies within the same logic: shrinking welfare nurtures the security apparatus (van Baar 2017). Temporality—the way it is understood and managed by civil servants—plays a significant role in explaining and reinforcing the development-security nexus. Instead of offering provisions, the state enacts a type of punishing mechanism against Romani migrants by implementing short-term programs for child protection, developing temporary camps and enforcing evictions.

Different temporalities detectable in one place, El Gallinero, are shaped by competing and overlapping state projects resulting from precarious urbanity, administrative chaos, political exclusion and the materiality of dwelling places. First, precarious urbanity translates into geographic isolation and a lack of public investment in infrastructure. The shantytown is divided into three areas: (1) El Gallinero[5] – the upper part built in 2007–2008 has a lot of empty shacks and social workers seemingly do not know why they remain uninhabited; (2) Ensanche[6] – the poorest part is also the oldest dwelling area, built in 2002; (3) El Alto[7] – the newest part, built in 2010; there is no sewage, electricity or water system in the shantytown, except for one source of water and one garbage container installed recently. The bus station is a 10-min walk but a ride to Madrid costs six euros. Second, administrative disarray results from the legal status of the terrain where the shantytown is erected, belonging in part to the regional authority[8] and in part to a private industrial terrain. Thus, the local administration cannot implement law-abiding programs of urban development, but it does go ahead and demolish "some" shacks several times a year,

[5] Lit. in Spanish means "chicken farm" because the shantytown was built on the place of an old chicken farm.

[6] Lit. in Spanish "expansion" which denotes in a awkward way an urban development, but that people living there call the same area *în groapă* which means lit. in Romanian "in the pit."

[7] Lit. in Spanish meaning "the upper" part of an area.

[8] Junta de Compensación de Valdecarros

spurred by a judge's order and a landlord's complaint. The number of inhabitants is claimed not to be known, although all shacks have a number and people are registered after the census done by the Red Cross and the specialized agency of the Autonomous Region of Madrid.[9] Third, political exclusion is visible in two ways: (1) by separating El Gallinero from the regional urban development project[10] and rehabilitation of Cañada Real Galiana, regardless of their geographical proximity, and (2) by offering integration and expulsion at the same time. Keeping the headlines, El Gallinero triggers contradictory political statements and programs for integration. On the one hand, the Mayor of Madrid invested in street repair in the shantytown (Bécares 2017). On the other hand, the head of Equality, Social Rights and Labour organization, who committed herself to a new program in collaboration with the Romanian authorities, explained that she wants "to integrate these people. To those that a house can be given, because they meet the conditions, it will be given, and to those who want to return to Romania, to facilitate [the return]" (Bécares 2016). Fourth, materiality of temporality is grounded in the definition of informal dwelling places that have "the vocation of temporality" (Pitillas Salvá et al. 2014: 14). In a technical description of the shacks, their non-conforming construction inferred that the houses are of a temporary character (Ávila 2014). These strange temporalities depicted within the official documents and political decisions have material effects on the lives of Romani migrants. Social intervention is determined not only by documents and research done on the population living in El Gallinero, but also by the social programs considered the only solution for the migrants.

7.4 Citizenship Timeline

One of the examples I want to evoke is the way in which local authorities dismiss the Romani migrant housing problem by pointing to an existent project of living "in-camp" for a period of 1 year, a project developed initially by the Red Cross and ACCEM organization.[11] This project addressing the Romani migrant housing issue started at the end of 1990s, and contrary to its aim, it led to the creation of El Gallinero shantytown. According to civil servants, the people who joined this project (and their relatives) or who wanted to join the project but did not qualify started to live in the proximity of the camp (Vrăbiescu 2018). This relocation project lead to the (re)negotiation of their "social contract" and reveals the understanding of

[9] In 2016, Instituto de Realojamiento y Inserción Social (IRIS) de la Consejería de Vivienda y Infraestructura was renamed Agencia de la Vivienda Social de la Comunidad de Madrid. From now on I will refer to this institution as IRIS.

[10] *Acuerdo Marco Social para la Cañada Real Galiana* has been signed between the regional authority of Madrid and the local authorities of Madrid city, Coslada and Getafe for the development and implementation of social measures depicted in the law 2/2011 of *Cañada Real Galiana*.

[11] The program APOI deployed by ACCEM.

migration as temporally unconstrained mobility. On the one hand, a social contract reveals a temporality of citizenship that enables the state to act administratively, pressuring people targeted for integration. The public authorities of Madrid, in this case, have the leverage to postpone any welfare action until the time limit of 1 year is lifted at the end of project, at which time the state resumes its responsibility for the given population. On the other hand, the targeted population is characterized as highly mobile, thus unable to fit in the designed social integration programs. Romani migrants facing this paradox should commit to the 1–year-long temporary "social contract," otherwise they end up being categorized as highly mobile, beyond the state's consideration for integration. This kind of "trial" integration contains another paradox: the individual-based social contract versus the family type of Romani migration.

In one of my encounters with the project manager, a young Romanian lady with a legal background, she said she feels accomplished being a mediator for the families, having to explain the process and help with their integration. During our talk, "family" stood out as the key category for the "in-camp" project for social inclusion. The project functions for families, meaning it includes normative families, single-parent families and families without children. The concept of "family" has been revealed as being central to my interviews as well as in all the activities, methods used for evaluation and the project's design and facilities. Contrary to academics and policy-makers who often labelled the migration of Romani as family or extended family migration (Matras 2000; Fleck and Rughiniș 2008), an emphasis on the family in managing Roma migration can dramatically affect the family structure and adversely legitimize and reinforce a particular type of violence. In fact, Romani migrants accepted to the "in-camp" housing program are supposed to sign the "social contract," this time designating a civil contract between the NGO and the migrant family, which compels them to find work on the job market and rent a place on their own. While a *social contract*, in contractarist terms, refers to an "individual" and their potential integration under a new agreement with the state, the inclusion policy of "social contract" is an agreement with an entire family, where "family" is defined as undesirable and even a liability for Romani migrants.

The contractarist theories start by defining a social contract as the relation established between the state and its citizens (see Rawls and Hobbes) and argues that people willingly give up control over their lives – or certain freedom/rights – to the state in order to obtain rights in the form of protection/security and/or welfare (see Rousseau and Hume). First, social contract theory explains the formation of citizenship by forfeiting certain rights given up by the individual to the sovereign state. Second, by "signing" the social contract, the individual aims to attain civilization, receive security and be protected by the violence possibly induced by other citizens. Roma migrants who enter the "in-camp" project reflect this type of mechanism: the "social contract" aims at their rehabilitation and integration into society, while the temporary nature of a "trial" inclusion actually pushes them out of society and attests that they do not belong to the same community.

In analysing the ethical and political exclusion of Romani migrants, a contractarist approach might be better explained and complemented by membership theory.

While contactarist theory postulates an individual-based social contract, membership theory has the potential to include or to exclude individuals in social contracts. The power to punish and the power to edict moral condemnation is the manifestation of the sovereign state, and it "marks out the boundaries of who is an accepted member of society" (Stumpf 2006: 378). Looking at community ties and mutual obligations, which are the basic concepts of membership theory, the case of Romani migrants living in shantytowns remains ambiguous. Responding to a standardized time, the temporality of the "social contract" establishes a T0 when the social contract begins, and a T1 when the contract expires. This state-pivoted temporality represents a time-lapse outside of a-temporal citizenship, which is the epitome of recognition and belonging to society. The "social contract" thus excludes Romani and denies them the right to citizenship. However, even when successful, Romani migrants cannot hope for the restoration of their social contract, namely, full acceptance as members of the community. Most likely, after the real-time measurable period of 1 year, Romani migrants are considered as having no ties to society.

On the one hand, the period of 1 year is known to be inadequate for any real social integration, since participants are expected to find work and rent a house. The economic context of the real estate market in Spain and its consequences for poor working-class Spanish-born people or migrants (Beremenyi and Carrasco 2015, 2018) severely diminishes Romani migrants' possibilities to respond to the project's demands. On the other hand, the materiality of the "social contract" condemns Romani migrants to not only fail the project, but also excludes them from the (national) community. Participants could not ask to prolong their stay, nor could they claim any other type of state provision. The process of failed integration thus leads to even harsher exclusion of Romani migrants. Unlike in contractarist theory, the materiality of the social contract offered in Madrid is measurable in real time and achievements. At the end of the program, there are no more obligations to support Romani migrants and thus no provision or protection is guaranteed by the state.

7.5 Conclusion

Temporality is embedded in laws and state devices of governance used in Spain to manage migration. In this chapter I demonstrated that life course normativity and housing standardization in social services practice incorporate different definitions of temporality. The subtle ways in which temporality is manipulated within the laws and social inclusion programs puts the blame for failure on marginalized people. This structural-temporality informs the ethics of social workers that are manifested in the implementation of inclusion programs. By letting the structural-temporality penetrate social inclusion programs, the state substantiates the means for excluding undesirable migrants.

In this chapter I have exposed civil servants' and social workers' visions of migration, precarious dwellings, and what they consider to be the "right" life course. Tackling the case study of Romani migrants living in El Gallinero shantytown, I have explored *temporality* associated with the inhabited space (first section) and the life course of Romani migrants (second section) as perceived by civil servants, and have contrasted these understandings with the temporality embedded in laws and social programs (third section), thus problematizing the temporality of citizenship (fourth section).

Romani migrants are just one example of how social workers' set of ethics is enacted during the implementation of inclusion programs for marginalized people. This process remains invisible to the street-level bureaucrats, institutions and organizations that set up tasks and measurements for Romani migrants' integration, which are ultimately impossible to meet. These unreachable goals indirectly convert social projects into exclusionary practices. If mobility is the consequence of the precarious lives of Romani in their country of origin, where push factors transform them into emigrants, inclusion programs in the host country confine their settling to the shantytown or subject them to voluntary return programs. Both contexts can be translated as state actions of forced (im)mobility.

I have showed that Spanish institutions have implemented projects for social inclusion that have competing and contrasting understandings of temporality, and which impose these divergent temporalities on the target group, Romani migrants living in El Gallinero. The inclusion agreement under the name of "social contract" allowed me to problematize the (a)temporality of citizenship and to shed light on how the temporality of migrants is manipulated in social programs. My hope is that this chapter opens up the possibility for further debates with respect to the correlation between temporality and ethics in managing migration.

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Chapter 8
The Stilled-Other of the Citizen. "Roma Beggars" and Regimes of (Im)mobility in an Austrian City

Eberhard Raithelhuber

The chapter looks into the socio-material production and regulation of the ethno-political figure of the "Roma beggar" through the prism of a regime-of-(im)mobility approach. Based on an ethnographic study, core aspects of this regime for "Roma beggars" are analysed on a micro-scale: criminalizing transport, invisibilising borders, educating beggars, victimization, stillness and deportability. The study investigates the everyday social and physical infrastructures and logistics for (im) mobility, imaginaries of (im)mobility and discursive technologies. It shows how a differentiated, rationalized knowledge on "them" is produced. "Roma beggars" are constituted as an epistemic object and policy target, legitimizing the unequal treatment of people in the name of security. The related regime-of-(im)mobility derives its effectiveness precisely from its in-built arbitrariness and inconsistency. The key insight is that the "stilled, able beggar" is the only legitimate form of begging in the light of a community of good and able citizens. As this figure is practically unrealizable and deceptive, it flips into the "Roma beggar". The chapter concludes that this "stilled-Other of the citizen" is a discursively activatable and materially stabilized aspect of the Otherness operating within the concept of citizenship itself. Hence, the regime-of-(im)mobility for "Roma beggars" turns out to be an integral part of regimes that enable differential movements and forms of (im)mobile existences among all kinds of people.

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8.1 Introduction

For some years now, the presence of beggars from South-eastern Europe has been intensely debated in many European cities, and that is the case in the Austrian city of Karlstadt.[1] Everybody in town is aware of the phenomenon and almost everyone has an opinion about the people sitting on the street, approximately 80–130 of them across the city. However, the ethno-political phenomenon of the "Roma beggar" is hard to grasp. For the analyst, the many different situations, discourses, practices and policies which somehow belong to the phenomenon appear somewhat disconnected and dispersed at first sight. This chapter looks at the phenomenon at hand through the prism of a regime-of-(im)mobility approach. Drawing on an on-going long-term ethnographic, multi-sited case study, I focus on narratives, practices and policies on a variety of local and trans-local levels which lead to the ethno-political construction of "Roma beggars" and their regulation and governance. I argue that the definition and governance of particular populations as unwanted by and unbearable for citizens in their "natural" territory, especially if these populations are connected to cross-border mobility and ethno-cultural difference, teaches us a lot about "the citizen" extending beyond the particular phenomenon of transnational begging.

I consider it necessary to understand the construction of the "Roma beggar" not from a migration perspective, but within a broader picture as something that is closely connected to the production, regulation and control of the mobilities and immobilities of all people – whatever their legal status – within a territory. As a consequence, my research partly leans on border studies and critical migration studies, but is grounded to a greater extent in mobility studies (for an overview see Cresswell 2011a; Adey 2017; Adey et al. 2014; Salazar and Jayaram 2016). This implies that movement is not primarily understood as a "transnational mobility" of some sort or group of "migrants". Instead, the study includes insights, approaches and concepts that traditionally come from other fields of study, such as tourism or transport studies, which are part of the still emerging field of mobility studies.

By this means, the study examines everyday (im)mobility in situ through a magnifying glass and looks at connections across time and space. This relational and critical understanding of (im)mobilities implies, finally, that studying the regime-of-(im)mobility for "Roma beggars" is not a self-contained field of study. Rather than exploring the question of who "Roma beggars" are, the underlying study wants to provide a prism through which to understand how the intersection of (im)mobilities and social (in)security is a core field for the stabilization and, possibly, transformation of power relations and inequalities which, in turn, build on particular (im) mobile social and political figures, such as the "Good citizen" (Anderson 2013), the "failed citizen", the "immigrant", the "abject citizen" (Hepworth 2012), "Roma" (Surdu 2016) or – in this case – the "Roma beggar".

[1] All names, places, media and legal references which could identify the city, individual persons, or groups are anonymised.

8.1.1 Intersecting Border Studies and Mobility Studies

In recent years, mobility studies have increasingly focused on different politics of mobility (Cresswell 2010; Squire 2010; Parker and López Catalán 2014; Schapendonk and Steel 2016; van Baar 2012) as well as on the mobility of politics (Peck and Theodore 2010). Hence, the questions have been placed on the agenda of how movement, power and politics are interwoven, what this means for everyday life and how movement is both experienced and conditional on experience (Bærenholdt 2013; Doughty and Murray 2014). This is the case in works on the forced motionlessness of detainees or refugees, or on forced "repatriation" (De Genova and Peutz 2010; Merriman 2015: 38ff). This aspect has also been researched with regard to the migration of "Roma" populations both outside and within the borders of the European Union (Jeremić 2012; Sigona and Vermeersch 2012; Leko 2017). Hence, several intersections have become visible between critical migration and border studies (which also use the concept of the regime) on the one hand, and, on the other hand, mobility studies.

Within migration and border studies, the concept of the regime has not only replaced the classical concept of migration systems and related theories (Müller 2010: 24ff). It has also allowed for a different conceptual understanding of who and what brings about a border, where it is located and what it actually consists of. Hence, using the concept of a regime "makes it possible to include a multitude of actors whose practices relate to each other but are not ordered in the form of a central logic or rationality; rather, the concept of 'regime' implies a space of negotiating practices." (Tsianos et al. 2009: 2) Thinking in terms of a regime allows us to think of borders as highly permeable, somewhat distributed and extended; an arena "where the regime of mobility control is itself challenged by the fluid, clandestine, multidirectional, and context-dependent forms of mobility." (ibid) Research following this line of thought focuses on zones (Squire 2010; Schulze Wessel 2017), e.g. transit zones, on camps (Dietrich 2015; Ilcan 2013) and shelters (Solano 2017), and other installations of control, selection, regulation and enablement, both of movement and fixation, including extended, extra-territorial and remote forms of migration control (Gaibazzi et al. 2017).

Mobility studies display many parallels to these perspectives. However, they offer the advantage of "de-migrating" the empirical and theoretical orientation towards certain forms of movement such as migration or flight, which are frequently regarded or at least addressed as something exceptional or special, even in critical research. Metaphorically speaking, mobility studies have the potential of freeing these perspectives from their migratory chains and of somehow normalizing mobility, thereby placing it within a broader, but equally power-sensitive analytical perspective.

This is important for the study at hand on "Roma beggars". While shelters, camps and police stations, all classical objects of migration and border studies, play an important role in the underlying regime-of-(im)mobility, related practices and narratives often take place in "normal" life, i.e. public space and public institutions.

Bridges, embankments, parks, pedestrian zones, bicycle lanes, public toilets and squares can be understood as both part of the context of a "critical infrastructure" (Korpela 2016) for practising mobility, as well as being "actively produced by the act of moving" (Cresswell and Merriman 2011: 7). In this context, infrastructures, both visible and invisible ones, are considered core aspects for controlling, enabling and constraining the mobility and immobility of different people in different ways. Nation states and derivative formations "below" and "above" this scale are presumed to be key actors in using infrastructures to exercise power over people's movement (Korpela 2016). Reminiscent of insights from studies on embodiment, performance and corporeality, e.g. in gender studies, mobility scholars emphasize within a historical and geographical perspective that "particular means and styles of moving have come to be associated with distinctive subject positions." (Cresswell and Merriman 2011: 9).

Drawing on these insights, the presented study will show that different styles and means of moving, different forms of spacing, place-making or timing do not necessarily coincide or coexist in one geographical and social space. They depend on diverse and unequal regimes-of-(im)mobility, which are engendered simultaneously, thus problematizing and normalizing both the movement and standstill of people, objects, ideas and symbols. This also means that a mobilities perspective is sensitive to the role of artefacts and objects of everyday use for the regulation of (im)mobilities, such as bikes, knives, personal belongings, water bottles, cash, photographs and begging signs, handwritten notes and booklets, ID cards, cars etc. Furthermore, paralleling research on precarious, highly controlled and marginalized populations in other fields of study focusing on resistance, on potentially subversive acts of citizenship (Isin and Nielsen 2008; Nyers and Rygiel 2012), on protest or on creativity and agency, the perspective employed here also shares the assumption that related, discursively produced and pre-fabricated "subject positions are also inhabited, resisted and manipulated through practice" (Cresswell and Merriman 2011: 9).

8.1.2 The Effectiveness of Regimes-of-(Im)mobility

Conventional approaches (e.g. Kesselring 2014) emphasize that regimes of mobility consist of rules or general codes of conduct, which are binding in subsequent action and procedures, or that these regimes entail clear cultural norms or rigid legal frameworks which make mobility policies effective and efficient. While rules and their application are clearly an important part of regimes, two things have to be stressed here beyond this. Firstly, regimes-of-(im)mobility are also discursively constructed. Secondly, and importantly, we must be aware that the arbitrary and inconsistent application of regulations (based on norms, rules or principles) does not reduce or demolish the effectiveness of regulations. Quite the contrary, an arbitrary and inconsistent application of a regulation can be a source of its effectiveness (Baker 2016: 158).

To demarcate such an understanding, scholars introduced the linguistic convention of "regimes of (im)mobility" (Baker 2016: 152ff; see also Glick Schiller and Salazar 2013; Salazar 2012; Shamir 2005). In a nutshell, regimes-of-(im)mobility can be defined as

> Rationalized systems for the regulation of movement—of people, goods, capital, and certain forms of knowledge—that encompass both infrastructural and discursive technologies. They may be formal and governmental, corporate, or informal and outside of legal frameworks, and they produce the material conditions for mobility and immobility, as well as the values and ideas that justify and legitimize distinctions between classes of objects and kinds of people who are accorded differential rights to mobility. (Baker 2016: 153)

This regime-of-(im)mobility approach shows similarities with two strands of regime thought in the context of migration research, namely those building on the "French regulation school" and those in the "dynamic field of governmentality studies", to use the differentiations offered by Horvath et al. (2017: 304ff) in their recent attempt to sort out regime perspectives for migration research. The regime-of-(im)mobility approach in the context of this chapter is characterised by the following five basic assumptions. Firstly, employing a relativistic, relational perspective, the regimes-of-(im)mobility approach counters "either-or" approaches which consider movement and stasis as oppositions or as poles in a continuum. Secondly, it emphasizes questions of inequality and power, especially when looking at the connection between the wanted, legitimized mobility enjoyed by some and the immobility of many others (Glick Schiller and Salazar 2013). Thirdly, and connected to this, the concept puts forward a different view of how this connection comes about in the context of regulation. Traditionally, the term "regime" in social sciences has been connected to a sort of regulatory scheme or system, e.g. of migration or welfare, which is closely connected to the state and its functions, or to supra-state institutions. According to Baker (2016), one major deficit of this perspective is the underlying normative and state-centred model it embraces. Research on migration, mobility or social security often stems from the inbuilt, "techno-political" assumption that *there is* a need for, deficit in, or lack of regulation that *must* be met by rational and effective means. Countering this functionalist perspective on effectiveness, scholars have proposed a diverging perspective on the question of *where* effectiveness *comes from*. According to this view, state regulation in the context of migrant mobility is powerful precisely because it lacks efficiency and orderliness:

> State regulation of migrant mobility is effective, in large part, because of its spectacular, public, violent, and destructive nature as well as its arbitrary and inconsistent application. (Baker 2016: 158)

Hence, the effectiveness of a mobility regime can only be fully grasped when seeing it as part of a regime-of-(im)mobility which is strong enough to "frame discourses on belonging, exclusion, rights and freedom", as Baker (2016: 157ff) writes with reference to Glick Schiller and Salazar (2013) and to De Genova (2006). Fourthly, such an approach is sensitive to infrastructures (both physical and social) for mobility, imaginaries of (im)mobility and discursive technologies, and to how they are engendered to bring about and legitimize (in)equality in connection with the

differential allocation of resources for (im)mobility and the attribution of related possibilities, rights, freedoms and positions. Fifthly, approaches to regimes of mobility show a strong focus on the simultaneity of related actions and events (Kesselring 2014: 3). Before turning to different aspects which make up the regime-of-(im)mobility for "Roma beggars" in Karlstadt, the next paragraph presents the research context and the methodology employed.

8.2 Methodology and Research Context

Empirically, the underlying research is based on an on-going, long-term and multi-sited ethnographic field study. This started in 2014 in Karlstadt and extended beyond Austria in cities in Sweden, as well as in slum settlements and communities in rural Romania. As a strategy to access the field, I moved around in situ (streets, sleeping places, begging places, shelters etc.) and travelled various times to Southern Romania, both with the people identified here as "Roma beggars" as well as with supporters from Karlstadt, i.e. activists supporting their claims, organizing medical treatment, and doing informal street work. I used a "following strategy" (Marcus 1995) and "mobile methods" (Büscher and Urry 2009; D'Andrea et al. 2011; Manderscheid 2014; Elliot et al. 2017) predominantly to trace or accompany different actors in the field. My intention was to delve into a "random" empirical field to substantialize and develop conceptual and theoretical reflections on the intersections of social (de)protection and (im)mobilities, inspired by a No Borders approach. In a nutshell, I adopted a "mobilities" perspective that reflects a No Borders approach (Raithelhuber et al. 2018).

8.2.1 Research Context

"Roma beggars", similarly to politically more correct, but equally questionable terms such as "poverty migrants" (in German: "Armutsmigranten") or "emergency travellers" (in German: "Notreisende"), which are both currently used in Austria, is a dummy pejorative category which I use as a heuristic to reconstruct a phenomenon. In my research it refers to people who are temporarily present in Karlstadt and, in most cases, have their self-declared home in South Eastern Europe. I refer mostly to extended family members from three nearby, remote slum settlements in rural Southern Romania. During my research, people from these shanty-towns comprised the largest number of transnationally mobile beggars in Karlstadt. These people spoke Romanian as their first language. They usually self-identified as Rudari (mostly understood as a Roma subgroup) or as *țigani* (Gypsies) when wanting to differentiate themselves from other groups, such as non-Roma Romanians (see also Leggio and Matras 2017: 4ff). Many moved to Karlstadt, some of them several times a year for several weeks, as well as travelling to other places and other

countries, such as Sweden, Germany, France, Spain or Italy. Similarly to many other Roma and non-Roma communities from Eastern European countries, their current transnational mobility patterns towards the "old" EU member states following the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1990 should be seen as strongly connected to socio-political and socio-economic changes in their countries of origin (Asséo et al. 2017). During my research, most of those who visited Karlstadt were dedicated to begging on the street during daylight hours or sold street newspapers, in the absence of adequate opportunities to support their families back home or to generate substantial income. Though some found temporary shelter in emergency overnight accommodation, many of these people slept outside in the open air by the river or in public parks (some even when it was minus 10°C or colder), or searched for a dry place under bridges. A few hid in abandoned houses during the night or slept in cars.

In this chapter, I predominantly focus on policies, practices and discourses in one Austrian city, partly due to the fact that, at least at first sight, the regulation of the (im)mobility of "Roma beggars" in Karlstadt seems to be framed and treated as a local problem. However, the discourses, practices and policies both addressing and constructing "Roma" are multi-scalar, complex and contradictory. Their construction and experience as "Roma" are shaped by ethno-cultural, as well as by different national, European and international policies and scientific expertise (Sigona and Vermeersch 2012: 1190). EU policies and scientific expertise also provided the basis on which the "Roma subject" and, more generally, Roma populations were created discursively and materially as particularly vulnerable and socially troubled groups (Vermeersch 2012; Surdu 2016; Magazzini 2016). In the context of my research, the discourse and related technologies can be understood as providing tools for knowledge production, for perceiving heterogeneous incidents and individuals as a particular "phenomenon" or "group", for performing and legitimizing related social practices (e.g. of sorting, classifying, helping, punishing etc.), for subjectivizing social positionings and (im)mobile figures and for (de)valorizing particular groups and behaviours.

8.2.2 The Discourse on "Roma Beggars" in Town

Building on this, the term "Roma beggars" relates to the dominant pejorative discourse on beggars in Karlstadt. This discourse and related practices and policies create categories for subject positions and for (im)mobile social and political figures. Addressing this group as "Roma beggars" (re)constructs them as manifestations of a certain (im)mobile social and political figure within the (national) state-security nexus, maintained by policy institutions (e.g. the police, the public order office, councils and public services) and welfare institutions (e.g. NGOs, hospitals, social services) as well as by public discourse and the media. In this context, the term "Roma beggars" emerges as a re-construction at the intersection of citizenship and mobility studies that is used to understand a given phenomenon. It attempts to grasp how certain fields of action and differentially valued, hierarchically ordered

and mutually interdependent figures are politically co-constructed and ruled. In this light, the following paragraph reconstructs the shared responsibilities of different actors in Karlstadt in bringing about a local discourse on "Roma beggars" as an ethno-cultural or ethno-political phenomenon, before turning to the analysis of different aspects which make up the regime-of-(im)mobility for "Roma beggars" in Karlstadt in the narrow sense.

Denominations are often indicative of the ways in which the categorized individuals can legitimately be treated (Housley and Fitzgerald 2009: 358ff; Bowker and Star 1999). In Karlstadt, most official policy documents, e.g. police reports, municipal decrees and official reports, do not show a direct ethnical framing to categorize the people that their discourse connects with begging. However, several years ago, a police report, parts of which is repeatedly cited in subsequent official reports, provides the following "general information" on the local case of begging: "Most of the beggars' groups belong to an ethnic minority" (official report No. 1). Further on, the same report explains that the number of "so-called street artists (mimes) and 'supposed' musicians, some of whom are actually assigned to the same ethnic group", has increased (state police report no. 1, cited in official report No. 1). Most of the time, written texts do not contain a clear ethno-cultural categorization of the people under observation. However, reports by the national police in Karlstadt and by the municipality speak of a "beggar milieu" frequently and in a matter-of-course manner. Using this term, these documents discursively shape a category or "group" out of a number of fundamentally heterogeneous, sometimes socially completely unconnected individuals. The term "beggar milieu" makes them into a collective that shares the same socio-cultural space, norms and values, attitude and actions. Though the term "milieu" in German can also be used as a more neutral, descriptive notion (e.g. a "social milieu"), the term "beggar milieu" (in German: "Bettlermilieu") entails a stigmatizing undertone that is linked to ideas of a sort of opacity, criminality and pre-modernity. Thus, people within the "beggar milieu" are connoted as having a sort of both conspicuous and suspicious social cohesion outside of the majority population of honest, respectable citizens.

Newspapers discursively connect to this, as the press provides additional information that most of the beggars are "Roma". Thus, newspapers, social media and online articles mark these people ethno-culturally and create what amounts to an ethno-political discourse around beggars. From time to time, the tabloid press associates the targeted group with diseases and insecurity and describes it as a threat for the domestic population. For example, the press in Karlstadt reported that the square in front of the train station was in the process of turning into a slum populated by "African drug dealers", "beggars" and "criminal asylum seekers" (anonymised yellow press article n°1). Other articles reported that the faecal remains and waste at these people's sleeping places had led to a plague of rats, potentially transmitting diseases and causing an epidemic (anonymised yellow press article n°2). A tabloid press editorial testified that the writer could prove that Romanian "pimps of the beggar mafia" were forcing victims of human trafficking onto the street, and described them as "poor devils" and "trafficked slaves" (anonymised yellow press articles n°3 and 4). In sum, these beggars are suspicious and even disease-infested victims of

their own people and have no agency. According to the government and to police reports, people referred to as beggars move like "nomads" between different Austrian cities (anonymised official report n°1). In one report, it is highlighted in bold letters that "within just one week approximately 50% of the beggars had been replaced" (anonymised official report n°2). Hence, beggars are given the status of passive objects that are moved around by unknown agents who are, supposedly, members of the "mafia".

In addition, activist platforms and associations, whose numbers include a few people who identify publically as "Roma", thereby ascribing themselves to the tradition of the international Roma activist movement since the late 1960s (Leggio and Matras 2017: 4), contribute to an ethnic image of these begging individuals. Roma are often described as a "population group" or even a "Volksgruppe". Activist groups add the information that these "Roma" begging on the street have been discriminated and marginalized throughout the centuries, but without challenging the group category (anonymised flyer n°1). Often, however, activists attach more neutral and social-problem-oriented categorizations to people begging on the streets, such as "emergency travellers" or "poverty migrants". These categorizations are also predominantly used by NGOs and non-state human rights and activist platforms.

To sum up, this section sketched out how different, sometimes independent actors discursively create "Roma beggars" as an ethno-political and ethno-cultural phenomenon. The main argument of this paper is, however, that the "Roma beggar" as an "epistemic object and policy target" (Surdu and Kovats 2015) is produced within, and connected to, particular regimes-of-(im)mobility. Therefore, it is vital to address the phenomenon at hand not only through critical discourse analysis (e.g. Wodak 2010), but also by using the varied tools that mobility studies provide. To phrase it differently, the main question that remains unanswered is the following one: How can a regime-of-(im)mobility approach be conducive to understanding and reconstructing the socio-political figure of the "Roma beggar"? To answer this question, the following section presents sample drillings through the sediments of the regime-of-(im)mobility for "Roma beggars" in Karlstadt. I use concepts and insights from mobility studies to determine and drill these boreholes. I will shed light on discourses, practices and policies related to transport, the criminalization of movement, and the establishment and enforcement of invisible physical and acoustic borders, as well as to the education and training of beggars and to stillness and deportability.

8.3 Discourses, Practices and Policies Governing "Roma Beggars" (and Others) in Karlstadt

The use of infrastructures of – or for – mobility makes visible the fact that "people are in very different and unequal positions with regard to infrastructures of mobility" (Korpela 2016: 115). In Karlstadt, infrastructures and transportation facilities, and even public toilets, are employed by public authorities, which either normalize

or un-normalize their uses in the context of mobility, including criminalizing their use in certain circumstances or by certain groups. Therefore, if there is one basic feature of transnational begging that is both brought about by regimes-of-(im) mobility and regulated in them, it is transport.

8.3.1 Criminalizing Transport

People's mobility to and from Karlstadt depends on an infrastructure which itself constitutes an essential pillar of begging. Generally, a regime-of-(im)mobility for routes and roads (e.g. highways, local streets) regulates the movement of people and goods. It sanctions and legitimizes certain activities (e.g. tourism or business), defines entitlements (driving or transportation licence) and classifies objects (e.g. dangerous goods, passengers or approved vehicles). In the given case, transport intersects with a regime-of-(im)mobility for "Roma beggars".

There is a significant, constant mobility of people taking place between poor South Eastern countries and Western and Northern European countries. This mobility is to a large degree engendered by EU policies of freedom of movement: many of these highly mobile people do not only use official public transport, but rely on rides or private carpooling. The drivers offering these rides to any passengers, including people who travel for begging, are using the enhanced structures of a "supply chain capitalism" (Tsing 2009, cit. in Kesselring 2014: 6). It is most unlikely that any of these uncountable drivers between Eastern and Western Europe might be punished based on the fact that the people transported, the passengers, go straight to work selling their labour on the capitalist market once they are dropped off at destination. No "normal" driver is held accountable for what passengers do, unless he or she is involved in some sort of criminal activity (e.g. human trafficking or a bank robbery). Yet, in Karlstadt, when a passenger jumps out of the car and goes more or less straight to a begging place, the driver is punished, based on a specific law on begging. According to the public security law applied, offering a ride to someone who wants to beg is criminalized, despite the fact that in 2012 the Austrian constitutional court considered begging an act of free expression and communication (i.e. expressing one's situation as a poor person), anchored in the European Convention on Human Rights. Hence, in a number of cases in Karlstadt, drivers were fined based on this specific law regulating the (im)mobility of "Roma beggars". These fines rested on the claim that the drivers were contributing to the "organizing of begging". In one case, a police officer saw someone jump out of a car and followed him, testifying that the passenger went straight to a begging place. After checking the IDs of both the former passenger and the driver, police issued a substantial fine to the driver. His activity of transporting a "beggar" to Karlstadt was considered an administrative offence, which violated public security law. This kind of practice is backed up by police routines. In most of the cases, and even in court decisions, officials base their judgement primarily not on the wording of a law, but

on supplementary notes. These notes substantiate the law on begging in the federal state. Originally, they stem from the discussion of the draft law in parliament. In any event, these notes are part of the legal regulation that defines "organizing begging" as an administrative offence:

> The term "organizing begging" must be interpreted in a broad sense and encompasses means which are conducive to establishing and maintaining an underlying "logistic", such as providing cars to travel to the places where people go begging, agreements amongst beggars regarding the places at which a particular person should beg, or the reception and safekeeping or investment of the money made through begging (Translation of the supplementary notes added to the security law of the corresponding state).

According to a "rational" idea of a law, any law should provide guidelines for its efficient and effective enforcement, especially if its violation is explicitly backed up by a threat of harsh punishment. Hence, from a normative view, issuing a fine to a transporter-driver would be understood as reacting to a lack of regulation, in this case regulating (im)proper reasons for transporting people. However, the alternative, discursive view of the law proposed here is that the relevant passage allows great scope for interpretation by the law enforcement agents, i.e. the police. In addition, it opens the door to legal insecurity and creates problems of justiciability. What is even more important is that it promotes an uneven application of the law.

Technically, the security law on begging applied in Karlstadt could be defined as badly designed. Its effectiveness and power can however only be grasped when it is seen as part of a regime-of-(im)mobility. Other incidents from my fieldwork support this argument. Some of the beggars had the chance to use a bike from time to time to move around in town, e.g. from the sleeping places in the outskirts. Some of the beggars reported that they were subject to police controls, being interrogated about the origin of the bike they used. Hence, the beggars saw themselves forced to prove that the bike belonged to them and was not stolen. Once, when I was able to pass on an old bike to someone, the man asked me to give him a sort of written warrant of donation that this was actually a gift from me. By asking this, he was obviously drawing upon a collective, shared experience and strategy amongst peers. Karlstadt is not generally known for permanent checks on people riding bikes. None of the "local" people I know there carried any kind of certificate around town to prove that a bike they used was theirs.

These two incidents, i.e. the fine against the transporter-drivers and suspicions against bike-riding "Roma" in town, are indicative of a general aspect: the control of mobility as part of a particular regime-of-(im)mobility for "Roma beggars" in Karlstadt. Both local government reports on "begging" and the special police reports they cite show a strong concern about the increasing mobility of "beggars" from Romania, not only between the two countries, but also in town. One way to interpret this result is to understand the local control and criminalization of transport in the context of begging as a sort of "repair work" to deal with unintended or unwanted consequences, paradoxes and contradictions in intra-EU labour mobility (Engbersen et al. 2017; Horvath et al. 2017: 309).

8.3.2 Invisibilizing Borders

A specific regime-of-(im)mobility for "Roma beggars" regulates not only their transportation, but also their whereabouts. In some locations within the centre of Karlstadt, begging has been completely prohibited for some years. The underlying "city" law (local scale) refers to the above-mentioned public security law in the corresponding federal state (regional scale). Though the constitutional legality of this ban on begging is highly contested by a local, independent human rights network, it is still considered valid as of 2019 – and thus enforced by police. This municipal decree defines particular pedestrian areas where narrow streets are enclosed by houses as *de jure* no-go zones for beggars. However, even in wider spaces, such as squares, begging is forbidden, even though the ban is limited to a distance of 3 m from the surrounding walls. If you are begging too close to the wall, you are fined. Therefore, to be sure not to beg within the "forbidden zone", one literally needs to measure 3 m from the wall delimiting the legal territory for begging. For a normal spectator or passer-by, no such borderline is visible at all. There is no physical sign or public street map which would indicate to a normal person moving around town the exact point when they are entering or leaving one of these "forbidden streets". The border exists only if and when someone is identified or differentiated as a beggar by the state authorities, i.e. the police, or by local shop owners, who are also well informed about these invisible borders. The authorities then apply practices of control and criminalization (i.e. issuing fines) based on situationally activated, differentiated knowledge.

The application of related categories (prohibited versus non-prohibited zone), the patterns of perception and the inbuilt problematics and arbitrariness can be exemplified by another report on begging, issued by the local government in favour of a renewal of the existing anti-begging legislation:

> There is a beggar with a dog sitting at the corner of Hermann-Weiter Street and Schmid Lane (Kreuzinger fashion store). The dog sits in Schmid Lane (begging prohibited) and the man around the corner in Hermann-Weiter Street (begging currently not prohibited). Several packages of dog food lie around the beggar, so that the beggar takes up a space of approximately 1.5 to 2 square metres. (Translation from official report No. 2)

How can this short quote from the municipal report be interpreted? Neither the report, nor state security law directly classifies dogs as beggars. Thus, dogs can sit freely either in the forbidden or non-forbidden zone. However, the incident is reported here in a portrayal that describes both dog and beggar as causing problems to the normal circulation of delivery vans and taxis in this part of the pedestrian zone. The dog is thus included in the problem construction related to the different regimes-of-(im)mobility that are applied in this particular space.

These examples show that applying different bodies of knowledge to particular people or other beings leads to differentiation. Differentiation, in turn, amounts to an enhanced rationalization of action, to a materialization and naturalization of the invested knowledge. This is because it is only by materializing that knowledge that one can "see" the beggar sitting on this or that side of the invisible border

demarcating the forbidden zone. By this means, people – in this case the "beggar" and other people or objects surrounding him or her – can be involved in, or excluded from, differential practices, e.g. practices of controlling, punishing, insulting or filing a complaint at the police. Different regimes of mobility are applied, e.g. the regime-of-(im)mobility for public space against the regime-of-(im)mobility for beggars. The latter is dependent on the assessment that these beggars literally "violate" the mobility rules in public space and thus have to be treated as a public security threat, for example by simply sitting at the side of a street. As a consequence, the now rated and (de)valued beggar can be treated differently, thus reinforcing or producing inequalities with regard to the rights and entitlements these people have in certain places.

However, borders are not only imagined as geographic. The active process of bringing about borders, which then rationalizes the unequal treatment of (im)mobile people, can also rely on other physical manifestations and perceptions, such as sound. Often, beggars say *Griass di'* (Austrian dialect for greeting someone) or *alles Gute für die Familie* ("best wishes to the family") to by-passers in German. However, the loudness or intensity of a beggar's voice saying *Griass di'* from a sitting position on the ground can be estimated as too loud in the sense of not being quiet or gentle enough to be considered part of a "legal" practice of begging. How can that be?

In the public and administrative discourse in Karlstadt, "legal" begging is commonly referred to as "silent begging". Thus "silent begging" is considered the legitimate form as against the legally codified and penalized opposite, i.e. "aggressive begging" and "organized begging". In two cases I know, beggars were fined by a police officer based on such a distinction based on loudness as a "lack of gentleness". The fines amounted to the begging money of approximately 2 weeks' gross income earned by sitting on the street from the morning to the evening. Luckily, with the help of a local activist, the beggars were able to bring their cases to court. The local activist, working on a voluntary basis, had already objected to several hundred fines on several occasions and appeared in court several times as a representative of the affected persons who, in most cases, could not be in Karlstadt when the court hearing took place. In one case the local activist achieved the annulment of the fine at the administrative court. The judge rejected a police officer's judgement, previously considered sound, as untenable. However, this kind of court victory is not easy to achieve. For someone living on the street for weeks, with no knowledge of the local language nor jurisdiction, an achievement like this depends on support networks and infrastructures which help to navigate official timelines, administrative procedures and juridical knowledge. In many similar cases, people decided to pay the bill without appealing, hoping not to get into further trouble. No one knows the exact number of these cases based on the classification of a beggar's attitude as an administrative offence. However, the police report that within 4 years of enforced controls on beggars in the city, several hundred fines were issued for "aggressive begging" and "organized begging" against people in the "begging milieu", and most of these fines had already been legally upheld.

8.3.3 Educating Beggars

Beggars who are subject to the (im)mobility regime on begging do not only have to apply available knowledge, e.g. to be safe and to avoid getting fined. They also have to acquire a specific, new knowledge, which I call "expert knowledge for beggars". Such knowledge is acquired partly through being "educated" or "schooled" on the rules and norms of the regime-of-(im)mobility on begging. These rules define, amongst other things, where and when it is allowed to beg, including the fact that nobody has the right to send them away if they stick to the rules. In the following I will show two things: firstly, how street-level bureaucrats (police, social street work) educate beggars on how to be "good", silent, non-invasive beggars and, secondly, how even supporters (NGO professionals, individual helpers and activists) provide a sort of "tutoring" or "training" for beggars on how to avoid getting into conflict.

Beggars in Karlstadt were "educated" by police patrols and by social street workers right before and after a new legislation on begging was locally enforced. These "education" efforts for beggars were appraised in the media, accompanied by photographs showing nicely acting police officers bending down to sitting beggars, handing them an information sheet with a street map. It is indicative that street work through a private NGO was for the first time co-financed through local tax money and was systematically introduced right at the time before the new ban on begging was enforced. The following quote from some of my ethnographic notes exemplifies this entanglement of NGO street work with the regulative regime. It documents my walk through the zone in the city centre accompanying a street worker. On that day, the ban on begging had just been put in place. Nonetheless, for an introductory phase of 2 weeks people were not immediately fined, but only informed about the law's enforcement and asked to move out of the forbidden zone with a "friendly nudge":

> Christina (the street worker) tells me on her initiative and slightly agitated, that she feels like she is on guard duty (she uses the German word *Wachdienst*). She has to walk through prohibited roads and squares and has to inform the people about the zonal ban on begging, but no one is there (field note n°1).

Obviously, this quote from my field notes reveals that people were no longer present in the prohibited zone and already begging somewhere else in town. This situation can to some extent be understood as an effect of the beggars' monthly meetings with their supporters and NGO representatives (professionals from shelters etc.) in town. Around the time when the zonal ban on begging was issued, professionals from one of the NGOs co-organizing the monthly meeting handed out official maps. On this extract from the city map, the hard to detect and sometimes arbitrary no-go zones for beggars were marked and thus became visible, providing specific "expert knowledge" for beggars. However, many of the participants were not used to reading maps, were illiterate and usually explained localities by referring to their visual appearance (e.g. "the church with the three doors"). In reaction to this, the professionals showed them pictures of the squares, streets and markets which were part of the information material that the municipal administration distributed in

town, thus spatializing and materializing the regime-of-(im)mobility for beggars. Around the same time, some "guests" were also invited to the meetings, such as a high-up representative of the municipality or a representative of the local child welfare and protection unit. Many times, activists and NGO professionals "instructed" people on how to avoid problems or evictions, e.g. by telling them that they should not hang around or sleep under the bridge in large numbers (which meant that many people ended up not protecting themselves from possible aggression at night). This monthly "space of negotiating practices" (Tsianos et al. 2009: 2) within the regime-of-(im)mobility has manifold facets. However, for the scope of this chapter, it is safe to say that the meetings served as a major hub to regulate and negotiate a number of issues which are central for begging in Karlstadt.

These two aspects – the education of beggars through "street-level bureaucracy" (Lipsky 1980) and the tutoring and training of beggars by supporters and activists – are somehow complementary and, in practice, highly entangled and ambivalent, both being a core part of the regime-of-(im)mobility for "Roma beggars". I therefore look at both the effects and non-effects that come with these practices: firstly, local authorities' concerns about knowledgeable beggars, secondly, the internalization and subjectivation of the begging people as beggars and, thirdly, the surprising non-criminalization of supporters and activists, though they provided beggars with logistics and infrastructure.

The direct education and training of "Roma beggars" in Karlstadt had its impacts. Both police reports and newspaper articles stated that beggars in Karlstadt grew knowledgeable over the course of time, in the sense of being aware of the specific rules that can put them in danger and thus they tried to adhere to the rules. For example, some moved to other parts of town for their begging activity. As a consequence, the originally intended effects of both education and criminalization have been under permanent discussion and assessed ambivalently by different actors contributing to the regime of (im)mobility on begging. In addition, the sometimes heterogeneous practices which I presented do not only represent a sort of schooling or education for "Roma beggars". As they offer possibilities to acquire expert knowledge on "begging", these practices are equally connected to an internalization and a certain form of subjectivation of the people as "Roma beggars" in two senses: firstly, in the sense of accepting being treated as a representative of a certain social, political figure with an inferior position (a "beggar"), but – as a "European" citizen – surprisingly with rights to free mobility; secondly, in the sense of making sense of this subjectivation in the context of one's experiences. When asked about their first experience on the street as a "beggar", many of my interviewees expressed their strong feeling of humiliation and that they had no other choice than to grow accustomed to this situation. Moreover, sitting there and not being able to move or do anything in this situation was often referred to as something very difficult to bear and cope with at the beginning. Hence, something that has been shown in research on flight crews at the intersection of mobility and workplace studies (Huchler and Dietrich 2013) is also true for beggars: in order to make begging a reliable and safe activity and to ensure its functionality, i.e. bringing as much money back home as

possible, begging entails a high level of subjectification and self-exploitation and, last but not least, it demands heightened personal discipline.

Besides these effects, I would like to examine a surprising non-effect: the non-criminalization of particular activities, logistics and infrastructures which are a core part of making transnational begging possible. Each form of mobility requires a particular system or even a number of such systems, which enable movement in the first place (Urry 2007, p. 12). This is also true of transnational begging. The different scenes, congregations, spaces, circles and activities which are key to enabling begging can heuristically be understood as mobility systems in the sense of John Urry, as underlying logistics and infrastructures. Bearing this in mind, it astonished me from an analytical perspective that, at least up to now, none of the reported activities has been criminalized as a part of the "underlying 'logistic'" for "organizing begging". This could be easily done based on the supplementary notes to the state security law mentioned above: the monthly meetings (supported by a church), the shelter (partly financed through local tax money and donations), the joint meetings of supporters with beggars in the park or the writing of begging signs in German, to name a few activities. A system of this type and its regime also encompass transport facilities for people and money, smartphones, "emergency numbers" to contact supporters, informal meetings at sleeping places, and so on. All of these are somehow interwoven into and productive for the regime-of-(im)mobility for "Roma beggars", shaping the manifestations of begging in Karlstadt.

8.3.4 Criminalization Through Victimization

As I have shown, the regime-of-(im)mobility presents itself in manifold ambivalent and contradictory ways. However, if there is one pivotal form of infrastructure for controlling, enabling and constraining mobility and immobility in town, it is police patrols and related counting and reporting techniques. They are responsible for bringing about a particular "rationalized" knowledge which, in turn, enables certain forms of unequal treatment of differentiated people in the name of security, especially for the sake of particularly "vulnerable" people. Hence, it is no wonder that due to official police statements, within 4 years more than 7000 identity checks were carried out in town on persons whom the police declared to be "associated with the beggar milieu" (anonymised official report n°3). This generalized suspicion against the "beggar milieu" is also manifest in the formation of the special police subunit, which was established some years ago: the "temporary investigation team against exploitation through begging". When I met the head of this small police subunit for the first time, he insisted on the "against exploitation" part. It is very revealing that in the media and even in government documents this unit is commonly referred to as the "temporary investigation team on begging".

According to a recent report (anonymised official report n°2), the temporary investigation team had filed criminal charges in more than 80 instances against over 60 people, due to alleged robbery, blackmail, human trafficking, theft by housebreaking,

criminal assault or coercion, quite apart from several hundred administrative offences, as mentioned above. The official municipal report, based on police information, neither explains how many of these cases resulted in convictions, nor quantifies or differentiates between the criminal offences of "coercion" on the one hand (which can easily lead to charges being filed after a dispute between agitated people on the street) and "human trafficking" on the other hand. And, finally, no information is given on how police officers observing these reported criminal incidents or processing data in their offices managed to link these people to the "beggar milieu", or what the suspected criminals actually had to do with the beggars sitting on the street. No definition of the "beggar milieu" is given at all. What this case clearly shows is that the supposedly rational knowledge which can be found in laws, local decrees, reports of all kinds or even in booklets with "rules for beggars" (which I will discuss below) is characterized by two main aspects: first, it leads people to believe that this kind of knowledge can be effectively applied and used to regulate both mobility and immobility. Secondly, on closer examination, this kind of knowledge is in fact highly instable and arbitrary. However, it is exactly these characteristics that contribute "positively" to the power of a regime-of-(im)mobility for "Roma beggars" in Karlstadt, both producing and governing (in)security. This must be seen within the wider, historical picture of the state-security nexus.

The generalized suspicion against the "beggar milieu" predates the concrete measures and activities within the corresponding regime-of-(im)mobility. In a fundamental way, the concepts of the "beggar milieu", of "organized begging" and "aggressive begging" are imaginaries rooted in a deep historical, culturalized and politicized discourse on the criminality, thievishness and dishonesty of vagabonds or rootless people of all kinds. There is an abundance of descriptions on who should be hindered from "sticking" to the city at any cost. Hence, the public security law and, in particular, the corresponding article on begging within the federal state to which Karlstadt belongs can be understood as a vagrancy law. Such legal regulations are a core means of bringing about the category of the vagrant as a particular suspicious mobile subject, as a "nightmare figure for a settled society", while vagrancy laws have been travelling "across the western world over several hundred years" (Cresswell 2011b: 240).

The legitimacy and authority of "modern" nation states as complex systems of rule and governance are fundamentally based on the claim to provide social security for the individual members of a sedentary national society within a national system of social mobility, e.g. through participation within the institutions of the life course regime (Raithelhuber 2018). Hence, to date, the conception of particular people and their living conditions as "vulnerable" and the subsequent definition of needs and associated responsibilities (both of the national community and of the individual) to solve this disadvantageous situation are a core part of any system of social security (Raithelhuber et al. 2018). In this "modern" context, "vulnerability" is constructed in a dual sense: firstly as a state in which the individual is incapable of progressively changing this situation and secondly as the status of an individual who depends upon external resources to return to normality, i.e. to regain the state of a non-dependent, self-reliable and mobile "worker citizen" (Anderson 2015). However,

"beggars" from abroad, i.e. people who are not considered part of the national society (unlike citizens, denizens etc.) are not in a position to raise any claims within the dominant, state-based social security system. They must construct an image of vulnerability that directly addresses individual passers-by they meet in public spaces, since most "Roma beggars" lack access to other local spaces, such as private, social networks (e.g. families, communities) or social services (e.g. health services, needs-based minimum benefit systems etc.). Public space, however, is primarily defined as the dynamic, ephemeral social relatedness of mobile people: people who show through their geographical movement that they are "able" men and women, capable of keeping up with the rhythms of self-responsible life. Hence, any way of representing an individual vulnerability that can be relieved through cash donations "within" the patterns and manifestations of the mobile figure is considered illegitimate. For example, in Karlstadt, as in many other cities, any activity that is considered to be "following" or "tracking" people in public space in search for money, or "blocking" the movement of people in flow or even irritating these moving people by speaking directly to them is considered a case of "aggressive begging" and, thus, is punished. So, one could ask, how can begging been done in the correct manner? If someone cannot be an "able citizen", how can they at least be an "able beggar"? The key to this answer is the production of the "able beggar" through stillness, which will be explained in the following section.

8.3.5 Stillness

Though the corresponding security in Karlstadt's law only defines what is *not* allowed ("aggressive begging" and "organized begging"), a couple of years ago the city issued a booklet in several languages titled "our most important rules for beggars". In this brochure, rule number one reads as follows: "begging is only allowed in silence". It is followed by explanations that beggars are *neither* allowed to speak to people, *nor* to touch them, *nor* to beg in a group, *nor* to beg with children and so on. So, if so many things are obviously (or better: confusingly) forbidden, how can one nevertheless be a beggar?

At the back of the booklet, an interpretation of begging is provided. It includes a moral legitimation of this kind of activity (e.g. nourishing children back home). Considering all the rules from beginning to end, this moral legitimation is granted only if and when an activity is that of an "able" beggar: an individual who is *not* forced to beg by others, who is able to beg *independently* and able to move into this immobile position across hundreds, even thousands of kilometres only within a *legitimized* form of mobility (e.g. like a tourist travelling by public transport or a private car). Neither the beggar booklet nor state security law provide a clear "positive" image of how exactly begging should be done. However, looking at artefacts, pictorial representations and texts regulating begging it becomes clear that stillness, both in the sense of motionlessness and quietness, seems to be the only acceptable

form of practising begging. Yet, stillness in public space seems to be a problem, calling for the further differentiation and categorization of related activities and objects, as shown in the following examples.

According to previous law-making by the Austrian constitutional court in 2012, a partial, limited ban on begging can be issued in principle, but only if the number of people begging in a certain area impede the use of public space in a way that produces a "deplorable" state of affairs. Hence, the documents supporting a ban on begging have to define in detail the conditions under which such a deplorable state of affairs can be claimed. Thus, official documents issued by the city administration portrayed and discussed begging as a disturbance of the public order. The corresponding administrative report did so by differentiating between "sitting beggars" and "photo-taking tourists", maybe because the city of Karlstadt is visited by millions of photo-taking tourists each year (versus a few hundred beggars). The document argues that the core difference between beggars and tourists is that "photo-taking tourists" move on after taking a picture. Hence, according to the report, in contrast to only temporarily stopping tourists, "sitting people constrict the flow through the narrow lanes and produce dangerous bottlenecks". Pointing to no further substantiated police statistics, the report indicates that this supposedly raises the threat of pickpockets – a characteristic that is not attached to tourist groups, which were my greatest horror when moving around town.

This example shows that the beggar is directly and indirectly displayed as a "vulnerabilising" figure for others, i.e. normal people using public spaces. However, the beggar is also portrayed as vulnerable and in danger. The reason given for this is not his or her marginalized living conditions "back home" (in this case the shanty towns in Romania), which could explain the presence of this person in situ. Quite the contrary, the reason presented in the official documents justifying a ban on begging is his/her stillness *as* a beggar. This becomes very clear in the following document. This time, it is not "photo-taking tourists" who are compared to "sitting beggars", but children on their way to school. The report describes that in the morning hours, when still few tourists roam the centre, delivery vehicles move through narrow streets to supply local shops and hotels in the pedestrian zone. The report discusses what this situation means with regard to "sitting beggars" (immobile objects) and "schoolchildren" (mobile objects) for an average driver of a delivery van:

> Beggars are endangered in their physical integrity through suppliers pulling in with vans, because as statically sitting persons they are not positioned within the typical visibility field in which people are expected to appear. Of course, schoolchildren are often also not taller than beggars. But they are, firstly, not static (i.e. as a general rule, they avoid approaching trucks) and, secondly, due to their movement they come into the drivers' field of vision much easier, they wear protective jackets [sic] most of the time and usually do not stay in front of shops. Accordingly, the[ir] risk [of being endangered] is reduced (municipal document, cited in the reasons for the decision of the Austrian constitutional court).

This passage is one intended to provide an argument for the restriction of a fundamental human right by showing that beggars' use of public space produces a deplorable state of affairs. In my eyes, the picture drawn here involving schoolchildren

lacks empirical examination. Also, the municipal document does not discuss other possibilities to protect the supposedly "vulnerable" beggars, e.g. by handing out reflective jackets (this is what pupils wear on their way to school, not "protective jackets") or by teaching beggars to stand up and, in a supposedly childlike manner, "avoid approaching trucks". However, besides seeking the "real" truth, what is obvious here is that a certain truth and knowledge about begging and beggars in public space is produced by such reports, connected to stillness. At its core, this knowledge operates with the flickering image of both the vulnerable and the "vulnerabilizing" beggar.

8.3.6 Deportability

Thus far, it has been argued that stillness, in particular, is both a challenge for beggars themselves and a precondition for being considered and legitimized as a "silent beggar". Hence, the only way in which begging is developed "positively" is within the figure of the "able beggar". However, there are inconsistencies inscribed into this figure. Whatever shape it takes, the figure of the beggar is an unwanted one. There are always simply "too many". They should not be there at all. They should go home. At least this is what "beggars" often hear from passing citizens or police officers.

In Karlstadt, the discursively produced vulnerability of the "Roma beggar", which predates the effectiveness of the measures within the regime-of-(im)mobility, culminates metaphorically in a rumour: a word goes around every few weeks in the peer group. Then the word is expressed as a concern to local supporters. Finally, in turn, supporters see themselves forced to disclaim that this will ever happen. The word is deportation. Every once in a while someone claims that someone local has told someone else that begging is about to be totally forbidden in town and that all the people will be sent back home in buses. The persistence of this inextinguishably circulating rumour is also reflected in one of my field reports. It documents an address by an activist to the participants of the monthly meeting of "beggars" and "newspaper sellers". In this particular situation, the speaker (Marina) positioned herself in front of the crowd sitting at the tables:

> After Marina has welcomed the participants she says that she wants to clarify some things and then (she continues): "Begging will not be forbidden here". Thereupon, or after the translation [from German to Romanian], the whole room reacts strongly with affirmation and happiness. Marina continues: "And we will not drive you home by bus to Romania". Once again, the participants loudly express their appreciation and delight at this statement (minutes of monthly meeting n°3).

This small scene reflects a general feature of the "Roma beggar" in Karlstadt: deportability.

8.4 Discussion

Regarding deportability, the findings from Karlstadt match similar findings from other studies on the ethno-cultural construction of "Roma". One very basic feature of the regime-of-(im)mobility for "Roma beggars" is the ethno-politicization of these people and, finally, their categorization as deportable and as being too many in number. Hepworth (2012) showed in her ethnographic study in Italy that the construction of "Roma" as "abject European citizens" is built basically on their deportability. Leaning on the work of De Genova (2010), for Hepworth deportability does not only encompass a high risk, a heightened vulnerability or a probability of being sent back. Deportability is also constructed through everyday security practices employed by the government and police as well as through discourses. In Hepworth's case, these discourses were created to justify the demolishment of Roma camps and their eviction from these living places (Hepworth 2012: 440). This, in turn, opens up the insecurity and randomness of whether someone is categorized amongst the group of those who can stay or whether that person counts as someone who belongs to the "too many". Deportability is one of the basic lessons that the regime-of-(im) mobility for "Roma beggars" teaches not only those who move within this pattern (the "beggars"), but also the many others who are supposedly mobile outside of these patterns (the "citizens"). One core feature that visualizes and materializes these differentiations is connected to a particular production of stillness.

Producing stillness can be reconstructed as a core element of a regime-of-(im) mobility for beggars, which implies people having to cope with certain forms of (bodily) subjectivations and internalizations. Within this regime, the only "legal" way to produce this kind of need or vulnerability is the stilled, sitting, isolated, autonomous body which turns into the only means to access resources (i.e. donations), while the only available resources are those of "private", able citizen-individuals moving in a public open space. On the one hand, this stilled, but unrealizable, deceptive figure of the able beggar and its characteristics challenge the movements of those who go with the "normal" flow (Bissell and Fuller 2013: 5). As Cresswell and Merriman note, "staying still (insofar as such a thing is possible) is also a notable practical positioning in the face of surrounding mobilities and the compulsion to move" (Cresswell and Merriman 2011: 5). Besides just being an "effect" of the corresponding mobility regime, the immobility and stillness of the "begging body" can also be seen as entailing a certain power or potentiality. It is brought about precisely through the embodied quality of *not* being on the move or of *not* moving, as Bissell and Fuller write with reference to Elias Canetti:

> [T]he power of the stilled body (whether standing or sitting) emerges in its display of vulnerability. A closing down of its potential for movement or defence. (Bissell and Fuller 2013: 2)

On the other hand, the stillness of the beggar also validates and reinforces the corresponding position of the citizen at the same time. The (im)mobile outsider in place – the "Roma beggar" – becomes socially explained in his or her mobility and positioned as an immobile, object-like, stilled being in multiple senses. Nonetheless, this constructed, present inability to be mobile *as* a citizen (physically and socially) entails an ambivalence, power and potentiality which, in turn, leads to a number of possible, mostly distant reactions, e.g. by raising suspicion, rejection, hatred, violence, charity or control. As a consequence, this production of vulnerability through stillness within the regime-of-(im)mobility for beggars and, vice versa, the production of stillness through vulnerability leads finally to the production of the only legitimate, object-like beggars, referred to in Karlstadt as "silent beggars". Silent beggars are those who, according to public discourse, practices and policies, are closest to the figure of the "able beggar". However, even if beggars behave that way, their presence as (im)mobile objects in public space intersects and clashes with other regimes-of-(im)mobility, for example those related to transportation, tourism or traffic. As a consequence, the "able beggar" is an unrealizable, deceptive figure that, under real conditions, flips into the "Roma beggar". Both figures are created by this "stillness-as-Other".

Hence, the ethno-political construction of the "Roma beggar" is one of the many figures which are conceptualized and activated as the citizens' "Other" (Anderson 2013), in a much clearer way than any other figure or subject. Ultimately, the "Roma beggar" reflects the inbuilt "Otherness of citizenship" (De Genova 2015: 201), as this figure is one discursively activatable and materially stabilized aspect of the Otherness operating within the concept of citizenship itself. There, it is based on particular values and demarcates something supposedly "outside" of citizenship, that does not fit in with the citizen and his or her mobility. In my opinion, this is what the definition and governance of particular populations as unwanted by and unbearable for the citizen teaches "us" about "them". All of these figures are constitutive, productive and "necessary" for unequally commanding authority over people.

Finally, these considerations raise the question of what other regimes exist alongside the regime-of-(im)mobility for "Roma beggars", which is only one of the many simultaneously present. Studies following the No Borders approach have already highlighted that "borders follow [all] people and surround them as they try to access paid labour, welfare benefits, health, labour protections, education, civil associations, and justice" (Anderson et al. 2009: 6). They have demonstrated that related processes of bordering are interwoven and thus invisibilized and naturalized in the everyday life of all kinds of people (and not just of "migrants") and that these processes impact on the subjectivities of "citizens" and "aliens" alike (Anderson 2015: 185; Mezzadra and Neilson 2013). Besides providing substantial findings on the governance and construction of "Roma beggars" in an Austrian city, I therefore argue that this paper demonstrates the richness of an empirical and theoretical orientation which lies at the intersection of (im)mobilities and social (de)protection, amended by a No Borders perspective, to analyse critical issues commonly framed by other concepts and dealt with under "migration studies", "welfare studies" or

"citizenship studies" (Raithelhuber et al. 2018). An approach of this kind claims to liberate us from the alluring and somewhat misleading category of "migrants". It draws attention to the practices, regulations, places, infrastructures, moorings (Hannam et al. 2006), systems or regimes that enable differential movements and forms of mobile and immobile existences among all kinds of people. This view includes sensitivity towards the qualities attached to some people through these processes, how these people are merged with objects and technologies, how their movements are traced and how they are allowed to engender and transfer value from present and past movements, or hindered in doing so. This implies sensitiveness towards their present national status, without falling into the trap of "methodological nationalism" (Wimmer and Glick Schiller 2002). While the conceptual focus on social protection or de-protection was beyond the pragmatic intention and feasibility of this paper, I have hopefully been able to show one essential thing: that looking at the "Roma beggar" through the prism of a regimes-of-(im)mobility approach allows us to address general issues of power and inequality within this type of focus on mobilities, and to recognise the fundamental entanglement of (im)mobilities and (in)equalities (Söderström et al. 2013: 7; Salazar and Smart 2011; Shamir 2005).

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Chapter 9
The Migrating Poor: Romanian Roma Under Social Authoritarianism in Poland

Joanna Kostka

This chapter critically examines the discourse on "Roma exclusion" in the context of European migration policy, presenting key findings from the case study of Romanian Roma migrants in a city of Wroclaw in Poland. The concept of "Roma exclusion" has come to dominate political discussions about the marginalization of the largest European minority. Placed at the centre of the European Union political agenda it recognized that Roma poverty has multiple and interrelated causes, which require multifaceted policy responses. Nevertheless, while the concept has acquired strategic connotations, by stressing socio-economic processes, it has remained open to different interpretation influenced by political perceptions of Roma identity, migration as well as domestic policy approaches to integration. The pivotal instability in the discourse concerns the question of whether exclusion entitles an individual or a group to seek opportunities through migration and whether receiving countries are obliged to provide necessary support. Building on equality scholarship, this chapter argues that portrayal of Roma as "welfare migrants" who move across Europe exploiting generosity of welfare states, legitimizes hostile public interventions that negate official commitments to the Free Movement principle. The case of Wroclaw has received unprecedented political and media attention and demonstrates that anti-Gypsy discourse is used to mask unwillingness and inability of the state to design and implement coherent migration strategies, reflective of the European principles and recommendations. It also shows that "migration panic" is equally strong in the new EU members, largely unprepared to act as receiving countries.

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9.1 Introduction

The anti-immigration rhetoric in the EU, traditionally directed at non-EU citizens, has shifted following the latest EU enlargements toward the rejection of European citizens, to whom the European treaties guarantee free movement around the continent. Particularly, migration of the largest European ethnic minority, the Roma,[1] has been accompanied by inflamed media reports and populist discourse laden with explicitly racist sentiments. While the Roma people are some of the many million Europeans who in their search for work and better life move to another country, the national and local decision-makers do not perceive their migration as a natural occurrence within a united Europe but rather as a problem or a threat to sovereign stability. A study commissioned by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) describes in detail the illegal surveillance of Roma migrants, forced evictions, and ethnic profiling by the police (Cahn and Guild 2010). According to the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) the criminalization of Roma migration has repeatedly served as an excuse to destroy Roma settlements as "cauldrons of criminality" and select EU citizens on the grounds of ethnicity to deport them (FRA 2009). Legally dubious practices of collective deportations of Roma have taken place in France, Italy, Sweden, and Belgium (Severance 2010; Parker 2012; O'Nions 2011; Fekete 2011).

While the origins of Romani westward migration date back to the 1990s (Sobotka 2003) the expansion of the EU in 2004 and 2007 deepened public insecurity and intolerance vis-à-vis Roma migrants (European Commission 2008). Politicized discourse of "waves", "flows" or "floods" of Roma people arriving in Western European countries effectively masks the fact that migrants act on personal decisions as to how best to improve their personal circumstances and realize the vision of a good life. The impact of media attention and right-wing rhetoric have resulted in the authorities presenting Roma migrants as "fraudulent" when they approach public authorities for legitimate entitlements, including social welfare assistance, access to employment opportunities, healthcare, and housing. Moreover, despite the fact that Roma are an extremely diverse minority group and their experiences in the course of inner-European migration differ widely (Kropp and Striethorst 2012) the media and politicians stubbornly construct an image of a homogeneous and deviant group, often labelled "benefit tourists".[2]

Whereas the situation and treatment of Roma migrants in the old Member States have received extensive analytical attention, migration of Roma across the new Member States continues to be overlooked. An intrinsic assumption that Roma migration is a solely westward phenomenon has diminished interest to undertake critical analysis of migration patterns and policies within countries such as the

[1] Today, more than ten million Roma live in Europe, with 75% residing in the EU. The Council of Europe provides an average estimate of Roma people in Europe of 11,166,500, with upper estimates of over 16,000,000 (Council of Europe 2012). A problematisation of these estimates is offered by Messing in this volume.

[2] Framing Roma migration in terms of "benefits tourism" is clear in headlines such as "The Gypsies who sparked a crackdown on benefit tourism" (Bentley, P. 2014).

Czech Republic, Hungary, or Poland. Despite urgent calls coming from non-governmental organizations (NGO) and activists about the intensifying violations of the human rights of Roma migrants (Móricz 2013; Nomada 2013, 2014) the international watchdog organizations have failed to recognize or reprimand practices undertaken by the Central and Eastern European (CEE) governments, even though they strongly resemble the oppressive measures employed in the West.

This chapter presents a case study of the situation and treatment of Romanian Roma migrants currently residing in Poland. It weaves together data collected through participatory observations undertaken by the author as part of consultancy work (2013–2014) with Nomada Association (a grassroots NGO actively working with the Romanian Roma community residing in Wroclaw) with activist materials, news reports, and policy briefs to expose and critically analyse existing policy interventions. The research demonstrates that a lack of integration policies and the portrayal of Romanian Roma migrants as "moral outcasts", unwilling to integrate and contribute to the society, legitimizes public interventions based on a particular form of social authoritarianism. In this hostile policy landscape, the focus shifts away from solidarity and social justice towards control, restrictions, surveillance, and expulsion. The chapter argues that not only are these policies ineffective, but they reinforce social stigma and force entire families into abject poverty and exclusion.

The chapter starts with an account of the changing migration patterns in Poland detailing the arrival of Roma migrants in the 1990s and the initial responses of the Polish state. It then examines the legal changes following the accession of Poland to EU and endorsement of the Freedom of Movement Directive. The last part analyses adopted interventions based on the particular form of social authoritarianism, showing their detrimental effect on social cohesion and integration.

9.2 Changing Patterns of Migration and Policies in Poland

For over a century, Poland has been one of the largest migrant-sending states in the CEE region and a vast reservoir of labour for many countries in Western Europe and North America. However, researchers have predicted that over the next decades Poland will gradually shift from being a major sending country to a country of transit migration and net immigration (Górny et al. 2009; Geddes and Scholten 2016). Poland as a full-fledged EU member with a relatively stable and growing economy (OECD 2016) provides vital economic opportunities for people from economically less developed countries in the region. Ukrainian migrants, in particular, tend to choose Poland as a destination country, a pattern dictated as much by economic need and political instability as by strong historical ties between these two countries (Okólski 2004). Nevertheless, despite the increase in overall immigration rates, in 2016, the foreign-born population living in Poland reached only 1.6%, the lowest percentage in the EU (Eurostat 2016). According to the Office for Foreigners of the Polish Ministry of Interior, in 2014 there were 121,219 foreigners living in Poland legally (including registered EU nationals). There is no official data on the number of incoming or settled Roma migrants, and thus far the government has made no

attempt to analyse the legal and socio-economic circumstances of this group. According to activist research conducted by the Western Centre for Social and Economic Research (ZOBSE) (Marcinkowski 2015) there are around 1500 people who identify as Romanian Roma and live in informal encampments located on the outskirts of large cities (including Warsaw, Wroclaw, Poznan, Cracow, and Gdansk).[3] Given these small numbers, immigration scholars continue to argue that at this moment Poland (just like the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Romania) is mainly a transit country or a gateway to the West (Iglicka and Ziolek-Skrzypczak 2010). The transit thesis means that little research has been conducted on permanent or circular patterns of migration, apart from Polish repatriates.[4] The notion of homogeneity within Polish society after WWII continues to be strict, resulting in an inability to see and discuss the changing dynamics of Polish demography.

In this landscape, it is perhaps not surprising that the presence of Roma migrants in Poland for years has not received political or academic attention. It is still common to talk about Roma migrants solely in the context of recent EU enlargement (Vlase and Preoteasa 2012).[5] However, Roma migration across Europe commenced already in the 1990s, when Roma people from the Eastern European Bloc began to flee abject poverty and increasing levels of ethnic violence in their home countries (Bhabha et al. 2017). Although Poland often served as a one way stop towards the West (mainly for Roma from Romania, Bulgaria, and ex-Yugoslavia), many families (usually the most impoverished) stayed behind and settled in various parts of Poland.[6] This effectively means that Romanian Roma migrants have been living in Poland for over 20 years, often in abject poverty, and exposed to daily harassment and discrimination. Activist research shows that children who were born in the Polish territory are often not recognized as rightful citizens or residents, and do not have access to basic education (Marcinkowski 2015).[7] Many families lack valid identity documents, do not have basic health insurance and are not registered within the state's bureaucracy. They are forced to squat in makeshift houses without basic

[3] The research does not account for Roma migrants living outside of the informal encampments.

[4] In early 1990s Poland introduces special regulations for returning Poles, targeted at the diaspora from the former Soviet bloc. A Polish Charter of 2008 defined several categories of members of the Polish diaspora, which meant exemption from paying for entry visas and access to the labour market on an equal basis with Polish nationals (Kępinska and Kindler 2014).

[5] It is important to keep in mind that there are few studies on Roma migration in the CEE region. In 2017, the Social Identity: Journal for the Study of Race, Nation and Culture published a special issue "Un/Free mobility: Roma migrants in the European Union" (Yildiz and De Genova 2017) which placed the marginalisation of the Roma at the veritable centre not only of "minority" questions in racial and ethnic studies but also at the very heart of migration and mobility studies in the European context. However even in this important and timely contribution, focus on migrants in the new Member States remains limited.

[6] There is not data on the number of Roma migrants arriving in Poland in the 1990s and there are only anecdotal accounts on why some people decided to stay.

[7] For example, in the Romanian Roma community in Wroclaw living on the informal encampment on Kaminskiego Street (around 150 persons), nobody attended any form of education in Poland. The oldest residents, age 45–60 completed at least 3 grades of Romanian primary education. Between 2011 and 2013 none of the children age 6–16 were enrolled in school or any other form of education (Nomada 2014).

amenities, living off panhandling and scrap-collection. It is not an overstatement that long-term Romanian Roma residents are living a stateless life, fully excluded from basic citizenship rights and access to the most essential public services. And yet, the dismal circumstances of this ethnic minority have gone fully unnoticed by international organizations (including the EU, European Roma Rights Centre, and OSCE), domestic human rights institutions, and NGOs. The violent and discriminatory treatment of Roma migrants by the Polish state throughout the 1990s has never been exposed or reprimanded, and now constitutes a part of "forgotten history", often denied by the authorities.

In the 1990s, Poland developed one of the most restrictive immigration policies in the region (Vermeersch 2005). This phenomenon was driven by the obligations of EU membership and coercive pressure to install new "hard" boarders on the Eastern and Southern frontier of the new Member States. The widely spread contention that most immigrants arriving in Poland are transit migrants on their way somewhere else triggered little political or public concerns. Outside the discourse on repatriations of Poles from the former Soviet Bloc few organizations and even fewer politicians engaged in discussions over integration, non-discrimination, and the need for far-fetched immigration policies. Not surprisingly Poland did not define integration in any legal document, often under the assumption that immigrants would automatically assimilate or would eventually leave the country (Iglicka and Ziolek-Skrzypczak 2010).

In this legal context, official policy towards Roma migrants who overstayed their visa permits was that of eviction and "on-the-spot" deportation. The legality of these actions was neither monitored nor documented and currently there are no reliable records accounting for the exact number of deportations open to the public.[8] According to the Ministry of Interior all deportations were executed in line with the Polish law of that time,[9] however activist reports stress that they were rarely supported by court decisions and often entire communities were purposely misled about their basic rights (Nomada 2013; Marcinkowski and Rusakiewicz 2015). Perhaps the most violent and legally dubious deportation took place in Wroclaw in 1998. According to the news report (Gazenta Wyborcza 1998), on the 15th of October at 6am the riot police and border guards converged on the Romanian Roma informal encampment in Tarnogaj (district of Wroclaw). Around 100 people, including small children, were rounded up and forced on to buses, with no prior notice. In what was called *Operacja Obcy* (Operation Alien), the county police, in full riot gear and rubber gloves, began to demolish the settlement using iron bars and sledgehammers. The residents were transported to the border guard unit in Kłodzko, close to the border with the Czech Republic, where they were placed in a gymnasium, and

[8] There are many media reports of evictions and deportations that took place in large Polish cities; however, the government has never released an official report or statement to the public. This also applies to deportations of immigrants from ex-Soviet republics who tried to settle in Poland throughout the 1990s. Ministry of Interior refused to grant access to the archival documents to the author of this article.

[9] Phone conversation with Press Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs May 6, 2014.

deported on the same day. In an interview, colonel Lech Surówka, a spokesman for the Commander of the Sudeten Border Guard, stated that the demolition of the settlement was done according to the protocol. When asked why such drastic measures were employed, he explained: "No point of leaving them here, the winter is coming, begging will stop and theft will begin" (Gazenta Wyborcza 1998). Similar operations took place in Poznan (1993 and 1999), Warsaw (1996 and 1998) and Cracow (1996) (Marcinkowski and Rusakiewicz 2015). According to a witness, the well-known Polish anthropologist Jerzy Fickowski, many of these operations resembled roundups common during WWII: "It was disinfestation, not a normal way to treat people" (interview in Gazeta Wyborcza 1996).

Not surprisingly, a coping strategy adopted by many Romanian Roma families has been that of "invisibility", that is, the avoidance of all contact with the authorities and any form of institutionalized assistance. Roma families have found shelter in the most secluded places, often close to landfills or on post-industrial sites, ready to relocate at any moment, with interfamily networks serving as the only safety net. Papadopoulos et al. (2008) argued that becoming imperceptible is often the most effective tool that a marginal population can employ to oppose prevailing forms of state violence. Certainly, in the case of Romanian Roma, invisibility proved an effective strategy of evasion, as the topic of Roma migrants disappeared from public debates for more than a decade. Without clear legislative power over immigration, local authorities turned a blind eye to the growing destitution of "transit migrants" in the hope that sooner or later the unwelcomed guests would leave on their own. However, the strategy of evasion has been detrimental to the health and well-being of the entire Roma migrant community. Whole families became disconnected from any form of public assistance, and were exposed to dramatic levels of poverty. In all respects, the living conditions of Roma migrants fall drastically below accepted domestic and European standards. A life in makeshift huts constructed from hazardous material without vital amenities – no running water, garbage disposal, sewage system, and electricity – in constant fear of eviction and removal has generated an inter-generational trauma (Hohmann 2013).

The accession of Romania to the EU granted the Romanian Roma communities EU citizenship, which under the so-called Freedom of Movement Directive (2004/38/EC) protects them from violent deportations. However, this new-found status has proved of little benefit and paradoxically only further excludes Roma migrants from socio-economic life and access to public services.

9.3 Policies and Narrative Towards Roma Migrants

In 2004 Poland transposed the Freedom of Movement Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 into domestic legislation. The Directive confers on every citizen of the Union a primary and individual right to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States. However, while the freedom of movement opens the national economies to flows of capital and

labour it drastically curtails the rights of "less desirable populations" to move around and settle in their place of choice. Article 12 introduces strict eligibility criteria for those who wish to register in the host country, these include proof of employment, self-employment, or financial self-sufficiency, and possession of valid health insurance. In Poland, the authorities apply a *sufficient resources* test to all registering citizens of the Union, and demand proof of permanent address (§2, Law Journal, No. 217, item 1616). The authorities automatically reject all those who do not meet the stipulated criteria, forcing people out of the system, and striping them from the right to access public services. While the directive talks about non-discrimination (art. 20), social cohesion, and integration (art. 18, 19) it reserves free movement for active workers and wealthy elites who do not rely on social support. Article 16 articulates this bluntly by stating that it is possible to expel people who "become an unreasonable burden on the social assistance". In this manner, the Directive can be used to justify the lack of multifaceted integration programmes for EU citizens in Poland, as those who are "allowed" residency are deemed well-resourced and self-sufficient while those without sufficient resources are either pressured to leave or are fully ignored.[10]

Under these circumstances, the impoverished Romanian Roma communities found it almost impossible to register as EU citizens, often finding themselves in a limbo of bureaucratic protocol.[11] Many individuals are also afraid to register, rightfully fearing prosecution, harassment, and expulsion (Marcinkowski and Rusakiewicz 2015). According to the Commissioner for Human Rights (2014), the government tends to simply ignore problematic cases (i.e. expired documents, lack of permanent address, precarious employment) hiding behind eligibility criteria and ignoring the dramatic socio-economic exclusion of long-term residents. Those who are willing to register cannot count on well-informed assistance, and their cases are often reviewed in an ad hoc manner, often dependent on the good will of individual agencies and/or bureaucrats. Moreover, while Poland transposed all the articles of the Directive 2004/38/EC, it did not systematize procedural protocol nor synthesize the EU requirements with the existing legal provisions and institutional *modus operandi*. The effect is one of confusion, procedural inconsistencies, and limited knowledge about the proper course of action. This is particularly acute at the lower tiers of government (Duszczyk and Lesińska 2009). These factors generate an evasive attitude among public administrators and frontline workers who are not always certain about their own decision-making discretion and are excessively constrained by byzantine protocol. In fact, it is still common for bureaucrats to label Romanian Roma as illegal immigrants excluding them from available programmes (i.e. registration as unemployed) and mobilizing interventions in full breach of EU Directives (Nomada 2013, 2014).

[10] See Nagy in this volume for an in-depth study on financial profiling of Roma in the UK.

[11] The situation is now slowly changing, due to tremendous efforts undertaken by local NGOs, and dedicated individuals who help Roma migrants during registry process. Local activists assure that without legal, financial, and culturally sensitive assistance, registration is virtually impossible, and cannot be completed successfully even by the most willing and determined individuals (Nomada 2014).

Even in instances where Roma migrants do manage to register in the system, they cannot count on any quality social assistance. An economically deterministic interpretation of the Freedom of Movement Directive is based on the premise that EU citizens are economically self-sufficient and in no need of state's support. Hence, the Polish government does not prioritize integration of EU foreigners and has yet to pass proper legislation. The first timid step toward strategic thinking about integration took place in 2011, when the Working Group operating within the inter-ministry Team for Migration presented a document titled *The Polish Migration Policy: Its Current State and Further Actions* (Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration 2011). The strategy outlined the main lines of action around integration, however its scope was extremely limited, as it did not discuss issues such as access to public health care, education, and social housing. Paradoxically, the strategy was directed exclusively at those foreigners who "integrate easily into local communities" such as foreigners of Polish origin, foreigners from the East[12] and international students (Duszczyk and Góra 2012). The explicit disregard for the presence and needs of impoverished and irregular migrants is a striking example of the revocation of the rights to residency (and in fact citizenship) for migrants believed to be "undeserving" or "culturally incompatible". As a matter of fact, the strategy bluntly stated that foreigners should not perceive integration programmes through the prism of the provision of social benefits (Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration 2011: 70). Statistics on the use of social security instruments confirm that the share of foreigners is marginal (Duszczyk and Góra 2012). Thus, it is ironic that the current discourse presents poor migrants as welfare tourists, who live off social support and exploit the charity of "good Samaritans".

The explicit rejection of integration policy as a means to provide foreigners with adequate public assistance is further manifested in the way the Polish integration regime is institutionalized. Integration responsibilities are scattered across different State Ministries and Departments, who tend to work in silos and often neither have a clear mandate for action nor prioritize integration in their portfolios. While the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy handles integration programmes, it is the Minister of the Interior and Administration that is accountable for issues pertaining to visa policy, for granting the right to stay and for actions targeted at refugees. The analysis shows that no direct relationship between these two parts is stipulated by Polish legislation, hence immigration policy is fully disconnected and often incompatible with integration measures (Duszczyk and Góra 2012). Decisions made within migration policy do not entail any decisions concerning the integration policy or any changes in the foreigners' access to the social security system. This means that the opening of the Polish labour market to foreign workers is not accom-

[12] This geographical and cultural preference is clearly stipulated in the government strategy document on Poland's migration policy. In accordance with the priorities set out in Resolution No. 2 of the inter-ministerial Committee for Migration of 2007, geographic preference for the admission of third country nationals to the Polish labour market (the Eastern Neighbourhood Countries and the Caucasus Countries) are maintained.

panied by decisions concerning their inclusion into Polish society. The migration policy doctrine assumes the primacy of labour market needs (i.e. replenishment of emerging labour force shortages) with full disregard of issues related to equality, social justice, and individual well-being. One wonders whether the government really has any interest in expanding integration policy or whether the urge not to accommodate migrants (at least those who do not have the desirable skills) in any way at all is a more dominant factor. In the case of Roma migrants, the state simply continues its politics of control and expulsion, so painfully executed throughout the 1990s, albeit now more constrained by Directive 2004/38/EC. The representation of Roma migrants as "delinquent" and unwilling to integrate legitimizes increasingly hostile and paternalistic approaches, based on control, surveillance, and eviction.

Over the past few years, Poland has seen extreme nationalistic movements and right-wing organisations and parties gain influence inside and outside the parliament. The recent "refugee crisis" has reinvigorated anti-immigration forces across the entire EU. In the case of Poland, it has created an opportunity for both populists and the mainstream right to build support using fear and xenophobia. The scapegoating of non-existent refugees has proven to be a very effective political tactic, with most of society having limited experience and knowledge on the subject, thus being unable to assess the veracity of the xenophobic messages.[13] The coming to office of the ultra-right, populist government in 2015[14] only intensified anti-immigrant rhetoric, now characterised by emotional narrative, which fully neglects facts and data (Hall and Mikulska-Jolles 2016). The media has played a key role in shaping negative popular opinion toward migration, describing the phenomenon with military allegories, comparing the inflow of refugees to natural disasters and diseases. The public debate on social media also experienced an outburst of xenophobia and blunt hate speech. The analysis conducted by the Centre for Social Opinion Survey (CBOS) in October 2015 shows that only 6% of Polish internet users commenting on migration spoke out in favour of helping immigrants and of their integration.[15]

The intra-EU migration of Roma people added a new impetus to long-standing prejudices towards indigenous Roma communities.[16] The prevailing attitudes portray Roma communities as a locus of uneducated, culturally backward, and lazy

[13] In a survey for International Organization for Migration, only 28% of Poles declared to have had contact with a foreigner in 2016.

[14] In October 2015, Poland has consolidated its right-wing shift after voters had handed an absolute majority in its parliamentary election to Law and Justice, a Eurosceptic party that is against immigration, wants family-focused welfare spending and partisan control over the rule of law.

[15] See Leggio in this volume on media narratives about "Roma migrants" in the UK during the Brexit campaign.

[16] Polish Roma Community in Poland consists of approximately 20,000 persons. Roma are divided into several groups: Polish Roma, Bergitka, Lovara, Kelderari, Sinti, Chaladytka (Russian) Roma. Persons of Romani origin experience discrimination, rejection, negligence as well as open hostility and aggression from average persons and representatives of various institutions (Polish Roma Association 2012). It is important to note that in public discourse Roma are constructed as a homogenous group, with little acknowledgement of sub-group divisions and nationality.

people, predisposed to criminality and exploitation of social benefits and charity hand-outs. In recent years, the negative discourse has intensified with direct accusations of delinquency, aggressive panhandling, destruction of private property and disregard for Polish norms and customs. This portrayal is evident in media headlines, such as those published by the largest daily paper of Lower Silesia, for example: "Gypsies attack people in the old square", "Gypsies grope passing women. How to protect yourself", "Roma are not poor they know how to lie and steal" (Kozioł 2014). In an institutional setting (i.e. social assistance, education, health care) these negative attitudes are perhaps less overt; however Romanian Roma are stubbornly portrayed by frontline workers as quarrelsome, "unable to follow the rules", "culturally backward", "unable to take care of themselves and their children".

Not surprisingly, few politicians are willing to acknowledge that poverty and exclusion of Roma migrants stems from years of public harassment, unequal treatment, and institutionalized racism. Overall, Roma issues are separated from the general debates about systemic inequalities, legal deficiencies, and discriminatory treatment of foreigners. This conveniently creates an image of a group that is not willing to benefit from an array of well-functioning public services and procedures. Negative perception and stereotypes among frontline workers reinforce resistance to provide Roma families with adequate assistance. It is common to talk about Roma communities in terms of the "undeserving poor" who refuse to work, reject the middle-class model, and more importantly are a burden on the public purse. A blunt statement from a manager of a social work team in Wroclaw shows the dramatic lack of understanding of the real barriers to integration and functioning in the society: "They come and go, they don't want to work, or send their children to school, it is not possible to work with them, they lie but worst of all they force children to beg" (interview, Wroclaw 2013). Some frontline workers I interacted with went as far as to state that Roma prefer to live in poverty, and are unable to function as "normal people". The pervasive trend of seeking the cause of poverty and justification for policy failures in the community itself and its specific culture gives legitimacy to extremely conservative, morally charged, and penalizing interventions. Political rhetoric places Roma outside the domain of the social proper, and justifies morally charged policies aimed at helping or coercing Roma to become "fitting" citizens. While some localities rely on less coercive schemes than others, the effect is always the same – a gruesome violation of human rights, inconsistent application of Polish law, and systemic abjection of entire communities. It is important to mention that none of the measures implemented thus far, no matter how violent and oppressive, have managed to achieve the implicit – and sometimes explicit – goal of curbing Roma migration, or forcing long-term residents out. Instead oppressive measures traumatized entire families, stripping them of agency and all opportunities for socio-economic advancement or well-being.

9.4 The Flourishing Power of Social Authoritarianism

The treatment of Romanian Roma fully exposes the grave shortcomings of Polish integration measures but also the conservative and penalizing nature of social assistance programmes. In many situations, social workers as well as community development practitioners and integration experts appear complicit in implementing social policies that are degrading and inhumane. Interventions are dispatched in an ad hoc manner, usually as a reaction to publicized "crisis" i.e. inflammatory media reports, epidemic scares, and official complaints. They also have a *schizophrenic* character, on one hand basic humanitarian aid is delivered (e.g. providing blankets, water tanks, and portable toilets) and on the other hostile security measures are normalized (e.g. surveillance, control checks, eviction, removal of children). This is best illustrated in the city of Wroclaw, where after agreeing to provide the informal encampment on Kaminskiego Street with portable toilets, garbage disposal units and water tanks, the authorities unleashed an array of intimidation tactic, including unscheduled controls by the City Guard and police, random public health inspections and early morning visits by social workers. According to the Roma residents, visitors always demanded detailed information about the families, conducted illegal searches of the houses, and insisted that a failure to comply with their instructions, could result in children being removed (Nomada 2014). These kinds of actions and threats are extremely common, and are used to exert pressure of the most painful kind as a social lever to secure acquiescence.

Direct harassment is complemented with morally charged anti-poverty campaigns usually aimed at changing the "problematic behaviour of impoverished groups" rather than promoting wider structural adjustments and reforms. One such oppressive strategy, mobilized under the auspices of eradicating anti-social behaviour, is stigmatization and penalization of street begging.[17] Abject poverty and systemic discrimination has forced many Roma families into mendicancy, which now constitutes the main source of income for entire communities. In a strict sense mendicancy is not illegal in Poland – the regulation prohibits the aggressive and fraudulent extortion of money, and begging performed by minors[18] – however it lends itself to public outcries driven by an omnipresent stereotype of a "begging gypsy", too lazy to do anything else, and flamboyant tabloid stories of tremendous wealth accumulated by begging Roma.[19]

Anti-begging campaigns appeared in 2011, as a means of tackling the alleged problem of "aggressive begging" and to discourage members of the public from

[17] See Raithelhuber and Ravnbøl in this volume on the governance and practice of begging among Romanian Roma in Austria and Denmark.

[18] Code of Administrative Offences, Article 58.

[19] In 2013 popular internet portal *trojmiasto.pl* published a story about Romanian Roma beggars in the city of Gdansk under the title *Gdansk attracts beggars, they 'earn' thousands of zloty per day*. In an interview, a manager of social work unit Monika Ostrowska insisted: "They [Roma] are very clever and have developed methods of begging to perfection. Recently, children begged with a small dog. It arouses pity. Please do not be fooled by their poverty".

giving money to beggars (Fertsch and Roik 2011). Publicly funded posters, brochures, and fliers circulated in Polish cities with slogans such as: "Don't Give Money on the Street", "Help for Real", "Begging is a choice not a necessity". While local councils maintained that the deliberately "hard-hitting" campaign was not anti-Roma, they admitted that lack of street donations will force the Roma people, as well as the homeless, to relocate. As stated by the MP representing the city Bydgoszcz: "If we cut them off they will have to leave" (Phone Interview, Bydgoszcz 2017). The campaigns are often reinforced by control checks, issuing of fines, and confiscation of money. Whist under the Polish Petty Offenses Act (Penal Code) a person can only be fined if she or he is able to work or has enough resources to live independently, the law does not provide a definition of the level of resources deemed to be "enough to live independently" nor of an "importunate or fraudulent manner". The police are therefore able to decide at their discretion whether to charge someone with an offense, or simply ask the person to leave the area. Far from being effective, the campaigns reinforce social stigma by implying that beggars are engaged in criminal activities, and that they have other choices for generating income. It is not coincidental that instances of verbal abuse and harassment of Romanian Roma increased shortly after the campaigns took to the streets. As a mother of three children confessed: "It was always bad, but now it is very very bad, people spit on you, and call you names, but I need to sit, I need to buy food for my children" (Interview, Poznan 2014).

Stigmatisation of begging corresponded with measures that interdicted squatting, rough sleeping, and homelessness, even though homelessness is not subject to penalty in Poland (Browarczyk 2013). Due to extreme levels of poverty, rampant discrimination in the housing market, and shortage of social housing, the majority of Romanian Roma live in informal encampments often located on vacant public land. The mainstream public discourse labelled these communities illegal ghettos that breed a parasitical dysfunctional underclass of failed human beings. Such framing justifies hostile interventions aimed at the removal of Roma families from their place of residence, often without a clear legal mandate and no alternative housing provided. By clearing the city of undesirable elements, the authorities force Romanian Roma to subsist in often degraded abject border zones within the state. The families not only lose all their belongings but also filial networks of friendship, care and protection. Their faith and trust in the state and state actors, already very fragile, is tarnished completely.

More recently, after the abovementioned violent eviction of 1998, the most well-known legal intervention against Roma from Romania took place in the city Wroclaw in 2012, when the Mayor's Office pronounced the encampment on Kamienskiego Street as illegal, dangerous, and a risk to public health – opinion issued by the Sanitary Inspectorate prior to any investigation. On the 19th of March 2012, the City tried to demolish the camp and remove its residents with the help of the municipal police. The authorities eventually abandoned the action due to an unclear legal mandate and conflict about who should bear responsibility for the eviction. Although the incident showed that municipalities are not in possession of legal policy tools to address informal housing, it did not prevent the City Hall from

conceiving alternative ways of eradicating the encampment (Nomada 2014). On the 26th of March 2013, the residents from the Kamienskiego Street received an official notice to vacate the premises within 2 weeks. On the 18th of April 2013, the city filed a lawsuit for the eviction of 47 adults and children in the District Court in Wroclaw.

Civil society organizations, including Amnesty International, named the court proceedings a striking example of structural discrimination and legal incompetency in breach of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Constitution of the Republic of Poland. The defendants were neither provided with adequate translation services[20] nor legal assistance (Nomada 2014). In January 2014, the Polish Society of Anti-Discrimination Law and the Commissioner for Human Rights appealed to the Mayor of Wroclaw to withdraw the case and commence a mediation process with the defendants. However, neither the appeals nor the realization that the lawsuit would not resolve the situation,[21] resulted in the suspension of legal proceedings. Following three hearings the case was adjourned and presently there is no available information about further proceedings.

The case of the Kamienskiego camp, widely covered by the media, set in motion a series of evictions and legal prosecutions across Poland. In 2013 a Roma family living in Poznan was evicted from an abandoned building, under the decision of the County Inspectorate of Construction which deemed the dwelling unsafe.[22] Yet the family (with children under five) was not provided with alternative housing (required by the Polish law) or any form of social assistance. The authorities insisted that the family was given an option to move into a homeless shelter, but refused. Given that shelters in Poland are segregated by gender it should not be surprising that the family refused to live there, instead relocating to another informal camp located on an abandoned allotment.

In 2014, local authorities in Gdansk allowed for a demolition of a 3-year-old encampment in Jelitkowo, without providing legal notice (required by the Polish law) and without the knowledge of the Municipal Family Support Centre. Under the pressure from human rights activists the Vice Mayor of Gdansk admitted that the demolition took place "a bit too early", due to a break in communication channels among the City Hall, the City Guard, and the Social Services. Even though 30 people (including children) lost all their possessions and became homeless, the decision was not condemned by the Prosecutor's Office and no alternative housing was provided. Similarly, in 2015 a small camp on Paprotna Street in Wroclaw, a home of an

[20] The court provided only Romanian translators without taking under consideration that the defendants speak a Romani dialect. Despite the appeals by civil society organizations the court has refused to grant permission to bring in a Romani translator.

[21] It is important to mention that there are close to 150 people residing in the settlement, hence the lawsuit does not affect all residents.

[22] The request for public disclosure of the assessment report, delivered to the authorities by the County Inspectorate of Construction, was denied (last request was made by the author on the 5th of July 2017).

extended Roma family, was "cleaned" and "cleared" by the workers of the City Guard and Urban Greenery Unit. When questioned by activists about the decision, the Mayor's Office insisted that the warrant for clearing was issued by the District Inspectorate, an autonomous public agency, hence circumventing legal responsibility. In a meeting with the Nomada team, the legal advisor of the Mayor's Office insisted that the area was "unoccupied". This is a blunt fabrication as the camp has been under continued police surveillance and the municipal social work unit regularly visited its residents. Less publicized evictions took place in Warsaw and Cracow, where entire families were evicted from vacant abodes, once again without any assistance provided.

According to the Polish law, local authorities are required to provide shelter and support to homeless people and people who are evicted (Journal of Laws of 15 April 2004, No. 64, item 593). However, this assistance is often based on behaviour control, which gives officials and care workers complete power over the "clients". For example, in 2014 the Municipal Social Work Unit moved a Romanian Roma family from the encampment on Kaminskiego Street to a social centre, under its authority. The centre subjected the family to daily controls (including room searches), 24-h monitoring, evening curfew and limited visitation rights. The social workers also endorsed a no tolerance for begging policy, which meant that any instance of non-compliance would result in immediate expulsion. Although the family was provided with food and basic personal items (i.e. sanitary products) it did not receive any financial allowance, as it was deemed that Roma would spend the money on "cigarettes" and "junk food". In meetings with local NGOs, social workers insisted that such control measures were necessary to "prepare and teach Roma how to lead a proper life". In effect, the assistance stripped the family of the ability to act, prevented them from influencing their own lives, and assuming responsibility for their behaviour. Human rights advocates compared the centre to a corrective institution, which not only hides poverty from the public view but also contributes to the further stigmatization and disenfranchisement of people.

9.5 Conclusion

The discrimination against Roma migrants living in Poland is still a severely under-reported reality. This chapter conveys that for two decades the Polish state has endorsed an array of oppressive and violent approaches, which pushed Roma migrants into abject poverty and destitution. In many ways, the hostility towards Roma feeds on the fact that policymakers lack proper tools to respond to the arrival of impoverished families, now legitimate EU citizens. Paradoxically, the transposition of the Freedom of Movement Directive contributed to further exclusion and stigmatization of Roma migrants who have been living in Poland for more than a decade. The continuing disenfranchisement of this group shows that European citizenship does not by any means make the EU a fully inclusive society of equal citizens. In fact, the very design of the Directive unjustifiably disadvantages the poorest

migrants, as it allows Member States to discriminate against economically inactive Union citizens labelled as an "unreasonable burden on the social assistance" (2004/38/EC: art. 14). In its current form, free movement within the EU provides unprecedented opportunities for 500 million citizens to live in each other's countries, but it is tied to a violent and oppressive system of exclusion. The differential treatment has allowed right-wing government of Poland to make the cynical, opportunistic argument for reconsideration of the benefits of the principle of free movement and roll out punitive interventions based on a particular form of social authoritarianism.

However, the dismal Polish response to integration challenges must be considered within the broader trend of welfare state retrenchment, punitive revamping of public policies and rebranding of poverty as personal failure. Omnipresent austerity measures have pushed millions of EU citizens into poverty contributing to growing tensions around access to jobs and welfare. Not surprisingly, the populist right-wing discourse eagerly frames migrants as a liability to countries that are already struggling with the effects of economic crisis. In many ways, the portrayal of Roma migrants as a deviant group incapable of living "a normal life" has intensified in tandem with a growing insecurity of Polish citizens, struggling with economic hardships. The emergence of explicit xenophobic movements (i.e. All Polish Youth) allows for drawing a distinction between "us" and "them" along lines of nationality and contesting the very question of who "belongs" in Poland as a full subject entitled to rights and protections.

In this context, political decisions have a central role in determining what Polish society will look like over the next few decades, how inclusive it will be, and whose economic, social, and political rights will be taken into account. The fact that Poland is still not receiving a high volume of immigrants should prompt the authorities to use this "quiet" time to devise policies and to experiment with novel approaches. However, at the moment the picture looks grim. The criminalisation of begging and squatting is tantamount to criminalising poverty. It perpetuates, rather than alleviates, the marginalisation and disadvantage experienced by impoverished communities. It also violates the fundamental human rights of some of the most marginalized people in Europe. Begging bans however, are the tip of an ugly iceberg of a wide base of antisocial behaviour measures. These measures are used to punish people in the name of maintaining public order. What we have here is essentially an attempt to criminalize the use of public space by all people considered "undesirable" by policymakers and corporate elites. As the European Commissioner for Human Rights, Nils Muižniek (2015) has said: "The criminalization of poverty hides problems from public view and undermines efforts to improve the living conditions of Roma who are stigmatized and discriminated against". While antagonism in some Polish cities is beginning to thaw, mostly because of grassroots advocacy, there is still no conception of how to alter and/or adjust policies and procedures to promote a sustainable, legitimate and accountable integration process. This will continue long-term unless we ensure that public spaces, public infrastructure, and social assistance, is accessible to everyone – including impoverished migrants.

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Part III
Coping Strategies and Counter-Narratives

Chapter 10
Identity Game for Welfare: Circumventing Surveillance of Legal Migrants in Europe

Veronika Nagy

Based on a critical ethnographic research, this paper aims to reflect on the role of welfare surveillance and outsourced social services in migration procedures of Central European Roma. After the fifth EU Enlargement in 2007, transnational mobility has become a significant challenge for all western governments. As full EU citizens, large Roma populations now enjoy freedom of movement in Europe. The long standing prejudiced perception of Roma as profiteers unwilling to integrate became a basis for concerns about a "threatening flood" of Roma westward. As a result, several old Member States have introduced different control strategies allegedly to ensure security, legitimating excessive policing and surveillance of migrants in order to isolate them from national consensus. The "mechanisms" applied for sorting and excluding unwanted Roma communities are grounded in a set of punitive rules enacted through national and local legislation with the purpose of expulsion. Accordingly, limiting access to social services gradually replaced migration policies as a new process of selection regarding undesired European migrants from A8 countries. Service providers in the neoliberal bureaucratic social fields introduced new modalities of surveillance and restrictions to deny income assistance, benefit entitlement and legal aid. This chapter provides an empirical analysis on the effects of these sorting measures and on how the targeted groups either comply or circumnavigate these regulations in London.

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10.1 Introduction

Based on a critical ethnographic research, this paper aims to reflect on the role of welfare surveillance and outsourced social services in migration procedures of Central European Roma. After the fifth EU Enlargement in 2007, transnational mobility has become a significant challenge for all western governments. As full EU citizens, large Roma populations now enjoy freedom of movement in Europe. The long standing prejudiced perception of Roma as profiteers unwilling to integrate became a basis for concerns about a "threatening flood" of Roma westward. As a result, several old Member States have introduced different control strategies allegedly to ensure security, legitimating excessive policing and surveillance of migrants in order to isolate them from national consensus. The "mechanisms" applied for sorting and excluding unwanted Roma communities are grounded in a set of punitive rules enacted through national and local legislation with the purpose of expulsion. Accordingly, limiting access to social services gradually replaced migration policies as a new process of selection regarding undesired European migrants from A8 countries. Service providers in the neoliberal bureaucratic social fields introduced new modalities of surveillance and restrictions to deny income assistance, benefit entitlement and legal aid. This chapter provides an empirical analysis on the effects of these sorting measures and on how the targeted groups either comply or circumnavigate these regulations in London.

Theresa Mays' promise to "use Brexit to stop EU migrants claiming UK benefits" (Siobhan 2017), symbolises the populist, exclusionist welfare discourse of the last decade. In response to fears about an increasing influx of Central and Eastern European (CEE) migrants who may be entitled to welfare benefits, several EU member states have extended their border protection and devised internal controls measures that are implemented though local bureaucracies. As mobility across EU member states intensifies, threatening stereotypes associated with non-EU migrants are accompanied by a "new menace": criminal "insiders" or benefit tourists from new member states who might profit from the freedom of mobility within the EU.

The long-standing perception of Roma as profiteers who are involved in illegal activities, live off of welfare and are unwilling to integrate has triggered concerns about a "threatening flood" of westward Roma mobility. This fear has been used to justify new surveillance measures aimed at controlling and profiling unattractive migrant groups. Although the securitisation of Roma migrants is not a new phenomenon, methods of targeting and selecting "undesired citizens" are being increasingly applied as financial aptitudes become the core parameters of migration. When the EU integration agenda led to stricter national migration policies,[1] the transnational mobility of EU citizens became a security question (Huysmans 2000) presented in terms of financial and cultural threat. Accordingly, the securitisation of Roma migrants has become a part of "a wider politicisation in which immigrants are portrayed as a challenge to the protection of national identity and welfare provisions"

[1] See EU legislation COM(2005) 389, ANNEX 16.

(ibid.: 751). These concerns have been used to justify new restrictive measures for profiling the immoral foreign opportunist versus the decent migrant who deserves state support and protection (Erjavec 2001: 703). Although references to "Roma benefit tourism" have been regularly used to justify new control measures, social security screenings and immigration policies are increasingly intertwined within surveillance practices of member states, targeting all unemployed newcomers. This chapter aims to present how the digitalisation of administrative services in the United Kingdom contributes to new discriminatory practices based on financial profiles.

Unemployed migrants are increasingly controlled and sanctioned by British welfare services and subjected to new monitoring practices. However, instead of leaving or avoiding these service providers, many people stay and try to anticipate these financial screening measures. As they increase their knowledge about the data collection methods service providers use, they learn and invent tactics to circumvent benefit restrictions. I will argue that similarities between surveillance profiles used by HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and the parameters of ethnic differentiation experienced by CEE Roma in their sending countries have led Roma migrants to interpret welfare exclusion as ethnic discrimination in London and respond to it accordingly. Therefore, while tax surveillance profiles do not include ethnic references, they are defined in terms of the financial sustainability of UK residents, which results in new exclusionary processes.

To recognise how these welfare-service-based financial monitoring structures facilitate migration control, we first need to understand how digitalised bureaucratic incentives (e.g. HMRC screening algorithms and financial sanctions) are used to make undesired groups voluntarily leave or become self-sustaining in the UK. This social sorting process is shaped by political, academic and NGO narratives, in which the economic and ethnic characteristics of migrants are regularly intertwined in references to poor migrants and marginalised unemployed Roma (Cherkezova and Tomova 2013).

First, I will reflect on how benefit applicants are monitored and profiled for welfare eligibility. Second, I will explore how this securitisation process implemented through financial sanctions is fuelled by different stakeholders. Third, I will describe how benefit applicants use strategies to challenge these social services surveillance mechanisms within the "virtual walls" of Fortress Europe. The selected cases of CEE Roma migrants will illustrate the interplay between the digitalised bureaucracies of HMRC welfare providers and the counter surveillance strategies adopted by CEE applicants. Finally, I will describe how the digital gap in online application systems creates a new governance from a distance, in which Roma migrants are not subjected to discrimination because of their ethnic identity but because of their economic profile based on a documented labour history.

Following the critical criminological tradition of qualitative data analyses, this research is based on 18 months of fieldwork performed within various CEE Roma communities (Polish, Slovakian, Hungarian, Czech) in London (Nagy 2018). The research relied on multi-sited ethnography, including institutional and virtual ethnographic tools. Research techniques involved participant observation, inter-

views and shadowing. As a researcher, interpreter, housemate, "advocacy worker" and ethnographer, I adopted different, often conflicting roles that led to specific information about the participants' decision-making processes.

10.2 Financial Sorting as Migration Governance

Although securitisation of migration is often linked to ethnic constructions of migration, this research reflects different profiling practices. To understand the current securitisation of Roma migrants in the United Kingdom, we first need to understand the correlations between ethnicity, surveillance and the new geopolitical incentives of the neoliberal western countries. Lyon (2013) notes that neoliberal European societies have developed a new understanding of control in the form of social sorting through technocratic bureaucracies. Thus, the securitisation of Roma migrants is not a direct result of ethnic governance, but rather an outcome of existing neoliberal market dynamics that characterise the political landscape in contemporary Europe (Van Baar 2011). Neoliberalism should be understood as both "a set of policy programmes that deregulate political government" and "a conservative liberal political movement" that bases its ideas on neoclassical economics (Van Baar 2012: 1292). Based on Foucault's notion of governmentality, many scholars (Lemke 2001; O'Malley et al. 1997; Rose and Miller 1992; Van Baar 2012) have evaluated neoliberalism as "a way of explaining the establishment and exercise of political power, one in which the concept of government is broader than management by the state; that also involves the regulation of populations through multiple institutions and technologies in society" (Mitchell 2006, p. 390). This governmentality concept has become the core of several securitisation theories that explain the expulsion and selection of migrants in the European context.

Recently, neoliberal state recognition of migrants has been based on legal economic activity and social citizenship rather than legal citizenship. It is also symbolised in the context of the European migration and integration debate, where there are vigorous disagreements about the meaning and extension of "social rights": how much should they be contingent on productive behaviour and who should be covered by which member state? Within the contemporary hierarchies of work, the functioning of borders has less to do with the geopolitical delineation of sovereign prerogatives (i.e. the power to exclude non-citizens from access to a state's territory) and more to do with the attempt to control, select and govern specific categories of people at a distance (De Giorgi 2012). A key element of this geopolitical selection process is the *social contract* between the state and the responsible citizen who accepts the social economic preconditions. As I will explain, this contract-based thinking holds welfare applicants responsible for losing or earning their rights to social benefits (Yeatman 1998).

Making responsibilisation the fundamental principle of this neoliberal welfare approach (Goddard 2012) justifies the selection of unproductive groups, who are seen as unwilling to integrate and participate in the host society. In the case of CEE

migrants, this participation is generally measured in labour market participation and by the level of dependence on state funding. Individuals' labour market positions serve as a symbol of economic participation in a neoliberal society which determines who should be "sorted out" from productive taxpaying society. In this context, social benefits are not a right of those who are in need, but are financial provisions that must be earned. Local authorities in London assert disciplinary power by assessing economic success as a key aspect of social sorting and maintaining social order in their boroughs. In short, social benefits come to play a significant role in migration control (Gill and Law 1989; Strange 1988) and their distribution is underpinned by a discourse on moralising, responsibility and securitisation of the poor. Consequently, this governance model normalises the social insecurity and exclusion of "undeserving benefit claimants" based on economic performance.

To combat the perceived economic threat of benefit tourists to the national welfare system, the UK government has initiated new security measures intended to differentiate the "good" or productive citizens from the undesirable "passive" citizens. Social and spatial exclusion is based on financial determinants that serve as a functional realm that precludes inclusion of the unproductive others (Halfmann 1998).

Before we look at how these welfare-service-based financial monitoring structures facilitate the control and selection of Roma migrants, we need to understand how governing bodies invent incentives that try to induce undesired groups to voluntarily leave the country. Authorities commonly use financial restrictions to restrict the incoming mobility of undesired migrants or to foster their outgoing mobility, thus regulating and controlling unwieldy flows of people. As Hyndman (2012: 245) explains:

> The idea of migrants as a vector of insecurity prevailed, creating potent fear that could be used for draconian measures. The biometric management of "insiders" and "outsiders" with its assemblage of new laws, policies and control practices render geopolitics and biopolitics inseparable.

State incentives are coded in different panoptic modalities, as tax credit regulations, to guide people on the move. As the Brexit debate proves, this apparatus of control and surveillance is frequently used as spatial disciplinary technology in the EU, where no visa regulations are in force for European citizens (Deleuze and Guattari 1987). Legal borders for population selection are thus intertwined with an internal selection based on labour participation, and with avoiding and expelling the unemployed, welfare-dependent newcomer. UK border control is thus facilitated by social economic surveillance which controls and disciplines transnational movement of the poor in EU. In such a harsh policy context, those who experience poverty are characterised "as 'culpable actors' at risk of 'moral hazard'" (Mead 1997: 19).

Accordingly, social security and immigration policies are increasingly intertwined within the surveillance practices of member states, blurring the line between welfare and crime control measures. Online monitoring practices, such as the use of data analysis software, are taking new forms in technocratic bureaucracies and changing the means of interaction between newcomers and administrative bodies.

As I will argue, these neoliberal incentives intertwine with the social construction of Roma ethnicity, but first I should clarify how policymaking uses the ethnic connotations produced by academics and non-governmental actors based on economic features.

10.3 Producing, Challenging and Transmitting the Ethnic Frame

Access to governmental support (e.g. eligibility for social benefits) is based on definitions related to the social construction of different groups who are in need. When ethnic connotations are linked to economic deprivation, these references become part of the welfare construction of deserving citizens used in geopolitical control strategies. Today's Roma are the contemporary inheritors of the Gypsy legacy, an identity that has been historically fabricated based on different political interests. Thus, the first question is how Roma migrants have been constructed as a needy population, and how professionals, academics and NGOs have contributed to this process.

Although Roma political advocacy groups draw attention to the structural exclusion of Roma from political decisions and outcomes, many Roma intellectuals distance themselves from politics in fear that the ethnic frames they would represent would contribute to their personal exclusion. Hemelsoet and Van Pelt (2015) criticise how the "ethnicisation" of Roma identity in policy measures influences the way mediators contribute to the construction of Roma identity and how the 'use' of these connotations reinforces stigmatisation schemes. A common denominator in these political narratives is the conviction that the Roma face a set of special problems: spatial segregation, discrimination, low educational attainment and intergenerational poverty (Sigona and Vermeersch 2012). As Kostka (2015: 81) explains:

> It is this understanding that is most pronounced in policy literature, stubbornly isolating questions concerning characteristic features of contemporary European society from questions pertaining to the living conditions of Roma communities.

Activists and NGOs use ethnic frames "to mobilize potential adherents and constituents, to garner bystander support, and to demobilize antagonists" (Vermeersch 2003: 885). This has had a major impact on recent assumptions about Roma migrants moving westward. Stakeholders like NGOs mobilise specific narratives as conscious strategic efforts by groups of people to fashion a shared understanding of the world and of themselves that "legitimate and motivate collective action" (McAdam et al. 1996: 6). Yet, NGOs and academics often ignore less visible subgroups if they do not fit into the socially constructed image of Roma ethnic minorities. Since the Roma community is quite diverse and fragmented, these narratives are not appreciated by those who cannot identify themselves with these realities (Vermeersch 2003). Considering these processes of ethnic framing, we need to understand how

recent Roma ethnic categories are formed and implemented by representatives in the political arena.

The concept of the Roma "benefit tourist" is constructed by a political framing that was meant to draw attention to ethnic discrimination in Europe. However, policy guidelines have often been based on an essentialist, one-sided image underpinned by normative contentions about the causes of Roma poverty and marginalisation that contributed to such opportunist ethnic images. As Kostka (2015: 87) explains:

> While policy-makers rely on empirical assessments to formulate the definitions of Roma exclusion, these assessments tend to be mediated by the existing cognitive and moral maps that orient their actions and routines. In turn, these politically accepted definitions legitimize a specific course of action, even if it is not needed or demanded by the final beneficiaries.

For example, the creation of the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020 (European Commission 2011) marks a significant step in the politicisation of Roma identity by increasing the number of initiatives, projects and programmes explicitly targeting Roma. This has affected social solidarity by disconnecting and distancing Roma from their fellow citizens. Such political tendencies differentiate Roma mobility from other intra-European movements and justify specific measures in host countries. The social and academic construction of Roma ethnicity designed by stakeholders as activists and politicians in this field is not only victimising, but these narratives also strongly contribute to existing images of welfare-dependent Roma on the margins of every European society.

At the same time, language interpreters, who often play the role of cultural mediators coming from the same sending countries, also transmit ideas and expectations that have direct implications for the interactions and the long-term policies developed in local bureaucracies. These interpreters often describe Roma as vulnerable, underdeveloped, welfare-dependent people who are living outside the law and society. When interpreters stress the vulnerability of Roma to victimisation of organised crime – or emphasise their involvement in human trafficking – these descriptions can have implications for crime control measures and the definition of a threat in the host communities. Some interpreters have even suggested that recent human trafficking laws in the UK could be applied as a migration control technique to exclude suspicious groups. Others have said that social workers seem to apply the rules more strictly to unwanted, impoverished Roma to make them move to another borough. As Pasquetti (2013: 446) notes:

> [These discourses] which (re)produce fear among the public at large, are routinely mobilized by state officials to justify practices such as the increase in covert policing, the adoption of "pre-crime" national security measures, and the use of military agencies in policing incorporated people including citizens.

By referring to Roma in terms of criminal networks, mobile outsiders or welfare shoppers, these transmitted fears operate as forces at the intersection of macrostructures and micro-interactions (Barbalet 1992; Scheff 1994).

10.4 Passing the Virtual Sally Port: Coping Strategies of Roma Newcomers

Western EU member states are shifting their bureaucracies towards a neoliberal business-like structure which is also reflected in the progressive incorporation of private organisations in social services. These organisations are increasingly subjected to efficiency-oriented practices, targets and limited discretionary powers. The changes in social service practices have altered the role of bureaucracies in the surveillance society. "Welfarism" has turned into targeted policing of the unemployed in which socially dependent newcomers are subjected to strict controls and sanctions. These processes are meant to control transnational mobility and prevent financial abuse.

The digitalisation facilitates new geopolitical tools for population control by electronic governance in which selection parameters are independent of nationality and ethnicity, but profile people based on economic status. Service users are thus encouraged to adapt themselves to the demands of the neoliberal labour market. Likewise, generations of newcomers develop suitable strategies to find their way through these procedures by manipulating, bypassing or hiding from these techniques of governance (Woolford and Nelund 2013).

Although expressions like "welfare tourists" and "benefit shopping" are used to describe foreign benefit claimants, living on welfare in a foreign country is a life of uncertainty. While the UK is often described as a welfare paradise, benefit claims are regularly suspended or ignored, and applicants feel subjected to an asymmetric surveillance system in which the service providers have more data about them than they have about themselves.

Foreign benefit applicants face numerous obstacles. Claimants need to prove their address to apply for a National Insurance number. Bank accounts are required for every benefit application, but it is difficult to get one without proof of income. While a migrant must regularly pay rent from the time of arrival, Housing Benefit is only available to people who have a job or receive Jobseeker's Allowance. However, Jobseeker's Allowance is only available to foreign applicants who have passed the National Habitual Residence test. This test requires proof of residence in the UK, so migrants are unable to claim anything in their first 6 months. The complexity of these interdependencies is not only interpreted as an obstacle, but as a bureaucratic fringe space where well-informed newcomers are able to circumvent restrictions to become entitled to benefits.

10.4.1 Tax Credit Procedures: The Castle of HMRC

The bureaucratic fringe between the content of online databases and the real circumstances of applicants can be explained by digitalised bureaucratic dysfunctions. Private sector and e-commerce surveillance methods prove dysfunctional when

adapted to e-governance.[2] The problem lies in their different objectives: public administration is concerned with the well-being of society, while e-business strives to maximise profit and increase market share (Lau 2006). Furthermore, information manipulated within an e-government process should be treated with a higher level of sensitivity than in a commercial business, and there is no need for the same level of standardisation and optimisation of processes as in a commercial business (ibid).

One such dysfunctional system is the administration of tax credit claims by the HMRC that become important for CEE migrants. These tax credit claims, which are designed to subsidise low-income taxpayers, became more popular after eligibility for Jobseeker's Allowance and Housing Benefit was restricted in 2014. However, applicants encounter difficulty in claiming these tax credits as these online application systems are facilitated by targeted surveillance algorithms that screen foreign claimants by treating them as fraud suspects.

The barriers start with the lack of face-to-face contact with advisors, which makes it more difficult for applicants to explain their circumstances. There are several inquiry centres where applicants can make free phone calls about applications, but doing so can be a stressful, expensive and time-consuming process. Each phone call starts with control questions. If the applicant is unable to answer the questions, the officer ends the conversation. Applicants know that they will be asked to provide their name and National Insurance number, but they can get confused when suddenly confronted with extra control questions. Although applicants are usually aware that these questions are designed to protect them from fraud and exploitation, they experience them as a barrier, since understanding and answering requires the assistance of an interpreter. Some of the interviewees were convinced that this process is set up to render filing claims more complicated and prolong the process in order to discourage applicants from following through.

Applicants can also apply for tax credit online, which requires them to fill in an online form, sign it and submit it to the HMRC data centre. Local brokers, such as friends or landlords, often help applicants by supplying them with the 'right answers' to satisfy entitlement screening parameters. Unlike Jobseeker's Allowance applications, these processes do not deal with claimants as individuals, but rather rely on the data that they share online. This makes it more attractive for applicants seeking to hide information, as these data collection methods generate gaps between real and "uploaded identities". This is what happens in the case of child tax claims.

10.4.2 Child Tax Credit Claims: Identity Management Online

Formally, the child tax credit is a weekly payment to low-income families for the care of children. In practice, children are verified by their identity documents, which are submitted to HMRC by their school or general practitioner. Many aspects of the

[2] E-government refers to the delivery of national or local government information and services to citizens via the internet or other digital means. See Palvia and Sharma (2007).

claim are interrelated and interdependent, so claimants try to avoid communicating any changes in their circumstances. For instance, a family that moves to another borough is required to inform HMRC, as the new council tax credit is determined based on the new property. This can lead to benefits being suspended or the household losing its Housing Benefit, which can cause debts and anxiety. Children must also be re-registered in the new borough, which affects child tax credit payments.

Informants reported using various strategies to keep and even increase their child tax credit payments. For instance, some "buy" an address to stay registered in their old borough. This allows them to keep their children in school, which is essential to preventing the school from informing HMRC about the change in circumstances. Benefit-dependent migrant families not only move between boroughs, but sometimes even across national borders. Transnational mobility can involve making benefit claims in more than one country and concealing transnational movements to prevent benefits from being cut.

Home-schooling allows parents to move back and forth with their children while keeping the children registered in the UK. When children attend school, parents risk being fined if they take their children out of school without notice. One interviewee was forced to move back to Hungary with her children, but she was able to keep her children registered at school in London by continuously updating the head teacher and postponing the date of return. Keeping the children enrolled in school not only ensured that they received their tax credits but also served as proof of habitual residence, making them eligible for a council house. As she explained:

> It is quite restricted now, but there are still some back doors. In my case, I have been registered [in the UK] since 2011, but I was not living here from the beginning. Actually, I was coming and going, but this country has paid child tax credit from 2011, and when I claimed the Housing Benefit, they paid it! They pay everything as they are convinced that I am a resident here. Because they are in the EU, there is free movement; no stamps, no nothing about my trips back home [no trace of border crossing].

By circumventing the system, she could claim child tax credit and child benefits in the UK and Hungary. In the UK, she applied for welfare under the children's father's name; in Hungary, where her children are registered for home-schooling, she applied under her name.

The application process for child tax credit is one of the most common areas of fraud. Members of migrant networks can use their EU citizenship to their advantage, by drawing on differences in state-specific traditions about surnames or taking advantage of the lack of EU databases registering foreign children. Some claimants apply for child tax credits for their relatives' children. One interviewee felt exploited by her own father, who claimed child tax benefits for her daughters. Others told of filing claims for their siblings, or even for children who had passed away:

> Many are handing in papers for someone else's kid to receive these weekly payments. When their own kid turns 18, they already have three children under their name [not relatives, but registered as their own children]. It does not appear that it is not his child. I see these things because we fill out some office papers and the surnames are never the same. And then there are those who take the money after a child is dead. For example, the child might have died long ago, but the birth certificate still exists, and they use it here in the UK.

This quote illustrates that many participants have extensive knowledge about how to become eligible for welfare provisions or how to increase their income without regular employment. Such information circulates on Facebook, on forums for newcomers and in private conversations (Nagy 2018a). Many of the claimants do not see their child tax application as fraudulent, especially when extended families are taking care of the children. Others fear repercussions and debt due to overpayments. Roma newcomers acquire such knowledge from other claimants, like their employers or landlords. Those landlords see sharing information about avoiding bureaucratic barriers as support and a guarantee of rent payment.

Informal "brokers" also make a living from the commodification of information. Agents who operate in the grey market usually combine different tasks, and there is a blurred line between consensual and predatory relationships. Information, complex applications and 'favours' like informal interpreting services can cost a newcomer up to £200. Newcomers also must pay rent, housing deposits and travel costs, all of which is often organised by these brokers. Since legal aid is not available to these migrants, they depend on such agencies and often acquire debts. These restrictions increase the role of middlemen who have local connections and help newcomers pass through the sieve of the welfare sorting machine.

10.4.3 Hide and Seek: HMRC's Electronic Monitoring Mechanisms

The value of identity has structurally changed in digitalised societies. Technological developments in authentication, such as the use of biometric data, are hailed as the future of security and crime prevention. Such assumptions regarding the prevention of data abuse presuppose a binary distinction between victims and perpetrators, the latter being involved in online data theft and the former uninformed about the risks of identity fraud and unaware of the exploitation of their personal data. However, this distinction is not clear cut: although it may lead to effective prevention measures, it obscures those who intentionally engage in data abuse (FPEG 2007). Though victims and fraudsters are often defined in oppositional terms, there are many overlaps. However, the blurry line between the two could be defined by the level of involvement, investment and relative experience of benefit or loss. Without empirical data on the relative experience of victims, we cannot understand the value of identity fraud. Although the risk of tax overpayment is high, it still seems to be beneficial for foreign applicants, particularly in benefit claims in a foreign country.

Identity fraud, especially for child tax credit applications, usually involves the unlawful use of another person's details for gain or to avoid an obligation (Pascoe et al. 2006). This type of fraud can cover a broad range of methods that vary according to the use of the other person's details.[3] Through online flows of information,

[3] For additional definitions of identity theft, see http://www.identitytheft.org.uk.

even those who stay the country of origin can learn about living conditions abroad and gather information about how they, as EU citizens, can access social provisions in different member states. When EU citizenship becomes a form of capital, it can easily be commodified in the form of identity documents.

Identity theft used for identity fraud is defined as the misappropriation of another person's identity (e.g. name, date of birth, current or previous addresses) without his or her knowledge or consent, or when a perpetrator decides to simply provide an agency with false personal information (Summers et al. 2014). Applicants who are considered victims of fraud can be aware of the value of these data and might want to profit from such activities. Likewise, "intermediaries, who are mostly defined as fraudsters by law, are not necessarily seen as perpetrators" (Lacey and Cuganesan 2004, p. 245) but they are often members of the same community they "serve" (Shover et al. 2003) and are seen as mediators who exploit the gaps in foreign welfare bureaucracy.

In the case of British benefit fraud cases, the most efficient offline approach is "selling a dream". Brokers offer something that promises profit or above average returns. As Titus (1999) argues, the lure of something absurdly cheap or lucrative is integral to many fraud "come-ons". The major factors in identity fraud are relying on the originality of the documents and on technical conditions of control measures that enable authentication of the data.

10.5 Eluding Social Sorting by Identity Fraud Online

In my fieldwork, I observed three types of identity fraud. In the first common form, immigrants use family members' documents to claim government benefits (illustrated by the child tax credit fraud cases). The second form of identity fraud involves migrants who exploit their extended networks and act as intermediaries for newcomers, recruiting people in their home country who are willing to provide identity documents. Those newcomers do not move to the UK seeking employment, but only travel there to sign applications and register for a National Insurance number. They then return to their home country and wait for their monthly payments. Some receive payments from the middlemen, who collected their monthly benefits. Others receive nothing, but they usually do not blame the middleman because they assume that their application was rejected. Extensive knowledge about application methods develops in relatively small communities in sending countries. In Hungary, for example, identification methods have become common knowledge in networks of marginalised young adults. This knowledge, coupled with growing socioeconomic problems, leads to the third and most interesting level of identity fraud. This involves local households selling their children's documents (e.g. birth certificates) for use by other families in child tax credit applications abroad. These practices are common in villages with extended networks in London or Manchester:

> My sister-in-law's husband asked me if I wanted to go to England to make some money. After Canada, I thought it might work out better and he has been living there for a long time now, making a lot of money with his brother, so he promised to get some benefits for us. He said it is easy money; we just need to go there for a few weeks and we can get 200,000 Forint [€650] per month. When I gave him my passport, he gave me 5,000 Forint [€16], but that was it. We drove there and I lived in their house with some other guys. They gave me a job in construction, but they didn't give me any money, or only something like £5 per hour, but the others said that the company paid us £8 per hour. He helped me get a National Insurance number and apply for a bank account, so I gave him my children's birth certificates and all the other documents he asked for. I never got my bank card and I never received any money. I haven't lost anything though. I want to go back, and now I know now how to do it. I know they were taking my benefits, but what can they do with this [with the documents and his bank card]?

The applicants selling their documents know the UK procedures for social provisions. Interestingly, these claimants do not define these contracts as 'selling' their data, but rather as investing in future welfare benefits from abroad to avoid future debt. Even if they receive no benefits after selling their documents, they still consider it a good decision to commodify their data, as they have not experienced any direct loss. Their data is mostly used to apply for social benefits from foreign governments, which the sellers do not view as a crime.

After enrolling in the UK system, benefit fraudsters apply for financial services. These services require information such as first names and surnames, date of birth and place of residence. In some cases, these details are checked against databases containing personal data to identify identity theft. The components of such initial legal identity data are the most relevant for government institutions. They are also supplemented by biographical elements, which claimants construct over time to support this authentication method (FPEG 2007).

Legal proof of identity is usually the responsibility of the state. However, the type and quality of identity documents issued by governments varies. This is becoming more problematic with the introduction of biometric data, which entails the risk of falsification (Grijpink and Prins 2003). Fraudsters are developing new ways to circumvent controls and obtain the necessary data. These techniques include online and offline strategies (e.g. procurement fraud, lending fraud, payment card fraud) (Levi 2008).

In benefit fraud cases involving Roma migrants, the fraud is designed to be legally ambiguous and beneficial for all actors. However, fraudsters take the fewest risks and reap the most benefits. For instance, in combination with benefit claims, fraudsters sometimes take over the account of a legitimate customer and use his or her credit facilities. The victim's personal details are used to create a new bank account and then to apply for credit. In other cases, a fraudster permanently takes on another person's identity (Newman and McNally 2005). Identity fraud is even more sophisticated in cases where information is used to secure "breeder" documents such as birth certificates. These are used for multiple applications for credit cards, loans and benefits, securing credit that is never going to be repaid (Gordon and Willox 2003).

The interviewees were aware of the risks they take by selling their documents, but they are also aware of the limitations of international law and cooperation. They often do not intend to stay in the UK, so they do not care if their actions have consequences for them there. Still, these commodification methods illustrate several recent problems in identity fraud legislation. According to Muller (2004), citizenship in western societies is being decomposed into "identity management". This shift is exemplified by a change in focus from questions of entitlement and rights, and the attendant cultural and ethnic attributes of citizenship, to questions of "verifying/authenticating 'identity' for the purpose of access to rights, bodies, spaces, and so forth" (ibid.: 280). Also, there is no EU-level legislation that specifically addresses identity theft (Mitchison et al. 2004). Member states have conflicting interests and differences in identification practices, credit card use, political systems and legal cultures (Grossman 2005).

Diversity in legislation and welfare provisions between different member states leads to commodification practices, which the marginalised citizens of poorer European countries exploit to survive. It is erroneous to assume that these actors are unaware of the risks they take: quite the opposite, they are conscious of the (in) effectiveness of punishment. As long as they receive benefits from these documents, they experience their involvement as profitable. They do not blame the recruiters, because it means immediate income for them. Even if some have negative experiences with fraudsters, they keep trying to invest their documents via others familiar with foreign procedures.

10.6 The Reality Gap

According to the classical interpretation, a victim of identity fraud is someone whose identity is abused because a fraudster is profiting from them. In the transnational mobility context, these roles are fluid over time. Individuals who voluntary sell their data actively participate in these applications and thus can be simultaneously defined as victims and perpetrators. It is unclear whether biometric technology or other data industry measures could actually reduce the incidence of identity crime. Critics have argued that instead of making changes in the identification processes, there should be a focus on the role of different actors and on altering the processes that shape these activities. The assumption that biometric data is infallible lulls authorities into thinking that they have found a solution to one of the basic problems of modernity, which has acquired a particular salience in today's globalised world: the problem of suspect identities (Cole 2009). As Lyon (2010: 607) suggests, "showing a token of legitimate ID is now a basic condition for the exercise of freedom". This points not only to how biometric technologies limit movement by producing "disqualified bodies" (Muller 2004), but also to the advantages such technology can offer to those with the right tokens: the globally mobile "kinetic elites" (Adey et al. 2014). Identity controls are, thus, not only fraud prevention

measures, but also mobility controls on the poor. In this context, Aas (2011: 341) notes that practices of transnational surveillance:

> [Unlike more] inwardly-directed national surveillance, revolve around alliances between "states like us" and protecting the public, which is no longer defined exclusively as the citizenry of the nation state. On the level of political discourse, these practices seem to aspire to notions of "pan-European and cosmopolitan citizenship".

However, various social groups (citizens, sub-citizens, supra-citizens and non-citizens) hold unequal positions in terms of the degree of surveillance they are subjected to, ranging from extreme deprivation to great social privilege (Nagy 2018b). This inequality reveals the inadequacy of the traditional liberal notion of citizenship as the springboard for articulating a discourse of rights.

Social sorting policies have been included in intra-European control measures based on data surveillance of benefit-dependent migrants. These data collections serve to objectively and efficiently select applicants based on parameters of welfare eligibility. However, such selections represent the neoliberal values of productivity. Instead of supporting poor unemployed applicants, these profiling systems are excluding them based on their financial capabilities. Such a selection method based on the suspicion of welfare claimants has been defined as a new geopolitical measure – the funnel of expulsion – to keep the undesired migrants away. However, such mobility control is overestimated, since the targeted ones can challenge such a mechanism and adapt to the selection parameters, especially in a virtual environment.

Surveillance is an active process with various levels of interaction between the surveyor and the survey object. The choice to apply for tax credits instead of welfare benefits represents a change from face-to-face interaction to virtual bureaucratic dialogues that shape the techniques of control and selection. Although virtual bureaucracies require internet literacy, they also provide a special identity-making space since the real person is no longer included in the digitalised interactions. This virtual space enables newcomers who are targeted for social exclusion to turn their virtual characteristics into those of a deserving productive citizen.

The use of electronic applications changes the process of "social sorting" and the tactics claimants use. Benefit applicants have always been monitored by service providers, but new digital systems include screening moments that push benefit applicants towards participation in the labour market and restrict their eligibility. Data about claimants is stored in databases and analysed by algorithms that calculate the "risk" of welfare dependency, fraud or long-term unemployment. This makes it more difficult for applicants to prove their eligibility, and drives them to search for loopholes in the system to avoid selection mechanisms.

The digitalisation of the service provision system creates a gap between the data on individuals and the actual person that data is meant to identify. Claimants in a virtual application system are less likely to represent themselves accurately, but instead attempt to come as close as possible to an "ideal type", based on the requirements for benefit entitlement. In this digital dialogic process, screening programmes and welfare applicants are continuously changing the parameters of screening requirements, which in turn triggers more restrictive application procedures.

These cat and mouse games between the claimant and the bureaucracy create an increasing reality gap between the claimant's real identity and the "dividual" who is translated into data based on specific parameters. Databases are filled with the altered personal information provided by those who feel targeted by local bureaucracies. These mutated profiles lead to unpredictability and inconsistency in spatial sorting strategies, increasing distrust among benefit claimants who, as a result, become even less transparent. Although screening mechanisms like spidergrams are increasingly included in databases, the algorithm that is supposed to filter claimants is cheated. These retargeting and restrictive policies both underestimate the participative skills of applicants and overestimate the capacities of digitalised bureaucracies.

As these processes are fuelled by welfarist political lobbies, service providers and applicants are suspicious of one another and keep each other in constant confusion by selecting information in online or offline interactions. I found that both claimants and service providers are involved in transgressive actions related to application procedures. The tightened managerialist norms that restrict professional considerations to a risk-screening analysis illustrate how individual considerations still affect decisions about claims. The reality gap facilitated by the digitalisation of welfare services provides a new space of operations for both civil servants and applicants.

The monitoring of applications and the selection of benefit recipients as political technologies of social sorting are thus carried out on several levels. It is not just an audit of recipients or a surveillance of eligibility criteria, but an extended consolidated verification procedure based on joint databases and, in some cases, maintenance enforced by computer assistance. As the examples illustrate, these notions are constructed as governmental incentives for profiling "the bad foreign opportunists" versus "the good citizens" who deserve support and protection from the state. These disincentives for foreign benefit claimants can also be traced in other screening instruments. These ongoing transformations of modern penal practices such as benefit sanctions reflect the capitalistic need to carve a docile and hardworking workforce out of the unruly, undisciplined and sometimes riotous "dangerous classes" constantly generated by capital itself as a by-product of its movement of creative destruction (Schumpeter 1942).

10.7 Conclusion

As the case of benefit applicant migrants illustrates, digitalisation of national bureaucracies opened new doors for migration governance. Diversity management of EU member states is now defined in financial terms, replacing ethnic constructions of social inclusion with financial parameters. Post-modern modalities of migration control are present in all bureaucratic practices in EU member states, and

surveillance practices do not only affect Roma welfare applicants. This study focused on how several profiling mechanisms that are associated with ethnic discrimination against welfare-dependent groups are shifting into neoliberal financial discrimination. It shows that Roma migrants who experience institutional discrimination based on financial connotations still explain these financial profiling mechanisms as ethnic targeting and respond to them accordingly. As their knowledge about the data collection methods of service providers increases, excluded groups who are aware of the preconditions of service providers' digital selection methods learn and invent tactics to circumvent legal restrictions. Although these newcomers are often framed as a dependent, uneducated and traditional minority, they successfully develop knowledge about the weaknesses and advantages of digitalised bureaucracies and adapt to the parameters of the desired applicant. Coping strategies are differentiated on a broad scale in which identity management plays a vital role. Therefore, behavioural modifications should be explained with different decision-making processes than in the case of UK nationals who are subjected to similar profiling and sanctions. To fit in to their host country, many Roma use economic coping strategies that also sustain ethnic invisibility. Hiding the Roma ethnicity is understood as a technique for gaining social and cultural inclusion.

Benefit tourism is a misconception. Roma newcomers are moving towards Western Europe with a range of aspirations, especially to escape ethnic stigmatisation. However, ethnic targeting by NGOs and market-oriented advocacy work contribute to existing ideas about marginal Roma groups that justify targeting mechanisms. These neoliberal selection methods shift discriminatory practices from ethnic parameters to the financial capabilities of applicants. Roma newcomers who settle abroad are constantly monitored by their environment: they are under high expectations from their family networks and are living under the gaze of welfare surveillance. Theirs is a life of transgression on the edge of moral deservingness and legal eligibility, constructed by a hidden identity.

This study reveals that the objectivity and effectiveness of digitalised surveillance practices are overestimated and that calculative effects of surveillance awareness are underestimated in the field of welfare provisions in the UK. Due to conflicting values in welfare provisions, managerialist neoliberal service providers cannot act according to the norms of a welfare state and adopt competitive market-oriented principles. These production-oriented notions "from welfare to work" are shifting the role and strategies of contracted service providers that control and sanction the unemployed. Unattractive migrant groups, often seen as "benefit tourists" and associated with benefit shopping, are meant to be targeted and excluded from the welfare system and forced towards the labour market. However, instead of leaving or avoiding service providers, many applicants stay.

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Chapter 11
Contesting the Structural Constraints. A Case Study of Roma Asylum Seekers from Serbia

Jovana Knezevic Kruta

This chapter reveals the experiences of Roma from Serbia who sought and have been denied asylum protection in some EU countries. The seeking of asylum by the Roma from Serbia, as one of the main patterns of their migration, has come to the centre of debated about the rights of obtaining asylum within the existing EU asylum policies, while enforcing the discourse of "false asylum seekers" and "welfare migrants". By revealing the complex reality within which Roma from Serbia choose to migrate in the form of asylum seeking, the study challenges the discourse of "false asylum seekers" and overcomes the simplification caused by this labelling, through looking at intricate relations between the decisions to seek asylum on the one hand and welfare benefits from getting into asylum procedure on the other. Furthermore, the study sheds light on various ways in which Roma asylum seekers from Serbia exert their power as social actors, thus contesting the tendency to "victimize" Roma populations. The study is based on several months of fieldwork carried out in three different municipalities in Serbia, with Roma whose asylum claims in countries of EU have been denied. This chapter aims to add to the analysis of how existing EU migration policies affect Roma populations by particularly focusing on actor perspective. It moves beyond theoretical analysis and looks at how social actors perceive their own experiences and understand the labels that are being imposed on them.

11.1 Introduction

While there are some common characteristics of the structural context within which significant numbers of Roma live in the European continent, what is labelled as "Roma" comprises an extremely diverse minority group. In fact, the contemporary

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government and media discourse tend to frame Roma in a very essentialising way as a homogenous group with uniform characteristics, behaviours, and customs. Decision-making bodies on both nation and international level reinforce such image through its policies and interventions, created to target the Roma specifically. This tendency can be observed in policy measures created to control recent migratory movements of the Roma towards and within the European Union, as well as in discourses that emerged as a result. Migrations of the Roma minorities in Europe became particularly visible in the context of the EU enlargements in 2004 and 2007, when increased numbers of Eastern Roma migrants moved to Western Europe, triggering the attention of national and EU political bodies (Magazzini and Piemontese 2016). Soon after the EU enlargements, visa liberalization was introduced for the countries of Western Balkans, causing the intensification of Roma migrations from these countries towards the EU. As it will be discussed in this chapter, explicit and implicit policy measures that emerged in reaction to the latter migration trend of the Roma, demonstrate the tendency to construct the Roma as "deviant" and through reinforcement of simplified and stigmatizing discourses legitimize obstructive and racialized approaches.

The primary aim of this chapter is to challenge the perspective that is widely presented in the media as well as a political and public discourse to represent Roma migrants as a homogeneous group in the light of recent migration trends labeled as "welfare tourists" or "fake asylum seekers". It further demonstrates that Roma migrants – like many other migrants – make personal decisions based on their understanding of the structural context and pursue their personal goals to ensure a better life. By showcasing the experiences and stories of Roma asylum seekers from Serbia who sought asylum protection in EU countries, the chapter aims to draw attention to the importance of hearing the voices of Roma as policy subjects and recognizing different ways of negotiating their way through the restrictive asylum regulations as acts of resistance.

This chapter is conceived as a case study of Roma asylum seekers from Serbia and is based on empirical research carried out in 2016. The second section outlines the background of the Roma migrating to the EU from Serbia. The third section addresses the framing of the Roma in broad terms, to which follows an analysis of how these frames can be challenged. The chapter further offers an insight into the agency of Roma asylum seekers from Serbia exercised through acts of contesting the existing structural constraints. I will shed light on the living reality of the regime of deportability, or rather how this regime is experienced in everyday life as seen through asylum attempts of Roma from Serbia, but also how the acts of resistance are continually challenging this regime.

11.2 The Case of Roma Migrants from Serbia

In 2009, the EU Council of Ministers decided to abolish visas for traveling to the Schengen area for the citizens of some Western Balkans countries – Serbia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) and Montenegro. The decision came

into force on 19 December 2009 and was followed by a significant increase in migration of Roma from these countries, Serbia in particular, towards EU countries (Andjelkovic et al. 2012; Sardelić 2014a, b; Koricanac et al. 2013). While the leading country of destination for Roma from Serbia, as well as from other post-Yugoslav states, continued to be Germany, their migrant status changed from the previous refugee and status of toleration (*Duldung*) to asylum seekers (Sardelić 2017). Serbia soon became one of the leading countries according to the number of asylum applications in Germany (UNHCR 2011, 2013, 2014).

No reliable data show the exact share of people identifying themselves as Roma among asylum seekers from the Western Balkans (Papadopoulou 2014: 48), though much of the statistical data shows that Roma files the vast majority of asylum applications from Serbia. Heuser (2014) claims that over 90% of all asylum requests from Serbia come from Roma, while Cvejic (2013) and Koricanac et al. (2013) believe that Roma makes up over 80% of asylum claims lodged by the Serbian citizens. Internal statistics of the European Roma Right Centre (ERRC) refugee counselling office shows that as much as 100% of the counselled refugees from Serbia identify themselves as Roma (Heuser 2014: 72). Given that many asylum-receiving countries don't allow collection of data based on ethnicity, direct or indirect contact with asylum seekers from Serbia remain the only way to estimate the ethnic structure of asylum applicants. Even though the estimates don't appear to be strictly precise, they still demonstrate that the contemporary migration from Serbia in the form of asylum seeking is in no small extent specific to Roma.

The official opinion of the EU is that Roma migrations in recent years have fundamentally economic reasons (Kropp and Striethorst 2012: 174). The way the Roma migration in the form of asylum seeking is framed in the public discourse supports justification of the legal and practical measures created to target Roma migrants specifically. Emerging from the public discourse on "welfare migrants" and "false asylum seekers" such narrative claims that Roma from Serbia comprehends the right to visa-free travel as an opportunity to solve their social problems by "abusing" the asylum system. As a reaction to the increasing number of Roma seeking asylum, and as a way to put their migratory movement under control, Germany, as the main receiving country, began enforcing restrictive admission policies (Leko 2017). One of the measures aimed at the extreme tightening of asylum procedures for migrants coming from the Western Balkans was classifying them as "safe countries of origin." With this classification, it is implied that asylum applications coming from the "safe countries" are presumed to be unfounded, and therefore subjected to fast-tracking and short procedures, which lead to almost a hundred percent rejection (Apap and Orav 2015). The official opinion is that there is no systematic political or another kind of persecution in the proclaimed "safe countries of origin". Based on this understanding, rejected asylum seekers are being expelled from the country on the bases of the Bilateral Agreement on Readmission[1] – another legal

[1] On the 18th of September 2007, Serbia signed an Agreement on Readmission with the EU. The agreement was ratified in 2008 and stipulated the readmission of the citizens of Serbia that are residing in the countries of EU without having legal status. By 2012, the Republic of Serbia signed 18 agreements on readmission with 16 EU countries (Andjelkovic et al. 2012: 37).

instrument aimed to ensure expulsion of the unwanted migrants (Heuser 2014; Sardelić 2017). Furthermore, examination of persons on the grounds of ethnicity began at the exterior borders of the EU (Kropp and Striethorst 2012: 176). As witnessed by some participants in this study, people are being prevented from leaving their own country based on ethnic profiling that takes place on the borders between Serbia and the EU.

The politicization of the Roma mobility created a counter-effect, stigmatizing Roma minorities even further. In a series of newly introduced policy measures, the European Parliament announced the possibility of suspension of visa-free travel for the citizens of the Western Balkans' countries (Sardelić 2014a, b). The Roma were forced into the centre of the debate and were the only ones to be blamed for jeopardizing the freedom of movement of all citizens of Serbia (ibid.). As Sardelić suggests, Roma minorities were again positioned unequally as citizens of their own countries, as a result of the "perceived collective features as 'abusers' of the system harming all other citizens" (ibid: 216).

11.3 Framing the Roma

The progressive institutionalization of several legal measures regulating the migratory movement, which can be considered "the largest encroachment on refugee protection in German post-war history" (Leko 2017: 80) pushed Roma migrants to the margins of legality. As Sardelić suggests, the status of asylum seekers for Roma from the post-Yugoslav countries is just one of the tolerated statuses they had from the 1990s onwards, following the refugee status and the status of toleration (*Duldung*) (Sardelić 2017). The restrictive admission policies targeting the mobility of the Roma pushes them into temporary and therefore liminal statuses, always on the margins of illegality (ibid.). With enforcement of bilateral agreements on readmission, particularly targeting those with non-permanent statuses, Roma migrants are pushed into the condition of portability, as they are under permanent threat of being deported back to their home countries. Along with systematic deprivation of the right to obtaining the permanent status of refugee protection, the regime of deportability (De Genova 2002) is also enforced through border securitization and examination of persons on the grounds of ethnicity, which further racialized Roma as an "unwanted minority" (Sardelić 2017).

Although significant public attention followed the recent migration of Roma from the Western Balkans, these events should also be considered in parallel with other migratory movements of Roma minorities within the European Union space. The reason for this is that migration of Roma minorities from various EU and non-EU countries has common roots such as escaping experiences of extreme poverty, permanent segregation, discrimination and hostility from the majority populations (Kropp and Striethorst 2012). Notwithstanding, these contextual factors are common to Roma populations in various national contexts. Questions on why international and national governing bodies fail to perceive the migration of Roma minorities as

acts of exercising the right to free movement within the EU as other Europeans do, and why migration of Roma is seen as a threat should be raised. Governments and media endorse an image of Roma migrants, and Roma in general, as a homogenous grouping their public rhetoric (ibid.: 179). Politicized discourses of "welfare tourists" and "fake asylum seekers," systematically fail to recognize that Roma migrants, similar to many other "non-Roma" migrants, act based on their personal decisions. Furthermore, the construction of Roma as a homogenous group hides the reality of Roma being an incredibly diverse minority group, whose experiences in the context of migration towards Western Europe differ widely (ibid.:176) While some migrate to Western European countries with the aim to find secure jobs and improve economic well-being, others move to live in less discriminatory and hostile environments (FRA 2009: 7).

The tendency to frame Roma as a uniformed group and the failure to address the plurality of experiences, particularly about mobility, has more extensive implications and can be considered as a general tendency in contemporary discourse on Roma. If we confront the politicized discourse on Roma as "abusers of the welfare state" and "delinquents," to the seemingly opposite public discourses that construct Roma as "victims" of structural discrimination and racism, we could come to the conclusion Roma are being constructed in a uniformed way. While the victimization discourse is, on the one hand, necessary to draw attention to the discrimination and disadvantaged living reality of the so-called "victims", it also constructs the "subjects" of victimization in such a way that takes away the possibility of change and homogenizes all Roma experiences (Schneeweis 2014). Thus, the construction of Roma within singularized discourses, regardless of whether they were framed in a "positive" or "negative" way, inevitably leads to ignoring the complexity of Roma individuals and their experiences, reducing them to one single dimension (ibid.). The most prominent threat in over-emphasizing only one discourse on Roma, is trapping them in an object position from where it is almost impossible to escape through self-empowerment or self-recovery (ibid.).

To overcome the implicit assumption of minorities being acted upon, it should be acknowledged that the fact that some people are in a structurally less dominant position doesn't necessarily imply the absence of space for exercising agency and acting based on one's own perceptions and decisions (Augustin 2003). Looking at Roma as "subjects" by considering agency, resistance and voices (Schneeweis 2014: 5) can contribute to overcoming the oversimplifications of their living experiences. To this end, this study aims to draw attention to the agential power of Roma in contesting the existing structural constraints, based on the case of Roma asylum seekers from Serbia. By presenting the stories, perceptions, and insights that Roma asylum seekers shared as part of their migratory experiences, this chapter aims to challenge the oversimplifying discourses of Roma as "victims" on the one hand and "welfare abusers" on the other. The next section attempts to look at Roma asylum seekers as individuals with the agency, who perceive the structural barriers and opportunities in specific ways, and respectively use their capabilities and available resources to reach the desired goals.

11.4 "Roma Migrants" as Social Actors with Agency

As abovementioned, there is a widespread tendency to frame contemporary migration of Roma individuals and families as a group phenomenon. Such trend is based on the assumption that there are specific common characteristics applicable to all those identified as Roma migrants, and distinct from the migration of "non-Roma" individuals. With the aim to shed light on the importance of considering Roma migrants as individuals with their perceptions, acting upon their personal decisions, this section presents stories gathered from Roma asylum seekers from Serbia.[2] Most of the respondents in this study migrated or planned to relocate to Western Europe in the form of seeking asylum, but their asylum claims were rejected as unfounded, after which they were forced back to Serbia.

Understanding how participants in this research perceive the structural context and conditions in their country of origin and the country of destination helped provide deeper insight into how personal decisions to migrate are shaped. As argued by several authors, contemporary asylum attempts of Roma from the Western Balkans, including Serbia, can be explained as a function of hardships they face in everyday lives (Maric et al. 2013; Sardelic 2014, 2017; Cherkezova 2014; Cvejic 2013; Andjelkovic et al. 2012; Koricanac et al. 2013). In line with these findings, the evidence gathered in this study show that structural factors – both push factors in Serbia and pull factors in the country of destination – play a significant role in shaping the decisions of Roma to claim asylum. The individuals and families who shared their stories emphasized difficult life in Serbia and the lack of job opportunities as the main reasons for seeking asylum in Western Europe. Some of the respondents explained that the challenges they face in everyday lives, such as the inability to supply enough food, pay electricity bills, ensure decent housing conditions or take care of their children's hygiene, make them choose asylum as the preferable solution. As participants explained, they face severe difficulties in integrating into the Serbian labour market, which is one of the causes of their economic isolation. According to their testimonies, problems in finding jobs are often caused by low education levels and the lack of training and skills, but also, as several participants pointed out- by facing ethnic discrimination.

Notwithstanding the fact that many Roma in Serbia live in extreme poverty and face various forms of discrimination, it is worth mentioning that the vast majority of Roma families do not choose to claim asylum in Western European countries. As Agustin (2003) suggests, understanding the movement of people needs to go beyond the consideration of structural factors. As it will be discussed in the following section, many personal factors can influence the decision of Roma families whether to seek asylum or not, such as access to resources such as kinship ties in the country of destination, economic resources, information, and knowledge. However, empirical

[2] The data was collected in Serbia in 2016, in the municipalities of Belgrade, Pancevo, and Cacak. The data was anonymised and names used in quotes are factious.

evidence suggests that even in those cases in which these resources are available, the decision of whether or not to emigrate is profoundly shaped by the perceptions of opportunities and barriers, both at home and in destination countries.

The stories of some participants in this study illustrate that determination not to seek asylum is not necessarily related to the structural conditions of living in Serbia, but it is instead a result of a personal understanding of given circumstances. As the example of a couple, Boban and Mila shows particular ways of understanding and making sense of living realities, largely determine the choices and decisions one makes. This couple with seven children who lived in a Roma slum in Belgrade, in extreme poverty and social and economic isolation, hardly managed a living by collecting waste and recyclable materials. After their first trip to Germany, taken to claim asylum like many of their relatives and friends, they changed their mind and came back to Serbia. As they explained, they were disappointed and didn't like what they saw in Germany, especially people becoming ill and desperate while in asylum procedures. Boban added: "I didn't like what that asylum was. I gave up. My Germany is here in Serbia. There is no way I will try to get asylum again". In other words, they made a decision based on their understanding of the given circumstances.

This example suggests that people choose how to respond and to act based on individual perceptions of particular conditions and opportunities and make migration related decisions as a consequence of their interpretations of benefits and risks (Robinson and Segrottcherk 2002). Although asylum-related benefits could be a strong pull on migration, perceived threats might be more influential in shaping the migratory decision. Boban and Mila's story also supports the assumption that a deprived situation in the home country and the intention to migrate are related in complex ways (Cherkezova 2014). Although deprived socio-economic living conditions for many Roma in Serbia are undisputable, similar to many other European countries, understanding and responding to these conditions vary depending on individual perceptions and preferences. Even within a given frame of constraints in the home country, such as the inability to get a job or to ensure decent housing conditions, Boban and Mila "manage their ways of coping with life" (Giddens 1984: 5).

Participants of the research perceive potential benefits of seeking asylum as the most determining factor and see asylum as the best alternative for escaping poverty and isolation. Having been through an asylum procedure, the individuals and families who shared these stories had solid opinions on why asylum represents the preferable solution to their problems. These opinions were in most cases expressed through comparisons between the life they have in Serbia and the life they had in Germany, while in the asylum procedure. The benefits of migrating to Germany went from the ease of finding jobs to experiencing Germany as a less discriminatory surrounding where it is possible to pursue one's personal goals and self-development.

11.5 Experiencing the Restrictive Regime

Similarly to many other migrants, the decision of some Roma from Serbia to seek asylum is mostly stimulated by anticipated benefits and gains. Not less significant in deciding to migrate are potential risks and barriers in reaching migration-related goals, and in the case of Roma migrants from the Western Balkans, these barriers are especially evident in the light of increasingly restrictive asylum policies and tightened asylum regulations. To exemplify some of the drivers of mobility, I deemed essential to reflect on how interviewed Roma asylum seekers interpret slim chances of being granted asylum, and how these interpretations influence their decisions to claim asylum.

Several authors have shown that Roma asylum seekers from Serbia and other Western Balkan countries have very realistic expectations when it comes to their chances of getting asylum protection (Koricanac et al. 2013; Maric et al. 2013; Andjelkovic et al. 2012). As Maric et al. (2013) argue, the vast majority of asylum seekers in their research were aware of almost impossible chances of being granted protection. They applied for asylum because they were hoping to find themselves among the lucky ones (Maric et al. 2013: 33). Driven by these findings, I asked the informants in the study why they opted to request asylum, knowing that they had low chances of being granted asylum protection. The reason for asking this was to understand better if being aware of the small opportunities to get asylum is perceived as a barrier to deciding to seek asylum. What I came to find out was striking not only because some Roma asylum seekers estimate their chances of getting asylum as high, but also because what asylum represents to them, is not necessarily similar to what asylum represents in legal terms. Namely, for Anka and other participants in the study, "getting asylum" did not only imply getting temporary or permanent asylum protection, but it also meant managing to stay in the asylum procedure for at least 6 months or a year. As it will be discussed in the following section, there are many ways to prolong asylum procedures, and those who manage to extend their stay up to 6 months or longer, are considered to have gotten asylum. This became evident through numerous conversations with this research's participants. Feat and Anka, two research participants who managed to stay in asylum procedures for a year, considered themselves as the "lucky ones" who managed to get asylum. Anka explained:

> We managed to stay "on asylum" for a year, and I thank god for everything we were provided with. We were fortunate to have stayed 'on asylum' for that long, but I also feel sorry that we didn't have enough luck to stay even longer.

On the other hand, Goran, who requested asylum three times, has never managed to stay in the procedure for longer than 3 months. He expressed a disappointment by not being able to "get asylum" at least for a year. These examples suggest that perceptions of one's chances to get asylum are created within a specific frame of understanding what asylum is. Only through looking at how Roma asylum seekers understand asylum, can we comprehend their practices, such as repeated asylum requests, despite low chances of being granted refugee status.

Long (2001) has pointed out the importance of considering discursive means that express values and points of view in interpreting the agency of social actors. Discursive means also understood as cultural constructs, offer alternative ways of formulating one's objectives and giving reason to a particular behaviour. Thus, a better understanding of the decisions and social practices of Roma asylum seekers from Serbia requires understanding their discursive means, or rather the ways of verbally expressing their points of view. As evidenced through the interviews, understanding the meaning that the interviewed Roma asylum seekers attach to the term "getting asylum" is pivotal to help us understand why and how they engage in social practices of asylum seeking.

Even though some Roma asylum seekers see their chances of getting asylum as high, within their understanding of what asylum is, most research participants acknowledge that the increased tightening of asylum regulations creates considerable barriers in fulfilling their goals. All research participants who applied for asylum explained that asylum procedures have become a lot more rigorous for people coming from the Western Balkans over the past years. The participants also believed that this is mainly due to large numbers of refugees coming from Syria and other war-affected countries. Goran pointed out to the significant differences in the strictness of status determination procedures when he applied for asylum in 2011, 2014 and 2015. While in 2011 he had a formal interview, the last two times he was only asked to submit a written form where he explained his reasons for requesting asylum. Similarly, Feat explained that while in his first interview for asylum, status determination officers paid close attention to what he was saying, in his last interview they barely even listened to him. Following the recent political categorization of Western Balkans countries as "safe countries of origin," the newly introduced fast-tracking status determination procedures were accompanied by the creation of special accommodation halls for migrants coming from these countries. As some study participants explained, after filing asylum applications, they were sent to accommodation halls together with hundreds of other asylum applicants from "safe countries of origin," instead of being provided with regular accommodation like before. In these accommodation halls, apparently aimed at demoralizing Roma migrants from making further attempts to seek asylum protection, people shared the beds and living space with unknown people. Their mobility also became severely restricted, as they had to report their leaving of the halls to the officers.

This practical embodiment of the restrictive regulations aimed at putting the movement of Roma migrants under constant control and surveillance, reinforced migrants' "illegality" and exposed them to random deportations to home countries. Goran, who experienced being in a collective accommodation hall during his last asylum procedure, explained that 1 day an officer approached him and his family, telling them to pack all their belongings within 1 h, after which they were put on the bus to Serbia. For Goran, this not only created enormous confusion and anger, as his wife and children were frightened, but it also caused the feelings of humiliation, as they were treated like criminals with no reason. This criminalization practice and enforcement of the regime of deportability was however not only reserved for those staying in collective accommodation halls, but for those in private accommodation

as well. Even though Anka regarded her yearlong asylum procedure as successful, she mentioned random checks of police officers several times during our conversation. Namely, in the apartment assigned to her family for the duration of the asylum procedure, police officers showed up twice, unannounced, once even during the night, demanding that Anka's family immediately pack their belongings. While the first time Anka successfully managed to explain to the officer that her son was still under medical treatment, showing all the documentation from the doctors and lawyers, the second time she had no grounds on which to confront the officers. This is when Anka and her family were forced to leave Germany and were sent back to Serbia. Similarly to Goran, Anka felt frightened not only by the appearance of police officers but also by the fact that they could come for them at any time. With an underlying intention of minimizing and controlling the unwanted movement of Roma, effective enforcement of restrictive measures also pushed the Roma migrants to the margins of legality.

Roma asylum seekers perceive the regulatory instruments such as detention-like accommodation halls and random deportations as drawbacks and barriers in deciding to seek asylum protection. Participants in this study stated that they do not plan to seek asylum in the next few years until the numbers of asylum seekers from Syria and other war-affected countries decrease. In other words, the interviewees understood the restrictive measures as a direct consequence of an increased number of war refugees. The example of Goran and other research participants suggest that although low chances of getting asylum protection might not necessarily be perceived as a barrier due to a particular understanding of asylum, other external factors are in most cases seen as obstacles.

11.6 Challenging the Regime of Deportability

Informants in this research believe that within the existing context of severely restrictive structural conditions, "having enough luck" represents one of the most important elements in making a successful asylum claim. However, their narratives demonstrate that they do not rely only on luck, but they also use their agency in many different ways to pursue the set goals. As a way to constantly challenge the restrictive regulation and policy measures targeting Roma particularly from "safe countries of origin," Roma asylum seekers use their abilities and skills to avoid being sent back to Serbia for as long as possible.

One of the strategies of the interviewed Roma in pursuing migration-related goals consists of constructing themselves in particular ways to fit the profile of a "deserving" asylum seeker in status determination procedures. According to research participants, there are several bases on which most Roma asylum seekers from Serbia claim asylum. One of the bases is the argument of facing poverty and social and economic isolation in Serbia. While research participants talked of "economic asylum" as a particular kind of asylum aimed at those who face extreme poverty, some explained that this sort of asylum is very difficult to get. For this reason, some interviewees

chose to claim asylum based on grounds other than economic, such as discrimination, even though they consider themselves deserving of obtaining "economic asylum." A reasonably typical ground for claiming asylums, among Roma asylum seekers from Serbia, are health issues. As research participants explained, claiming asylum based on health problems has in many cases ensured a successful procedure, that is, a procedure that lasts at least 6 months. Indeed, considering the difficult access to health services for Roma in Serbia, a large number of them often do not get appropriate medical treatment. Hence, it does not come as a surprise that a considerable number of Roma asylum seekers indeed suffer from some health issue. According to research participants, if one of the family members suffers from a health problem, the whole family gets a chance to stay in the asylum procedure for the duration of the medical treatment. Anka, whose asylum procedure in Germany lasted 1 year, before being rejected, claimed asylum based on her son's health issues. Since he had a surgery 6 months after they had made the asylum requested, the whole family got permission to stay in the asylum procedure during this period. Their procedure was extended for six more months after the surgery, for the period of post-surgery medical care. In the same manner, Feat, another participant who claimed to have had a successful asylum attempt, requested asylum based on his health problems. Feat explained to status determination officers that he had a psychological disorder, as he was traumatized in the Kosovo conflict, from which he fled to Serbia in 1999. Although his request was rejected within only 7 days, Feat managed to extend his asylum procedure thanks to hiring a lawyer. Feat believed that had he claimed asylum based on other than health-related grounds, even a lawyer would not have been able to extend his procedure.

While some Roma asylum seekers from Serbia successfully construct themselves as deserving asylum seekers, often based on health problems of some family members, others "have less luck" with staying in the procedure. Some, like Srecko, were being sent back to Serbia right after their medical intervention was over, while others got rejected only after a few days or weeks. As the respondents testified, those Roma asylum seekers who are not happy with the length of their asylum procedure need to put more effort to prolong the process. These efforts ought to be seen as acts of practicing agency within a severely restricted structural context.

According to the participants, there are different tactics and strategies that Roma asylum seekers from Serbia employ to extend their asylum procedures. All these strategies imply exercising agency by using personal abilities and drawing upon available resources. Once Roma asylum seekers from Serbia have their asylum requests officially rejected, which is almost always the case, some of them try to extend the procedures by lodging appeals. The interviewees explained to me that knowing how to go about prolonging the procedure, along with "having good luck," is crucial to making an asylum attempt successful. Strategies for extending the procedure vary from hiring good lawyers and translators for the Serbian language, to going to municipal and other courts and gathering adequate documentation from doctors. Feat boosted his chances of "getting asylum" by hiring a lawyer who represented him throughout a yearlong procedure. At the same time, he had to make sure to save enough money from the monthly allowance, so that he could invest in paying the lawyer.

Without further evaluating the risks that come with the tactics Roma asylum seekers employ, it is worth recognizing that the ability to rely on available resources gives Roma migrants an opportunity to become influential creators of their own lives and migration endeavors. Even though extreme tightening of asylum regulations make obtaining refugee status almost impossible for Roma coming from the Western Balkans, using the power they possess as social actors create a constant challenge to the restrictive regime. When Feat's asylum request got rejected after only 7 days, he called his sister who had lived in Germany for a long time. She told him not to worry and found a good lawyer to represent him in the appeal process. Feat claimed that if it weren't for his sister, he would have never managed to stay in the asylum procedure for a year. After putting a lot of effort in gathering the documentation needed and investing a considerable amount of money as well other resources, Feat got three procedure extensions in total. After his last permitted stay expired, Feat decided to withdraw his asylum request and go back to Serbia. The reason for this was that the costs of hiring lawyers became too high, which made Feat decide to use the savings he had made in the procedure to buy some land in Serbia.

11.7 Conclusions

This research finds evidence against the arguments of some authors such as Andjelkovic et al. (2012) that the "real" and primary motivation of Roma from Serbia in attempting asylum is not to get permanent asylum protection, but to ensure a decent life for a couple of months through receiving a monthly allowance. Although some participants have expressed satisfaction with the fact that they managed to save some money and were not disappointed by not being granted permanent asylum; some other claim that their only dream is to stay in Germany and never come back to Serbia. The variety of motives for and expectations of seeking asylum suggests that there is no one standard explanation of the nature of recent Roma asylum attempts. While for some Roma from Serbia seeking asylum represents a way to cope with life hardships temporarily, for others it is a way to escape life-threatening poverty and isolation permanently. Thus, the tendency present in the contemporary discourse surrounding the phenomenon of recent asylum-seeking of the Roma from post-Yugoslav space, to identify one characteristic motive for their migration, appears to be oversimplifying. Based on the empirical data, this study argues that the reasons of Roma asylum seekers vary depending on individual perceptions of barriers and opportunities both in the home country and the country of destination.

The individuals and families that shared their stories experienced the regulatory instruments such as detention-like accommodation halls and random deportations as drawbacks and barriers in deciding to seek asylum protection. Nevertheless, their stories suggest that while severely restricting the space and mobility of Roma migrants, the obstructive regulations and instruments of control are always being

challenged through acts of resistance that Roma asylum seekers exercise in their asylum attempts. Using social ties and other available resources in pursuing asylum-related goals represent a way for Roma asylum seekers from Serbia to exercise their agency even within a very constricted context. Despite the slim chances of getting asylum, some Roma from Serbia choose to use their abilities to stay in asylum procedures as long as possible. Understood through the lenses of "capable agency approach" (Briones 2009), Roma asylum seekers can be regarded as social actors that possess power and capacity to achieve desired outcomes. As Vlase and Voicu (2014: 2420) explain, using capabilities and their underlying resources, appears to be critical in exercising agency, which enables agents to overcome victimization and "lead their lives in ways that they value".

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Chapter 12
Patchwork Economies in Europe: Economic Strategies Among Homeless Romanian Roma in Copenhagen

Camilla Ida Ravnbøl

This chapter investigates the economic strategies of a group of Romanian Roma, who live in homelessness in Copenhagen. It draws on 13 months of anthropological fieldwork with Roma women and men who migrate continuously between Denmark and Romania and who mainly make a living by collecting refundable bottles and cans in Copenhagen. They refer to themselves as *badocari*, which translates to "bottle people" in Romanian. The chapter proposes the concept of "patchwork economy" to frame the micro economic strategies that the *badocari* engage in. The analogy of patchwork crafting serves to illustrate how the households' economies rest upon a constant "stitching together" of various unreliable income sources that are scrap based and have no interconnection but due to their unreliability and minor revenue cannot stand alone to support the family. Furthermore, it illustrates how debt constitutes the background quilt against which the patchwork economy is continuously reconfigured. Finally, the chapter presents analytical insight into the interconnectedness between the micro economy of the Roma household and the broader social and political context of Romania and argues that the former should be regarded as a direct response to the latter.

12.1 Introduction

It is early morning and I meet Vasile at the street corner in the city where he usually sleeps. Vasile is a 45-year-old man. He is Roma from Romania and currently lives in homelessness in the streets of Copenhagen (Denmark). He earns a living primarily from the deposit on refundable bottles. On this early November morning, Vasile has just awoken from his sleep. I sit next to him on a sleeping bag, which is placed

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on top of cardboard paper in an attempt to insulate it from the cold ground. We hide from the rain under a shed roof of an office building and Vasile coughs loudly while pulling his cap tighter around the ears. Vasile points to show that his shoes are soaked from walking in the rain the night before, while searching for refundable bottles in the garbage bins around Copenhagen. He smiles wryly and says that the wet shoes are worth 10DKKR (1.3€) since he only found seven refundable bottles yesterday. He shakes his head, points to the rainy clouds in the sky and then concludes that it is time to return to Romania for the winter period since there are very few refundable bottles to find in Copenhagen at this time of year and hence little money to be made. We have agreed to meet this morning because Vasile wants me to photograph how he lives in Copenhagen including where he sleeps and how he works with scrap items from the garbage bins. In his own words, he wants me to document the lives of the *badocari,* which is a term that Romanian Roma who collect refundable bottles in Copenhagen use to define themselves. *Badocari* translates to "bottle people" in Romanian and is further elaborated on in the coming sections.

This chapter responds to Vasile's request for documenting the lives of the *badocari* by way of zooming in on the economic strategies that motivate them to travel to Denmark.[1] It introduces the concept of "patchwork economy" to frame the micro economic strategies that the *badocari* engage in. The analogy of patchwork crafting serves to illustrate how the household economies of the *badocari* rest upon a constant "stitching together" of various unreliable income sources in which credit and debt figure as continuous components. The chapter further aims to present new analytical insight into the interconnectedness between the micro economy of the Roma household and the broader social and political context of Romania.

The chapter is structured around five empirical and analytical sections. The first section analyses the limitations that the *badocari* experience in regards to the formal labour market in Denmark and how they are consequently pulled into an informal street economy. The second section analyses the economic niche of the *badocari* in Copenhagen. The third section follows my interlocutors back to their households in Romania where the younger children are left behind under the care of other relatives. It sheds light on the interconnectedness between the livelihood in homelessness in Copenhagen and the opportunities and conditions available in Romania. The fourth section introduces the patchwork economies of the Roma households and discusses the components that comprise such a micro economy including continuous financial debt. The final fifth section discusses how the *badocari* regard their household economy as being embedded in a broader Romanian context and how it in fact can be regarded as a challenge to the latter. This is exemplified in my interlocutor Vasile's paraphrasing of a Romanian proverb *peştele se împute de la cap*, which signifies that the fish rots from the head. The analysis unfolds Vasile's linkage between his economic situation and a Romanian proverb about decayed fish through a discussion on how Vasile – as well as the majority of my other interlocutors –

[1] The chapter builds on ethnographic material for my PhD dissertation and the topics discussed are more extensively elaborated on in the dissertation (published Dec. 2018).

regard the Romanian political system as corrupted (rotten) and how they are affected by this decay as citizens of the state of Romania. On this basis, I argue that in order to gain a comprehensive insight into the experiences and motivations of the Romanian Roma *badocari* who travel to Copenhagen and live and work in the street, it is pertinent to include how the *badocari* respond to broader political and economic contexts in Romania and in the European Union at large.

12.2 Methodology

The chapter builds on ethnographic data material collected during 13 months of anthropological fieldwork with 40 Romanian Roma in the streets of Copenhagen as well as several visits to their homes in Romania during the period April 2014 to January 2015 and September to November 2016.[2] However, since my interlocutors and I live and work in the same city (Copenhagen), I continue in close contact with many of them. The Roma women and men who became my interlocutors primarily come from the same all-Roma ethnic neighbourhood in Romania albeit a few come from an adjacent neighbourhood. They mostly make a living by collecting refundable bottles and cans in Copenhagen and call themselves *badocari*. *Badocari* relates to an old term for "bottles" (*badoaca*) used in some regions of Romania and hence the closest translation of *badocari* is "bottle people" or "people who work with bottles".[3] *Badocari* is therefore not an ethnonym for a particular Roma group in Romania. Rather it is a self-defined and self-ascribed plural term used by my interlocutors with reference to their current occupation in Denmark. In regard to ethnonyms, my interlocutors do not identify in the same Roma sub-groups despite largely coming from the same neighbourhood. For example, some identify according to their families' historical engagement in traditional occupations and crafts e.g. as *Cărămizari* (brick-makers).[4] Others refer to themselves as "Romanianised Roma" with reference to their families' engagement in majority society work places rather than in traditional crafts (e.g. in large scale industries

[2] I spoke with 150 persons during the 13 months fieldwork and followed 40 persons closely. The majority of them comes from one Roma neighbourhood but approximately eight persons come from an adjacent neighbourhood. The two neighbourhoods share many similarities in terms of their size, demography and income levels. They are all-Roma ethnic neighbourhoods located on the margins of the larger city. They have mixed Roma sub-group belonging and refer to themselves primarily as *badocari* and overall as *ţigani*, the Romanian term for Gypsies, that originates from the ancient Greek *athiganoi* (untouchables) and has highly pejorative connotations. I included close to a 50/50 division of men and women in between the ages 17 and 70 years. Romanian was the primary language of interaction and in this regard, I had support of my research assistant, Simona Barbu.

[3] I have investigated the origins of this term by consulting various Romanian dictionaries and through interviews and correspondence with Romanian historians who study Roma history including Petre Petcut and Mariana Sandu.

[4] For more comprehensive overview of Roma sub-group identification see: "Studio despre meste-sugurile Rome" by Romano Butiq.

and factories during the communist period in Romania). However, my interlocutors rarely talk about their sub-group belongings and mostly refer to themselves as *badocari* and as residents of the larger city in Romania that the neighbourhood is located within.

Data is triangulated by comparing field observations with interviews with my primary interlocutors as well as with interviews with employees in relevant public institutions, NGOs, and legal organisations and finally with a document analysis of existing research and legal documents. The name of the Roma neighbourhood and the city in which it is located as well as the names of my interlocutors have all been anonymised and replaced with pseudonyms.

The chapter highlights the ethnographic account of Vasile and complements it with quotes from my other interlocutors. This structure is chosen since it is an anthropological chapter, which takes the point of departure in selected empirical cases that reflect general concerns expressed by the group of interlocutors involved in the study (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007: 3).

12.3 Analytical Perspectives

The chapter places itself within the field of economic anthropology and is inspired by a range of anthropological perspectives on how urban poor understand and respond to notions of money, debt and credit (e.g. Hann and Hart 2011; Gregory 2012; Peebles 2010; Pedersen 2017). It also brings into discussion studies concerning economic strategies of Roma communities (e.g. Hrustic 2015; Pulay 2015; Solimene 2015; Stewart 1999; Okely 1996).

"Patchwork economy" is introduced as a concept in this chapter, to grasp the various sources of income with together form the basis of the household economy of my interlocutors (Sect. 12.7). A patchwork pattern is made up of separate squares of fabric, each in their own design, that are sewed together and finally attached to a larger material (such as a quilt or a pillowcase). Whereas the larger material onto which the patchwork is attached is clearly defined (e.g. a squared quilt) the patchwork pattern itself can take different shapes. A patchwork household economy is argued to refer to a process of "stitching together" various sources of income that per se have no interconnection (each have their own design) but due to their unreliability and minor revenue cannot stand alone to support the family. It is not a stable economy but rather an economy, which depends on a constant development of new economic income opportunities (replacing the squares of fabric). This includes bottle collection in Denmark, child allowances in Romania, begging in France as well as other activities. The chapter illustrates how the families "stitch" their household incomes together and also how credit and debt figure as constant components in the patchwork household economy. The analogy of the patchwork pattern is explored over the course of this chapter.

12.4 When Employment (*muncă*) Is Not an Option, Then You Turn to Business (*afacere*)

The majority of my interlocutors worked in Italy, Spain and Portugal prior to their arrival in Denmark. They mostly occupied jobs in construction, agriculture, the restaurant business, and in the care sector (Ravnbøl 2015; see also studies by Maroukis et al. 2011; Solimene 2015; Djuve et al. 2015; Preoteasa et al. 2012). They worked without a formal working contract and with a lower salary compared to their formally employed colleagues. In other words, they were part of the informal economy in these countries, defined as the uncontracted employment of persons who work without access to social protection schemes as well as workplace and union protection standards. Following the economic crisis of 2008 and the euro crisis of 2010, many became unemployed in these countries and those most significantly affected were irregular workers and low skilled workers (Maroukis et al. 2011: 133). Upon losing their informal work opportunities, many Roma families directed their attention to countries in Scandinavia (see also Djuve et al. 2015).

The vast majority of the Roma communities in Romania have been sedentary since the communist period (Achim 2004: 191; Preoteasa et al. 2012). For some, the sedentary livelihood dates back as far as to the period of Roma slavery in Romania, during which Roma families were bound to the land of the king, the lords and the monasteries (Achim 2004; Petcut 2005; Asséo et al. 2017; Yildiz and De Genoa 2017). The large migration flow for my interlocutors as well as many other Roma communities in Romania initiated after 1989, in the aftermath of political and economic changes which opened the borders but also increased the gap between social classes; and more bluntly revealed problems of structural discrimination against the Roma in Romania (Achim 2004; Preoteasa et al. 2012). Many Romanians and particularly Roma minorities who often occupied the lowest paid jobs and worked in informal arrangements lost their jobs in the transition to a capitalist market economy (Bacon 2004; Asséo et al. 2017).

Employment is the dream of the majority of my interlocutors. Vasile, used to work in a factory during the socialist period in Romania. He lost his job at the factory when it closed down shortly after the political changes of 1989. When Vasile arrived for the first time in Denmark in 2009, he initially hoped to find employment in a factory or in the construction sector. However, he rapidly learned the complexity of such an endeavour since he does not speak Danish or English and does not have formal education. Vasile also realised that the highly regulated Danish labour market has an inherent complication to it, since the access to a Danish social security number (CPR number) is usually dependent on having an employment contract and a residence address.[5] However, the majority of employers and landlords frequently request CPR registration when foreign nationals contact them regarding employment or housing, although this is not obliged by law. Vasile, as well as the vast majority of the *badocari*, thereby find themselves caught up in a circle of social exclusion in which con-

[5] See information available on the Danish State Administration homepage

ditions relating to employment, housing and social security mutually exclude the other (Ravnbøl 2015).

As many of my other interlocutors, Vasile makes a distinction between formal employment that he calls "work" (*muncă* in Romanian) and the economic activity of collecting bottles, which he terms "business" or "work tasks" (*afacere*) (Ravnbøl 2015). *Afacere* as a concept serves to frame the multiplicity of businesses performed in a diverse and highly complex street economy in Copenhagen. The street economy in Copenhagen is as any other urban street economy comprised of a large variety of economic niches (Wacquant 2008; Pulay 2015; Di Nunzio 2012). Some economic niches are legal (such as collecting refundable bottles and scavenging trash) but many are also illegal (such as theft, pimping and drug sale). The niches are highly diverse but have in common that they all unfold within the informal economy in the street and comprise a broad variety of nationalities and age groups. The following section zooms in on the *badocari* economic niche.

12.5 The *badocari* Economic Niche in Copenhagen

Vasile explains how the income for the *badocari* is entirely contingent on the season and the weather. They earn very little during the winter and when it rains, since this entails that fewer people consume beverages outdoors. Vasile's income of about 1€ from the rainy day in November, described in the introduction, illustrates this point. During the summer, the weather is warmer and a range of open-air festivals are held throughout the city. As Vasile himself explains:

> In the summer the sunlight lasts longer. People drink outside, and you can earn around 300–400 DKKR a day [40–54€]. During festivals, it is better, and we can raise many bags of bottles, you can earn up to 700 DKKR a day [94€].

The weekends are more lucrative compared to the week days since the *badocari* can collect bottles around the discotheque area in the city centre. Vasile explains that a normal working day during the summer starts at 10 am and ends at 5am the following morning when the discotheques close. He continues:

> You have to run a lot to collect these bottles, they are not all in one place, you have to run all over the city and look into all the garbage bins. And you have to get there before everyone else.

The *badocari* share a common concern of having their personal belongings stolen when they live and work in the street including that their bags of bottles are stolen by other bottle collectors. Vasile explains this risk:

> Yes, the bags get stolen if you leave them or look away. This is why it is better to cooperate with other *badocari* during the festivals, so that one person can guard the bags while the others collect. Then you take turns so that everyone gets a chance to collect something. But you have to be careful, you cannot cooperate with everyone. It is best to cooperate with people you know from back home in the neighbourhood.

Vasile explains how he ties the bags to his bicycle during the night to prevent them from being stolen while he sleeps. He, as well as the majority of my interlocutors, tries to avoid this situation by delivering the bottles at the return machines before nightfall.

The return machines, also known as reverse vending machines, are allocated within or next to larger grocery stores. Refundable bottles and cans are counted automatically when the items are inserted into the machine and the value of each item depends on the volume, weight and material and range from 1 DKKR up to 3 DKKR (0.13 € – 0.40 €) per item. The *badocari* know the value of the returnable items by heart. Refundable bottles and cans in Copenhagen is an economic niche not only of interest to the *badocari* but also to a range of other persons who live or work in the street (e.g. homeless persons) or persons who want to augment their income. Hence, competition for the bottles rises in various periods of the year. For example, a woman called Ioana explains that she normally takes all the bottles and cans that she finds on the ground or in the garbage bins. However, during summer days and especially during festivals, where larger quantities of beverages are consumed outdoors in Denmark, there are more bottles and cans available but also many more bottle collectors. Hence, competition rises and the *badocari* become more strategic. Ioana and the other *badocari* carefully evaluate the value of each bottle compared to its weight and volume, since a full or heavy bag means that they have to leave the "bottle location" and locate a reverse vending machine where they can dispose their bottles, unless they can find a person of confidence who is willing to guard the bag. As a result of careful calculations, Ioana, as well as the rest of my interlocutors, favour the small 33 cl plastic bottle since it has a higher value compared to cans of a similar size, weighs less than a glass bottles, but is also less bulky and easier to stack compared to the large plastic bottles.

Another income opportunity in Copenhagen that most of the *badocari* engage in while also collecting bottles, is to scavenge through garbage bins for discarded items that can be brought home and sold at flea markets in Romania. Some also enter waste disposal sites at nightfall. Everything has a potential value; from old shoes and clothes to toys, broken electronics, old chargers etc. The old items serve as a minor but also highly unreliable source of income, since the *badocari* never know which waste sites or which garbage bins contain items of value.

Vasile explains how the *badocari* constantly evaluate the expenses that they have in relation to their income. If they earn 300 DKKR a day (40€) during the summer, they can afford to buy food, cigarettes and still have money left to send home. However, during the winter they hardly make enough money to send home and many eat discarded food items that they find in the garbage bins or visit social cafes and shelters that offer free food. Similar reflections are made with regard to sleeping in the streets. The *badocari* sleep rough due to an expensive and inaccessible housing market in which – as was illustrated in the above sections – landlords often request a social security number and a work contract upon lease as well as a limited availability of shelters that allows entry to un-registered EU citizens and undocumented migrants. The police immediately demolish the informal settlements such as shanty towns and camps. Renting a room in a hotel usually costs more than the *badocari* make on a days' work. The *badocari* present numerous accounts of private

landlords (illegally) renting out "sleeping spaces" on bunk beds and on the floor in their apartments for prices ranging between 50 and 150 DKKR (7–20€). However, even this amount is too high for many of the *badocari*.

The ethnography has so far shed light on how the *badocari* live a precarious livelihood on the margins of society that is marked by temporalities of the day and the year. They enter into the informal economy in the street and engage in a constant hunt for bottles and old items to ensure minimum income. Bottle deposit and return comprise an economic niche, which is legit in terms of the law. However, it unfolds within a broader street economy in Copenhagen, which as any other urban street economy has a significant share of illicit and semi-legal street activities (Wacquant 2008; Di Nunzio 2012; Pulay 2015). Consequently, the *badocari* are continuously tempted with possibilities for earning fast cash (through crime) as they are also tempted by other possibilities in the street milieu including gambling, alcohol and drug consumption. Some of my interlocutors with time gave into such temptations for various personal reasons.

At this point in the analysis it is relevant to turn the attention to the motivations for engaging in the *badocari* niche in Copenhagen since revenue is sent home to the family in Romania, which usually consists of the children as well as grandparents or other close kin who take care of the children while the parents are away.

12.6 Income Opportunities at Home in Romania

Most of my interlocutors come from the same Roma neighbourhood in Romania. The majority of them are poor and some are extremely poor. For example, Vasile and his family manage to cover basic needs (food, clothes, utilities) but have no possibilities for covering unforeseen expenses, saving money and paying off debt. In comparison, Vasile's stepson Matei lives in extreme poverty. Matei and his wife Andreea live in a small one-room shack together with their two children ages 2 and 4 years. The roof is broken, there are no kitchen or toilet facilities, no running water and the shack does not have flooring. Matei and Andreea explain that they cannot afford daily meals for the two children and the family often goes to bed hungry. Larger and better equipped houses are also present within the neighbourhood, which are owned by the wealthier residents.

On the early November morning, while hiding from the rain, Vasile sums up a range of important aspects related to the income opportunities that he and other residents in the Roma neighbourhood experience in Romania:

> It is not possible for me to find a job in Romania. I am also too old now since they prefer to hire younger people. Then the question appears if I should stay home and receive social benefits, which is 100LEI a month[6] [22€] and only lasts for buying a gas container for cooking, or if I should go to Denmark. In Denmark I can earn 100 DKKR [13€] a day. I will spend 50 DKKR on food and still be able to send 50 DKKR [6.5€] home a day.

[6] The exact sum of the social benefits at this period of time (2014) was 141 RON a month.

A survey by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA 2016: 9) indicate that 80% of Roma in Europe live below the at-risk-of-poverty threshold defined by the survey. Furthermore, it shows that the paid work rate for Roma (20–64 years) is only 30% compared to the EU average of 70%. The survey finds that 63% of Roma youth (16–24 years) are unemployed and not enrolled in education or training compared with the 12% EU average on the NEET rate for the same age group (ibid.: 10). Statistics from Romania from 2012 indicate that unemployment rates in Romania for persons age 15–64 are 33% for Roma and 18% for non-Roma. For young persons (age 15–24) the unemployment rates are higher, respectively 43% for Roma and 28% for non-Roma. 77% of Roma work in the informal sector compared to 8% of non-Roma (UNDP 2012: 20). This situation is caused by multiple interrelated factors with primary roots in poverty and ethnic discrimination against Roma in all aspects of public life including the labour market, education and housing (FRA 2016; UNDP 2012). These listed statistics are well reflected in the situations of my interlocutors who all confirm that they cannot find contracted employment in Romania. The middle aged and older generations, such as Vasile, experienced to hold jobs (formal and informal) prior to the political changes in 1989. A few also worked in the informal labour market (without a contract and with lower salaries) in more recent periods but the vast majority cannot even access uncontracted labour. Especially young persons, such as Vasile's step son Matei, experience limitations in accessing both the formal and informal labour market and none of the young persons that I spoke with had ever had a work contract in Romania. For example, Matei explains that he is very well aware of the fact that he will never be able to access a job with a contract. He only completed 4 years of school and explains that he struggles with reading and writing. He then adds that he does not have a driver's license, which could increase his chances of finding daily work tasks around the city. "And I am Roma so who will hire me?", Matei then concludes and thereby underlines a consciousness about the discrimination that Roma experience in Romania. Matei instead engages in daily labour for wealthier residents in the neighbourhood, when such is available, such as cutting wood during the winter period for which he is paid 20 RON (4.50€) for a full working day. Matei explains that he began travelling to Denmark as a *badocar*, to gain revenue to pay expenditures for his family at home incl. food, clothing, electricity and wood for heating.

Very few of my interlocutors receive unemployment benefits in Romania. Most receive monthly child allowances, which range from 200 RON (45€) per child below 2 years of age and 40 RON (9€) per child age 2–18 years (from 6 to 18 years it is termed a school allowance and is contingent upon school attendance) (Radu 2009).[7] The majority do not receive social benefits since they lack the necessary documents. They do not own formal rental contracts to their housing let alone ownership documents, since they mostly live in informal settlements. Furthermore, since many have started travelling abroad to work they cannot attend regular meetings with social services to prove their eligibility for the social benefits, nor can they

[7] These sums stem from the period of 2013 to 2014 when my fieldwork was carried out. Minor adjustments to the social benefits rates may have occurred since this period.

engage in the monthly 72 h communal work activities which is a requirement for obtaining social benefits in Romania (Radu 2009). As Vasile describes it in the above, the *badocari* earn more on bottle work in Copenhagen compared to social benefits in Romania, so many resign from the bureaucratic processes of claiming social benefits.

12.7 Patchwork Household Economies Configured Around Debt

An important aspect that should be included in the analysis is that of managing debt as part of the household economy.[8] Since the majority of my interlocutors are poor, they take out credit (in the purchase of food in the grocery stores) as well as cash-loans to cover larger expenses such as health care expenditures, school expenses etc. Matei's case is illustrative of the complexities associated with taking up such debts. Matei explains that it is impossible for unemployed persons to be approved for a bank loan and that only wealthier residents have bank accounts. Instead, poor families take credit with local shops who often charge higher prices compared to the super markets. Furthermore, they take out cash-loans from private money lending companies and from the wealthier families in the neighbourhood. They refer to these moneylenders as *cămătari*. When I visit Matei's house he shows a loan agreement that he signed with a private moneylending company in which he commits to a 70% interest rate. He says that he could not borrow more from the *cămătari* since he already owes them too much. Matei says that it was foolish to take out another loan, but that he was desperate since his children were hungry. Matei explains that the *cămătari* also set high interest rates (between 30% and 70%). Most of my interlocutors have debts to the *cămătari* and most take out new loans in order to repay older loans. Furthermore, some of the *cămătari* are also the shop owners in the small neighbourhood and therefore people such as Matei have several forms of debt to the same person (both in form of credit in the store and cash-loans).

Matei is far from alone in feeling desperate and as if he is drowning in debt (see also Hrustic 2015 on usury among Slovak Roma). To the contrary, the majority of my interlocutors describe the debt repayments as being one of the primary motivating factors for migrating. For example, the woman introduced in the above called Ioana and her husband Dragos started migrating abroad to repay their debt. However, they also had to borrow more money to pay for the travel to Denmark, and thereby had to increase their debt in order to repay it . When Ioana and Dragos finally manage to repay their debt following a long working year in the streets of Copenhagen, they arrive home without money and have to take up a new loan with another *cămătar* to cover for expenses at home during the winter period. In this sense, the debt is not caused by the migration process as has been illustrated in research on

[8] See also studies on debt by Graeber (2011), Pedersen (2017), Gregory (2012), and Peebles (2010).

some migrants from Nigeria (Plambech 2017). Rather, debt appears as an integral component of the *badocari* household economy prior to the migration process, and in fact encourages mobility (to earn money for repayment) as well at it is perpetuated by the migration process (when taking up new loans to pay for travel costs).

With inspiration in the work of Gustav Peebles (2010), the anthropologist Chris Gregory (2012) describes how credit is essentially an aspect of potential future consumption (of granting the ability to spend money). However, as soon as the credit is invoked in turns into a debt, in a lived presence and future (Gregory 2012:384; Peebles 2010). For my interlocutors it is the potentiality of spending money in the future (credit and loans) that carries the economy in certain periods of the year such as when purchasing food in the store. Debt has a paradoxical attribute to it, since it serves as the most reliable income opportunity that the poor families have (compared to the unknown availability of bottles, it is more predictable that money lenders will want to lend money at high interest rates). At the same time, debt ties them down through rapidly growing interest rates in need of repayment. In other words, debt and credit serve as stable income (credit and loans) as well as an expenditure (debt repayments) in a household budget that is constantly adapted to fit new economic realities. Yet, it is a highly problematic "stable" element due to the high interest rates. I argue that in order to understand the relationship that the *badocari* have with money (Peebles 2010) it is vital to understand debt as a continuous component of the household economy.

Very few of my interlocutors envision a future where they will be debt free. Rather they envision a future where they can control their debts better. It is more about preventing the house from being appropriated by a moneylender as a sanction for not repaying loans, than never taking up any new debt. There is no escape from the debt, such as it has been portrayed by the anthropologist Morten Axel Pedersen (2007) in a study of young men in Ulaanbaatar in Mongolia who hide from their money lenders when they relocate to other parts of the city. The *badocari* cannot leave the neighbourhood since their young children are usually left at home under the care of other relatives or neighbours. Furthermore, access to new loans with the *cămătari* usually depends on a history of previous loan repayments since few money lenders will lend money to strangers. Hence, the *badocari* are dependent on social relations in the neighbourhood including to close kin who take care of their children and to the local *cămătari*. The *badocari* seem very conscious of the fact that their lives are shaped by poverty and that debt is an unavoidable element. They aspire to influence what this life in debt might look like by creating a livelihood situation with periods of tolerable living and with periods of life on the edge reflected in the constant movement around Europe. In this continuum, the majority of the *badocari* do not seem to envision themselves as living in an equal relationship with the remaining social world, nor that there is much solidarity to find outside the core family – neither in majority society, which largely discriminates against the poor and uneducated Roma, nor with the wealthier money lenders who charge immense interest rates from their poor neighbours.

The situation of unemployment, constant debt, lack of access to often inadequate social benefits and clear awareness about limited opportunities in Romania illus-

trates how the household economy of the *badocari* is entirely dependent upon one or both of the heads of the household (mother and father) travelling abroad and living a life as a homeless *badocar* in Copenhagen. This movement allows the household to "stitch together" what I argue can be termed a patchwork household economy. The economy is composed of several sources of income such as child allowances from Romania, minor salaries from daily work in Romania, income from selling scavenged trash items from Denmark at flea markets in Romania, and income generated in Copenhagen from bottle deposit. Some *badocari* also travel to other EU member states where they beg, work in construction sites, agriculture or factories. The sources of income are not interrelated but are combined in order to create a total economic sum that allows for basic survival. They are unreliable and minimal and each of them cannot stand alone to support the family. The income opportunities are also generated by different members within the household. The children constitute the basis of the child allowance. The relative who remains at home to care for the children is in charge of selling old items (from Copenhagen and other places) at flea markets in the city. The parents who migrate are in charge of begging, bottle collection, daily labour etc.

I regard the patchwork household economy as a continuous crafting process. When one economic source fails, that specific element of the larger patchwork is replaced by another economic source – similar to when small squares of fabric are sewed together in a patchwork pattern. One square can be replaced without destroying the rest of the pattern. The financial crisis appears when too many of the minor economic strategies fail, just as a pattern dissolves when missing too many squares of fabric. Furthermore, whereas a patchwork pattern can have different shapes, the larger material onto which the pattern is attached is clearly defined and often squared (such as a quilt or a pillowcase). This analogy of dual layers is important (the background and the pattern) since it reflect the composition of the *badocari* household economy. I argue that if the economy can be approached as a patchwork pattern, then the background material against which the economy is configured can be regarded as debt. Debt is the "quilt", so to say.

The patchwork household economy rests upon a calendar year which is divided into cyclical phases. The months from March/April to August are spent in Copenhagen. September is spent at home in Romania with the family, where they enrol the children in school and participate in family festivities such as weddings and baptisms. October to December are by some of my interlocutors spent in Copenhagen collecting (albeit less) bottles and scavenging trash that can be sold at flea markets back home in Romania. Other *badocari* spend these months in EU member states such as Italy, France or the UK, where they beg or work on agricultural farms, construction sites etc. January and February are mostly spent at home with the family to celebrate the holidays and prepare for spring so that they can return to Denmark. In this way, the year is carefully planned out in phases that are repeated continuously. The *badocari* constantly evaluate the time and money spent and earned in each location. A woman called Ana explains it as such:

> Most young people have left the neighbourhood and now only old persons and children are left. People leave for countries like Denmark, Sweden and Norway but also to other parts of Europe. Then they return home after a few months. Some stay home a few months and some only stay a few weeks, this all depends on whether they have gathered enough money to stay home for longer periods. Coming home means starving, since there is no work at home.

Ana does not know when she and her husband can return home to see their children but at this moment they have not earned enough to be able to return. Anna tells me that she dreams of finding a job as a cleaner or caretaker of elderly persons, since the money that she earns from deposit on bottles and from begging is not enough to support her large family at home. Ana's story illuminates how, paradoxically, the way to ensure the subsistence of the household is to leave the family behind for longer periods of time to explore economic avenues in other countries. Returning home entails being close to close kin and loved ones but also entails not earning an income. In order to remain home, one has to make a living abroad to cover the expenditures during the home period or take up a new loan. In this sense, the home serves as a constant push and pull factor in the migration processes of the *badocari*. The migration process of the *badocari* is cyclical with a constant return to Romania where the family lives. For the *badocari* it is not a matter of leaving the country in search of establishment with a better fortune elsewhere. Rather it is about creating a viable living in Romania through developing a patchwork household economy, which involves moving across Europe in a continuous cyclical process (Ravnbøl 2015).

12.8 Micro-economics as a Challenge to Political, Economic and Social Contexts

> "Peştele se împute de la cap!" [The fish rots from the head]

The anthropologists Chris Hann and Keith Hart (2011) argue for the importance of adopting an anthropological analytical perspective on what they refer to as a "human economy" (Hann and Hart 2011:167). In opposition to a rationalist choice perspective on individuality, they emphasise a human economic approach that looks at persons whose preferences and choices are shaped by their social relations and broader historical and political contexts (Ibid: 9). Thereby, the concern is with how social beings engage with their economic situations and transactions as part of their relations to the world at large.

The proverb *Peştele se împute de la cap!* can be regarded as central to understanding how my interlocutors relate their individual household economy to the broader structures of society. The proverb is not only Romanian, but can be identified in several other languages, and refers to a decay process, which initiates in the

fish head before it spreads to the trunk and finally to the tail.[9] Vasile presented this proverb as his answer to my enquiry about whether he could ask for financial or social support in Romania to address his poor livelihood condition. The proverb represents Vasile's rejection of such possibilities and response to his necessity to travel abroad to gain funds due to a situation of poverty but also due to a situation of corruption in Romania, where, in his view, the economic and political elite uses EU and state funds for private interests. Vasile thereby links his household economy to a broader historical and political context of Romania in which the political management of the country is "rotten" and not extending its services to the poor Roma families. Corruption and mismanagement of EU funding have been described in several studies on Romania and is also part of the broader criticism by the European Commission as well as the European Union agencies towards the member state (CoE 2017; Ionescu 2006).

However, there are additional important aspects to Vasile's reference to decayed fish. What he is also stating in this sentence is that Vasile envisions himself as belonging to the body of the fish. The corruption (decay) which initiates in the political system and its elite (the fish head) eventually influences the rest of the nation state (the fish body); it triggers down and influences behaviours of citizens within the state. One consequence is that of lost faith in the state and decision to migrate abroad in search of alternate income opportunities, which Vasile and my other interlocutors have opted for. Another consequence is that of becoming corrupt or involved in financial fraud and bribery. Vasile elaborates on this second part with reference to the *cămătari*, to whom he – as well as all my other interlocutors – is financially indebted. When I ask my interlocutors if Romania's accession to the EU in 2007 has not resulted in increased economic funds for Roma integration and combating poverty, most of them laugh. They do hand gestures in the air and point to their pockets by way of imitating a hand that steals. Their gesticulation explains how in their opinion EU funds have been stolen and channelled into private properties of wealthier businessmen and politicians in Romania. This includes high level politicians as well as local mayors and city counsellors who have access to EU funds and who also act as money lenders. The *badocari* mention the contrast between their poor houses and the large houses in the city as an example. Vasile's response is an example of this:

> The counsellor here is not helping us, he is helping himself. His pocket is closer to him than we are. I will show you around the neighbourhood so that you can see the houses of those who work in the municipality. They say that they work with human rights. But you will ask yourself with what money they have built those houses since they do not earn big salaries. And then you can see how people like Matei live in one-room shacks. It is like this all over Romania.

Consequently, Vasile and the many other *badocari* started travelling to EU member states to explore new economic strategies. This became the initiation of the patchwork household economy, a micro economy which can with benefit be regarded as a reaction to a situation where the *badocari* experience that they have to manage on

[9] It is an inaccurate biological assumption but serves as a metaphor that Vasile uses to explain his view on how corruption among politicians eventually trickles down and influences behaviours of local politicians and regular citizens within the state.

their own in a (rotten) political landscape that cannot be trusted and where they receive no assistance from the remaining society or even within their own neighbourhood. The critique presented by Vasile, as well as by the majority of my interlocutors is however also extended beyond the margins of the nation state to include the EU as a whole. This was most evident one early morning where I asked Vasile a question and referred to him and the other *badocari* as migrants. Vasile send me a sharp look and replies in a serious and slightly raised voice:

> – We are not migrants! Migrants are those from Africa and the Middle East. We are in the European Union and we are EU citizens [...] We are part of one big family! We have a right to be treated the same way as Danish persons seeking work, but there are so many double standards and they find excuses not to give us our rights.

Vasile's outburst underlines an awareness of the rights that he and the other *badocari* have as citizens of an EU member state as well as his experience of not being granted such rights in practice. The patchwork household economy of the *badocari* should be understood in the light of the critique presented by Vasile: as microeconomic strategies that develop in response to social disparities and corruption on their home country (Romania) as well as in response to experiences of limited assistance and opportunities for the Roma in general within the EU.

Various scholars have analysed the economy of Roma communities within a framework of negotiated power relations between Roma communities and the broader non-Roma society (Pulay 2015; Solimene 2015; Okely 1999; Stewart 1999; Engebrigsten 2007). These studies argue that the opposition to majority society is essential to Roma identity formation and that the opposition to non-Roma (Gadjo) is a key marker of such distinctions (Solimene 2015). In contrast, this chapter offers alternative viewpoints presented by the *badocari*. Even though ethnic distinctions shape their everyday lives and relations, other social distinctions are much more important to them, and at times prevail over that of ethnicity. This includes distinctions according to social class where they are critical towards those who are rich in comparison to them, who are poor if not extremely poor. The *badocari* also turn their critique of wealthier elites inwards towards neighbourhood residents who they find to be corrupt, such as the *cămătari* and local politicians. The *badocari* claim rights as Romanian citizens and as citizens of the European Union who seek employment and housing on a similar footing with nationals but are also very conscious of the fact that they are not given such rights neither in Romania nor in the broader context of the EU. They feel that they belong to "the body of the fish" but as a marginalised part. In other words, their economic strategies should not be understood as a manifestation of an opposition to a Gadjo society with the opposition (dualism Roma/Gadjo) as an end in itself. Rather, their economic strategies reflect those of a marginalised neighbourhood that is critical towards social disparities between rich and poor, as well towards corruption and ethnic discrimination. This difference is highly important since it sets a question mark to the scholarly tendency towards continuous depiction of the Roma as an ontological other.[10] Rather, it calls for the

[10] For a more elaborate critique of the historical representation of Roma as an ontological other see the work of Asséo et al. (2017).

importance of a critical look not only on ethnicity (Roma/Gadjo) but also on relations of social inequality including on the *de facto* opportunities that poor Roma communities have of upwards mobility and not just free movement from one destination of marginalised livelihood within the EU into that of another.

12.9 Concluding Comments

In Ancient Greek, the term *oikonomia* refers to the management of the self-sufficient household, which is usually a manorial estate (Hann and Hart 2011). The household of the *badocari* is far from being a self-sufficient manorial estate. Rather it is entirely contingent on the availability of economic sources across the EU such as refundable bottles, trash that can be sold at flea markets, child allowances, begging incomes, low paid daily jobs etc. This patchwork household economy is haunted by constant debt. However, it is not a resigned and passive submission to poverty but a critical claim towards the state for basic rights, in a context where their economic strategies for creating a life on the margins are continuously developed and adjusted, as a continuous patchwork pattern crafting process.

The patchwork household economy of the *badocari* is less about searching for better futures in new locations (Philpott 1968) and more about viewing Europe as one social field of economic potentialities. The *badocari* emphasise their EU co-citizenship and the obligations that they place on nations within the EU, including Denmark and Romania. Until these obligations are manifested in concrete actions on behalf of the member states, the *badocari* manage with the opportunities that they themselves create and that are made available to them. The patchwork household economy, I argue, is a reflection of such micro strategies for economic survival as well as they are a challenge to current political, economic and social orders within Romania, Denmark and the EU at large.

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Chapter 13
Differing Romani Mobilities? The Case of Cross-Border Migration of Roma Between Slovenia and Austria

Julija Sardelić

Different public debates discuss the position of Roma in Europe as if they were one of the most mobile populations in Europe. The position of mobile Romani individuals became especially visible after the 2004 and 2007 European Union (EU) Enlargements. However, only a certain type of mobility of intra EU Romani migrants became particularly highlighted by the headlines of European Media: the one that more or less corresponded to a stereotypical image of a "Roma nomad" and depicted Roma as a potential threat to the social welfare systems of host states. This chapter argues that the reasons why Romani individuals become mobile are more complex and diverse than of those presented in the European public domain. The chapter traces life histories of Slovenian citizens who identify as Roma and have been mobile for work between Slovenia and Austria. It offers counter-narratives on how differing mobility practices of different Romani individuals are.

13.1 Introduction

At the beginning of April 2014, a group from the Romani civil society in Slovenia held a protest under the slogan "No Tolerance for Intolerance" to commemorate International Romani Day (8th April). In the town of Murska Sobota, the capital of the north-east region of Pomurje, and the place in Slovenia with the largest Romani population (M.R. 2017), they painted over a piece graffiti to counter its message of intolerance. The graffiti stated: "Disabled people have to work, while Roma misters are enjoying themselves." (Pojbič 2014).[1] This statement conveyed a wide-spread

[1] All texts that were not originally in English but in Slovenian, including the interviews, were translated by the author.

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prejudice towards Roma: that they do not want to work, and prefer to live a life of leisure on social benefits. Commenting on the graffiti, the President of the Roma Community Council in Slovenia, Darko Rudaš, stated: "Roma would very much like to work, but they have become the greatest losers on the labour market, due to the combination of the economic crisis and prejudice towards them" (in Pojbič 2014). Rudaš added:

> In the Pomurje region, Roma cannot get any employment despite the fact they want to work. The prejudice still exists from the side of the employers. Because of that many found their employment in neighbouring Austria, where we have identified more than 500 Roma workers. Most of the work they do is heavy manual labour that Austrians decline. […] Despite the fact they have to drive 100 kilometres just to get there, in Austria they are respected as responsible workers. (Pomurec 2014)

This chapter contextualizes the mobility practices of those Roma who are Slovenian citizens working in Austria. The image of Roma living on social benefits rather than working exists in various national contexts (Richardson 2014; Ciaian and Kancs 2016; Martin et al. 2017), although this prejudice has also expanded beyond simply national contexts. For example, it also appeared in the debates on EU citizenship and how Romani individuals practice and engage with their supranational citizenship (Parker 2012; Parker and Toke 2013; Aradau et al. 2013; Çağlar and Mehling 2013; Faure Atger 2013; Ram 2013). After the fall of the Berlin Wall and in the discussions that occurred on EU accession for the former socialist countries with high Romani populations (especially Bulgaria and Romania), the public discourse perpetuated the fear that Roma would move *en masse* towards "old" EU Member States (Guglielmo and Waters 2005; Sardelić 2018). This fear was not only based on that of mass migration, but also on a perception that Romani migration is particularly unwanted (Yuval Davis et al. 2017; Richardson 2014; Martin et al. 2017; Vermeersch 2013).

Neither the public discourse nor the scholarly literature have previously discussed the migration and mobility of Roma who are Slovenian citizens. While there are no official numbers of how many Slovenian citizens who identify as Roma are migrating or moving between Slovenia and Austria, the unofficial number of 500 that Rudaš put forward seems low. However, taking into account that only 3246 Slovenian citizens declared themselves as Roma in the most recent population census (Office for National Minorities 2005), this number becomes statistically higher. More importantly, with his statement Rudaš highlighted a particular form of cross-border mobility that was previously overlooked by the media and policymakers, as well as in scholarly debates.

This chapter explores who the Romani individuals are, who either commute between Slovenia and Austria, or have migrated permanently to Austria. It presents excerpts from life story interviews with Romani individuals who are or were practicing their rights as EU citizens to work in another EU Member State. The general aim of the chapter is not to point out a pattern that could be labelled as either Romani migration or mobility, but rather to show that there are alternative narratives to what is usually seen as "Romani migration" in Europe. The chapter seeks to point to differing mobility practices by Roma in the EU, which are usually not discussed in public debates and are not connected to "Romani migration".

In the first section, the chapter highlights the representation of Romani migrants in Europe, and indicates that there is a lack of reliable statistics on how many Roma actually do migrate in the EU.[2] In the second part, the chapter contextualises the migration and mobility of Roma from Slovenia within the migration history of the former Yugoslav space and the position of Roma in Slovenia. In the third part, it focuses on the narratives of individuals who offer their own perspectives on the reasons why they move between Austria and Slovenia, or why they have migrated for employment. The chapter concludes with a discussion on what new insights these narratives give on the social construct of Romani migrants and migration in Europe.

13.2 The Representation of Romani Migrants in Europe

In the public discourse there has been a certain representation of what Romani migration is, and of who such migrants are. Romani migrants with EU citizenship have usually been represented either as beggars (Yuval Davis et al. 2017) or "benefit tourists" (Richardson 2014; Martin et al. 2017; Sardelić 2018). However, in recent years scholarly research has shown that the migration and mobility of Roma are not as homogenous as assumed in the media discourse (Nacu 2010; Grill 2012; Vermeersch 2012; Pantea 2012; Vlase and Voicu 2013). Some studies show that differences in migration patterns do not arise simply because of ethnicity, but need to be observed from an intersectional perspective, and include the consideration of, for example, gender and class (Nacu 2010; Kóczé 2017). However, a large proportion of this research focuses on particular migration patterns of Roma, especially from countries such as Romania to countries like the UK (Matras and Leggio 2018; Humphris 2017), Spain (Magazzini and Piemontese 2016; Vrabiescu and Kalir 2017), Italy (Solimene 2011; Hepworth 2012) and France (Ram 2013; Sardelić 2017a), as well as on the construction of the representation of the poor Roma migrant (Richardson 2014; Ciaian and Kancs 2016). This image of a poor Roma migrant has been used to show the limits of EU citizenship (Parker 2012) as well as in broader debates on the politics around migration in general, such as those seen around the UK's EU membership referendum (Brexit)[3] and benefit tourism by EU citizens (Sardelić 2018). As Can Yildiz and Nicholas De Genova argued, the position of Roma migrants indicates the "larger politics of mobility as a constitutive feature of the socio-political formation of the EU" (Yildiz and Genova 2017). In the debates on EU citizenship, the position of Romani migrants in particular has been presented as an indicator of the limits to the EU's free movement policies (Faure Atger 2013; Sardelić 2018).

What is more, the latest research on the discourse surrounding Romani migrants shows that they are being framed not simply as an ethnic group, but as a "racialized minority" in Europe (Yildiz and Genova 2017; Kóczé 2017; Van Baar 2017;

[2] For a problematisation of reliable statistics see the contribution by Vera Messing in this volume.

[3] See the contribution by Viktor Leggio in this volume.

McGarry 2017; Sardelić 2017b). They are visible despite the fact that the available numbers (or better yet, estimates) show they are not one of the most dominant migrant groups in Europe. As Claude Cahn and Elsphet Guild stated:

> Information on Romani migration has, if anything, been overproduced. The arrival of one hundred or two hundred Roma from another country can trigger front-page news coverage in the yellow press and more serious media for days. However, beyond certain particular micro-scenarios, reliable statistical data on Romani migration is largely unavailable. (Cahn and Guild 2008: 33)

While population censuses tend to underestimate the Romani population, since many Romani individuals prefer not to identify themselves as such (Bernát and Messing 2016), Cahn and Guild claim that the media has an effect of overestimating the number of Romani migrants. According to these authors, some sources estimate that there are around 30,000 Romani migrants in Germany, 80,000 in Italy, and some 20,000 in Austria, as well as 6000 Roma migrants from Romania in the UK (Cahn and Guild 2008: 33). In most of these countries, the migrants identified as Roma did not simply start coming with the 2004 and 2007 EU enlargements, but had longer migratory connections with these places, where they came as forced migrants during the Yugoslav wars (Perić and Demirovski 2000; Sigona 2003; Solimene 2011; Sardelić 2017a). Some other studies show that there is a greater number of mobile Roma between neighbouring countries. For example, informal estimates have shown around 100,000 Roma moving in different mobility patterns between Albania and Greece (Cahn and Guild 2008), but this cross-border migration between neighbouring countries has sparked little scholarly attention (Vullnetari 2012). There has also been very little quantitative research done on what are the aspirations of Romani individuals in migratory processes and what countries are the most desirable for them. A study on the emigration intentions of Roma showed that in certain contexts they give preference to those countries that are either neighbouring or closer geographically. For example, Roma with the intention to emigrate from the Czech Republic indicated Austria, Slovakia and Germany as their top destination countries, while those from Bulgaria indicated Turkey as their favoured country (Duval and Wolff 2016). On the other hand, Roma from three former Yugoslav republics, Croatia, Serbia and Macedonia, all stated that Austria was one of their top choices (ibid.). Since Serbia and Macedonia are at the present EU candidate countries, this shows that the choices of most desirable countries for emigration are not only based on the EU free movement policy, but also on particular constellations in the countries of origin and specific histories of migration (Sardelić 2017b).

13.3 Migration Histories of Roma from the Former Yugoslav Space

While Duval and Wolff (2016) did not include Slovenia in their studies on the emigration intentions of Roma, certain parallels can be found with other post-Yugoslav countries due to their common historical backgrounds. The Former Socialist

Federative Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) was the first socialist country to sign a number of bilateral agreements with the countries from the former Western Bloc. These bilateral agreements allowed Yugoslav citizens to seek temporary employment abroad (Novinšćak 2009). SFRY had such an agreement both with Germany and Austria. For the former Yugoslavia, this arrangement was one way to address the issue of unemployment, especially in rural areas. However, as I argued in my previous work (Sardelić 2017a), it was also partially done to address the problem of unemployment among Roma who were Yugoslav citizens. There are no reliable numbers regarding how many Yugoslav Roma sought employment in Austria or Germany (Matras 2000), as at the time they were simply included in the statistics with other Yugoslav *Gastarbeiters*. Due to the previous migratory networks, many Romani individuals from Yugoslavia also sought asylum in Austria during the Yugoslav wars (Cahn and Guild 2008). While they were in most cases given only temporary protection status (Sardelić 2017c), it was often not clear whether Roma from conflict-ridden Kosovo and other parts of the former Yugoslavia moved to Austria and Germany as labour migrants or as forced migrants. The labour/forced migration dichotomy also constitutes the main difference in the positioning of those Roma who later became Slovenian citizens. Roma with Slovenian citizenship were not affected by the Yugoslav wars to such an extent as those from other former Yugoslav countries. They were always labour migrants and not asylum seekers. In addition, Slovenia borders Austria, and a number of Romani settlements are located in the vicinity of the Slovenian-Austrian border. This contributed to a specific form of commuting between the two countries, as I will discuss in the next sections.

13.4 The Position of Roma in Slovenia

To date there has not been any academic account on the mobility and migration of Roma from Slovenia. Moreover, until recently (Sardelić 2016; Szilvasi 2018) the discussion on the position of Roma in Slovenia generally did not attract a great amount of international scholarly attention. From the policy-making perspective, Slovenia was not a full participatory member of the Decade of Roma Inclusion (2005–2015),[4] but rather had an observatory status, like the United States. Slovenia also positioned itself on the international stage based on the perception that it was a country that underwent a smooth post-socialist transition without any significant rise in "ethnic tensions" or hostility towards its minorities. After gaining independence, there were only a few critical accounts of how Slovenia positioned its minor-

[4] The Decade of Roma Inclusion was launched in 2005 and represented the first transnational project which meant to improve the social and political conditions of the Roma. Twelve European countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, and Spain) developed a National Action Plan to improve the condition of the Roma in the Decade's priority areas of education, employment, health and housing. Slovenia and the USA were external observer (UNDP 2015).

ity citizens, but, since the turn of the millennium, more analysis on this topic has emerged (Zorn 2009; Deželan 2012; Sardelić 2017a). Slovenia not only managed to escape the extensive conflicts that were seen in most other post-Yugoslav states, but also did not experience a major economic downfall in the 1990s, as suffered by other states undergoing post-socialist transitions. Some scholars argue that after its independence Slovenia developed policies that protected its minority citizens, including Romani as well as the Hungarian and Italian minorities (Klopčič 2007). Finally, one can argue that the position of Roma in Slovenia also attracted very little scholarly attention due to the fact that this population is very small compared to other post-socialist states. Therefore, their migration would not have represented such a problem with regard to the EU policy of free movement. According to the 2002 population census, just 3246 individuals declared themselves as Roma (Office for National Minorities 2005). However, even earlier unofficial estimates by different Romani activists only range between 10,000 and 50,000 individuals who could be identified as Roma (Latham 1999: 221). Most Roma in Slovenia live in two rural regions: Dolenjska, located on the Slovenian south border with Croatia, and Pomurje, which is the most eastern region in the country, bordering Austria to the north, Croatia to the south and Hungary to the east (Sardelić 2012).

Although the Romani minority in Slovenia is small, they are among those Slovenian citizens who still face major obstacles when entering the labour market. According to the National Programme of Measures for Roma 2010–2015, produced by the Government of Slovenia, 2193 Roma were registered at the Employment Office of Slovenia as unemployed, which represented 2.5% of all unemployed residents in the country (Government of the Republic of Slovenia 2010). At the same time, comparing this figure with the number of all those who identified themselves as Roma, this would indicated that 67% of this population was unemployed. Yet the question is whether this number reflects the reality, since there is are discrepancies in the various estimations. Furthermore, according to the National Programme, in 2009 a total of 890 Roma were included into the active employment policy measures. According to the National Programme, 79 Romani individuals were registered as having regular employment in Slovenia with an open-ended contract. Importantly, the National Programme did not count as employed those Romani migrants who were working outside Slovenia.

13.5 Contextualizing Economic Migration of Roma from the Pomurje Region

As part of my PhD studies, I conducted fieldwork in several Roma communities in the region of Pomurje in 2012. During this fieldwork, I conducted 20 in-depth semi-structured interviews with individuals who identified themselves as Roma. In addition, I also performed participant observation and many informal conversations with various members of these selected communities. In October 2017, I conducted

another series of interviews, in the form of life stories, with those individuals who I had previously identified during my fieldwork as having experience of being employed in Austria. These life stories are particularly focused on the employment histories of four individuals. At that time, Maria was working as a deputy manager of a section in a grocery shop; Tania was working as an integration officer for EU citizens (mostly Roma), and as a teacher of German as a second language; Kiki used to work in the factory dealing with leather materials for luxury cars in Austria, but since then moved to Berlin; finally, Andi occasionally worked in Austria doing seasonal work on different farms. In this section I will present their views on why they found employment in Austria, and why many Roma from Slovenia decide to seek employment in this neighbouring country.

All interviews were conducted in Slovenian: this was either the mother tongue of the interviewees or they had a knowledge of it on the level of a native speaker, while most of them were also fluent in German. Since some of the issues discussed could be considered ethically sensitive, and Romani settlements in Slovenia are relatively small (with an average of 200 inhabitants in each), in order to preserve the anonymity of the interviewees, I decided not only to use pseudonyms, but also not to name the Roma settlements from which these individuals came from, although all are located in the Pomurje region. According to the 2002 population census and other unofficial estimates by different civil society organizations, Roma account for up to 10% of the population in Pomurje (Klopčič 2007), which is considered to be Slovenia's poorest and most rural region. The region was severely hit by the last financial crisis, since many large textile factories, which by means of state aid had survived the post-socialist transition, collapsed after 2008. These collapses happened when the government decided not to continue giving subsidies to the local factories, which in their best years, during the socialist period, employed up to several thousand people (Fink Hafner 2010: 1165).

The greatest number of Romani settlements in this region are located in the vicinity of the Austrian border, while some are close to the Croatian border or in the proximity of the Hungarian border. These settlements were mainly established as permanent living spaces in the years after WWII and up to the 1970s, when a state decree was issued stipulating that all Romani children should also be included in the education system (Sardelić 2012). In the fieldwork conducted in 2012, I carried out my research in two settlements located near the Austrian and Croatian borders. Very early in my work it became clear to me that the settlement near the Austrian border did not fit the stereotypical image of a Roma settlement, and did not distinguish itself from other villages populated by the majority population. In the Romani communities near the Austrian border, where I also conducted my research, the data collected demonstrated that the unemployment rate among its inhabitants was not significantly higher in comparison to that seen among the majority population in the region, and remained similar even with the emergence of the economic crisis. Yet as Rudaš stated (Pomurec 2014), this was not because these individuals were able to find employment in Slovenia, but precisely because of their proximity to Austria.

The Roma settlements in Slovenia near the Austrian border, where I conducted my research, were considered by media and public authorities to be an example of

"best practice" when it comes to Romani integration in Slovenia (see Institute for Ethnic Studies 2004). As described in the previous paragraph, unemployment did not pose a major challenge in these settlements, even after the onset of the economic crisis, as also noted by the interviewees. Still, this portrayal is somewhat paradoxical. This is because the success of these Roma settlements and their residents cannot be attributed to the full inclusion in the labour market in Slovenia, since most of the inhabitants found official gainful employment in the neighbouring state of Austria.

Romani individuals are not the only Slovenian citizens who sought employment in Austria. According to different sources there are approximately 20,000 Slovenian citizens who work in Austria and commute on a daily basis (Reporter 2017). However, according to the opinion of most interviewees, most Slovenian citizens who are Roma and employed find work in the neighbouring state.

13.6 Romani Individuals as Economic Migrants: Life Stories Between Slovenia and Austria

One of the first things I discussed with Maria (a woman in her early 30s, originally from a Roma settlement near the Austrian border), was her employment status, when she was still in Slovenia. She stated that the employment she had in Slovenia was based on projects to improve the position of Roma, usually funded by the EU:

> When I was working in Slovenia, I was at first working on a project, and then the project was over, I got a job on another project in Pomurje. But there were some complications there, I did not get regular payment. And then I was unemployed for some time. […] But I am now so old that I did not want to be dependent on my parents. I decided to go to Austria.

Tania, a woman in her early 30s with a master's degree who was the president of a Romani NGO in Slovenia, also migrated permanently to Austria. Similar to Maria, she felt that in Slovenia she could only get so-called "project work":

> I had a feeling it will be very difficult for me to get employment. I thought that if I get employment there, I would only be able to work on projects. This would be employment only for couple of years. And then nothing. In Austria, I saw there are better possibilities, but also there were personal reasons why I decided to go to Austria.

I asked the interviewees what they saw as the reasons why Roma are looking employment in Austria. Maria responded that the region of Pomurje is already disadvantaged and there is a lack of jobs, especially for Roma. Local employers were usually non-Roma Slovenians, and would also prefer to employ other non-Roma Slovenians:

> Pomurje is so small that everybody knows you. This should not have an effect, but it does, because everyone knows you. But there is really a big problem with unemployment there, not only among Roma. And employers would rather give employment to someone else [to a non-Roma Slovenian] and not to me.

However, Andi, a man in his early 30s from a different Roma settlement, proposed that this does not only happen in Pomurje. After finishing high-school, he was working in the army, which later on cut the number of employees. After he lost his job, he worked in different short-term jobs with longer periods of being unemployed, and he then decided to start doing seasonal jobs in Austria. He claimed that one of the main reasons for his seeking employment in Austria was not just that the region where he came from was disadvantaged, but also the general prejudice towards Roma, which is found in other parts of Slovenia too:

> Pomurje is an economically disadvantaged region, but I also went to Maribor, I also had job interviews in Celje, in Novo mesto and Velenje, and it was the same. When they see you, they say they have other candidates. One even told me that he had a bad experience with Roma, and while he believes me that I am hard working he still said no.

Tania stated that she had a similar experience with the employment services in Slovenia:

> In my opinion, there are not many jobs available. But this is not the main reason. I think it is still true that no matter if you have education they would rather take someone else, not Roma. The only exception is if the job requires knowledge of the Romani language or is in any way connected to Roma. I still remember when I was at the Employment Office, the employment advisor there was shocked that I wanted to write in my employment profile that I can speak Romani. She told me between the lines that she was afraid this would be a reason why I would not get a job. This was shocking for me.

Kiki, a man in his early 50s who had completed vocational training, said that the reason why many people decide to migrate to Austria was for the better salaries:

> The salaries are better. When I was working there, I had 1,200 euros. When I worked two Saturdays, I got to 1,400 euros. That was my salary. That was my net salary.

Tania stated that it is not only the better pay, but also the social welfare system that attracts many people to decide to work in Austria. Also, similar to most of the interviewees, Tania said that Austrians do not see Roma as unwanted Romani migrants, but simply as foreigners:

> It is because of the better structured social welfare system. All the Roma employed in Austria, their children also get social benefits. […] Also a higher salary. And there is very little discrimination on the basis that they are Roma. They are seen as foreigners who work in Austria.

In another interview, Kiki explained his employment history and stated that although he has worked in construction for over a decade there was a lack of genuine opportunities for progressing in his career in Slovenia, or getting a better salary:

> You know how it is in Slovenia, everything is falling apart, and there is no employment. […] When I was doing my truck driving license exam, then this [employee at the employment centre], she said that: "You know mister, you chose a difficult profession". And I asked her why. She said driving trucks is difficult. And I asked her: "So should I work with a shovel my entire life?". […] I was working in construction for 11 years in Slovenia, regularly. But then I started working with metal [picking and selling scrap metal]. But then the employment centre gave this opportunity if you wanted to get into another profession, and then I wanted to become a truck driver, and I passed all my exams on the first try. Then I

> was sent to Maribor for a specialized health exam. And they found out that I have colour blindness. And then I said to the doctor: "Look, when I went to the army they said that I am able to go, but I already had colour blindness then". I was in the army for 150 days. I had a feeling that this doctor did not want me to progress.

I asked Tania when was it that more Romani individuals with Slovenian citizenship started working in Austria. She stated that it was when Slovenia joined the EU, but even more so with the economic crisis in 2008, when jobs in Pomurje became even more difficult to come by. However, her reply was twofold and conveyed a complex reality: while the younger generation from her Romani settlement started migrating for work after the economic crisis, there was already a tradition of working abroad from when Slovenia was still a part of socialist Yugoslavia:

> From my former settlement, out of those who have employment, 80 per cent of them work in Austria. I do not know when this trend started. I think it was with the European Union, when Slovenians started working abroad more, Roma also started. Also with the economic crisis. Because there are very few jobs in Pomurje, but also now in Slovenia. […] Before Slovenian independence not all the settlements had people who were working abroad, but this depended on the tradition of each settlement. Our settlement always had this tradition. Already our ancestors worked abroad, they were in Germany, Australia, in Austria. This tradition was alive, there were also some working in Libya. […] In some other settlements, they were, for example, selling goods on the market.

Tania highlighted the fact that the trend of working abroad was already a reality for many Roma during the period of Socialist Yugoslavia. Romani individuals did not only work in Austria and Germany, but also in places like Libya, which was possible because of Yugoslavia being a part of the Non-Aligned Movement. Tania's statements show that the migration and mobility of Romani individuals have to be put in a broader context in order to be understood. Similar conclusions can be drawn on the basis of Kiki's interview. First, he stated that fewer Roma worked abroad in Yugoslavia, because they were able to get work in the country:

> They were working before in big companies, construction sites, then the textile industry. Half of [name of a Roma settlement] was working in places like that. More than half. And then this water company, Mura. Even my father was working there. In the time of Yugoslavia it was not a problem if you did not have school. You got a shovel.

Later in the interview, Kiki stated that there was particular turning point when more Romani individuals started working in Austria. With the European Union the border not only opened up for Slovenian citizens, but also for EU citizens. When Slovenia joined the Union, Kiki was working informally collecting scrap metal. His story showed that collecting scrap metal is not something that would intrinsically part of Roma culture, but it was a more profitable business for him personally at the time. This then became less profitable when Slovenia joined the EU, because besides the formal market the informal one became more accessible to other EU citizens too. With this shift, EU citizens from Hungary also started collecting scrap metal from Slovenia (Kiki did not specify whether it was only Roma or also non-Roma Hungarians who did this):

> So I quit the formal labour market and started doing scrap metal, but then when the Hungarians came, when the border opened, we saw that doing metal did not bring such a profit.

The stories of Romani individuals, such as those of Maria, Tania, Andi and Kiki, remain invisible in the wider media. On the basis of their examples, it seems that Roma are racialized as a minority only when they fit a certain pattern of migration, externally ascribed as "Romani migration", which is seen as a part of "their culture". Tania now lives in Austria, and she works on the integration of EU citizens from other Member States. She claimed that there is a very small proportion of Romani migrants who are begging on the streets:

> I work on the integration of EU immigrants, those who are mostly Roma. The data we have there shows that a very small number of those are begging on the streets. But even those who are on the streets, they are selling newspapers. Many work in different sectors. […] From my own experience I can say that Roma also work in restaurants, hotels, in grocery shops, logistics, not only as low-skilled workers, but also on better positions as managers. Also in health institutions.

In their life stories all the interviewees claimed that their position as workers in Austria was better than in Slovenia. Maria felt that there were many more opportunities for advancing in her career, and that there was more job security:

> There I got employment right away, on the second day I was in Austria. For the first three months I was working in a restaurant. And then I decided to stop working there and I found another job in a grocery store where I still work today. After nine months I got a promotion. Now I have regular employment, not connected to any projects, a permanent contract.

Similarly, Andi felt that Roma were seen as better workers in Austria than in Slovenia:

> I did seasonal work in Austria. We were picking grapes and then horseradish, everything that needed to be done on the farm. […] Only Roma work there. […] The bosses there mostly take Roma, because they are fast and good workers. […] Some are there during the week, those who live far away, some drive there. […] They are not looking at you as Roma, for them it is only important that you show you are good at your work. Only this is important.

However, Andi also noted that they worked for lower salaries than Austrian citizens:

> In the leather factory, in the slaughter house, 90 percent are Roma. For Austrians, these are not well-paid jobs. By Austrian standards 1400 euros is not a lot. For Slovenians this is good.

Kiki worked in the leather factory for 5 years. While he said the salary was good, he also said that Austrians would not work in such working conditions. This was not only because of the long drive to work, but also because of the dangerous chemicals used in the factory, and the initial lack of certainty as to whether they would be paid:

> But then my brother-in-law got me to Austria. He said this is a *Leitfirma* [start-up company], and I got scared a bit, because you know how it is with *Leitfirma*. You can get money or you don't get money. And I was thinking, I will be driving so far, but then not get payment. And then my brother-in-law said, no, no, you come, I am already working there three months. But then I saw that the payment is good, 1,200 euros. So first I worked in a *Leitfirma* for one year, and then regularly for four years. Although I was working in Austria, I did not know how to speak German, because there were a lot of Roma there. Also Hungarians were working there and speaking their own language. There were also Hungarian Roma. A lot of

> Roma work there. […]. I had an easy job, but it was difficult because of the driving. The drive to work destroyed you already. […] A smart Austrian would not work there, because they know what it means. There are chemicals there. It is difficult work.

Later on, Kiki moved to Germany, because of a new relationship:

> So my partner did not want to leave Berlin because of her son. And then I said I decided, if you could find me work in Berlin, then no problem. It does not matter what kind of work. You know, we are universal, we do everything.

The negative attitudes towards Roma in Slovenia can be confirmed by research studies on social distance, which show that the majority population expresses the largest social distance towards Romani (Klopčič 2007: 33). However, as statistics shows, on the one hand this attitude did not particularly change with the growing economic crisis nor the 2004 EU enlargement. On the other hand, there were some other events that significantly changed the position of Roma working on the Austrian labour market. In 2014 the Constitutional Court of Slovenia ruled that all daily temporary migrant workers in Austria, including Roma, would have to pay additional tax (corresponding to the difference between the Slovenian and Austrian levels of taxation, since the latter is lower on salaries), in order to be taxed equally to Slovenian citizens employed in their home country (Sobotainfo 2014). However, due to the progressive taxation scale in Slovenia, this meant that temporary migrant workers in Austria were then taxed at a higher rate than those doing the same work in Slovenia. When I asked my respondents how this affected them, many of them stated that they had already permanently migrated to Austria, closer to their place of work, while most of who had not were thinking about leaving Slovenia because of this change in taxation. Both Tania and Maria claimed there is a trend, particularly among younger Romani individuals, of moving to Austria permanently:

> As far as I know most of them [the older Roma] are still driving to work. But the younger generation are deciding to migrate.

Tania claimed that this is not only a trend among Roma, but also among those who identify as Slovenians:

> Many, not only Roma but also [non-Roma] Slovenians, moved to Austria because of the new law. Many Slovenians move there and spend the money on themselves rather than giving it back to the state.

13.7 Conclusion

In this chapter I contextualised the position of Roma who are Slovenian citizens, but I chose to migrate to the neighbouring country of Austria for work. I presented excerpts of Romani individuals' life stories who found themselves in such a position. The aim of this chapter was not to present certain trends in what is usually considered as "Romani migration", but rather to show, as Peter Vermeersch (2018) stated, that the notion of Romani migration becomes problematic, once alternative

narratives on why and how Romani individuals migrate are presented. While it is impossible to draw any general conclusions based on these qualitative approaches, generalisations based on numbers of Roma and of Roma migrants living in each EU Member State are also very questionable, since these numbers are usually only estimates. However, Roma are still very visible as migrants in the EU, therefore it is important to present narratives which do not fit the media representation and image of Roma as a racialized minority.

While in comparison with the entire population of Slovenia the number of temporary migrant workers in Austria is not high, it is, according to my respondents, very high among the individuals belonging to Romani minorities, especially those living in settlements next to the Austrian border. According to their interviews, it was a lot easier for them to find employment in Austria, because they were not regarded as Roma but included in the group of other temporary migrant workers. However, the interviewees did not claim that Austria is a sort of paradise for Roma from Slovenia, but instead noted the inefficient polices that were developed in their own country for their integration, while also making some criticism of Austria (such as lower wages for foreign workers, and dangerous working conditions).

It might be argued that both Slovenian policies for the improvement of the position of Roma, as well as the Austrian policies aimed at the inclusion of workers from abroad, had unpredictable consequences. For example, as some of the respondents argued, they were only able to get "project work" in Slovenia, being employed on projects that were mostly aimed at improving the position of Roma. However, these projects did not offer any structural or longer-term employment, and in some cases were even used as an excuse by potential employers as to why they were not employed in more stable work in Slovenia.

In conclusion, what this chapter shows through the life stories of Romani individuals from Slovenia who work in Austria is that migration – both on a daily basis as well as permanent – is not in any way intrinsic to the Romani population and its culture. It is rather the active response of Romani citizens to different societal challenges, which might not have to do solely or mainly with direct discrimination, but depend instead on more structural accounts of inequalities, in which Roma find themselves having to navigate their mobility and employment choices.

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