Roma Diplomacy

Edited by Valeriu Nicolae and Hannah Slavik

policy center
roma & minorities

IDEBATE PRESS

DiPLO

ROMA DIPLOMACY

ROMA DIPLOMACY

Edited by Valeriu Nicolae and Hannah Slavik

International Debate Education Association
New York – Amsterdam – Brussels

DiploFoundation
Malta - Geneva

Policy Center for Roma and Minorities
Bucharest

Published in 2007 by
The International Debate Education Association
400 West 59th Street
New York, NY 10019

Cover Design: Sandra Grubic
Cover Photographs: Hannah Slavik

ISBN 978-1-932716-33-7

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Roma diplomacy / edited by Valeriu Nicolae and Hannah Slavik.

p. cm.

ISBN-13: 978-1-932716-33-7

1. Romanies—Europe. 2. Europe—Ethnic relations. I. Nicolae, Valeriu. II. Slavik, Hannah.

DX145.R625 2007

305.891'49704—dc22

2007017084

Printed in the United States of America

Contents

PART 3: CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS
ROMA DIPLOMACY: A CHALLENGE FOR EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS?
BRUSSELS, 8 – 9 DECEMBER, 2005

Preface

This volume is one of the lasting results of a project that had special significance for DiploFoundation: Roma Diplomacy. From a practical point of view, the project was significant because it was well supported both by donors and by a large variety of people working internationally in the fields of diplomacy and human rights. It successfully applied a new approach to addressing the problems facing the Roma people of Europe. From a personal point of view, the project was significant to me because of my own experience with and understanding of the Roma people and culture.

The project has roots in the beginning of this century. With the end of the Cold War and growing interest in Roma rights, the time was ripe to take steps towards developing negotiation and lobbying skills for representatives of Roma organisations. In 2001, Diplo, with the support of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, awarded a scholarship to Valeriu Nicolae, a young Roma activist from Romania, to participate in the Postgraduate Diploma Programme in Diplomacy. His success led to further Roma participants in our courses.

At the same time as Diplo was training the first Roma "diplomats," awareness was gradually growing in Europe of the need for professionally trained representatives of Roma communities. European institutions and governments needed good interlocutors to help them communicate with Roma communities and effectively address numerous specific problems. With the accession of new countries to the EU, Roma became the largest ethnic minority in the European Union.

All the main elements of our future project were falling into place. We had the first trained Roma diplomats, and an increasing demand for this type of training. We initiated the "Roma Diplomacy" project in 2004, coordinated by the first graduate from our Postgraduate Programme in Diplomacy, Valeriu Nicolae. In conceptualising the project, we received support from Ambassador Walter Fust, Director of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation. His agency provided the core funding, while other supporting organisations joined shortly, including the Norwegian Embassy in Bucharest, the US Embassy in Bucharest, the European Commission Delegation in Romania, the European Parliament Offices of Jaroka, Wiersma, Mohacsi, Levai, and Cashman, the Roma Participation Programme of the Open Society Institute, and the International Debate Education Association (IDEA). Professor Andre Liebich provided special academic support, and the Graduate Institute of International Studies in Geneva assisted with organising events in Geneva.

The project involved 25 young Roma activists from around Europe in a one-year training programme. They attended capacity-building skills training sessions and an academic course on diplomacy and human rights advocacy-related topics. They conducted individual and collaborative research; they constructed an online knowledge-sharing platform for Roma rights activists; they visited and had

internships in European Union institutions, international organisations, and non-governmental organisations. Finally, they took part in conferences with leading experts in the field with the aim of awareness building.

The project motto was "Virtual Diplomacy for a Virtual Nation," tying the project into one of Diplo's main areas of expertise and interest, the use of information and communication technology and the Internet for diplomatic representation. The Internet and ICT provide a natural tool for Roma representation, offering a cost-effective platform for a widely dispersed ethnic group, sometimes described as a virtual nation. The project was an enormous learning experience for all of us who were involved. We found we were often called upon to explain what we were doing, starting from confusion over terminology (many assumed Roma Diplomacy referred to the Italian capital city), to discussion about what constitutes diplomacy. Diplo considers the practice of diplomacy to be broader than the traditional representation of states through embassies. Diplomacy, whether with a capital "D" or a small "d," involves much more. As a set of techniques and processes, it lubricates relations in modern society and provides solutions for problems through negotiation and compromise. As the Roma Diplomacy project advanced, we realized that we were experimenting with new forms of diplomacy, which may be used in other contexts in the future.

This book is a printed record of the outcome of the project. It contains papers written by the academic supporters of the project, research conducted by project participants, and conference presentations. Other long-lasting results include the experience, knowledge, and networks developed by the programme participants. The "holy grail" for any institution is that a project will continue to live through its participants. In this case, a particularly important result is the establishment of a new Roma organisation – a think tank that aims to shape European policy on Roma, and on minorities in general in the long term.

The papers in the book provide a starting point for reflection and action. Roma diplomacy itself is both a long-term goal, and a means towards that goal. It will require time, effort, and real commitment from the different players involved in Roma issues today and in the future.

Jovan Kurbalija
Director
DiploFoundation

Acknowledgements

Many individuals and institutions contributed to the success of the Roma Diplomacy project, unfortunately too numerous to list here. Without their support, the project, and this publication, would not have been possible. Ambassador Walter Fust, and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, deserve special thanks both for the funding which made the project possible, and for the personal interest shown over the last few years. The Roma Diplomacy project also owes its success to the participants – the 25 young Roma activists from across Europe who dedicated their time during an entire year to learning and building a network. We have also learned much from them.

The editors would like to express particular appreciation to Jovan Kurbalija, Director of DiploFoundation, for his long-term understanding and initiative in extending Diplo's activities into the sphere of Roma rights.

For assistance in preparing the book, we thank Steve Slavik for his patient and meticulous editing, and Sandra Grubic for her sensitive work on the cover design and book layout.

Finally, we owe thanks to the International Debate Educational Association for publishing this book.

Contributors

Florin Botonogu is a young Roma with a university degree in Social Work and a Masters Degree in European Social Policies at Bucharest University. He also holds a Postgraduate Diploma in Contemporary Diplomacy from the University of Malta. His work experience is related to the fields of child protection, human rights, and social affairs. Since 2001, he has been working on Roma issues. He worked several years with Romani CRISS (a human rights NGO), and with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in a regional project in the Balkans. Since 2004, he has worked with the United Nations Development Program in the Romanian Country Office as a Social Coordinator and has contributed to the initiation and development of the study "Evaluation of Programs Targeting Roma Communities in Romania."

Richard Corbett is Deputy Leader of the Labour MEPs and a member of the Socialist Group in the European Parliament. He is the spokesperson for both the Labour Party and the Socialist Group on the Constitutional Committee of the European Parliament. The latter deals with the reform of the European Union, including the new constitution and Parliamentary procedure. Mr. Corbett is also on the Civil Liberties, Justice, and Home Affairs Committee, which deals with EU legislation and policies in the fields of asylum and immigration, citizen's rights, trans-national crime, and discrimination. Before election to the European Parliament, he worked from 1977 to 1981 in the voluntary sector for youth organisations. From 1981 to 1989, he was a civil servant. In 1989, he was appointed Policy Advisor to the Socialist Group of the European Parliament, with particular responsibility for the 1991 Inter-Governmental Conference that drafted the Treaty of Maastricht. Mr. Corbett has written widely on European affairs, including co-writing the standard textbook on the European Parliament, now in its sixth edition.

David M. Crowe is a Professor of History at Elon University and a Professor of Legal History at the Elon University School of Law. He is President Emeritus of the Association for the Study of Nationalities at Columbia University and has been a Visiting Scholar at the Columbia University Harriman Institute. He serves on the editorial boards of *Nationalities Papers* and *Ethno-Politics*. He is the author of *A History of the Gypsies of Eastern Europe and Russia* and co-editor of *The Gypsies of Eastern Europe*. He has published articles on the Roma in the *Austrian History Yearbook, Osteuropa, Jahrbuchern fur Geschichte Osteuropas,* and other journals in Europe and North America.

Marcel Dediu received a BA in 2001 from the Political Science Faculty of the National School of Political Studies in Bucharest. From 2001 to 2003, he continued studies at the University of Geneva, from which he received a Master's degree in May 2003 with

a dissertation on the interest of European institutions in solving Roma issues on the international agenda. Currently, he is undertaking PhD studies in Political Science at the University of Geneva. His main research subject is the role of international institutions in the formulation, influence, and promotion of specific discourses and public policies for Roma at the international level. Currently he works for Spolu International Foundation, a Dutch non-profit organisation supporting Roma organisations in South-Eastern Europe.

Asmet Elezovski is a Roma who lives and works in Macedonia. He is a graduate physiotherapist, a member of the European Roma and Travellers Forum and of the European Centre for Antiziganism Research, and presently is director of the National Roma Centrum. His active participation in the Roma movement started as a journalist and editor of Roma broadcasting programs and written journals. He is an initiator of the Roma movement in Macedonia and on an international level. Since 1992, he has worked in human rights and building policy for Roma people, gaining experience with EP, OSCE ODIHR, OSI RPP, Romani CRISS, ERRC, CoE, Friedrich Herbert Stiftung, and others. He has published reports on Kosovo Roma and two books: *Between Fiction and Reality: Roma in Macedonia* and *Temporary Life: Chronic Roma Refugees from Kosovo in Macedonia*. In 2005/06, Mr. Elezovski attended the Roma Diplomacy Program offered by DiploFoundation.

Janette Gronfors is a Finnish Roma woman who has worked as a civil servant on Roma education and media issues in Finland, and, recently, as a Roma education consultant and then as a Gypsy and Traveller Development Officer in Waltham Forest Council in London, United Kingdom. She is the chairperson of a Finnish national Roma organisation, Nevo Romary, as well as communication coordinator and secretary for the International Roma Women Network. Ms. Gronfors also has membership in many professional bodies. She is interested in public relations and public diplomacy.

Ian Hancock has been involved in the Romani movement since the 1960s. He joined the International Romani Union at the first World Romani Congress in 1971 and was part of its delegation to New York that successfully petitioned for Romani representation in the UN. He currently represents the IRU on the UN Economic and Social Council and in UNICEF, and is the North American member of the International Roma Parliament (Vienna). In 1998, President Clinton appointed him to represent Roma on the United States Holocaust Memorial Council. He is a recipient of The Gamaliel Chair in Peace and Justice and accepted the Rafto Foundation's international human rights prize in Norway in 1997. The recipient of a number of awards in recognition of his work and has authored numerous articles and books dealing with Roma-related topics. He is currently Director of The Romani Archives and Documentation Center at The University of Texas at Austin.

Gabriela Hrabanova completed High School of Production in Advertisement with a specialisation in management in art and advertisement. Subsequently, she worked for three years in the advertising agency CMB Media Ltd. as a project manager. In

February 2004, she completed a BA at the New Anglo-American College in Prague and, in 2006, after finishing the online programme in Public Diplomacy offered through DiploFoundation, she started an MA in International Relations and Diplomacy at the New Anglo-American University. Gabriela has been a member of Athinganoi, an association of Romani high school and university students, since 1999. Since 2003, she has been the Chairwoman of the Board of Directors. From 2002 to 2004, she worked as a Roma eRider in the Roma Information Project, focusing on consulting and training with Romani non-governmental organisations, to improve their planning and development of NGO organisational skills. Currently, Gabriela works for Athinganoi as Executive Director, coordinating works, managing projects, and representing the organisation to the public. She is involved in the Decade of Roma Inclusion as a member of the governmental committee for the Decade and the on the Committee for the Elimination of All Discrimination.

Ibrahim Ibrahimi was born in Gostivar, West Macedonia. He finished primary and secondary education in Gostivar, and graduated from the Faculty for Economics in Skopje. Presently, he is writing his MA thesis on "Cost Benefits in Roma Educational Projects." Mr. Ibrahimi was a program coordinator in Romaversitas and the Open Society Institute Macedonia, and, in 2004, he worked with the European Centre for Minority Issues. Subsequently, he worked as a consultant to the Council of Europe on Roma and employment, and has served as a member of Macedonia's Romani delegation to the Decade of Roma Inclusion and as a member of the Macedonian Helsinki Committee. Mr. Ibrahimi was included in the Roma Access Program and has also finished the one-year programme on Public Diplomacy offered by DiploFoundation.

Sakibe Jashari was born on June 12, 1975, to a Roma father and an Ashkali mother in Ferizaj, Kosovo. She completed primary and secondary education during the worst period for education in Kosovo. During the war in Kosovo, in March 1999 she and her family fled to Macedonia where they stayed for three months. There, as a volunteer, she helped "Doctors of the World" with translation for Kosovo refugees. Her stay in Macedonia ended the day the agreement was signed by Albanians and Serbs. She and her family returned to Kosovo in June 1999 and, after two months, she began her first job with Care International. After this job, she gained working experience with different international NGOs and organisations. For the last seven years, she has worked with the United Nations Mission in Kosovo. She currently attends a distance learning undergraduate program at the London School of Economic and Social Science, majoring in Politics and International Relations.

Andre Liebich obtained his PhD at Harvard University. He was a professor of Political Science at the Universite du Quebec a Montreal until 1989. Since then he has been Professor of International History and Politics at the Graduate Institute of International Studies in Geneva, where he is now also Director of Graduate Studies. He has been a visiting professor at Universite de Montreal, McGill University, Universite de Fribourg, and Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj. He has held fellowships at St. Antony's College,

Oxford; the Russian Research Center, Harvard; the Hoover Institution, Stanford; the Kennan Institute, Washington; the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton; and the Institute for Historical Research, University of London. He is the author of *Beyond Ideology and Utopia: The Politics and Philosophy of August Cieszkowski* (Reidel, 1979), *From the Other Shore: Russian Social Democracy after 1921* (Harvard, 1997), *Les minorites nationales en Europe centrale et orientale* (Georg, 1997). He has edited volumes and published articles and chapters on political theory, European history, minorities, citizenship, and nationalism. In 2005–2006, he was chair of the Advisory Council of the Roma Diplomacy Project.

Saimir Mile is a Rrom from Albania who has lived in France since 1996. He obtained a Master's degree in International Law from the Sorbonne University and in Rromani Linguistics and Civilization at the Paris National Institute of Oriental Languages and Civilizations. His research focused on identity and identification of European minorities without compact territory through the Rromani example. For the last decade, he has been involved in several activities at the institutional as well as non-governmental level. Among others, he has been contracted by the OSCE as a secretary and moderator of the Rromani working group on the Action Plan for Roma and Sinti, and currently he is the president of the NGO, The Voice of the Rroms.

Valeriu Nicolae is currently General Secretary of the European Roma Grassroots Organisation, an international network of Roma organisations working at the community level. From 2003 to 2005, he worked as Deputy Director of the European Roma Information Office in Brussels. He has an academic and professional background in programming and management, and many years of experience as an activist for Roma rights in Romania. In 2001, he was awarded a scholarship to attend DiploFoundation's Postgraduate Diploma in Diplomacy and, in 2006, he completed a MA in Contemporary Diplomacy at the University of Malta. Valeriu has published extensively on the topic of Roma and human rights, regularly presents papers at international conferences, and conducts training seminars on human rights and media skills. From 2005 to 2006, he worked with Diplo as coordinator for the Roma Diplomacy project.

Valery Novoselsky was born in April 1970 in an assimilated Romani family in Dnipropetrovs'k, Ukraine. From 1991 to 1994, he studied history in Dnipropetrovs'k National University. From 1993 to 1995, he worked in an evangelical mission in Moscow, from which he immigrated to Israel in autumn 1995. From 1996 to 2002, he studied and worked as an English-Russian translator in the Galilee Bible College, the Israeli branch of American Global University. He obtained a BA in Theology and Bible in 2002. He has been part of the international Romani movement since the summer of 1999 in his capacity of an editor of the Roma Virtual Network. He is an alumnus of Diplo's Roma Diplomacy Programme (2005–2006). Currently, he works as a consultant with the European Roma Information Office, the European Roma Rights Centre, and the International Debate Education Association. Beside his active involvement in the

international Roma movement, Valery participates in public initiatives of Israeli Arab organisations.

Lisa Pavan-Woolfe studied in Italy and the US, graduating in Political Science from the University of Padua, Italy, where she also taught as an assistant professor of Anglo-American Law. In 1975, she joined the European Commission where she has worked in a variety of areas: anti-trust, transport, environmental and consumer protection. In the early 80s, she gained experience in the Commission's central coordination division, the Secretariat General. In 1993, she started in the Commission's department for labour and social affairs that funds vocational training and education programmes in EU member states. She was then appointed director for international and horizontal affairs in the same Directorate General. She also covered integration of people with disabilities, fundamental rights, and antidiscrimination. She has been responsible for EU policy development in the area of equal opportunities for women and men. She is now principal advisor with a mandate for the European Year of Equal Opportunities. She is the author of several articles on European matters and a book on the inter-relations between employment policy and social issues in Europe.

Elly Rijnierse studied Political Science and International Relations at the University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands (1986-1992). From 1994-2000, she worked on a thesis on "Democratisation and Globalisation in Benin: the Position and Interests of Cotton Farmers in Benin." From 2001 to 2006, she worked as Program Officer for Albania and Georgia, as well as the Eastern and Western Europe region, for Cordaid, the Department of Central and Eastern Europe. Her special field of interest was minorities in Europe, specifically the Roma. Ms. Rijnierse worked in a Strategic Alliance with the Justice and Peace Commission, the Netherlands, to support a network of minority organisations in Europe aimed at the Equal and Effective Participation of Minorities. In January 2007, Ms. Rijnierse started as Program Officer for Nigeria and Chad within the Sector Participation of Cordaid. Her specific field of interest is the participation of civil society in relation to the extractive industries.

Bernard Rorke was born in Dublin and lives in Budapest. He is the Director of the Open Society Institute's Roma Participation Program. He has an MSc in Politics and Sociology from Birkbeck College University of London and a PhD in Political Theory from the Centre for the Study of Democracy, University of Westminster. His thesis title was "Beyond Friends and Enemies: The Politics of Irish Nationalism in the Twentieth Century."

Hannah Slavik is the Educational Programme Director for DiploFoundation, a non-profit development organisation working primarily in the field of online education for diplomats and others involved in international relations. She has eight years of experience in designing educational methodology, planning educational policy, coordinating materials development, and evaluation for online learning programmes

in the field of diplomacy, international relations, and human rights. She holds a Post-graduate Diploma in Online and Distance Education and an MA in Linguistics. She has edited two recent Diplo publications, *Language and Diplomacy* and *Intercultural Communication and Diplomacy*. Over the last seven years, she has been involved in Roma rights as a volunteer with a number of different organisations, including the European Roma Rights Centre in Budapest. In 2005–2006, she worked as the educational advisor and online course coordinator for Diplo's Roma Diplomacy project.

Eva Sobotka read Political Science at the Central European University before receiving her PhD in Politics and International Relations from the University of Lancaster in 2004, studying under Professor Hugh Miall. Subsequently, she accepted a position in the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia, which became the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights in 2007. She has been active in academic and policy research and in advocacy of human rights over the past ten years, devoting her attention to conflict situations (Northern Ireland, the Middle East), Muslim communities, and Roma and Travellers in Europe. Her research has aided the work of a number of institutions, including the European Roma Rights Centre, Save the Children, the Open Society Institute, The World Bank, the Council of Europe, OSCE, and the European Commission.

Vladimir Spidla has been Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, and Equal Opportunities at the European Commission since 2004. Prior to that, he was Prime Minister of the Czech Republic, Minister of Labour and Social Affairs and Chairman of the Employment Committee of the Czech Parliament. From 2001 to 2004, he held the position of the Chairman of the Czech Social Democratic Party, a non-communist left-wing party that he helped to re-establish after the 1989 revolution. He holds a PhD in History and Prehistory from Charles University in Prague. In his political work, Mr. Spidla has always emphasised a search for practical, non-ideological solutions, while putting an accent on their human dimension, rather than on their purely technocratic aspects. In addition, he has long had a personal interest in issues concerning human rights, dignity, and social inclusion of the Roma, towards whom he has shown a deep sympathy. In the early 1990s, as the Head of the Labour Office in Jindrichuv Hradec, he often dealt with Roma clients, challenged discriminatory practices of employers, and was among the first who successfully tested micro-credits for small Roma businesses. He also has personal experience of working closely with Roma in various jobs, including manual labour, which he performed during the period of political repression in the 1970s and 1980s when he could not freely practice his profession.

Gyula Vamosi has participated in the Roma movement since 1996. He started by running a local Romani community organisation in his home town that has grown into a national association of Romani community leaders. As a Romani-English conference interpreter he has gained experience by attending hundreds of meetings and international conferences. He is the author of the first Romani-English political dictionary. Working with numerous local Romani organisations, Gyula has become a

professional consultant and eRider, roving throughout Europe. In recent years, he has had an integral part of bringing the Decade of Roma Inclusion from the elite, international level to that of the average Roma in Hungary. Mr. Vamosi grew up in a traditional Romani family in the southern city of Pecs in Hungary. He and his wife, Marika, are parents of three boys.

Beate Winkler has been Director of the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia in Vienna since 1998, when this independent agency of the EU was established. She started the Centre from scratch and has been re-elected twice. She has worked in the field of migration, integration, and discrimination for more than 25 years and was the first female director of an agency of the EU. Following the decision of the Council of the European Union in December 2006, the mandate of the Centre has now been extended to the Fundamental Rights Agency of the EU. Ms. Winkler holds a Doctorate in Law from the University of Cologne. In the course of her career, she has gained experience in such fields as politics, management, media, science, culture, education, the building up of networks, and interdisciplinary co-operation at the national, European, and international levels. She has published widely on intercultural issues in magazines, specialist literature, and weeklies; and has acted as editor of a number of books on the topics of migration, integration, intercultural dialogue, and xenophobia.

Introduction

Valeriu Nicolae and Hannah Slavik

On paper, European and international institutions have made significant progress in the last 30 years in addressing the problems facing the Roma minority in Europe. Currently (early 2007), the European Parliament has seven resolutions on Roma[1] and the European Union Council has three.[2] In addition, excellent reports have been written[3] and the European Commission has produced over one hundred documents focused on or including Roma. The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) has adopted an Action Plan for Roma and Sinti, the United Nations has a Roma-focused recommendation (Rec. 27 from 2000), and the Council of Europe has introduced a definition of anti-Gypsyism that is recognised by the European Union.

Intergovernmental organisations have additionally advocated measures to include Roma in the social and political activities of national states. On the national level, documents such as Joint Inclusion Memorandums (JIM) and National Action Plans (NAP) now include Roma-focused chapters in a good number of countries. At least ten states have national strategies for Roma.

Yet, even the most optimistic politicians and bureaucrats would hesitate to claim real progress when it comes to Roma. Extreme nationalism, social exclusion, and racism remain rampant, and Europe's 10 to 15 million Roma are those most strongly affected of any European ethnic group. In fact, in the field of employment, the worst exclusion faced by Roma is precisely within the European and international institutions. This exclusion is particularly visible when we look at efforts made to include other European ethnic minorities within these institutions.

Why do Roma remain excluded within European and international institutions? To a large degree, it can be seen as a consequence of the focus of efforts made by these

[1] Resolutions on: the Situation of Gypsies in the Community (1984); Education for Children whose Parents have no Fixed Abode (1984); Illiteracy and Education for Children whose Parents have no Fixed Abode (1989); Gypsies in Community (1994); Discrimination against Roma and Sinti (1995); the Situation of Roma and Sinti in the European Union (2005); the Situation of Roma and Sinti Women in the European Union (2006).

[2] Resolution No. 89/C 153/02 of the European Union Council on School Provision for Gypsy and Traveller Children (1989); Resolution of the Council and the Ministers of Education Meeting within the Council on School Provisions for Children of Occupational Travellers (1989); Resolution of the Council and Representatives of Member States; Governments Meeting within the Council on the Response of Educational Systems to the Problems of Racism and Xenophobia (1995).

[3] EU Support for Roma Communities (2002 - DG Enlargement); Situation of Roma in an enlarged Europe (2004 - DG Employment and Social Affairs); Review of the European Union PHARE assistance to Roma minorities (2004 - DG Employment and Social Affairs); Thematic Comment No 3: "The Protection of Minorities in the EU" (2004 - EU Network of Independent Experts in Fundamental Rights); Equality and Non-Discrimination – Annual Report 2005 (special section on "Improving the situation of Roma in the EU") (2005 - DG Employment and Social Affairs Key Voices); Access to Justice (DG Employment and Social Affairs).

institutions on behalf of Roma. For the last two decades, European institutions have equated Roma with uneducated, unskilled, unemployed, poor, and often criminal populations residing mainly in ghettos and traditional Romani communities. This part of the Roma population fits the negative stereotypes held by the majority population. European initiatives targeting the social inclusion of Roma have focused exclusively on this part of the Roma population. No European awareness campaign has ever targeted successfully integrated Roma, or the even larger group of ethnically-mixed Roma.

This approach has contributed to the significant lack of improvements in the lives of Roma, and, in fact, may have even worsened the situation. As the plight of these stereotypical Roma has been brought to the focus in mass media, the social stigma related to Roma has increased and successful Roma feel increasingly less inclined to declare their ethnic origins. In addition, elements of the Romani movement have become visibly radicalised, following the same model as extremist nationalistic movements.

The exclusive focus on the disadvantaged hinders the recruitment of well-educated Roma human resources within European institutions, because qualified Roma are not acknowledged to exist or actively sought. Poorly qualified Roma hired to meet quotas lead to poor Roma leadership and representation, further alienating existing Roma intellectuals. As a result, well-integrated Roma continue to prefer to hide their ethnic identity. Positive role models are largely absent and the social stigma attached to Roma ethnicity continues unchallenged.

In 2005-2006, DiploFoundation, in cooperation with Roma organisations, ran the *Roma Diplomacy* programme: a comprehensive and long-term training programme for Roma-rights activists. In contrast with most European initiatives, this programme focussed on young Roma "elites" – well educated and successful Roma men and women working actively in Roma non-governmental organisations, international organisations, and national institutions. The programme aimed:

- to create a strong group of Roma **"public diplomats"** with the ability to bridge the gap between Roma civil society and government/EU institutions;
- to create and build on existing **Roma rights networks** to help activists employ diplomatic channels for fast, appropriate response to challenges facing Roma;
- to facilitate the **sharing of research and experience** of Roma and human rights activists with a focus on diplomacy, through ICT tools and a collaborative online platform;
- to build **practical capacity among Roma rights activists** through participation in conferences and internships in EU institutions, international organisations, and non-governmental organisations;
- to form the basis of a **Roma "think tank"** to inform and steer the process of Roma social inclusion in a united Europe; and
- to build **awareness of Roma rights issues** on the local, national, and international level through academic dialogue, research, and the dissemination of information.

The programme was highly successful. It attracted funding from several sources, after the courageous initial commitment of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and the personal interest of its director, Ambassador Walter Fust. Among its supporters, the project can count the former President of the European Parliament; the European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities; several MEPs; the Director of the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia; the Roma and Travellers division at the Council of Europe; a number of ambassadors and their embassy staff; the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs; the Open Society Institute, a number of leading academics on Roma and minority issues; the Graduate Institute of International Studies in Geneva; and most of the Roma "diplomats" currently active at the international level. The project could not have succeeded without their active support and, in many cases, active involvement.

In terms of lasting results, the 25 project participants together with the project team:

- completed a year-long capacity-building educational programme, improving their background knowledge, professional skills, and experience;
- conducted research relevant to their professional and personal areas of interest, in some cases leading to articles for this publication;
- established a network for sharing information and coordinating joint responses to issues affecting Roma in Europe;
- through study visits, built contacts with individuals in European and international institutions working on Roma issues;
- improved their information technology skills for representing and advocating the Roma;
- attended conferences and made presentations on Roma-related issues;
- completed internships in non-governmental and European institutions;
- attended further courses in diplomacy offered through DiploFoundation;
- conceived of and, in 2007, realised the establishment of a European Roma think-tank – the Policy Center for Roma and Minorities.

All in all, the cost of the one-year programme was less than the cost of a two-day European-level conference.

* * *

This publication is another tangible result of the Roma Diplomacy project – a collection of papers written or inspired through the project. The volume includes statements by European-level civil servants presented at the 2005 Roma Diplomacy conference in Brussels, papers by academics working in the human and Roma rights fields, and research by the programme participants. This may be the first collection of papers where Roma authors outnumber non-Roma.

Public diplomacy employs a wide variety of methods and techniques to address a variety of audiences. Similarly, the papers in this volume cover a variety of topics, ranging from consideration of just what the term "Roma Diplomacy" may mean and include, to research aimed at promoting awareness of the situation of Roma in different regions and countries. Many of the papers provide recommendations for policy makers. The diverse range of topics covered reflects the diverse concerns and understanding of the authors when asked to write about Roma diplomacy: they chose topics that reflect their own experience and reality.

Papers in the first section of the book set out to define Roma Diplomacy and to explore different approaches. *Andre Liebich* opens the investigation with a "dissection" of the term "Roma Diplomacy." He first looks at diplomacy itself, and then considers how Roma may employ diplomacy, to what ends, and within which limits. *Valeriu Nicolae* works towards a definition of anti-Gypsyism. He then analyses the role different types of diplomacy has played in interethnic conflict, and proposes the establishment of a Roma diplomatic corps that may negotiate more sustainable inclusion policies and aid in resolving inter-ethnic conflicts. He hopes such a group might also bring about a change of attitudes within diplomatic and political circles and within majority populations. *Ian Hancock* takes a step back to address issues of diplomacy solely within the Romani world. He suggests that because Roma as a group are fragmented, "we must be able to talk to each other before we are in a position to talk to anyone else."

David Crowe takes a historical, comparative approach, exploring the differences and similarities in the experiences of the Roma in Eastern Europe and African-Americans in the United States. He suggests that this comparison may provide the Roma with useful lessons about how to deal, diplomatically and pragmatically, with the various forces and problems that have kept them at the fringe of society. *Florin Botonogu* suggests approaches for the United Nations to address the Roma situation. He proposes that the Roma movement has much to learn from movements of different minority groups, like indigenous peoples, and that international institutions can apply different, successful instruments for the benefit of other minority groups.

Bernard Rorke looks at the disparity between the expansion of democracy and the rights granted to citizens in Eastern and Central European states since 1989, and the capacity of Roma to access these rights. He evaluates the work of the Open Society Institute in this field, stressing the role of Roma civil society participation in initiatives for Roma. Through an analysis of the interaction between state and non-state actors, regional, international, and inter-governmental organisations involved in Roma policy, *Eva Sobotka* defines the limitations and opportunities of the different actors. She suggests steps to improve implementation of policies and, thus, the situation of Roma and Travellers in Europe.

Marcel Dediu discusses the role of the European Union as a promoter of non-traditional forms of diplomacy, such as "Roma diplomacy." As an example, he analyses the way that the European Union has indirectly come to give Roma representatives the possibility of a voice on the European agenda. *Asmet Elezovski* looks at the enlargement process as a unique opportunity to influence for the better the situation of Roma minorities in Europe and as a critical time for Roma to enter into dialogue.

Valery Novoselsky examines the effects of the Internet as a platform that has allowed Roma communities to conduct diplomatic, political, cultural, and media relations, providing the basis of the formation of a non-territorial Roma nation. The use of the Internet is also analysed as an example of public diplomacy, a means for Roma to make the public aware of Roma community concerns.

Returning to terminology, this section closes with *Saimir Mile*'s examination of the use and effects of different vocabulary to represent Roma and other minorities associated with Roma. He shows how international organisations have included the term "Rroma" within blanket descriptions that cover other minority groups, to their detriment.

The second section of the volume takes the reader on a journey to a number of countries with Roma populations, both within and outside of the European Union. *Gabriela Hrabanova* presents an overview of anti-Gypsyism in the Czech Republic, including an analysis of the portrayal of Roma in the media. Many contemporary media organisations post articles on websites and offer discussion facilities. She analyses the online public discussion surrounding articles on Roma posted on such websites. *Janette Gronfors* reports on her study of the participation and visibility of Roma women in Finnish society. She points out that Roma women recognise their importance as mediators, and how skilfully they actually use public diplomacy in their lives, concluding with the hope that in the future they will further develop these skills for use in their communities and beyond.

Gyula Vamosi reveals unacknowledged challenges Hungarian Roma communities confront in accessing European Union funds. He supports his concern that grassroots Romani civil society organisations typically participate as marionettes in development partnerships through a review of Roma project results. *Ibrahim Ibrahimi* investigates the level of Roma participation in public administration in the Republic of Macedonia, providing explanations for the poor level of inclusion and proposing measures to combat the problem. Finally, *Sakibe Jashari* analyses the cultural and traditional distinctions between three minority communities of Kosovo: the Roma, the Ashkali, and the Egyptians. She examines the challenges of establishing a unified political body and concludes with practical recommendations for better representation and empowerment of these communities in Kosovo's decision-making bodies.

The final section of the volume presents a number of statements given at the December 2005 Roma Diplomacy conference in Brussels. This conference brought together European-level policy makers, representatives of intergovernmental organisations, civil society, and Roma organisations from across Europe. The conference was opened by the then President of the European Parliament, *Josep Borrell Fontelles,* who referred to a "historical amnesia" that has engulfed the persecution and discrimination experienced by Roma. *Graham Watson,* Leader of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe, said "Roma lack both a visible, vocal elite and institutions committed to protecting their rights. This translates into little or no political influence and complete under-representation at government level." He proposed that one of the final outcomes of the Roma Diplomacy project might be the formation of a think tank to put Roma issues high on the European Union agenda.

Beate Winkler, Director of the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia, proposed concrete measures in the areas of policy implementation, empowerment of Roma, combating anti-Gypsyism, and data collection. *Richard Corbett,* Deputy Leader of the Labour MEPs, suggested that the response of the Union and its member states to the situation facing Roma would be "a test of its success or otherwise in achieving the objectives of equality, non-discrimination, and equal treatment laid down in treaties." He proposed the establishment of an all-party Roma intergroup to ensure a structured dialogue and review of anti-discrimination legislation to include and address the specific problems facing Roma. *Lisa Pavan-Woolfe* of the Directorate-General Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities at the European Commission, outlined how the European Union promotes gender equality. She said that "empowering Romani women to take part in diplomacy and politics is . . . a sign of mature democracy."

Elly Rijnierse described how Cordaid has been supporting Roma civil society organisations with the aim of facilitating social cohesion. She provides a specific example of how a civil society organisation in Bulgaria has played a significant role in the coordination of policies and actions of the authorities and institutions that address Roma communities.

Vladimir Spidla, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, closed the conference, underlining the need for a positive and common approach: "The creation of a highly qualified, articulate group of European Roma with diplomatic skills is not a challenge for the European Union; rather, it is a very useful asset in our efforts to deal with that challenge of Roma inequality and social exclusion."

The volume ends with a set of recommendations compiled by the participants in the Roma Diplomacy conference.

PART 1:
DEFINITIONS AND APPROACHES

What in the World is Roma Diplomacy?

Andre Liebich

The pairing of "Roma" and "diplomacy" appears to be so unusual that the only relevant entries in Google for this conjunction relate exclusively to the Roma Diplomacy Project that has given rise to this book. Two substantial, recent monographs on the international presence of the Roma (Vermeersch, 2006; Klimova-Alexander, 2005) do not even have an index reference for "diplomacy." Clearly, "Roma diplomacy" is a novel and unexpected concept made all the more striking through its linguistic oddity.[1]

Having caught attention with a startling title, the Roma Diplomacy Project raises questions about the suitability or adequacy of the term "Roma diplomacy." The purpose of this paper is to probe such questions with a view to establishing the possibilities, as well as the limitations, of a Roma diplomacy. Broadly speaking, this is an inquiry into the specificity of Roma diplomacy. I propose to proceed by looking, first, at understandings of diplomacy and of diplomats and then at the difficulties, but also the opportunities, that such understandings offer for the subject of our concern.

What's Special about Diplomacy?

We have all heard the throwaway phrase that a diplomat is "a man sent abroad to lie on behalf of his country." The phrase was always silly and it is even sillier now than it was in the past.[2] A diplomat may well be a woman rather than a man; as the Roma case we are considering here suggests, a diplomat may not have a country; and lying has never been a sound long-term policy. Whatever it once was, diplomatic activity has multiplied and diversified. We now combine the term diplomacy with one or another of an almost infinite number of modifiers: dollar diplomacy, oil diplomacy, environmental diplomacy, humanitarian diplomacy, multi-stakeholder diplomacy and so on (Barston, 1997). The new diplomacy emphasizes the concerns of peoples, not those of governments (Davenport, nd). Harold Nicolson, a very classical diplomat, was close to the mark when, several decades ago, he defined diplomacy as "the ordered conduct of relations between one group of human beings and another group alien to themselves" (Nicolson, 1969, p. 5).

Nicolson's qualification – "the *ordered* [my emphasis] conduct of relations" – is a most significant one. Diplomacy does not cover all sorts of human interaction or intergroup relations. It involves relations that are both orderly and that take place within a given order. Now, orderly relations are those that aim, through sustained dialogue and cooperation, at some sort of communality, a community of purpose, if possible, and, at the very least, a community of understanding. The common use of the term diplomatic to mean tactful is merely figurative, but it points us in a definite direction. Diplomats are cultural bridge builders, as a recent interesting article has eloquently demonstrated (Hofstede, 2000).

A way to approach the subject of diplomacy is to consider what diplomacy is not. Diplomacy is not a market-driven process, except in a very figurative way. Above all, however, diplomacy is not war or armed struggle. Where outright force begins, diplomacy ends. One might go further and suggest that diplomacy is not litigation. Diplomacy is not a one-off, zero-sum contest, where I win and you lose. Diplomats work for the long-term and consider cumulative gains. They seek continued cooperation, rather than clear closure. They may fantasize about wiping out their opponents (as we all do in moments of frustration), but they know they will have to deal with these same interlocutors anew and they must, therefore, search for agreement rather than elimination.

One might say that diplomacy is less like a football match than like a musical performance. Although this may be stretching the point, since harmony is not the rule on the international scene, the "Concert of Nations" was, nevertheless, long a staple figure of the vocabulary of international relations. It had its first and second fiddles, some instruments screeched, but the point was to harmonise rather than clash. *Accorder ses violons*, as the French say, and the expression applies to the Concert of Nations as well. The South African president, Thabo Mbeki, has pushed the point I am making even further. In his words, "I don't know what quiet diplomacy means. All diplomacy is quiet. If there is shouting it is not diplomacy" (Mbeki, 2006).

What's behind Diplomacy?

Diplomatic conduct is orderly, in the sense I have outlined above. It also takes place, as I have suggested, within a given order, a set of political realities and legal fictions that we call the international order. As we know all too well, the fundamental or, to some minds, the only building blocks of this international order are sovereign states. Many authors, decrying the privileges of states in a world where other actors and forces have more real importance, have produced a vast literature on the topic.[3] Academics and policy makers seek to de-mystify that modern misnomer, the "nation-state," by pointing out that this term applies to only a handful of today's almost two hundred states. Most states contain more than one nation, in any recognizable sense of the latter term, and the vast majority of the world's nations do not have their own state (Liebich, 2003). In recognition of such realities, some authors have given up speaking of titular majority nations, say, the Spanish in Spain, as opposed to minorities, such as, say, the Basques. They have looked instead toward concepts such as "multiculturalism" and "consociationalism" or they have adopted a vocabulary that relies upon the concept of "co-nations" (Malloy, 2005). Through these expedients, one can make even non-state actors subjects of diplomacy. Thus, Spanish diplomacy is also Basque diplomacy; admittedly, this is not a satisfactory solution for all Basques, but it is a step away from diplomatic facelessness.

Such theoretical innovations go only so far in furthering the cause of the Roma. The tacit assumption in all such discussions is that the collectivities involved – minorities, co-nations, nations, or whatever other designation is adopted – have an identifiable territorial basis. Even diasporas, a term in great vogue today (Shain and Aharon, 2003), have homelands which they do not inhabit, but to which they can

refer.[4] In tacit imitation of such diaspora identification, Roma activists have invoked India as a mythical or historical homeland. New Delhi diplomacy has sometimes even gone along with such claims, but it has never done so in a meaningful way.[5] Moreover, it appears increasingly clear that, historically, the Roma acquired an identity as Roma only after they had left their Indian homeland, if, indeed, they came or they all came from India (Fraser, 2000; Hancock, 2000). The recently coined formulation that Roma constitute the first or the only pan-European minority is not of much help either for bestowing a diplomatic personality upon the Roma. The notion of a European diplomacy is tenuous and a quarter or so of the world's Romani population lives outside Europe, even if one understands Europe in the narrow sense of members of the European Union.

The international state system has witnessed some creative attempts to establish legal territorial identity where no such identity exists in fact. Prime among the examples from which Roma might seek inspiration are the Knights of Malta, formally entitled the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of St. John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta. This entity claims sovereignty, even though its present sovereign territory is limited to a Roman palazzo. The Order issues widely recognized passports and it enjoys permanent observer status in the United Nations General Assembly, if only as an organisation than as a state.[6] In fact, the only non-member of the United Nation with observer status as a state is the Vatican, whose territory extends over 0.4 square kilometres; its territoriality must certainly be considered symbolic. Even the smallest member state in the United Nations, the Principality of Monaco, extends over 1.9 square kilometres. In comparison, the microstates of the Pacific, Tuvalu (25 square kilometres) and Nauru (21 square kilometres) appear as empires. Surely, some philanthropist somewhere or, better yet, some collective effort might purchase a piece of real estate of these dimensions to serve as a Roma homeland. One could even compromise on the matter of sovereignty. The Principality of Andorra, a United Nations member, lies under the joint tutelage of the President of France (co-prince!) and a Spanish bishop. A more limited example of quasi-sovereignty is Mount Athos, the Autonomous Monastic State of the Holy Mountain, which operates under Greek sovereign protection. Territoriality may be in the eyes of the beholder.

What's Really behind Diplomacy?

Territoriality may remain pre-eminent in the present international state order, but it is qualified by an even more fundamental constitutive principle of the world order, that of the formal equality of states. The smallest, poorest, and weakest state is the legal equal of the greatest superpower. I suggest that the tenet of the legal equality of states opens a door towards countering the handicap of statelessness and, thus, it creates the possibility of Roma diplomacy.

The principle that all states are equal is a fiction. Who would dream that the weight of a microstate compares with that of a great power? The fiction of equality, however, serves primarily as a symbolic acknowledgement of dignity. It operates as a demand for respect within the international order, obliging other members to bestow this respect or to risk the disruption of the system as a whole. The task of any

non-state actor that seeks recognition in the international arena lies in obtaining the sort of respect accorded automatically to states. This respect will not entail legal equality, given the present international arrangements, but it can offer non-state actors or non-state stakeholders the measure of dignity they will require to practice their own diplomacy.

What are the means by which a non-state actor can win such recognition? Colossal wealth is one possibility. Microsoft outranks many states, in fact, if not in law. More than a century of universal humanitarian work, resulting in a record of service, utility, efficiency, and integrity, may be another means. This is how the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has come to acquire the enviable position it holds as one of a small group of very special non-governmental organisations with particular (though, of course, not state) status at the United Nations and in dealings with states.

Options such as those available to Bill Gates or to the ICRC are not available to Roma diplomats. Therefore, Roma must rely on other assets and skills. They may draw on the personal charisma of Roma leaders and on the good will of other actors. The latter may be individuals, such as George Soros, whose Open Society Foundation and other initiatives have been in the forefront of support for Roma. They may be non-governmental organisations, international organisations, and even some states. Roma diplomats can invoke the numerical strength of their constituency – ten to fifteen million people in Europe alone – and the perceived urgency of addressing Roma issues. Roma diplomats, thus, have a number of instruments at their disposition.

What Might Diplomats Do?

If Roma diplomats are to use these instruments effectively, they must adopt an appropriate stance towards themselves and among themselves. We might best describe this stance as one of dignity and pride.

As long as others have a perception of Roma as victims, it will be difficult for others to consider Roma diplomats as equal in dignity to their interlocutors. Victims and perpetrators or even victims and non-victims are, by definition, not equal. The stance that victims must assume by virtue of their position is that of claimants or morally empowered supplicants who appeal (perhaps even forcefully) for concessions and compensation. Credible diplomats, however, cannot be supplicants. They must be partners and they will serve themselves better by engendering an attitude of respect rather than one of condescension or pity. To be sure, internalizing a victim status as an unchanging reality of life is a condition that corresponds to the fate of the Roma (Project on Ethnic Relations, 1992). However, as Beate Winkler, Director of the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia, put it at the Roma Diplomacy Project's conference in Brussels in December 2005: presenting oneself as a victim is counter-productive because ultimately people blame the victims or consider them responsible for their own fate. Roma are victims and the thrust of Roma activism towards recognizing their victim status is both morally and politically appropriate, even though it carries the risk of treating Roma as passive victims (Braham and Braham, 2003). The point is that victimhood need not be the strategic orientation of

Roma diplomacy and it should certainly not be its exclusive orientation. Even in the matter of restitution and compensation for past injustice, a classic victim agenda, claimants equal in stature to wrongdoers are most effective in the pursuit of satisfaction. Israel has been successful in enforcing Holocaust-related claims against Germany because it could speak on terms of equality.

Pride in their identity should be the first quality of Roma diplomats and ensuring respect should be the goal. The means employed to attain this goal are not particularly different from those practiced by other diplomats. Public diplomacy consists of projecting an image of oneself to the outside world, regardless of whether one is a state or a stateless nation. Canada has conducted a campaign to have itself seen as cool, connected, civil, competitive, captivating, and cosmopolitan. Norway has gone to great pains to identify itself with peace, equality, and nature (Batora, 2006). One can discuss at length the specific agenda that Roma diplomats might set themselves. It seems to me, however, that if their goal is to ensure respect they will act in such a way as to counter negative or deprecatory images of Roma.

By way of example, Roma diplomats might begin with the field of culture and emphasise the contributions of Roma to the creative arts. To be sure, they would have to handle such an orientation gingerly in order to avoid the re-enforcement of stereotypes. I have before me a press release about Damian Draghici, a Romani panflutist from Romania (Divers Bulletin, 2007). It praises this "top Gypsy musician celebrated around the world" and notes that Draghici's international tour is funded by the Romanian foreign ministry. Such sponsorship lends itself easily to criticism, although Draghici himself is not bothered by it: "Our music changes people's perception of Gypsies and that is the objective," he is quoted as saying (Divers Bulletin, 2007).[7] His attitude may appear naive but, nevertheless, it appears to me to be self-defeating to refrain from celebrating, say, Romani accomplishments in music out of fear that Roma would be seen as "only" musicians.

Another area through which Roma diplomats could promote respect for the community they represent is that of learning and scholarship. The dearth of academic chairs of Romani studies and of similar institutional arrangements is a reflection of the ignorance and disregard that surround the Roma presence. The under-development of Romani studies represents a disservice to Roma themselves who are unable to cultivate knowledge of their language, culture, and history. It fosters the widespread sentiment among *gadje* that Roma are not a worthy subject of inquiry. This is only one step away from saying that they lead an unworthy existence. Obviously, Roma diplomats will not be the scholars occupying such chairs. However, they will intervene with public authorities and foundations to sponsor chairs, library collections, and scholarships.

Finally, Roma diplomats have a strategic interest in emphasizing Romani roots. The stereotype of Roma as nomads is deeply set, in defiance of all realities. It is invariably associated with shiftiness and social irresponsibility. A way of underlining the presence of Roma as resident, full citizens is to see that they acquire statistical visibility. What is not counted does not count. Roma have traditionally been reluctant to be included in census figures or to be registered in state documents (Covrig, 2001; Project on Ethnic Relations, 2000). They have sensed, rightly, that statistics and

records are a form of control and a potential instrument of oppression. Their experiences in the Third Reich tragically confirmed suspicions, when routine police files aided in rounding up Roma for imprisonment and elimination, as even unsympathetic sources recognize (Lewy, 2000). Roma diplomats should be mindful of the potential for abuse in data collection and they should press for data protection safeguards. Their overriding interest, however, is in seeing that national and international statistics affirm loudly the Romani presence. Authorities cannot ignore a group or statistical category that embraces hundreds of thousands – in Romania, probably millions – of its citizens. By declaring themselves as Roma to the census-taker, individuals take the first step towards demonstrating that pride in identity which is the pre-condition to effective action.

To move from the general to the particular, in a very specific item on the international diplomatic agenda Roma stakes are high and Roma diplomats can intervene effectively to make an impact. This is the question of Kosovo, whose future is at stake at this very moment. The international community is concerned to make of Kosovo a model polity and, for that reason, it is keen to co-opt minority support (Project on Ethnic Relations, 2006). The challenge to Roma diplomats is to see that such concern for what is known in local jargon as the RAE (i.e., the Roma, Ashkali, Egyptian population) goes beyond issues of humanitarian and social welfare. Kosovo Roma (and kindred groups) are not only victims of the tragedy of Kosovo, they are also stakeholders in Kosovo's future. Roma representatives have asked to take part in all final status negotiations (European Roma and Travellers Forum Press Release, 2007) and members of the United Nations Administration in Kosovo have stressed that protection of minorities will be one of the most important issues during the status talks (OneWorld.net, 2006). If such affirmations become practice, participation in the talks will serve as a test of fire for the theory and practice of Roma diplomacy

Any Problems with Roma Diplomacy?

It is easy to think of obstacles to the successful implementation of a Roma diplomacy. Diplomacy is a set of techniques and instruments used to implement a foreign policy defined by others (Calvet de Magalhaes, 1988). One can, therefore, go only so far in discussing diplomacy without inquiring into foreign policy. This is all the more true in a democratic order where a duly registered popular mandate is the only legitimate basis of political action.

From where would Roma diplomacy draw its mandate? If diplomacy is the implementation of a foreign policy, whose foreign policy is it implementing? Who defines the foreign policy that Roma diplomacy executes and to whom are Roma diplomats responsible? These are questions that go to the heart of the Roma Diplomacy Project because it involves not only Roma diplomacy's effectiveness, but its credibility. It seems to me that no straightforward answer to these questions present themselves, but a number of responses deserve consideration.[8]

First, Roma diplomacy may be seen as the expression of Roma international civil society. The many earlier attempts at finding a world-wide Romani voice have lately re-emerged in a number of organisations with aspirations to either European-wide or universal representation of the Roma people. Among the former is the European Roma

and Travellers' Forum under the sponsorship of the Council of Europe[9]; among the latter one must include the Roma National Congress and the International Romani Union (IRU).[10] Although the IRU is contested among Roma activists and, formally, it is only one of over two thousand non-governmental organisations with consultative status at the United Nations, it is the only Roma organisation that enjoys such status (Klimova-Alexander, 2005). Thus, the IRU comes closest to a universal body that can speak on behalf of the Roma of the world. Moreover, the structure of the IRU and the thrust of its thinking have been evolving in the direction of a quasi-state formation so that it can accommodate quite comfortably the notion of a diplomatic dimension to its activities.

Second, Roma diplomacy can take inspiration from and foster cooperation with the indigenous peoples' movements that have attained a successful diplomatic dimension. To do so, Roma activists must overcome their many reservations towards assimilating Roma and indigenous issues. It is true that an almost ontological difference lies between Roma and indigenous or "first" peoples whose claims on the international community rest on original possession of land and on colonial dispossession. Moreover, an inverse numerical relationship results world-wide between the presence of Roma and of indigenous peoples; Roma are present where indigenous peoples are few and vice versa. Existentially, however, the situations of Roma and of indigenous peoples bear many similarities in terms of social marginalization, widespread discrimination, and political powerlessness. Notwithstanding such handicaps, indigenous peoples can boast of enviable achievements in the international arena. The United Nations Economic and Social Council, the United Nations' prime locus for non-governmental organisations, hosts a permanent advisory forum on indigenous people. The United Nations Commission on Human Rights sponsors a working group on indigenous populations and a special *rapporteur* on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous peoples. As well, in 1989 the International Labour Organisation adopted Convention number 169 "concerning indigenous and tribal peoples in independent countries" (ILO, 1989). The *elan* of the indigenous peoples' movement has recently encountered a major setback with the shelving, in November 2006, by a committee of the United Nations General Assembly, of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which had previously sailed through the United Nations Human Rights Council. Nevertheless, Roma will be able to celebrate when they have attained as much international recognition as have indigenous peoples. Moreover, and of particular interest from our point of view, at least one diplomatic programme for indigenous peoples seems to bear comparison, in terms of structure and aims, with the Roma Diplomacy Project. Awanuiarangi, a New Zealand institute of higher education for indigenous people, offers a Certificate of International Diplomacy for Indigenous Delegates (Awanuiarangi, 2007).

Finally, as we inquire into the mandate of Roma diplomats, we suggest that giving a voice to those who are voiceless is a legitimate enterprise as well. It is at the heart of rights advocacy. UNICEF or children's' rights organisations do not claim to have a mandate from the children of the world and Amnesty International does not limit itself to prisoners who have asked for its intervention. In these cases, the universally

recognized normative nature of the concern gives moral legitimacy to the undertaking. Advocates are, in a sense, mandated by humanity as a whole. Roma diplomats can appeal to such universals as other Roma activists have done. This is, however, a moral, not a political and democratic legitimation. The effects of Roma diplomacy would be qualitatively different if Roma diplomats grounded their action in a constituency that loudly and proudly declared its identity and if they founded their action on the decisions of representative and democratically functioning non-state institutions.

What Next?

Roma diplomacy as advocated in this paper is not the only way forward for the Roma people nor is it their only means of acceding to a diplomatic function. States are increasingly concerned to have their diplomatic corps reflect the multicultural realities of the countries they represent. As Roma attain elected and appointed positions on a national or international level, one can expect that individual Roma will appear as ambassadors and consuls of one country or another. This development is to be applauded and emphatically encouraged.

However, diplomats of established states who happen to be Roma will not be diplomats in the sense in which we have spoken of Roma diplomacy here. They will be traditional diplomats whose loyalty will properly lie with the state they represent and not with the transnational community from which they come.[11] Indeed, Roma who are diplomats, like members of other minorities, will have to be on guard to counter suspicions of double allegiance. Roma diplomats as we have understood them here will be unique figures on the international scene. They will combine the traditional aspects of diplomacy with the novelty of representing something other than a state. If they succeed, they will impart a new dynamic to the practice of international diplomacy and render a unique service to Roma everywhere.

Endnotes

1. "Romani diplomacy" is the linguistically correct term. It is incorrect to use the term "Roma," a masculine plural noun, as an adjective (Hancock, 2003). We would never say, for instance, "Frenchmen diplomacy." Ian Hancock has, however, graciously overlooked this anomaly in the Project's name and has participated fully in this project. May I take this occasion to thank him.

2. I have not found the origin of this quip. Another one which comes closer to the truth and has the merit of rhyme is attributed to one Isaac Goldberg writing in 1927: "Diplomacy is to do and say/The nastiest thing in the nicest way."

3. This is the heart of an ongoing debate among specialists of international relations between those who argue that we are living in a world "beyond the nation state" and those who, while recognizing transnational forces, defend the continued relevance of the nation state. Badie (1995) is among those who eloquently argue that we have reached the "end of territory," that henceforth

networks are more important than territory, and that even territorial identity is defined by discourse or the "word" *[le verbe]* (Badie, 1995, p. 113). An interesting attempt to think of alternatives to a state-centred international order has been undertaken by Gottlieb (1993).

4. One of the seminal collections on diasporas does not touch upon the Roma case (Sheffer, 1986).

5. In fact, if Roma came from Sind, which is one possibility among others (a doubtful etymology suggests that "Sint" comes from "Sind"), it should be Pakistan that sponsors them.

6. Order of Malta passport holders carry another passport as well, as would Roma in a corresponding arrangement created on their behalf.

7. Ironically, the only criticism mentioned in the press release is that of the Romanian right-wing politician Gheorghe Funar who accuses the foreign minister of wanting Europe to believe that in Romania there are only Gypsies.

8. This is, of course, part of the general question of Roma leadership. For frank discussions of this issue and, in particular, its relevance to the IRU, see Project on Ethnic Relations (2001).

9. The relation of this organisation to the also recently founded European Roma Forum is not clear. The previous website of the latter, http://www.EuropeanRomaForum.org, was not publicly accessible on 15 January 2007.

10. According to Klimova-Alexander (2005), the focus of the Roma National Congress is also overwhelmingly European.

11. The United Kingdom appears to be making a particular effort to diversify its diplomatic corps (Government of the United Kingdom. Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 2005). Efforts elsewhere are pitched at a junior level. For example, the Czech Diplomatic Academy invites Roma, without restriction to Czech Roma, to enrol and similar initiatives will be taken by other countries (MINELRES, 2001). The Council of Europe has a formal Roma internship scheme (Council of Europe/Open Society Institute, 2004) and the availability of such internships has been a prime concern for members of the Roma Diplomacy Project.

References

Awanuiarangi. (2007). Website. Available from: http://www.wananga.ac.nz [Accessed 15 January 2007].

Badie, B. (1995). *La fin des territories: essai sur le desordre international et sur l'utilite social du respect.* Paris: Fayard.

Barston, R. P. (1997). *Modern diplomacy.* London: Longman.

Batora, J. (2006). Public diplomacy between home and abroad: Norway and Canada. *Hague Journal of Diplomacy,* 1(1), pp. 53–80.

Braham, M. and Braham, M. (2003). Romani migrations and EU enlargement: reply to critics and some epistemological considerations for policy-making. *Nationalities Papers,* 31(1), pp. 47–61.

Calvet de Magalhaes, J. (1988). *The pure concept of diplomacy*. New York: Greenwood.

Council of Europe/Open Society Institute. (2004). *Roma internship scheme* [online]. Available from: http://www.coe.int [Accessed 19 August 2005].

Covrig, A. (2001). *Why Roma do not declare their identity – careful decision or unpremeditated refusal* [online]. Available from: http://hiphi.ubbcluj.ro [Accessed 26 August 2005].

Davenport, D. (no date). The new diplomacy [online]. *Policy Review,* 116. Available from: http://www.policyreview.org [Accessed 17 June 2005].

Divers Bulletin, 4(247). (2007). *Top Gypsy musician celebrated around world* [online]. February 5. Available from: edivers_buletin-admin@mediafax.ro [Accessed 12 February 2007].

European Roma and Travellers Forum. (2007). *Kosovo status talks democratic disguise* [online]. Strasbourg, 24 January. Available from: ertf@coe.int [Accessed 29 January 2007].

Fraser, A. (2000). The present and future of the Gypsy past. *Cambridge Review of International Affairs,* 13(2), pp. 17–31.

Gottlieb, G. (1993). *Nation against state: a new approach to ethnic conflicts and the decline of sovereignty*. New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press.

Government of the United Kingdom. Foreign and Commonwealth Office. (2005). *Race equality scheme 2005–2008* [online]. Available from: http://www.fco.gov.uk [Accessed 28 June 2005].

Hancock, I. (2000). The emergence of Romani as a koine outside of India. In: T. Acton (ed). *Scholarship and the Gypsy struggle: commitment in Romani studies.* Hatfield: University of Hertfordshire Press, pp. 1–13.

Hancock, I. (2003). *We are the Romani people. Ames am e Rromane dzene.* Hatfield: University of Hertfordshire Press.

Hofstede, G. (2004). Diplomats as cultural bridge-builders. In: H. Slavik (ed). *Intercultural communication and diplomacy*. Geneva: DiploFoundation, pp. 25–38.

International Labour Organisation [ILO]. (1989). *Convention concerning indigenous and tribal peoples in independent countries, adopted 27 June 1989* [online]. Available from: http://www.ilo.org/ilolex [Accessed 15 February 2007].

Klimova-Alexander, I. (2005). *The Romani voice in world politics: the United Nations and non-state actors.* Aldershot: Ashgate.

Lewy, G. (2000). *The Nazi persecution of the Gypsies.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Liebich, A. (2003). Must nations become states? *Nationalities Papers,* 31(4), pp. 453–470.

Malloy, T. H. (2005). *National minority rights in Europe.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Mbeki, T. (2006). Interview, BBC Radio, World Today, 24 May.

Minority Electronic Sources [MINELRES]. (2001). *Memorandum (2001) between IRU and Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 4 April* [online]. Available from: http://www.minelres.lv [Accessed 3 August 2005].

Nicolson, H. (1969). *Diplomacy.* London: Oxford University Press.

One world.net. (2006). Romas and Ashkalis ask to participe *[sic]* in status delegation. KosovaLive. 26 January.

Project on Ethnic Relations. (1992). *The Romanies in Central and Eastern Europe: illusions and reality* [online]. Supava, Slovakia, April 30 to May 2 1992. Available from: http://www.per-usa.org [Accessed 15 February 2007].

Project on Ethnic Relations. (2000). *Roma and statistics* [online]. Strasbourg, France, 22–23 May 2000. Available from: http://www.per-usa.org [Accessed 15 February 2007].

Project on Ethnic Relations. (2001). *Leadership, representation and the status of the Roma* [online]. Krakow, Poland. March 9–10 2001. Available from: http://www.per-usa.org [Accessed 15 February 2007].

Project on Ethnic Relations. (2006). *Kosovo roundtables 2001–2005.* Available from: http://www.per-usa.org [Accessed 15 February 2007].

Shain, Y. and Aharon, B. (2003). Diasporas and international relations theory. *International Organization,* 57, pp. 449–479.

Sheffer, G. (ed). (1986). *Modern diasporas in international politics.* London: Croom Helm.

Vermeersch, P. (2006). *The Romani movement: minority politics and ethnic mobililization in contemporary Central Europe.* New York: Berghahn Books.

Towards a Definition of Anti-Gypsyism

Valeriu Nicolae

> "Rarely does anyone stop to say what it is and what is wrong with it."
>
> *Kwane Anthony Appiah (1990) on the use of racism*

On October 25, 2005, in the flat of an ethnic Romanian man in Bucharest, police discovered the body of an 11-year-old Roma girl who had been raped, killed, and cut into hundreds of pieces. A Romanian newspaper, *Adevarul*, published the news on October 26. Had the victim been Romanian and the murderer Roma, and bearing in mind the country's long tradition of racially-motivated pogroms, one can only speculate as to what bloody manifestations of collective punishment might have been meted out as a consequence. The Hadareni atrocities of 1993 serve as a grim reminder of what can happen (Pro Europa, 2000). The evening of October 26, a talk show on the Romanian TV station OTV included two items related to Roma: one concerning the rape and murder of the Roma girl, and the other about a fight involving Roma. During the broadcast, several commentators suggested that the murder was related to the fact that Roma parents are unable to take care of their children. Comments on the fight involving Roma included the suggestion from a caller carried live on TV that "Gypsies should be shot dead."

The thesis of this essay rests on the premise that majority's attitudes towards, and pervasive hostility to, the presence of Roma minorities in Europe represent a factor potentially destabilizing to the European societies. This challenge to stability and peaceful interethnic coexistence needs to be understood as a complex, multi-faceted, pan-European issue, and the means to address this challenge should be complemented by diplomacy. The indicator of this potential for ethnic conflict is the growing anti-Gypsyism in Europe – a form of racism particular to the situation of Roma in Europe and capable of adapting to changes in this situation. Before describing the potential role for diplomacy and Roma diplomats, it is important to set out a clear definition and description of anti-Gypsyism.

Currently, no recognized or widely accepted definition of anti-Gypyism is available. This definition builds on a previous one published on the site of European Roma Information Office (Nicolae, 2005a). I argue here that anti-Gypsyism is a distinct type of racist ideology. It is, at the same time, similar, different, and intertwined with many other types of racism. Anti-Gypsyism itself is a complex social phenomenon which manifests itself through violence, hate speech, exploitation, and discrimination in its most visible form. Discourses and representations from the political, academic, and civil society communities, segregation, dehumanization, social stigma, social aggression, and socio-economic exclusion are other ways through which anti-

Gypsyism is expressed. Anti-Gypsyism justifies and perpetrates the exclusion and supposed inferiority of Roma and is based on historical persecution and negative stereotypes. Despite the fact that anti-Gypsyism fits academic descriptions of racism, until very recently academics in writing, discussion, and analysis of racism have by and large ignored or simply paid cursory attention to the plight of the Roma, and have not made much effort to analyse the discrimination faced by Roma. Dehumanisation is pivotal to anti-Gypsyism. I understand dehumanisation as the process through which Roma are often seen as a subhuman group closer to the animal realm than the human realm. Even those rare cases of seemingly sympathetic portrayals of Roma seem to depict Roma as somehow not fully human, at best childlike. Roma are in the best cases described as free-spirited, carefree, happy, and naturally graceful. All these characteristics are frequently used to describe animals.

Neo-Racism or Differentialist Racism

Many authors regard the latest manifestations of racism against different minority groups in Europe as what Baker (1981) and Taguieff (2001) call "differentialist" racism. Both authors describe differentialist racism as a form of racism focused not on biological, but on cultural differences and on what its perpetrators call "natural preference" for a specific "cultural" group. This form of racism promotes the incompatibility of cultures, however the results are similar to those of biological racism. According to Rorke (personal interview in 2006) this is a profoundly more dangerous, more insidious form of racism, it has a longer shelf life and can infect the mainstream of political thought and action with greater ease than biological racism. The point made by proponents of differentialist/new racism is that biological racism was fatally discredited with the defeat of German Nazism and in the wake of the Holocaust. When it comes to Roma, biological racism is alive and well; dehumanisation is still central to the anti-Roma discourses. Rorke also considered anti-Gypsyism to be "protean and polymorphous." This complements what Rorke wrote in 1999:

> Although *anti-ciganism* remains well-nigh ubiquitous, like most forms of prejudice it is neither static in terms of its content, nor is it somehow spread evenly across the polities of the European continent. Within different states prejudice against Roma is either less or more pervasive, more or less overt, manifests itself to differing degrees and in very specific direct and indirect forms against Roma, and takes it bearings from the flows and eddies of wider political developments.

Recent surges of anti-Gypsyism in Europe (Nicolae, 2006) and, in particular, in England and Italy are explained through cultural clashes rather than biological heredity, but the effects are the same. We are witnessing violent social conflicts (Slovakia, Romania, Hungary) and dissolution of social bonds.

An interpretation of anti-Gypsyism based on cultural differences fails to take into consideration social psychological research carried out in various countries (Perez, Chulvi and Alonso, 2001; Perez, Moscovici and Alonso, 2002; Chulvi and Perez, 2003; Marcu and Chryssochoou, 2005). This research has revealed that, unlike other

minorities, the Roma are perceived as closer to the animal realm than to the human one. In Romania, for example, while the prejudice against the Hungarians was expressed in terms of negative human attributes (e.g., *hypocrite*), prejudice against the Roma was expressed in terms of negative animal traits (e.g., *wild*) (Marcu and Chryssochoou, 2005). Given the existing high level of contact between the majority population and the Roma, it is clear that dehumanisation is not based on misconceptions or ignorance on the part of the majority population. Instead, dehumanisation of the Roma appears to be a legitimising myth that serves to justify the majority's abusive behaviour towards this minority.

The pogroms against Roma in Romania at the beginning of the 1990s, which resulted in over a hundred burned houses and tens of victims, as well as the frequent attacks by skinheads, are often justified by public opinion makers, intellectuals, and mass-media through presenting the Roma victims as a subhuman species (Nicolae, 2006). Dehumanisation of Roma and other ethnic groups has a long historical pedigree and made the mid-20th century genocide easier to perpetuate and neglect. Refusal to acknowledge or the outright denial of the Romani Holocaust has helped preserve the marginalisation of Roma Holocaust victims (Nicolae, 2005b) and the existing *status quo* that places Roma in the position of non-citizens or pariahs.

Many academics underline the superficiality of differentialist racism. For example, Balibar (1991) writes: "the neo-racist ideologues are not mystical heredity theorists but 'realist' technicians of social psychology" (p. 23). According to Balibar, it is only at a superficial level that differential racism "does not postulate the superiority of certain groups or peoples in relation to others but 'only' the harmfulness of abolishing frontiers, the incompatibility of life-styles and traditions" (p. 21). His point is particularly relevant in the case of anti-Gypsyism, as behind the talk of difference between the majorities and Roma, old notions of hierarchy remain intact. That these old notions exist is proven by the polls in Europe (OSCE, 2005). Unfortunately, little doubt seems to exist in the minds, actions, and policies of the majorities regarding whose life-styles are modern and civilised and whose are not.

Anti-Gypsyism manifests itself not only through racial categorisation, which postulates the inferiority of Roma, but also through straight-forward dehumanisation of Roma. Anti-Gypsyism, therefore, can be defined as a form of dehumanisation, because prejudice against the Roma clearly goes beyond racist stereotyping whereby the Roma are associated with negative traits and behaviour. Through dehumanisation, the Roma are viewed as less than human; and, being less than human, they are perceived as not morally entitled to human rights equal to those of the rest of the population. Other authors describe this as delegitimisation (Bar-Tal, 1989; 1990) or moral exclusion (Staub, 1987; Opotow, 1990).

The failure by European states (e.g., Italy and Netherlands) to accord official recognition of group status is quite different in intent and outcome to dehumanising racism, but is an institutional dimension of anti-Gypsyism. Neither Italy nor Netherlands officially recognise Roma as national ethnic minorities, despite recognising other national minorities.

Biological Racism

> "And yet, though there are no races, racism certainly exists!"
>
> *Jacquard and Pontalis (1984)*

Racism is a relatively new concept, according to Zack (1996). He says that *The Oxford English Dictionary* dates the earliest appearances of the term "racism" to the 1930s. In fact, racism has been at the basis of exclusion and violent conflict for much longer.

Arthur de Gobineau (1967), considered the father of biological racism, was the first to write about distinct human races in his *Essai sur l'inegalite des races humaines (1853-1855)*. However, a series of theories published much earlier than the nineteenth century provide the roots of biological racism (racism based on an essentialist notion of race, linked to nationalism and the state). Zack (1996) considered that "modern concepts of race derive from eighteenth and nineteenth century pseudo-science that rationalised European colonialism and chattel slavery" (p. 3). As well, Williams (1995) believes that racism preceded the theories of Gobineau and argues that racism was created to justify enslavement in Africa.

Kant is also seen by Zack (1994) to have contributed to the creation of the European concept of racism as he drew on Aristotle's theory of essences of natural kinds and that barbarians were natural slaves. Probably the earliest introduction of racist concepts can be found in Plato (2002) who wrote in *The Republic* that some people are "constructed of intrinsically inferior material" (p. 39).

In 1940, Ruth Benedict defined racism as "the dogma that one ethnic group is condemned by nature to congenital inferiority and another group is destined to congenital superiority" (p. 21). Scientific or biological racism, based on 19th century theories of biological superiority and inferiority of races, is largely seen as compromised and no longer acceptable in political and public discourse. However, in the case of Roma, we often still encounter virulent forms of biological racism, in both political and public discourse (OSCE, 2005).

Long before biological theories of race surfaced in Europe, Roma faced persecution. Banned from living in several European countries, enslaved in what was then Romanian territory, accused of playing a role in the killing of Jesus and often identified with criminals (Lucassen and Willems, 2001), Roma have been continuously rejected by the majority populations.

The European Commission country reports often underline structural racism against Roma in countries of Central and Eastern Europe, yet some of those countries have already joined the EU and others will join soon. Violence and acts of discrimination, including state-sponsored rejection, which seem impossible for any other minorities, are often occurrences in the case of European Roma.

For example, in 1998, Great Britain re-imposed visa restrictions on Slovakia in order to prevent Romani asylum seekers from having their cases heard in the UK. In summer 2001, the UK government established a "pre-clearance" of air passengers at the Prague airport, which served to single out Romani passengers and prevent them

from boarding airplanes destined to the UK (BBC News, 2001). As well, in April 2001, the UK government adopted a "special" border policy, singling out persons belonging to seven named groups, Kurds, Roma, Albanians, Tamils, Pontic Greeks, Somalis, and Afghans, for special measures. Of these groups, Roma and Kurds do not hold passports stating their ethnicity (Hansard, 2001).

European Roma are not a homogenous group. Roma can range in appearance from fair-skinned and blue-eyed to very dark-skinned and black-eyed, with the two extremes often seen in the same community or even family. Roma share many physical features with Arabs, Turks, Indians, as well as Europeans. Roma in Europe follow a number of different religions: Christianity (Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant), Islam (both Shia and Sunni), Judaism, as well as atheism. Many Roma are unable to speak Romani. Even those who speak Romani may have difficulties understanding each other as the various dialects are quite different across Europe. Therefore, the UK border policy, which was in place until 2004, demonstrated a form of state-sponsored discrimination against Roma that operated despite the fact that no sure way to identify Roma exists. The policy was not based on any criteria of racial discrimination: appearance, skin colour, religion, or language. The experience, in 2001, of Czech reporters that revealed that Czech Roma with a darker skin colour were stopped, while whiter colleagues were granted permission to leave for the UK, suggests that this was a case of imagined biological differences between Roma and others.

Anti-Gypsyism in the UK is demonstrated not only in state policy, but also through official and popular sentiment. Jack Straw, in charge of British diplomacy until May 2006, is known for derogatory comments (transcript interview available at v.nicolae@diplomacy.edu) targeting "travellers," who he saw as good for nothing but defecating at people's doors

"Should we let Gypsies invade England?" was the title of a tabloid poll in January 2004. Around 20,000 people paid to call in and tell readers of the *Daily Express* that they were not going to put up with the "gyppos." The poll was part of a larger media campaign in the British press led by tabloids that lasted for several months (ERIO, 2004). The government reacted by starting talks about measures to restrict access for Roma to the UK. UK Prime Minister Tony Blair said in the following days in the House of Commons: "It is important that we recognise that there is a potential risk from the accession countries of people coming in." One day later, accordingly, the *Daily Express* echoed Blair, with banner headlines "Gypsies: you can't come in."

The ideas of Arthur de Gobineau are still widespread in Europe and salient in regard to Roma. The fear of degeneration from mixing of majority "races" with Roma is held by a majority. According to a 1999 poll, less than 1% of non-Roma Bulgarians can imagine marrying a person of Romani origin (Nahabedian, 2000). In 2003, a Gallup poll in Romania discovered that 93% of Romanians would refuse to accept Roma in their families (IPP/Gallup, 2003). In a poll conducted by Focus Institute in 1999 in Slovakia, 80% of the interviewees said that they would never allow their children to marry a Roma (Pisarova, 2000). In an opinion poll conducted among Slovenian secondary school students in 1993, 60.1% said they would avoid any contact with Roma (Ramet, 2005). In a survey conducted in 1986 and 1988 at Spanish schools, 70% of teachers said they would be upset if their child married a Roma

(Calvo Buezas, 2001).

Park (1950) writes that race relations "are not so much the relations that exist between individuals of different races as between individuals conscious of these differences." The results of the polls in Romania and Bulgaria (both with a Roma population of about 10%) seem to indicate that anti-Gypsyism has been internalised by a good number of Roma, besides the majority populations.

Opinion polls in Luxembourg (Legrand, 2004), Malta, and Denmark (European Values Study, 1999) show that anti-Gypsyism operates even in the absence of direct contact with Roma. The poll shows that 25% of Luxembourgish people would not like Roma as neighbours, despite that, according to the census, no Roma live in Luxembourg. The strongest rejection is found among workers and housewives, the lowest among people who have a liberal profession. Over 30% of those interviewed in Malta declared that they would not want to have Roma as neighbours. No Roma reside in Malta, according to the official census. The report shows that 15.2% of respondents in Denmark would not like to have Roma as neighbours. In Denmark, practically no Roma reside (less than 0.001%).

Despite no social interaction, in conflicts and, in most cases, in any form of contact, the majority populations reject Roma. This reinforces the view that anti-Gypsyism is a racist ideology with strong similarities to specific forms of racism such as anti-Semitism. Anti-Gypsyism often serves to justify the existing social order whereby the Roma are permanently kept in an inferior social position.

Anti-Gypsyism is also reflected in a form of false consciousness on the part of the Roma themselves. A significant number of Roma deny their roots in an attempt to escape the social stigma associated with Roma identity. Most of them, especially the professionally successful Roma, manage to hide their parentage and eventually lose their ethnic identity and assimilate to the majority. Losing one's ethnic identity is usually not possible for other groups facing racism and could be held as an argument that anti-Roma feelings are not based on race or ethnicity, but on stereotypes and historical prejudices against Roma. The high number of "invisible" Roma is well-reflected in the discrepancies between the estimated number of Roma and the lower results of official censuses as reflected by the documents of the Council of Europe (Council of Europe, 2000).

A tremendous amount of energy is spent in justifying or legitimising political, economic, and cultural exclusion of Roma. Prejudices against Roma are based not only on race, but on a combination – unique in each region or country – of religion, language, culture, and physical appearance. Moreover, Roma are identified based on neighbourhoods, villages, regions, or countries where they live, social class, "Roma-specific" professions, speaking patterns, clothing, and even behaviour. This complex exercise of building negative stereotypes directed at Roma based on whatever features are shown by the Roma in a particular area is not typical of racism, which focuses on race or ethnicity alone, as shown by a few key features such as skin colour, language, or religion. In this way, anti-Gypsyism is able to adapt and Roma remain targeted, regardless of the changes they make in their social status, living conditions, and practices, as long as they admit to being Roma.

Conclusion

Ambalvaner Sivanandan, director of Britain's Institute of Race Relations, wrote in 1973 that racism was "an explicit and systematic ideology of racial superiority." By 1983, he had come to think that "racism is about power, not prejudice." In 1985, he related it to "structures and institutions with power to discriminate" (Dalem, 1987). Anti-Gypsyism includes features from all of his definitions of racism; however, it is not reduced to only those. Anti-Gypsyism is a very specific form of racism, an ideology of racial superiority, a form of dehumanisation and of institutionalised racism. It is fuelled by historical discrimination and the struggle to maintain power relations that permit advantages to majority groups. It is based, on the one hand, on imagined fears, negative stereotypes, and myths and, on the other, on denial or erasure from the public conscience of a long history of discrimination against Roma. It ignores not only events where Roma were killed bestially, but also any non-stereotypical characteristics in the life of Roma. Prejudices against Roma clearly go beyond racist stereotyping that associates them with negative traits and behaviours. Dehumanisation is its central point. Roma are viewed as less than human; being less than human, they are perceived as not morally entitled to human rights equal to those of the rest of the population.

Like any ideology, anti-Gypsyism can adapt as Roma remain targeted, regardless of the changes they make in their social status, living conditions, and practices, as long as they admit their ethnic roots. Anti-Gypsyism has such contempt for reason, facts, and intellectual debate that it requires little effort to justify its often ideological contradictions and changes, a feature that links it strongly with fascism.

References

Appiah, K. A. (1990). Racisms. In: D. Goldberg (ed). *Anatomy of racism.* Minneapolis, MN: Minnesota University Press, pp. 3–13.

Baker, M. (1981). *The new racism: conservatives and the ideology of the tribe.* London: Junction Books.

Balibar, E. (1991). Is there a "neo-racism"? In: E. Balibar and I. Wallerstein (eds). *Race, nation, class: ambigous identities.* London: Verso.

Bar-Tal, D. (1989). Delegitimization: the extreme case of stereotyping and prejudice. In: D. Bar-Tal, C. F. Graumann, A. Kruglanski, and W. Stroebe (eds). *Stereotyping and prejudice: changing conceptions.* New York: Springer-Verlag, pp. 169–183.

Bar-Tal, D. (1990). Causes and consequences of delegitimization: models of conflict and ethnocentrism. *Journal of Social Issues,* 46(1), pp. 65–81.

BBC News. (2001). *UK gets tough on Czech Immigrants* [online]. Available from: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/1445494.stm [Accessed 15 March 2007].

Benedict, R. (1940). *Race, science, and politics.* New York: Viking Press.

Calvo Buezas, T. (2001). *Espana racista? Voces payas sobre los gitanos.* Barcelona: Ed. Anthropos.

Council of Europe. (2000). *Legal situation of the Roma in Europe* [online]. Available from: http://assembly.coe.int/Documents/WorkingDocs/Doc02/EDOC9397.htm [Accessed 15 March 2007].

Chulvi, B. and Perez, J. A. (2003). Ontologisation versus discrimination d'une minorite ethnique (les gitans). *Nouvelle Revue de Psychologie Sociale,* 2(1), pp. 6–15.

Dalem, D. (1987). *Racial mischief: the case of Dr. Sivanandan.* In: A. Flew (ed). *Power to the parents.* London: Palmer, pp. 38–63.

European Values Study. (1999). *Who would you not like to have as a neighbour?* quoted according to: Special Tasks Minister for Social Integration 2003: Cultural Diversity and Tolerance in Latvia, Riga.

European Roma Information Office [ERIO]. (2004). *European Roma Information Office (ERIO) condemns anti-Roma media campaign in the UK in the wake of EU enlargement* [online]. Available from: http://www.erionet.org/UKmedia.html [Accessed 14 May 2006].

Gobineau, J. (1967). *Essai sur l'inegalite des races humaines (1853–1855).* Paris: Editions Pierre Belfond.

Hansard. (2001). *Comment by Mrs Roche re Race Relations Act* [online]. Available from: http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200001/cmhansrd/vo010501/text/10501w21.htm [Accessed 5 May 2006].

IPP/Gallup. (2003). *Intoleranta, discriminare si autoritarism in opinia publica, September 2003* [online]. Available from: http://www.gallup.ro/romana/poll_ro/releases_ro/pr031016_ro/pr031016_ro.htm [Accessed 1 September 2005].

Jacquard, A. and Pontalis, J. B. (1984–1985). 'Entretrien' une tete qui ne convenient pas. *Genre Humain,*11, pp. 8–35.

Legrand, M. (2004). Les voisins qu'on n'aimerait pas avoir, par groupe de population. In: *Les valeurs au Luxembourg. Portrait d'une societe au tournant du millenaire.* Luxembourg: Editions Saint-Paul.

Lucassen, L. and Willems, W. (2001). *The weakness of well ordered societies: Gypsies in Europe, the Ottoman Empire and India 1400–1914* [online]. Paper for the NIAS-Conference Accommodating Cultural and religious Differences. Available from: http://www.ceu.hu/sun/SUN_2004/Downloads/Syllabus%20Critical.doc [Accessed 18 June 2006].

Marcu, A. and Chryssochoou, X. (2005). Exclusion of ethnic groups from the realm of humanity: prejudice against the Gypsies in Britain and in Romania. *Psicologia Politica,* 30, pp. 41–56.

Nahabedian, M. (2000). *All ethnic problems solved?* [online]. Available from: http://www.ce-review.org/00/41/nahabedian41.html [Accessed 1 August 2005].

Nicolae, V. (2005a). *Anti-gypsyism* [online]. Available from: http://www.erionet.org/Antigypsyism.htm [Accessed 15 March 2006].

Nicolae, V. (2005b). Who now remembers the Roma? A continuing story of exclusion and persecution. *Index on Censorship,* 34(2), pp. 65-69.

Nicolae, V. (2006). Words that kill. *Index on Censorship* 35(1), pp. 137-141.

Opotow, S. (1990). Deterring moral exclusion. *Journal of Social Issues,* 46(1), pp. 173-182.

Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe [OSCE]. (2005). *Anti-Gypsyism in the European mass-media*. Warsaw: Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Park, R. E. (1950). *Race and culture*. Glencoe, IL: The Free Press.

Perez, J. A., Chulvi, B., and Alonso, R. (2001). When a majority fails to convert a minority: the case of Gypsies. In: F. Butera and G. Mugny (eds). *Social influence in social reality: promoting individual and social change*. Ashland, OR: Hogrefe and Huber.

Perez, J. A., Moscovici, S., and Alonso, R. (2002). Natura y cultura como principio de clasificacion social. Anclaje de representaciones sociales sobre minorias etnicas. *Revista de Psicologia Social,* 17(1), pp. 51-67.

Pisarova. (2000). Slovakia losing patience with Roma [online]. *Slovak Spectator,* 17.1.2000. Available from: http://www.slovakspectator.sk/clanok-2271.html [Accessed 1 September 2004].

Plato. (2002). *Opere complete*. Bucuresti: Editura Humanitas.

ProEuropa. (2000). *Hadareni case indictment* [online]. Available from: http://www.proeuropa.ro/HRO/cazuri/Indict.htm [Accessed 12 April 2007].

Ramet, S. (2005). *Slovenia since 1990* [online]. Available from: http://wwics.si.edu/index.cfm?topic_id=1422&fuseaction=topics.publications&doc_id=8506&group_id=7427 [Accessed 15 May 2006].

Rorke, B. (1999). *Perspectives on racisms old and new* [online]. Available from: http://www.osi.hu/rpp/Racisms.html [Accessed 5 May 2006].

Staub, E. (1987, August). *Moral exclusion and extreme destructiveness: personal goal theory, differential evaluation, moral equilibration and steps along the continuum of destruction*. Paper presented at American Psychological Association meeting, New York.

Williams, E. (1995). *Capitalism and slavery*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.

Zack, N. (1994). Race and philosophic meaning. *American Philosophical Association Newsletter on Philosophy and the Black Experience,* 94(1), pp. 14-20.

Zack, N. (1996). *Bachelors of science: seventeenth century identity then and now.* Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.

Taguieff, P. A. (2001). *The force of prejudice: on racism and its doubles.* Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

On Diplomacy, Roma and Anti-Gypsyism

Valeriu Nicolae

Conventional diplomacy needs not only reform, but development of efficient approaches towards the prevention and negotiation of interstate or intrastate ethnic conflicts. The increasing exclusion of and discrimination against Roma in the European Union, coupled with a growing awareness of long-term discrimination within Roma communities, has produced an increasingly strained relationship between European majority populations and the Roma. This is a serious threat to European stability and needs redress through different tools, including diplomatic tools. Widespread and accepted anti-Gypsyism needs recognition and address as an indicator of stress and potential conflict. I propose that a European Roma diplomatic corps may offer a solution. A Roma diplomatic corps may negotiate more sustainable inclusion policies and may aid in resolving inter-ethnic conflicts; it may as well bring about a change of attitudes within diplomatic and political circles and within majority populations. To argue this, in the remainder of this paper I analyse the involvement of different types of diplomacies and their effects in interethnic conflicts as well as the effect those had up to this moment in reducing the often extreme rejection of Roma by the majorities population.

Background

In 1984, the *Wall Street Journal* ran an article asserting the increasing irrelevance of diplomacy. It described the political appointments of often-incompetent people and the reduced influence of career diplomats. Analysing the disastrous failure of diplomacy in the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, the Iraqi invasion of Iran, the Argentina-United Kingdom dispute over the Falkland Islands, the US-Nicaragua conflict, the occupation of Grenada by the US, and the failure of the UN in Afghanistan, the article argued that diplomacy had become "irrelevant" and needed reform. The article did not mention inter-ethnic conflicts motivated by racial hatred, which may be read as an indication that diplomacy in general has not been concerned with resolving conflicts that take place within national borders.

However, it is important to consider that the last 22 years has seen a dramatic change in the types of conflict prevalent on the international scene. Contemporary conflicts depend dominantly on tensions between ethnic and national groups. Federalism, language rights, social and political representation, religious freedom, regional autonomy, historical claims, immigration and naturalization issues were or are at the very root of conflict around the world. Millions of people have died in recent years due to conflicts motivated by racial or ethnic differences in Africa (Sudan, Rwanda, Burundi, Sierra Leone, Congo), Europe (ex-Yugoslavia, Turkey, Spain, France, the United Kingdom, Cyprus, the Baltic Countries, Transnistria), Asia (Sri-Lanka, Indonesia, Pakistan, India, Iraq, Nepal, Myanmar Thailand), and South America (Mexico, Peru, Chile, Columbia, San Salvador).

The salience of ethnic conflicts led to the coining of a new expression, "ethnic cleansing," in the early 90s, an expression often used in media coverage around the world. Public diplomacy, humanitarian diplomacy, and preventive diplomacy have developed as alternatives to traditional diplomacy and are viable complements to conventional diplomacy as defined by Berridge (2005). Still, it seems almost impossible to end most interethnic conflicts through negotiation. The failure of the UN to solve or address the Rwandan genocide and the current Darfur crisis, in conjunction with the slow and far-from-perfect reform of the UN Human Rights Council, as well as the restart of violence in conflicts considered "solved," as in Sri Lanka, East Timor, Turkey, Lebanon, and Israel indicate the need for a reform of diplomatic services. As Will Kymlicka (1995) writes, "resolving these disputes is perhaps the greatest challenge facing democracy today" (p. 1).

The Roma and Inter-Ethnic Conflict

Roma, the largest ethnic minority in Europe, seem to present a significant risk for inter-ethnic conflict. I argue here that increasing racism against Roma (anti-Gypsyism) is a clear indicator of conflict risk. Despite the fact that there was no recognised conflict between Roma and non-Roma in Europe the establishment of the Contact Point for Roma and Sinti (CPRS) within the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) which deals with security and stability in Europe indicates the concern and potential for such conflicts.

On May 24, 1984, the European Parliament adopted a resolution (C172/153) that acknowledged the fact that "gypsies still suffer discrimination in law and practice" and called on the governments of member states to eliminate discrimination against Roma. Ethnic tension and violence against Roma, although largely unreported, continued until 1989. The fall of Communism in Central and Eastern Europe and the emergence of extreme nationalism throughout Europe coincided with a record number of violent incidents that destroyed thousands of Roma households and resulted in hundreds dead and tens of thousands of Roma displaced in Europe. In the 1990s, pogroms in Romania, Hungary, Czech Republic, Bulgaria and Slovakia, the war in ex-Yugoslavia and the periodic re-emergence of violence in Kosovo and Macedonia brought the extreme conditions faced by the seven to nine million European Roma to the attention of the media and international institutions.

In recent years, the European Parliament, the European Commission, the Council of Europe, the United Nations, and the OSCE have contributed to some positive steps in combating discrimination against Roma, particularly in the field of law. Nevertheless, the basic rights of Roma are still largely violated on a daily basis and reports of all the above-mentioned institutions identify Roma as the most discriminated ethnic minority in Europe.

Europe in general, and Eastern and Central Europe plus the Western Balkans in particular, should be concerned, because their democratic regimes face multiple problems due to the extreme socio-economic exclusion of Roma and rampant anti-Gypsyism. The riots in February 2004 in Slovakia targeting the Roma population in Eastern Slovakia resulted in the largest deployment of army troops since the Second

World War and had many commonalities with the riots in the autumn of 2005 in France. These incidents show clearly that both new and old European democracies can have dramatic setbacks if they do not seriously address widespread racism and social exclusion.

So far, diplomacy has not played a role in addressing the tensions between the majority populations and Roma minorities. In fact, national governments see and present the Roma problem primarily as a social problem rather than an ethnic one. Consequently, the Roma have been almost completely excluded from diplomatic services or initiatives, even when they represent an important stakeholder.

To date, Roma-related issues have been identified as a social problem rather than one of ethnic exclusion. This has often served to obscure the degree of racism and discrimination, play down the specificity of the types of exclusion faced by Roma, and effectively deny Roma a voice when it comes to policy remedies. Such exclusion is so commonplace and pervasive within nation states that it should come as little surprise that this disregard spills over into the international arena. Even in those international conflicts where Roma are an endangered ethnic group, no effective representation of their interests is made, their plight is overlooked, and any claim made on their behalf is viewed with scepticism.

The case of Kosovo is probably the most salient. The third minority in the ex-Yugoslavian enclave, the Roma were more-or-less excluded during the socialist regime of Tito and, during the war in Kosovo, were killed, accused as traitors by both Serbs and Albanians, and expelled while their properties were looted or destroyed. The multiple negotiations regarding the situation and status of Kosovo have failed to include any Roma.

A Roma Diplomatic Corps

At the European level, an acute need exists for appropriate representation of Roma, as recommended in different reports and recommendations of the European Parliament, Council of Europe, European Commission, the UN, and OSCE. Roma are not only the largest ethnic minority in Europe and the most discriminated, but also the only ethnic group that has no state, or "mother country" ready or willing to defend its rights.

The establishment of a European Diplomatic Corps could enhance the growing involvement of international institutions and their attempts to grapple with the complex range of problems faced by Roma. This Corp might be charged with three main tasks:

- to assist with preventing and negotiating interethnic conflicts within and outside European states;
- to develop European diplomatic networks and advance the issues of the only European minority without a state ready or willing to defend it;
- to negotiate and work for the implementation of a European Roma integration policy within the member states of the Union.

To elaborate, I believe that a group of Roma could be trained to function as a part of a European taskforce of preventive diplomacy and negotiators focused on interethnic conflicts. Every European Union state includes Roma citizens assimilated within different minorities in those states. Roma have, at the very least, legitimacy to take part in the very difficult process of negotiating ethnic conflicts within member states or among them. Such a diplomatic corps could also contribute to providing a visible, positive, and non-stereotypical image of Roma, changing general attitudes about the Roma and implicitly curbing anti-Gypsyism while preventing escalation of tensions and possible conflicts. Member states having problems with structural racism as reported by the European Commission (2006a) could solve part of their image problems by promoting Romani diplomats and politicians, as done, for example, in Hungary through the presence of two Romani members of the European Parliament in Brussels.

The limited participation of Roma in the design and implementation of national strategies focused on Roma resulted in an overall failure of those policies and no significant progress in the Roma communities. The lack of effectiveness of European initiatives addressing social issues of the Roma was made clear in the Phare evaluation of the European Commission (2004). A corps of Roma negotiators supported by a reliable network of Roma experts could make the difference in the future. The existing top-down approach of solving Roma issues in Europe is widely seen by main stakeholders as seriously flawed, due mainly to the lack of participation of Roma in processes targeting or affecting them.

The involvement of traditional diplomacy may be effective in curbing the existing social distance between Roma and the majority population. The failure of governments and international institutions to address properly the situation of Roma can be related to the limited involvement of Ministries of Foreign Affairs (MFAs) and international diplomats in issues related to Roma as well as to the almost total absence of Roma from diplomatic services and international institutions dealing with Romani issues.

The Role of Niche Diplomacy in Combating Racism and its Failures Related to addressing Anti-Gypsyism

Both conventional diplomacy and multilateral diplomacy have failed to address inter-ethnic conflicts and racism in general, and anti-Gypsyism in particular. In order to curb anti-Gypsyism, we need a significant change of attitudes within the majority populations regarding Roma minorities. We also need involvement of Roma in European and national diplomatic exercises to promote a positive image of Roma. Including Roma in negotiation and prevention of inter-ethnic conflicts, promotion of social inclusion, and adoption of policies targeting elimination of poverty and segregation are just a few obvious diplomatic niches where Roma professionals could contribute to the European process. Roma, as the largest ethnic group in Europe without a state, could be at the basis of a European Roma policy that later could provide legitimacy for a common European Foreign policy.

Preventive and crisis diplomacy employed in situations and conflicts that have involved Roma, such as former Yugoslavia and Macedonia, and especially Kosovo,

have never included Roma. Presently, the most common type of diplomacy remains bilateral diplomacy, in both its conventional and unconventional forms. Yet, a Roma diplomatic corps could make possible bilateral diplomacy between the European Union and member and non-member states. This niche diplomacy could strengthen public diplomacy and pressure currently applied by national and international non-governmental organisations (NGOs), currently the only diplomatic tool available for the Roma in Europe.

The European Union and it predecessors have a history of involvement in human rights. The 1950 adoption of the *European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms,* introduced concern for human rights into Europe. This convention was reinforced by a *European Commission of Human Rights* and by the *European Court of Human Rights*. Despite reluctance from Greece, Portugal, and Spain (at that time still far from the functional democracies they now are), the European Economic Community adopted, for the first time in 1973, the phrase "respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms" as a norm for the future European Union. Risse-Kappen (1995) argues that the European Union has been fundamental also in the emergence of human rights norms in East-West relations and, therefore, in the introduction of human rights issues in the superpower diplomacy before the end of the Cold War. *The Helsinki Final Act of 1975* (Helsinki Final Act, 1976), which saw the states under the Iron Curtain conceding to their citizens the right to have human rights organisations, was undoubtedly one of the main successes of European diplomacy.

The lack of tension and the economic interlinks among members, combined with the fact that the enlargement process is the main factor in inhibiting interstate wars, are already significant achievements of the European Union. In conjunction with the reduction of tensions between member states and the increasing convergence of hitherto discrete national security and economic interests within an enlarged Union, the lack of tension and the enlargement process limit the already minor role that member state diplomacies play in Europe. However, this minor role can also be seen as signalling a successful path forward for a future European foreign service.

"Conventional wisdom says that Conventional Diplomacy is dying" said *The Economist* (1998). European diplomacy as a whole needs to find a diplomatic niche to provide visibility and legitimacy to its foreign affairs policies before the European Union can become an alternative power pole for the United States. The European legal framework targeting the elimination of discrimination and racism is considered the most advanced in the world (European Commission, 2004). The adoption of the Charter of Fundamental Rights (European Parliament, 2000) and its inclusion in the proposed European Constitution is a clear signal that Europeans have some tools and experience in implementing a basic human rights framework.

- According to Article 29 of the European Union Treaty, one of the treaty objectives is to "provide citizens with a high level of safety within an area of freedom, security and justice by developing common action among the Member States in the fields of police and judicial co-operation in criminal matters and by preventing and combating racism and xenophobia."

- Article 3(2) of the European Union Treaty requires the Community to "aim to eliminate inequalities and actively to promote equality between men and women in all its activities and thus ensure the integration of the dimension of equality between men and women in all Community policies."

- The Communication on the Year of Equal Opportunities of the European Commission (2005) emphasizes the fact that Roma are the "most disadvantaged ethnic minority group in Europe" and writes about the "significant barriers in employment and education" they face. The Communication writes "disadvantages experienced by some communities, for example, the Roma, are so wide-scale and embedded in the structure of society that positive action may be necessary to remedy the nature of their exclusion."

- The adoptions of the Race Directive 43/2000/EC as well as the introduction of Article 13 in the European Treaty clearly indicate that the European Union has and advances a human rights agenda.

European diplomacy has the legal tools, the experience, and the capacity to develop a human rights diplomacy that should include, as one part, a distinct diplomatic corps focused on combating anti-Gypsyism.

Niche diplomacy also has a strong history in European states. The European block is mainly composed of middle-sized and small powers skilled in developing diplomatic niches. In the case of Netherlands, Denmark, and Sweden, such niches include human rights diplomacy, before and following the void of leadership at the end of the Cold War (Puchala and Coate, 1988).

However, response to the war in Iraq as well as to the Israel-Palestine conflict has shown that the Union does not yet project a coherent and united foreign policy (as often underlined by *The Economist* (Anon., 2002, 2003, 2004, 2006). In an article published on June 16, 2006, *The Economist* (Anon., 2006) writes "Everyone recognises that the EU's apparatus for making foreign policy is a bureaucratic nightmare."

So far, support at the national level of the member states for a diplomatic approach to racism and discrimination is limited, but, on the other hand, no clear opposition to such an initiative has arisen. In general, strong opposition of member states hinders a common European foreign policy; member states have different economic and geopolitical interests related to their colonial pasts and traditional alliances. These differences are less significant when it comes to human rights diplomacy.

A European human rights diplomatic niche might also function as a much-needed counterbalance to the converging right-wing movement in Europe based on a combination of neo-racist, neo-fascist, and anti-Gypsy movements. Numerous analyses show beyond any doubt the re-emergence of racism in Europe and expose political and intellectual efforts to make racism respectable (Gilroy, 2001; Williams, 1998; Modood, 1997; van den Berghe, 1995; Wieviorka, 1995; Gellner, 1994; Goldberg, 1993; Balibar and Wallerstein, 1991). Not only the extremist right, such as Le Pen and the Front Nationale in France, Jorg Heider and the FPO in Austria, Umberto Bossi and the Lega de Nord in Italy, the Vlaamse Blook in Belgium, and the Fremskrididtpartiet in Denmark and Norway, but also mainstream parties on both sides of the political scene have started to deploy theories justifying racism.

In general, most European parties condemn racism through the discourses of leading politicians when at the European level. The same political leaders remain, at best, silent within the national discourse, as anti-racist rhetoric is unpopular. A visible and successful European diplomacy targeting racism and discrimination within and outside European Union borders could encourage a popular movement against racism and for tolerance in Europe.

Anti-Gypsyism could provide a basis for building such a diplomatic niche, as practically everywhere in Europe Roma are the most hated ethnic group and the most serious danger to social and economic cohesion. Perhaps this common thread of distrust and ignorance, at the best, and hatred and violence, at the worst, can be turned into a common goal or theme upon which to base such niche diplomacy.

Anti-Gypsyism is currently strong also in countries that seek European Union accession, the western Balkans, Ukraine, Turkey, and Moldova – as well as in Russia, Belarus and other ex-Soviet countries. The fight against anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, the two other forms of racism widespread in Europe, has already received diplomatic support from within Europe and from outside. This is not at all the case for prejudice against the Roma.

Europe is still struggling with racial and religious polarisation. Currently we see a deepening of racial stratification of labour and discrimination in access to employment (European Commission, 2006b; Lutz, 2000; Solomon and Wrench, 1996). In the case of Roma, this polarisation is the most dramatic in Europe, yet it could also be the easiest to address through a European Policy for Roma. In fact, such a policy was requested by the European Parliament in its resolution of April 28, 2005 (European Parliament, 2005). An eventual success in addressing anti-Gypsyism could legitimate the European Union in its efforts to achieve social cohesion, but also could help Europe play an important role in negotiating interethnic conflicts. This would be particularly relevant if it done by a task force of European diplomats of minority backgrounds.

Intergovernmental Multilateral Diplomacy

Multilateral diplomacy might affect intergovernmental institutions and national governments in regard to inter-ethnic conflicts.

The UN, the OSCE, and the Council of Europe, once considered legitimate negotiating intergovernmental institutions in inter-ethnic related issues, have repeatedly shown their inability to address the politicisation of race within and outside of Europe. The failure of these institutions to address inter-ethnic conflict and basic violations of human rights has been exposed in numerous cases, in former European colonies (Nigeria, Rwanda, Liberia, Cambodia, Indonesia, Uganda), and in Nagorno-Karabakh, Ossetia and Abkhazia, and Chechnya. The Yugoslav conflicts, the tensions in Estonia and Latvia between the locals and the Russian minority, the Cypriot and Corsican problems, the riots in France in 2005, the unresolved Basque and Catalan issues in Spain - the recrudescencė of racism all over Europe signal the need for an inside reform at the international and European diplomatic level.

As far as national diplomacies are concerned, despite being main players in what is called human rights diplomacy (Mullerson, 1997), Sweden, Denmark, the

Netherlands, Germany, the United Kingdom, and Norway have failed abysmally in addressing the conflicts in Bosnia and in Kosovo. All these countries have a significant proportion of population supporting anti-Gypsyism.

The only relative success we have seen in Europe, when it comes to ethnic minorities, is from the European Parliament. Members of the European Parliament from ethnic minority backgrounds have brought to light issues regarding the Hungarian minority in Slovakia and Romania, Romani issues, and the situation of the Basque, Catalan, and Muslim minority. Their successes, especially when it comes to awareness-raising in issues concerning Roma communities, should be replicated by encouraging diplomats of minority backgrounds to play an active role in the negotiating teams of the Union.

The OSCE considers ethnic minority issues as primarily related to security rather than human rights. The establishment of the Contact Point for Roma and Sinti in 1999, and the appointment of Nicolae Gheorghe in the position of Senior Adviser, were very good steps forward, but were far from enough to have the effect needed on the international diplomatic and political scene. Roma issues remain marginal even within the OSCE. With the establishment of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, it has even developed a diplomatic instrument for providing early warning for potential conflicts. Unfortunately, the OSCE does not yet see anti-Gypsyism as a possible warning indicator for conflicts, despite the fact that in 2005 they published a report on anti-Gypsyism in the mass media. They have failed, so far, to develop a strategy to include the biggest ethnic minority in the OSCE's area in their negotiating corps.

For example, in 1993, when negotiating the frictions between Hungary and Slovakia due to discrimination against the Hungarian minority in Slovakia, the High Commissioner decided to send a group of three experts on minority issues to draft recommendations (OSCE, 1993). Despite the fact that the Roma minority is the largest ethnic minority in both Slovakia and Hungary and that a significant number of Hungarian Roma in Slovakia face multiple discrimination, no Roma were involved in the efforts of the OSCE. The Hungarian minority well represented in the negotiations also failed to include any Roma.

Another clear example of the mishandling of minority issues is the case of OSCE was Macedonia, which has seen a significant increase in inter-ethnic tensions with the inauguration of the Albanian University in December 1994 in Tetovo - a preview of future events that put later Macedonia on the brink of civil war. Some significant factors promote the involvement of Roma in the diplomatic efforts in Macedonia. First, Roma are the third largest ethnic group in Macedonia. Roma are well integrated both in the Albanian and Macedonian ethnic groups and a significant number of Muslim and Christian Roma live in Macedonia. The municipality of Suto Orizari is, in effect, a Romani town. Therefore the administrative autonomy of regions, often the issue of discussions, was of utmost relevance to the Roma. Macedonia was also the most logical target - and the Roma proved to be one of the first groups fleeing conflict from different zones of conflict in ex-Yugoslavia and especially from Kosovo. And, finally, a large number of well educated Roma live in Tetovo, which is also the site of one of the most successful Roma NGOs in Macedonia, Kham. The Polish leader of the OSCE

diplomacy at that time in Macedonia, Marek Jeziorsky, completely ignored the possibility of involving Roma in negotiations meant to ease the tensions.

By far the worst case in recent history not only of the OSCE but of the other intergovernmental organisations remains Kosovo.

Kosovo: A Case Study of a Diplomatic Failure

The concept of preventive diplomacy was fashionable in the early 1990s. The Clinton administration tried to develop an early warning system for conflicts, and the UN talked of a rapid intervention army able to stop conflicts at their very beginning. Following those talks, the world sat back and watched a series of the most terrible atrocities in history in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Rwanda and then in Kosovo.

The conflict in Kosovo provides a good case study to demonstrate that diplomatic efforts should not only take anti-Gypsyism into consideration, but should train and involve Roma and other vulnerable minorities to help negotiate ethnic conflicts. According to Nicolae Gheorghe (personal communication, March 2006), ex-senior advisor for the OSCE on Roma and Sinti issues, the Roma in Kosovo were among the most successful and educated in Europe. Numerous Roma were integrated within both communities and seen as successful role models. An intellectual Roma elite was present in Kosovo prior to the conflict. Therefore, exclusion of Roma from negotiations regarding the future of Kosovo cannot be justified through the lack of appropriate candidates.

In 1999, the majority of Roma in Kosovo were forced to flee by ethnic Albanians in an "ethnic cleansing" process which included Serbs, Gorani, Bosniaks, Turks, and Croats, following the withdrawal of Yugoslav forces. (For the sake of simplicity, I use the term Roma to include the Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities in Kosovo – sometimes referred to as RAE). Accused by both Serbs and Albanians of collaborating with the other side, the Roma were caught in the middle of a violent and long-standing conflict between the main ethnic groups in Kosovo. As most Roma were generally integrated within the Serbian minority, but a significant number were also integrated within the Albania majority, they became a scapegoat for both parties: Albanian separatists on the one hand and the Serbian nationalist/Milosevic regime on the other (ERRC, 2003a).

According to NGO estimates (Polanski, 2003), 7–10% of Kosovo's population prior to the NATO intervention were from the Roma community. The *Gesellschaft fur bedrohte Volker* estimates that 80% of Roma were expelled from Kosovo, while the Human Rights Watch (2003) wrote that 75 of their settlements and 15,000 of their houses were destroyed (p. 12). Yet the plight of the Roma community was systematically ignored not only by international media coverage, but also by the international diplomatic efforts which tried to resolve the situation.

Udo Janz of the UNHCR-Bosnia and Herzegovina, speaking in Sarajevo in January 2003 at an OSCE conference, said:

> It is unacceptable that more than several years after the end of the conflict in this country and several years after the end of the conflicts in neighboring countries, there are still an estimated 50,000 Roma displaced in in the Balkans and

> between 40,000 and 60,000 Roma refugees in Western Europe. We....need to act together with Roma representatives to address the root causes of this continued forced displacement in the region and beyond the region. We have to map out what tools we have in our arsenals in order to find a sustainable solution to the issue of forced displacement. (ERRC, 2003a)

According to ERRC (2003a), EU member states and populations receiving Romani refugees from Kosovo have treated them with disrespect and contempt, and await the chance to expel them. This contempt is reflected in the complete absence of Roma input or participation in the European diplomatic efforts in Kosovo, and is as prejudicial as the popular anti-Gypsyism.

According to an European Roma Rights Center report, Belgrade Radio station B92 reported that on May 27, 2002 the UNHCR cautioned German officials not to expel Kosovo minority groups currently living in Germany back to Kosovo (ERRC, 2003a). Mr. Stefan Berglund, Chief of the UNHCR's German Office, was quoted by B92 as having stated that "international protection is still required." Following the UNHCR warning, on May 29, 2002, the news agency *Agence France Press* reported that on the same day, 1,000 Roma arrived in the western German city of Essen to protest against the pending deportation of approximately 250 Sinti and Roma refugees from the Former Republic of Yugoslavia. According to *Agence France Press*, the Sinti and Roma to be deported were afraid to return to the region, but German officials had rejected their asylum claims (ERRC, 2002). According to UNHCR, to date, Germany hosts between 25,000 and 30,000 members of Kosovo minority groups, while "the number of ethnic Serbs among them is very low."

Similarly, the ERRC reported on the situation in Denmark:

> on March 10, 2002, a number of Roma from Kosovo presently in Denmark have been ordered to report to the Sandholm Prison and Probation Service immigration detention establishment in North Zealand, as preliminary measure prior to their "voluntary repatriation" to Kosovo. Such persons have been instructed in writing that they "must leave Denmark". We note from reviewing documents provided to such persons that they are offered goods such as money and medical assistance if they leave Denmark "voluntarily", with the information that such goods will not be made available to persons who are forcibly expelled from Denmark. (ERRC, 2003b)

Since 2002, other attempts have been made to return Roma refugees from Kosovo, despite the re-emergences of inter-ethnic conflict, showing beyond doubt that the region is still insecure.

Belgium, the UK, and Italy have also in recent years collectively expelled Roma. In October 1999, Belgium expelled 74 Romani asylum seekers from Slovakia, following a press campaign against Roma and racist pronouncements by leading Belgian politicians which were lately similarly replicated in Italy and the UK. The European Court of Human Right found in Conka v. Belgium (no. 51564/99) Belgium guilty for the collective deportation of Roma (Statewatch, 2002).

Unfortunately, throughout the conflict in Kosovo, Roma have been excluded from the numerous negotiating processes. Other non-conventional approaches have been deployed along with the formal diplomatic efforts. For example, the International Crisis Group, a small organisation dedicated to preventive diplomacy and led by an ex-American - a former US ambassador, Mort Abramowitz, with experience in Thailand and Turkey (during the first Gulf War) contributed to negotiations. The International Crisis Group had nothing to justify its legitimacy and, as expected, failed in its efforts to raise attention about the volatility of inter-ethnic relations in Kosovo and Macedonia (The Economist, 1998).

Martti Ahtisaari, the former Finnish president, currently leads the UN and international diplomatic efforts in Kosovo. Considering the explosion of violence in 2004 which saw 19 people killed, 954 injured, and thousands losing their properties and homes, it is hard to believe that efforts aimed at establishing a democratic and multi-ethnic Kosovo have a real chance. For example, on March 27, 2004, a group of 258 Roma Ashkali were chased from their homes in Vucitrn/Vushtri and looked to a French KFOR for protection. Their call to the EU High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy, Javier Solana, asking for relocation to an EU country was ignored.

In June 2006, during a conference in Brussels focused on Kosovo (which the author attended), German MEP Doris Pack, member of the centre right European People Party and chair of the European Parliament delegation for relations with the countries of south-east Europe, declared that Roma should not be included in the negotiations as they would "interfere" in the negotiations between the Albanians and Serbs.

The presence of Roma in the negotiating process may be the only way to ensure a sustainable solution as a significant number of Roma in Kosovo are mixed Roma Albanians and Roma Serbs and therefore have a strong interest in the peace process. An European Diplomatic corps which to include European Roma along with Serb and Albanian Roma focused on achieving a long term and sustainable truce would be better received and could be supported by the local and regional leaders. The involvement of the Roma MEPs and the Roma diplomats backed up by international organisations and the USA could lead to a significant breakthrough and provide a positive case study for the development of a European diplomatic niche involving minorities and focused on peace negotiations in inter-ethnic conflicts. Unfortunately none of the above seems to be of any concern for anybody.

The Failure of Public Diplomacy in Addressing Anti-Gypsyism

NGOs and intergovernmental organisation public diplomacy have been instrumental in the last years in making the Roma issues visible on the international scene. Their efforts underline the need for the involvement of Roma in the European society at all levels including the political and diplomatic ones. Unfortunately, none of these actors has been seriously involved in creating the capacity within the Roma communities or supporting the appointment of Roma professionals in positions which could have them participate in the diplomatic processes and negotiations in Europe. I chose to analyse the case of the UN as it is the main diplomatic international body.

On August 18, 1993 in an article in *The Independent,* McRae suggested that the role of NGOs on the international scene is often more relevant than the diplomacies of small and medium powers. In this vein, a series of important international NGOs including Amnesty, Human Rights Watch, Open Society Institute and Minority Rights Group have recently taken strong stands against anti-Gypsyism in Europe. Their actions can be considered a form of public or multilateral diplomacy (Gregory, 2005). As I will point out later in this section it is often the lack of any significant stand of any diplomacy on issues related to anti-Gypsyism is often related to the lack of Roma diplomats able to bring up the issues. It is unfortunate that the main recommendation of the above-mentioned NGOs regarding the effective inclusion and participation of Roma fall short of convincing, because aside from the Open Society Institute, none of these NGOs employ any Roma in their staff or have Roma involved in their boards of directors.

The rights of other vulnerable groups in Europe are defended by both their countries of origin (in the case of religious and race discrimination, by a number of countries) and by European NGOs (e.g., the European Anti-Poverty Network, European Disability Forum, FEANTSA (homeless people), ILGA (gay and lesbian people), European Women Lobby, and Social Platform,) dealing with the issues. Despite the fact that Roma are the largest and most discriminated ethnic minority in Europe, according to the European Commission, which provides core funding for most of the European Network NGOs dealing with vulnerable groups, not a single Roma NGO in Europe is financed by and welcomed under the umbrella of the Commission. Under pressure from European Roma Information Office the European Commission has launched a call for proposals for supporting a European Roma Network in 2005. Not only that there was no consultation with Roma organisations about the Terms of Reference which lead to no organisation being selected for the first two years, but also the funds available are five times less than for similar network organisations.

In the case of Roma who have no state of their own and no European state willing to stand up for their rights, the Roma NGOs are of utmost importance. Higgot (1997) states that:

> diplomacy has lost its insulation from domestic policies. It is the blurring of policy-making and diplomacy that makes space for technical and entrepreneurial elites in the decision making communities of the many world's developed states...diplomacy comes more to require domestic policy change from negotiating partners. (p. 2)

Unfortunately, vulnerable groups exposed to racism in general have limited input as negotiating partners within the national states, and therefore their input on domestic policy is not only not required as Higgot describes, but, when available, is received with scepticism by the national governments. In the case of Roma, the strong rejections from the side of the majority populations (OSCE, 2005) and strong nationalism in the countries were they live in makes the situation even worse as they are rarely consulted in anything of interest for their communities. When it comes to Roma, Higgot's assumption on lost insulation of diplomacy from domestic policies is simply wrong.

According to personal research, the World Bank and the European Development Bank, as well as the UN and European Commission, all strongly involved in multimillion-Euro programs of assistance and development targeting Roma communities and all main players in traditional and public diplomacy, fail to employ a single person of Roma origin in their well over 50,000 staff members working in Europe. Roma have a population larger than 10 of the 27 European member states.

Considering the fact that unemployment rates among Roma are four to five times higher than the European average, according to UNDP (2006), it is hard to understand how the International Labour Organisation, one of the first international diplomatic humanitarian instruments, has never become involved in issues related to Roma and has never tried to employ any Roma within the organisation. The International Organisation for Migration also fails to employ Roma, despite administrating hundred of millions of Euros in projects targeting Roma.

The failure of the UN in addressing human rights issues is well documented by numerous authors on human rights and multilateral diplomacy, as well as *The Economist* (1999, 2000, 2001, 2004b, 2005, 2006c). It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to examine the failure of the UN in general terms, however a few points are relevant here. The need for reform of the UN was addressed in the 2005 report of the High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change: "A More Secure World: Our Shared Responsibility." The group, established by Kofi Annan, identified six clusters of threats that the UN needed to address differently. These included economic and social threats, including poverty and deadly infectious disease; internal violence, including civil war, state collapse and genocide; terrorism; and transnational organised crime. All of these issues are the most relevant for the situation of Roma when it comes to Europe. The clusters mentioned are also to be found in the Action Plan on Improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti within the OSCE Area adopted by the OSCE (2003). The OSCE report has an entire chapter focused on the importance of active participation of Roma in initiatives and policies targeting them. Currently, no indication shows that the UN makes any effort in including or training Roma.

In addition, former UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali's famous "An Agenda for Peace," published in 1995 (UN) deserves a short analysis from the point of anti-Gypsyism. In paragraph 23 of the agenda Boutros-Ghali writes "The United Nations has developed a range of instruments for controlling and resolving conflicts between and within States. The most important of them are preventive diplomacy and peacemaking" (p. 12). In paragraph 26, preventive and peacemaking activities are underlined as a priority for the UN. Paragraphs 30 and 31 highlight difficulties in the process of preventive diplomacy and identify the most important of them "finding senior persons who have the diplomatic skills and who are willing to serve for a while as special representative or envoy of the Secretary-General" (p. 18).

Since the publication of this agenda, the UN has not made any efforts to develop a diplomatic corps of ethnic minorities and has not employed any of the over 20 million Roma worldwide in its structures. The report specifies that "Preventive Diplomacy may be performed by the Secretary-General personally or through senior staff or specialized agencies and programmes, by the Security Council or the General Assembly and by regional organizations in cooperation with the United Nations" (p.

46). None of the above mentioned bodies and organisations include any Roma. No known senior diplomats of Roma origin exists. In combination with the strong and popular anti-Roma feeling in countries where Roma live, the chance of preventive diplomacy as promoted by the UN including Roma is very limited. Not only the UN, but also other stakeholders should have been involved in training and developing a corps of Roma diplomats which would put pressure of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs to include Roma if the UN would be serious about including ethnic minorities in their actions seen as preventing diplomacy.

On July 16, 2000, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights of the UN adopted General Recommendation No. 27: Discrimination against Roma (UNCHR). In its Recommendation 48, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination suggest that "The High Commissioner for Human Rights consider establishing a focal point for Roma issues within the Office of the High Commissioner." Six years later, this has not happened, nor is it under consideration within the UN.

Recommendation 41 of the same document, under the heading "Measures concerning participation in public life" requires "necessary steps, including special measures to secure equal opportunities for the participation of Roma minorities or groups in all central and local governmental bodies." Again, the UN has preferred not to comply with its own recommendation.

Anti-Gypsyism could be an indicator for potential instability in Europe when it comes to Roma, and thus provides justification for an efficient type of preventive and niche diplomacy. A common European Diplomatic Initiative targeting anti-Gypsyism could very well be the start of a successful common European Foreign Policy targeting racism and inter-ethnic conflicts. Involvement of Roma in a European Diplomatic corps working on these issues is a logical and much needed step. A need is recognized at the level of the European Union (European Parliament, 2005) for promoting positive role models within the Roma communities and needs to be done at the diplomatic level. The initiative of the OSCE which named Nicolae Gheorghe as Senior Advisor for Roma and Sinti proved highly successful, but in order to see a significant change this model needs to be replicated hundreds of times. An increased need of capable negotiators and promoters of change within the Roma communities is visible, negotiators and promoters capable of reversing the current trend of isolation and rejection from outside and sometimes from inside the Roma communities. The rejection of the European Constitutions by France and the Netherlands in 2005 triggered calls for a rethinking of the way Europe communicates with its citizens and for much dialogue between Brussels and the Europeans.

In general, the Romani movement and, in particular, its international part is almost a closed system. The ingression of new people is extremely limited and upward or downward mobility is reserved for practically the same people. The closed system results in very low or unrealistic expectations, as the pool of ideas is very small. As in any closed system, criticism is discouraged, leading to limited and often bad ideas carried forward.

Autocratic leadership encourages isolation, as isolation avoids exposure of often-serious flaws or lapses in education or judgement. Progress is often received as an attack to tradition and culture that, in fact, has nothing to do with either tradition or

culture. Change is not just feared, but also opposed and the traditional leaders fast downplay any new expertise. People in closed systems tend to adopt a common view and react defensively to changes. The number of assimilated and, therefore, "invisible" or mixed Roma is much higher than the number of Roma ready to accept their ethnic identity. The Roma movement needs to move away from small community or family interests to principles. The movement needs to adopt principles able to attract people and avoid exclusionary principles based on blood purity.

A substantial number of non-Roma are willing to help the movement, but are discouraged by the existing exclusionist approach. An immediate need exists to build bridges with other ethnic minority movements and create a strong ethnic minority rights movement able to influence and mainstream ethnic minority rights within the general framework of the human rights movement.

The serious involvement of intergovernmental institutions and national governments can easily and efficiently address these drawbacks. Unfortunately, up to this moment not only the main stakeholders on the international and national scene did almost nothing to capacitate a new generation of Romani leaders but it practically helped the existing status quos by giving visibility and support to traditional leadership as it is the case of the newly established European Roma and Travellers Forum.

Seven to nine million Roma live in Europe and even the most optimistic politicians and bureaucrats in Brussels would not talk about an existing dialogue with Roma communities. The rejection and exclusion of Roma at the national levels need redress through international mechanisms in order to avoid a dangerous, but possible radicalisation of the Romani movement.

References

Anon. (2002). What common foreign policy? [online]. *The Economist,* September 19, 2002. Available from: http://www.economist.com [Accessed 15 July 2006].

Anon. (2003). Europe: questions and answers [online]. *The Economist,* June 23, 2003. Available from: http://www.economist.com [Accessed 15 July 2006].

Anon. (2004). Chirac-lite [online]. *The Economist,* November18, 2004. Available from: http://www.economist.com [Accessed 15 July 2006].

Anon. (2006). A sleepy summit [online]. *The Economist,* June 16. 2006. Available from: http://www.economist.com [Accessed 15 July 2006].

Balibar, E. and Wallerstein, I. (1991). *Race, nation, class: ambigous identities.* Paris: Editions la Decouverte.

Berridge, G. R. (2005). *Diplomacy: theory and practice.* London: Palgrave Macmillan.

European Commission. DG Enlargement. (2004). *Review of the European Union Phare assistance to Roma minorities* [online]. Available from: http://ec.europa.eu/comm/enlargement/phare_evaluation_pdf/revised_minorities_thematic_raw_161204.pdf [Accessed 15 August 2005].

European Commission. (2005). *Proposal for a Decision of the European Parliament and the Council on the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All (2007) Towards a Just Society* [online]. Available from: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/fundamental_rights/pdf/ey07/dec07_en.pdf [Accessed 15 August 2006].

European Commission, DG Enlargement. (2006a). *Country report Bulgaria.* Luxembourg: European Commission.

European Commission, DG Enlargement. (2006b). *Country report Romania.* Luxembourg: European Commission.

European Parliament. (1984). *Resolution of the European Parliament on the Situation of Gypsies in the Community.* European Parliament C172/153

European Parliament. (2000). *The Charter of Fundamental Rights* [online]. Available from: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/charter/default_en.htm [Accessed 15 March 2007].

European Parliament. (2005). *Resolution of the European Parliament on Roma in the European Union* [online]. Available from: http://dev.eurac.edu:8085/mugs2/do/blob.html?type=html&serial=1117816024500 [Accessed 30 August 2005].

European Roma Rights Center (ERRC). (2002). UNHCR warns against forced expulsion of Kosovo Roma refugees from Germany. *Roma Rights* [online], 2/2002. Available from: http://www.errc.org/cikk.php?cikk=956 [Accessed 12 April 2007].

European Roma Rights Center (ERRC). (2003a). *The protection of Roma rights in Serbia and Montenegro.* Memorandum prepared by the European Roma Rights Center in association with the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Human Rights Field Operation in Serbia and Montenegro (UN OHCHR). Available from: http://www.errc.org [Accessed 23 December 2004]

European Roma Rights Center (ERRC). (2003b). Denmark. [online]. Available from: http://errc.org/publications/letters/2003/denmark_mar_13_2003.shtml [Accessed 2 August 2005].

Gellner, E. (1994). *Encounters with nationalism.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Gilroy, P. (2001). *Against race: imagining political culture beyond the color line.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Goldberg, D. T. (1993). *Racist culture: philosophy and the politics of meaning.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Gregory, B. (2005). *Public diplomacy and strategic communication: cultures, firewalls, and imported norms* [online]. Available from: http://www8.georgetown.edu/cct/apsa/papers/gregory.pdf [Accessed 14 June 2006].

Helsinki Final Act. (1976). Available from: http://www.hri.org/docs/Helsinki75.html [Accessed 15 March 2007].

Higgot, R. (1997). Issues, institutions and middle power diplomacy: action and agendas in the post Cold War era. In: A. F. Cooper (ed). *Middle power diplomacy after the Cold War. London*. Macmillan, pp. 25–45.

Human Rights Watch. (2003). *Out of Limbo? Addressing the Plight of Kosovo Roma Refugees in Macedonia*. New York: Human Rights Watch, p. 12.

Kymlicka, W. (1995). *The rights of minority cultures*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Lutz, H. (2000). *The long shadows of the past: racism, nationalisms, ethnicisms and gender in a new Europe* [online]. Available from: http://www.vifu.de/areas/migration/document/20000719lutz.htlm [Accessed 25 October 2005].

Modood, T. (1997). Difference, cultural racism and anti-racism. In: W. Pnina and T. Pnina (eds). *Debating cultural hybrydity: multi-cultural identities and the politics of anti-racism*. London: Zed Books.

Mullerson, R. (1997). *Human rights diplomacy*. New York: Routledge.

Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). (1993). *Statements of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, Reference No. 251/93/L*. Warsaw: Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). (2003). *Action Plan for Roma and Sinti*. Warsaw: Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). (2005). *Anti-Gypsyism in the European mass-media*. Warsaw: Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Polanski, P. (2003). *Kosovo*. [online]. Available from: http://krrf.tripod.com [Accessed 1 December 2005].

Puchala, J. D. and Coate, R. A. (1988). The states of the United Nations. In: *Reports and papers, 1988–92*. Hanover: Academic Council on the United Nations System.

Risse-Kappen, T. (1995). *Bringing transnational relations back in. Non-state actors, domestic structures and international institutions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Solomon, J. and Wrench, J. (1996). *Racism and migration in Western Europe*. Oxford: Berg Publishers.

Statewatch. (2002). *Belgium, found guilty of mass expulsion of Roma* [online]. Available from: http://www.statewatch.org/news/2002/feb/05belgium.htm [Accessed 12 April 2007].

United Nations Development Program [UNDP]. (2006). *At risk: Roma and the displaced in Southeast Europe* [online]. Available from: http://europeandcis.undp.org/?menu=p_cms/show&content_id=1F1720E9-F203-1EE9-BC7AE7B9E8FA04E4 [Accessed 5 July 2005].

van den Berghe, P. L. (1995). Does race matter? *Nations and nationalism*, 1(3), pp. 28–45.

Wieviorka, M. (1995). *The arena of racism*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Williams, R. G. (1998). Race, multiculturalism and democracy. *Constellations*, 5(1), pp. 12–39.

Our Need for Internal Diplomatic Skills

Ian Hancock

Diplomacy is defined as "the management of international relations by negotiation; the method by which these relations are adjusted and managed by ambassadors and envoys; skill . . . in the conduct of international intercourse and negotiations." While the assumption was that we met in Geneva to discuss diplomacy between Romani and non-Romani agencies, I want to take a step back and address issues of diplomacy solely within the Romani world.

A diaspora people, we as Romanies exist in a great many distinct groups and are both geographically and politically dispersed. We have become fragmented by complex social and historical factors, with far-reaching consequences – thus the above definition from the *Oxford English Dictionary* (Onions, 1968, p. 514) must apply equally well to us: we must be able to talk to each other before we are in a position to talk to anyone else.

At present, different Romani organizations representing different interest groups meet with various non-Romani agencies to address mutually agreed-upon issues. However, the Romani groups involved in each situation do not and cannot speak for all Romanies everywhere. They represent either their own shared agenda (e.g., rights of the child) or their own group (e.g., human rights training of Roma in Sweden). They do not speak for Romanies as one global people.

This, of course, is to be expected and is not what I am addressing here. What I want to focus on is why, even within such single-topic contexts, we find it difficult to find common ground amongst ourselves. I was in Stockholm not long ago, where at least five different Romani groups resident in Sweden had come together to discuss Roma-related issues; the lack of cooperation amongst them almost led in one case to a death threat. More recently still, I was in Saint Louis, Missouri, where nearly 3 000 Roma have settled, part of a much larger population of some 45 000 Bosnian refugees in that city. They must deal with hostility from the non-Romani Bosnians, with learning English, with finding jobs and establishing homes. Yet, they exist in three distinct groups, who maintain their separateness and distinctiveness from each other despite sharing the fact of being a minority within a minority in a new land. At one of our international meetings, the Romani delegates from one particular country sat outside the conference hall angry and threatening to leave because they could not understand the Vlax dialect used in the presentations.

It is this divisiveness that I want to concentrate on, because it causes us the most problems. I repeat, before we can talk to the rest of the world, we must be able to talk to each other. In order to talk to each other, we must know who we – and each other – are: what separates us and what we have in common.

Are Roma one people? The fact that we met in Brussels and are here today in Geneva – from many different parts of the world – is an indication that we are now treated as though we were, regardless of how we have been traditionally regarded.

Who's in Charge of Identity?

The definition of Romani identity rests in many hands, though hardly in our own. The media, and even some academics, regard it as based solely on behaviour. Like Cher with her 1971 hit song, "Gypsies, Tramps, and Thieves," in a recent issue *The New York Press* referred to "hoboes and gypsies" as if they were same thing; and *The New Yorker* magazine wrote about "assertive women: female scholars, priestesses, gypsies, mystics, nature lovers" (Boyer, 2006, p. 36), evidently assuming that all of those labels refer to behaviours or occupations. One academic specializing in Roma, Professor Ralph Sandland of Nottingham University, says the word Gypsy "is merely a job description" (1996, p. 384), while *The Centurion: A Police Lifestyle Magazine* defines "Gypsies" as "any family-oriented band of nomads" (Schroeder, 1983. p. 59). The Romani Archives and Documentation Center in Texas receives the *Google Search* links to "Gypsy" in the press every day. For January 23, 2006, the Center received four items: one dealt with moths, one with Broadway chorus-line dancers, one with an Irish soccer team, and the last with recreational vehicles. Not one of them had anything to do with Roma.

The academics and folklorists who recognize an ethnic identity have, nevertheless, set their own limitations, traditionally wanting us to be illiterate and living under the hedges in order to be authentic. Even the great Paspati maintained that "it is in the tent that the Gypsy must be studied, and not in the villages of the bastardized sedentary Gypsies" (1883, p. 14); his contemporary, Pischel, too believed that "the Gypsy ceases to be a Gypsy as soon as he is domiciled and follows some trade" (1883, p. 358). This would disqualify most of us, and it is clear that educated, settled Roma pose a problem. The Czech sociologist, Jaroslav Sus, claimed that it was an "utterly mistaken opinion that Gypsies form a nationality or a nation, that they have their own national culture, their own national language" (1961, p. 89). The former sub-editor of the *Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society* mocked the same notion as nothing but "romantic twaddle" (Vesey-Fitzgerald, 1973, p. 2). Dora Yates, former honorary secretary of that organization, asked "except in a fairy tale, could any hope [of a Romani nationalist movement] ever have been more fantastic?" (1953, p. 40). Yet another member, Werner Cohn, wrote in his book, *The Gypsies*, that we "have no leaders, no executive committees, no nationalist movement. . . . I know of no authenticated case of genuine Gypsy allegiance to political or religious causes" (1973, p. 66) – and these are the experts. A firm denial of the nationalist movement also originates with the Gypsy Lore Society. One member, Jiri Lipa, wrote:

> To be exact, there is no one Gypsy culture nor one Gypsy language. . . . If in the process of looking for native assistants and for training them [the gypsilorist finds that] literary talents should appear, so much the better. . . . [I]n reality, however, it is mere toying, a waste of energy and material means which are not abundant for Gypsy studies. While a missing attribute is being artificially contrived, which is supposed to make the Gypsies an ethnic minority in the conventional sense in the eyes of wishful thinkers and bureaucrats, irreplaceable values of Gypsy culture are being lost in our time. (1983, p. 4)

The question of who speaks for us is one constantly addressed. Although sympathetic to our position, a non-Romani took it upon himself to "forgive" a non-Romani Auschwitz survivor for anti-Roma statements made in his book (Weiss, 2007). At the University of Texas in April, 2007, the promotional flyer for a conference on Romani women in Turkey entitled, "Reconfiguring Gender and Roma ('Gypsy') Identity through Political Discourses in Western Turkey," noted that "Rom and non-Rom men's voices speak for Roma women," although the "reconfiguration of Roma identity" in this presentation was made on our behalf by a *non*-Romani woman, and not by a Romani. In a new book on world music, the passages on Romani music are illustrated by two non-Roma Balkan music specialists (Naylor, 2006). A week-long "Gypsy" conference at the University of Florida in March, 2007, consisted mainly of singing, dancing, and dressing up by various non-Roma, but included no Romani participation. When questioned in this regard, organisers responded that they "couldn't find any Gypsies." They have since received a complaint from members of the Miami Romani community.

So Who Are We?

While some of the earliest Roma told the Europeans that we had come from India, this fact was not generally known, and was eventually forgotten even by our own people. Consequently, a great many incorrect, and sometimes bizarre, hypotheses gained currency. Some *gazhe* have written that we originated from inside the hollow earth, or on the Moon, or in Atlantis; that we were the remnants of a race of prehistoric horsemen, were Nubians, or Druids; or even that we were a conglomerate drawn from the fringes of European society and that we artificially dyed our skin and spoke a made-up jargon for the purposes of plotting criminal activity.

The problem I am focusing on here is that we ourselves are as uncertain about our origins as is the general *gazhikano* population – and that uncertainty serves only to sustain the universal Hollywood image. Some of our own people have said that we are Berbers or Jews or Egyptians, or were a presence in the Roman Empire, thus giving the stamp of legitimacy to such claims. It is the very existence of this nebulous identity that has contributed to the ease of its manipulation.

In my book, *We Are the Romani People* (Hancock, 2002), I complained that degrees have been awarded to graduate students whose theses and dissertations were supervised by committees the members of which had no expertise whatsoever in Romani studies. An article that appeared in a published collection of scholarly essays about Roma in 1999 maintained that "whether Gypsies originate in either Egypt or India is a matter that has not been settled" (Esplugas, 1999, p. 43). Since 1997 at least three "Gypsy" courses have been established at different American universities by faculty who have no qualifications in the area, who have never met any Romanies, and whose list of readings contain non-academic and misleading titles. Books and articles about Romanies number in the tens of thousands, but practically every single one of them has been written by an outsider – and most of those by people who have never actually met any Roma in their lives. It would be hard to imagine a book about modern-day Poles or Slovaks being taken seriously had it been written by someone who had never visited Poland or Slovakia and who had never met anyone from those countries.

Recent scholarship is forcing a serious re-examination of our origins. My own sociohistorical and linguistic work supports genetic research conducted by Kalaydjieva and others, who found that "confirming the centuries-old linguistic theory of the Indian origins [of Roma] is no great triumph for modern genetic research," but that "the major, unexpected and most significant result of these studies is the strong evidence of the common descent of all Gypsies regardless of declared group identity, country of residence and rules of endogamy. . . . [T]he Gypsy group was born in Europe" (2005, pp. 1085-6).

This European perspective is fundamental to the discussion. Three hitherto unconsidered aspects of the contemporary Romani condition rest upon the facts of our history, and must be acknowledged if we are to understand our problems of identity and in-group communication or lack of it. First, our population has been a composite one from its very beginning, and, at the beginning, was occupationally, rather than ethnically-defined. Second, while our earliest linguistic, cultural, and genetic components are traceable to India, Romanies everywhere essentially constitute a population that acquired its identity and language in the West (accepting the Christian, Greek-speaking Byzantine Empire as linguistically and culturally Western). Third, the entry into Europe from Anatolia was not as a single people, but as at least three smaller migrations over perhaps as much as a two-century span of time.

Together, these account in large part for the lack of cohesiveness among the various groups self-identifying as Romani, and for the major dialect splits within the language. We might see each major post-Byzantine group as evolving in its own way, continuing independently a process of assimilation and adaptation begun in northwest India. Thus, the descendants of those held in slavery until the 19th century, and those whose ancestors entered Spain in the 15th century are today very different. The former – the *Vlax* Romanies – were heavily influenced genetically, culturally, and linguistically by Romanian and the Romanians; the latter – the *Kale* Romanies – were influenced in the same way by Mozarabic and Spanish, and the populations have, furthermore, been separated by more than six centuries. Any originally acquired characteristics each group might still share, which constitute the genetic, linguistic, and cultural "core of direct retention," are greatly outweighed by characteristics accreted from the non-Romani world. The reunification (or more accurately unification) movement urged by such organizations as the International Romani Union or the Roma National Congress seeks – as I do myself – to emphasize the original, shared features of each group, rather than those acquired from outside which separate them. Yet, for some, that original material is now scant, and creating for them any sense of a pan-Romani, global ethnicity would require the kind of effort that is, sadly, very far down on the list of day-to-day priorities and, pragmatically, would be difficult to instigate. It also calls into question the legitimacy of the exclusionary and subjective position taken by some groups who regard themselves as "more Romani" than others.

Accommodating Our Dual Heritage

The extent to which our "Asianness" should play a part in the discourse is a matter of some debate. We are unique among world populations in having the Indian ingredients in our early makeup come together in the West; we are both an Asian and a Western people, but with no Asian experience or (hardly any) presence. Mirga and Gheorghe have noted that some of us "eagerly affirm [our] European roots and heritage and consider [our] Indian past as irrelevant to the current Romani causes and claims" (1997, p. 22); while Saip Jusuf said his feelings of affinity with India were so intense that he refused to recognise that we belong to any European country (Sharma, 1976, pp. 29–30). The late Mateo Maximoff (1994) stridently claimed that if you did not speak the Romani language, you could not claim Romani identity.

In a very real sense, we are as "European" as anyone else. European is not a nationality or an ethnicity; Europeans are composed of a multitude of these. European does not mean being originally from a part of Europe; if that were true, the Saami and Hungarians and Finns and Estonians would not be Europeans. Having a country is not a qualification; if that were true, then the Basques, the Catalans, and the Frisians would not qualify.

While the knowledge of our Indian origins is important, just as it is important for any nation to know its own history, it is not a body of knowledge kept in mind on a daily basis. In fact, most of us do not even know about it and some of us do not believe it when we first hear about it. When skinheads carry placards that say "Gypsies Go Back To India," this is an informed, but unrealistic bigotry. European Romanies regard Europe as home, not India. Our own spokespersons, who believe we should refrain from bringing too much attention to our Indian connection, argue that if we stress our non-Europeanness, it will merely serve as justification for those who would like us to leave. In any case, in light of the details about our history that are now emerging, we may not even have begun to be an ethnic population until our ancestors reached the West, and the time spent in Europe and beyond accounts for practically the entirety of the Romani experience.

Despite the emphasis on Europe, it is important to remember also that we are a diaspora people found all over the world; we are a global population, with between a quarter and a third of our total number outside of Europe. The exclusive focus of Romani-related organisations on populations located only in Europe fails to acknowledge our existence internationally. With the constant (especially post-communist) migration of members of European Romani families to North and South America and to Australia, and with the tremendous increase in the use of the Internet, contacts linking us around the world will continue to grow.

At our follow-up meeting in Geneva, a document circulated that I found entirely relevant to our situation. It was the text of an interview by Eugen Tomiuc (2006) with the Chairman of the British Muslim Council for Religious and Racial Harmony, Dr. Abduljalil Sajid, part of which is worth reproducing here.

> Muslims are a multifarious and multifaceted people throughout the world, and Europe is not separated from the world. Muslims are divided, as all human beings are . . . and Europe is also divided. We didn't come here as a monolithic,

collective group in Europe. We all are coming from different backgrounds and we all have to cement our differences and work out together what are our issues, common challenges, common problems, and how we can bring a common approach to deal with those challenges. That will be our strength. I think we can form a permanent body of European imams' councils. That would be a great strength. There we can debate our issues and bring common resolution to those issues to the whole world, and especially to the European people that we are going to be our partners in faith, in belief, and in citizenship. And you have nothing to fear from the Muslims of Europe. [Regarding my identity as either] a Muslim in Europe or as a European Muslim, I'm both. I consider myself a European Muslim. My identity is in my geography, my area, but I myself also consider that my first and foremost duty is to the identity of my faith, believing in God. So I am a Muslim in Europe as well as a European Muslim. I do not see a contradiction in either of these two terms, and we should not be asked and forced to choose one against another. We can be both.

Everything that Sajid maintains for Muslims in Europe (a good many of whom are Roma) also holds true for us. While not linked by a common religion, we share a common origin, but we are divided as the result of many factors, above all, physical separation and lack of education. Both have kept us from taking charge of our place in the global community. This is now changing. Our leaders and representatives from all parts of the world are able to meet in person or communicate via the Internet. More scholarly works on our history and socio-political situation have been published in the past twenty years than ever before. Courses in Romani studies are offered at the highest level, and educational grants for young Roma are now a reality. We have what we need to improve our situation, and to speak for ourselves in the international forum. Yet, before we can be fully equipped to do that, we must speak to each other.

References

Boyer, P. J. (2006). Hollywood heresy. *The New Yorker,* May 22, 2006, pp. 34–39.

Cohn, W. (1973). *The Gypsies*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Esplugas, C. (1999). Gypsy women in English life and literature. In: M. Button and T. Reed (eds). *The foreign woman in British literature: exotics, aliens and outsiders.* Westport, ME: The Greenwood Press, pp. 145–158.

Hancock, I. (2002). *We are the Romani people: ame sam e Rromane dzene.* Hatfield: The University of Hertfordshire Press.

Kalaydjieva, L. et al. (2005). A newly discovered founder population: the Roma/Gypsies. *BioEssays,* 27(10), pp. 1084–1094.

Lipa, J. (1983). [Guest editorial on priorities in Romanological studies]. *Newsletter of the North American Chapter of the Gypsy Lore Society,* 6(1), pp. 3–4.

Maximoff, M. (1994). [Interview]. *Jekh Chib,* 17, pp. 29–33.

Mirga, A. and Gheorghe, N. (1997). *The Roma in the 21st century: a policy paper.* Princeton, NJ: The Project on Ethnic Relations.

Naylor, M. (2006). *Our musical world: A creative program to greet humanity's coming of age.* Ann Arbor: V&V International.

Onions, C. T. (ed). (1968). *The shorter English Oxford dictionary on historical principles.* Oxford: The Clarendon Press.

Paspati, A. (1883). *Etudes sur les Tchingianses ou Bohemiens de l'empire Ottoman.* Constantinople: Koromelia.

Pischel, R. (1883). Die heimat der Zigeuner. *Deutsche Rundschau,* 36, pp. 353-375.

Sandland, R. (1996). The real, the simulacrum, and the construction of "gypsy" in law. *Journal of Law and Society,* 23(3), pp. 383-405.

Schroeder, J. (1983). Gypsy crime in America. *The Centurion: A Police Lifestyle Magazine,* 1(6), pp. 58-63.

Sharma, S. K. (1976). Roma have ethnic and linguistic connections with India. *Roma,* 2(2), pp. 26-30.

Sus, J. (1961). *Cikanska Otazka v CSSR.* Prague: Statni nakladatelstvi politicke literatury.

Tomiuc, E. (2006). *The challenges of European integration and Muslim identity.* Radio. Free Europe/Radio Liberty, text of broadcast April 7, 2006.

Vesey-Fitzgerald, B. (1973). *The Birmingham Post* for July 14, 1973.

Weiss, P. (2007). Forgiving Elie Wiesel, somewhat, on his opposition to Gypsies in Holocaust museum. *The New York Observer,* January 2. Available from: http://mondoweiss.observer.com/2007/01/forgiving-elie-wiesel-somewhat-on-his-opposition-to-gypsies-.html [Accessed 2 April 2007].

Yates, D. (1953). *My Gypsy days.* London: Phoenix House.

You Are Not Alone: A Comparative Look at the History of East European Roma and African-Americans in the United States

David M. Crowe

In a recent conversation with an African friend from Zimbabwe, she told me of several conversations she had with a number of Roma in Bucharest where she worked for the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, DC. When they first met her, they assumed that she was an African-American because of her good, unaccented English. Many of the Roma she met referred to themselves as "Blacks" and felt a close kinship with African-Americans. The idea of skin colour as an identity marker for Roma is an old one. In the late 1950s, a series of articles came out in the Hungarian press that referred to the Roma as "Brown Hungarians." Given that official publications at the time decried anti-Roma prejudice and blamed it on "discredited, inhuman racial theory," one wonders if government attitudes were in any way affected by the early stages of the civil rights movement in the United States (Hadju, 1980; Ervin and Tamas, 1977; Puxon, 1973; Discrimination, 1959).

Without question, governments throughout Eastern Europe at this time were deeply troubled by the fact that they had in their midst an ethnic group suffering from an array of social, economic, and other problems that negated communist claims to have brought social and economic equality to the region. Over the next two and a half decades, driven by misguided ideals of "socialist humanism," communist regimes sought to adopt policies designed to improve the plight of the Roma and force them to assimilate into society. David Z. Scheffel (2005) argues that most of these efforts failed because they destroyed the unequal, but workable pre-communist community relationships between the Roma and the *gadje*. Instead, when the Roma tried to grasp the ring of equality, their efforts were staunchly resisted.

This paper will explore, in broadest terms, differences and similarities, experientially speaking, between the Roma in Eastern Europe and African-Americans in the United States. Comparative history, particularly when it deals with different countries or peoples at different times in history, is always tricky. Yet the very reason for studying history is to learn from it. Thus, a comparative look at the plight of both groups could provide Eastern Europe's Roma with some useful lessons about how to deal, diplomatically and pragmatically, with the various forces and problems that have kept them at the fringe of society.

The idea of skin colour as a negative ethnic marker is primarily a 19th century idea born in the midst of white Europe's "civilizing" efforts in Asia and, later, Africa. Rudyard Kipling (1940) termed this "civilizing" trend "The White Man's Burden," the idea that it was the responsibility of white Europeans to bring Christian civilization to the world's "half devil and half child." Josiah Strong (1891), an American religious leader, argued for the "the final competition of races, for whom the Anglo-Saxon is being schooled" (p. 22). Strong concluded that the "result of this competition of races will be the 'survival of the fittest.'" White American and European attitudes towards new concepts of race had now blended with Herbert Spencer's Darwinist thoughts about "survival of the fittest" (Gay, 1993).

Yet, such attitudes were applicable not only to Asia and Africa, but also to parts of Europe, particularly the new Romanian state, home to the world's largest and most oppressed Roma population. While most educated people in the world are vaguely familiar with the broad, horrible sweep of slavery in the American South, few know much about the institution of Roma slavery in the Balkans, particularly in Wallachia and Moldavia. Roma slavery there was just as horrid and inhumane as its sister institution in the United States. Both institutions ended in the late 1850s and early 1860s, and both came about, directly and indirectly, as a result of warfare (Crowe, 2006; Hine, Hine, and Harrold, 2006; Foner and Brown, 2005; Achim, 1998; Hancock, 1987).

Emancipation did not bring the fruits of independence hoped for by the Roma or African-Americans. One observer noted, for example, that within a few years after emancipation, many Roma, "with no money or possessions, and having nowhere to go, offered themselves for resale to their previous owners" (Hancock, 1987, pp. 37-38). Others essentially became indentured servants to former landlords (Bercovici, 1983; Gjorgevic, 1929; Ozanne, 1878). African-Americans fared no better. For a decade after the American Civil War (1861-1865), considerable gains were made by American Blacks in the South, although they lasted only as long as the region was under military occupation. Gradually, by the mid-1870s, the modest gains made by Southern Blacks began to fade in the midst of a growing crescendo of violence that became a hallmark of the region well into the 20th century (Foner and Brown, 2005; Meltzer, 1993).

By the 1890s, a series of anti-Black voting and other laws were in place throughout the South that disenfranchised Blacks. Already condemned to a medieval shareholding system that forced them to lease land from former owners, Southern Blacks found themselves condemned to a growing system of "separate, but equal" policies that affected all public institutions, whether it be schools, transportation, or business. The United States Supreme Court essentially sanctioned these restrictive, racist "Jim Crow" laws in its landmark *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision in 1896 (Foner and Brown, 2005).

In Europe, emancipation became one of the hallmarks of post-Enlightenment efforts to create more open, democratic societies. However, the new democracies that emerged in Eastern Europe in the second part of the 19th century remained as suspicious as ever of the Roma and placed restrictions on their movements. In Bulgaria, for example, the traditional Ottoman *mahala* (or *mahalles*), long an island of Roma culture and history, were outlawed (Crampton, 1990; Kenrick and Puxon, 1972). Efforts to halt Roma nomadism had been an integral part of *cameralist* government Roma policy in the Austrian empire going back to the time of Maria Theresa and Joseph II. Though their efforts to force Roma in Hungary and Transylvania to become sedentary and become good tax-paying Austrian Catholics had seemingly failed by the end of the 18th century, the 1893 Roma census indicates that the spirit of these policies survived and had a dramatic impact on the Roma living in the Austro-Hungarian Empire (Crowe, 2006).

The best evidence we have of what David Z. Scheffel (2005, p. 212) called the traditional "pragmatic tolerance" between Roma and *gadje* in Slovakian Hungary

comes from this census. It tells us that close to 90% of Hungary's Roma lived in established settlements. The rest lived as nomads or semi-nomads. It is also interesting that when surveyed about their attitudes towards the Roma, peasants in 6,000 villages told census takers that "the conduct of the gipsies was blameless." Only 300 villages reported serious problems with the Roma (Tomka, 1970; Hooz, 1895). In other words, by the end of the 19th century, most of Hungary's 274,940 Roma had not only settled in villages throughout the region, they had also begun to establish the important relationships with their *gadje* neighbours so essential to living in multi-ethnic communities. Most of these relationships were based upon "utilitarian considerations" that centred on the unequal, lowly, but useful status the Roma played in Hungarian, Transylvanian, and Slovakian society. The *gadje* controlled Roma access to food, clothing, living space, and welfare, while the Roma were a source of cheap labour and other skills in the larger community. They always knew their place and accepted public segregation, whether in schools, churches, or cemeteries. And, unlike in the United States, no pretence was made about the myth of "separate but equal." Conditions for the Roma were always "separate and unequal" (Scheffel, 2005, p. 212).

Regardless of these conditions, it is well documented that the Roma throughout Eastern Europe were loyal citizens whenever given the opportunity to express such patriotism. Roma are found in many of the nationalistic uprisings and wars that took place in this region during the 19th century and served loyally in the armies of the Central Powers during World War I. Roma also idealistically embraced the new democracies that emerged in the region after the Great War, hopeful that they now would finally enjoy the fruits of true democracy. While evidence suggests that gains were made politically, educationally, and culturally, these gains soon fell prey to the drift towards fascism that swept the region in the late 1920s and 1930s. Fascism and its sister movement, Nazism, proved to have deadly consequences for the Roma, since they increasingly were lumped together with Jews as a despicable "asocial" element with *artfremdes blut* (alien blood) that had to be isolated from those in the racial mainstream to prevent "infecting" their racial superiors (Crowe, 2000).

The idea of racial, ethnic, and other "pollutants" in society was not just a European phenomenon. Eugenics (Greek, "good birth"), the idea of improving "the human race by suitable management and manipulation of its hereditary essence," had permeated certain fields of Western science, particularly in the United States (Kevles, 1995, p. vii). Between 1907 and 1939, over 35,000 people were sterilized in the United States, many of them against their wishes or without knowing that they had been sterilized. Most of the sterilization victims were African-Americans or poor whites, particularly mentally challenged women (Black, 2003).

The idea of racial inferiority as a criterion for forced sterilization and other medical abuses continued in the United States well beyond the first half of the 20th century. The most famous case, which, in a different sort of way, reminds one of the forced Roma sterilization campaign in Czechoslovakia in the 1970s and 1980s, was the forty year old "Tuskegee Study of Untreated Syphilis in the Negro Male" at the Tuskegee Institute (now Tuskegee University) in Tuskegee, Alabama. Founded by one of the most prominent African-Americans in the United States, Booker T. Washington,

Tuskegee's goal was to educate a new generation of Black educators and leaders. Washington himself was subject to contemporary racial attitudes about Black diseases such as syphilis and high blood pressure. After his death, one of his physicians wrote on his death certificate that Washington died of "racial characteristics," meaning one of these two "Black diseases." Washington died of the latter (New Review Clarifies Washington's Death, 2006, p. 20).

Sponsored by the United States Public Health Service (USPHS), the Tuskegee study looked at the effect of syphilis on 399 poor Black male sharecroppers. It used another 201 African-American males as control subjects. None of the participants were ever told they had syphilis or how they got the disease. Instead, they were told that they had "bad blood." The study's physicians also denied their subjects treatment for syphilis, including penicillin, which became available in 1943. Twenty-eight of the Tuskegee patients died of untreated syphilis during the course of the study, while another 100 died of syphilis-related illnesses. Forty subjects infected their wives with the disease because the USPHS never told them that syphilis was transmitted sexually. Nineteen of the subjects' children were born with syphilis (Tuskegee Syphilis Study, 2000; Jones, 1993).

The study continued after World War II, despite the moral constraints of the Nuremberg Code (1949), which dictated, among other things, that such experimentation can be done only with the full consent of the human subject. Only in 1972, after the press revealed the horror of what had been done at Tuskegee since the early 1930s, was the project shut down. Dr. John R. Heller, who oversaw the project as Director of Venereal Diseases of the USPHS, saw no connection between the medical experiments conducted by the Nazis and the Tuskegee project. However, James H. Jones, the author of *Bad Blood: The Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment* (1993), argues that there were similarities. For one thing,

> like the chain of command within the military hierarchy [the SS] of Nazi Germany, the Tuskegee Study's firm entrenchment in the PHS [USPHS] bureaucracy reduced the sense of personal responsibility and ethical concern. For the most part doctors and civil servants simply did their jobs. Some merely "followed orders"; others worked for the "glory of science." (p. 180)

While the Tuskegee syphilis project was inhumane, it pales in comparison with the horrible medical experiments done on Roma victims during the Holocaust. These experiments were promoted by Nazi Germany's most influential Roma expert, Dr. Robert Ritter, the head of Nazi Germany's *Rassenhygienischen und Bevolkerungsbiologishcen Forschungestelle.* He argued that the Roma's "genetic endowment and 'primitive racial' character" caused their "antisocial and criminal behavior" and he advocated the sterilization of most Roma "asocials" (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2004, p. 101). Consequently, the Roma were the subject of medical experiments at a number of concentration camps and the Robert Koch Institute in Berlin. The most horrid research took place at Auschwitz II-Birkenau, where Dr. Josef Mengele was the SS physician for the Gypsy Family Camp. He did gruesome experiments on Roma, particularly on children and twins (Lewy, 2000; Zimmermann, 1996; Piper, 1991).

It is often forgotten that people of African descent were also persecuted by the Nazis. Adolf Hitler (1943) personally despised Blacks and claimed that Jews had brought "Negroes into Germany during the occupation of the Rhineland [1923] after World War I to 'bastardize' the White race" (p. 325). The Germans sterilized hundreds of Afro-Germans and other Blacks and sent many to concentration camps, where many of them died (Lusanne, 2003). The perpetrators of these crimes against the Roma and Blacks were well educated physicians and medical specialists who saw their patients as expendable racial inferiors.

At this point, the stories of African-Americans and Roma begin to diverge. While scholars still disagree on the number of Roma who died in the Holocaust, all would agree that all of the Roma in Nazi-occupied Europe and its satellite states were victims of persecution. On the other hand, the war and the active role played by African-Americans in the military helped pave the way for their true emancipation in the American South after the war. One of the things that spurred this effort was the dramatic migration of African-Americans out of the South to other parts of the United States. By the 1950s, their plight could no longer be seen simply as a regional problem. Newly empowered Black voters throughout United States began to press for an end to discrimination. The starting point for this campaign was a United States Supreme Court Case, *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* [Kansas], which declared that public school segregation violated the constitutional rights of African-Americans to equal protection under the law. Although this decision applied only to public schools, by implication it opened the door to further legal challenges of other segregated public facilities (United States District Court, 1954). A massive and often violent resistance campaign arose in the South against desegregation, both in the courts and in the streets. The Ku Klux Klan and others violently attacked civil rights activists and murdered others.

In 1955, a calculated incident took place in Montgomery, Alabama, a bastion of Southern pride and racism, when police arrested an African-American, Rosa Parks, for refusing to give up her seat to a white passenger and move to the back of the bus, the only legal place Blacks could sit (Burns, 2004). What followed was a campaign of passive resistance and a bus boycott in Montgomery between 1955 and 1956, led by Dr. Martin Luther King, one of the most significant figures to walk across the stage of American history. After the success of the Montgomery boycott, Dr. King, along with other Black leaders, created the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), which promoted public facility desegregation throughout the South and began a campaign to register Black voters. Soon, Dr. King, the most prominent Black spokesman of the SCLC, was able to transform his movement from a regional one into a national one (Burns, 2004; Branch, 1988).

Southern efforts to stop his anti-discrimination campaign failed and in 1957 Congress passed the first civil rights act since Reconstruction, which created a mechanism for African-Americans to sue to overturn discriminatory voting laws throughout the South. The act also created a permanent advisory Commission on Civil Rights. In 1960, a "sit-in" by African-American college students at a Woolworth's department store lunch counter in Greensboro, North Carolina, triggered the sit-in phase of the civil rights movement. This was quickly followed by a series of "freedom

rides" throughout the South to prevent Southern officials from ignoring recent anti-segregation court decisions. Over the next few years, President John F. Kennedy sent federal marshals into the South to protect "freedom riders" from the growing crescendo of violence they faced throughout the region (Branch, 1988).

Peaceful demonstrators were constantly harassed, beaten, and arrested by local police. One of those arrested in Birmingham in the spring of 1963 was Dr. King. A few days later, eight prominent clergymen, including the local rabbi, published a letter to Dr. King in a local newspaper criticizing his civil disobedience. Dr. King (Bass, 2001; King, 1963a) responded with his "Letter from Birmingham Jail," one of the cornerstone documents of the civil rights movement. He was in Birmingham, he stated, because "injustice is here." The white power elite in Birmingham left him no choice. African-Americans had waited for 340 years "for our constitutional and God-given rights" and were still asked to wait for "negotiations" to bring about changes. In response to charges that civil rights activists were breaking the law with their passive resistance campaigns and sit-ins, he quoted St. Augustine, who said that "an unjust law is no law at all." He went on to castigate the white moderate, who, while verbally agreeing with the goals of the civil rights movement, was "more devoted to 'order' than to justice." He was proud to be called an extremist, pointing to other extremists in history such as Jesus, St. Paul, Martin Luther, and others. He also reminded the eight clergymen of Thomas Jefferson's words in the American Declaration of Independence: "We hold these truths to be self evident, that all men are created equal." Finally, he voiced disappointment in the church, which collectively failed to provide leadership by telling congregations, "Follow this decree because integration is morally right and because the Negro is your brother." He ended with a prayerful plea that

> the dark clouds of racial prejudice will soon pass away and the deep fog of misunderstanding will be lifted from our fear-drenched communities, and in some not too distant tomorrow the radiant stars of love and brotherhood will shine over our great nation with all their scintillating beauty.

Five months later, 200,000 civil rights activists and supporters descended on Washington, DC (August 28, 1963) to promote public support for President Kennedy's new civil rights bill, which was designed further to strengthen African-American efforts to challenge discriminatory laws in the courts (Burns, 2004). Here, Dr. King (1963b) made one of his most famous speeches, "I Have a Dream," which he delivered on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. King reminded his audience that the "Emancipation Proclamation," signed almost a century earlier by President Lincoln, was "a great beacon light of hope to millions of Negro slaves who had been seared in the flames of unwithering injustice." Yet, a hundred years later,

> the life of the Negro is still today crippled by the manacles of segregation and the chains of discrimination. One hundred years later, the Negro lives on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity. One hundred years later, the Negro is still languishing in the corners of American society and finds himself an exile in his own land.

The American promise in the Declaration of Independence (July 4, 1775), he declared, was that "all men would be guaranteed the inalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." America, he continued, had failed to keep its promise and today African-Americans were demanding "the riches of freedom and the security of justice. We have also come to this hallowed spot to remind America of the fierce urgency of now." Dr. King added that

> now is the time to rise from the dark and desolate valley of segregation to the sunlit path of racial justice. Now is the time to open the doors of opportunity to all of God's children. Now is the time to lift our nation from the quicksands of racial injustice to the solid rock of brotherhood.

He had a dream

> That one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self- evident: that all men are created equal." I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down at a table of brotherhood. I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a desert state, sweltering with the heat of injustice and oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice. I have a dream that my four children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character. I have a dream today.
>
> I have a dream that one day the state of Alabama . . . will be transformed into a situation where little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls and walk together as sisters and brothers. I have a dream today.
>
> Let freedom ring. When we let freedom ring, when we let it ring from every village and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews, and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing the words of the old Negro spiritual, "Free at last! Free at last! Thank God Almighty, we are free at last!"

Three weeks later (September 15, 1963), racial terrorists blew up Birmingham's Sixteenth Street Baptist Church, a meeting place for Civil Rights activists, murdering four innocent children (Branch, 1988).

This tragedy was followed by the shocking, traumatic assassination of President John F. Kennedy on November 22, 1963, in Dallas, Texas. The following summer, despite delaying tactics by Southern politicians, Congress passed an expanded version of President Kennedy's civil rights bill. It strengthened efforts by Blacks to challenge discriminatory laws in the courts and created the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. The bill's Title VII also outlawed racial discrimination based on sex (Dallek, 2003; Schlesinger, 1978).

This did little to temper the passions unleashed in the civil rights movement. Yet, it should be remembered that the problems faced by African-Americans in the United States at this time were not just isolated in the South. Dr. King stated weeks before

his assassination in Memphis, Tennessee, on April 4, 1968, that he had seen far worse racial prejudice in Chicago, Illinois, where he had spent the summer working on civil rights issues. In the years since the passage of the 1964 civil rights act, a shift had occurred, away from the passive resistance of Dr. King's movement to more violent outbursts among African-Americans angered by their continued impoverishment and lack of full civil rights. Perhaps no one better represented this frustration than Malcolm X, a leader in the Nation of Islam, an African-American Islamic group. This group promoted "Black Power" and separatist ideas that encouraged African-Americans to get in touch with their African heritage and aggressively to revitalize their communities. Although most African-Americans continued to support Dr. King's integrationist approach to civil rights, the Black Power movement changed the dynamics of the racial discussion in the United States. It was in this atmosphere that Congress passed several important new pieces of civil rights legislation in 1968, which extended Bill of Rights guarantees to Native Americans and addressed discrimination in housing (Branch, 2006).

While the civil rights movement certainly transformed the face of the United States, problems still remain. This is something, of course, that contemporary African-Americans have in common with the Roma. Although African-Americans make up 13.4% of the population of the United States, almost a quarter of them live in poverty. Twenty percent cannot afford health care (United States Census Bureau, 2004). A 2002 report by Harvard University's civil rights project noted that four times as many Black children are sent to schools for the "emotionally disturbed or mentally retarded" as white students (Pitts, 2006, p. A11). Roma children in Eastern Europe suffer from the same mistreatment, although a much higher percentage is sent to such institutions (Crowe, 1994). The National Urban League's claim that the cause of the complex problems facing African-Americans is the "status quo of neglect, domestic budget cuts, insensitivity, and short-sighted policy priorities" could be just as applicable to East European Roma (Morial, 2006, p. 1).

Perhaps a recent story best represents the continued problems of racism, particularly as it relates to African-Americans, in the United States. In 1995, President Bill Clinton decided to award John Hope Franklin, one of the United States' most prominent and beloved African-American scholars, the Presidential Medal of Freedom. To celebrate, Franklin decided to hold a small dinner party at the private Cosmos Club in Washington, DC. As he was strolling through the club with his friends, a white woman handed Dr. Franklin, long a member of the club, a coat check receipt, and ordered him to get her coat. He told her that if she presented her receipt to a uniformed attendant, one of them would get it for her (Franklin, 2005).

At a distance, of course, the plight of African-Americans in the second half of the 20th century pales in comparison to the problems faced by the Roma in Eastern Europe. However, there are interesting parallels and lessons to be learned. At the end of World War II, the Roma hoped that the new, post-Fascist governments of the region, perhaps mindful of lessons of the war and the Holocaust, would truly now begin to create new democracies that would finally embrace the human and civil rights for which the Roma had longed. Instead, the Roma were soon faced with new Stalinistic dictatorships that scorned the mere hint of ethnicity and democracy. The

Roma, as they often had done in the past, hid behind phoney ethnicity in an effort to blend into the larger national landscape.

The death of Joseph Stalin in 1953 and Nikita Khrushchev's secret speech attacking Stalin and Stalinism in early 1956 created new hopes for more open societies. But if the fascist and Nazi horrors of the 1930s and 1940s had taught the Roma anything, it was that dictators would do anything to cling to power, and this was certainly the case with the communists. The post-1956 communist regimes of Central and Eastern Europe were anything but monolithic; still, when it came to the Roma, most seemed to be of one mind set – do everything possible to force the Roma to give up their traditional ways and assimilate. Although policies varied from country to country, the general thrust was to pour money into projects and institutions designed to address Roma housing problems, educational deficiencies, and employment. These policies were neither creative nor sensitive to the uniqueness of Roma traditions and tended to fortify traditional stereotypes towards the Roma among the *gadje*. Worried by a growing birth rate among Roma women, the Czechoslovakian government adopted, for example, a program to sterilize Roma women in an effort to reduce birth rates (Tritt, Laber, and Whitman, 1992; Ulc, 1969).

The biggest problem the Roma face is deep-seated public prejudice. I recall an incident in 1990 at Attila Joszef University in Szeged, Hungary, where I was teaching. I asked a renowned, highly respected colleague to take me to a local Roma market. I considered this professor a liberal in every way. While we drove to the market, he told me that whenever he met a Roma on the street, he always walked to the other side. Once we got to the market, he talked about how much he resented the Roma who were pushed to the front of the housing queue in Hungary, only to light a campfire in the living room floor their first night in the apartment. As well, I will never forget an incident in Prague outside of the Maisel Synagogue in the late 1990s. When I went in, I noticed a Roma woman on the corner begging with her small children. When I left the synagogue, I saw that she had moved just outside the entrance to get closer to the tourists when they came out. Standing near her were several book sellers. In a flash, one of the book sellers began screaming at the poor Roma woman in Czech, demanding that she leave. The Roma woman and her children were not hurting anyone, and had just as much right to be on the street as anyone else. In this storybook city, certainly one of the richer capitals in Eastern Europe, she came face-to-face with racial hatred as vile as anything that Dr. King and his followers in Birmingham and elsewhere in the United States had confronted three decades earlier.

This insidious racial hatred is the underpinning of the problems that the Roma and African-Americans face in Eastern Europe and the United States today. The severity of their plight is very much affected by the larger issues and traditions of democracy, prosperity, and integration. In many ways, the Roma of Eastern Europe today have a status similar to that of African-Americans forty years ago. The traditions of hatred are centuries-old, meaning it will take a very long time to get at the root of the problems the Roma face. Nonetheless, the Roma have the advantage of hindsight, meaning that they have in African-Americans role models to study to help craft programs and movements better able to address their problems, both individually and collectively. One thing in the Roma's favour is their tradition of patience and peace.

The old biblical adage that violence begets violence is certainly true in regard to civil rights movements. Once the leaders of the civil rights movement in the United States adopted a policy of passive resistance, it immediately gave them the moral high ground. We have to look no further than the violent tactics of the Irish Republican Army or the Palestinian Liberation Organization to see that movements that embrace violence as a principal tactic take much longer to achieve their goals.

The Roma also have another advantage over African-Americans; their old, rich cultural and historic traditions. Although both slave institutions were equally dehumanizing, the Roma were at least able to remain in countries with which they were historically familiar. African slaves were ripped from their villages in Africa and transported thousands of miles to areas totally unfamiliar to them. This process was so violent and dehumanizing that, over time, it destroyed everything but a hint of African cultural identity and awareness, meaning that after they were emancipated, American Blacks were left with little sense of their African roots or culture. Some African-Americans have tried to rediscover their African heritage, but, given the great "melting pot" syndrome that permeates ethnic culture in the United States, it has been difficult to retrace their roots (Foner and Brown, 2005).

What is essential for the Roma of Eastern Europe at this time is to remember that they will have to lead the way in demanding the complex changes necessary to make them co-equal partners in the budding democracies in this part of Europe. If they wait for national or international leaders or legislatures to do this, they will have a long wait. It took African-Americans almost a century to come to this realization. The cause of the Roma in any part of Europe must be an integral part of any international, national, regional, or local planning or thinking. In the end, the real test of a democracy is not how it treats its majority, empowered populations, but how it treats those who have little power or voice in governing their own fate. Until the Roma of Eastern Europe are treated as equal citizens with full rights and empowerment opportunities, the democratic experiments in this part of Europe will remain a fiction.

References

Achim, A. (1998). *Tiganii in Istoria Romaniei.* Bucuresti: Editura Enciclopedica.

Bass, S. J. (2001). *Blessed are the peacemakers: Martin Luther King, Jr., eight white religious leaders, and the "Letter from Birmingham Jail."* Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press.

Bercovici, K. (1983). *Gypsies: their life and legends.* New York: Greenwich House.

Black, E. (2003). *War against the weak: eugenics and America's campaign to create a master race.* New York: Four Walls Eight Windows.

Branch, T. (1988). *Parting the waters: America in the King years, 1954-63.* New York: Simon and Schuster.

Branch, T. (2006). *At Canaan's edge: America in the King years, 1965-68.* New York: Simon and Schuster.

Burns, S. (2004). *To the mountaintop: Martin Luther Kings's sacred mission to save America, 1955-1968*. New York: HarperSanFrancisco.

Crampton, R. J. (1990). The Turks in Bulgaria, 1878-1944. In: K. H. Karpat (ed). *The Turks of Bulgaria: their history, culture and political fate of a minority*. Istanbul: The Isis Press.

Crowe, D. (1994). *A history of the Gypsies of eastern Europe and Russia*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

Crowe, D. (2000). The Roma holocaust. In: F. C. Decoste and B. Schwartz (eds). *The holocaust ghost: writings on art, politics, law and education*. Edmonton: University of Alberta Press.

Crowe, D. (2006). From persecution to pragmatism: the Habsburg Roma in the eighteenth century. *Austrian History Yearbook*, 37, pp. 98-120.

Dallek, R. (2003). *An unfinished life: John F. Kennedy, 1917-1963*. Boston: Little, Brown.

Discrimination. (1959). *East Europe*, 8(12), pp. 3-18.

Ervin, T. and Tamas, R. (1977). *Bucsu a ciganyteleptol*. Budapest: Kossuth Konyvkiado.

Foner, E. and Brown, J. (2005). *Forever free: the story of emancipation and reconstruction*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Franklin, J. H. (2005). *Mirror to America: the autobiography of John Hope Franklin*. New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux.

Gay, P. (1993). *The cultivation of hatred: the bourgeoisie experience, Victoria to Freud*. New York: Norton.

Gjorgevic, T. (1929). Rumanian Gypsies in Serbia. *Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society*, Third Series, 8(1), pp. 7-25.

Hadju, M. (1980). Gypsies 1980. *Hungarian Digest*, 6, pp. 28-34.

Hancock, I. (1987). *The pariah syndrome*. Ann Arbor, MI: Karoma Publishers.

Hine, D. C., Hine, W., and Harrold, S. (2006). *African-American odyssey*. New York: Prentice Hall.

Hitler, A. (1943). *Mein Kampf*. Translated by Ralph Manheim. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Hooz, I. (1895). Census relative to Gipsy population in the 18th and 19th centuries. In: *Ergebnisse der in Ungarn am 31. Janner 1893 durchgefuhrten Zigeuner - Conscription*. Budapest: Buchdruckerei der Actiengesellschaft Athenaeum.

Jones, J. H. (1993). *Bad blood: the Tuskegee syphilis experiment*. New York: The Free Press.

Kenrick, D. and Puxon, G. (1972). *Destiny of Europe's Gypsies*. New York: Basic Books.

Kevles, D. J. (1995). *In the name of eugenics: genetics and the uses of human heredity*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

King, Dr. M. L., Jr. (1963a). *Martin Luther King's letter from Birmingham jail, April 16, 1963* [online]. Available from: http://www.nobelprizes.com/nobel/peace/MLK-jail.html [Accessed 12 April 2006].

King, Dr. M. L., Jr. (1963b). *I have a dream, August 28, 1963* [online]. Available from: http://www.mecca.org/~crights/dream.html [Accessed 12 April 2006].

Kipling, R. (1940). The white man's burden. In: *Rudyard Kipling's verse*. New York: Doubleday, Doran.

Lewy, G. (2000). *The Nazi persecution of the Gypsies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Lusanne, C. (2003). *Hitler's black victims: the historical experience of Afro-Germans, European Blacks, African, and Afro Americans in the Nazi era*. New York: Routledge.

Meltzer, M. (1993). *Slavery: a world history*. New York: Da Capo Press.

Morial, M. H. (2006). The National Urban League opportunity compact. In: National Urban League, *The state of black America 2006: the opportunity compact*. New York: The National Urban League.

New review clarifies Washington's death. (2006). *The New York Times*. May 7, 2006, p. A6.

Ozanne, J. W. (1878). *Three years in Roumania*. London: Chapman & Hall.

Puxon, G. (1973). *Rom: Europe's Gypsies*. London: Minority Rights Group.

Piper, F. (1991). *Auschwitz: how many Jews, Poles, Gypsies . . .* Krakow: Poligrafia.

Pitts, L., Jr. (2006). America still keeping blacks under its boot. *News and Record*. Monday, May 15, p. A5.

Scheffel, D. Z. (2005). *Svinia in black and white: Slovak Roma and their neighbours*. Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press.

Schlesinger, A. M., Jr. (1978). *Robert Kennedy and his times*. New York: Houghton Mifflin.

Strong, J. (1891). *Our country: its possible future and its present crisis*. New York: The Baker & Taylor Company, for the American Home Missionary Society.

Tomka, M. (1970). Die Zigeuner in der Ungarischen gesellschaft. *East European Quarterly*, 4(1), pp. 2–24.

Tritt, R., Laber, J., and Whitman, L. (1992). *Struggling for ethnic identity: Czechoslovakia's endangered Gypsies*. New York: Human Rights Watch.

Tuskegee Syphilis Study [online]. (2000). Available from: http://www.brown.edu/Courses/Bio_160/Projects2000/Ethnics/TUSKEGEESYPHILISSTUD [Accessed 7 May 2006].

Ulc, O. (1969). Gypsies in Czechoslovakia: a case of unfinished integration. *Eastern European Politics and Societies,* 2(4), pp. 306-332.

United States Census Bureau. (2004). *African Americans by the numbers* [online]. Available from: http://www.infoplease.com/spot/bhmcensus1.html [Accessed 2 April 2006].

United States District Court. (1954). *Brown et al. v. Board of Education of Topeka et al., May 17, 1954* [online]. Available from: http://brownvboard.org/research/opinions/347us483.htm [Accessed 1 May 2006].

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. (2004). *Deadly medicine: creating the master race.* Washington, DC: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

Zimmermann, M. (1996). *Rassenutopie und Genozid: Die nationalsozialistische "Losung den Zigeunerfrage."* Hamburg: Hans Christian Verlag.

The Indigenous People's Movement – A Possible Example for Promoting Roma Issues in the United Nations

Florin Botonogu

The United Nations was built with the horrors of World War II in mind. As expected, human rights was a main pillar of the system. However, during the Cold War, the UN was interested in avoiding any major differences between partners, in keeping them together, but still fighting for fundamental human rights and freedoms, as mandated by the UN charter. Because of the political relations among and within member states, the defence of individual human rights, rather than of group rights was favoured.

After the fall of Communism in Central and Eastern Europe, different minority groups in this area started to claim their place in society. The Roma were one of these groups, perhaps the most visible and with the greatest number of individuals. However, after more than 15 years of democracy, human rights organisations still signal many outrageous acts. Roma women are sterilised against their will, many people are illegally evicted from their homes, huge areas of poverty exist, Roma live in unimaginable conditions (*mahalas* and ghettos), and anti-Gypsyism grows, sometimes encouraged by politicians. Often, on entering a Roma community, one has the feeling that one has moved from Europe to an underdeveloped country. Clearly, this is far from what the UN member states had in mind at the beginning.

Starting from the recognition of a need for cooperative effort to overcome the human rights violations and poverty in the Roma community, the aim of this paper is to suggest some ways the UN can improve the Roma situation. To identify instruments that the UN could use, I will compare the way the UN has addressed the issues of indigenous peoples with how the UN could deal with the Roma issue.

I shall focus on indigenous peoples primarily because of two similarities: those between the identities of minorities and indigenous people, and those between the socio-economic situation of Roma and indigenous people. Not only has the Roma movement much to learn from movements of different minority groups, like indigenous peoples, but international institutions can apply different, successful instruments for the benefit of other minority groups.

After briefly describing the history of UN efforts to address minority rights, I will explain the parallel between the two groups. Subsequently, I will focus on the main UN actions towards Roma and indigenous people. Finally, I will compare the described actions and offer several recommendations based on my analysis.

The History of Minority Rights

Many political conflicts are due to minority issues. Even if a conflict does not involve any minority, minorities are often among the victims of the conflict. In the last decades of the 20th century, developments occurred that allowed minorities to have a louder voice both on the national and international level. In this period, the concept of minority rights evolved in international relations.

The history of minority protection in European treaties starts in 1606 when the protestant minority in Transylvania was allowed freely to practice their religion through a treaty between the King of Hungary and the Prince of Transylvania (Simon, 2000). Soon after, in 1707, Sweden intervened in favour of the Protestants from Poland (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2007). In the same period, the Treaty of Westphalia (1648) offered religious freedom to the Protestants and their equality with Catholics on German territories (Yale Law School, 2007). Catholics in Livonia enjoyed freedom of religion through the Oliva Treaty (1660) (Kiraly, 2007).

The first international treaty that concerned itself with minorities other than religious minorities was the final Document of the Vienna Congress (1815), which protected the nationality of the Poles in the signatory countries (Historical Text Archive, 2007). Another matter taken up in international treaties was that of the Muslim minority in Christian countries and the Christian minority in Muslim countries. For example, the Paris Treaty of 1856 and the Protocol on Greek Independence of 1830 discussed these issues (Marcero, 2003). As well, the Treaty of Berlin (13 July 1878) related the recognition of the new Balkan states to the principle of religious equality (Arkenberg, 1998).

The League of Nations

The minority protection system within the League of Nations was complicated. First, the Minority Treaties established certain rights for persons belonging to a minority race, language, or religion. These treaties were bilateral agreements between the allied and associated powers and unaffiliated countries (Poland, Czechoslovakia, Serbo-Croatia, Romania, and Greece). Relevant chapters provide for minority protection in the peace treaties of the allied and associated powers with Austria and Bulgaria in 1919, with Hungary in 1920, and with Turkey in 1923. Special agreements for the protection of minorities were signed in European regions with special problems (e.g., the agreement between Sweden and Finland in the matter of the Aland Islands or the agreement between Poland and Germany in the matter of Upper Silesia). Another category of documents protecting minority rights in the League of Nations includes the unilateral declarations of countries joining the League (Albania in 1921, Lithuania in 1922, Latvia and Estonia in 1923, Iraq in 1932).

The contents of the Minority Treaties, of the sections of the peace agreements, and of the unilateral declarations are more-or-less similar to that of the agreement with Poland. The primary rights stipulated in these documents are: the right to life and freedom; the right to naturalisation; equity before the law; free use of one's native language; the right to establish charitable, religious, and social institutions; the right to education in one's native language; and the right to an appropriate sum from public funds for charitable, religious, and educational purposes. However, this system of minority right protection was not universal, but agreed to by a few European countries that were willing to protect minorities (or that were constrained by the need of recognition for their new borders to do so) (Sandor, 2007).

A very important step made by the League was to introduce the right to petition. This step took place with the adoption of the Tittoni Report in 1920 by the League

Council. According to this adoption, minorities had the right to issue a petition to the League, but the petition could be brought into the discussion of the League Council only by a member state. Thus, the petition was a simple report, without any juridical effect, unless a member state was willing to support it. The League modified this procedure in the following year and the petition system became more complicated. In terms of solving the petitions, the Minorities Committee preferred to negotiate with governments and obtain an amiable solution of the dispute, as the League did not have the necessary instruments to intervene directly in a matter considered exclusively a state's competence.

After World War I, the main concern of the states was to preserve peace. However, European peace was directly related to the way that states maintained peace within their own territories, by applying non-discriminatory treatment to the new minorities. Only US President Woodrow Wilson recognised the importance of minorities in preserving peace; he proposed that states should apply the same treatment to both minorities and the majority population. US allies rejected his proposal (National History Day, 2007).

The concept of collective rights was misused and abused by German National Socialist doctrine in the League's time. According to Nazi ideology, if a person is worth nothing as an individual, his or her value is given by his or her quality as a member of the community. *Volksgemeinschaf* (People's Community) was a state policy, in which all members of an ethnic group should belong to one state. Thus, Hitler became the primary promoter of the collective rights of the Germans. The concept of collective rights was totally compromised when Hitler used it as an excuse to invade Austria and Czechoslovakia. This policy was a source of permanent tensions in the 1930s and finally led to the Second World War.

Human rights after 1945

Two major changes occurred in the approach to human rights after World War II. First, the issue shifted from the political to the human level. Second, as expected after the Nazi experience, a shift occurred from a concern over collective rights to one over individual rights. This was also the trend in the UN (the UN Charter does not contain any provision for minorities). Still, the UN made a noteworthy concession to minority rights in 1946 by the creation of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. A few early conventions prove that the collective dimension of group protection was present in international relations (the *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide* [Human Rights Web, 1997], and the UNESCO *Convention Against Discrimination in Education* [UNESCO, 1960]).

However, we should look at the UN as an international, not only a European organisation. From this perspective, we should take into account the process of de-colonisation. Considering the huge risks of this process, the UN was focused on keeping states (especially new, African states) in one piece, rather than encouraging one part or another in the name of protecting collective rights.

The Biafran conflict is perhaps the best example. This conflict was not a territorial dispute, but about secession. Nigeria is presently one of the wealthiest African countries and the most populated (with over 80 million people). In 1955, oil resources were discovered and two-thirds of these resources were in the eastern part of the country. As in many other African countries, Nigeria was an artificial collection of various ethnic groups. The most important were the Houssa and Peul in the north (more than half of the population); the Yoruba in the south-west; and the Ibo in the east. Following internal fights for power, politics shifted from centralism to federalism. On May 30, 1967, General Ojukwu proclaimed the independence of Biafra, which did not include the whole Ibo population. One of the aims of this action was to determine that the east would not pay royalties to the federal government. His army consisted of officers of the Nigerian army (many of them of Ibo origin) and European mercenaries. At that moment, for the UN a juridical problem arose: is the Biafran war an internal problem of the Nigerian government, or is it an international matter? The UN position was similar to that of new African countries: no matter how artificial the boundaries, secession is bad. It can create a precedent available to all ethnic groups that might feel disadvantaged by the state. Western powers either supported the federal government or remained silent, waiting for the result of the war. For the supporters of Biafra, the war was the "genocide" of a nation. The war ended in 1970 with the failure of Biafran secession (American University, 2007).

Eventually, the idea of the protection of individual rights prevailed and, curiously enough, was sustained by both liberal states and socialist camps. Another important moment for the minority rights international history were the Helsinki Accords. In the early 1970s, the Soviet Union wanted recognition of borders. They initiated what later became known as the Helsinki Accords. The Western countries had no problem with recognising borders, but they had to think of something to ask in return. They asked in return for respect for human rights. Politicians and diplomats did not initially agree, because they knew it was not realistic. As a solution, diplomats and politicians included in the same document issues related to security, culture, and human rights. The documents contain provisions for national minorities, affirming that states will respect the right of persons belonging to minorities to equality before the law; that states will afford them the full opportunity for the actual enjoyment of human rights; that states will protect their legitimate interests.

When the Cold War ended, a series of changes influenced the approach to human rights. In the Soviet block, voices of minorities arose. In the West, the trend of identity politics was initiated by multicultural societies like the USA and Canada. Europe became more and more interested in minority issues as an important part of human rights issues. The UN became more active in protecting minority rights and created efficient regional instruments.

In sum, minority rights are on the agenda. The challenge for the present and future is how to implement this agenda, how to improve and create tools so that minorities will benefit from real protection of the states. It is in the capacity of the UN to take a step forward and contribute to the improvement of the Roma situation.

Minorities and Indigenous People

Here, I will identify the main similarities and differences between minorities and the Roma and indigenous peoples. I will begin from some working definitions of the two groups. Various authors offer various definitions of a minority (Castellino and O'Leary, 2007). For example, a minority is

> a group numerically inferior to the rest of the population of a state, in a non-dominant position, whose members – being nationals of the state – possess ethnic, religious or linguistic characteristics differing from those of the rest of the population and show, if only implicitly, a sense of solidarity, directed towards preserving their culture, traditions, religion or language.

Another definition suggests that a minority is

> a group of citizens of a State, constituting a numerical minority and in a non-dominant position in that State, endowed with ethnic, religious or linguistic characteristics . . . differ[ent] from those of the majority of the population; having a sense of solidarity with one another, motivated, if only implicitly, by a collective will to survive; and whose aim is to achieve equality with the majority in fact and in law.

The defining characteristics of indigenous populations are very well articulated by the idea that

> indigenous communities, peoples and nations are those which, having a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing in those territories, or parts of them. They form . . . non-dominant sectors of society and are determined to preserve, develop and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories, and their ethnic identity, as the basis of their continued existence as peoples, in accordance with their own cultural patterns, social institutions and legal systems.

We can extract from these definitions the primary similarities and differences between minorities and indigenous people. They have in common a numerical inferiority and a non-dominant social position, and they have ethnic, religious, or linguistic characteristics contributing to a sense of solidarity and to a will to preserve their culture.

One main difference between minorities and indigenous peoples is that indigenous peoples are in their original habitat, while minorities may not be. As well, apparently the aim of a minority "is to achieve equality with the majority in fact and in law." In this view, equality rests on the legal institutions of the majority. However, equality of this kind would mean a renunciation of an important part of an indigenous people's culture (their own legal and political institutions).

Statistics and reports referring to Roma (UNDP, 2006) and indigenous people (Yeung Sik Yuen, 2000) describe other, non-defining similarities.

1. The political influence of the two groups has grown during the 1990s.

2. Non-governmental organisations play an important role in promoting the interests of Roma and indigenous peoples.

3. Although national and international institutions approve many policy documents on Roma and indigenous peoples, their implementation is very weak.

4. Bilingual education in both types of community has grown.

5. Roma and indigenous peoples have fewer years of and poorer quality education than the majority population.

6. Roma and indigenous peoples have less access to basic health services, although the number of initiatives addressing healthcare is increasing in the last years.

7. Often, social protection systems do not address Roma and indigenous peoples, but poor people in general.

8. Poverty rates among Roma and indigenous peoples are high and falling only slowly.

9. Being Roma or being indigenous increases the probability of being poor.

10. Roma and indigenous women and children are especially vulnerable in many fields.

In conclusion, the number and nature of similarities present a strong basis for the UN to look at actions and initiatives developed concerning indigenous people as a basis for addressing the Roma issue. Although differences and different contexts exist, the similarities suggest taking a close look at initiatives developed by the UN with the aim of identifying possible future steps for work with the Roma.

United Nations Interest in Roma and Indigenous People

The first reference to Roma by a United Nations organ is a fleeting one, incorporated in Resolution 6 of 31 August 1977, by which the Sub-Commission appeals to the countries to ensure Roma the same rights as the rest of the population (UNECOSOC, 1994). Yet, in more than 50 years of existence, the activity of the UN Sub-Commission on Human Rights on Roma issues reduces to only:

- one Roma-specific resolution
- one Roma-mentioning resolution
- six Special Rapporteurs
- one World Conference Against Racism
- one study mentioning Roma.

The Roma-specific resolution is resolution 1992/65 "Protection of Roma (Gypsies)." It invites the states to adopt measures for combating discrimination against Roma and invites the Special Rapporteur on minorities to pay a special attention to Roma.

Resolution 2001/9 on the right to development is the first UN resolution not addressed to Roma, yet which specifically mentions them. Only seven years have passed since the UN mentioned Roma as a group that needs special attention. It is not clear who introduced the paragraph concerning Roma, but it may be the result of two factors: the process of preparing for the World Conference against Racism and the influence of the United Nations Development Programme, which had started to show an interest in Roma.

Special Rapporteurs have started to mention Roma in their documents, but only a few done so in a significant way. The first was Joseph Voyame, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Romania. The beginning of the 1990s was a troubled period in relations between Roma and Romanians, characterised by many conflicts. If his first report contained only one phrase about the Roma, the next two reports were more comprehensive, describing the situation of human rights violations, important conflicts, and the process of creation of representative Roma structures like a political party or civil society organisations (UNECOSOC, 1994).

The Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, Mr. Maurice Glele-Ahanhanzo, was the second Special Rapporteur who paid particular attention to Roma in the period, 1993-2001. In his field visits in Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Romania he addressed the issue of Roma discrimination and used the information provided by non-governmental organisations (Human Rights Internet, 2007).

Miloon Kothari was another Special Rapporteur who paid attention to Roma, pointedly to their living conditions. During his visit to Romania, he pointed out the poor housing condition of Roma and their spatial segregation and urged the government to continue monitoring the Roma segregation and to act against discrimination in this field (United Nations, 2002). The Independent Expert on Minorities, Mrs. Gay McDougall, also had Roma as a target of her visits and reports, starting from the beginning of her mandate in 2005 (United Nations, 2007b).

At the *World Conference against Racism*, Roma were recognised as one of the groups that suffer discrimination and marginalisation, not only by inviting them to the conference, but also by including them in the Durban Declaration and Plan of Action. However, the only study mentioning Roma was that developed by Mr. Aisbjorn Eide in 1993, "Possible ways and means of facilitating the peaceful and constructive solution of the problems involving minorities." It contains only one paragraph referring to Roma, which passes responsibility to regional organisations like the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe or the Council of Europe (United Nations, 1993).

Recent activity of the Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights

A resolution of the Sub-Commission was adopted in 1991 (Resolution 1991/21). It expressed awareness and concern regarding the difficulties of Roma in exercising their civil, cultural, economic, and social rights and regarding discrimination and intolerance. A proposal passed that the Commission should adopt a resolution to

alleviate this situation. Only in 1992 did the UN Sub-Commission on Human Rights receive the task of addressing Roma issues.

In 1998, in a working paper on the rights of non-citizens, David Weissbrodt pointed out the situation of Roma, one that was amplified by the fact that their citizenship rights were often not recognised. In 2000, the author was appointed as Special Rapporteur to carry out a study on the rights of non-citizens. In his preliminary report he mentioned Roma in relation to this issue, but the 2002 report did not specifically mention Roma.

Another working paper is worth mentioning, "The human rights problems and protections of Roma" (Yeung Sik Yuen, 2000). This paper clearly shows that no systematic UN efforts to understand the situation of the Roma minority in Europe had occurred and identifies the "need to initiate a study to identify the reasons why, unlike other minorities who integrate successfully in the countries of their choice, the problems of Roma are recurrent in spite of the fact that they have been living for several generations in the same countries."

Another important initiative of the Sub-Commission was the appointment of a Special Rapporteur on the human rights problems and protection of the Roma. The proposal, made to the Commission in 2000, put forward the name of Yeung Sik Yuen. In 2001, the Commission rejected this proposal (not through explicit disapproval, but by ignoring it). The Commission recommended the Sub-Commission to focus only on the studies proposed by the Commission. This was regarded as a clear signal that the Sub-Commission should not address Roma issues (Klimova-Alexander, 2005). As a consequence the Sub-Commission has not made another proposal for a Special Rapporteur on Roma, although this has been requested by many national and international organisations.

Concerning other UN structures, the Working Group on Protection of National Minorities and all treaty bodies have paid attention to Roma issues. As well, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights has recently developed a fellowship program for Roma.

Two important documents are worth mentioning in this context.

- The UN *Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities* (United Nations, 1992). It is not addressed specifically to Roma, but is an important document in the discussions about Roma held in the UN framework.

- The CERD General Recommendation No. 27, *Discrimination against Roma* (United Nations, 2000). This document mentions important issues like racial violence, education, living conditions, media, and participation in public life. Article 48 recommends the High Commissioner for Human Right to consider establishing a focal point for Roma issues within the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees.

United Nations interest in indigenous people

More than 370 million indigenous people live in 70 countries worldwide. UN interest in indigenous issues has increased starting with the early 1980s (United Nations 2007a). It was also the Sub-Commission that promoted the rights of indigenous

people. In 1969, a report on racial discrimination contained a special chapter dedicated to indigenous people. At this point, the Sub-Commission proposed a comprehensive study of the issue of discrimination of indigenous people. The Economic and Social Council approved this proposal in 1971 and Mr. Jose Martinez Cobo completed it between 1981 and 1984.

A proposal made in 1981 by the Sub-Commission and subsequently endorsed by the Commission and, in 1982, by the Economic and Social Council, authorised the Sub-Commission to create a Working Group on Indigenous Population. This group consisted of five members from different regions of the world. In the beginning, the participation of representatives of indigenous peoples was very weak. Its mandate was two-fold: evolution of standards concerning the rights of indigenous people and review of progress related to protection of human rights of indigenous people.

As indigenous people did not have financial means to participate in the Working Group sessions, the idea of establishing a fund for supporting the participation of indigenous people and their organisations occurred in 1984. The UN Voluntary Fund for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People was established in the next year (United Nations, 2007c). Donors are governments, non-governmental organisations, and other private or public entities. Its mandate expanded in 2001 to include participation of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. The Fund is managed by a Secretary-General assisted by a board of trustees of five persons with experience in indigenous issues. In 2006, 101 grants were disbursed, consisting of $US 451,614.

The International Decade of the World's Indigenous People (1995-2004) aimed at strengthening international cooperation for solving problems of the indigenous people in areas like human rights, environment, development, education, and health. The Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People commenced on 1 January 2005. Five aims were established.

- To promote participation of indigenous people in the design and implementation of policies and programs addressed to them;
- To promote indigenous people in decision-making processes related to policies that affect them;
- To redefine development policies that are culturally inappropriate;
- To adopt targeted policies, programs, projects, and budgets;
- To strengthen the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms regarding the implementation of policies and programs that affect indigenous people.

In 2006, the Trust Fund for the Decade approved 20 grants for projects with a value of some $US 10,000 each.

In 1990, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 1993 the International Year of World's Indigenous People. The first aim was to raise awareness for the plight of indigenous peoples by disseminating information through different channels. The second aim was to enhance financial resources by establishing a Voluntary Fund for the International Year.

A significant moment in the history of the human rights movement of indigenous people was the appointment in 2001 of Rodolfo Stavenhagen (Mexico) as Special Rapporteur. The mandate was renewed in 2004 (Commission for Human Rights resolution 2004/62). The main working areas of the Special Rapporteur are thematic research on issues that effect the human rights of indigenous people, country visits, and communication with governments concerning violations of human rights.

An open-ended inter-sessional working group on draft declaration on indigenous people was established by the Commission for Human Rights resolution 1995/32 and the Economic and Social Council resolution 1995/32. Its aim was to work on the 1994 draft declaration and to prepare it for consideration and adoption of the General Assembly.

A further important milestone in the recognition of human rights of indigenous people was the adoption by the Human Rights Council of the *Universal Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People* on 29 July 2006 (United Nations, 2006). A controversial issue in the discussion related to indigenous people and minorities is the right to self-determination – the right to determine for themselves their political status and to pursue their economic, social, and cultural development. The Declaration recognises this right. Two countries, Canada and Russia, voted against the adoption of the Declaration. Canada had problems with unclear provisions related to land, resources, territories, land claims, and self-government. Activists think the Canadian government is reluctant to give indigenous people more power.

The Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues was established in 2000 as an advisory body of the Economic and Social Council. Its mandate is to provide expertise and recommendations to the Council and to other programs, funds, and UN agencies, to raise awareness, to promote integration of indigenous issues within the UN system, and to prepare and disseminate information on indigenous people. The Permanent Forum is comprised of 16 independent experts, functioning in a personal capacity. Eight are nominated by governments and elected by the Economic and Social Council and eight are nominated by indigenous organisations and appointed by the president of the Economic and Social Council.

The idea for this permanent forum originated in the need of indigenous people to have a suitable structure within the UN system to consider indigenous issues. The idea was discussed at the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna (1993) for the first time.

An Indigenous Fellowship Program offers the opportunity to indigenous people to learn about the UN system and the mechanisms of protection of human rights. It has four components:

- An English-speaking program began in 1997 and in 2007 had five participants;
- A Spanish-speaking program began in 2000 and in 2007 had four participants;
- A French-speaking program began in 2002 and in 2007 had five participants;
- A Russian-speaking program began in 2005 and in 2006 had four participants.

In addition, education in minority rights has continued. In 2006, the High Commissioner for Human Rights on Indigenous Issues (United Nations, 2006)

- organised three seminars on indigenous themes, one of them with more than 470 participants;
- organised regional consultations, developed projects addressed to indigenous people, held training workshops, strengthened contacts with indigenous organisations, and helped the government of the Republic of Congo to organise consultations on the draft law on indigenous people.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Keeping in mind that the primary aim of this paper is not to compare UN interests in indigenous people with that of UN interests in the Roma, keeping in mind the similarities between the two groups, it is essential that we look at another common feature: neither has a state to represent them. This is of crucial importance when we talk about the UN system, as the decision-making process is totally in the hands of state representatives.

Yet, it is clear from the very beginning that indigenous issues have been on the agenda of different UN bodies for more than 25 years. Not only have they been on the agenda, but concrete initiatives have been developed, concluding with the adoption of a Declaration in 2006, where the right to self determination and other important claims of indigenous people have been recognised. Roma clearly were also on the agenda, but not to the same degree as indigenous issues and not with remarkably concrete results. Roma are mentioned regularly in reports about violations of human rights.

However, indigenous issues have been in the attention of different UN bodies for more than two decades. The conclusion of the last report of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNDP, 2006) is that indigenous issues are largely integrated into the work of UN bodies. Several reasons are offered for this:

- the greater visibility of indigenous peoples
- discussions on the draft of the UN declaration on indigenous people had, as a secondary result, a greater sensitivity of different UN bodies toward this issue
- the work of the Special Rapporteur on indigenous people
- the presence of indigenous people in Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights most of the time (due to the fellowship program)
- the use of human rights mechanisms by organisations of indigenous' people
- co-operation between the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights and other UN programs and funds.

In regard to visibility, only three Roma civil organisations have consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, and their activity is not very intense. In addition, in the whole UN system, no Roma is employed. This fact presents a good picture of the interaction between the UN and Roma: on the one hand, Roma organisations are not very interested in using the human rights mechanisms of the UN; and, on the other hand, the UN seems reluctant to pay more attention to this

issue. Clearly, UN mechanisms offer great opportunity to improve the Roma situation, both in terms of human rights violations and in terms of development.

Recommendations

The first step to improve the Roma situation is to ensure a greater interaction of Roma organisations with the UN system. At national levels, organisations are very active in defending human rights, but they do not have a consultative status with the Economic and Social Council. If even one civil organisation from each country with significant Roma population registered and participated at UN meetings, at least seven strong, active organisations could provide important input on Roma issues. A strong lobby from at least five Roma organisations for at least five years would influence the decision-making process. That would be the easiest way to increase attention paid to Roma issues, because this possibility already exists; it just needs to be exercised.

A second proposal is a study on the needs of different UN bodies for employing Roma. This study could analyse the amount of work of the respective office, body, program, or fund dedicated to Roma, the amount of money that they spend on Roma programs and issues, the terms of reference for the job, the position (determining powers and responsibilities), and the budget. The sponsorship of a UN body of such a study would be the first and easiest step on behalf of the UN. Concrete proposals resulting from the study should be presented to the Human Rights Council and other decision-making bodies in the UN.

The idea of a Special Rapporteur on Roma Issues is not new. The Human Rights Council might pay attention to this proposal, unlike the Commission for Human Rights. Several good reasons support the appointment of a rapporteur on Roma issues:

- It is not a simple issue – it includes human rights violation to development issues. Time and resources of Special Rapporteurs are limited.
- It would be a sign that the UN takes seriously the problems of the most numerous and most discriminated ethnic group in Europe.
- The need for a Special Rapporteur for Roma issues was recognised by the Sub-Commission in 2000.

An important objection might be that the Roma issue is taken into account by other Special Rapporteurs. At the moment, 28 thematic mandates on thematic issues exist. Of these, 12 can be linked to Roma: the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, arbitrary detention, racism and racial discrimination, violence against women, the right to education, extreme poverty, migration, adequate housing, internally displaced persons, trafficking in persons, and minority issues. In their mandates, only six give particular attention to Roma, but, even then, not to all issues pertinent to Roma. Time and resources are limited and their focus is not on Roma.

An advisory body on Roma issues, following the example of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, could give advice to the Human Rights Council and to the Economic and Social Council, provide and disseminate information to the whole UN

system, and raise awareness on Roma issues. Members (independent experts) could be nominated in equal number by governments and by Roma organisations.

Several advantages of having such an advisory body would be:

- a direct influence on both the Human Rights Council and the Economic and Social Council
- a strong link with the states, through representatives nominated by the states
- a focus on more issues than a single person (independent expert) with limited time and resources could undertake.

The last proposal is for the employment of a Roma within the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights. This is a basic measure for the development of Roma issues in the UN system. As a department of the UN Secretariat, the Office has a mandate to protect and promote the enjoyment of all human rights stipulated in the UN Charter and in all international human rights laws and treaties. It integrates a human rights approach within all work of UN agencies.

As experience with indigenous people has shown, the UN system has several human rights mechanisms that can promote the rights of the Roma. The challenge is to go beyond words and to promote Roma issues more often and with concrete results. This is a two way process: Roma should make better use of the human rights mechanisms within the UN system and, at the same time, the UN should take concrete steps to show a real interest towards Roma issues.

References

American University. (2007). *The Biafran war* [online]. Available from: http://www.american.edu/TED/ice/r1 [Accessed 15 March 2007].

Arkenberg, J. S. (1998). *The Treaty of Berlin, 1878. Excerpts on the Balkans* [online]. Available from: http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1878berlin.html [Accessed 15 March 2007].

Castellino, J. and O'Leary, D. (2007). *Some definitions of "minorities"* [online]. Available from: http://minority-rights.org/docs/mn_defs.htm [Accessed 14 April 2007].

Encyclopaedia Britannica. (2007). *Treaties of Altranstadt* [online]. Available from: http://concise.britannica.com/ebc/article-9005947/Altranst%C3%A4dt,-treaties-of [Accessed 15 March 2007].

Historical Text Archive. (2007). *Austria-Hungary and Poland, a short history of* [online]. Available from: http://historicaltextarchive.com/books.php?op=viewbook&bookid=2&cid=28 [Accessed 15 March 2007].

Human Rights Internet. (2007). *Racism and racial discrimination* [online]. Available from: http://www.hri.ca/fortherecord2002/vol1/racismchr.htm [Accessed 15 March 2007].

Human Rights Web. (1997). *Convention on the prevention and punishment of the crime of genocide* [online]. Available from: http://www.hrweb.org/legal/genocide.html [Accessed 15 March 2007].

Kiraly, K. B. (2007). *The Transylvanian concept of liberty and its impact on the Kingdom of Hungary in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries* [online]. Available from: http://www.geocities.com/NapaValley/4739/document.htm [Accessed 15 March 2007].

Klimova-Alexander, I. (2005). *The Romani voice in world politics: The United Nations and non-state actors* [online]. Available from: http://books.google.com/books?id=RGqhKmylB4QC&pg=PA35&lpg=PA35&dq="romani%20issues%20at%20the%20un"&source=web&ots=yknoQzLSfg&sig=xmXnCwDBcVcCehlhGZIKa_IJTe4#PPR6,M1 [Accessed 15 March 2007].

Marcero, R. P. (2003). *Diplomatic shifts in Austro-Hungarian foreign relations: the Balkans between 1856-1878* [online]. Available from: http://www.trwp.com/docs/eurasia.htm [Accessed 15 March 2007].

National History Day. The National Archives and Records Administration. USA Freedom Corps. (2007). *President Woodrow Wilson's 14 points (1918)* [online]. Available from: http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=true&doc=62 [Accessed 15 March 2007].

Sandor, E. S. (2007). *The role of the League of Nations and the UN in the protection of minorities under international law* [online]. Available from: http://www.hhrf.org/kisebbsegkutatas/mr_01/cikk.php?id=1180 [Accessed 15 March 2007].

Simon, T. W. (2000). *Protecting minorities in international law* [online]. Available from: http://www.studiperlapace.it/view_news_html?news_id=simon [Accessed 15 March 2007].

United Nations. (1992). *Declaration on the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities* [online]. Available from: http://www.ohchr.org/english/law/minorities.htm [Accessed 14 April 2007].

United Nations. (1993). *Possible ways and means of facilitating the peaceful and constructive solutions of problems involving minorities* [online]. Available from: http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G93/145/83/PDF/G9314583.pdf?OpenElement [Accessed 15 March 2007].

United Nations. (2000). *General recommendation No. 27: discrimination against Roma* [online]. Available from: http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/(Symbol)/11f3d6d130ab8e09c125694a0054932b?Opendocument [Accessed 15 March 2007].

United Nations. (2002). *Special rapporteur on adequate housing* [online]. Available from: http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G03/107/95/PDF/G0310795.pdf?OpenElement [Accessed 15 March 2007].

United Nations. (2006). *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on Indigenous Issues* [online]. Available from: http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G07/113/14/PDF/G0711314.pdf?OpenElement [Accessed 15 March 2007].

United Nations. (2007a). *Documents on indigenous people* [online]. Available from: http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu2/ind_main.htm [Accessed 15 March 2007].

United Nations. (2007b). *Independent expert on minority issues* [online]. Available from: http://www.ohchr.org/english/issues/minorities/expert/index.htm [Accessed 15 March 2007].

United Nations. (2007c). *Voluntary fund for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People* [online]. Available from: http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu2/9/vfinddec.htm [Accessed 15 March 2007].

United Nations. Economic and Social Council [UNECOSOC]. (1994). *Situation of human rights in Romania* [online]. Available from: http://www.unhchr.ch/Huridocda/Huridoca.nsf/b617b62bcb39ea6ec1256610002eb7a6/07972ca8c5ce034c802567310050b8d1?OpenDocument [Accessed 15 March 2007].

United Nations Development Programme [UNDP]. (2006). *At risk: Roma and the displaced in Southeast Europe*. Bratislava: UNDP-RBEC.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation [UNESCO]. (1960). *Convention against discrimination in education* [online]. Available from: http://www.ohchr.org/english/law/education.htm [Accessed 15 March 2007].

Yale Law School. (2007). *Treaty of Westphalia; October 24, 1648* [online]. Available from: http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/westphal.htm [Accessed 15 March 2007].

Yeung Sik Yuen, Y. K. J. (2000). *The human rights problems and protections of Roma* [online]. Available from: http://www.hri.ca/fortherecord2000/documentation/commission/e-cn4-sub2-2000-28.htm [Accessed 15 March 2007].

No Longer and Not Yet: Between Exclusion and Emancipation

Bernard Rorke

Long after the dust has settled on East and Central Europe's transitions from dictatorship, one glaring democratic shortfall remains. The Roma, as Europe's largest ethnic minority, have not benefited from the dramatic transition, consolidation, and expansion of democracy and democratic values since 1989. A veritable chasm remains between the bundle of rights with which citizens have been endowed, and the capacity of the Roma to access those rights. This disparity is a consequence of a long-standing and resilient racialised imagining and constitutes a radical misrecognition that represents, to paraphrase Charles Taylor (1992), a form of oppression imprisoning the Roma in a false, distorted, reduced mode of being. The Roma are deemed by the majority cultures to be beyond the pale, undeserving of the privileges afforded to other citizens. Where one's experience is rooted not just in a sense of illegitimacy, but, in so many cases, literally outside the law, the rights to which one might appeal are effectively erased. The repercussions of this racist misrecognition range from social segregation and exclusion to a widespread tolerance of racially motivated acts of violence against the Roma. The continued ostracism, the racist exclusion of Europe's most significant ethnic minority from meaningful and effective participation in political processes, registers as perhaps the most critical of democratic deficits within and beyond the European Union. Despite our pious cosmopolitan platitudes, the maltreatment of the Romani people provides a stark reminder of just how much our democracies, liberal and illiberal, old and new alike, remain stained by residues of the ideologies of dark times.

In very practical terms for the Roma, such misrecognition affects their life chances, their access to education, housing, health provision, and opportunities for employment. As Nancy Fraser (2000, p. 3) rightly points out, in the real world virtually "every struggle against injustice, when properly understood, implies demands for both redistribution and recognition." Insomuch as access to these rights and resources is a matter of distributive justice, a politics of recognition, which asserts that assimilation is no longer the price of equal respect, must precede or, at least proceed in tandem with, policies of effective redistribution. By recognition, I do not mean an elaborate cornucopia of special considerations, concessions, or group-specific rights accorded to the Roma based on purported cultural differences. Rather, I mean a very basic recognition by non-Roma of Roma as fully human and intrinsically equal beings.

Such recognition requires an acknowledgment of injustices past and present. For the current plight of the Roma cannot be fully comprehended without understanding the history of maltreatment of Romani populations in Europe. Anti-Gypsyism as a distinct and long-established species of racism remains prevalent across Europe, and has always been broad and polymorphous in its manifestations. Historically, the imagining of the Roma as hostile pariahs has a long pedigree. As Ian Hancock explains:

> The persona of the Rom as non-white, non-Christian outsider became incorporated into Christian European folklore, which served to justify and encourage prejudice against him. Like Asahuerus, the Jew doomed to wander through eternity because he refused to allow Jesus to rest on his way to Calvary, Roma were accused of forging the nails with which Christ was crucified. And while Jews were accused of drinking the blood of Christian babies in hidden rites to which no outsider was privy, Roma were likewise charged with stealing and even eating those babies. Paralleling even more closely the Asahuerus myth is the belief that the original sin of the Roma was their refusal to give Mary and the baby Jesus shelter during their flight from King Herod into Egypt. (1997, p. 21)

Patterns of persecution have varied enormously over the centuries. Policies towards the Roma have always constituted a negation of the people, their language, and culture; and, according to Liegeois and Gheorghe (1995), can be grouped into three broad categories: exclusion, containment, and assimilation. The grim genealogy of exclusion stretches from officially sanctioned "Gypsy-hunts" and edicts of banishment in the seventeenth century to mass extermination in the mid-twentieth century Holocaust, and, at the close of the last millennium, to persecution and expulsion in the course of "ethnic cleansing."

When Bertholt Brecht (Luban, 1994, p. 81) spoke of "dark times," he described times in which wisdom and goodness have come fatally apart from each other, social conditions he likened to a "flood in which we have all gone under." For the Roma in 1940s Europe, this flood brought victimisation, enslavement, and genocide. To this day, the fate of the Roma at the hands of the Nazis and their allies remains largely forgotten. In many accounts, the Romani Holocaust, known to some as the *Baro Porrajmos* (Great Devouring), is relegated to the footnotes, if mentioned at all. Estimates as to the number of Roma liquidated between 1939 and 1945 vary greatly. A wide consensus concurs that at least half a million perished. In some countries, this drive for elimination took place without much German prompting. For example, in Croatia, between 1941 and 1943, in the course of a concerted fascist drive to cleanse Croatia of non-Croats, most of the county's 28,000 Roma were interned in Ustasa-manned concentration camps, and large numbers were transported to extermination camps in the Third Reich. By October 1943, only two to three hundred Roma were still alive in Croatia, barely 1% of the region's pre-war Roma population. For the Romani survivors of the Holocaust, more dark times were to come. The condition of uprootedness, described by Hannah Arendt (Benhabib, 1994, p. 118) as one of "having no place in the world, recognised and guaranteed by others," meant that the Roma became not only the forgotten victims of this most ferocious of historical moments, but continued to be regarded as superfluous, as not belonging to the world at all. As Yehuda Bauer (1997) has written:

> In sheer demonic cold-blooded brutality the tragedy of the Romanies is one of the most terrible indictments of the Nazis. The fact that their fate is hardly ever mentioned and that the mutilated Romany nation continues to be vilified and persecuted to this day should put all their host nations to shame. (p. 10)

In the post-war, Communist states of Central and Eastern Europe, traditional prejudices about "Gypsies" converged neatly with a Marxist notion of the *lumpen proletariat* – a class defined by Marx as "thieves and criminals of all kinds, living on the crumbs of society, people without a definite trade, vagabonds, people without a hearth or home" (Stewart, 1997, p. 113) – to rationalise aggressive assimilation of Romani populations. Any fleeting optimism that the political transitions following the fall of Communism might herald a brighter future for the Romani populations of the Central and East European region soon evaporated. During the communist era, as many observers have noted, there was at least a bottom line in terms of social provision – yet, since 1989, in many countries, that bottom line has ceased to exist. As a recent World Bank Report put it: "Although Roma have historically been among the poorest people in Europe, the extent of the collapse of their living conditions is unprecedented" (Ringold et al., 2005, p. xiii).

What Is To Be Done?

Having sketched a cursory outline of the challenges facing Romani populations in the so-called enlarged and ever-enlarging Europe, it is time to grapple with the perennial political question – What is to be done? One might add more pertinently – by whom? For so long, so much of the discourse of political elites has seemed peppered with a sort of exasperated fatalism, that nothing can be done with these so-called Gypsies, that in living memory nothing much has changed, that everything has been tried. At the risk of sounding polemical, one could retort that, indeed, many things have been tried – persecution, intimidation, mob violence, mass expulsions, sterilisation programs, pogroms, and genocide. As outlined above, the twentieth century has borne eloquent and terrible witness to *gadge* endeavours to grapple with the "Gypsy problem." Concerning less lethal forms of policy interventions, characterised by both forced and unforced assimilation, a wide consensus now exists that such approaches are discredited as unjust and illiberal, incompatible with democratic norms, and, to put it mildly, marred by a damaging paternalism. However, encouraging signs can be seen that winds of change have begun to sweep across the European continent. Recent initiatives, such as the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015, signal a newfound willingness by political leaders to acknowledge the depth of the problems facing the Roma, and to devise concrete national action plans in key policy areas. The Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015, an initiative supported by the Open Society Institute and The World Bank, is an unprecedented international effort to combat discrimination and ensure that Roma have equal access to education, housing, employment, and healthcare. Launched in February 2005, endorsed by the Prime Ministers of eight Central and East European countries, the Decade also receives support from the European Commission, the Council of Europe, the Council of Europe Development Bank, and the United Nations Development Program.

The Decade has plans "to close the gap in welfare and living conditions between the Roma and the non-Roma and to break the cycle of poverty and exclusion over a period of 10 years" (Rorke and Wilkens, 2006, p. 9). Central to the vision and organising principles of the Decade is a commitment to Roma participation. To date,

Roma representatives, experts, and civil society organisations have played a key role in identifying policy priorities and defining Decade goals and targets. The Decade vision statement plainly acknowledges that "Roma participation will make or break the Decade" (Decade of Roma Inclusion, 2004).

Any semblance of success requires that the participation of Roma urgently needs to be extended in scope and deepened in substance across all levels of deliberation, implementation, oversight, and monitoring of the Decade process. Aside from the particular context of the Decade of Roma Inclusion, it seems that the principle of Roma participation has finally been embraced, if somewhat gingerly, by governmental, intergovernmental, and international agencies. As ever, a gap remains between rhetoric and substance. The political challenge is to move beyond simply paying lip service to the notion of Roma participation. Roma-led advocacy remains vital to mobilise the necessary political will from above and below to make any tangible difference.

Lessons Learned

Much Roma-related activism over the last 15 years has emanated from the sphere of civil society. The NGO sector within this sphere has been the entry point for Roma participation in public life. It is largely due to Romani civic activism that any public awareness or recognition of Roma issues exists. In addition to their role as advocates for Roma rights, organisations with strong ties to local communities are vital to the success of any initiatives or interventions targeted at Roma. Over the last 12 years, the Open Society Institute has been the largest non-governmental supporter of Roma-related issues in Central and Eastern Europe. My experience with the Open Society Institute Roma Participation Program (RPP) convinces me that this sector needs expansion and strengthening. *Ad hoc*, project-based funding is not enough. Only a long-term and strategic approach will bolster capacity within the sector. Funding from the RPP over the last eight years has combined strategic coherence with fast and flexible grant-making. On the one hand, civic groups need sustainable, long-term institutional core support. Any strategic advocacy requires a minimum prospect that Roma-led NGOs do not exist in a state of perpetual financial crisis precluding any forward planning. On the other hand, a degree of "enlightened opportunism" and a capacity for flexible, imaginative, and informed grant-making is needed to respond to and take advantage of changing and often dynamic political situations. In addition, RPP strategy has a deliberate focus on younger Roma, investing in the future by creating opportunities for an emerging, well-educated, and politically astute stratum of young Romani activists. Capacity-building for this emergent stratum must go beyond project and finance management to include content-based policy training in the issues that impact most on Roma communities, for these men and women will be the leaders of the future (Rorke and Wilkens, 2006).

Aryeh Neier neatly summarised the perspective of the Open Society Institute in 1997, in conversation with Roma about Roma. Speaking of one lesson learned from his experience in the American Civil Liberties Union and Human Rights Watch, he stated, "it is never possible for well-meaning people to give rights to other people, it

is only possible to assist people to exercise their own rights – what OSI can do is help Roma to help themselves" (Rorke, 1998, p. 34).

To summarise the lessons learned since that time across Open Society Institute programs in their varied endeavours to help Roma help themselves, in broad terms of what does and what does not work, we can assert the following:

What works

Broadly speaking, what has succeeded is investment in the form of direct funding support, training, and capacity-building (1) to strengthen Roma civil society and to stimulate wider Roma-led civic participation; (2) to enable the voices of Roma activists and communities to be heard and heeded by state institutions; (3) to mount effective challenges to state policies of segregation and exclusion; and (4) to foster the professional capabilities of Roma to engage effectively in policy processes to promote integration and anti-discrimination.

The Roma-related programs and initiatives of the Open Society Institute are wide-ranging and diverse. However, if one can find a unifying theme to what works, it is to transcend a donor-recipient relationship and to foster dynamic partnerships with Roma civic organisations based on trust, transparency, and reciprocity. Funding should be strategic and forward-looking, sensitive to organisational limits and potentials, flexible enough to respond to contingencies and, in the last instance, guided by one simple criterion: whether in its intended or unintended consequences any given initiative empowers or disempowers Roma.

What doesn't work

The three points below outline what does not work. They may seem obvious, but the depressing fact is that so many projects targeted at Roma populations manage to combine all three, consume vast amounts of available funding, at best leaving little or no beneficial traces, at worst exacerbating existing situations, leaving only cynicism and disenchantment with what many Roma see as an exploitative "Gypsy industry."

- Funding projects that in their budgeting, design, and implementation neglect the significant issue of structured or substantive Roma involvement and partnership. Many projects seem designed for institutional convenience and are often strikingly at odds with, or disconnected from the clear and pressing needs of the community in question.
- Funding projects devoid of any strategic value, have no prospect of sustainability, and leave no worthwhile legacy or concrete lasting results.
- Funding projects that fail to make any distinction between inputs and outcomes, that confuse means and ends, offer no clear outcome justifications for an endless series of activities, trainings, and seminars, and neglect to include Roma in the processes of monitoring and evaluation.

By way of concrete illustration of what has worked, an example of a dynamic partnership with Roma civic organisations to stimulate wider Roma-led civic participation, we can examine RPP involvement in initiating school desegregation campaigns in Bulgaria.

Civic Advocacy: Desegregation

The strategy of the RPP to challenge the denial of equal access to education took the form of civic desegregation campaigns led by Romani NGOs. The basic idea was to develop models of good practice at the local community level to show that integration can work, to advocate for their replication, and to build national and international coalitions of support to advocate for substantive governmental reform to address the issue of segregation.

In Bulgaria, the RPP and its partner Romani organisations deliberately deployed the word "desegregation" to distinguish and contrast this advocacy campaign from prior efforts that were content "to improve the quality of education in Roma-only ghetto schools" (Rorke, 2006). The word was also chosen with the knowledge that analogies could be frequently drawn with the civil rights movement in the US, and to bolster our insistence that in the field of public education, separate and segregated educational facilities are inherently unequal. The desegregation campaigns differed in that the pilots and attendant advocacy were Roma-led, committed to empowering Romani parents to make informed choices about their children's futures. The campaigns very publicly and, in their day-to-day activities, very practically countered the pervasive prejudice that Roma do not value education. *Desegregacia*, something of a neologism in Bulgarian five years ago, is now common currency in public discourse in Bulgaria, used widely in the media, in public speeches by Presidents, Prime Ministers, education ministers, Romani activists, and surfaces in official policy documents.

At the local level, intensive preparatory phases took place prior to the launch of the desegregation pilot projects. These included round-table discussions involving education directors, school teaching staffs, Roma and non-Roma community representatives, public debates, and extensive media coverage to render the process completely transparent and to cultivate the necessary consensus for successful integration and to ensure that the receiving schools would provide a welcoming environment. The new and remarkable partnerships formed between Romani parents and the staff and directors of the mainstream schools consolidated and legitimated the process among Roma and non-Roma alike. From the first pilot project in Vidin, RPP-funded projects subsequently extended to more than 2,500 children in eight cities across Bulgaria. In 2001, Petar Stoyanov, then the President of the Republic of Bulgaria, fully endorsed the Vidin initiative and expressed the hope that very soon "the experience of Vidin will be common practice in the rest of Bulgaria" (Rorke, 2002, p. 17). Five years on, this day has yet to dawn.

Professor Jack Greenberg, one of the lawyers who argued Brown v. Board of Education, spoke of his experience when he visited the Bulgarian desegregation projects as a guest of RPP on the 50th anniversary of that historic decision. He told the Bulgarian media that he had never seen educational integration working so well and declared himself impressed with their achievements: "I am impressed with what you have achieved. It is an inspiration for us human rights advocates in the USA, we have not completed what we started in 1954" (Rorke, 2004). Later, reflecting on his experiences, he wrote in *Dissent Magazine* that:

> Even more striking was the community effort to provide social supports. Social workers visited every Romany family that had school-age children. Tutors were available for children who needed help. Teachers received special training. Families that needed food or clothing received assistance. Roma and non-Roma children shared outings, social events, and cultural experiences. . . . They taught me more than I taught them. Just as learning another language helps one understand English better, Brown v. Board of Education, took on new meaning for me as I observed integration of Roma into Bulgarian public schools. (Greenberg, 2004)

Sustained national level advocacy resulted in an Instruction issued by the Bulgarian government on September 10, 2002 (Rorke, 2002). It announced that it considered the placement of Romani children in schools for the mentally handicapped to be a discriminatory practice and that steps will be taken to ensure that this practice is discontinued forthwith. The government announced as its priority over the next three years to integrate Romani children into mainstream schools and to phase out the segregated "Gypsy" schools. To build on these gains, civic advocacy was complemented by strategic litigation. On October 25, 2005, The European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC) and the Romani Baht Foundation prevailed in court against the Bulgarian Ministry of Education. Echoing the US Supreme Court decision of Brown v. Board of Education, the Sofia District court affirmed that racial segregation in education is unlawful. Dimitrina Petrova, Executive Director of the ERRC, said: "After a period of fifty-one years, the soul of Brown v Board of Education crossed the Atlantic and was reborn in Europe. For the first time, a civil court in a European country, Bulgaria, found that separate by coercion means unequal" (ERRC, 2005).

While this example illustrates the determination and resourcefulness of Roma and pro-Roma organisations, it confronts us with one sobering insight into the limits of civil society advocacy in the face of governmental inertia and indifference. We also have an abiding sense of just how vulnerable such campaigns are to hostile pressure and political change – an abiding sense of how so often, so little separates success from failure. Where in the recent past, states across Central and Eastern Europe lacked legitimacy with the broad mass of the people and refused to concede full representative government, opposition from civil society had considerable space to manoeuvre and capacity to effect change. One of the ironies of the transition to democracy is a consequent shrinking, not so much of the space, but, rather, of the capacity to effect change. Confident that they preside over fully consolidated democracies and strong states, many of the new democrats are becoming bullish and hostile toward what they see as interference from unelected bodies. One such democrat, Czech president Vaclav Klaus, argued in 2005 that the Council of Europe should make its task to battle against "post-democracy," particularly the "very dangerous" phenomenon of NGOs that "directly interfere in people's lives" (Rorke, 2006). Such statements serve as a reminder that successes in changing policy largely remain contingent upon the goodwill of political elites, on their openness to entertain entreaties emanating from civil society, and on their inclination to avail themselves of the expertise residing therein. Strategies for effective intervention need always to

adapt to changing times and circumstance. For the last 15 years of Romani activism, non-governmental organisations were the engines of change. While it is vital that the non-governmental sphere continue to expand and develop, more is needed to break the vicious cycles of deprivation and exclusion that blight so many Romani lives. The challenge in the coming decade is to move from projects to policy, and for a new elite to emerge from the Romani movement capable of holding public office with distinction, and to move from civic activism to effective political representation.

What Kind of Politics?

Strategic considerations about the most effective forms of political intervention are compounded by the complex diversity within Roma populations, "a group of people whose mother tongues are not only the various dialects of Romanes but also Arabic, Turkish, Albanian, Romanian, Hungarian, Spanish and others" (Marushiakova and Popov, 2005, p. 448). For political protagonists desirous of a constituency they can call their own, such diversity poses serious constraints and cannot be wished away. For diversity or plurality is quite simply part of the human condition, and any politics that aspires to cultivate what is just, liberal, and realistic must remain cognisant of this. Those who advocate a politics demanding respect from the majority for minority diversity and difference must themselves respect diversity within their putative constituencies. As for the ethnic majorities, now that assimilation of minorities is no longer a credible option, political leaders and theorists propose models of integration espoused by many activists. As Bhikhu Parekh (2005) cautions, while integration appears to be a perfectly sensible goal, "when probed deeper, the idea of integration is not as innocent as it seems." It is to be conceded that, as Parekh asserts, some models of integration are, in fact, either indistinguishable from or differ only in small degree from assimilation:

> In France the Commission of Nationality set up under the chairmanship of Marceau Lang in 1987 argued that integration involves "affirming the essential and indivisible values that found French society and determine its identity." In Germany, integration is taken to involve not "mere adjustment" to German society but "inner affirmation of its values" and "internalisation of common goods."

It is clear that an assimilationist rationale drives these perceptions of integration, and sees integration as a one-way process with the onus on the minorities to make the adjustments and accommodations deemed necessary for social cohesion. Integration needs to be understood as a two way process, an open-ended sequence of negotiated adjustments between the majority and minorities. Integration must be understood in terms defined by Roy Jenkins (2005) over 30 years ago, "not as a flattening process of assimilation but equal opportunity, accompanied by cultural diversity, in an atmosphere of mutual tolerance." The challenge for Roma advocates is to devise the most effective strategies to promote integration and emancipation from the crushing burden of discrimination and exclusion compounded by extreme poverty. For some Romani activists, mindful of their history and the history of forced assimilation, a separatist assertion of Roma identity, of Roma nationality, takes precedence over all talk of integration.

The national idea

What of the lure of nationality and the politics of nationhood? After all, political movements advancing national claims have wielded enormous influence on the modern world – a world divided into states each purporting to represent a nation. Nationality is perhaps the most universally legitimate political value of our times. Many hitherto oppressed populations have, through struggles for national independence, come to take their place on the world stage alongside the powerful nations of the world – a process that transforms a mere population into a distinct and sovereign people. For a people whose past has been infused with relentless brutality and whose present is confronted by entrenched racism and exclusion, it is not hard to see the attractions the national idea holds for many Roma desirous of an emancipated future.

Beyond the rhetoric of the Romani nation, the very notion of nationhood remains as problematic as it is elusive. Max Weber (1948) famously insisted that if it is at all expedient to distinguish national sentiment as something homogeneous and specifically set apart, one can do so only by referring to a tendency toward an autonomous state:

> In so far as there is at all a common object lying behind the obviously ambiguous term "nation," it is apparently located in the field of politics. I define the concept of the nation thus: a nation is a community of sentiment which would adequately manifest itself in a state of its own; hence a nation is a community which normally tends to produce a state of its own. (p. 179)

Of course, no *Romanestan* exists, nor any realistic prospect of Roma advancing secessionist or other territorial claims that would provoke the sort of conflict conventionally linked to nation-building processes.

Strategically, the rhetoric of the Romani nation can play an important role in countering perceptions of the Roma as scattered, dispersed spectral beings who inhabit the margins of societies. The problems begin as soon as one moves beyond the rhetoric to endow this particular notion of nation with substance. The International Romani Union (IRU) at its fifth world congress in Prague in 2000 declared itself a "non-territorial nation" (Younge, 2000). Endowed with some of the trappings of nationhood, a flag, an anthem, and a language, we can see such a move as an imaginative strategic response to political developments within the supposed "post-national" space of the European Union. Such a move could be seen as a bold and imaginative political act by Roma in a Europe of ever more porous internal borders, to demand international formal recognition, while at the same time empowering and fostering a collective sense of identity and worth among a disenfranchised and excluded people.

Yet, who will represent "the people"? As Gary Younge (2000), reporting on the IRU congress, pointed out,

> in order for such a nation to gain and maintain international credibility it must have democratic legitimacy. To have that it must have elected representatives who are able to legislate and arbitrate. For any of this to be meaningful, their decisions must be enforced.

Clearly, this nation, this "community of sentiment" is at something of a disadvantage by not having the capacity, as Weber put it, to manifest itself in a state of its own. All national communities, as Benedict Anderson (1991) famously stated, are imagined, indeed "all communities larger than primordial villages of face-to-face contact are imagined" (p. 5). The point Anderson makes is that "communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined" (p. 6). The style and substance of this imagining is especially pertinent, for to move beyond the realm of the imaginary, the non-territorial nation faces some formidable challenges. International congresses, and ersatz election processes cannot hope to address the democratic deficit that lies at the heart of the problem. However well-intended, and regardless of how lofty the motivation of the individuals concerned, every claim to be truly and legitimately representative is doomed, and unavoidably doomed, to be, at best, contestable and, at worst, spurious. Quite apart from the logistical challenge of conducting elections across dozens of sovereign states, and even more fundamental than the issue of who represents the people, is the question, "Who is the people?" For the identity of every political community is contingent on exclusion just as much as inclusion. The specifically political component of collective identity "hinges on the possibility of drawing a frontier between 'us' and 'them.' . . . [T]he logic of democracy implies a moment of closure which is constituted by the very process of constituting the 'people'" (Mouffe, 1999, p. 43). This moment cannot be avoided; the crux is how it can be negotiated. If the Romani nation, despite its non-territorial essence, is to be grounded in formal representative structures; if the nation without a state is to be officially recognised as a democratically legitimate entity, a way of deciding who is and who is not Roma must be settled. Ethnicity, as the sole organising principle constitutive of formal inclusion or exclusion from this nation, would prove in practical terms to be divisive, debilitating, and, in terms of political advancement, potentially destructive.

Ethnicity Matters

The above is emphatically not to deny, as some would, the importance of ethnicity, but merely to highlight the practical pitfalls of a politics of nation based solely on such a nebulous principle. Any sense of collective identity that exists outside of institutions that can meaningfully bind people across wide social and geographical spaces "is necessarily fragmentary, discontinuous and elusive" (Breuilly, 1996, p. 151). However elusive such a sense of identity may be, one cannot deny that it exists – despite the efforts of some academics, Roma exist as a distinct ethnic group. Whatever some social theorists may postulate about ethnic identities as the product of human imaginations in a specific time and place, the fact that something is imagined does not make it imaginary. As Richard Jenkins puts it:

> The absence of formal coordination or collective decision making across a large ethnic population – the fact that there is no central committee, and the group may be internally divided in various respects – does not necessarily undermine its status as a group. The minimal reality of a group is that its members know that it exists and that they belong to it. . . . The everyday reality is that people

> act in terms of these shared imaginings and they therefore have extensive consequences . . . manifest in tangible realities. The fact that a community may be imagined does not mean that it lacks substantial reality. (Jenkins, 2005)

So substantial is this reality that the European Commission (2004) acknowledged that "despite demographic uncertainties, there is little doubt that the total number of Roma in Europe is many times greater than the total population of a number of the Member States" (p. 9). This acknowledgement and the ever-growing recognition of the Roma as the largest ethnic minority across the European Union and the most excluded ethnic minority within each of the ten new member and two accession states presents both challenges and opportunities for advocacy.

The most important focus of advocacy efforts remains that of the territorial nation state. This is, to say the least, a deeply unfashionable contention, often damned as an anachronistic residue, by the proponents of post-national constellations and cosmopolitan democracy in a globally interconnected context. Within the European Union, much is made of the supposed fragmentation of national-political sovereignty in the context of an ever-deepening and seemingly ineluctable integration. Federalists would have us bid adieu to an outdated model of state sovereignty, allegedly mired in some terminal legitimacy crisis as the "hollowness and implausibility of the fictions of residual state sovereignty" (Wuori, 2001, p. 9) come to be revealed. Contrary to the alarmist assertions of Euro-sceptics and the wishful thinking of Euro-federalists alike, member nation states will retain extensive regulatory powers and effective sovereign control of crucial and nationally distinct military, cultural, and legal institutions. Larry Siedentop (2001) asserts that democratic political cultures in Europe today remain closely tied to and dependent upon nation-states. Each of these cultures, despite their shared commitment to democratic norms, have emerged from distinct historical experiences, have taken different institutional forms, and are legitimised by different sets of foundational myths and symbols. Recent referenda provide a salutary reminder that the sense of national belonging and of democratic citizenship deriving from it will not be jettisoned lightly. The European Union does make laws, but in these complicated processes, the vital role resides with national governments. The European Commission is a supranational body, but ultimately dependent for its functioning upon the assent of its constituent member states. While it is beyond dispute that state sovereignty is less absolute and national identity less unitary, the primary locus of democratic accountability stubbornly remains within the nation state. To paraphrase Richard Rorty (1998), the governments of our nation-states will remain, for the foreseeable future, the principal agents capable of making any real difference in the amount of selfishness and sadism inflicted on fellow-citizens. It remains the case that demands for justice, recognition, and redistribution to promote Roma inclusion matter most when a national government can be called to task to meet its democratic obligations towards its most disadvantaged citizens. To meet these obligations in a meaningful way, we need to rethink what we mean by integration.

As discussed earlier, some models of integration are indistinguishable from assimilation and represent fundamentally flawed understandings of the relations

between ethnic majority populations and minorities. Parekh (2005) suggests that rather than ask how minorities can be integrated, we should ask how they can become equal citizens bound to the rest by ties of common belonging. Applying this to the context of Roma, we could view integration as a means not an end. The nature, forms, degrees, and limits of integration should be negotiated and decided by their ability to serve the overall objective of fostering common belonging in the context of changing relations between Roma and non-Roma citizens.

In policy terms, a common sense of belonging will make sense only if clear and affirmative policies overcome the glaring material disparities and social, residential, and educational segregation between Roma and non-Roma. For statesmen and women, the standard ploy in response to such demands is to prate on and on about the virtues of mainstreaming and huff and puff about the undesirability of "positive discrimination." This reactionary *yakety-yak* attacking so-called positive discrimination needs address and forthright and coherent arguments made for affirmative action. By affirmative action, I do not mean open-ended policies of preference with rigid quotas for ethnic minorities that ignore wider social and economic inequalities. What I mean is implementing programs of positive action, rather than positive discrimination: well-targeted programs and policies to remove obstacles to equality, to liberate those disadvantaged from cumulative cycles of disadvantage and exclusion. Such policies should apply to all the disadvantaged, but Roma should receive special attention because their disadvantages are greater and compounded by discrimination. Group-sensitive policies should be seen as a means towards integration, as Parekh argues, part of a general egalitarian policy, justified in their differential treatment on grounds of fairness, special needs, and social cohesion.

Due recognition of the resilience of the national idea is not to diminish the importance and creative potential of transnational advocacy efforts. Nor does this recognition underestimate the opportunities afforded by Europeanness to call national governments to task to meet their democratic obligations and international commitments to tackle disadvantage and social exclusion, and eradicate racism and all forms of discrimination that effect Roma communities. One obvious example is perhaps the management and spending of European Union Structural Funds. These funds, when managed properly and disbursed wisely, have enormous potential to combat poverty and exclusion. Although Structural Funds come from Brussels, the coffers filled by monies raised by the European Union, "the actual spending of the money is negotiated between the European Commission and the member state governments" (Harvey, 2006, p. 6). In this negotiating space, transnational Romani NGO networks have a vital role to play to ensure that these funds promote models of social inclusion that at the level of concrete implementation manage to include rather than exclude Roma. It is not inconceivable that the governments of new member states, awash with structural funds and left to their own devices would manage to spend fortunes, but do little or nothing of consequence to improve the lot of their Roma citizens.

Neither should a realistic and pragmatic recognition of the resilience and the appeal the national idea holds for so many citizens close our eyes to the possibilities that Europeanness offers to complicate and enrich current understandings of

citizenship. No European state may exist, but European citizens do, as defined by Article 9 of the Treaty of Amsterdam. While, in legal terms, this is a derivative form of citizenship deriving from "holding the nationality of a member state" in terms of citizens' shared self-understandings there is huge potential to move beyond mere derivation. Increasing numbers of these citizens, intentionally or otherwise, are part of an emergent, vibrant, and densely interconnected European civil society. The cultural and political sense of being European, a pliable and variegated identity, reinforced by a myriad of educational, professional, and recreational arrangements, complements, complicates, and challenges extant national understandings of what means to be a citizen. Too often such understandings of citizenship remain constrained by ideologies of national identity that are tightly communitarian, rather than hospitably pluralist. These understandings, historically specific and ideologically abridged, are of far more recent vintage than many care to admit. Different today than they were in the past, they are in many fundamental ways open to change. From above, the vast complex of supra-national structures that comprise the European Union, binding the member states in some sense of shared community, and, from below, the restless dynamics of European civil society, by definition heterogeneous and diverse, are pregnant with opportunity for a progressive Romani politics. Lamentations about the dearth of charismatic leaders, or anything resembling mass mobilisation are wrong-headed and anachronistic. For the future, rather than think in terms of one civil rights movement, or one international body invested with all hopes and resources, something different should be envisaged. Indeed, we are already seeing something different: a plurality of struggles waged, and strategies adopted, by ever more sophisticated civic and political actors: Romani men and women, capable of co-operating at local, national, and international levels to challenge oppression, confront racism, and advance the cause of Romani emancipation.

References

Anderson, B. (1991). *Imagined communities: reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*. London: Verso.

Bauer, Y. (1997). Introduction. In: G. J. Colijn and M. Sachs Littell (eds). *Confronting the Holocaust: a mandate for the 21st century*. Studies in the Shoah, Volume XIX. Washington, DC: University Press of America, pp. 4–12.

Benhabib, S. (1994). Hannah Arendt and the redemptive power of narrative. In: L. P. Hinchman and S. K. Hinchman (eds). *Hannah Arendt: critical essays*. Albany: State University of New York Press, pp. 111–141.

Breuilly, J. (1996). Approaches to nationalism. In: G. Balakrishnan (ed). *Mapping the nation*. London: Verso, pp. 146–174.

Decade of Roma Inclusion, 2005-2015. (2004). *Vision and value statement* [online]. Annex 3 of the Summary of the 3rd ISC Meeting Budapest 2004. Available from: http://www.romadecade.org/users/download/3rdISCmeeting.pdf [Accessed 12 April 2007].

European Commission. Directorate-General for Employment and Social Affairs. (2004). *The situation of Roma in an enlarged European Union*. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

European Roma Rights Centre [ERRC]. (2005). *ERRC prevails in court against Bulgarian Ministry of Education on school segregation of Roma* [online]. Available from: http://www.errc.org/cikk.php?cikk=2411&archiv=1 [Accessed 25 February 2006].

Fraser, N. (2000). Social justice and identity politics. *CSD Bulletin*, 7(1), pp. 2-5.

Greenberg, J. (2004). Brown vs. Board of Education: an axe in the frozen sea of racism. *Dissent Magazine* [online], Fall 2004. Available from: http://www.dissentmagazine.org/index.php [Accessed 25 February 2006].

Hancock, I. (1997). The roots of anti-gypsyism: to the Holocaust and after. In: G. J. Colijn and M. Sachs Littell (eds). *Confronting the Holocaust: a mandate for the 21st century*. Studies in the Shoah, Volume XIX. Washington, DC: University Press of America, pp.19-45.

Harvey, B. (2006). *Manual on the management of the European Union structural funds*. Brussels: European Anti Poverty Network.

Jenkins, R. (2005). *Groups and group rights: real or imaginary?* [online]. 10th Torkel Opsahl Memorial Lecture, December 1, 2005. Available from: http://www.democraticdialogue.org/documents/Opsahl10_000.pdf [Accessed 25 February 2006].

Liegeois, J-P. and Gheorghe, N. (1995). *Roma/Gypsies: a European minority*. Minority Group International Report, October 1995. London: Minority Rights Group.

Luban, D. (1994). Explaining dark times: Hannah Arendt's theory of theory. In: L. P. Hinchman and S. K. Hinchman (eds). *Hannah Arendt: critical essays*. Albany: State University of New York Press. pp. 79-110.

Marushiakova, E. and Popov, V. (2005). The Roma – a nation without a state? Historical background and contemporary tendencies. In: W. Burszta, T. Kamusella, and S. Wojciechowski (eds). *Nationalismus across the globe: an overview of the nationalism in state-endowed and stateless nations*. Poznan: School of Humanities and Journalism, pp. 433-455.

Mouffe, C. (1999). Carl Schmitt and the paradox of liberal democracy. In: C. Mouffe (ed). *The challenge of Carl Schmitt*. London: Verso, pp. 5-15.

Parekh, B. (2005). British commitments. *Prospect* [online], 114, September 2005. Available from: http://www.prospect-magazine.co.uk [Accessed 12 April 2007].

Ringold, D. et al. (2005). *Roma in an expanding Europe: breaking the poverty cycle*. Washington DC: The World Bank.

Rorke, B. (1998). Aryeh Neier in conversation. *Roma Participation Program Reporter*. Budapest: Open Society Institute, pp. 34, 35.

Rorke, B. (2002). Update: major breakthrough on education reform in Bulgaria. *Roma Participation Program Reporter: Special Desegregation Issue*. Budapest: Open Society Institute.

Rorke, B. (2004). RPP desegregation advocacy in Bulgaria and beyond. Internal OSI discussion paper.

Rorke, B. (2006). *Civic advocacy and desegregation* [online]. ENAR Conference Proceedings, Roma and Equal Access to Education: From Segregation to Integrated Schooling, Brussels, April 28–29, 2006. Available from: http://www.enar-eu.org/en/events/roma/index.shtml [Accessed 12 April 2007].

Rorke, B. and Wilkens, A. (2006). *Roma inclusion: lessons learned from OSI's Roma programming*. New York: Open Society Institute.

Rorty, R. (1998). *Achieving our country: leftist thought in twentieth century America*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Siedentop, L. (2001). *Democracy in Europe*. London: Penguin Books.

Stewart, M. (1997). *The time of the Gypsies*. Studies in the Ethnographic Imagination. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Taylor, C. (1992). *Multiculturalism and the politics of recognition*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Weber, M. (1948). The nation. In: H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (eds). *From Max Weber: essays in sociology*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, pp. 171–179.

Wuori, M. (2001). *Human rights in the world and EU Policy 2001*. The Greens/European Free Alliance in the European Parliament, Brussels, Belgium, Report adopted by European Parliament plenary session, July 5, 2001, pp. 9–12.

Younge, G. (2000). A nation is born. *The Guardian* [online], Monday July 31, 2000. Available from: http://www.guardian.co.uk/Columnists/Column/0,,348886,00.html [Accessed 25 February 2006].

Opportunities and Limitations for International Organisations in Addressing the Situation of Roma and Travellers in Europe

Eva Sobotka

A variety of human rights has been extended to the people in the post-Second World War era, and much of this progress is due to activists who have mobilised international human rights norms in defence of their causes. A number of scholars have pointed out that international human rights and anti-discrimination norms are a critical source of change (Jacobson, 1996; Sassen, 1996). While norms often provide legitimacy for activists in pressuring governments, the work of international organisations can initiate change in transforming or developing policies. Yet, despite effort on the part of a wide range of actors, the situation of Roma and Travellers remains marked by a lack of implementation of policies, by marginalisation, and by discrimination.

Using theoretical and practical analyses, this article unravels the process of discrimination by providing insights into the crucial points and turns that have brought the issue to the agendas of international organisations and the member states of the European Union. The interaction of state and non-state actors, and that of relevant regional, international, and inter-governmental organisations, is analysed to illustrate effects of norms and to define the limitations and opportunities of actors involved. Offering a forward-looking analysis, the author suggests possible steps that could improve implementation of policies and thus the situation of Roma and Travellers in Europe.

Levels of Governance

When faced with the question of whether international human and minority rights norms have had an effect in Roma policy-formation or change at the state level, one may attempt a three level analysis: that of the state level, the intergovernmental level, and the level of non-governmental organisations and advocacy groups. However, the analysis of each individual level, without reference to the other two, makes little sense and carries only a limited amount of explanatory power. As well, the question about the influence of norms must be answered not only in terms of how policies change under their influence, but also in terms of why they change and if they change at all. These questions shift the focus from a level-based analysis of national policy to an analysis of interaction among the three. Accordingly, change of policy, or lack of change, has to be analysed as an outcome of interaction among the three levels of governance. In particular, when looking at the interpenetration of different levels, one sees that Romani activism has been a process of both rivalry and complicity (Goverde et al., 2000). Various players – philanthropic organisations, non-governmental agencies, advocacy groups, Romani organisations, researchers, governments, and think tanks – have shaped the cognitive map about Romani issues.

Studies of international norms have come a long way since Keohane and Goldstein's reference to what they called the "anti-empiricist bias" of much reflectivist

and constuctivist literature (Goldstein and Keohane, 1993). First, constructivists have moved beyond the theoretical level pioneered by scholars such as Kratochwil (1989) and Wendt (1994, 1987) to address many of the substantive issues that rationalist scholars study. Second, a number of these studies have explicitly examined interaction between international and domestic levels of analysis by examining both international and domestic cultural institutional contexts of policy-making. This allows scholars to move away from two previous tendencies: purely structural approaches looking at the effect of international norms, or an emphasis on domestic politics and identities to the detriment of international factors. Furthermore, much of this work has gone beyond empirical studies relying on secondary sources, to rich detailed studies based on archival interview data. The next task for this literature is to pay systematic attention to the differential diffusion of norms across states and time, and to the mechanism by which norms diffuse to states. Jeffrey Checkel argues that while some recent work examined domestic policy in detail, it does not provide a sense of the causal mechanisms empowering norms at the domestic level or of why that empowerment might vary across time and place (Checkel, 1998).

One has to look at the influence of the international normative environment, and well as that of the agencies involved in determining the effects of norms on policy environments. However, the effects of those international standards on Roma policy vary significantly in ways often not noted by norms theorists. International norms do not diffuse equally in respect of all people and rights issues within states. Moreover, it is important to understand the influence of norms on changes of meaning of an object of policy. In respect to Roma, we have witnessed a shift from governments' defining the issue as "a gypsy problem" in the early 1990s and making an analogy with crime prevention and increasing internal security (i.e., police power, supremacy of municipalities). The "gypsy problem" has shifted to issues of Roma and the Roma community with implications in human rights policy and increasing inclusion of diversity by the state. This has not been just a euphemism on the part of governments, but a real shift in the understanding of the Roma and the policies that need to be developed.

In regard to the governance level of international organisations, the international bureaucracy has some autonomy and international organisations are not merely diplomatic arenas where states pursue their power by other means (Smouts, 2001). Recognition of this autonomy is at the heart of reflection on the reform of international organisations and the building of the new "multilateralism" (Smouts, 2001). The Council of Europe (COE) and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), organisations influencing the process of Romani policy formation, have stood at the very beginning of the reformulation in the address of the situation of Roma in the early 1990s. Despite limited ability in their mandates and performance possibilities at a level of soft law, their mission of being an enlarging community of states that share the same values and ideas of human rights has been instrumental in bringing change to Roma policy discourse. The EU and enlargement processes are late comers to the issue of the situation of the Roma; nonetheless, equipped with the powerful influence of the Copenhagen criteria, requiring stability of minority and human rights and the rule of law and institutions guaranteeing democracy in accession states, the Union has had a significant effect on Roma policy change.

In relation to Roma, one could identify the ideological framework as following: (1) OSCE: security, human rights, minority rights paradigm; (2) COE: migration management, human rights, minority rights paradigm; and (3) EU: diversity management and situation of minorities for external relations, in particular in the context of Union enlargement. While some differences between the approaches are obvious and they have, at times, created tension in addressing the situation of Roma, in recent years considerable effort has been devoted to increase coordination of activities on Roma and Travellers among international organisations. Meeting in a context of an informal group of inter-governmental organisations and institutions on Roma and Travellers, actors exchange information on their activities with an objective of increasing the effect of activity. The outcomes of the group meetings, chaired by the EU Presidency, further inform work of Union institutions.

Opportunities and Limitations of International Organisations

Coordination among institutions and international organisations to steer the theme has been only one possible mechanism for facilitating each other's efforts and, despite its usefulness, it cannot replace action on the level of member states, the implementation of policies at national and local levels. Using a theoretical model for illustrating dynamics concerning governance of the Roma issues (Figure 1) in relation to international organisations, one can observe moments of (1) access, (2) incorporation, and (3) perpetuation, which form layers of interaction between the member states, the international organisations, and non-governmental organisations in policy areas related to Roma issues. This interaction between member states, international organisations and, recently, Roma actors is also influenced by the pre-existing ideological framework of the international organisations to which member states subscribe.

By the moment of access, I mean a way by which the Romani issues come to the attention of the international organisations. A second, even more diverse set of measures can be grouped under moment of incorporation. Incorporation refers to policy, at times homogeneous and at times highly heterogeneous, comprising political and normative interventions against discrimination, and racism; measures aiming at incorporation into various social contexts, such as the labour market, the educational system, and social security; and, finally, measures perpetuating and fostering group identities. The policy areas where measures of the latter kind are applied is labelled a moment of perpetuation. Their measures focus on facilitating the process of sustaining policy implementation.

The distribution of competences and responsibilities between international organisations and member states with regard to these three levels of governance is illustrated in Figure 1 by two inverted pyramids symbolising the member states and the international organisational level of governance (Toggenberg, 2005). As for a moment of access, this one has been relatively easy for Romani issues. While some lobbying took place at the level of the OSCE in the early 1990s, the Romani issues found firm ground in the work of international organisations. As for the second layer of measures, pertaining to the moment of incorporation, international organisations build on close co-operation between the two layers of governance and a vast range

of policy areas. In fact, this is an area where the pyramids overlap at the widest. Here international organisations provide a solid set of hard law and soft law provisions in the area of racism, non-discrimination, and social cohesion. At the same time, member states of international organisations will come for inspiration, to transfer good practice and knowledge, or to resist attempts to change policy. Whereas member states dominate the moment of perpetuation, the moment of incorporation is characterised by close co-operation between players.

Romani Activism and Influencing Trans-National Social Space

With the trans-national political organising of the Roma, we have witnessed attempts to re-define a political space in networks. Romani networks have enjoyed a margin of manoeuvre, which allows them to influence simultaneously several sectors of political, economic, social, and cultural life. They bypass the state and participate in it, introducing forms of expression midway, between conformity and deviance, order and disorder.

The Romani trans-national elite has operated in networks, which philanthropic institutions used as a tool for changing the political dynamic in Europe by supporting the civil society initiatives and issues that which demanded attention and financial support. Shortly after the end of Communism, some Romani activists started to use mechanisms of international law to report on human rights abuses of Roma, mainly in Romania, but spreading quickly in other countries of Central and East Europe. Since the mechanisms of international law similarly operate trans-nationally, and their main purpose is to alert the signatories to the law (member states), they also follow a logic of networks, which has only strengthened the organisational dynamic of the growing trans-national Romani elite. Consequently, the divisions between the non-governmental and governmental spheres have been blurred in much the same way as in domestic and international relations, and significantly have contributed not only to building a trans-national social space where Romani issues are discussed on a regular basis, but also brought new actors into the policy debate. Through this strategy, Romani organisations have gained power to shape multilateral international agendas, which went from general topics of democratisation to detailed attempts to identify social, housing, employment, educational, and health discrimination of Roma. Hence trans-national networks of international organisations proved to be a useful tool for achieving equality and universal identity (Gheorghe, 1997).

While defining policies and human rights concerns, activists have also provided semantic and intellectual lead on Roma identity. A shift in understanding of the Roma has led to adoption of policies addressing perceived problems in societies, such as vagrancy, social and welfare control, tax collection, and criminality. As a caste, the Roma were defined in social terms and placed in the framework of relations with other groups as "a separate collectivity that inherited an imposed position of inferiority" (Mirga, 1992, p. 12). Later, this caste-like status was re-defined in racist theories to justify the actual slavery to which Roma were subjected in many countries, because of allegedly inferior racial characteristics (Hancock, 2002).

However, the racial definition was semantically confounded with the social one: first, because it "legitimised" the Roma's social status; second, because the racial

attributes merged with the social ones in a way that resulted in a social rather than a racist and ethnic external identification. For instance, in the territory of Romania, where Roma were slaves until the middle of the 19th century, "the words *tsigan* and *slave rob* (slave)," Gheorghe writes, "were juridical and cultural synonyms. So the exonym *tsigani* acquired the meaning of an inferior social identity rather than that of a distinct . . . cultural, ethnic group and identity" (Gheorghe, 1991, p. 834). With the emergence of modern statehood in the 19th century, states made their first attempts to define strictly their populations; these efforts were also the first such modern state measures to define Gypsies (Lucassen, Willems and Cottaar, 1998). A social policy approach has been widely used to improve or eliminate "anti-social" behaviour.

During the Second World War, a great number of Roma perished in the concentration and extermination camps of National Socialist Germany. The same confusion of social and racial characteristics existed in Nazi ideology and praxis. On the one hand, Roma were described in racist terms as people of "alien blood;" but also, on the other hand, as a social category: "asocials" or "parasites." For instance, according to Nazi *Rassenhygienische und Bevolkerungsbiologische Forschunsstelle* (Research Department of Racial Hygiene and Population Biology) "Gypsies like Jews, were considered a race because they had 'alien' *(artfremdes)* blood" (Huttenbach, 1991, p. 35).

During the socialist period, the significance of their labour power and the inter-group relations involved in their utilisation defined the Roma (Gheorghe, 1997). State policy towards them was, thus, determined by the structural demand of host economies in which they lived and the extent to and manner in which their labour power was required. Romani pollution codes have been identified as related to experiences within the economy that have defined Romani labour as worthless and their bodies as trash (Stewart, 1997). Hence, Roma were, once again, officially defined as a social population and not an ethnic group, a definition that corresponded with the assimilation policies of different governments in the region. In Czechoslovakia, for instance, the Roma were labelled a "social group with a dying ethnic identity, [with] no culture of their own and . . . language bordering on slang; therefore, they had no right to a distinct ethnic existence" (Mirga, 1992, p. 12). In Poland, the situation differed slightly. According to Mirga (1992), until 1989 "the Roma were recognised as people of Gypsy origin, but the Gypsies were considered an 'ethnographic category' rather than an ethnic group" (p. 12). In Hungary, the culture of Roma was defined as a culture of poverty (Kemeny, 1976).

A change in the problem definition of Roma from a social problem to an issue of human rights violation has been essential for policy change in the 1990s. Yet, in 2003, some Romani activists felt that the transformation of Roma to a "social issue" was inadequate. Gheorghe stated at a World Bank Conference on Roma in 2003: "I have a few comments about the previous session, especially on the language used, namely the words 'social integration.' The goal of the Romani activists over past ten years was to cement – get rid of – the word 'social.' I would advise the World Bank, the OSCE, the EU and other organisations to be careful about the use of the words 'social inclusion.'" Debates over adequate policies towards national minorities or Roma grew throughout the 1990s, in the growing discourse of diversity within state-led political theorists, to a conceptualisation of an adequate policy approach.

Romani Issues in Trans-National Space: Application of a Model of Governance on Roma Issues

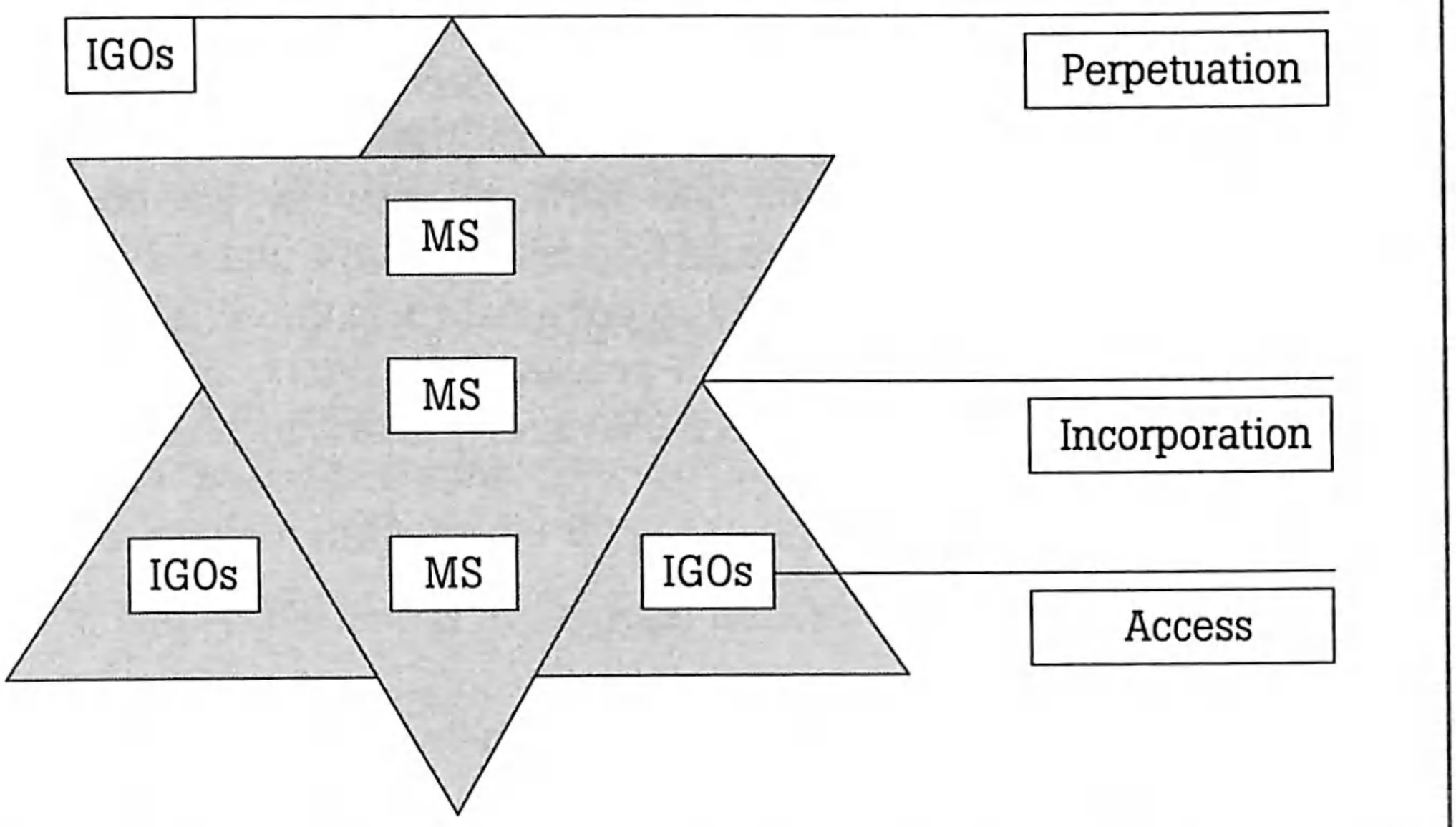
Looking at the model of governance on Roma issues (Figure 1), one would like to assess the development so far. Where are we with instituting Romani issues in the agendas of member states? How far do we have to go in order to reach a turning point, to implement policies, to lower the level of discrimination, prejudice and stereotypes that hamper efforts to have Roma and Travellers part of European societies? While explaining the theoretical framework of my argument, let me illustrate practical links to positions covering the period from 1989 to the present.

Moments of access of Romani issues to intergovernmental organisations started following the 1989 end of the Cold War in Europe. The effort to address the situation of Roma was part of a larger effort to facilitate peaceful transformation of post-communist countries. For some years after the end of the Cold War, attention was devoted to the situation of Roma in the eastern part of Europe, while attention to the situation of Roma and Travellers in western Europe stagnated. It has taken a tremendous effort on a part of civil society to draw attention to human rights violations of Roma and Travellers in the West.

Moments of incorporation of Romani issues within the OSCE and the COE are significant in two ways. They identified Roma issues explicitly as a concern, singling out Roma from other national minority groups. International organisations devoted special attention to Roma, because it was widely believed that their ethnicity was a point of conflict closely related to human rights violations and discrimination. On a negative side, the incorporation of Romani issues within the framework of the OSCE and the COE, and consequent policy recommendations, lacked consistency. As a result, documents and initiatives were multiplied with no attention paid to the language or continuity of the approach.

The EU enlargement process and frequent reference to compliance with Copenhagen criteria helped to spotlight the Roma policy. Yet, this has not led to a more innovative approach or policy recommendations or to an increase in institutional commitment on a part of the EU; nor, most importantly, to implementation of Roma policies in EU member states. The relevant question in the EU policy context has not been one of who is in charge of which policy areas, but, rather, one of which instruments can be used to what degree and for what purpose. In this context, the ideas of "mainstreaming" and "targeting" have come to the fore. The objective of mainstreaming Roma in relevant European policy, instrumental, and practical measures has been complemented with the argument of targeting. In a way, the concept of targeting is comparable to the concept of positive action inherent in the Racial Equality Directive, which member states may use as a means to compensate for past and present inequalities.

Figure 1: Governance of Romani issues: Relations between Member States and International Organisations. MS = Member States. IGO = International Organisations. (adapted from Toggenburg, 2005)



Conclusion

Insofar as there have been opportunities for access and incorporation of Romani issues on the agenda of international, intergovernmental organisations and, consequently, on the agendas of member states, international organisations have been limited in addressing the situation of Roma. As we are past the process of access and in a level of incorporation, at times it seems more difficult to facilitate reaction from member states and move to the stage of perpetuation or implementation of policies. While in the early 1990s, member states formulated Roma policy as a social issue, by the end of the 1990s, as a result of discussion within the OSCE, the Council of Europe, and between member states and non-governmental advocacy organisations, the Romani issue was influenced by concepts of non-discrimination, combating racism, xenophobia, and intolerance. Current ethnicisation in state policy towards Roma (Stewart, 1997) is a by-product of the human and minority rights approach.

While we are still very far from the perpetuation stage of governance in regard to Roma and Travellers issues in Europe, it is this area where Roma diplomats could be most helpful, working with member states and local governments. In short, norms do not just diffuse: state and non-state actors are the agents in the adoption of, and resistance to, international norms. The legacies of Roma civil rights activism and later policy activists have been complex and varied. One important legacy is the creation of new institutional positions of real policymaking power for rights activists. As well, as the Romani issue has risen so high in the last years, many of the earlier human rights advocacy organisations and organisations advocating minority rights became

Roma policy think-tanks. Some of them adopted a role of strategic policy thinking and issue analysis, tools, which by 2003, although required prior the EU accession, have been missing in most Central and East European government profiles (Peters, 2003).

It also seems that criticism of lack of implementation and learning on the part of member states is no longer helpful in facilitating the process of perpetuation and implementation. One could be a little provocative and suggest that to move to the process of perpetuation, the process of access and incorporation has to be reiterated again and again. This is something that international organisations very rarely can do on their own initiative. New players, new networks, case law, and cooperation of different networks on cross-cutting issues help to facilitate the renewal of the process from access to incorporation and, finally, to perpetuation. In the current state of play, a stronger institutional home within EU policies, instruments, and measures will facilitate the further process of implementation of policies in member states and movement towards perpetuation.

References

Checkel, J. T. (1998). The constructivist turn in international relations theory. *World Politics,* 50, pp. 324-348.

Gheorghe, N. (1991). Roma-Gypsy ethnicity in Eastern Europe. *Social Research,* 58, 829-844.

Gheorghe, N. (1997). The social construction of Romani identity. In: T. Acton (ed). *Gypsy politics and traveller identity.* Hatfield: University of Hertfordshire Press, pp. 153-171.

Goldstein, J. and Keohane, R. (1993). Ideas and foreign policy: an analytical framework. In: J. Goldstein and R. Keohane (eds). *Ideas and foreign policy: beliefs, institutions and political change.* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, pp. 145-155.

Goverde, H., Haugaard, M., Cerny G. P. and Lentner H. (eds). (2000). *Power in contemporary politics: theories, practices, globalization.* London: Sage.

Hancock, I. (2002). *We are the Romani people, Ame sam e Rromane dzene.* Hatfield: University of Hertfordshire Press.

Huttenbach, H. R. (1991). The Romani Porajmos: the Nazi genocide of Gypsies in Germany and Eastern Europe. In: D. Crowe and J. Kolsti (eds). *The Gypsies of Eastern Europe.* Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, pp. 30-40.

Jacobson, D. (1996). *Rights across borders: immigration and the decline of citizenship.* Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Kemeny, I. (1976). *Beszamolo a magyarorszagi ciganyok helyzetevel foglalkozo, 1971-ben vegzett kutatasrol.* Budapest: MTA Szociologia Intezetenek Kiadvanyai.

Kratochwil, F. V. (1989). *Rules, norms and decisions: on the conditions of practical and legal reasoning in international relations and domestic affairs.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lucassen, L., Willems, W. and Cottaar A. (1998). *Gypsies and other itinerant groups: a socio-historical approach*. London: Macmillan.

Mirga, A. (1992). Roma territorial behaviour and state policy: the case of the socialist countries of East Europe. In: A. Rao and M. J. Casimir (eds). *Mobility and territoriality: social and spatial boundaries among foragers, fishers, pastoralists and peripatetics*. Oxford: Berg, pp. 259-278.

Peters, G. (2003). Developing strategic policy capacity in government. In: T. Verheijen (ed). *Thinking the unthinkable: from thought to policy*. Bratislava: UNDP, pp. 22-35.

Sassen, S. (1996). *Loosing control*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Smouts, M-C. (2001). International co-operation from co-existence to world governance. In: M-C. Smouts (ed). *The new international relations: theory and practice*. London: Hurst, pp. 73-80.

Stewart, M. (1997). *The time of the Gypsies*. Boulder, CO: Westview.

Sus, J. (1961). *Cikanska otazka v CSSR*. Prague: Statni nakladatelstvi politicke literatury.

Toggenburg, G. (2005). Who is managing ethnic and cultural diversity in the European condominium? The moments of entry, integration and preservation. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 43(4), pp. 717-738.

Wendt, A. E. (1987). The agent-structure problem in international relations theory. *International Organisations*, 41(3), pp. 335-370.

Wendt, A. E. (1994). Collective identity formation and the international state. *American Political Science Review*, 88, pp. 5-10.

The European Union: A Promoter of Roma Diplomacy

Marcel Dediu

The European Union (EU) is a "strange political animal." It has a structure in which individual states protect and negotiate their interests, but, at the same time, it has the capacity to act in international affairs as a unit. One wonders if the EU has the same diplomatic functions of a normal state. Diplomacy is typically a monopoly of sovereign states or of international organisations. Yet, the EU is not a promoter of state interests at the international level and many scholars speak about its multi-level governance (Marks et al., 1996; Hooghe, 1995; Peterson, 1995) where most policies are produced within the institutions of the Union and are transmitted to the international agenda independently of the will of the states that created the organisation. The EU is neither a federal structure nor any other form of supra-state; many functions of the Union are limited by the states constituting the organisation.

How then does this "strange political animal" perform in international affairs? Taking the case of Roma minority as an example, I assert that through its complex policy-making system the EU promotes a non-traditional form of diplomacy. The Roma minority does not posses a home country that can represent its interests at the international level. National governments, at least theoretically, represent the interests of the Roma minority. In reality, however, those governments do not promote the interests of the Roma minority.

Only after 1989, when concerns arose regarding the internal stability of the Central and Eastern European countries and the large number of Roma migrants in the western European states, did the issue appear on the international agenda. Through recent policies, the EU indirectly gave representatives of the Roma minority a voice on the European agenda. The role of the EU in shaping the voice of Roma had two phases: the first occurred after 1989, when, through the external policies towards the Central and Eastern European countries, one of the conditions to join the Union was to "promote and protect the rights of national minorities" (European Council, 1993), including the rights of Roma. The second is occurring now, as, slowly but firmly, specific policies for Roma as a minority inside the EU are developed. Roma, after the first wave of enlargement in 2004, are part of the EU and new instruments and mechanisms for them are underway.

In this paper, I point out the role of EU as a promoter of Roma diplomacy. The term refers, in this document, to Roma forms of representation of their interests and the long road of self-affirmation of the Roma minority in Europe.

Background

The promotion of Roma diplomacy on the European agenda has had two main phases, that from 1989 up to the first wave of enlargement with Central and Eastern European countries in 2004; and the current period, when all the Central and Eastern European countries are part of the EU. Presently, Roma are no more an external

problem, but part of the Union and new challenges lay ahead. In the last years, Roma diplomacy on the European agenda has gradually shifted from a security concern approach to a larger approach, taking into consideration all the complex elements of a European minority (Gugliemo and Waters, 2005).

The case of Roma was addressed after 1989 in the package of minority rights protection in Central and Eastern European countries. The situation of minorities was a sensitive issue on the agenda of those countries. The possibility of bloody civil wars in the countries was generally feared and the situation of Roma was the most alarming. Many villages were burnt, thus creating tense environments for minorities in these countries (ERRC, 1996, 2001 ; HRW, 1991, 1992). Due to the internal tensions, many Roma fled into western European states (Wrench and Solomos, 1998; Matras, 1996). In this general context, western European governments welcomed the Eastern European newcomers in the club of democratic states only if human rights protection, fundamental rights, and protection of minority rights were implemented in the general laws. These conditions were first formalised in 1993, in an EU document now called the "Copenhagen criteria" (European Council, 1993).

The conditions set in the Copenhagen criteria for newcomers to the EU are a paradox. On the one hand, the protection of minorities within Central and Eastern European states has a positive effect on the representation of Roma; on the other hand, the conditions are imposed without a basis in EU law and do not translate directly into the *acquis communautaire* (Sasse, 2005). The Union actually developed a double standard: the Eastern European countries are asked to respect minority rights, but the EU has no specific policy promoting the rights of minorities. Some scholars speak about the "rhetorical entrapment" of the Union (Piana, 2004; Neyer, 2003; Schimmelfennig, 2001). First, general rhetoric is promulgated concerning the protection and promotion of Roma interests on the public agenda of the Central and Eastern European states. Yet, inside the Union, one finds no specific policy for minorities and, needless to say, none for the Roma. The idea of rhetorical entrapment foreshadowed a shift from the security concerns approach to EU enlargement in the beginning of the 1990s to the larger approach of recent years, touching indirectly the Roma minority (Gugliemo and Waters, 2005).

Currently, in 2007, the issue is even more complicated. The Roma are part of the EU internal agenda. Roma diplomacy will face new challenges in the years to come. Here, I will discuss the promotion of Roma issues in Central and Eastern European states as part of the complex foreign policy exercise of the EU towards candidate countries. I will include the politics of conditionality and the effects of the conditionality mechanism in the domestic context of each Eastern European state. Subsequently, I will take up the idea of rhetorical entrapment and the adoption of some policy instruments that indirectly touch the Roma. These instruments were adopted before the first wave of enlargement in 2004. Finally, I deal with the main challenges lying ahead for Roma diplomacy in the enlarged EU.

Roma Diplomacy as a Policy Tool in Central and Eastern European Countries

The year 1989 was a historical moment for Eastern European countries, with the fall of communist regimes and the expression of intention of their governments to become part of the Western democratic world. However, in many countries civil organisations reported many abuses against ethnic minorities, especially the Roma. Many Roma decided to migrate to western European countries to escape the tense internal environment. At that time, a general fear of ethnic civil wars in Eastern Europe arose and, in western Europe, security concerns arose related to the high number of Roma asylum seekers and illegal immigrants. The start of the civil war in ex-Yugoslavia encouraged western governments and other international institutions to tackle the issue of minorities as a first priority on the public agenda. Numerous international institutions put pressure on Central and Eastern European governments to change the hostile environment for minorities in these countries.

Even with no general coordination of efforts of the international institutions, some positive steps for Roma in Europe occurred (Sasse, 2005; Hughes and Sasse, 2003; Witte, 2000). First, the Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) were vital in adopting legal instruments for the promotion and protection of minority rights, including the rights of Roma. Second, the Central and Eastern European governments wanted to join the military organisations of the western world, particularly the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). One of the conditions to join NATO was the promotion of democratic values in each candidate country. Thus, pressure from NATO was not negligible. Third, the EU had an influence in preparing the grounds for enlargement, from signing commercial agreements with these countries to the finalisation of negotiations and official entrance into the Union. I will discuss only the roles of the Council of Europe, OSCE, and the EU in promoting Roma rights in Eastern Europe. I will designate the involvement of the Council of Europe and OSCE as pre-EU arrangements, because the instruments used by the EU to promote Roma rights did not rely on any legal instrument of the *acquis communautaire*, but on instruments developed by the last two European organisations. I consider all the instruments used by the Council of Europe, OSCE, and the EU to promote Roma rights as part of the complex EU conditionality mechanism (Sasse, 2005; Hughes and Sasse, 2003; Pentassuglia, 2002, 2001; Amato and Batt, 1998).

The European Union Conditionality Mechanism

Before the entering into the EU, Eastern European countries were supposed to fulfil certain criteria. From the first steps taken by the OSCE and Council of Europe, up to the full involvement of the EU in the process of accession is a conditionality mechanism.

Since the main concern of European states was the situation of minorities in ex-communist countries, among the conditions for joining the Council of Europe was the adoption of specific legal instruments dealing with minorities. The main instruments that directly or indirectly voiced the extreme difficulties of the Roma minority were:

- General recommendation papers issued by the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, all of which expressed their concerns about the situation of the Roma minority in Europe. Recommendation No. 3 dealt with the "Fight against racism and intolerance against Roma/Gypsies," adopted in 1998.
- Recommendation documents issued by the Council of Europe noting multiple discrimination faced by Roma (CoE 2007, 2003, 2000). The first document addressed to Roma appeared in 1993.
- The setting up, in 1995, by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe of an Expert Committee on Roma, Gypsies and Travellers. This group became the main policy unit inside the Council of Europe related to Roma programmes in European countries. The Group advises the Committee of Ministers of the Council on all matters related to Roma and Travellers (CoE, 2007).

The OSCE also contributed to the promotion of the cause of the Roma in Europe. The OSCE, as early as 1990, was the first international organisation to recognise the "particular problems of Roma (gypsies)" in the context of the proliferation of racial and ethnic hatred, xenophobia, and discrimination (CSCE, 1990). Created in 1975 (CSCE, 1975) as the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, it did not have any structure or any permanent organs at the beginning; it was created to protect the main geopolitical balance of Europe after World War Two.

Presently, the OSCE has its own system of protection of minority rights. The system is part of the human dimension component of the organisation. The term "human dimension" describes a set of norms and activities related to human rights and democracy (OSCE, 2007). At the beginning of the CSCE, the concept of human rights was defined on very strict grounds, taking into consideration the geopolitical context at that time. The downfall of Communism required a change of the concept (Marchand, 2001). First, different documents defined different aspects of human rights, such as the fight against racism and the protection of national minorities. Second, specific institutional settings were approved, such as the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, with headquarters in Warsaw, and the High Commissioner on National Minorities, with headquarter in the Hague.

The Second Meeting of the Conference on the Human Dimension of the CSCE, held in June 1990 in Copenhagen, recognised that in the context of the fall of totalitarian regimes, new forms of discrimination, hate, and intolerant acts against the Roma/Gypsies were flourishing (CSCE, 1990). The Third Meeting of the Conference on the Human Dimension of the CSCE, which took place in Moscow in October 1991, asserted the importance of education for human rights in Eastern European countries. It was claimed that education regarding human rights would have a direct effect on intolerance, prejudice, and other forms of hatred against Roma. As well, the Third CSCE Summit of Heads of State or Government, held in Helsinki in July 1992, expressed the necessity to elaborate, in the framework of such educational programmes, specific programmes designed only for Roma.

In September 1994, the first Human Dimension Seminar on Roma in the CSCE Region initiated a series of further meetings that institutionalised the Roma issue on

the agenda of the organisation. The Fourth CSCE Summit of Heads of State or Government, held in Budapest in 1994, changed the name of the CSCE to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and created inside the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, a Contact Point for Roma and Sinti with office in Warsaw (CSCE, 1994). The Contact Point works to promote "full integration of Roma and Sinti communities into the societies they live in, while preserving their identity" (OSCE, 1998). In addition, the Contact Point provides policy advice to OSCE governments, acting as a clearinghouse for the exchange of information on Roma and Sinti issues. As well, it enhances interaction between OSCE structures, governments, international organisations and Roma or Roma-related organisations to develop synergies and common approaches. It serves to collect information from OSCE countries on legislative and other measures related to the situation of Roma and Sinti and makes it available to the OSCE community and other international organisations (OSCE, 2001).

Besides the main institutional developments, the two reports of the High Commissioner for National Minorities of the OSCE (HCNM, 1993; 2000) had an influence on policy formulation for other European institutions, namely the Council of Europe and the EU. The reports speak about the serious discrimination faced by Roma all over Europe. The first appeared in 1993 when ethnic conflicts and migration flows were very high; the second, in 2000 when the accession process and preparation for candidate status of Eastern European countries was underway. The reports reflect the type of policies and discourses promoted by the European institutions in two different periods. In 1993, immediately after the downfall of communist regimes, the major concern was the security of the continent. The 1993 report addressed internal ethnic conflicts and the high number of illegal immigrants and asylum seekers. The report expressed that concern by asking the member states of CSCE to promote policies related to the internal stabilisation and democratisation of the countries. The report in 2000 reflected the change of situation in Europe, when the Central and Eastern European states were in the phase of accession and various programmes to prepare the countries for the candidate status to the entrance into the EU were in place (Gugliemo and Waters, 2005).

The main influences of the Council of Europe and the OSCE were important in setting the way the policies for Roma evolved. The influence and the conditions set by the Council of Europe and OSCE were the first entrance point into the EU. The Central and Eastern European states wanted to join the rich club of EU, but, before entering some other steps had to be taken. Although we cannot say that from the first agreements with the Council of Europe to the final entrance into the EU, a general coordination of efforts of the international actors occurred, we can say that informal and tacit agreements – a kind of "roadmap" – for the Eastern European states was in place. The countries who wanted to join the EU had to follow specific steps. The role of the Council of Europe and OSCE was greater during the first years after the fall of communist regimes, when the countries needed some intermediary organisations to help them to pass from one political regime to another.

The reports and the documents issued by the two institutions had a great effect on the domestic politics and on the international stance of the Eastern European

countries. For example, the "name and shame policy" (Schimmelfennig, 2001) had some effect on the political stability of the countries. Governments wanted to show to the international community that they respected the human rights standards; therefore, they adopted new legislative and policy initiatives. Reports and documents were used as a kind of "grading system" for the countries, an indicator of their levels of democracy and levels of respect for minorities, including Roma. In the conditionality mechanism set by the two institutions, reports and documents became preliminary steps of European integration.

More recently, the EU has adopted specific tools to provide a conditionality mechanism. These tools offer protection of ethnic minority rights, including those of the Roma, and vary from diplomatic pressures on candidate countries to financial assistance to solve problems within the countries. The main relevant actions of the EU toward the candidate countries are:

- the use of a human rights clause in the association agreements with Eastern European countries and the monitoring of the accession criteria set in Copenhagen, 1993 ("political criteria");
- the use of unilateral policies about commercial privileges and technical assistance when the EU is in a position to offer something to newcomers, based on the fulfilment of the conditions imposed the Union ("commercial and technical criteria");

The new version of Article 49 of the EU Treaty (European Union, 2006) clearly specifies that a country that desires to join the Union should respect human rights and fundamental liberties.

In terms of political criteria, the candidate country should have political stability that ensures the promotion of democracy, the rule of law, human rights, and respect for and protection of ethnic minorities. This reference to ethnic minorities was a vital step of the EU in relation to future members of the Union (Pentassuglia, 2002).

The monitoring exercise was given to the European Commission as part of a complex accession process. The monitoring process was institutionalised through the annual regular reports, as of 1998, issued by the European Commission. In these reports (European Commission, 1998), the European Commission, in the "political criteria" chapters, offers a general overview of the status of ethnic minorities within the countries. The situation of the Roma people was one of the main concerns in almost all the annual reports of the European Commission (Sasse, 2005).

In regard to commercial and technical criteria, the policy tool used by the EU was a human rights clause inserted into "second generation" commercial agreements with the future member states. The clause makes use of the respect for human rights and fundamental liberties, as defined by the Helsinki Final Act (CSCE, 1975) and Paris Charter (CSCE, 1990). The agreements gave the power to either side to suspend or terminate the agreements if one party is not acting in accord with agreements. Such unilateral policy granted considerable power to the EU in influencing national agendas regarding the protection and the promotion of the rights of ethnic minorities.

Technical assistance (especially financial assistance) granted to Eastern European

countries is another tool for influencing them to respect minority rights. The PHARE (Poland and Hungary Aid for Economic Reconstruction) programme, the main financial tool extended for all Eastern European countries after 1989, provided major financial assistance to the Eastern European countries. One condition of access to such funds was to respect the rights of minorities. Under the guidelines of the PHARE programme, specific projects dealing with minority rights received funding, especially projects addressed for Roma issues. Projects for Roma issues were financed through the general civil society capacity-building component or through specific projects for Roma non-governmental agencies. The effects of financial assistance were felt primarily at the level of policies, rather than at the level of improvement of living conditions of Roma (European Commission, 2003b) and had major effects on strategies developed by national governments for Roma people.

The EU conditionality mechanism had considerable long-term effects in the countries. The main instruments of the conditionality mechanism were:

- the policy formulation. Candidate countries were indirectly influenced by the reports and documents issued by EU institutions. The conditions set for integration were to adopt specific policies for minorities, including Roma. Although no comprehensive minority policy was formulated, the EU was a source of inspiration for other policy or legal instruments. The anti-discrimination policies adopted in Eastern Europe are based on the anti-discrimination legislation of the EU, namely the Race (CoE, 2000) and Employment Directives;
- name and shame policy. The EU mechanism of monitoring the accession criteria was the annual regular reports for each candidate country; the report was delivered each year by the European Commission. Through the regular reports (the first released in 1998), the European Commission assessed the level of preparation and readiness of each candidate country. Through the reports, the European Commission made comparisons between the countries, but also made a hierarchy of countries who were ready to join. By having the main problems named, the governments of the region were compelled to change the situations (Sasse, 2005).
- stick and carrot policy. The main financial and technical assistance programmes facilitated the transition from one political regime to another.

If we look back in time, we may observe different phases of European integration; in each phase, EU institutions used different mechanisms to implement changes in accession countries. First, the signature of association agreements put the countries on the rails of accession; then, the opening of negotiations and the complex accession process moved events along; finally, negotiation talks occurred for the entrance of the countries into the EU. These phases placed different type of pressure and conditions on the candidate countries. For example, in the first phase, many programmes for civil society development were supported. Civil society organisations reported the abuses of the governments and, immediately, EU Institutions took a stance against these practices. In the second phase, the complex accession process elaborated legal and policy documents for the areas identified as short- and medium-term priorities. The

Roma were one of the highest priorities of the agenda (European Commission, 1998). Financial programmes elaborated the priorities while regular reports expressed concerns about the violations of rights and the slow process of adoption of Roma policies. Finally, preparations began for the governments to become part of the complex EU decision-making machine. In the case of Roma, the EU designed and implemented different programmes. The regular reports complained that despite the adoption of legal instruments for Roma, the implementation of those measures were very weak (European Commission, 2003a).

Conditionality Mechanism Influences on Candidate Countries

The conditions of the EU, the Council of Europe, and OSCE had positive effects in the domestic political context of each Eastern European country. Specific instruments for the promotion and protection of Roma rights have been adopted; due to investment in civil society programs, the influence of Roma civil society organisations has grown in the last years; last, but not least, specific institutional settings for the representation of Roma rights were created. These effects occurred in three main phases (Dediu, forthcoming): first, from 1989 up to starting the process of accession (1997); second, the completion of the accession process up to the start of negotiation talks with the candidate countries (1999/2000); third, the preparation of Eastern European countries to become full members of the EU.

The period from 1989 to 1997 is one of concerns for geopolitical stability and democratisation of the Eastern European countries. Immediately after the downfall of the communist regimes, the Eastern European countries directed their efforts to ensuring their transition from one political system to another. The first years after the downfall of the old regimes were characterised by intense ethnic conflicts within the borders of the countries of Eastern Europe and by huge waves of migration to western Europe borders. Thus, all the effort expended by western actors towards Eastern Europe were within the framework of "stabilisation and democratisation" of the countries.

Soon, specific instruments for the protection and promotion of minority rights, including those of the Roma, were adopted. The Eastern European countries were supposed to adopt those instruments in internal legislation. For example, the Council of Europe Recommendation 1201 was hotly debated in Romania and Slovakia, because it included elements related to the right of autonomy of minority groups. The right of autonomy was considered to violate the integrity of the national borders of those countries. Finally, after considerable diplomatic pressure from the international community, the instruments related to autonomy were adopted. Other international documents of the Council of Europe and OSCE were included in national legislation, thus creating the premises for stability and democracy of the countries, pre-conditions for joining the Western club.

Another objective during the years after 1989 was the support of specific programmes for the development of a strong civil society in each Eastern European country. Civil society was considered the primary watchdog of the values of a democratic state and, accordingly, during those years Roma organisations received partial support.

At the beginning of 1994 and 1995, the main association agreements between the EU and the Central and Eastern European countries were signed. The general stabilisation of the region was underway and new steps towards European integration were to be taken. The main priority of the Eastern European governments was to start the accession procedures with the EU.

At the beginning of 1997, when the European Commission elaborated the Agenda 2000 (European Commission, 1997) and the accession process with the Central and Eastern European countries was opened, a new phase of involvement of the EU in the region began. This period opened by establishing institutional mechanisms that allowed a better implementation of the European policies in each country.

The European Commission, on 16 July 1997, adopted Agenda 2000, which included opinions for each country from Eastern Europe. The Commission also included recommendations for each country to improve their national policies according to the Copenhagen criteria. Following the adoption of Agenda 2000, in 1998, general Accession Partnerships (European Commission, 1998) were signed with each candidate country. The Accession Partnerships are a form of pluri-annual programme stating the main activities to be taken in each field identified as a short- and medium-term priority; defining a national program for the implementation of the *acquis communautaire;* and clarifying the financial programmes offered by the EU to the candidate country.

Roma were considered a short- and medium-term priority in almost all the Accession Partnerships. The main changes related to the status of Roma due to the influence of the EU are those relevant to the setting of specific national policies for the improvement of living conditions of the members of the ethnic group. In countries with high numbers of Roma (Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Poland), national strategies for the improvement of Roma situation were adopted by the national governments.

In December 1999, the Helsinki European Council (European Council, 1999) decided to start the opening of negotiation talks with the first wave of Central and Eastern European countries. The opening of negotiations supposed the entrance into a new period, because the countries would become full members of the EU. The entrance into the Union does not rely only on the adoption of the *acquis communautaire,* but also on the capacity to adopt and be part of the complex EU policy-making system. The policy-making system requires each candidate state to be capable of implementing European policies in each national context, as well as to participate fully in the elaboration of future policies in each field.

The main effect of the EU was two-fold: the creation of specific institutional settings to represent the interests of the Roma within the national government and the further strengthening of Roma civil society through specific projects for capacity-building of those organisations. The creation of institutions dealing with Roma issues were logical steps in the process of adoption and implementation of policies for Roma in each country. The strengthening of Roma civil society actually allowed a further professionalism of the national representative organisations that could better monitor the implementation of the governmental policies.

Roma Rights on the Internal European Union Public Policies Agenda

Before the finalisation of the enlargement process in Eastern Europe, specific changes related to Roma rights occurred on the internal agenda of the EU. Many voices raised issues concerning the standards imposed on candidate countries, indicating that the EU had no policies for Roma or for minorities in general. The conditionality mechanism actually permitted a slow movement toward minority issues inside the Union.

The European Union and "double language"

The respect for minority rights is a new concern for EU member states. The respect for human rights standards and the protection of ethnic minority rights were conceived as foreign policy tools when the EU first started talks with the countries from the ex-communist bloc. However, the member states did not escape their own ethnical tensions (Abdikeeva, 2002; Wrench and Solomos, 1998) due to their diverse minorities. This ambiguity between external policies and internal policies creates a "double language." The Eastern European countries are asked to respect minority rights, but the EU has no specific policy that promotes the right of minorities. What model should the EU use for the Eastern European countries when the rights of minorities are not respected even in the most democratic countries of the Union? The absence of a unique minority rights policy allows many interpretations at the level of each member states, but also at the EU level.

Rhetorical Entrapment

The concerns of western European countries were clear when minority rights was put on the European agenda. The conditions for joining the EU expressed strategic calculations of the western governments to protect themselves against unstable Eastern European neighbours. However, the strategic preferences could not be expressed as foreign policy objectives towards the newcomers from Eastern Europe. The expression of such interests would have contradicted the common, liberal values promoted by the EU inside and outside its borders. Therefore, these norms were promoted to any external candidate who wanted to join the EU. Yet, although the opening attitude of the EU in the early 90s towards Central and Eastern European countries relied on principles of democracy, the rule of law, the promotion of fundamental rights, and economic prosperity, minority rights protection was not part of the foundations of the community (Gugliemo and Waters, 2005).

Rhetoric action theories (Schimmelfennig, 2001; Risse, 2000; Burns, 1999) explain that the EU deliberately and strategically used common values arguments in order to promote the minority agenda (including the cause of Roma) in the national programs of the newcomers of Eastern Europe. In the 90s, the EU carefully designed the criteria to join the organisation in such a way as to apply to foreign candidate countries. However, having no minority policy, the EU took two steps (Gugliemo and Waters, 2005): (a) inclusion in the Copenhagen criteria of the phrase about the "protection and the respect for the national minorities" (European Council, 1993); and (b) a reliance on OSCE and the Council of Europe to develop such policies. Both OSCE and the Council

of Europe responded to the needs of the EU at that time. The Council of Europe developed legal instruments for the protection of minority rights, including instruments addressed specifically to Roma. The OSCE dealt with security concerns in the flow of asylum seekers and illegal immigrants to western Europe (Sasse, 2005).

Many European reports and Romany activists spoke about the violation of Roma rights all over Europe. They signalled a gap between Eastern European conditions to join the EU and the lack of a coherent Roma policy inside the organisation. The rhetoric about common values was useful for the changes in Eastern Europe, but, at the same time, the EU has been rhetorically entrapped because the conditions were set for outside countries, but inside no clear policy for Roma exists (Gugliemo and Waters, 2005).

The rhetorical entrapment actually determined a slow but steady change in the way Roma policies are treated on the EU agenda. Some new policies started inside the organisation, even if they did not directly touch the Roma (Sasse, 2005).

Internalisation of Roma Rights inside the European Union

Today, the EU has no specific policy for minorities in general or for Roma specifically. Yet, the rhetorical entrapment of the EU has had some small positive effects on the public agenda of the community. Not part of community policies or any community law, some instruments and institutions have been adopted that indirectly have an effect on the Roma minority. The main two approaches developed in the last years are: legal- or rights-based approach and the social inclusion policies approach.

A legal- or rights-based approach has been adopted extensively in recent years. Equality and non-discrimination under EU law forces legal obligations for the member states. The main instruments and institutions that indirectly touch the Roma are:

- Race (CoEU, 2000a) and Employment Directives (CoEU, 2000b) through Article 13 prohibit discrimination on any ethnic grounds.
- Community programmes related to discrimination are now part of the new integrated programme known as PROGRESS (Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity) (European Commission, 2004a). Under the new programme, specific activities of exchange of information and dissemination of best practices in Europe are envisaged. The programme was approved by the European Parliament and Council in November 2006. Through community programmes, some European networks that special in the fight against discrimination are financed.
- Each year, the European Commission finances specific campaigns and events related to one theme. The years 2007 and 2008 will be the European Years of Equal Opportunities the European Year of Multi-Cultural Communication, respectively.
- Diverse reports related to general human rights protection are issued every year by various European institutions and agencies. For example, EU Network of Independent Experts delivers each year a general report about the protection of

human rights in Europe. The protection of Roma rights are clearly described in these reports. The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (formerly the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia) has issued many reports regarding multiple discrimination faced by Roma in Europe (EUMC, 2006, 2003).

- Last, Article 21 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights that now is part of the proposed European Constitutional Treaty (European Union, 2004) states that discrimination based on "membership of a national minority" should be prohibited. The Constitutional Treaty will open up new legal opportunities for the promotion of minority rights, including Roma rights.

Article 13 of both European directives and of the still to be ratified Constitutional Treaty are exceptions, but all the other instruments do not legally engage the states to enforce the rights of minorities. The legal instruments address the multiple structural discrimination of Roma only partially and indirectly.

A social inclusion policy approach has also been developed, especially during the last ten years. Most international reports speak about Roma as multiply excluded from housing, employment, education, and health. This social exclusion of Roma requires a comprehensive approach, but such policy does not exist. Rather, scattered initiatives the indirectly touch Roma are in use.

- The Lisbon Strategy (European Council, 2000) set new indicators to achieve a "sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion." Almost all the indicators have a direct effect on Roma.

- The new open method of coordination, which was officially endorsed by the European Council in Lisbon in 2000 (European Council, 2000) includes specifically the coordination of efforts dealing with the social issues of the Roma minority (European Commission, 2007a). The open method of coordination rests on soft law mechanisms such as guidelines and indicators, benchmarking, and sharing of best practices among member states. The method is more intergovernmental in nature than the policy-making machine of the EU. After general agreement on policy goals in a given area by the EU Council, these goals are translated in specific actions at the regional and national level. Specific benchmarks and indicators are agreed upon by the member states in order to measure best practices across the Union (European Commission, 2007b).

- Studies of the European Commission, the last released in 2004 (European Commission, 2004b), speak about the multiple social exclusion of Roma in Europe. The document could serve as a future policy document for the European Commission

- The Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity (PROGRESS) (European Commission, 2004a) financially supports the implementation of the objectives of the EU in employment, social affairs, and equal opportunities. More specifically, PROGRESS will support the implementation of the employment objectives of the EU, including the implementation of the open method of coordination in social protection and inclusion. It also addresses improvement of the working

environment and conditions including health and safety at work and reconciling work and family life; the effective implementation of the principle of non-discrimination and promotion of its mainstreaming in all EU policies; the effective implementation of the principle of gender equality, and promotion of its mainstreaming in all EU policies. Roma are included as a target group in the envisaged activities of the European program.

The social policy instruments have no legal basis. The implementation of such measures depends heavily on the will of the governments.

Conclusion: the Roma, a Full European Minority

In 2007, Romania and Bulgaria were admitted as full members of the EU, thus the entire process of enlargement that started after 1989 has ended. The last two countries have the largest Roma populations of the European countries. The inclusion of Romania and Bulgaria gives legitimacy to the call of Roma minority representatives for better representation of their voice inside the EU.

Various sources approximate the number of Roma presently living in Europe at around 12 million. However, it is a recognised fact throughout all European countries that few Roma declare their ethnic affiliation in official, national censuses. People refuse to self-identify as Roma because the social stigma associated with this ethnic category is very high. Therefore, they declare themselves either as belonging to the majority ethnic group, or as part of a better-regarded minority, for example, Hungarian, German, or Turkish. No matter their social status, all Roma have been subject to mechanisms of exclusion to different degrees and in different contexts.

The structural exclusion of Roma from the decision-making mechanisms of European societies has lasted for hundreds of years and only concentrated and comprehensive instruments can help overcome centuries of marginalisation. Some years ago, the documents issued by the Council of Europe or OSCE reminded the governments of Europe that the Roma minority is truly a European trans-national minority. Debates about the truly European nature of Roma have ceased, other kind of discourse having been adopted. In recent years, it seems that a general discourse about the social exclusion of Roma from Eastern Europe has almost monopolised the entire agenda of the European societies. As Simhandl (2005) correctly observed, a general distinction between the "Western Gypsies/Travellers" and "Eastern Roma" creates specific types of discourses and policies. Although the Roma minority represents a complex group, the separation made by European societies has an effect on the evolution of the Roma minority on the public agenda. The general mentalities in Europe associate the "Western Gypsies/Travellers" with the nomadic style of life and policies inside the western European countries deal mostly with such issues. The Eastern European mentalities consider Roma as only a social problem and all the policies converge in the social inclusion sector.

The policies adopted by the European institutions before and after 1989 reflect this differentiation between western Gypsies or Travellers, having a nomadic style of life, and eastern Roma, characterised mainly by poverty and social exclusion (Simhandl, 2005). However, is this discourse correct? Does the Roma minority represent the

simple objects of the main discourses of the European societies? Even if in recent years some hundreds of instruments were adopted and now we see in place an amorphous system that deals with Roma issues in Europe, Roma still do not participate as an equal group in decision-making mechanisms. Roma remain at the mercy of majority groups of the countries where they reside. Even if Roma settled in Europe hundreds of years ago, European societies consider them as "guests" and they are tolerated because no other option exists. The largest minority group in Europe, equalling in number the population of Hungary, for example, is still in the hands of policy makers of "host societies" and is still the object of the passive attitude of these countries.

In their policy paper, Gheorghe and Mirga (1997) discuss some possible alternatives of public policies for the Roma. The main alternative, according to them, is to strengthen the development of Roma civil society organisations that will eventually create new capacities inside the Roma minority and represent the interests of the group in a complex, European policy-making system. Today, many organisations speak in the name of Roma, although their influence on national and European public agendas is very limited.

New ways of thinking about Roma will be envisaged; a new type of Roma leadership will grow in the following years. The main challenge for European societies is to consider Roma as part of the common founding elements of Europe and new ways of involvement in the decision-making system in each society are mandatory. Is Europe ready to face the challenge of Roma diplomacy?

References

Abdikeeva, A. (2002). Germany's policies toward Sinti and Roma: living apartheid? *Roma Rights* [online], 1. Available from: http://www.errc.org/cikk.php?cikk=777&archiv=1 [Accessed 16 April 2007].

Amato, G. and Batt, J. (1998). *Minority rights and EU enlargement to the East. Report of the first meeting of the reflection group on the long-term implications of EU enlargement: the nature of the new border* [online]. Available from: http://www.iue.it/RSCAS/WP-Texts/98_05p.htm [Accessed 16 April 2007].

Burns, T. J. (1999). Rhetoric as a framework for analysing cultural constraint and change. *Current Perspectives in Social Theory,* 19, pp. 165-185.

Council of Europe [CoE]. (2000). *Recommendation No R (2000) 4 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the education of Roma/Gypsy children in Europe* [online]. Available from: http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/romatravellers/documentation/recommendations/receducation20004_en.asp [Accessed 16 April 2007].

Council of Europe [CoE]. (2003). *Recommendation 1633 (2003): forced returns of Roma from the former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, including Kosovo, to Serbia and Montenegro from Council of Europe member states* [online]. Available from:

http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/romatravellers/documentation/recommendations/recrefugeesap16332003_en.asp [Accessed 16 April 2007].

Council of Europe [CoE]. (2007). *Group of experts on Roma, Gypsies and Travellers* [online]. Available from: http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/romatravellers/mgsrom/default_en.asp [Accessed 16 April 2007].

Council of European Union [CoEU]. (2000a). *Council directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000 implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin* [online]. Available from: http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/pri/en/oj/dat/2000/l_180/l_18020000719en00220026.pdf [Accessed 16 April 2007].

Council of European Union [CoEU]. (2000b). *Council directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000 establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation* [online]. Available from: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2000/l_303/l_30320001202en00160022.pdf [Accessed 16 April 2007].

Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe [CSCE]. (1975). *Helsinki final act* [online]. Available from: http://www.osce.org/documents/mcs/1975/08/4044_en.pdf [Accessed 16 April 2007].

Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe [CSCE]. (1990). *Charter of Paris for a new Europe* [online]. Available from: http://www.osce.org/documents/mcs/1990/11/4045_en.pdf [Accessed 16 April 2007].

Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe [CSCE]. (1994). *Budapest document 1994. Towards a genuine partnership in a new era* [online]. Available from: http://www.osce.org/documents/mcs/1994/12/4048_en.pdf [Accessed 16 April 2007].

Dediu, M. (forthcoming). The role of international institutions in reforming the public policies for Roma in Romania. In: F. Bondar (ed). *Public policies and public administration*. Iasi: Polirom Publishing House.

European Commission. (1997). *Agenda 2000: for a stronger and wider Union* [online]. Available from: http://ec.europa.eu/agenda2000/overview/en/agenda.htm [Accessed 16 April 2007].

European Commission. (1998). *Enlargement: key documents on enlargement 1998* [online]. Available from: http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/archives/key_documents/reports_1998_en.htm#compo [Accessed 16 April 2007].

European Commission. (1998). *Progress reports from the commission on progress towards accession by each of the candidate countries, November 4, 1998* [online]. Available from: http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/archives/key_documents/reports_1998_en.htm [Accessed 16 April 2007].

European Commission. (2003a). *Comprehensive monitoring reports* [online]. Available from: http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/archives/key_documents/reports_2003_en.htm [Accessed 16 April 2007].

European Commission. (2003b). *Review of the European Union PHARE assistance to Roma minorities: PHARE support allocated in 1999–2002 and implemented until November 2003* [online]. Available from: http://www.phareinterimevaluation.org/documents [Accessed 16 April 2007].

European Commission. (2004a). *Proposal for a decision of the European parliament and of the Council establishing a community programme for employment and social solidarity – PROGRESS* [online]. Available from: http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/LexUriServ/site/en/com/2004/com2004_0488en01.pdf [Accessed 16 April 2007].

European Commission. (2004b). *The situation of Roma in an enlarged European Union* [online]. Available from: http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/fundamental_rights/pdf/pubst/roma04_en.pdf [Accessed 16 April 2007].

European Commission. (2007a). *The EU and Roma* [online]. Available from: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/fundamental_rights/roma/index_en.htm [Accessed 16 April 2007].

European Commission. (2007b). *Employment, social affairs and equal opportunities* [online]. Available from: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/index_en.html [Accessed 16 April 2007].

European Council (1993). *Copenhagen European Council: presidency conclusions, 21–22 June 1993* [online]. Available from: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/summits/copenhagen/co_en.pdf [Accessed 16 April 2007].

European Council. (1999). *Helsinki European council: presidency conclusions, 10–11 December 1999* [online]. Available from: http://europa.eu.int/council/off/conclu/dec99/dec99_en.htm [Accessed 16 April 2007].

European Council. (2000). *Lisbon European council 23 and 24 March 2000: presidency conclusions* [online]. Available from: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/summits/lis1_en.htm [Accessed 16 April 2007].

European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia [EUMC]. (2003). *Breaking the barriers – Romani women and access to public health care* [online]. Available from: http://eumc.europa.eu/eumc/material/pub/ROMA/rapport-en.pdf [Accessed 16 April 2007].

European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia [EUMC]. (2006). *Roma and Travellers in public education: an overview of the situation in the EU member states* [online]. Available from: http://eumc.europa.eu/eumc/material/pub/ROMA/roma_report.pdf [Accessed 16 April 2007].

European Roma Rights Centre [ERRC]. (1996). *Sudden rage at dawn: violence against Roma in Romania* [online]. Available from: http://www.errc.org/db/00/18/m00000018.pdf [Accessed 16 April 2007].

European Roma Rights Centre [ERRC]. (2001). *State of impunity: human rights abuse of Roma in Romania* [online]. Available from: http://www.errc.org/db/00/0B/m0000000B.doc [Accessed 16 April 2007].

European Union. (2004). *Treaty establishing a constitution for Europe* [online]. Available from: http://europa.eu/constitution/index_en.htm [Accessed 16 April 2007].

European Union. (2006). *Consolidated versions of the Treaty on European Union and of the Treaty Establishing the European Community* [online]. Available from: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2006/ce321/ce32120061229en00010331.pdf [Accessed 16 April 2007].

Gheorghe, N. and Mirga, A. (1997). *The Roma in the twenty-first century: a policy paper.* Princeton, NJ: Project on Ethnic Relations.

Gugliemo, R. and Waters, T. (2005). Migrating towards minority status: shifting European policy towards Roma. *Journal of Common Market Studies,* 43(4), pp. 763–786.

High Commissioner on National Minorities [HCNM]. (1993). *Roma (Gypsies) in the CSCE region.* Paper presented to the Meeting of the Committee of Senior Officials, 21–23 September. The Hague: HCNM.

High Commissioner on National Minorities [HCNM]. (2000). *Report on the situation of Roma and Sinti in the OSCE area* [online]. Available from: http://www1.osce.org/documents/hcnm/2000/03/241_en.pdf [Accessed 16 April 2007].

Hooghe, L. (1995). Sub-national mobilisation in the European Union. *West European Politics,* 18(1), pp. 175–198.

Hughes, J. and Sasse, G. (2003). Monitoring the monitors: EU enlargement conditionality and minority protection in the CEECs. *Journal of Ethnopolitics and Minority Issues,* 1, pp. 5–10.

Human Rights Watch [HRW]. (1991). *The persecution of Gypsies in Romania* [online]. Available from: http://www.hrw.org/doc?t=europe&c=romani [Accessed 16 April 2007].

Human Rights Watch [HRW]. (1992). *Romania: human rights developments* [online]. Available from: http://www.hrw.org/reports/1993/WR93/Hsw-06.htm#P263_90215 [Accessed 16 April 2007].

Marks, G. et al. (1996). European integration from the 1980s: state-centric v. multi-level governance. *Journal of Common Market Studies,* 34(3), pp. 341–378.

Matras, Y. (1996). *Problems arising in connection with the international mobility of the Roma in Europe and the recent emigration of Roma from the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic* [online]. Available from: http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/romatravellers/documentation/migration/MGSROM(2000)9Matras_en.asp [Accessed 16 April 2007].

Neyer, J. (2003). Discourse and order in the EU: a deliberative approach to multi-level governance. *Journal of Common Market Studies,* 41(4), pp. 687–706.

Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe [OSCE]. (1998). *Seventh meeting of the Ministerial Council, 2-3 December 1998, Oslo* [online]. Available from: http://www.osce.org/documents/mcs/1998/12/4168_en.pdf [Accessed 16 April 2007].

Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe [OSCE]. (2001). *The ODIHR contact point for Roma and Sinti: an overview* [online]. Available from: http://www.osce.org/publications/odihr/2001/01/12363_144_en.pdf [Accessed 16 April 2007].

Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe [OSCE]. (2007). *What is the human dimension?* [online]. Available from: http://www.osce.org/odihr/13371.html [Accessed 16 April 2007].

Pentassuglia, G. (2001). The EU and the protection of minorities: the case of Eastern Europe. *European Journal of International Law,* 12(1), pp. 3-38.

Pentassuglia, G. (2002). *Minorities in international law.* Strasbourg: ECMI, Council of Europe.

Peterson, J. (1995). Decision making in the European Union: towards a framework for analysis. *Journal of European Public Policy,* 2(1), pp. 69-93.

Piana, D. (2004). Constructing European constitutional discourse? Arguments for common values in the European Convention. *South European Society and Politics,* 9(1), pp. 24-40.

Risse, T. (2000). "Let's argue!" Communicative action in world politics. *International Organization,* 54(1), pp. 1-39.

Sasse, G. (2005). *EU conditionality and minority rights: translating the Copenhagen Criterion into policy* [online]. Available from: http://www.eui.eu/RSCAS/WP-Texts/05_16.pdf [Accessed 16 April 2007].

Schimmelfennig, F. (2001). The community trap: liberal norms, rhetorical action, and the eastern enlargement of the European Union. *International Organization,* 55(1), pp. 47-80.

Simhandl, K. (2005). *"Western Gypsies and Travellers" – "Eastern Roma": the creation of political objects by the institutions of the European Union.* Paper presented at the Fifth Pan-European Conference held at The Hague, September 2004. Hamburg: Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy.

Witte, B. de (2000). *Politics versus law in the EU's approach to ethnic minorities. Working paper* [online]. Available from: http://www.eui.eu/RSCAS/WP-Texts/00_04.pdf [Accessed 16 April 2007].

Wrench, J. and Solomos, J. (eds). (1998). *Racism and migration in Western Europe.* London: Berg.

Roma Integration in the European Union

Asmet Elezovski

The process of the enlargement of the European Union provides a unique opportunity to develop policies to improve the situation of Roma minorities in Europe. As this process of enlargement is ongoing, this is an important time to both examine what is currently happening with the Roma in Europe and what measures could be undertaken in the future for integration and improvement.

Roma are present in almost every European country. In 1993, according to Recommendation 1203 of the Council of Europe, they were declared "a true European minority" (Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, 1993). However, as a specific entity, they face issues related to basic human rights and needs. The European Parliament's (2005) adoption of the historic *Resolution on the Situation of the Roma in the European Union* on April 28, 2005, is heralded as a landmark event in the Roma struggle for recognition. Item 8 of this Resolution "calls upon Member States and candidate countries to strengthen national legislation and administrative measures that expressly and specifically counter Anti-Gypsyism/Romaphobia and prohibit racial discrimination and related intolerance, whether direct or indirect, in all spheres of public life" (European Parliament, 2005). We, the Roma, must face now face these challenges: the situation of the Roma population is still a cause for concern, given the evidence for racism and discrimination, and for failures of the justice system.

The current European enlargement gives us the opportunity to look for some methods to promote the integration of Roma. This study examines the current situation of Roma in Europe (in late 2006) and the role of the process of enlargement in bringing about changes for Roma. It also seeks means for the effective integration and participation of Roma in Europe. It looks at important differences in a wider civil, political, economic, and cultural context to find the right path in promotion of integration and inclusion. The challenge is an immense step that we, the Roma, must take, because Europe is growing together with us. Let us be constructive and examine the difficulties facing us, and combine our efforts.

Problems Facing Roma in Member States, Pre-Accession, and Candidate Countries

Article 6 of the Treaty on the European Union upholds the principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law (European Union, 2006). Promotion of these values puts every person in the centre of European integration; one must first respect the term *citizen* as the highest point of reverence and the source of the will to build a solid society. Every citizen should be properly recognised, irrespective of origin and social or cultural differences, and these values must be the starting point for integration.

To begin an assessment of the current situation of Roma, it is important to review the issues Roma face in various European countries, in the European Union candidate states, and in non-Union countries. This will provide a basis for recognition and consideration of issues related to Roma across Europe. The following examples illustrate the range of issues and may provide a starting point for a more exhaustive study.

Czech Republic

In the Czech Republic, an EU member state since January 2006, renewed controversy arose concerning the Lety Concentration Camp. The Czech National Party erected a memorial stone to World War II victims near the site of this former Roma concentration camp, an action that some saw as a denial of the Roma Holocaust. In response, the mayor of Lety had the stone removed, leading, in turn, to protests by both National Party members and Roma activists. Gwendolyn Albert, Director of the League of Human Rights, commented:

> Yes, I believe that there is more or less a straight line between the fact that the victims here were Roma, and the fact that Roma since 1989 have been discriminated against in many, many areas. I will never forget it: I was actually here in 1989 during the revolution and in early 1990, one of the first other open, public gatherings I saw on Wenceslaus Square was a gathering of fans of Nazism. I don't understand how anyone in this part of the world can embrace that ideology, but they do. I think it also has a lot to do with the unrecognized, undisguised history of collaboration with the Nazis, not only here but all over Europe. To me it's tragic that there isn't yet a consensus in the Czech Republic about WWII, about the Holocaust, about what happened. I think it's tragic. (Mastalir, 2006)

It is, indeed, tragic that this controversy has been re-opened, when we are moving towards greater respect for each other as equal human beings. It is depressing that cases like this still exist and that so much misunderstanding occurs regarding innocent Roma victims. We should learn some things from the past, to better our future.

Slovakia

In Slovakia, another European Union member state, the Roma form the second largest minority group, constituting at least 4.8% of the population and, likely, more as statistics do not include Roma who are well-integrated with the majority population (Orgovanova, 2007). In Slovakia, Roma face institutional discrimination at all levels. In particular, Slovak officials often feel free to express anti-Roma sentiment. In one example, former Slovak Prime Minister Meciar, at a meeting with local representatives in the town of Spissk Podhradie in early September 1993, "talked about socially inadaptable persons, but everybody knew he meant the Roma. Indeed, there is general anti-Roma sentiment among Slovak officials at all levels. The mass media carry a similar bias and suggest few specific solutions except reinforcing the police presence in these regions. Ironically, an all-powerful police was also a primary tool of the previous totalitarian state" (Orgovanova, 2007).

The situation of the Roma in Slovakia is of concern because basic human rights are violated and hate-speech is present. If the current problems persist, Slovak society will remain divided. Non-Roma need to be better informed in order to accept that Roma are part of Slovakia as well, and that they deserve treatment as equals, not as second-class citizens. It is not sufficient for Roma to raise their voices: someone needs to listen to them. Dialogue between communities and different entities must be efficient and promoted as a value among citizens. In addition, European institutions must be aware of the situation and put pressure on the authorities.

Bulgaria

Problems also exist in Bulgaria, a state soon to join the EU. In February 2004, the European Court of Human Rights announced its judgment in two cases relating to discriminatory treatment and police brutality against Bulgarian Roma (Tzekov vs. Bulgaria and Ognyanova and Choban vs. Bulgaria) (ERRC, 2006b). In the first case, police fired shots at a young Roma man travelling in a horse drawn cart after he was ordered to stop and did not comply. Mr. Tzekov was hit in the back, arrested, and taken to the hospital for surgery. No criminal charges were brought against him, nor against the officers who shot him. The civil action that he subsequently brought was dismissed on the basis that the shooting was in conformance with law. In 1998, an application to the European Court of Human Rights was lodged. The Court found the use of firearms not justified and the subsequent investigation not thorough or effective (ERRC, 2006b).

In the second case, police arrested a Mr. Stefanov for alleged theft. He died the following day, allegedly from a fall from the third floor of the police station. An autopsy found numerous injuries on his body. In 1998, an application to the European Court of Human Rights was lodged. The Court found a violation of the right to life as the government did not provide a plausible explanation of the events leading to Mr. Stefanov's death, nor was the investigation found to be adequate. In addition, the court found a violation of the right to freedom from torture and inhuman and degrading treatment, as a fall was not likely to have caused the injuries found on Mr. Stefanov, nor were they otherwise accounted for (ERRC, 2006b).

In a separate case, on July 7, 2005, the European Court of Human Rights found its first violation of Article 14 of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms in the Nachova vs. Bulgaria case, related to the 1996 fatal shooting by military police of two Roma conscripts. The court concluded that the Bulgarian authorities had failed to investigate whether discriminatory attitudes may have played a role in the killings. "The failure to do so in this case, despite indications of racial motivation, amounted to discrimination" (ERRC, 2006a).

As a state that will soon join the European Union, Bulgaria is obliged to fulfil certain criteria. The General Antidiscrimination Law, adopted by the Bulgarian Parliament on September 16, 2003 and entering into force on January 1, 2004 (Parliament of the Republic of Bulgaria, 2003), aims for more effective implementation of relevant international acts in order to solve problems of direct and indirect discrimination, and failures of the judicial system facing the Roma community.

Germany

Rudko Kawcynski, President of the European Roma and Traveller's Forum, describes the situation in Germany:

> In its passivity toward the Romani situation, Germany already falls behind its obligations as a member of the international community and the EU. It refuses to acknowledge the Roma as a national minority, it refuses to implement European and international resolutions and recommendations, it refuses to allow naturalization of Roma born in Germany.
>
> The unique quality of Germany's active measures are recognizable in its efforts to tie economic aid to restrictions on migrations: Germany has signed treaties with a number of eastern European governments (Poland, Czech Republic, Romania, Slovakia, and Croatia), allowing indiscriminate deportation of stateless refugees (e.g., from former Yugoslavia) to the partner countries. The partners are expected to prevent potential refugees from leaving or crossing their territory without necessary visa. (Kawczynski, 2000)

Germany has, in addition, failed to implement European Union race anti-discrimination law. For example, on April 28, 2005, the European Court of Justice ruled that Germany had "breached EU Law by failing to transpose fully a European Directive prohibiting discrimination on the grounds of race or ethnic origin" (European Commission, 2005). The directive requires that member states designate a body to promote equal treatment and provide practical and independent support to victims of racial discrimination.

This directive is of particular importance in Germany, which hosts many Roma refugees from post-crisis areas. In one example of the mistreatment of Roma refugees, on August 16, 2006, Berlin authorities forcibly expelled a Muslim Romani woman and her four children to Serbia, "ignoring a direct appeal to stay expulsion as well as compelling evidence concerning her extreme psychological state" (ERRC, 2007b). Germany, as a founding member of the EU, has a responsibility to show more understanding for minorities, including the Roma population. Other states also have the responsibility to react to expulsions of refugees from Germany, because this is very serious issue related to basic human rights. Germany could open a window of opportunity for Roma, to ensure them residence or asylum status when necessary, and halt the process of deportation of Roma, because they are refugees from Kosovo, a post-crisis area, and they cannot return while the final status of Kosovo remains at issue and their personal safety not guaranteed.

Macedonia

In the Republic of Macedonia, a candidate state, currently discrimination results in segregation of communities in all areas of social life, including employment, housing, health care, education, and access to public places. Affirmative measures could offer the Roma true participation and inclusion, and conditions to start a dialogue.

According to Article 9 of the Constitution of Macedonia, all citizens "are equal in their freedoms and rights, regardless of sex, race, color of skin, national and social origin, political and religious beliefs, property and social status" (Parliament of the

Republic of Macedonia, 2001). These values are also guaranteed through the 2001 *Framework Agreement*, which promotes "the peaceful and harmonious development of civil society while respecting the ethnic identity and the interests of all Macedonian citizens" (Framework Agreement, 2001). The Agreement states that the principle of non-discrimination and equal treatment of all under the law is to be "respected completely" and applied "in particular with respect to employment in public administration and public enterprises, and access to public financing for business development." The *Framework Agreement* (2001) also reconfirms Article 8 of the Macedonian constitution in stating:

> The fundamental values of the constitutional order of the Republic of Macedonia are:
>
> - the basic freedoms and rights of the individual and citizen, recognized in international law and set down in the Constitution;
>
> - equitable representation of persons belonging to all communities in public bodies at all levels and in other areas of public life.

These acts are in accordance with international law, yet Macedonian Roma still struggle with situations where basic rights and freedoms are denied. A case related to the violation of human rights was presented at the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg—the first case against Macedonia involving Article 3 of the European Convention of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. Article 3 prohibits torture or inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. On April 16, 1998, Mr. Jasar, a Macedonian national of Romani ethnic origin from Stip,

> was in a local bar where gambling took place. One of the losing gamblers complained . . . and fired several gunshots. Several police officers were called to the bar. Mr. Jasar maintains that police officers grabbed him by his hair and forcibly placed him in a police van. During his detention in police custody, he was kicked in the head, punched and beaten with a truncheon by a police officer. The medical report issued immediately after Mr. Jasar was released the next morning stated that he had sustained numerous injuries to his head, hand and back. In May 1998, Mr. Jasar . . . filed a criminal complaint with the public prosecutor against an unidentified police officer. More than eight years later, no steps were taken to investigate the complaint. At the same time, Mr. Jasar also began civil proceedings for damages against the State, which were dismissed in October 1999. (ERRC, 2007a)

Mr. Jasar filed a complaint with the European Court of Human Rights in 2001. The court judged that the lack of any investigation by the public prosecutor into the allegations of ill-treatment constituted a violation of Article 3 of the Convention. Recent reports by international bodies confirm that "physical ill-treatment of persons in police custody is a serious problem in Macedonia and express doubt that judges or prosecutors conduct effective investigations when such ill-treatment is brought to their attention" (ERRC, 2007a).

Opportunities Offered by Enlargement

The EU family is growing, with new member states. Roma live in both old member states and upcoming members. Enlargement and improved legislation offer opportunities to better the condition of minorities, among them the Roma. The challenge is to use fully EU legislation within national legislation, and effectively to implement this legislation in order to promote equality. In particular, national authorities need to improve the defining and delivery of policy agendas with special regard to non-discrimination and equal treatment.

A Green Paper entitled *Equality and Non-Discrimination in an Enlarged European Union* was published in 2004 (European Commission, 2004), shortly after the enlargement of the European Union with ten new member states. This Green Paper raised a wide number of issues linked to the future of equality and non-discrimination policy in an enlarged EU. "These challenges include enlargement of the EU, particularly the need to step up efforts to address the situation of Roma and other ethnic minorities. Our objective should be to ensure that the EU's framework for combating discrimination on all of the relevant grounds is effectively implemented and enforced across the enlarged Union" (European Commission, 2004). Non-discrimination is as relevant to the ten countries that joined at that time and to others that have since applied to join, as it is to old member states. It is one of the so-called political criteria for membership to which states agreed at the 1993 Copenhagen European Council. New member states are expected to have transposed the two anti-discrimination directives before joining the European Union, as they form part of the body of community law .

Enlargement, therefore, should be an incentive for candidates to improve the condition of minorities to ensure the full and effective implementation of anti-discriminatory legislation. During the enlargement period, a number of current issues will be open for discussion, among them the rights of the minorities and implementation of proper legislation. As the Green Paper states, at this moment "it is important to stress that the effective implementation of non-discrimination legislation depends on the commitment of national authorities, the active support and involvement of civil society and complementary support for non-legislative measures to combat discrimination" (European Commission, 2004). In order to enter in the European Union, countries are required to bring national legislation into accordance with present standards.

The Green Paper explains that to ensure that everyone living in the European Union can benefit from effective legal protection against discrimination, the Council adopted two directives in 2000: the Racial Equality Directive (2000/43/EC) (European Council, 2000a) and the Employment Equality Directive (2000/78/EC) (European Council, 2000b). These directives introduced protection against discrimination on certain grounds for the first time in many member states and new specialised equality bodies have been set up. The directives represent significant progress in ensuring protection against discrimination, and have required significant changes to national law in all member states, even those with comprehensive existing anti-discrimination legislation (European Commission, 2004).

In addition, 2007 will be the "European Year of Equal Opportunities for All and Towards a Just Society." This is a great chance to raise awareness and to combat discriminatory policies.

Recommendations

Despite some positive recent developments (especially the excellent proposal of the European Commission regarding the Year of Equal Opportunities), the exclusion of Roma remains common even in some of the best social inclusion initiatives. Roma women and disabled people continue to face extreme discrimination and far too few EU-financed gender or disability projects have a representative number of Roma included. In many cases, the omission of Roma as one of the targeted groups serves to maintain the existing status and to give little chance for betterment of conditions in practise.

With non-EU members, the best time to take significant steps is the moment that a country submits a formal request for membership. Within existing member states pressure must be maintained so that these states provide all rights and freedoms recognized by law. The following recommendations may help build a framework for integration for the Roma population in Europe.

1. All difficulties faced by Roma require and deserve special attention regarding human rights and respect for minorities in accordance and implementation with the highest international standards.

2. Explicit guidelines should be created for integration of Roma in political, economic, social, health care, and educational areas in candidate countries and member states. Countries should submit reports about the level of Roma integration to appropriate bodies.

3. Regarding the issue of stateless Roma persons, Roma refugees, asylum seekers, and returnees in post-crisis areas (Balkans, Kosovo), a solution should provide citizenship for Roma in adopted countries and regulate their status to allow active participation in civil society and the community.

4. As adequate education is a pre-condition for integration into society, funds for Roma education and access to higher education should be available. Roma should have equal opportunities to be involved in all ongoing educational processes, as well as access to "second-chance schools." The difficult situation of Roma should be eased by education. Literacy and citizenship education are vital to keep individuals informed about their rights and obligations as citizens.

5. National agencies should be formed in each country to oversee integration, to collect information and to influence policies through expert research. Roma people should be included in the work of such agencies.

6. Legislative measures for international standards for Roma integration such as Strategy Documents should be adopted to improve policies towards Roma in Europe. In addition, legislative measures like Framework Agreements are needed in each country in coordination with all relevant subjects concerning Roma

themselves. All new member states must incorporate European rules on anti-discrimination into their national legislation before they join the European Union. Effective implementation should be made by each country, and member states must be obliged to better the situation of Roma population.

7. Closer cooperation is required between EU institutions, national authorities, Roma representatives, the Roma population, and civil society.

8. The media should assume the roles of promoting mutual understanding and respect for diversity groups, informing with analysis, spreading information that concerns Roma issues, and promoting policies to include the Roma population in their programmes. The media should run awareness-raising campaigns in order to promote equality.

9. Authorities must undertake to solve the issue of lack of statistical data on Roma in various countries, and that of civil registration and documents for identification.

10. Cultural autonomy must be respected:

> every member of a national minority has the right to preserve his or her ethnic identity, cultural traditions, native language and religious beliefs. It is prohibited to ridicule and to obstruct the practice of ethnic cultural traditions and religious practices and to engage in any activity which is aimed at the forcible discrimination of national minorities. (Parliament of the Republic of Estonia, 1993)

11. In order to promote best practices, exchange of experience between countries is needed, not only through declarations or laws, but also in real practice. States must share their positive practices to see different ways of addressing problems, comparing issues, and comparing results achieved.

12. Governments in regions with Roma populations must take further steps to integrate Roma civil servants at all administrative and decision-making levels, where they can obtain positions and help in the issues regarding their concerns.

13. Member states and candidate countries should take concrete positive measures on behalf of the Roma to involve them equally in society.

14. Governments must recognise "the need to ensure effective Roma participation in political life, particularly as regards decisions which affect the lives and well-being of Roma communities" (European Parliament, 2005).

Conclusions: The Role of Roma in an Enlarged Europe

Concerning the situation of Roma in Europe and the process of enlargement, one may conclude that because Roma are part of Europe, their problems may be addressed within European as well as national institutions. However, Roma should be aware that they must start the process inside their communities, to send a message that the process of integration within society will start with their self-reliance and organising action in order to improve the current situation. Roma organisations, Roma activists,

and Roma intellectuals, as citizens with particular public influence, need to participate in creating relations with the responsible authorities, giving opinions, and expressing attitudes. In addition, organisations like the European Roma and Traveller Forum, the Roma National Congress, the International Romani Union, the International Roma Women's Network, the Gypsy and Traveller International Evangelical Fellowship, and the European Roma Information Office, which deal with issues and concerns that Roma face, must be involved as partners and representatives of the Roma communities. European institutions should recognise, support, and join this initiative.

Roma are willing to start the dialogue, but they need guarantees that their needs and issues will be taken seriously by the international and national community. Despite many international documents, the Roma population across Europe still faces concrete problems regarding its civil status, civil registration, lack of documents, discrimination, segregation in schools, housing, and health care protection. Roma need practical joint action with state authorities, European institutions, civil society, and the Roma community as well.

As Roma, we also need to look for ways to address a difficult situation related to perception of the situation by non-Roma. Because many funds and grants have already been provided to deal with problems facing the Roma, non-Roma sometimes complain that too much has already been spent for the Roma community. Yet Roma populations suffer from poverty and discrimination. It takes time as well as money to see improvements. Many of the problems facing Roma are deeply rooted and have been present in society for decades.

Important steps are underway. For example, the Decade of Roma Inclusion, 2005–2015 is an initiative adopted by eight countries in Central and Southeast Europe, and supported by the international community. The backing of these governments signals a turnaround in Roma policy and the political will necessary for reform and provides recognition of the responsibility of governments to help Roma achieve equal possibilities in society (The World Bank, 2007).

This is a crucial time for dialogue with Roma communities. Throughout history, Roma have been a peaceful people, but problems may arise as radical groups grow or move into some communities to capitalise on the discontent of the Roma. A latent risk exists, since enduring in extremely difficult conditions produces fruitful ground for conflict. This is a crucial time: the process and dialogue have started. Now, changes must begin in reality in order to avoid deeply disappointing the Roma communities.

The integration of Roma in Europe is a process, not an event. Just a decade of inclusion will not be sufficient to integrate the Roma; we need the decades we have lost over the centuries. Integration will be a long-term process of learning how to be citizens and how to posses equal rights and obligations under the law. Established policies must lead to the development of concrete and practical institutional frameworks and legislative measures, through permanent and constant cooperation and working together on all levels. Through this process, the Roma will achieve equal opportunities and respect.

References

European Commission. Directorate General for Employment and Social Affairs. (2004). *Equality and non-discrimination in an enlarged European Union. Green Paper* [online]. Commission of the European Communities, COM(2004) 379 final, Brussels 28.05.2004. Available from: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/publications/2004/ke6004078_en.pdf [Accessed 27 March 2007].

European Commission. Employment. Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. (2005). *Germany has failed to implement EU race anti-discrimination law* [online]. Available from: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/emplweb/news/news_en.cfm?id=11 [Accessed 27 March 2007].

European Council. (2000a). *Council directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000 implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin* [online]. Available from: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32000L0043:EN:HTML [Accessed 4 April 2007].

European Council. (2000b). *Council directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000 establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation* [online]. Available from: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32000L0078:EN:HTML [Accessed 4 April 2007].

European Parliament. (2005). *European parliament resolution on the situation of the Roma in the European Union* [online]. Available from: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P6-TA-2005-0151+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN [Accessed 27 March 2007].

European Roma Rights Centre [ERRC]. (2006a). *European Court affirms failure to investigate racial motivation amounts to discrimination* [online]. Available from: http://www.errc.org/cikk.php?cikk=2470&archiv=1. [Accessed 27 March 2007].

European Roma Rights Centre [ERRC]. (2006b). *European Court issues two judgements against Bulgaria* [online]. Available from: http://www.errc.org/cikk.php?cikk=2522 [Accessed 27 March 2007].

European Roma Rights Centre [ERRC]. (2007a). *Macedonia found in violation of the European Convention on Human Rights* [online]. Available from: http://www.errc.org/cikk.php?cikk=2724 [Accessed 27 March 2007].

European Roma Rights Centre [ERRC]. (2007b). *Germany forcibly expels suicidal woman to Belgrade* [online]. Available from: http://www.errc.org/cikk.php?cikk=2620 [Accessed 15 March 2007].

European Union. (2006). *Consolidated versions of the Treaty on European Union and of the Treaty Establishing the European Community* [online]. Available from: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2006/ce321/ce32120061229en00010331.pdf [Accessed 27 March 2007].

Framework Agreement. (2001). Available from: http://www.usip.org/library/pa/macedonia/pa_mac_08132001.html [Accessed 27 March 2007].

Kawczynski, R. (2000). *Report on the condition of the Roma in Europe* [online]. Available from http://www.romnews.com/a/RKreport.htm [Accessed 27 March 2007].

Mastalir, L. (2006). *Renewed controversy at the Lety concentration camp* [online]. Available from: http://romove.radio.cz/en/article/20882 [Accessed 27 March 2007].

Orgovanova, K. (2007). *Roma in Slovakia* [online]. Available from: http://www.slovakia.org/society-roma.htm [Accessed 27 March 2007].

Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. (1993). *Recommendation 1203 (1993) on Gypsies in Europe* [online]. Available from: http://assembly.coe.int/Main.asp?link=/Documents/AdoptedText/ta93/EREC1203.htm [Accessed 27 March 2007].

Parliament of the Republic of Bulgaria. (2003). *Law on protection against discrimination* [online]. Available from http://www.stopvaw.org/sites/3f6d15f4-c12d-4515-8544-26b7a3a5a41e/uploads/anti-discrimination_law_en.pdf [Accessed 4 April 2007].

Parliament of the Republic of Estonia. (1993). *Law on cultural autonomy for national minorities* [online]. Available from: http://www.einst.ee/factsheets/cult_auton/ [Accessed 28 March 2007].

Parliament of the Republic of Macedonia. (2001). *Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia* [online]. Available from http://www.minelres.lv/NationalLegislation/Macedonia/Macedonia_Const2001_excerpts_English.htm [Accessed 27 March 2007].

The World Bank. (2007). *The decade of Roma inclusion* [online]. Available from: http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/ECAEXT/EXTROMA/0,,contentMDK:20754751~pagePK:64168445~piPK:64168309~theSitePK:615987,00.html [Accessed 15 March 2007].

The Internet and Public Diplomacy in the Formation of a Non-Territorial Roma Nation

Valery Novoselsky

This paper examines the effects of the Internet and public diplomacy on the formation of a non-territorial Roma nation. The role of the Internet and that of public diplomacy are analyzed in the context of the development of an international Roma movement and of a Romani elite. The examples featured in this research illustrate the way Internet communication and web resources have contributed to the emergence of Roma nationhood on international scale. The paper also looks at the Internet as a platform for conducting diplomatic, political, cultural, and media relations of Roma communities.

The paper starts with the definition of the term, *Roma*, from linguistic, ethnological, and political points of view, helping us to understand today's political discourse of Roma activists with other state and non-state actors. The author analyses the notion of ethnic Romani consolidation starting with the history of Roma migrations from India and emphasising the emergence of Roma ethnicity within the Byzantine cultural environment of the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries. This consolidation had a tremendous effect on the development of Roma culture, language, and identity. The migrations of Roma starting from the fourteenth century also affected Roma ethnicity in terms of the formation of ethnic sub-groups and their worldwide dispersal.

Subsequently, the paper looks at the advantages of the Internet in the building of Roma virtual communities and in the formation of a new Romani transnational identity. The important role of the Internet in transforming the ways Roma interact, socialize, acquire and share information is examined. Roma activists and supporters actively utilize the web to communicate with civil society. They also use the Internet to develop themselves as reliable international communicators and experts on Roma issues. Interaction through numerous websites and Internet connection services (list servers) has intensified the process of constructing social alliances within the Roma political movement. Networks help Roma organisations promote Roma causes at national, regional, and international levels.

The goals for the development of Roma communities require Roma activists, experts, and practitioners actively to use public diplomacy tools to make the public aware of Roma community concerns. The guidelines suggested for the strategy of Roma public diplomacy focus on constructing relationships with other communities and defining areas of shared interests. The means for practical implementation of such strategies are identified and connected with the skills required for Roma pubic diplomats to handle information, conduct research, and make effective presentations. The integration of the Internet in the conduct of Roma public diplomacy is discussed.

In sum, this paper briefly traces the Roma historical roots, language, migrations, and political movement. Then, attention shifts to the supportive role of the Internet in structuring the international Romani movement, especially in Europe, and to the role of the Internet in consolidation of Roma communities in a non-territorial nation.

The History and Current Situation of Roma in Europe

The term *Roma*, the ethno-cultural self-title of those perceived by others as Gypsies, has directed the official political discussion since the 1970s. The term *Gypsy* has its source in the word Egypt, from an incorrect belief that Gypsies were originally from Egypt. However, this term was never used by the Roma to describe themselves. Many consider the terms *Gypsy* and its equivalent in other languages, *Tsigan*, as derogatory. Despite the fact that not all people perceived as Gypsies recognise themselves as Roma, the word Roma currently has the authority of political correctness (Petrova, 2003).

The Roma do not compose a homogeneous ethnic group, but consist of a variety of related ethnic subgroups with their own identities. However, since the beginning of the 70s, we have witnessed a consolidation of these groups into a unifying Romani identity (Mirga and Gheorghe, 1997), so that, presently, most organisations on international, regional, national, and local levels that deal with diverse aspects of the "Roma issue" favour the name Roma.

Most Roma speak different forms of Romani (or Romanes), a language belonging to the Indo-Iranian group of the contemporary Indo-European family of languages, a family widespread in Pakistan and northwest India. Modern linguists relate Romani to the Pothohari dialect of Punjabi, spoken in Pakistan and northwest India (Wikipedia, 2006a). However, speaking Romani is not a compulsory identity characteristic, since some communities that regard themselves as Roma have lost it (e.g., many Roma in Hungary do not speak Romani). The majority of Roma typically also speak the main language of the region in which they live.

History of Romani migrations and today's Roma population

The exact date of Roma migration from India is still a topic of discussion among scholars. Some start the count from the eleventh century, while others underline that Roma migration is the result of numerous migrations of different ethnic and social groups leaving India for different reasons at different times between the early fifth and twelfth centuries (The Patrin Web Journal, 1998). The claims of anthropological and linguistic theories that the ancestors of the Roma people migrated from India to Eastern Europe in about 1000 CE are strengthened by genetic research measuring the prevalence of five different neurological-disease mutations in more than 1,800 Roma spread across Europe (Wikipedia, 2006a).

The ancestors of Roma remained after the original exodus passed through the territories of today's Afghanistan, Iran, Armenia, and Turkey. People recognized as Roma by other Roma still live as far east as Tajikistan, including some who made the migration to Europe and returned to Iran in the eighteenth century (Zargaries). Among contemporary descendents of these people are the Banjara in northwest India. The Banjara themselves recognize a connection with the Roma in Europe and have developed social links with Romani activists in recent years (Wikipedia, 2006a).

Estimates suggest that up to 10 million Roma live worldwide, of which some 7 million live in Europe. The majority of today's European Romani population lives in Central and Southeast Europe. In western Europe, except for Spain and Portugal, the

Roma have never constituted a significant proportion of the population, in comparison with the countries of Southeast Europe. Smaller concentrations of Roma are found in the United States, Latin America, and republics of the former USSR. Lesser numbers of Domary Gypsies are dispersed all over the Middle East, North Africa, and Central Asia (Wikipedia, 2006a).

Roma status vs. European socio-economic and cultural stereotypes

Despite its visible ethnicity, until recently the Roma population did not constitute a political entity and still do not have a territory of their own. Because of a nomadic lifestyle and a durable reluctance to integration, considerable distrust has prevailed between the Roma and their neighbours. Perceived as an inferior part of society, they are still subject to discrimination.

Most states consider the Roma as a counter-cultural group that challenges the basic values of society. This perspective explains the frequent attempts throughout the history of Europe to exterminate Roma people and their lifestyle. These persecutions reached a climax during World War II, when the Nazis killed large numbers of Roma. It is believed that approximately, 1 500 000 Roma were killed during *Porajmos* (the Great Devouring). However, to determine the exact number of Roma who died in the Holocaust is not easy. Much Nazi documentation lacks analysis, and many murders were unrecorded because they took place in the fields and forests where Roma were seized (Wikipedia, 2006a).

After World War II, political circles and civil society in western Europe offered little attention to the Roma until the 1970s, when the "Roma issue" started to be spelled out in terms of integration, rather than of assimilation (previously seen as the key factor in solving their problems). The Roma and Traveller groups enjoyed freedom of movement and certain rights related to their culture, which was viewed as an expression of cultural pluralism, a model established first by the Council of Europe (COE) and then adopted by the European Union. Thus, while enjoying particular ethnic rights, the Romani communities preserved a virtual autonomy from the state, self-employed in the traditional occupations of nomadic Roma (Mirga and Gheorghe, 1997).

Many Roma had much better social status in the countries of the Eastern Block during socialist times, as the communist states achieved a certain integration of unskilled Romani labour into the economy via coercive measures. Since the majority of Roma were employed, their families were also to some degree socially and economically secure.

Challenges of the transition period and Romani ethnic mobilization

The downfall of Communism affected the Romani people in many ways. In particular, Roma have increasingly faced economic problems, as most of them were incapable of competing for jobs in the conditions of a market economy, due to insufficient educational and professional skills.

The downfall of Communism initiated a complex transition to democracy and a market economy in Central and Eastern Europe. In a process of liberalization and democratization, ethnic minorities, among them the Roma, acquired the right to

participate in public and political life as collective entities. Responding to economic hardships, and aware of the danger of persecution by the majority population, new political Romani elites and non-governmental organisations emerged. They raised the Romani issue and forwarded cultural, social, and political demands; they also attempted to mobilize Romani communities, especially during democratic and free elections. As a result, Romani parties and organisations succeeded in placing Romani representatives in parliaments and in advisory and consultative governmental bodies (Mirga and Gheorghe, 1997). The Roma became an ethnically mobilized group, having a common stance and interests. Romani leaders discovered common interests and the authority of collective political action in promoting and defending their human and minority rights.

During the 1990s, the legal position of the Roma improved, changing from a national disregard and non-recognition of Romani ethnicity to an acknowledgment of their status as a legitimate ethnic group. Presently, large and diverse Romani communities experience a process of ethnogenesis, while moving from a status of a marginal community of "Gypsies" to one of a "Roma minority" demanding respect and rights (Mirga and Gheorghe, 1997), and with an emerging strata of intellectuals.

In traditional Roma communities, a strata of intellectuals was non-existent, since formal education was not an essential value. Furthermore, many Romani families only reluctantly sent their children to schools due to fear of assimilation. Those Romani intellectuals presently active in Europe are of recent origin, the result of coercive educational measures taken since the 1950s, primarily in the former communist states (Mirga and Gheorghe, 1997). The emergence of a second generation of young Roma intellectuals relates mainly to the enormous efforts undertaken by the activity of the Soros Foundations Network in the countries of Central Europe and Southeast Europe.

The integration of any ethnic minority is a two-way process between the minority and a majority population. Roma leaders should assume, on the one hand, that the majority population in countries where Roma reside will acknowledge and respect the distinctiveness of Romani ethnic traditions and lifestyle; while, on the other hand, the Roma minority should accept the norms and standards of living of the majority population within the state of residence.

Constructing a Romani transnational identity

A new political movement among the Roma that started in the 1970s led to the establishment of the International Romani Congress. The first conference of this organisation was held in London in April 1971. Shortly, an executive body of the International Romani Congress, the International Romani Union (IRU), was established. The IRU has led lobbying and negotiating with and within the international community on Romani issues. The concept of a Romani nation emerged in the framework of the IRU, and its basic symbols, such as an anthem and a flag, were soon established; as well, the IRU made significant efforts to develop a standardized literary Romani language. The COE strongly supported the latter through the European Charter on Regional and Minority languages.

In the *Declaration of a Roma Nation* (Balkan Human Rights List, 2001), issued in 2001, the IRU claimed that the Romani people constitute a single and distinct political community that requires its own, separate political representation and that, due to its unique history, it deserves special treatment within a European framework on equality issues. The IRU presently advocates the recognition of Roma as a non-territorial nation and has dedicated itself to building unity around a standardized Romani language. The IRU demands the establishment of a special status for the Roma as a non-territorial minority in Europe (Mirga and Gheorghe, 1997).

The development of a Romani movement

Romani ethnic mobilisation is a new phenomenon and needs time for development with the support of state structures and international institutions. Democratic procedures present a potential solution for the progress of Romani political participation: the Romani community has an opportunity to elect representatives at all levels by means of democratic elections. Legitimate representation at the international level is already becoming apparent due to the number of Roma persons elected to national and European parliaments.

Having a forum to represent Roma communities in Europe has been in the air since the early 1990s. Early in the present century, an unofficial, tentative group composed of Roma leaders and personalities started examining the possibility of setting up such a forum. Between 2001 and July 2004, several meetings took place in Strasbourg, where Roma and Traveller representatives negotiated the creation of the European Roma and Travellers Forum (ERTF) with the COE. In July 2004, the ERTF registered as an association under French law. In November 2004, the COE Committee of Ministers agreed to establish close and privileged relations with the ERTF through a Partnership Agreement signed on 15 December 2004 (COE, 2006). Thus, the Forum provides to Roma and Travellers the possibility to participate in and influence, openly and officially, decision-making processes in issues relating to them. This is the first time that national and European Roma organisations throughout Europe have been able to discuss and formulate jointly their hopes and concerns.

Another good sign is that in June 2004, Ms. Livia Jaroka became the second Roma Member of the European Parliament when elected from the list of candidates from the Hungarian right-wing Fidesz Party, following that country's accession to the European Union. The first Roma Member of Parliament was Juan de Dios Ramirez-Heredia, of Spain, who served in the European Parliament in 1994-1999. The third Roma Member of Parliament is Mrs. Viktoria Mohacsi, a Hungarian politician and Member of the European Parliament from the Alliance of Free Democrats, part of the European Liberal Democrat and Reform Party. She replaced a party colleague, Gabor Demszky, on 29 October 2004 (Wikipedia, 2006a).

In addition, The Decade of Roma Inclusion is an initiative launched in 2005, consisting of eight Central European and Southeast European countries, to improve the socio-economic status and social inclusion of the Roma minority in the region. The Decade of Roma Inclusion, in operation until 2015, represents the first multinational project in Europe actively to develop the lives of Roma in eight countries: Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Macedonia, Romania, Serbia

and Montenegro, and Slovakia. These countries have significant Roma minorities disadvantaged both economically and socially (The Decade of the Roma Inclusion 2005-2015, 2006).

The Effects of the Internet on the Establishment of Romani Virtual Nationhood

Modern communication technologies transform the modes of social interaction and networking. The spread of the Internet is generating virtual communities in which like-minded individuals interact with each other across space and time. The Internet is a global tool that promotes creating relationships, building alliances, and sharing of texts and graphics. It provides the possibility of an emergence of virtual communities, where participants are able to involve themselves and implement their own sense of ethnic togetherness. These trends inescapably affect internal and external communications of Roma communities, the Roma movement, and Roma-related policies on a pan-European and an international scale.

Stone (1991) characterises virtual communities as "incontrovertibly social spaces in which people still meet face-to-face, but under new definitions of both 'meet' and 'face.' . . . Virtual communities [are] passage points for collections of common beliefs and practices that unite people who [are] physically separated." Virtual communities emerge as disembodied, yet, even so, they are still the reproductions of real life societies. The limit of this community lies within the concrete people who live in real spaces and have an access to the Internet. In the case of virtual communities created around a particular national, ethnic, or religious identity, they are "imagined communities" (Anderson, 1991).

The sense of awareness, solidarity, and identity of these imagined communities is stimulated and strengthened in the process of online communication. This is more so, in the case of Roma communities dispersed around the world. The Web allows these communities, on the one hand, to surpass their separation and their forced displacement (e.g., Roma refugees from ex-Yugoslavia) and, on the other hand, to mobilize and form themselves culturally, socially, and politically. This unification is facilitated through communication in the relation of actualities and in the reconstruction of shared historical experiences (Wong, 2003).

Thus, Roma communities have a number of positive factors due to the World Wide Web; the Web serves as the source of information on diverse topics related to ethnicity, as the tool for communication and coordination from local level up to the format of public diplomacy, as the "show-window" for community image-branding, lobbying, and promotion of culture. The World Wide Web offers a variety of services, such as formats for presentations, software for processing communication, collection and dissemination of information, forms for subscribing to membership and for contributions, and programs to facilitate discussions and to apply leadership functions (Geser, 2001). In this regard, the role of already existent websites of Roma non-governmental organisations and cultural associations is vital.

Arranging and delivering the content of websites

Digital space contains a significant number of personal and organisational websites and online fora pertinent to the Roma. It makes available an elaborate system of the community's social, cultural, and political organisations, all of which stand together around the idea of a common origin and present lives, a shared cultural heritage, and mutual goals. These websites emphasise Romani traditions, music, dance, history, cuisine, films, and other Roma products, thus producing a new form of Romani ethnic image.

Usually, any Romani or supporting organisation introduces itself in sub-pages entitled, "Who we are," or "Our organisation." After this introduction (i.e., description), the explanation of basic principles follows, usually entitled, "Mission statement." The description of organisational activities includes the issues of education, culture, housing, human rights advocacy, and, perhaps, others. These sub-pages link to the topic of "How you can help" or "Get involved," featured on other sub-pages. As well, almost every Romani website contains a certain amount of information on Roma history and traditions. Occasionally, the website will present some information on the history and development of the international Romani movement. The sites with "news headlines" offer more attention to the movement. Often, pages containing news and historical information include photographs.

Most sub-pages contain, under the title "Contact us," the title of the organisation, postal and street addresses, telephone and fax numbers, e-mail addresses, and ICQ or Skype directories. Forums or guest books are usually connected to the site. Most offer the opportunity to share an opinion about the lead article under the request, "Write us your opinion." These tools help to ensure communication between the web-hosting organisations and the virtual audience, thus serving as a bridge in the construction of social alliances and ensuring interaction.

Selected Roma links:
http://www.dzeno.cz/?r_id=28 - Dzeno Association, Czech Republic.
http://www.ertf.org - European Roma and Traveller Forum.
http://www.erionet.org - European Roma Information Office.
http://www.fsgg.org - Fundacion Secretariado Gitano.
http://www.romea.cz/english/index.php - ROMEA Association, Czech Republic.

Other World Wide Web services

Other services offered by the World Wide Web allow for more interaction, rather than simply the broadcast of information. For example, the Roma Virtual Network (hosted on Yahoo Groups, moderated via an e-mail address romale@zahav.net.il on another server) now functions globally. Started in Israel in July 1999, today it operates across all continents, offers up to 20 articles daily in English, Romani, and other languages (taken from the Roma Daily News, Romano Liloro, Roma Rights, Romane Nevipena, Mundo Gitano), and an electronic database. In the database, upon request or member subscription, one finds a variety of links, files, articles, and photos on a diversity of topics. Maintained by a volunteer editor and a dozen volunteer correspondents as a non-profit organisation, it has become a "dwelling place" for many of its members.

One may find other virtual public venues as well, e.g., the International Roma Women Network (irwn_members@advocacylists.org, started in Finland in 2003) or USTIBEN (ustiben.2@ntlworld.com, started in the UK in 2002), and chat-enabling forums and blogs for the exchange of ideas. Beside websites, most of these fora create a space of *Romanotan* (an imaginary Romani country) on the Web and help to develop an ethnic identity within a virtual Roma nation.

Roma websites in ethnic mobilization and cross-cultural communication

Many Roma websites and fora for discussion establish an insider-outsider dichotomy, especially in articles regarding anti-Gypsyism. In their construction of a Roma identity, these fora frequently tend to create "standardised" Roma communities dispersed around the world. They assist in the removal of differences among Roma communities and they build an implicit Roma commonality. They create strong attachments to ideas of a unified non-territorial nation that seem to be stronger than conceptions of a territorial nation (Wong, 2003).

Many Roma websites such as those of the Romano Centro, Patrin, the European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC), and the European Roma Information Office (ERIO), whose primary audiences are activists from Roma communities and organisations that live in their respective localities, promote and adopt a sense of community. In providing actual information and making analyses of local and international events, at the same time they embody very specific notions of community that include sharing the same space and time. These sites encourage a sense of community, as do their sponsoring bodies, and seek to defend community interests when confronted (especially relevant to the ERRC site).

The use of the Web in cross-cultural communication and overcoming ethnic ghettoisation is shown in a number of simple and visible facts. In particular, any Romani website usually contains texts in at least three languages: Romani, the language of the country of residence, and English, as an international language. A mixed Roma and non-Roma staff usually performs the web-design. The work of the organisation that hosts the site usually takes place in cooperation with non-Roma non-governmental organisations or governmental structures. Photos often show both Roma and non-Roma supporters and participants of events. The description of educational projects contains a number of visible points depicting a harmonic collaboration with non-Roma. The lists of sponsor organisations and institutions speak for themselves.

This trend also occurs when important governmental documents in relation to ethnic minorities are discussed on the website. Usually representatives of a number of other ethnic minorities contribute in online discussions. Inter-ethnic dialogue also occurs in signing a petition in support of someone or in support of a joint cultural event or festival. This kind of activity is prepared via web announcements, calls for applications, and virtual communication. As a result, information on Roma community activity and movement is easily conveyed to an audience that is ready to adopt such information, contribute to the exchange of ideas, and participate in community life.

Due to its relatively easy access and low cost, some Roma have taken the Internet as an emancipatory tool to open channels of information exchange and to create an

innovative political space. Representatives of an ethnic minority are now able to make their views public and claim their identity through the Internet. Web communities have enabled Romani people to develop relationships that are often concurrently inter-cultural and cross-cultural. However, due to the significant rate of poverty, language barriers, and illiteracy among Roma, the digital divide is still very apparent. Thus, Roma communities have an urgent need for their own Internet centres and institutions to train local technical experts who can provide ICT support for non-profit organisations and advocates.

The role of Roma networks in education and creation of a Roma intellectual and cultural elite

The formation of an elite is a part of a broad process of development of nationhood. The fall of the Iron Curtain and the challenge of the Internet galvanised this process. In particular, digital networks represent a part of political activity that shapes the emergence of a new Romani elite (Wikipedia, 2006b). They provide intellectuals with timely information about new challenges, opportunities, and venues. They provide channels to locate needed contacts, events, projects, financial grants, and employment possibilities, thus leading to the creation of economic forces that also shape the emergence of an elite. The variety of virtual platforms, representing various views on the world, helps to create a strata of Roma population able to think at a more advanced intellectual level.

Today's Internet is sufficient for keeping a proper level of communication among Roma elites throughout Europe. Roma activists communicate with one another on internal community events (originating with the International Romani Union, the Roma National Congress, and the European Roma and Travellers Forum), and on Roma-related events held by the European Union. In all cases, the Internet is a tool for announcing events, recruiting staff for Romani or related organisations, and for professional and personal communication.

Due to these developments, currently a Romani elite has an opportunity to influence an international audience via public and official diplomacy and media. A Roma elite needs intensive media and in-person communication with lay people in the Roma community and many working contacts and joint actions with non-Roma elites. In these issues, the Internet serves as a media channel, chat venue, and a "dwelling place" for professional websites.

In sum, the Internet provides Roma communities with the opportunity to develop the concepts of ethnic identity and relations with supportive non-Roma. This system allows both personal and group usage of web tools, as well as research, collection, distribution, and presentation of information. Roma communities connected by the challenge of globalization and the need to create new cultural and social alliances have developed a sense of virtual identity. Thus, the digital space of Romani communities and non-Roma supporting organisations contains a significant number of personal and institutional websites and fora united around common ideas of origin, history, culture, and goals.

Most web tools used by Roma integrate various concepts of Roma identity within a virtual unitary Roma nation. The variety of tools ensures a three-level interaction:

between web-hosting organisations and a virtual audience, within the web-hosting organisations, and between personal users (i.e., a virtual audience). They help to construct an assumed Roma commonality and a shared identity. These web tools enable the Roma to maintain broad relations, facilitate dialogue, and contribute to community affairs.

The Roma virtual identity shown in websites, chat rooms, and blogs helps people to meet in person, hold events, and discuss vital issues in a real format. Individual awareness and practical experience becomes wider due to the communication and information offered by the Internet. The Internet also provides appropriate communication and coordination among developing Roma elites and advocates of the Roma movement around the world – and, especially, in Europe. As well, sensitive information on Romani issues is shared and discussed with partners working with Romani individuals, helping the Roma in political, social, and cultural issues. Existing digital networks and resources represent a part of social activity shaping the emergence of a new Romani intellectual and political elite.

The Role of Public Diplomacy in a Non-Territorial Roma Nationhood

Today's world is already familiar with the notion of public diplomacy, which involves aspects of diplomacy beyond interaction between national governments. This trend has affected Roma lives in the countries of the former Eastern Block. For example, currently one finds more media coverage of the life of Roma communities than one did 15 years ago, when the Roma were portrayed as representatives of a mysterious and, at the same time, asocial entity. In addition, one finds something new. While Roma still remain a complex and unusual ethnic group in the international mind, a realization is growing that Roma are not a collage of folksy individuals or criminals. Increasingly, leaders and activists of Roma organisations are generating new images of Roma ethnic identity and culture for non-Roma audiences.

As well, Roma activists are presently looking at public diplomacy frameworks that involve them in more than traditional community leadership. This means that Romani media and public organisations promote connections with that which influences international opinion (Agrawal, 2005).

Many young and educated Roma activists act as public diplomats working on behalf of their community. Roma activists and students study and work in an inter-professional and inter-cultural environment where they participate in public communication and partnerships with counterparts from other ethnic and national communities (USIA Alumni Association, 2002). Many young Roma from Central and Southeast Europe attend the Central European University in Budapest to pursue studies on Roma-related projects. Accordingly, when a student or a scholar in given country conducts team-based research on a Roma topic via the Internet, in collaboration with other Roma scholars and institutions, he or she utilises a service provided by a number of Roma networks. When a newspaper correspondent who deals with Romani issues asks for an interview or clarification of a statement made by a Roma activist, he or she usually contacts the available Roma organisation. When a student or an educator in any country wants to know more about Roma culture or

history, perhaps he or she can ask someone on the staff of a Roma organisation for clarification. When someone wants to publish a brochure in a particular country or group of countries on a multi-ethnic subject, Roma activists may participate in its planning, publication, and distribution. These examples of Roma activism and public relations demonstrate the scope and variety of modern public diplomacy engagement by Roma activists (USIA Alumni Association, 2002).

The strategy of public diplomacy for Roma elites

The task of communicating with a foreign public with the help of various tools, known as public diplomacy, has become important not only to states, but to ethnic minorities. The spread of democracy to many countries, including those with a significant Roma population, has improved access to news and information and has enabled the rise of numerous international non-governmental organisations and advocacy movements.

In this context, Roma elites have the opportunity to adopt a public diplomacy strategy whose ultimate goal is building and deepening relationships, understanding other national and communal needs, and identifying areas of shared values and interests. Roma public diplomacy can achieve a number of goals: increasing familiarity with the Roma community; increasing the appreciation of the Roma community; engaging people with the Roma community; and encouraging public support for the Roma community's concerns.

The role of the Internet in the performance of Roma public diplomacy

Modern means of electronic communication constitute the most obvious structural change of the environment in which public relations activists operate. Media diplomacy and public diplomacy need to be seen as complementary to each other. Accordingly, interaction with the media should be the focal point of the daily work of a public diplomacy practitioner (Sucharipa, 2004).

It has become standard practice for the modern Roma activist to consult on a regular basis the websites of different national and international news agencies. As well, every activist is familiar with the homepages of all organisations and institutions relevant for his or her work. Roma activists today network with colleagues around the world, relying on easy access to important, up-to-date, web-based information. Internet access increases the amount of information that one must process, sort out, and place into a knowledge system.

The introduction of Internet communication has brought about a number of important changes for Roma activism.

- It has promoted direct contact between all activists and, as the welcome result, it has promoted greater motivation, less loss of time, and a greater sense of responsibility.
- It has aided in the development of an informal reporting style.
- It has aided in the generation of a spirit of teamwork; staff of organisations can – independently of geographic location – work together on a report to the director, on a draft statement, or on a position paper.

While information gathering has become easier, information management has become more pertinent. New electronic procedures need to be established and elaborated. Roma information and knowledge managers need to be educated and adequately positioned in the management structures of Romani non-governmental organisations. Websites need professional development and maintenance and they should assume an important function in the representation of a Roma non-territorial nation.

New developments, such as the link between foreign and internal politics, the extension of the spectrum of issues dealt by ministries of foreign affairs, and the communication revolution, have taken public diplomacy to the forefront of international attention. Thus, a Roma public diplomacy practitioner should act as an international communicator and mediator of positions of his or her own community for all sections of the non-Roma audience (Sucharipa, 2004). He or she must build up a stable network of contacts in all areas of society with a view to active involvement in shaping public opinion in Roma and non-Roma environments. He or she also must concentrate on in-depth analysis and drafting recommendations for action.

Conclusion

Because of historical and social events, today's Roma are not a homogeneous ethnic group, but consist of a number of interrelated ethnic communities residing in different countries, regions, and continents. For a long time they did not possess a common identity due to lack of a common territory and homeland. However, because of political consolidation of these communities, most state and non-state actors who address the Roma issue now accept the title, Roma. Many current Romani activists hold the Romani nation to be a point of identification in their public and political activities. They have introduced the concept of a non-territorial nation to describe the current status of the Roma. This concept rests on the common Indian roots of the Roma people, common historical experiences, perspectives, culture, language, and social status.

The fall of Communism initiated a difficult process of transition to democracy and free market economy in the countries of the former Eastern Block. Minorities, among them the Roma, were granted an opportunity to participate in public and political life and develop their own community structures. In response to the challenges of economic hardship and anti-*Tziganism*, new political Romani leadership and organisations emerged. These actors have addressed Romani issues by ethnic mobilisation and defence of community rights. They brought forward Romani cultural, social, and political rights in regional and, more precisely, a pan-European context, especially during democratic elections. Because of ethnic mobilization, Romani political parties and organisations succeeded in the election of a number of Romani representatives to government bodies. Consequently, during the 1990s the legal status of the Roma has improved – changing from non-recognition of ethnicity to full acknowledgment of status as members of a legitimate ethnic group.

The growth of the Internet provided many individuals and non-governmental organisations within Roma communities with the prospect of developing concepts of

ethnic identity and with tools for electronic communication on a community and inter-ethnic level. Therefore, during the last 15 years Roma communities challenged by globalization and the need to create new alliances have developed a sense of common virtual identity. A significant number of personal and institutional websites, electronic fora, and blogs, which stress ideas of a common origin, history, culture, and goals, support this sense.

Through the practice of sharing information and knowledge online, dispersed Roma communities are becoming aware of their common heritage and are willing to integrate through the notion of a unified non-territorial nation. This process has gone further since already established Roma virtual networks have became influential international actors in the field of public diplomacy and public affairs.

Presently, many Roma activists work and study in an inter-cultural environment, where they actively communicate with colleagues from other ethnic communities and nationalities. Because of this communication, the task of interacting with non-Roma representatives becomes more important than ever for the Roma ethnic minority. Since non-Roma perceive young and educated Roma activists as public diplomacy officers representing their community, activists should act as international communicators and mediators of the positions of their community to their non-Roma audience.

Roma activists need to use a strategy for public diplomacy that builds relationships, understanding other community needs and cultures and identifying shared areas of interest. Roma public diplomacy can achieve a set of objectives: helping others to think about Roma issues; creating positive opinions regarding the Roma community; encouraging others to see the Roma community as a destination for relationships and research; and enabling public and political support for Roma community concerns. The role of the Internet is important in maintaining communication and coordination in this trend. It helps the timely dissemination and discussion of sensitive information on relevant issues.

References

Agrawal, S. (2005). Diaspora and public diplomacy [online]. *The Financial Express* [New Delhi], 12 February 2005. Available from: http://fecolumnists.expressindia.com/full_column.php?content_id=82346 [Accessed 26 May 2006].

Anderson, B. (1991). *Imagined communities: reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*. London: Verso.

Balkan Human Rights List. (2001). *Declaration of a Roma Nation (IRU), 1 January 2001* [online]. Available from: http://www.hartford-hwp.com/archives/60/132.html [Accessed 22 March 2007].

Council of Europe [COE]. (2006). *European Roma and Travellers forum* [online]. Available from: http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/romatravellers/FERV/default_en.asp [Accessed 26 May 2006].

Geser, H. (2001). *On the functions and consequences of the Internet for social movements and voluntary associations* [online]. Zurich: Universitat Zurich. Available from: http://socio.ch/movpar/t_hgeser3.htm [Accessed 26 May 2006].

Mirga, A. and Gheorghe, N. (1997). *Roma in the twenty-first century: a policy* [online]. Available from: http://www.per-usa.org/21st_c.htm [Accessed 26 May 2006].

Petrova, D. (2003). *The Roma: between a myth and the future* [online]. Available from: http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m2267/is_1_70/ai_102140950 [Accessed 26 May 2006].

Stone, A. (1991). Will the real body please stand up? In: M. Benedikt (ed). *Cyberspace: first steps* [online]. Cambridge: MIT Press. Available from: http://molodiez.org/net/real_body2.html [Accessed 26 May 2006].

Sucharipa, E. (2004). 21st century diplomacy [online]. *EU Diplomacy*, 8 January 2004. Available from: http://campus.diplomacy.edu/lms/pool/BD%20materials/Sucharipa.htm [Accessed 26 May 2006].

The Decade of the Roma Inclusion 2005-2015. (2006). *What is the Decade?* [online]. Available from: http://www.romadecade.org/en/index.php?search=&action=10&id=0&jump=0 [Accessed 26 May 2006].

The Patrin Web Journal. (1998). *Timeline of Romani (Gypsy) history* [online]. Available from: http://www.geocities.com/~patrin/timeline.htm [Accessed 26 May 2006].

USIA Alumni Association. (2002). *What is public diplomacy?* [online]. Available from: http://www.publicdiplomacy.org/1.htm [Accessed 26 May 2006].

Wikipedia. (2006a). *Roma people* [online]. Available from: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roma_people [Accessed 26 May 2006].

Wikipedia. (2006b). *Elite* [online]. Available from: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elite [Accessed 26 May 2006].

Wong, L. (2003). Belonging and diaspora: the Chinese and the Internet [online]. *First Monday* [Chicago], April 2003. Available from: http://www.firstmonday.org/issues/issue8_4/wong/index.html [Accessed 26 May 2006].

Rroma and Rroma-Related Groups: The Result of a Forced Naturalisation Under the Pressure of Politically Correct Vocabulary

Saimir Mile

The word *Rroma* has been used for some ten years in different official documents adopted by states and international organisations. This usage has been in accord with the wishes of Rromani activists, who wanted by this means to avoid the prejudices attached to the terms that foreigners applied to Rromani people, like "Gypsies" and *Tsiganes*. After a decade, it is interesting to ask ourselves about the results of this change in political speech. To make things clear from the beginning, I would specify that I refuse to re-adopt the old terms, and I am profoundly attached to the word Rroma, since I feel that it demonstrates respect for this people. The Rroma have never claimed the right to self-determination in the strict meaning of the word. They have never claimed to constitute a separate state. On the contrary, in 2000, the Fifth Congress of the International Rromani Union proclaimed the Rromani nation as a nation with no compact territory and no territorial claims (Semo, 2000; Courthiade, 2004; Pietrosanti, 2004). Designation as Rroma, the name with which the Rromani people identifies itself, is one of the aspects of this right in the eyes of Rromani activists (Tanaka, 1995).

However, to get back to the issue of respecting the Rroma and its demonstration through the use of the term that they use for their own identification, since this word entered the vocabulary of international organisations (the Council of Europe, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe and others) it has always been accompanied by something else. One of the structures of the Council of Europe, for instance, is the Rroma/Gypsies Division within the Social Cohesion Department. Lately, it has been renamed Rroma/Gypsies/Travellers. Within the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, we find a Contact Point for Rroma and Sinti Issues. All this leads to the question: about whom are we talking?

It is commonly accepted that the Rroma are a minority with a common origin. They came from Northern India to Europe and a part of them went further to the Americas. Presently, the people sharing this origin are divided into three distinct groups: Rroma, Sinti, and Kale. The current distinction between these three groups is mainly a linguistic one, due to historical events. The Rroma in the narrow sense of the word, who live primarily in Eastern Europe, speak varieties of the Rromani language. In spite of the discrepancies between these varieties, mutual understanding between the speakers is more than satisfactory. The Sinti call their mother tongue "Rromanes" or "Rromnepen," but this language, highly influenced by German in the North and by Italian in the South, is not so accessible to the Rroma. Finally, the Kale, more commonly referred to as *Gitanos* in Spanish, have lost the use of their language, due to long-lasting persecution under the Spanish monarchy. They conserved, nevertheless, about a dozen words that they still use, sometimes combining them with another language, mainly Spanish and Catalan. The same phenomenon, called paggerdisation, has been observed with groups such as the Romanichals in the United Kingdom (Courthiade, 1999).

The word *Rrom*, recorded as early as the fourteenth century, is known and used by all three groups. In the Rromani language, it means "Rromani man" or "spouse," while Sinti and Kale use it only with the second meaning.

If we consider a common origin and language to be the defining criteria of a people, or of a nation, then it seems clear that these three groups belong to the same entity. Indeed, they have the same origin and they used to speak the same language, currently still used in day-to-day communication or kept in the memory of this people as a language that their ancestors spoke. These objective elements prove the commonality of the three groups. I have also observed a subjective proof, perhaps not as strong as the others, but present despite the lack of any systemic intervention for keeping and reinforcing it. Every time that people belonging to different Rromani groups meet, they almost systematically start exchanging between them words that they know in Rromanes. It is then surprising and quite touching to see that even with so few common words, they feel that they belong to the same people, even when they do not share the same citizenship, religion, social status, or lifestyle. Some Kale activists have even learned the Rromani language in recent years to facilitate communication with their colleagues from Eastern Europe, and are actively teaching it to the young generation.

After this short description, one might argue that the title of this short essay is not relevant, since if understood as "Rroma, together with Sinti and Kale," the phrase "Rroma and Rroma-related groups" is not, in fact, the result of a "forced naturalisation," but, rather, another way to designate the related groups of "Rroma, Sinti, and Kale." Unfortunately, this is not the case. In use, the phrase "Rroma and Rroma-related groups," as defined and used by international organisations, covers a quite different reality. The three groups of Rroma, Sinti, and Kale are, in most cases, included in the Rroma and Rroma-related category. However, the over-riding notion behind this denomination is not an ethnic one, and even less a national one. The pressure of Rromani activists has not been so far-reaching yet. While vocabulary has changed under pressure, the underlying mental structures have not. Accustomed to thinking in terms of Gypsies, *Tsiganes*, or Nomads, those who now speak of Rroma and Rroma-related groups still have in mind all groups that were previously called Gypsies. Is this because the definition of the term Rroma is not yet clear to them? This seems hard to believe. In any case, this could not be the only cause, or the most important one. Something else is happening: the fact that states have accustomed themselves to dealing with Gypsies, *Tsiganes*, and Nomads for decades, in the manner that they defined these people, but not with Rroma as these latter have defined themselves.

If we analyse the history of the words Gypsy, *Tsigane*, and all their equivalents in different languages, we see that all of them were constructed in a process that combines ignorance, contempt, and, very often, racism. The word Gypsy derives from Egypt, because they were at one point perceived as having come from this country – a misperception sometimes supported by the Rroma themselves to be better accepted by the autochthons (Hancock, 1999). As for *Tsigane*, this word originates from the Greek word *athinganoi*, a sect circulating in the Balkans some centuries before the Rroma arrived, and of which no proofs of presence after the eleventh

century have been found (Rromani Baxt, 2005). The majority population referred to all those with a particular language, lifestyle, or profession as Gypsies or *Tsiganes;* we can say that any marginal(ised) person is a potential Gypsy or *Tsigane* in this context. This is the reason that majority populations call Yeniches or Travellers, Gypsies. This is also why Balkano-Egyptians, Rudars, or Beas are also called *Tsigani* although they have little in common with the Rroma: the negative stereotypes prevail in the perception of the majority population, who ignore the endogenous identity of each of the groups. In the case of Rudars/Beas, for example, many believe that they are Rroma who, for unknown reasons, stopped using the Rromani language. It is true that some Rromani groups lost their language; not only the Kale, but entire groups or families in Central and Eastern Europe. Nevertheless, they kept and still keep the conviction that they are Rroma and very often remember that their elders spoke Rromani. This is not the case for the Rudars/Beas, who have their own language (*limba de baiesi,* an archaic Romanian dialect). External observers simply ignore this language, while it is in daily use in Croatia and in Hungary. The hypothesis that Beas are a group of Rroma who abandoned their language falls short once the observer records the presence of a language different both from Rromani and from other surrounding languages (in this case, Croatian and Hungarian) and the non-recognition of Rromani as a lost language among the Beas population. In Western Europe, the Yeniches and the Travellers are in a similar situation: they have their respective languages, more-or-less in use, and never considered themselves as Rroma, yet the external view is insensitive to this fact.

The multiple terms applied to Rroma are not racist in themselves. It is, rather, the concept that they refer to, a bundle of stereotypical features, that is racist. The result is that a variety of groups with no relation other than the amalgam created by unlearned or racist people have suffered from discrimination as *Tsiganes.* In some cases, the distinction may not be important. For example, while dealing with a case of murder perpetrated by skinheads upon a Rudar, a court would not consider any distinction reasonable. The skinheads wanted to kill a "Gypsy" and they did it; they will never care about some "intellectual nuances," since their targets are Gypsies, Jews, and so on – not what these people are, but what the skinheads think they are.

Yet, the situation is quite different when an institution undertakes to draft a policy for a minority group, because this policy must consider the target group in a coherent way. In this context, it seems more reasonable to define the group by its own criteria rather than by external ones. We can take as an example a recommendation on education of Rromani children. In this case, the use of Rromani language and culture in the curriculum is relevant to the Rromani children, but not to all those whom the majority call *Tsiganes* or Gypsies. Accordingly, if the recommendation concerns the education of Rroma or Gypsy or Traveller children, it will not likely be relevant in states where Rroma, Balkano-Egyptians, and Beas reside. In fact, the Beas have their own language, unrelated to Rromani, while Balkano-Egyptians do not have a language of their own. In the end, we should not be surprised when a given government considers that the unification of Rromani languages is not possible and, therefore, it has no way to teach in the Rromani language. Croatia, where both Rroma and Beas are present, applied such an approach until very recently.

Since the *Tsigani* or the Gypsies are not a people, but a social group conglomerating various peoples stigmatised by the majority population, it is nonsense to think about a Gypsy language. It is also nonsense, and shows disregard for other languages and cultures, to use the term Rromani as a politically correct translation of Gypsy and consequently speak about "Rromani languages," in order not to discriminate. Here we face the real problem, one that shows in two different ways. Either the nation-states refuse to recognize national identities different from those they created by voluntarily confounding citizenship and nationality; or, recognising in principle such national identities, the states refuse to apply this notion to the Rroma or other peoples who do not have a state of their own. In Europe, the first option is more relevant in the west, while the second is relevant throughout Europe. Both positions lead to almost the same result: pretending not to discriminate, the national identities at stake are ignored and forced into inaccurate social categories whose denominations hardly hide the reality they cover: Gypsies and *Tsiganes*. This is the case for "Gens du voyage" in French, but also for "Rroma and Rroma-related groups."

Perhaps it is time to remember that the term discrimination is not genuinely pejorative. Those who remain reluctant after this argument should consider that all that is needed is some discernment. Finally, is this not the only way to show respect for the other minorities that have suffered from discrimination as Gypsies and who want to keep their own identity? They, too, have the right to self-definition, the right to keep their languages and their own particularities in equality with the Rroma. This is their most absolute right, for which they should not have to pay the price of a "forced naturalisation." Just as the Rroma have acquired their right to be called Rroma instead of Gypsies or *Tsiganes*, it is nothing more than the basic right of the Beasi, Egyptians, Yeniches, and Travellers to be called by their own name. Putting them into the category of a Rroma and Rroma-related group means refusing them this right, and imposing upon them, as well as on the Rroma, the status of a social group defined by its marginalisation.

This refusal is a political reality that has prevailed for a very long time. The current situation of the concerned peoples is very much the outcome of the processes this choice of terminology has generated. Decision-makers may decide to maintain this situation, but for the sake of transparency, they should present it clearly: they should change their speech, full of good intentions for emancipating and respecting identities and cultural diversity, to make it fit with their actions that, in fact, address social issues foreign to the ethnic or cultural identity. However, such a change implies extreme courage since it damages the wishes of the peoples labelled Rroma and Rroma-related to be recognised. Inversely, decision-makers can act differently in order to fit with the objectives they claim to pursue. This last change is less radical and is more likely acceptable to those concerned. In Croatia for example, Beas people often say, "we have nothing to do with those who sing "Gelem, gelem [the Rromani anthem]." The government seems to have changed its position with regard to the identification of the minorities and is planning to insert the option "Beas" in the questionnaires for the next census (personal communication, Dr. M. Courthiade).

Only one issue remains: that of the people belonging to the other minorities concerned who have been involved in the political processes, especially at the

European level, as representatives of Rroma and Rroma-related groups. This issue is not to be exaggerated, since only a few of them wish to maintain the confusion between these peoples, believing that clarification of this point would lose them an audience for their people, or, more egoistically, some personal privileges. In fact, the opinion that every people should be respected for what it is and not pushed to bargain its identity for some consideration, prevails today (Raykova, 2003). This position corresponds to a basic need of the minorities concerned, but also of the societies they live in and of democracy in Europe as a whole: being an actor in one's own fate, which cannot be realised without being owner of one's name.

References

Courthiade, M. (1999). *The dialect structure of the Rromani language* [online]. Available from: http://www.dromedu-forum.org/fileet/The_Dialect_Structure _of_the_ Rromani _Language.pdf [Accessed 2 April 2007].

Courthiade, M. (2004). Les Rroms dans le contexte des peuples europeens sans territoire compact. *Bulletin de l'Association des Anciens eleves de l'INALCO,* October 2004, pp. 31– 37.

Hancock, I. (1999). *Origins of the Romani people* [online]. Available from: http://www.geocities.com/~patrin/history.htm [Accessed 2 April 2007].

Pietrosanti, P. (2004). *The Romani nation or: Ich Bin Ein Zigeuner* [online]. Available from: http://web.radicalparty.org/pressreview/print_right.php?func=detail&par=9368 [Accessed 15 March 2007].

Raykova, A. (2003). Report of the seminar "Cultural identities of Roma, Gypsies, Travellers and related groups in Europe" [online]. Available from: http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/romatravellers/documentation/culture/repseminaronCulturalIdentities_en.asp [Accessed 2 April 2007].

Rromani Baxt. (2005). Pour en savoir plus sur les Athigganoi dans l'empire byzantin (6eme–11eme siecles). In: S. Mile, *Identite et identification des minorites sans territoire compact en Europe a travers l'exemple des Rroms* [online]. Available from: http://rinchibarno.free.fr/mmr.htm [Accessed 15 March 2007].

Semo, M. (2000). Emil Scuka preside le congres mondial des Roms a Prague. *Liberation* [online]. Available from: http://web.radicalparty.org/pressreview/print_right.php?func=detail&par=1705# [Accessed 3 April 2007].

Tanaka, J. (1995). *Rroma in Romania – struggle for self-identification* [online]. Available from: http://www.geocities.com/~patrin/rroma.htm [Accessed 2 April 2007].

PART 2:
CASE STUDIES

Anti-Gypsyism in the Czech Republic

Gabriela Hrabanova

> "People think about us that we are dirt that we steal. And that we do not bring up our children the way we should. But, viewing the news, you can rarely see there that a Roma man would be the criminal, yet they are still negative about us. When something happens, it is a Roma individual having stolen something petty, but millions are being stolen, and they do not give a damn about it."
>
> *Roma respondent (Factum Invenio, 2005)*

The main objective of this paper is to present an overview of anti-Gypsyism in the Czech Republic, to demonstrate the different areas where it occurs and to show how these areas influence public opinion. First, I discuss the definition of anti-Gypsyism then briefly review the history of Roma in the Czech Republic. I address the present situation, and explain the government's stance towards social integration of Roma into society. To illustrate institutionalised anti-Gypsyism, I focus on the Romani Holocaust in the Czech Republic and its reparations, as well as on the representation of Romani issues in media. I will use case studies to illustrate anti-Gypsyism. Moreover, I describe the current legal situation and explain where it works and where it falls short. I conclude with my own concerns and recommendations.

Background

The popular term "gypsy" is a common term used by English speakers that developed from the word "Egyptian." The Czech equivalent is *cikan,* from the Greek *atsinganos,* originally a heretic sect that disappeared around the eleventh century. When Roma arrived in the Byzantine empire a century later, they were considered as a new arrival of this sect. Although Romanies are often called Gypsies and *cikani,* many Romanies reject both terms because it stigmatises them. The word "nigger" used for African-Americans in the US represents a similar insult and impoliteness. The term "accompanied innumerable lynchings, beatings, acts of arson, and other racially motivated attacks upon blacks" (Kennedy, 2004). *Cikan* also evokes in Czech people adjectives such as wild, dangerous, stinky, and dirty, or characterises those so named as thieves and liars in discussions and in the general attitude towards Roma in the Czech Republic.

The source of the negative position of the Romani people is hidden in European history. After the arrival of Romanies in Europe around 1400, they made their home in almost every country; nevertheless, Romanies were victims of persecution and massive discrimination, resulting in practices known as anti-Gypsyism. According to

Valeriu Nicolae (2006), "anti-Gypsyism is a complex code of social behavior used to justify and perpetrate the exclusion and supposed inferiority of Roma. It is based on historical persecution and negative stereotypes and in its current forms continues strongly to hinder Roma from reaching the status of equal citizens." Although Romanies were subject to elimination during World War II, the present danger of anti-Gypsyism is ignored, since it still prevails in the Czech Republic. Anti-Gypsyism characterises Romanies as less than human; closely connected to racism, it unfortunately often goes even beyond that. Stereotypes of Roma are linked to negative behaviour shown in the daily discrimination of Roma. These stereotypes are common, for instance, in public discussions and in media, in the limited access of Roma to public services, and in the second-rate position of Roma in Czech society. Even though the government reflects the need to help Roma in their policy concepts and laws, the disagreeable situation remains.

History and Anti-Gypsyism in the Czech Republic

Roma have been living in Europe for centuries; most experts of Romani issues believe that the Romani originated in northern India. Romanies appeared in western and central Europe beginning in the thirteenth or fourteenth century, and by the fifteenth century were in the territory of what is today the Czech Republic (Muzeum romske kultury, 2006). The first evidence of Roma presence in Czech lands occurs in Dalimil's Chronicle dated from 1317, which mentions the so-called Catharisis (in Czech *Katarsich*) in connection with the Mongol invasion of Europe in 1242. A more reliable source from 1417, in the Old Czech Records of Time, comments that, "Also this year Gypsies are straggling in Czech lands and were gold-digging people" (Muzeum romske kultury, 2006). In 1545, King Ferdinand I issued a mandate to exile Roma from the country. At the end of the seventeenth century, another Czech king proclaimed Roma to be outcasts because of their travelling life style. This, in fact, permitted the non-punishable killing of Romani men and torturing of Romani women and children. The sanctions were softer during the reign of Empress Maria Terezie (1740–1780). She introduced laws such as the Order from 1749 that forced Roma to leave the territory (Petru and Fuhrmannova, 1997).

During the First Republic (Wikipedia, 2006a) in 1927, a law was implemented "about roaming gypsies." It formally reduced the possibilities of travelling and, at the same time, started the registration of so-called "gypsy cards." As well, the law introduced other restrictions. For instance, state authorities could forbid Roma to enter a specific area, and children less than 18 years could be taken from their parents (Petru and Fuhrmannova, 1997). During the years of persecution following the Holocaust and after communist efforts towards assimilation, such as the 1959 prohibition of travelling, an endeavour was made to relocate Roma and their families in the territory of Czechoslovakia. Moreover, the forced sterilisation of Roma women, several hundred cases of which have been documented in the Czech Republic and Slovakia in recent years represents a particularly serious case of human rights violation.

The mobilisation of Roma after the fall of the Iron Curtain brought to the attention of the human rights community the violation of their rights, especially because the replacement of Communism opened a path for more violence. Their mobilisation resulted in the creation of specific provisions for Roma and their general recognition. The government also showed an interest in and commitment to creating policies focusing on Roma integration into society. Since 2004, the Czech Republic has been a member of the European Union and is strengthening ties with western Europe; the Republic is making efforts to share values based on democracy and equality. In addition, it needs to harmonise its legislation with European legislation, to focus on introducing the comprehensive anti-discrimination act, and publicly commit to future change.

The Situation of Roma in the Present Czech Republic

Presently, the life of Roma is different from popular ideas and cliches about Gypsies. It was described by the Czech Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Vladimir Spidla, at the conference *Roma Diplomacy: A Challenge for European Institutions*. He stated that the conditions in which these people find themselves are disgraceful, "namely . . . that most of them suffer poverty and social exclusion; that many of them encounter discrimination in all areas of life; and that some of them now live, as citizens of the EU, in conditions unworthy of the EU, in de facto ghettoes" (Spidla, 2005).

The government of the Czech Republic is offering protection to marginalised groups, and the Romani nationality is one of them. One of most discussed issues in the past has been the sensitive issue of collecting information about the numbers of these disadvantaged groups. The official number of the Roma population is very different from the real one, since the Roma do not identify themselves with the Romani minority.

One reason behind a low official census count of Roma is the fact that Roma are strongly stigmatised and face anti-Gypsyism in all spheres of their lives. One student of Asian origin from New York University who studied in Prague for one semester expresses the current situation: "There is this constant back and forth, an unending cycle of who is right and who wrong, no clear black and white. I felt stuck in this murky gray area, like both the Czechs and the Roma do. One group cannot understand the other because of a great cultural disconnection, because of the boundaries of speech, of culture, of miscommunication, of no communication at all" (Rufin, 2007).

According to the Constitution, the Czech Republic cannot collect data based on ethnicity. The only remaining tool to measure the number of Roma is the official census. However, only a small number of Roma declare a Romani nationality in the official census. Only scientists and non-government organisations can present educated guesses and findings regarding the number of Romani individuals in the Czech Republic. Official census data from 1991 show that only 32,903 people confessed to Roma nationality. In 2001, this number was 11,746 (Czech Statistical Office, 2001). Kveta Kalibova points out that the credibility of the data is limited

because of the experiences of Roma (Kalibova, 1999). They became used to punishment under Communism after admitting to Roma nationality or after publicly carrying out Roma customs. Therefore, Roma are afraid publicly to say they are of Romani origin. As well, the Roma often do not understand the correct meaning of nationality; they often mistake it for state citizenship. Furthermore, many Roma in the Czech Republic simply do not want to be considered Roma and, therefore, declare a different nationality (Kalibova, 1999). Estimates of the real number of Roma are between 250,000 and 300,000 people, which is about 2.5% of the Czech population (Wikipedia, 2006b).

The Czech government developed the Roma Policy Concept (2005) to ensure better quality and higher educational levels for Roma. It is based on affirmative action, uses neither quotas nor determines the numbers of Roma in certain jobs or of candidates accepted for study courses. In addition to a focus on the elimination of racial discrimination and the insurance of equal opportunities, the Roma Policy Concept focuses on assistance for those in a deprived situation for social or historical reasons. While not limited to members of the Roma community, it considers the specific needs of Roma (Roma Policy Concept, 2005). As a consequence, in 2005, the Czech government invested some Koruna 110,885,000 in Roma communities, and in 2006 it proposed to invest Koruna 110,700,000 (Report on the Situation of Romani Communities in 2005, 2006). Nonetheless, Romani activists responded that "70 percent of Romany children have no chance to gain full elementary education because they end up in schools for children with learning problems" (Romea, 2006b). In some areas "up to 90 to 100 percent of Romanies are jobless and their low qualification is often the main obstacle preventing them from finding a job" (Romea, 2006c). Therefore, the question remains, to what extent is the implementation of the policy concept meeting the needs of Romanies. As well, three-quarters of the population of the Czech Republic think that the government should not focus more on Romani rights (Stem Trendy, 2006).

To understand better the position of the majority of the population, the final report prepared by Factum Invenio in 2005 concerning attitudes toward Roma in the Czech Republic illustrates that the behavioural and emotional responses of non-Roma respondents seem very complicated. Most of the respondents, regardless of their age, approached the Roma issue very critically and impatiently. They acted rather intolerantly toward the Roma minority; and, as the report stated, they "didn't believe such a goal like the Roma integration could ever come true. Especially the people from areas with a high density of Roma population tended to be more disappointed and distrustful toward the Roma community." Most were convinced that much had already been done to improve the situation of Roma, with little or no success. Instead, they suggested that since it concerns their own lives, the Roma people should be responsible and support efforts to integrate (Factum Invenio, 2005).

With the intention of producing public commitment, the Czech government has worked "toward eliminating discrimination and closing the unacceptable gaps between Roma and the rest of society," as stated in the Declaration for the Decade (Decade, 2005), signed in Sofia on 2 February 2005. Some political parties, such as the Czech Social Democratic Party, in the parliamentary election of 2006 used the

issue of high Roma unemployment and their poor living conditions as a pre-election topic. The aim was to attract Romani voters, presenting them with possibilities that would benefit their situation, such as social security, reduced discrimination, and better access to education. Nevertheless, the National Party was discriminatory. The common arguments of politicians were that Romanies do not work, and that they use government taxes for their own means. The best illustration is the campaign of the politician, Jiri Cunek, who built his political career in town of Vsetin, based on evicting "hundreds of Romani families from a dilapidated building in the town centre, [and] engaging in other generalizations about these individuals, which were quoted in the press. The town re-housed some of the families in newly constructed, state-subsidised 'container' flats, on land which had previously been a dump, a half-hour walk from the town centre" (Albert, 2007). Cunek started as a local politician, become mayor of the town of Vsetin in 1998 (Cunek, 2007) and, due to his campaign to solve the "problem" of Roma in Vsetin, he become the Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister for Regional Development. He is also a Chairperson of the coalition party, Christian Democrats (Cunek, 2007). A public opinion poll in January 2007 shows that Cunek is the most popular politician in the Czech Republic (Stem Trendy, 2007). Moreover, Cunek announced in a BBC 4 interview on 5 March 2007 that he is drafting a "solution to the Romany issue." He also stated in a BBC interview that "unfortunately, my experience is that one of the problematic issues in any communication with Roma, that is, Roma from problematic groups, is that they have a very blurred border between the truth and a lie" (Albert, 2007). Yet, he supported anti-Gypsyism by statement in the daily *Blesk* on 30 April 2007, when asked how one could become entitled to state support similar to that provided the Roma. Cunek replied, "You would need to go somewhere to get a suntan, your family would need to start making a mess and lighting fires on the square, and then maybe some politicians would help you" (Hlustik, 2007). In addition, Cunek was accused of corruption; he is suspected "of having taken a bribe of half a million crowns as a mayor of Vsetin, north Moravia, in 2002" (Prague Daily Monitor, 2007).

The Murder of All and Respectful Memory

> "When brawny young men wearing black shirts with cartridge belts block your way in the street or in the underground and offer you hate-filled Nazi pamphlets, may you see before your eyes unknown Roma children sent to their deaths by Nazis."
>
> *Nadezhda Demeter (Horvathova, 2003, p. 109)*

The compensation of Romani survivors from World War II still has not taken place. In no place in the Czech Republic do Roma have a respectful memorial for the victims of the Holocaust. "Unlike the Holocaust of the Jews, or the genocide committed against other people and minorities, the massacre of Roma has not yet entered the canon of modern history curricula" (Mirga, 2005, p. 93). The Romani Holocaust was the most visible and institutionalised type of anti-Gypsyism in history. Of the original 6,500

Roma living in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, no more then 583 ex-prisoners came home. About 4,780 men, women, and children became objects of forced concentration camps. In so-called Gypsy camps, more then 3,000 men, women, and children died. A total of 326 died in Lety; 207 prisoners died in Hodonin near Kunstat; and more than 2,645 died in Auschwitz-Birkenau. An unknown number died in Buchenwald, Ravensbruck, and other camps. They were transported either as so-called asocial Roma, or as forced labour prisoners. However, it is not possible to discover in existing documentation the real number of Czech Romanies and Sinties who become victims of the Holocaust (Necas, 1999).

In a dispute regarding the evidence concerning the elimination of Roma during World War II, different interpretations can be found in the current political spectrum in the Czech Republic. The most controversial issue is the case of Lety, where in the 1970s on the former site of a Nazi concentration camp, the Communists built a pig farm. Jan Vrba, a Lety survivor, has stated that "It was a place of cruelty; starving children were eating raw cabbage from the fields, and the townspeople from Lety paid no attention to them. Small children were dying on piles of – I don't want to say it – piles of excrement. Lety must be a memorial!" (Kenety and Velinger, 2005). Nevertheless, the pig farm is still there and authorities still have not taken any serious action toward building a memorial. While President Vaclav Havel worked in the early 1990s "to erect a well-intended (albeit criticised) monument, the Cabinet moved to speedily privatise the state-owned farm at the suspiciously low price, instead of removing it as per international agreements requiring Holocaust site preservation" (Albert, 2005).

After a decade of Roma lobby, awareness-raising, and calls led by Romani and other activists to remove the pig farm, negotiations entered a new phase. On 28 April 2005, the *European Parliament Resolution on the Situation of Roma in the European Union* (European Parliament, 2005) called on the Czech government to act: "the Romani Holocaust deserves full recognition, commensurate with the gravity of Nazi crimes designed to physically eliminate the Roma of Europe, and calling in connection with this on the Commission and the authorities to take all necessary steps to remove the pig farm from the site of the former concentration camp at Lety u Pisku, and create a suitable memorial." Nevertheless, the response of the Communist Member of Parliament, Miroslav Ransdorf, was that "there have been rampant lies told about Lety. No real concentration camp was ever there" (Albert, 2005). At the same time, President Vaclav Klaus publicly said: "the victims of this camp were primarily connected to an epidemic of spotted typhus, not with what we traditionally conceive of as concentration camp victims" (Albert, 2005).

Unfortunately, such statements support anti-Gypsyism and also influence public opinion, since people consider the president as an authority and believe him. A public opinion poll from January 2007 showed that "in the long term, the president of our country has been the most trustworthy Czech constitutional institution. Currently 72% of Czech citizens trust the president" (Samanova, 2004). Such statements also demonstrate a misunderstanding of the conditions of people forced into labour or killed in the gas chambers. No one can imagine saying anything similar about the Jewish victims of the Holocaust.

Romani activists wish for positive change. "I hope that the European Parliament's recommendation, that this pig farm ought to be removed or destroyed, shows our society that it is a very sad and shameful situation. I hope that our government finally will remove this pig farm and it will be a true memorial of the Roma Holocaust in Czechoslovakia," said Karel Holomek (Kenety and Velinger, 2005). His expectation was supported also by Prime Minister Jiri Paroubek who, at the opening of an exhibition at Lety, remarked that "it is our ongoing task to fight against ethnic intolerance and primitive nationalism, because those are the roots of racism. Let us be aware that we encounter expressions of intolerance and even of admiration of Nazism today in our society. It is enough to recall the meetings of nationalist skinheads, verbal and physical attacks on members of Roma ethnicity, and other examples of ethnic intolerance" (Albert, 2005). Subsequently, Paroubek announced that the Lety case would not be resolved before the June parliamentary election. According to Jan Bures, a political scientist from Charles University, this reaction was influenced by public opinion, which showed that the solution of buying the pig farm was absurd considering that it might discourage Social Democratic voters (Mastalir, 2006).

The dispute over the pig farm in Lety has involved serious discriminatory and abusive rhetoric. Lety became the subject of the 2006 pre-election campaign for the Czech right-wing extremist National Party. They placed their own monument close to the former concentration camp. "The four-ton boulder bearing the inscription 'To the Victims' – meaning the 'real' victims of World War II, the Czechs – was accompanied by a media flurry and statements about Lety even more horrendous than Ransdorf's" (Albert, 2005). The National Party's spokesperson, with their campaigns, supported the stereotypes about Roma being "dirty," by blaming prisoners from Lety with the argument that they had caused their own deaths from typhus by not maintaining basic hygiene. "Such statements would be laughable if not for the fact that they are received by far too many people in this country with a completely straight face" (Albert, 2005).

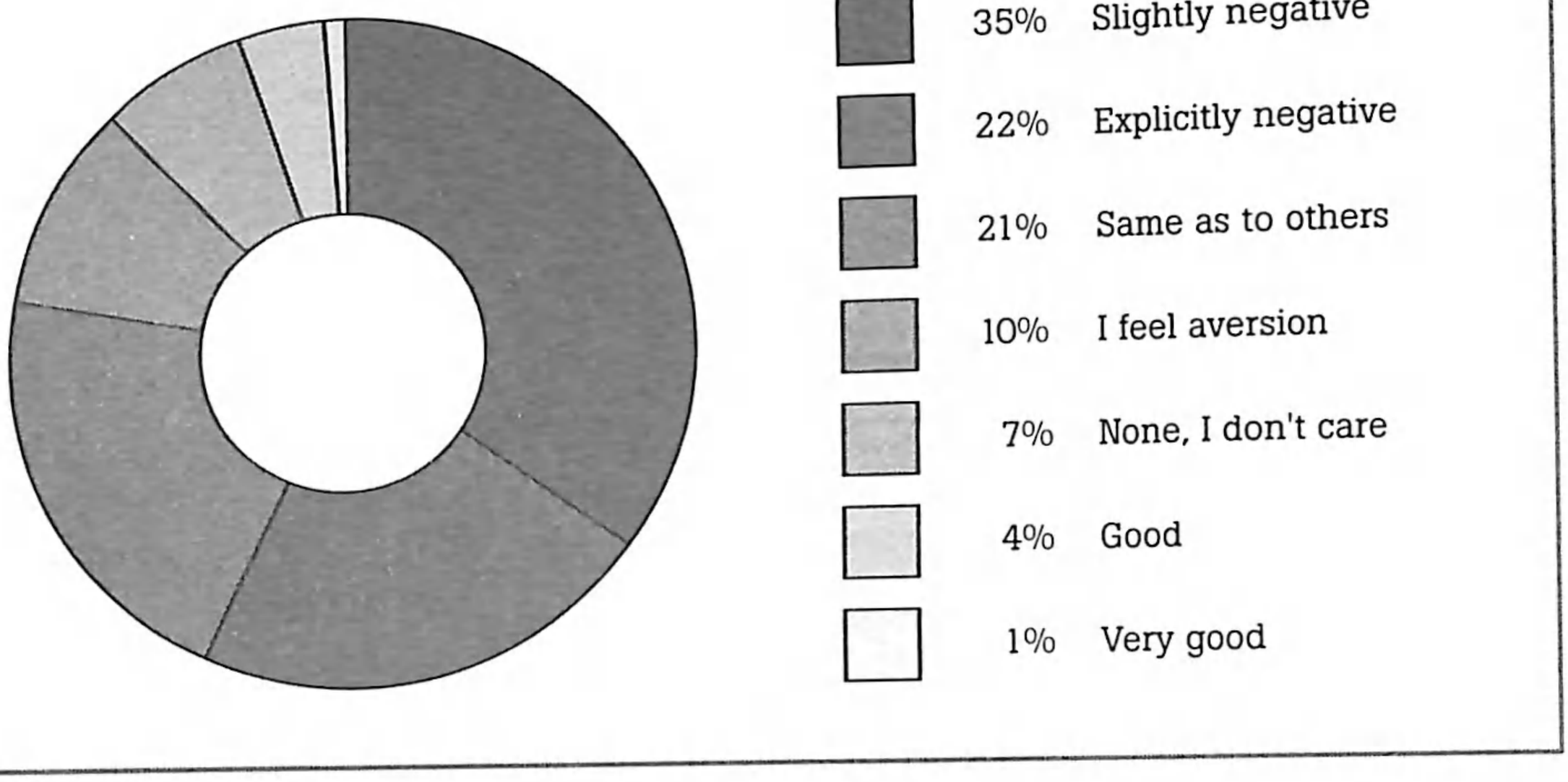
The new Minister for Minorities and Human Rights, Dzamila Stehlikova, started new negotiations with the owners of the pig farm to buy it; however, the owners overpriced it. Stehlikova said in a press conference that "the government cannot spend tax-payers' money on the farm since its price is exorbitant." At the same time, she added that "the farm's owner had the right to set a high price on his property." Stehlikova also stressed that "a mistake had been made in this case in 1992 already when the originally state pig farm had been privatized" (Romea, 2007a). According to Cenek Ruzicka, from the Committee for the Compensation for the Romany Holocaust Victims, the government should draw up a law on the arrangement of memorials at the sites of wartime internment camps for Czech Romanies. "The legislation should set down that a commemorative arrangement is in the public interest. This would also facilitate the property settlement with the owners and subsequent removal of the buildings there," continues Ruzicka (Romea, 2007b).

Respectfully commemorating the victims of the Romani Holocaust would help the majority of the population understand the current situation of the Romani minority and would help them overcome the stereotypes about Roma that fuel anti-Gypsyism. In addition, the denial and decreasing level of importance given to the Romani Holocaust are in themselves a form of anti-Gypsyism.

Public Opinion, Media, and Tolerance

"Czechs feel constantly the strongest aversion against Romanies," according to a poll carried out by the STEM agency. Additionally, as Figure 1 depicts, "only 5 percent of respondents have good relations to Romanies" (Stem Trendy, 2006).

Figure 1. Relationships of Czech Citizens towards Roma



Source: Stem Trendy, 2006.

The interaction between public opinion and media is crucial. "The Media might kindle the conflict between racial groups, which is dependent on the stance towards using racial questions, if racial minorities are viewed in the reportage as a conventionally conflicting, this conflict will then merge into society and it becoming a real threat" (Potucek, 2004). Since the image of Romanies in the media tends to be negative, public polls report increasing intolerance and hate. It is very rare that an editor-in-chief and his team in mainstream media offer objective information based on their own knowledge, experience, and contacts with both the majority and minority Romani (Balazova, 2005). The Romani community, whose members are frequently displayed as criminals and socially unacceptable, would welcome progress in this area. According to Pehe (1999), the most alarming feature in the Czech Republic related to the fight of racism is the passivity of Czech cultural and intellectual figures. Since the beginning of television, many people have considered media stars as their role models; therefore, "it would be very influential if such celebrities would publicly criticize racism in general." Pehe continues that if "celebrities of the show-business as well as the politicians known very well were to publicly support Roma then the public opinion would not stay on their side." To support such change might be risky, especially because voters and consumers of entertainment are typically members of the majority.

Newspapers and media in general have a role in building public opinion. They have a moral obligation and responsibility to be objective. Journalists who regularly concern themselves with topics relating to Roma and other minorities need an

aptitude for and knowledge of the issues. For instance, as Jarmila Balazova, a prominent journalist in the Czech Republic has said, "not every journalist can write or speak soundly about economics. I must say that in the Czech Republic a few such publications and one radio station do exist. They are inarguably viewed thoroughly positively even by the minority; however, even these newspapers, magazines, and radio stations are afraid of negative reactions from their readers and listeners." The reason for their sometimes overly cautious stance, Balazova continued, is that "there are not too many minorities, in our case Roma, topics" (Balazova, 2005).

The media is still missing the element of objectivity. Journalists spread only the message that people want to hear, in other words, the hot topics that will sell newspapers. For instance, journalists did not cover the meeting of a hundred Romani women in Prague, 10-11 February 2006, the first meeting of this kind organised by Romani women for Romani women in the Czech Republic. The aim of the meeting was to discuss critical issues in relation to Romanies, and to find a common base for their solution. Yet, this opportunity to record good practices about Romani women appeared not interesting for Czech television. Even though Czech television should inform the public objectively, considering that it is state-owned, it did not consider this event important enough to cover (Samko, 2006). Other mainstream media published a small number of articles about the meeting, using the Czech Press Agency (CPA) as their source. The CPA covers (or is supposed to cover) every activity from all fields of interest happening in the Czech Republic. Unfortunately, the meeting did not receive adequate coverage from the CPA.

Interestingly, a conference regarding the Position of Roma Minority in the Educational System of the Czech Republic, organised in September 2006, had wider media coverage. According to Ivan Vesely (2006), the organiser of the conference, the reason for coverage was the presentation of the Economic Model for the Next Thirty Years. It says that the government should invest in the education of Romanies. Five hundred million Czech Koruna would be necessary for the first ten years, which would be reduced to 250 million Koruna for the next ten years. "The results of the conference were serious recommendations to the Government, moreover they were including clear budget line, and therefore the mainstream media was interested to publicize it, since it concerns tax-payers" (Vesely, 2006).

Articles about Romanies published on Internet news services, regardless of their content, are usually followed by strong anti-Gypsy discussions. These very often need to be stopped by the administration of the webpage where the discussions are held. For example, iDnes, the internet version of the daily mainstream printed *Mlada Fronta Dnes*, states: "We are sorry to all nice readers for discontinuing the discussion after the article; unfortunately, some were using it for repeating racist and crude remarks, which were not possible to erase one by one" (iDnes, 2006). Nevertheless, some comments remain untouched.

The web server iDnes has considerable experience with terminating discussions after posting articles related to Romanies. One example occurred after posting an article about a protest march in Svitavy held on 22 July 2005. About 90 skinheads and other people gathered to protest against the injustice that took place during the trial of Vlastimil Pechanec. Pechanec was sentenced in 2004 to 17 years in prison for

the racially-motivated murder of the Romany man, Ota Absolon (Romea, 2006a). The web server had to publish an apology after writing this piece and web administrators also stopped the subsequent discussion. As well as iDnes, discussions against Romanies are available on the web server Novinky.cz (Novinky, 2006), where discussion is current regarding the article about three young "darker" men who interacted with a group of one man and two girls. After the interaction, one darker man was stabbed with a knife and he needed hospitalisation. Even though this article did not use any word related to any ethic minority or group, the contributors to the discussion attacked only "Gypsies." As an example, one individual wrote that "Gypsies should be automatically arrested, and they should work to go mad, this is from my own experience, I was working two years in Ostrava-Vitkovice, and animals are angels with a glory, in comparison to them, and what are these gypsies doing, we don't have an idea, but our laws. . . . .? Everyone has a fear of racism, but if we continue this way, people should become more worried."

Unfortunately, discussions against Roma appear not only in the mainstream media; individuals search for possibilities to express their feelings on Romani web servers. Zdenek Rysavy, the Romea Executive Director, said that "no one can avoid it, but the administrator should carefully watch the activity on his/her website and eliminate the racial content that negatively influences its visitors." He also said that it is very hard to avoid the racial reaction of readers; "they are also on our website, I need to erase them, but I cannot be always online to control what is newly written." Mr. Rysavy also added that although commentaries could be limited by registration, "everyone can write a different name and remain in anonymity" (Rysavy, 2005).

The means used for transmitting negative or witty messages about Romanies often includes not only Internet websites, but also email communication. According to Jaroslav Balvin, the coordinator of minority issues at the City Hall of Prague, such emails also circulate between officers at City Hall. These characterise Roma as funny creatures, and do not give them any respect (Balvin, 2006). The question remains to what extent such emails and discussions influence ordinary Czechs who meet with Romanies in working relations or on a daily basis in their neighbourhoods. The question also remains to what extent derogatory email communication influences public officers and stakeholders who deal with Romanies in their professional occupation.

Existing Legal Background and Administrative Measures against Discrimination

The basic legal regulation ensuring the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms is the *Charter of Fundamental Rights and Basic Freedoms* (2006) which forms part of the constitutional order. It contains a general prohibition on discrimination in article 3, which guarantees "basic rights and freedoms for all regardless of sex, skin colour, language, faith and religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, membership in a national or ethnic minority, property, family or other status." Protection against discrimination is also offered by international conventions binding on the Czech Republic. These conventions include the

International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women*, the *International Pact on Civil and Political Rights*, the *International Pact on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*, and the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*.

Before 31 May 2002, article 10 of the Constitution of the Czech Republic "acknowledged only one category of treaties – treaties on human rights and fundamental freedoms which, at a constitutional level, had priority over the law. All other treaties were only directly applicable at a national level where they were explicitly stipulated by law. This situation led to a certain non-transparency, inconsistency, and lack of uniformity in the application of the relevant treaties by courts and other bodies, and thus in application and practice" (CERD, 2005). Constitutional Act No. 395/2001 Coll, effective from 1 June 2002 (Sbirka zakonu, 2001a) represents a turnaround by stating that "it promulgated international treaties whose ratification has been agreed by Parliament and which are binding for the Czech Republic form part of the legal order; if an international treaty stipulates something different to the law, the international treaty must be applied" (CERD, 2005). Under Act No. 309/1999 Coll. on the Collection of Laws and the Collection of International Treaties (Sbirka zakonu, 1999), international treaties are promulgated in the Collection of International Treaties. The Collection of Laws and Collection of International Treaties are official instruments for publication of binding legal regulations. This change to the Constitution establishes the precedence of international treaties over the law (CERD, 2005).

Based on new membership in the European Union, between 2002 and 2005, the Czech Republic amended several legal regulations and adopted new legal regulations of discrimination. These changes concern primarily the following:

a) An amendment to Act No. 99/1963 Coll., the Civil Procedure Code (Sbirka zakonu, 1963), which establishes the principle of shifting the burden of proof in cases of alleged discrimination based on racial or ethnic origin. The amendment is in Act No. 151/2002 Coll. (Sbirka zakonu, 2002a).

b) An amendment to Act No. 65/1965 Coll., the Labour Code (Sbirka zakonu, 1965), prohibits direct or indirect discrimination on grounds of, among other things, racial or ethnic origin, prohibits harassment and sexual harassment, defines the terms relating to discrimination, and provides a more detailed definition of sexual harassment in the workplace.

c) A new Employment Act No. 435/2004 Coll. (Sbirka zakonu, 2004a) was adopted which, like the Labour Code, contains more detailed legislation on the discrimination issue. The Act covers access to employment and establishes certain positive measures for members of national and ethnic minorities. It prohibits direct and indirect discrimination in the application of the right to employment on grounds of sex, sexual orientation, racial or ethnic origin, nationality, state citizenship, social origin, family, language, health, religion or faith, property, marital and family status, age or family obligations, political or other orientation, membership and activity in political movements, in trade unions or employee organisations.

e) In 2002, comprehensive legislation was adopted for the employment relationship of state employees where such relationship became a service relationship. The so-called Services Act No. 218/2002 Coll. (Sbirka zakonu, 2002b) includes the principle of equal treatment for all state employees.

f) Act No. 361/2003 Coll. on the Service Relationship of Members of Security Forces (Sbirka zakonu, 2003) also provides comprehensive legislation for the service function of members of the Czech police, fire service, customs administration, prison service, intelligence agency, and the Office for Foreign Relations. It prohibits discrimination in service functions, including on grounds of nationality, race, family or ethnic origin, defines terms relating to discrimination, and establishes a victim's right to judicial protection in the event of discrimination. The Act defines direct discrimination as "behavior as a result of which, on the grounds stated in paragraph 2, a member has been, is or could be treated less favorably than another member in a comparable situation" (CERD, 2005). It interprets indirect discrimination as apparent non-discriminatory behaviour that disadvantages one member in relation to another based on the specified grounds, prohibits harassment "behavior that is justifiably perceived by another member to be unwelcome and whose aim or consequence is to lessen the dignity of a natural person or to create a hostile or humiliating environment" (CERD, 2005). The Act came into effect 1 January 2006.

g) With effect from 1 January 2005, an equal approach to education without any discrimination (including on grounds of race) is provided by the new Education Act No. 561/2004 Coll. (Sbirka zakonu, 2004b)

h) An amendment to the Code of Criminal Procedure Act No. 141/1961 Coll (Sbirka zakonu, 1961) regulates the specific conditions for an injured party to consent to or reject a criminal prosecution. For example, a criminal prosecution for a violent crime against a group of the population and against an individual can be brought only with the consent of the injured party.

i) An amendment to the Act on Radio and Television Broadcasting (No. 231/2001 Coll.) (Sbirka zakonu, 2001b) contains a prohibition on advertising and teleshopping that attack religious or political persuasions, and a prohibition on advertising and teleshopping that are discriminatory on grounds of sex, race, skin colour, language, national or social origin or membership of a national or ethnic minority (CERD, 2005).

With respect to the new approach of the government toward issues of discrimination, the first case of a successful action for protection of personal rights where the court confirmed that racial discrimination had occurred was in 2002. The Roma plaintiff was not allowed into a discotheque because entrance was forbidden to Roma. Other guests were allowed into the discotheque when they paid for their tickets. As a result of the action for protection of personal rights, the Roma received an apology from the relevant company and financial compensation for non-material loss. The regional court admitted the action in the first instance, although only

concerning the defendant's obligation to apologise. After a series of appeals, the obligation to pay financial compensation was awarded for Koruna 50,000 (Factum Invenio, 2005). A member of the Roma community submitted another action for protection of personal rights against a company owning a restaurant. In this restaurant, a metre-high statue depicted a "classical deity" with a baseball bat in its hand bearing the inscription, "For Gypsies." The plaintiff argued that the company's action constituted an attack on human dignity, suggesting that as a guest in a publicly accessible business, he was not welcome and, as an individual, he was attacked. The regional court rejected the action on the grounds that this did not represent an unlawful infringement of personal rights. In the court's opinion, the existence of the statue with a baseball bat bearing the inscription "For Gypsies" created an individual negative reaction, but it was not an unlawful infringement of personal rights. The court did, however, admit that for racists, the baseball bat is used as a weapon against Roma, and that it could also be used to kill. The court did not find that this constituted an infringement of the plaintiff's personal rights (Strupek, 2006).

The government still has not approved a comprehensive anti-discrimination bill that fully implements European Union directives on equal treatment and protection against discrimination. The act should harmonise the legislation covering protection against discrimination, and remove any shortcomings in Czech law from the point of view of these directives. The anti-discrimination bill specifies also the role of the Office of the Ombudsman and Public Defender of Rights as the individuals responsible for the issue of equal treatment and for assisting victims of discrimination.

Conclusion

Based on Nicolae's (2006) definition, an overview of the current situation of Romanies in the Czech Republic shows that they are exposed daily to anti-Gypsyism. In other words, discrimination is a natural feature of Romani life. Even though Romanies witnessed the Holocaust and have often been targets of discrimination, the majority of society lacks information about Romani culture and history. This fact also is also reflected in public opinion, internet discussions, and mutual understanding of both groups. As this report has demonstrated, Romanies are also viewed as less than human and participants in Internet discussions often refer to Roma as animals, as well as picture them in chains and even in museums. Many election campaigns use the topic to attract votes from the majority of population who dislike Romanies.

Even though the Romani issue is a subject of the Czech government and subject to approved policies, the marginalisation of Roma deepens. People in marginalised communities are unable to extract themselves from the vicious circle of unemployment and dependency on social benefits, and are subject to systematic discrimination. National policies related to Roma are hardly implemented at the local level. The government needs to make a clear stand on anti-Gypsyism as a specific form of discrimination, go beyond the financial support of various projects, and act politically for change. Prevention and fighting against racism should be a core priority in governmental programs, as should be the finalisation of the anti-discrimination bill.

Moreover, it is very important to support objectivity in the media, and open discussions with celebrities and politicians on this issue. It is essential to involve Roma in decision-making processes, to consult with the Roma community regarding future steps, and to present Roma as an integral part of society. To conclude, "being Rrom is a positive identity just like being Chinese, Argentinian, French, or any other group" (La Voix des Rroms, 2006).

References

Albert, G. (2005). The deadliest threat [online]. *Prague Post*. July 25, 2005. Available from: http://www.romea.cz/english/index.php?id=servis/monitoring/m_en_2006_0001 [Accessed 2 February 2006].

Albert, G. (2007). Cunek is the problem, not the solution [online]. *Prague Daily Monitor*. 13 March, 2007. Available from: http://launch.praguemonitor.com/en/42/opinion/2876/ [Accessed 15 March 2007].

Balasova, J. (2005). *The role of the media in portraying the Roma and perpetuating prejudice* [online]. Available from: http://www.romea.cz/english/index.php?id=servis/z_en_2003_0041 [Accessed 15 March 2007].

Balvin, J. (2006). Presentation at the seminar "Kotazce anti-ciganismusu, Romofobie a rasismusu v Ceske republice." Prague, Philosophic Faculty of Charles University. 5 April 2006.

Charter of Fundamental Rights and Basic Freedoms. (2006). [online]. Available from: http://test.concourt.cz/angl_verze/rights.html [Accessed 15 March 2007].

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination [CERD]. (2005). *Sixth and seventh periodical report on the performance of obligations arising from the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination*. Prague: The Governmental Office of the Czech Republic.

Cunek, J. (2007). *Members of the Czech Republic government* [online]. Available from: http://www.vlada.cz/scripts/detail.php?id=20617 [Accessed 5 April 2007].

Czech Statistical Office. (2001). *Basic final results of the Population and Housing Census 2001*. [online]. Available from: http://www.czso.cz/eng/redakce.nsf/i/basic_final_results_of_the_population_and_housing_census_2001 [Accessed 5 April 2007].

Decade. (2005). *Declaration of the Decade of Roma Inclusion* [online]. Available from: http://www.romadecade.org [Accessed 5 April 2007].

European Parliament. (2005). *European Parliament resolution on the situation of Roma in the European Union* [online]. Available from: http://dev.eurac.edu:8085/mugs2/do/blob.html?type=html&serial=1117816024500 [Accessed 15 March 2007].

Factum Invenio. (2005). *Attitudes toward the Roma in the Czech Republic* [online]. Available from: http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTROMA/Resources/CzechQualitativeReport.doc [Accessed 5 April 2007].

Hlustik, D. (2007). *U telefonu Cunek . . . ne, neodstoupim* [online]. Blesk, 30 April 2007. Available from: http://www.blesk.cz/Clanek72765.htm [Accessed 6 April 2007].

Horvathova, J. (ed). (2003). *Le romengro murdaripen andro dujto baro mariben.* [Genocide of Roma during World War Two]. Slovo, 21, p. 109.

iDnes. (2006). *Romove prchli pred pochodem skinu ze Svitav* [online]. Available from: http://zpravy.idnes.cz/romove-prchli-pred-pochodem-skinu-ze-svitav-fzr-/domaci.asp?c=A060722_172732_domaci_mr [Accessed 15 March 2007].

Kalibova, K. (1999). The Roma as viewed by statistics and demography. *Roma in the Czech Republic: collection of essays from social politics.* Prague: Socioklub. pp. 94–106.

Kenety, B. and Velinger, J. (2005). *Government to pave way for memorial on former concentration camp site* [online]. Available from: http://romove.radio.cz/en/article/20788 [Accessed 15 March 2007].

Kennedy, R. (2004). A note on the word "nigger" [online]. *Harper's Weekly.* Available from: http://www.civilwarliterature.com/01Introduction/TheNWord.htm [Accessed 5 April 2007].

La Voix des Rroms. (2006). Leaflet Rroms. Paris: La Sorbonne Nouvelle.

Mastalir, L. (2006). *Lety pig farm removal on the back-burner* [online]. Available from: http://romove.radio.cz/en/article/20950 [Accessed 15 March 2007].

Mirga, A. (2005). For a worthy place among the victims: the Holocaust and the extermination of Roma during World War II. In: J. Amrosewicz-Jacobs and L. Hondo (eds). *Why should we teach about the Holocaust?* Cracow: The Jagiellonian University, Institute of European Studies. pp. 93–100.

Muzeum romske kultury. (2006). *Dejiny Romu. Prehled dejin Romu do roku 1989* [online]. Available from: http://www.rommuz.cz/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=24&Itemid=35 [Accessed 6 April 2007].

Necas, C. (1999). *Romanies in the Czech Republic yesterday and today.* Olomouc: The Palacky University.

Nicolae, V. (2006). *Anti-Gypsyism – definition* [online]. Available from: http://www.erionet.org/mainAG.htm [Accessed 15 March 2007].

Novinky. (2006). *The argument of youth ended with stabbed man* [online]. Available from: http://www.novinky.cz/diskuse/05/36/45.html [Accessed 15 March 2007].

Pehe, J. (1999). *Souboj s rasismem zatim prohravame. Hospodarske noviny: 18 May 1999* [online]. Available from: http://www.pehe.cz/clanky/1999/1999-Soubojsrasismem.html [Accessed 15 March 2007].

Petru, D. and Fuhrmannova, I. (1997). *Romska problematika predmetem jednani vlady* [online]. Available from: http://www.blisty.cz/files/isarc/9711/19971110q.html [Accessed 5 April 2007].

Potucek, J. (2004). *Masmedia a rasismus. Potucek: 23 December, 2004* [online]. Available from: http://policy.euweb.cz/view.php?id=25 [Accessed 15 March 2007].

Prague Daily Monitor. (2007). *Deputy PM Cunek stays in govt despite corruption accusation* [online]. 1 March 2007. Available from: http://www.praguemonitor.com/en/34/czech_politics/2189/index.html [Accessed 6 April 2007].

Report on the Situation of Romani Communities in 2005 [online]. (2006). Available from: http://www.vlada.cz/scripts/detail.php?id=20262 [Accessed 15 March 2007].

Roma Policy Concept. (2005). *Koncepce romske integrace 2005* [online]. Available from: http://www.vlada.cz/dokument8150.html [Accessed 6 April 2007].

Romea. (2006a). *Skinhead march without any incidents* [online]. Available from: http://www.romea.cz/english/index.php?id=servis/z_en_2006_0215 [Accessed 15 March 2007].

Romea. (2006b). *EU critical of Czech Rep sending Romanies to special schools* [online]. Available from: http://www.romea.cz/english/index.php?id=servis/z_en_2006_0164 [Accessed 6 April 2007].

Romea. (2006c). *Romany associations demand 700 million for children's education* [online]. Available from: http://www.romea.cz/english/index.php?id=servis/z_en_2006_0264 [Accessed 6 April 2007].

Romea. (2007a). Stehlikova: *Stat zrejme veprin v Letech nebude moci odkoupit* [online]. Available from: http://www.romea.cz/index.php?id=detail&detail=2007_2106 [Accessed 6 April 2007].

Romea. (2007b). *Czech Romanies for new legislation on WW2 camp for Romanies* [online]. Available from: http://www.romea.cz/english/index.php?id=detail&detail=2007_152 [Accessed 6 April 2007].

Rufin, M. (2007). Confronting color in a world of white [online]. *Prague Daily Monitor/Prague Wanderer,* 13 March 2007. Available from: http://launch.praguemonitor.com/en/42/life_in_prague/2878 [Accessed 17 March 2007].

Rysavy, Z. (2005). Interview with Executive Director of Romea.cz. 15 April 2005.

Samanova, G. (2004). *Hodnoceni pusobeni Vaclava Klause v prezidentskem urade* [online]. Available from: http://www.cvvm.cas.cz/index.php?disp=zpravy&lang=0&r=1&s=&offset=&shw=100419 [Accessed 6 April 2007].

Samko, R. (2006). Lecture: *Roma and mass media*. Chocerady – Lavka. 5 July 2006.

Sbirka zakonu. (1961). *141 Zakon 28 November 1961* [online]. Available from: http://www.mvcr.cz/sbirka/1961/sb66-61.pdf [Accessed 6 April 2007].

Sbirka zakonu. (1963). *99 Zakon 4 December 1963* [online]. Available from: http://www.mvcr.cz/sbirka/1963/sb56-63.pdf [Accessed 6 April 2007].

Sbirka zakonu. (1965). *65 Zakonik prace 16 June 1965* [online]. Available from: http://www.mvcr.cz/sbirka/1965/sb32-65.pdf [Accessed 6 April 2007].

Sbirka zakonu. (1999). *309 Zakon 11 November 1999* [online]. Available from: http://www.mvcr.cz/sbirka/1999/sb101-99.pdf [Accessed 6 April 2007].

Sbirka zakonu. (2001a). *395 Ustavni zakon 18 October 2001* [online]. Available from: http://www.mvcr.cz/sbirka/2001/sb149-01.pdf [Accessed 6 April 2007].

Sbirka zakonu. (2001b). *331 Zakon 17 May 2001* [online]. Available from: http://www.mvcr.cz/sbirka/2001/sb087-01.pdf [Accessed 6 April 2007].

Sbirka zakonu. (2002a). *151 Zakon 22 March 2002* [online]. Available from: http://www.mvcr.cz/sbirka/2002/sb061-02.pdf [Accessed 6 April 2007].

Sbirka zakonu. (2002b). *218 Zakon 22 April 2002* [online]. Available from: http://www.mvcr.cz/sbirka/2002/sb084-02.pdf [Accessed 6 April 2007].

Sbirka zakonu. (2003). *361 Zakon 23 September 2003* [online]. Available from: http://www.mvcr.cz/sbirka/2003/sb121-03.pdf [Accessed 6 April 2007].

Sbirka zakonu. (2004a). *435 Zakon 13 May 2004* [online]. Available from: http://www.mvcr.cz/sbirka/2004/sb143-04.pdf [Accessed 6 April 2007].

Sbirka zakonu. (2004b). *561 Zakon 24 September 2004* [online]. Available from: http://www.mvcr.cz/sbirka/2004/sb190-04.pdf [Accessed 6 April 2007].

Spidla, V. (2005). Concluding address of international conference Roma Diplomacy – A Challenge for European Institutions. Brussels, 9 December 2005.

Stem Trendy. (2006). *Informace z vyzkumu STEM Trendy 4/2006* [online]. Available from: http://www.stem.cz/clanek/1112 [Accessed 6 April 2007].

Stem Trendy. (2007). *Informace z vyzkumu STEM Trendy 1/2007* [online]. Available from: http://www.stem.cz/tisk.php?id=1194 [Accessed 15 March 2007].

Strupek, D. (2006). Presentation: *Kotazce anti-ciganismusu, Romofobie a rasismusu v Ceske republice.* Prague: Philosophic Faculty of Charles University, 5 April 2006.

Vesely, I. (2006). Interview with the Chairperson of Dzeno. 18 December 2006.

Wikipedia. (2006a). *First republic* [online]. Available from: http://cs.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prvn%C3%AD_republika [Accessed 15 March 2007].

Wikipedia. (2006b). *Romove* [online]. Available from: http://cs.wikipedia.org/wiki/Romov%C3%A9 [Accessed 15 March 2007].

Roma Women's Participation in Finnish Society

Janette Gronfors

This paper reports a study of the participation and visibility of Roma women in Finnish society. It identifies how Roma women participate in Finnish society and what problems they face in doing so. The group who participated in the study is a small, but representative sample of Roma women living in southern Finland. Based on the results of the study, the author lists improvements that may promote their status in Finnish society.

Very little research has been conducted in Finland regarding Roma women and even less from by a researcher who is Roma. The author's Roma origin was, thus, a factor in choosing this topic. Another factor was the author's active participation in society and civic associations, giving her an intimate view of the participation and visibility of Roma women for more than ten years.

Background: The Roma in Finland

An estimated 10,000 Roma live in Finland and an additional 3,000–4,000 Finnish Roma live in Sweden. The Roma have lived in Finland since the 1500s. Although in Finland, the Roma are an established Finnish minority with rights secured by legislation, the status of the Roma population has been clearly different from that of the majority of the population. The Roma were persecuted in Finland during 1600 to 1800. Active efforts to raise the status of the Roma were begun only a hundred years ago, at which time governmental committees were established. These committees gave their reports in 1900 and 1955. Both reports came to almost the same conclusion, that only by assimilation could the Roma become acceptable members of society. Without active and enlightened majority activists, Roma policies might not have changed from assimilation to participation.

In 1956, the Finnish government founded the Advisory Board for Gypsy Affairs (later the Advisory Board on Romani Affairs), which, at that point, had only one Roma member. The Advisory Board for Roma Affairs celebrated its 50th anniversary in April 2006 (Advisory Board on Romani Affairs, 2006). The most important issues that the board handles are housing and education, as well as the status of the Roma language and culture.

The social and educational standing of the Roma improved with the founding of the Romany Education Unit within the National Board of Education in 1994. The most important function of the Unit has been to represent expertise in the fields of education and culture; the Unit influences educational planning to ensure basic and occupational education of the Roma. The Unit no longer exists in its previous form, but a small team still works within the National Board of Education, concentrating on Roma educational and cultural affairs.

The organisation of the Finnish Roma has been rather slow. The past ten years have been the most active, manifested by the founding of almost twenty associations.

The oldest Roma association in Finland is 100 years old and the most recent just a year. The activities of six national associations and about twenty local associations fall into three main categories: Christian, cultural, and social activities.

Roma women in Finland and in Europe

Roma women have a major, visible role in Roma society in bringing up children and in setting an example of how to be an active citizen. Roma women have the capability to negotiate in official situations, simple or complicated, and local authorities have welcomed this capability on many occasions. The participation of Roma women has also increased internationally, where they have actively promoted their own affairs and brought a Roma point of view into discussions on social affairs and human rights. One can find dozens of Roma women's' organisations in Europe at the moment, but only one international one, the International Roma Women Network, founded in 2003, and in which the author has actively worked as a secretary and a publicist. In Finland, Roma women have only one local association – in Turku, founded in 2000 – and one national organisation – Kromana. Both of these Christian organisations are quite young and time will tell how they affect the position of Roma women on a local or national level.

In 2003, the first and the most extensive report on Roma women in Europe was published. This report, "Breaking the Barriers – Roma Women and Access to Public Health Care" (OSCE, CoE, EUMC, 2003), was the first cooperative effort between The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe minority ombudsman's office, the European Union's immigration and Romany affairs department, and the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia. This work serves as a great example of successful local cooperation where intergovernmental organisations pool their expertise and resources. However, without active input by Roma women, both as participants and mediators, in the making of this report, it probably would not have turned out to be so extensive and informative.

Another, larger European Union project was coordinated by the European Migration Centre in Berlin. This institute investigated the social and economic status of Roma women in 15 European countries between the fall of 2005 and spring of 2006. Of the Nordic countries, Sweden was chosen and the present author was responsible for conducting the research. The results (European Migration Centre, 2006) clearly show that social and economic status directly affect the ways in which Roma women take part in society and how social inclusion efforts will succeed.

Equality and anti-discrimination legislation in Finland

Improving the social status of the Roma by governmental means is a rather recent development in Finland. Only in the 1970s were the Roma recognised as a national minority group. Legislation to secure their position was even slower to follow.

A general change in attitude is visible in national legislation. Article 5 of the Constitution that took effect in 1995 has a universal prohibition of discrimination: "No one can be treated unequally on the grounds of gender, age, origin, language, religion, conviction, opinion, health, disability or other reason relating to the person"

(Vuori and Zegers de Beijl, 1996). In addition, Article 14(3) of the Constitution guarantees the right of minorities to their own culture: "The Sami as an indigenous people and the Roma and other groups have the right to maintain and develop their culture and language" (Vuori and Zegers de Beijl, 1996). Discrimination has been a criminal offence in Finland since 1999. "Article 11(9) of the Criminal Code states that if a public official or servant does not treat everyone equally, regardless of their race, national or ethnic origin, skin colour, language, gender, religion or other comparable reason, he or she shall be issued a fine or convicted to serve a prison term of up to six months. At Article 47(3), the Criminal Code also provides for punishment of discrimination in employment" (ENAR, 2002, p. 4).

According to the Constitution, amended in 2000, no one can be treated unequally without acceptable cause on the grounds of gender, age, origin, language, religion, conviction, opinion, health, disability. Another important amendment in the Constitution is the right of the Sami and the Roma to maintain and develop their culture and language. This amendment has been crucial for reviving the Roma language. The legislation also includes reinforcing the cultural identity of Roma children in day care and in school. The Day Care Act supports the language and culture, and the Education Act supports the status of the Roma language as a mother tongue. These acts are major advances for the development of Roma status.

Roma rights in Finland

The government has continued its work on the promotion of the Roma people and their rights, both on a national level and internationally. It is gratifying that European Network Against Racism has taken Roma women as a separate group in their Shadow report on Finland (ENAR, 2004). They discuss the difficulties that Roma women face in education and working life, stating that, "Women should be seen as individuals, not as representatives of an ethnic group only, and recognition of the needs of Roma women should be supported both in education and the labour market. The future will largely be defined by the attention given to Roma women's issues, as women play an important role in children's education and as mediators of cultural heritage" (ENAR, 2004, p. 32).

The Aim and Content of the Study

The aim of the study reported here is to identify how Roma women participate in Finnish society and what problems they face in doing so. The group selected for participation was a small sample of Roma women living in southern Finland. The study is descriptive and qualitative. A descriptive study will document interesting features or detailed descriptions of people, situations, or incidents. This study aims to yield more information on a subject that has not been studied before in Finland and, possibly, to bring forth suggestions from Roma women to improve their opportunities for more efficient and more visible participation in Finnish society. The women interviewed were a good sample of Roma women in the area, as they were at an active age and represented both traditional and non-traditional women, as well as Roma and "half Roma."

Methodology

I conducted ten interviews based on structured questionnaires. Interviews proved to be a more meaningful way of finding answers for the Roma women than checking a box in the forms, as was the original plan. I gleaned considerably more information on their thoughts on the subjects as they relaxed and voiced their opinions, instead of following a rigid set of printed questions.

Interview questions

I asked only four questions to each participant, allowing the participant to provide whatever information seemed relevant.

1. How actively do Roma women participate in the activities of society or associations or the church?
2. Do Roma women have difficulties in participating in society?
3. Do Roma women face discrimination?
4. Do you have any suggestions for improving opportunities to participate?

Results and discussion

I review the results for each question. Recommendations are presented separately.

1. Participation of Roma women in society, associations, and church.

According to all ten interviews the activity and visibility of Roma women has increased in Finnish society during the past few years. Local and national Roma associations and different Roma projects coordinated by different parties have employed Roma rather well, but these jobs are often short-term employment and subsidised by employment funds. Roma women are involved in local and national advisory boards of Roma affairs. The interviewees also all agreed that women are more and more interested in what is happening around them, but without heavier investment into raising their level of education, equal participation in society will be difficult.

Of the women I interviewed, about a half were actively or occasionally involved in spiritual activities. Generally, a great number of Roma women are visibly involved in the Pentecostal movement, as preachers, singers, and musicians in musical groups and camp activities. For some of the Pentecostal activists, this activity has raised their level of activity in other areas of society.

All the women that I interviewed agreed that in all areas of society, participation is weakest for the Roma in the political field, and they agreed on the reasons. One reason is the tendency of not keeping up with daily politics. Another reason is a low level of general knowledge, as many have a very limited school education. A third reason is the lack of confidence in one's potential. Finally, yet not least, is the passivity of their community, for example, when it comes to voting.

No Roma has yet been voted into Parliament, although some have been listed as candidates. On a municipal level, some politically active Roma have attained office, among them a few women. In general, politics have not been an area of interest among the Roma, apart from a few exceptions; only recently has interest grown.

2. Problems that Roma women face when participating in society.

The interviewees clearly expressed their opinion that the educational level of Roma in Finland is very low, and that makes finding a job rather difficult. The fact that the Roma have a low level of education throughout Europe compared to the rest of the population is common knowledge. Anyone familiar with the Roma culture and tradition knows that Roma families also often lack a tradition for education as well as role models in this area, which also slows down the development of the education level. Without the basic skills taught in school, controlling the direction of life is very difficult. Even when the right for political participation is secured, as it is in Finland, participation is practically impossible without basic skills.

The interviews showed that many Roma women and children are totally dependent on social services and benefits, having housing and health problems. Many families are not able to break the poverty cycle, especially in single parent households and large families. Social services and social workers also have problems in fulfilling families' needs and wishes adequately, which even today are often due to ignorance, whereas earlier it was due to patronising Roma politics. Half of the women that I interviewed pointed out that many Roma families have few or weak contacts with the majority population, and close relationships with neighbours and the surrounding society are lacking. All the women that I interviewed also pointed out that exercise is not a traditional part of the daily lives of the Roma, which manifests itself in the poor health of both children and adults, as well as in passivity in controlling one's life.

3. Discrimination towards Roma women.

The status of Roma women in Finland is poor, even though it is better than in many Eastern and Central European countries. In the Nordic countries, the Roma population has the same rights and responsibilities as the rest of the citizens. However, Roma women face discrimination almost daily in shops and public places. In the interviews, the women talked about discrimination, but not as much as I had expected. The most common method of discrimination mentioned was indirect, where the women felt watched and talked about. On the other hand, the women mentioned direct discrimination in applying for jobs.

Recommendations to Improve Roma Women's Participation in Finland

The recommendations gathered here are those from the Roma participants in connection with the interviews and discussions, as well as the researcher's comments. After discussion of the participant recommendations, I have added my own that I see topical and worth mentioning.

Recommendations from interviewees

A number of recommendations were suggested by interviewees.

- To promote the status of Roma women and to encourage their participation, a special, unofficial diplomatic team should be founded with members from governmental offices and educated Roma women activists. This team would

bridge the gap between Roma and public policy. Wikipedia (Wikipedia, 2007) defines diplomacy as "the art and practice of conducting negotiations between representatives of groups or states." In an informal or social sense, diplomacy is the employment of tact to gain strategic advantage, one set of tools being the phrasing of statements in a non-confrontational or polite manner. The role of a Roma woman is often to bridge relations between authorities, officials, and the Roma. This could be a form of public diplomacy.

- Classes for Roma women to complete comprehensive school should be arranged in such a way that taking part would not stretch their financial resources too much. Only after basic education, they could apply for education in vocational classes. The attitude towards education among Roma women has grown more favourable, but financial issues often prevent their seeking further education. They need financial support, as very few are entitled to adult student funding.

- Roma women want classes geared towards women, classes where they can learn useful skills or update their own skills, as well as discussion groups and peer groups where they could discuss their affairs. A new interest in physical education classes has arisen and a dire need exists for instructors for those classes.

- Classes for Roma women should be arranged to encompass self, to teach how to take control of one's life, to educate regarding human rights, to show how to participate in politics, and to become an active member of society.

Recommendations by the researcher

Based on the study reported here, and on my own experience, I have a number of recommendations.

- Roma women have been active for several years in the advisory boards for Roma affairs (national and local boards). Positive feedback has also come from local Roma cooperation teams in western Finland where these teams are active in ten communities; they have proven to be a good and efficient means of cooperation. Cross-administrative cooperation groups should be founded in every town with a Roma population.

- To date, no studies have been conducted in Finland into Roma women's social and economical status or health, let alone their educational needs. These studies would be useful in focusing resources and actions into problem areas. National surveys on the socioeconomic situation of Roma women, on the health of Roma women, and on the educational needs of Roma women should be conducted.

- Finland does not have a specific education, health, and employment policy or program for the Roma population, but it might be useful to have such policies in place. It would be easier for communities to follow a plan made with the needs of the Roma population in mind.

- Hiring educated and qualified Roma women in permanent posts in both governmental and municipal levels would improve the status of Roma. The

educated Roma women in Finland are capable of working as civil servants. In addition to having knowledge of the Roma culture, we need their expertise in other areas, such as employment, health, and education. Through retraining and apprenticeship training, those who already have posts could obtain qualifications for their work and, thus, reconsider their scope of activities – allowing work done to promote Roma affairs to be done with even higher standards.

Conclusion

Often, the only visibility that Roma women in Finland have has been due to the fancy traditional costume; it has been only during the past ten years that we have stepped into the limelight as ourselves, as Roma women expressing our opinion and giving interviews in matters that concern us. To me, that has been one of the most positive steps toward increasing visibility. Perhaps in the future, the media will be more interested in the opinions of the Roma, for example, on daily politics, which is becoming more of an interest for the Roma as well.

This limited study shows quite clearly that the reason for the lack of participation in society among Roma women is not ignorance of how Finnish society works. The reason has been, rather, the lack of interest among the Roma in things happening outside their own communities. The most important object of interest is still the family, but nowadays more interest is apparent in participating, in creating, and in influencing the society in which we live.

Roma associations, the national Advisory Board for Roma Affairs and the local advisory boards, are good platforms for Roma to voice their opinions, but how far do they hear the voices of individual Roma, especially if the board members are the same people year after year? Founding Roma cooperative teams in towns with Roma populations would give more Roma the opportunity to have input on decisions concerning them as well as to learn and to practice public diplomacy while working the same field towards common goals with decision-makers.

Other points that the study brought forth are the low educational level and poor economic situation, which promote marginalisation. We should encourage and support Roma women, both within the Roma community and outside of it, to take part in basic and vocational education, as well as general education that would promote integration with the majority population. Roma families are in need of role models, such as well-educated, successful young people that younger children could look up to and follow as an example.

Roma women often have poor health. Taking care of the home and daily chores keep women at home and taking care of themselves does not get enough attention. Roma women need help and support in keeping healthy, so that they could have the energy to study and work, and, thus, be more active in Finnish society.

This limited study clearly demonstrates that Roma women recognise their importance as mediators, and how skilfully they actually use public diplomacy in their lives. In the future, as the educational level of Roma women improves, I hope and believe that in many cases acting as a mediator will become an actual job for which they will be paid.

References

Advisory Board on Romani Affairs. (2006). *50th anniversary*. Publication 2006:5. Helsinki, Finland: Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, Finland.

European Migration Centre. (2005) *Report on economic aspects of the condition of Roma women*. Project number: IP/C/FEMM/2005–09 prepared for European Parliament DG of Internal Policies Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs (RMD 3 J 24/26).

European Network Against Racism [ENAR]. (2002). *ENAR shadow report for Finland 2001* [online]. Available from: http://www.enar.eu.org/en/national/finland/Report%20OF%20FINLAND%202001.pdf [Accessed 15 March 2007].

European Network Against Racism [ENAR]. (2004). *Shadow report 2004, Finland* [online]. Available from: http://www.enar-eu.org/en/national/finland/finland2004.enOK.pdf [Accessed 15 March 2007].

Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, Council of Europe, European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia [OSCE, CoE, EUMC]. (2003). *Breaking the barriers – Romani women and access to public health care*. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

Vuori, K. and Zegers de Beijl, R. (1996). *Protecting (im)migrants and ethnic minorities from discrimination in employment: Finnish and Swedish experiences* [online]. Available from: http://wwwilomirror.cornell.edu/public/english/protection/migrant/download/imp/imp14.pdf [Accessed 11 April 2007].

Wikipedia. (2007). *Diplomacy* [online]. Available from: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diplomacy [Accessed 15 March 2007].

Removing the Veil over European Union Monies: Challenges of Roma to Access of Structural Funds in Hungary

Gyula Vamosi

Piroska is a kind, Hungarian woman in her 40s managing a small, but ample store in Meszes, the notorious Gypsy ghetto of Pecs, where local housewives can purchase food on credit. They always spend their child benefit payments and even more at Piroska's store and immediately pay the debt after collecting the social benefits that are their only regular income. Ibolya, one of my aunts, is a habitual client of Piroska with several other Romani mothers. As well, Papusha, a Romani mother of four, obtains out-dated yogurt for free and distributes it regularly to Romani children in the community – the only dessert to which they have access. The consumption of expired products by many Romani families has become routine. In Craiova, Romania, Roma families live in garbage dumps where "eating from the garbage is normal for almost everybody" (Nicolae, 2005). Funds provided by the European Social Fund and the Hungarian government will combat this reality, which is a daily feature of numerous Romani families across the Central and East European region.

Meanwhile, leaders of projects addressing the problems of Romani communities are moving into larger houses, driving classier cars, or taking fancy vacations in Cuba. Brochures, conferences, and websites are normally major elements of projects in which politicians can participate to gain more votes for their party. Members of Romani communities continue to face poverty and discrimination in employment and health and confront segregation in housing (European Commission, 2004). No research has examined how Roma communities have benefited from the more than 300 billion Hungarian Forints of grants invested during 2004-2006 by Hungarian state organs and the European Commission in Hungary to achieve social inclusion of the Roma (National Development Agency, 2007).

Analysing the project results issued by the National Development Agency this year (National Development Agency, 2007), I realised that, as part of the first National Action Plan 2004-2006, the Hungarian government has provided 1,083,280,347 Hungarian Forints out of 317,499,386,693 Forints to Romani civil society organisations. This was done under two national measures of social inclusion within the European Social Fund: the Human Resources Development Operational Programme (HRDOP) (HRDOP, 2007) and the Regional Development Operational Programme (RDOP) (RDOP, 2007). The proportion is obviously low when compared to the significance of the issue. During the decade, 1997 to 2007, hundreds of conferences have been organised; convincing political speeches have been delivered; and thousands of compelling articles and books have been published about Roma discrimination in fields of health, housing, education, and employment. Moreover, billions of euros have been invested; nonetheless, no one can explain why those funds have not reached the Roma.

The primary purpose of this paper is to explore the challenges Hungarian Roma communities confront in accessing EU monies and to make a brief review of HRDOP-

and RDOP-funded Roma project results. I reveal a concealed story concerning the Hungarian branch of the HRDOP and the RDOP that should not remain hidden from the public. I do so only to promote my major objective, to underline that grassroots Romani civil society organisations typically participate as marionettes in development partnerships. Exceptions occur only when the chair or a good friend of the leader of a Romani organisation occupies an important political position. As well, I explore present-day obstacles of Roma community organisational access to European Union funds. The discussion of impediments will explain why European Union monies do not reach Romani communities and, thus, why the Hungarian government and the European Commission cannot achieve social inclusion through the current system of tax redistribution.

In conclusion, I outline steps that could improve the capacities of Romani grassroots organisations, as well as their competitiveness for access to European Union funds. With these improvements, not only would more Romani organisations access Structural Funds, but they would make better and more concrete use of monies. I finally pinpoint further areas of research to provide a deeper analysis of the impediments.

Challenges to Roma Organisations

Romani community-based organisations have faced numerous obstacles since 2004, the year of the implementation of the First National Action Plan of Hungary (2004-2006) regarding Structural Funds (Horvath and Hudomiet, 2005). Due to the number of challenges, very few organisations can initiate or participate in a development partnership. Organisations wishing to apply for EU funds by joint efforts will have to set up their own partnerships. Nevertheless, most Romani community organisations are unable to establish one as they do not possess necessary educational, administrative, or financial capacities, and they have to confront biased political decisions and corruption. Lack of experience with large-scale projects and lack of skills relevant to online information research and assessment, project development, project management and administration, and budgeting – as well as lack of education in general – are major features of many Romani community members and leaders (Horvath and Hudomiet, 2005).

Failure of participation in development projects

Sham participation yields sham social inclusion. The only way Romani communities can benefit from projects is through an integral involvement and substantial participation in them. Nevertheless, organisations of Romani communities can become only flimsy partners in development partnerships.

My consulting activities with Romani community organisations and my experience in project evaluation strongly suggest that the only reason for many development partnership leaders to use Romani organisations or Roma minority self-governments as partners in Hungary is to gain additional credibility for proposals submitted to evaluation committees. Participation of Roma in such partnerships normally does not include more than signing the proposal, the contract, and attendance sheets, thus

confirming Roma participation in projects to the Hungarian government and to the European Commission in Brussels. In the meantime, Roma communities remain a decoration on the cake, as they are not involved in making decisions or in developing the project plan. They perform only an insignificant portion of the activities, have minor responsibilities, and receive a small amount of funding. For example, either one person receives a salary (not more than the minimum wage) in the course of the implementation, or for only a period of it, and may receive access to a computer. Unfortunately, no research has studied the effectiveness of Roma involvement in development partnerships; nor are details issued by state authorities regarding how Roma communities have actually benefited from HRDOP- and RDOP-funded programmes.

Roma people are diverse and divided and Roma leaders are unable to reach a minimum consensus regarding what strategy they should use to advocate effectively the rights of the Roma people. As Romnet (2007), the Roma News Portal website, also demonstrates, public fights between leading Roma politicians occupying chair positions in national Roma organisations have become general. They follow the trend of numerous majority politicians and do not work for goals of social integration as a top priority, but primarily for providing sufficient political and financial support for their political allies. In any case, it does not make a difference whether a Romani or non-Romani entity leads a development partnership. Neither can accomplish more than the symbolic participation of Romani civil organisations and thus EU funds are absorbed by entities having an influence over decision-making.

Challenge of political control

In a fierce battle for power, both left- and right-wing political parties exploit European Union funds. Schopflin (2001, p. 15) claims that "power nowadays resides in information, in ideas, in ability to manipulate concepts and to persuade others to act, rather than force them to do so." Politicians applied various means in the communist era to force people to follow a specific political direction in Central and Eastern Europe. Today, however, this is impossible if one wishes to stay in authority. Instead, politicians support entities collecting thousands of votes for them by influencing decisions over funds that grantees receive. Structural Funds compose a significant part of the lawfully accessible financial resources that indirectly or directly may enhance the capacities of political decision-makers.

The adage, "From one pocket to the other," has grown into an idiom in Hungary to describe politicians' approaches to the use of public money. It indicates that politicians always discover methods to put taxes into their own or their political associates' pockets. Survey results show that many Hungarians believe the primary beneficiaries in development partnerships are often people who themselves or whose close relatives, good friends, or political companions fill a political position from which they can influence decisions made regarding a given project (Vati Kht, 2005).

This phenomenon is possibly exemplified by the first RDOP grant contract signed in Hungary. In November 2002, a grant of 1.5 billion Forints was provided to Pecs Sopianae Heritage Kht for the management of world heritage locations of Pecs by the

municipality of Pecs (Orokseg Haz RDOP-Pecs, 2006). Among the partners of the project, the Municipality of the City of Pecs and the Municipality of Baranya County were involved. The head of the lead organisation, as well as the mayor of Pecs and the head of the county municipality were prominent members of the Hungarian Socialist Party, which, at that time, was in government. Members of the socialist party had led Pecs Council since 1998. The city of Pecs is believed to have the strongest socialist influence in the country as leading politicians of the city also occupy important decision-making positions in the national socialist party. Thus, it is possible that this affiliation influenced political decisions regarding the distribution of Structural Funds.

Political processes and practices also influence Roma politicians. Other examples suggest a linkage between political position and the decision over who can become a RDOP or HRDOP grantee in the Roma field. Investigating project results of HRDOP and RDOP measures published on the website of the National Development Agency (2007), one sees that between 2004 and 2006, the amount of HRDOP and RDOP funds provided to beneficiaries of development partnerships set up by Roma is highest in counties in which the Roma with the highest political position resides. During 2004 to 2006, seven of the 44 RDOP and HRDOP grants, accounting for more than 25% of the entire grant amount given to the Romani community, were given to members of the Romani community in Zala county. Laszlo Teleki, State Secretary for Roma Affairs between 2002 and 2006 is a resident of this county. The county receiving the second-most amount of HRDOP and RDOP funds is Borsod-Abauj-Zemplen County with 12%, and the third, Baranya County with 9%.

Rudko Kawczynski, president of the European Roma and Travellers' Forum alleged at a conference in Budapest that Roma politicians are purchased by major political parties and do not advocate real rights of Roma, but become followers of majority parties. He continued by adding that Teleki, the Hungarian State Secretary of Roma Affairs, is a symbol of native Americans' taking up the cowboys' side (Kawczynski, 2002), by which he meant that some native American leaders have taken positions under the white reign, rather than represented interests of their own people.

Corruption

Gyurcsany Ferenc, Hungarian Prime Minister, made a declaration on national media outlets in March 2007 regarding a new policy to curtail the so-called my friend-my brother culture in public spheres (Magyar Radio Online, 2007). This declaration has generated a fierce discussion both in the media and on the Internet. In these discussions, some claim that it is impossible to fight the my friend-my brother culture in Hungary and that the practice makes people compete for appreciation, rather than for the goals of work. Often, they say, we can find instances where the partner or a closely related relative of a decision-making politician manages an organisation that receives European Union funding. Nevertheless, no cases have ever been taken to court, even though public opinion is convinced of its severity (Magyar ATV, 2007).

Lack of strategy

Neither governments nor political parties ever become successful without a strategy. Romani political leaders still have not found the common denominator to conceptualise mid- and long-term strategies and to identify common goals and objectives. Having consulted both Romani community organisations and Roma political leaders throughout the country, I have experienced in the past 10 years that Roma leaders lose ties with the broad Romani community and pursue their individual political and financial interests by either joining major political parties or recruiting a small group of Roma leaders around them. Thus, any endeavour undertaken by grassroots communities to improve their own fates and that of their fellow citizens is overwhelmed by political forces.

For instance, local majority forces defeated the protest of a local Romani community by pressuring the leader. Istvan Horvath, the leader of the Roma Managers' Professional Association in Debrecen, North-East Hungary, organised a protest with 300 Romani against corruption in 1999 (Ashoka Hungary, 2002). This act generated widespread public discussion in Hungary and the local leaders in Debrecen could not find other ways to appease the rebellious spirit of the unified Romani community, except by providing all support requested by Horvath. Today his organisation successfully gains European Union funds and attracts international donors. He has attained several political positions and leads a local TV programme for Romani people. Nevertheless, the protest did not reach its original goals, as the community still does not possess significant political power and do not have Roma representatives in the local municipality. Fragmentation of Romani leaders will exist until the birth of a financially independent, educated group of Romani leaders who are able to unite their own interests with community goals.

No project owners

Consulting several development partnerships targeting Romani communities, I experienced that Romani community-based groups are not owners of the process of project development and implementation; they are either not invited to participate in the partnership or become partners that are delegated minute and insignificant activities. As a result, the motto, "Nothing about us without us," is gradually becoming commonplace in proposals targeting Romani people.

Recruitment of people from Romani communities and prevention of withdrawal from programmes are general issues with which development partnerships implementing Roma programmes have to struggle. However, if a development partnership were to include community-level organisations in their partnership and tasks, allocating responsibilities and finances so that the community can feel treated as an equal partner, then probably partnership leaders would have less difficulty in retaining Romani members.

Undereducated leaders

Although no research has examined the educational level of Roma political leaders, my work with the current president of the National Gypsy Self-Government and with the vice presidents and the leaders of national Romani groups confirms that the majority of both national and local Roma leaders have a low level of education. Most Romani community organisations cannot develop proposals for HRDOP and RDOP measures, as they are simply undereducated. As well, they have no financial means to maintain a staff having sufficient education and experience to gain EU funds for their programmes. Nevertheless, a few organisations chaired by members of the Romani community are capable of developing EU proposals by hiring non-Romani staff to locate every fundraising opportunity. In rare cases, these organisations also contract external organisations to carry out project development. The major problem in both cases is the lack or low participation of Romani leaders in building the activities, schedule, and budget of the project. Negative consequences follow. For example, in my own work I have encountered numerous proposals submitted by Roma organisations that include racist statements. I have seen: "This project aims to instruct Roma about how to carry out hygienic activities in their own household." It is obvious that Romani leaders have not read many proposals officially signed and stamped by them.

When he was a programme coordinator of the Roma Participation Programme at the Open Society Institute, Sejdo Jasarov claimed that non-Roma opinion-makers and politicians treat educated young Roma in Hungary as circus monkeys. According to Jasarov, they state that the only reason why these few young Roma managed to attain a university-level education is that, unlike average Roma, they are talented (Jasarov, 1998). Janos Bogdan, founder and the first director of Gandhi High School, Pecs, Hungary, stated that young Roma university graduates would become competitors of the older generation of Romani politicians and will have to face political opposition in work for social inclusion (Bogdan, 1998).

My experience suggests that the attitude of many non-Roma leaders and intellectuals is biased and I agree with the statement of Jasarov. I participated as a student in the autumn of 2003 at a seminar on Hungarian Minority Law at the Faculty of Law in Pecs. A general opinion of non-Roma students attending was that most Roma people do not want education or to find a job for themselves because they are lazy and happy to receive social benefits.

I also share the opinion of Bogdan that educated Roma have to face the opposition of undereducated Romani leaders. As a member of Romaversitas, a programme for elite Roma university students, I have encountered positions stating that young, educated Roma are stuck between two ways, that of the Romani and that of non-Romani opinion-makers. On one hand, non-Romani people cannot deal with intellectuality of Romani people as they hold negative stereotypes about Roma – they are dirty, thieves, and undereducated. On the other hand, educated Roma are not accepted by Roma leaders as they might mean political opposition for them in the future. Thus, many educated Roma decide not to declare their identities publicly and do not contribute to the Roma movement. Nonetheless, mention should be made of

the increasing number of educated young Roma returning to their communities who use their skills for the benefit of Romani people.

Lack of computer skills

To overcome computer illiteracy and issues of project development and implementation resulting from lack of education, Roma organisations rely on hiring educated non-Romani. An indication of this trend is that one can see young non-Roma university students or graduates sitting behind computers in Roma offices.

In the present era in which information is vital, most Roma leaders lack the basic skills of computer use. I have encountered Romani leaders who have no understanding of how to switch on a computer, not to mention the effective use of search engines, emails, and eGroups and, thus, they do not participate in the virtual world of information. As leaders of local community-based organisations, they do not have access to the Internet and, without computer skills, are unable to use the computer effectively to identify useful and important information on the Internet. This challenge generates additional difficulties for Romani communities in acquiring funds. Roma community members will have no thorough understanding of proposal announcements and others must interpret them. This is another reason why project leaders can use Romani community organisations for their own benefit, with social integration falling into secondary relevance.

No skills in information assessment and use

Romani leaders do not know how to assess and use online information, which becomes important in project development and implementation. Romani organisations are, of course, aware that proposal announcements regarding Structural Funds are published on the Internet; nevertheless, in certain cases, they do not fathom this source. Even if they can access this information, once an organisation locates a website, it faces numerous downloadable documents. To download these documents, one will not only have to read hundreds of pages, but also understand the content. Only few Romani organisations have Roma leaders or staff members able to access and digest the relevant information, and who have a thorough understanding of the given field of Romani issues.

No experience with large-scale projects

Romani organisations are incapable of taking the lead in developing and implementing EU-funded programmes as they have a lack of experience in running large-scale projects. Experience is a significant aspect of evaluating proposals. An applicant must submit documentation along with a proposal to justify that the applicant has already managed large-scale projects.

Consequently, Romani community organisations cannot become lead applicants and, therefore, have no option but to become partners in development partnerships. Educational institutions, foundations, and municipalities sometimes request Romani organisations to join their development partnership; however, this is normally because a given proposal announcement favours the participation of a Romani organisation or minority self-government.

Budgeting of projects

The world rotates around money and projects revolve around budgets. No record is available on the number of local Romani community organisations that have participated in development partnerships nor can we find details about what experience Romani organisations have gained in developing budgets. We should consider the fact that very few Romani community-based grantees can be found in Hungary. As well, no community-level Romani groups have initiated partnerships and developed proposals. Consequently, Romani organisations do not participate in developing budgets.

A common practice of Romani organisations is to delegate the task of project development and budget design to experts specialised in developing proposals. However, project planning and the construction of budgets is an essential component in establishing the sense of ownership, obligation, and responsibility of all stakeholders. Experts should assist only with the principles and guidelines followed when setting up a budget.

During my eRiding consultancy for organisations, carried out in collaboration with The Advocacy Project, I encountered cases in Mako, Balassagyarmat, Kecel, and Pecs where project leaders never consulted Romani organisations on budget matters, nor had any Romani organisations seen the proposal. Their participation in the development of the project idea and the proposal consisted of nothing but signing and stamping blank sheets of papers onto which the proposal would be printed. Although most Roma organisations I have interviewed claimed to have participated in shaping the project idea, in fact many had not read the proposals before submission.

Training with fictitious goals

Programmes are not tailored to circumstances of community members, but for project management, trainers, and training agencies. European Union–funded training is a fictitious component of projects and is only distantly related to the reality of Roma communities. Regrettably, the steering authorities of the Hungarian government have presented no data concerning the success of training and employment projects.

The goals and objectives of Structural Funds aiming to improve social inclusion have been invented in Western Europe and tailored to decrease inequality of opportunities between citizens. However, in Central and Eastern Europe Roma people are simply not in the position to attend a training programme lasting for months without sufficient support for their families. "One out of every two Roma in the countries surveyed, goes hungry at least a few days every year. One out of six is constantly starving. Health in Roma communities sharply deteriorated in the last decade. . . . The infant mortality is frighteningly high" (United Nations Information Service, 2003).

Roma programmes funded by the European Union have created tension in society. Critical voices claim that Roma receive considerable support while poor people of Hungarian origin are excluded from state support. Even so, public opinion is rarely informed about the reality of Roma families, which is very similar to Sub-Saharan conditions (United Nations Information Service, 2003).

The allocation of HRDOP and RDOP funds have given birth to a small group of "whiz-kids" in the Romani community who have become specialised in attending training programmes financed by the European Union and the Hungarian government. The same people participate in training programmes on the same subject, but managed by different development partnerships. Two years ago a Romani girl from Bataszek, Tolna County, Hungary attended two Romani language and two European Computer Driving License programmes at the same time. On discovery, she was requested to repay costs of the driver training, as she had not taken the final exam. In her reply, she produced her computer certificate received after participating and taking the exam successfully under the aegis of another development partnership.

Project managers of the first National Action Plan still have not identified a method to reach the most vulnerable and the most isolated Romani communities with their programmes. Nevertheless, it is important to do so. The entire group of Vlach Romani people, who constitute 20%–25% of the Hungarian Gypsy population, remains unapproached by any programme.

Excessive bureaucracy

Administration of a project is the major focus of development partnerships and, thus, goals and objectives of social inclusion gain a secondary significance. Therefore, project management should pay careful attention to sharing roles and responsibilities of project coordination and implementation. In reality, they can rarely find community leaders for such positions who are both educated and committed to project goals. The best solution would be employment of people who are members of the target group itself. However, they tend to pay salaries to their own colleagues working in the office and contributing to project development, rather than to members of the Romani community.

According to the *Cambridge Advanced Learners' Dictionary*, subsidiarity is "the principle that decisions should always be taken at the lowest possible level or closest to where they will have their effect, for example, in a local area rather than nationally" (Cambridge Dictionaries Online, 2007). The European Commission is a decision-making body of the European Union having an extremely hierarchic and organised system of administration. Grantees take a high responsibility with the expenditure of public funds and are expected to maintain an administrative process similar to the one in Brussels.

According to HRDOP and RDOP grant contracts, all grantees are required to keep project documentation until 2013 (Tempus Kozalapitvany, 2006). This includes papers produced in the development, implementation, and follow-up phases of the project. The documentation should be administered in a clear and transparent way so that monitors, evaluators, state authorities, or other officials searching the project documentation could easily find a given paper that they need.

Monies for Roma do not reach Roma. Challenges Roma community organisations face in accessing EU monies are not explored by Hungarian government authorities. Nevertheless, if social inclusion of Roma people is a major concern of state organs,

then in the future it is necessary to make a thorough analysis of challenges Romani community organisations face in accessing EU funds.

Roma Project Results

As the Hungarian government has not published any data pertinent to grants provided for projects specifically targeting Romani communities, I used an online source available on the website of the Hungarian Development Agency that describes the results of funds provided under the budget of the European Social Funds (National Development Agency, 2007). I wanted to discover how many programmes targeting Romani communities were supported under two specific mandates: the HRDOP and the RDOP, as these two aimed for social inclusion. Three more national programmes operated in Hungary under the National Development Plan between 2004 and 2006, but social inclusion and integration were less significant within these. I also wanted to discover the number of Roma projects that are or have been led by Romani organisations and the number that have been managed by non-Romani entities.

I used a simple method and counted project titles signifying Romani people as a target group of the project. I also included the number of organisations with the term "Roma" or "Gypsy" in the name of the organisation. In order to find which of the Roma projects had been or are being managed by an organisation of the Romani community I used two methods. Autonomous bodies of Romani communities normally apply the term "Roma" or "Gypsy" in their names and, thus, this was an important factor in identifying Roma grantees. I double-checked all organisations in the list through the Internet. I should also add that the personal contacts and working experience I have gained during an 11-year consultation relationship with Romani organisations in Hungary has confirmed my classification in this process.

As Table 1 suggests, the entire number of grants under HRDOP and RDOP measures for the implementation of projects for Romani communities that target development in the field of employment is very small – in fact, less than 1.5% of the total. Figure 1 indicates that grantee organisations and institutions that have not been established by members of any Romani community have received three times more grants for Roma projects than Roma community organisations. This seems controversial, as social inclusion can be achieved most effectively if the target group is the beneficiary of funds. State authorities will not only have to consider the situation of Roma people as a priority of the National Action Plan, but will also have to generate methods to promote this goal. Figure 1 clearly demonstrates that present mechanisms, acting as gates to HRDOP and RDOP funds, are closed for local Romani organisations.

Figure 1: Distribution of HRDOP and RDOP Grants in Hungary up to February 2007

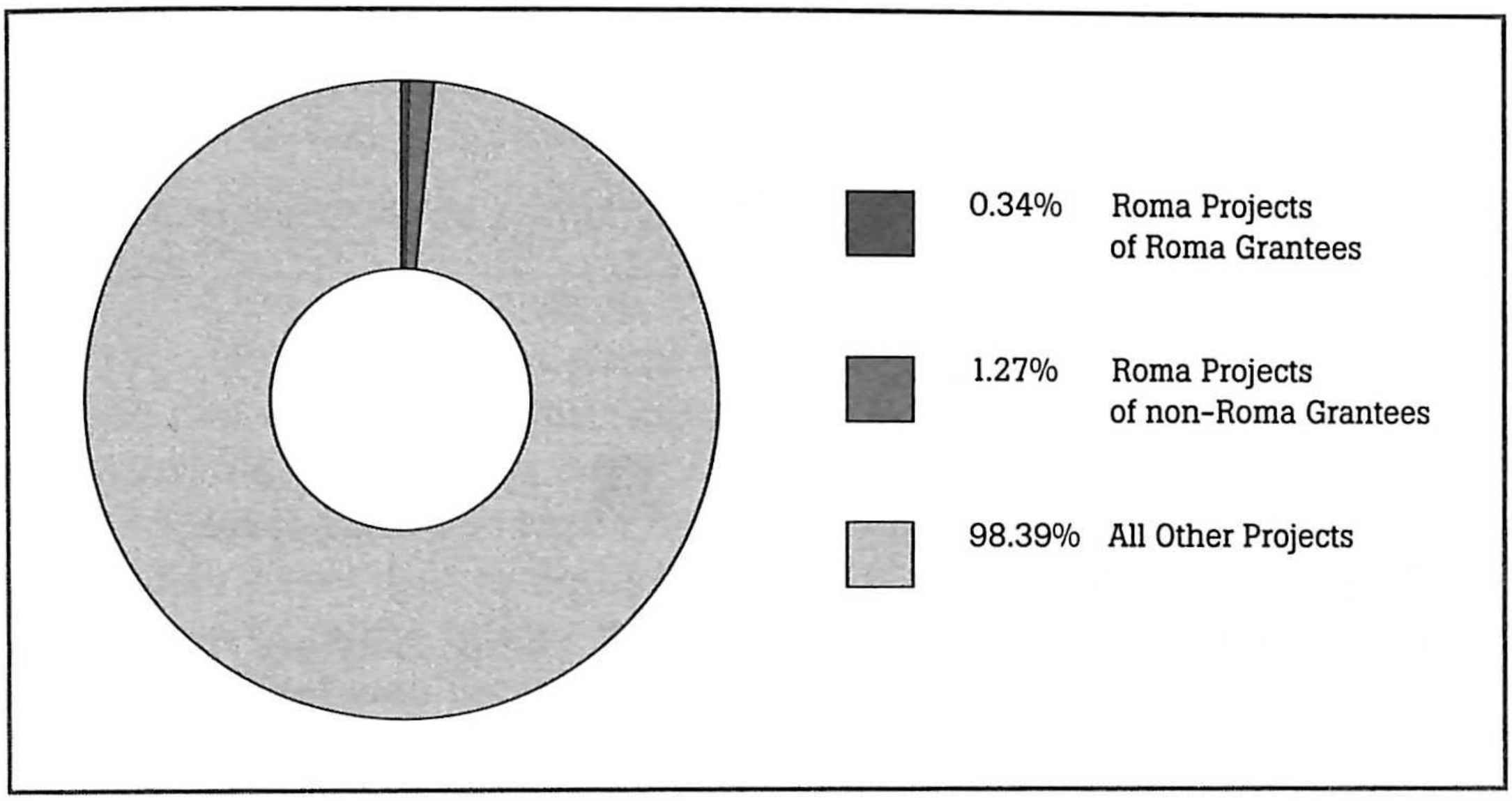


Table 1: Distribution of HRDOP and RDOP Grants

Distribution of HRDOP and RDOP Grants Approved in Hungary up to February 2007	Amount of Grant (Forints)	Distribution of Grants
All Projects	317 499 386 693	100%
Roma Projects of Roma Grantees	1 083 280 347	0.34%
Roma Projects of non-Roma Grantees	4 020 432 530	1.27%
All Roma Projects	5 103 712 877	1.61%

Figure 2 points out that in the period of the first National Action Plan (2004-2006), 19 organisations signed a grant contract with the HRDOP and RDOP steering authorities. Steering authorities have final authority over projects financed by Structural Funds. However, two times more Romani organisations signed similar contracts.

Figure 2: Distribution of HRDOP and RDOP Grantees up to February 2007

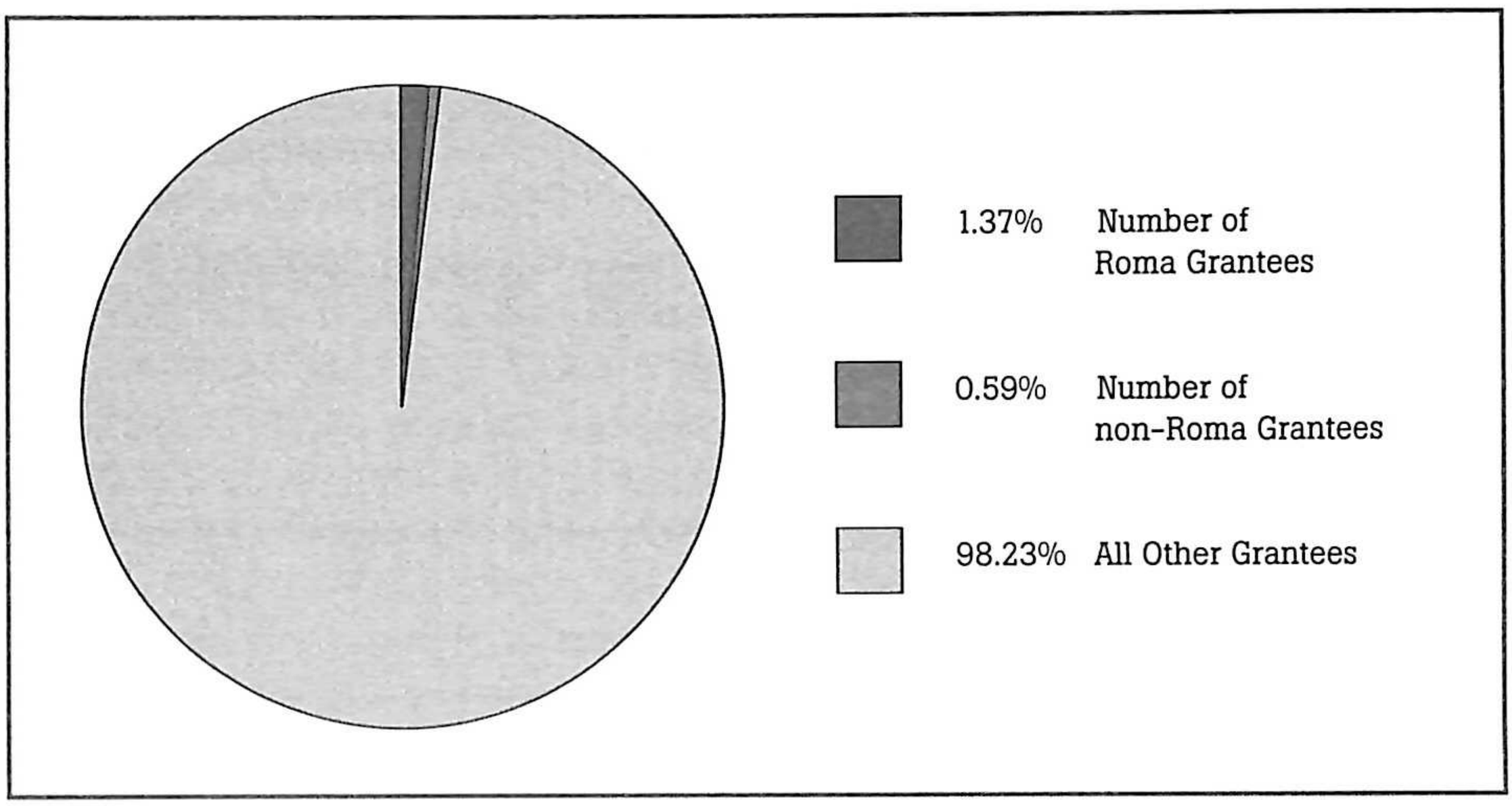


Table 2: Distribution of HRDOP and RDOP Grantees in Hungary up to February 2007

Distribution of HRDOP and RDOP Grantees in Hungary up to February 2007	Number of Grantees	Distribution of Grantees
All Grantees	3202	100%
Roma Grantees	44	1.37%
Non-Roma Grantees with a Roma Project	19	0.59%
All Grantees with a Roma Project	63	1.97%

One might be deceived by the figures in Table 2, as more than two times more Romani grantees received financial support from HRDOP and RDOP measures than non-Roma grantees. Nonetheless, if we compare this data to that in Table 1, where the amount of money provided for Roma and non-Roma grantees is indicated, we can see an uneven distribution of funds. Non-Roma grantees received almost four times more support than Roma for the implementation of projects targeting Romani communities.

The significance of social inclusion of the Romani people and their participation in the goals of integration into all fields of life is not reflected by HRDOP and RDOP project results. Although several documents of the Hungarian government emphasise the social issues of the Roma people, this emphasis is not reflected in funding allocation.

Conclusion

The review of challenges that Roma community organisations face in accessing European Social Funds under HRDOP and RDOP measures reveals a picture of accomplishments and failures. In this paper I intended to underline first, that state mechanisms do not take notice of challenges Romani community organisations confront in accessing EU funds, and second, that the level of funding for Roma projects is low. Third, I wished to highlight the ineffectiveness of existing projects aimed at helping Roma communities.

While more than five billion Hungarian Forints have been made available to 63 Roma-related development partnerships between 2004 and 2006, with few exceptions little progress has occurred. Even though two times more Romani grantees with a Roma project received funding than did non-Roma, clearly non-Roma grantees received four times more funding for Roma projects than did Roma organisations.

At the same time, the balance has shifted towards project management and away from the goals of Romani communities. Unfortunately, no research describes the ratio of salaries paid out to project management staff and the participating members of the Romani community. However, it is simple to understand the situation as members of the Romani community are undereducated and cannot occupy positions in management where salaries for management positions are three to six times higher than those for other project employees.

The banner of the National Development Agency website accentuates: "In the framework of the National Development Plan with the support of the European Union, new Hungary is constructed. 17 thousand 233 grant contracts, grant of 707.3 billion HUF, 54939 new places of employment, development in 1927 settlements" (National Development Agency, 2007). Nonetheless, no data are available regarding the number of workplaces generated under HRDOP and RDOP measures for Roma. To determine the usefulness of EU monies intended for social integration of Romani people, the National Development Agency should identify specifically how beneficial Roma projects have been. We should be able to understand whether EU monies have brought about change in the life of Romani families. For example, we should be able to determine if a given project has achieved improvement in family household income, in educational level, in stable housing, or in health conditions. Without a thorough analysis, statistics regarding project results can be extremely misleading and we cannot know whether figures indicate tangible success in terms of goals of integration.

Life is a theatre, says the famous adage, and distribution of European Union monies is similar, and very theatrical. The title of the play is "Social Inclusion of Roma," in which everyone has a role and is rewarded – except the Roma people. We find thousands of pages of sociological analyses, somewhat less about political participation and the human rights situation, but nothing about the number of Roma who participate in the development of programme goals, activities, and budget, and how many take part in implementation. We cannot find records of how many Romani people were paid a salary and how much, how many have been provided a job during the project period, or how many have stayed or found a job after the implementation of a project.

To promote the creation of a more efficient policy for HRDOP and RDOP monies, research should be conducted regarding the effectiveness of Structural Funds. No research analyses the amount of European Union monies invested by Hungarian state authorities to achieve social inclusion of Romani people and its concrete result. At the moment, we are unable to tell how much money was provided in the period of 2004-2006 for training and employing Roma and we have no details about how many and what types of training certificates have been provided and how many members of local Romani communities have been employed in the implementation and follow-up of development projects. It would be also interesting to see the amount of salaries paid out to project management and relate that to the amount of salaries paid out to the Roma target groups.

In the meantime, the focus on Romani inclusion is becoming tighter than ever before. Lavish studies grace our bookshelves. Staff members of international organisations have visited the eighth district in Budapest, which has become famous worldwide for its high density of Roma population and their difficult living conditions. For example, the High Commissioner of Human Rights from the Council of Europe, heads of the Gypsy and Travellers Division, and other officials have seen the situation of Romani families in Romani ghettos of the Balkans.

In this paper, I did not aim to list and analyse all the challenges Roma organisations face in accessing European Union funds. However, the obstacles listed suggest that both the Hungarian government and the European Commission should support the participation of Romani community organisations in development partnerships. These institutions should also carry out an analysis of Roma project results as HRDOP and RDOP projects promoting social inclusion are currently far from achieving their goals and objectives concerning the Roma population of Hungary.

References

Ashoka Hungary. (2002). *Horvath, Istvan* [online]. Available from: http://hungary.ashoka.org/hungary.ashoka.org/tagsag/Horvath_istvan.html [Accessed 15 March 2007].

Bogdan, J. (1998). *Future of young Roma at higher education. Intervention at the Romaversitas forum held in Budapest*. Budapest: Romaversitas.

Cambridge Dictionaries Online. (2007). *Cambridge advanced learner's dictionary* [online]. Available from: http://dictionary.cambridge.org/define.asp?key=79454&dict=CALD [Accessed 15 March 2007].

European Commission. (2004). *The situation of Roma in an enlarged European Union*. Brussels: European Commission Directorate-General for Employment and Social Affairs Unit D3.

Horvath, H. and Hudomiet, P. (2005). *Eselyegyenloseg a munkapiacon*. Budapest: Tarki.

Human Resource Development Operational Programme [HRDOP]. (2007). *Palyazati eredmenyek* [online]. Available from: http://www.hefop.hu/page.php?MenuID=16 [Accessed 22 March 2007].

Jasarov, S. (1998). *Future of young Roma at higher education. Intervention at the Romaversitas forum held in Budapest.* Budapest: Romaversitas.

Kawczynski, R. (2002). *EU eastern enlargement.* Intervention at the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Roma Conference held in Budapest November 10, 2005.

Magyar ATV. (2007). 2007.01.31. *Hianyok es kenyszerek* [online]. Budapest: ATV. Available from: http://www.atv.hu/friderikusz/?q=node/755 [Accessed 5 April 2007].

Magyar Radio Online. (2007). *Napi hirosszefoglalo 2007. 01. 31* [online]. Available from: http://www.radio.hu/read/212600 [Accessed 5 April 2007].

National Development Agency. (2007). *Project results* [online]. Available from: http://www.nfu.gov.hu/index.nfh?r=&v=&l=&d=&mf=&p=5578 [Accessed 22 March 2007].

Nicolae, V. (2005). *Internal market of the European Union and Roma minorities in the new member states and candidate countries: threat or opportunity?* Presentation at the Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung Roma Conference, Bratislava. Brussels: European Roma Information Office.

Orokseg Haz ROP-Pecs. (2006). *A Pecs/Sopiana Orokseg Kht* [online]. Available from: http://www.ROP-pecs.hu/ [Accessed 5 April 2007].

Regional Development Operational Programme [RDOP]. (2007). *Nyertes projektek* [online]. Available from: http://www.RDOP.hu/?p=nyertes_projektek&regio=0 &megvalosulas_helye=0&fejlesztesi_terulet=0 [Accessed 22 March 2007].

Romnet. (2007). *Kepriport az OCO elnok valasztasarol* [online]. Available from: http://www.romnet.hu/hirek/hir07031406.html [Accessed 14 April 2007].

Schopflin, G. (2001). Minorities in democracy. In: A. M. Biro and P. Kovacs (eds). *Diversity in action, local public management of multi-ethnic communities in Central and Eastern Europe.* Budapest: LGI/OSI. pp. 15-20.

Tempus Kozalapitvany. (2006). *Projektek szakmai vegrehajtasa, Karacson Zsolt, Vati Kht.* [online]. Available from: http://www.tka.hu/upload/docs/kepzesek/PCM2005/bekes/Szakmaivegrehajtas.pdf [Accessed 16 April 2007].

United Nations Information Service. (2003). *Avoiding the dependency trap* [online]. Available from: http://www.unis.unvienna.org/unis/pressrels/2003/note230.html [Accessed 31 March 2007].

Vati Kht. (2005). *Sonda Ipsos felmerese az "Integralt helyi fejlesztesi akciok osztonzese" c. teruletfejlesztesi Phare programme kereteben elnyert palyazatok ismertsegerol, elfogadottsagarol* [online]. Available from: http://www.vati.hu/main.php?folderID=2322&articleID=5808&ctag=articlelist&iid=1 [Accessed 14 April 2007].

Roma and their Participation in Public Administration in Macedonia

Ibrahim Ibrahimi

The purpose of this study is to explain the low level of Roma participation in public administration in the Republic of Macedonia. Since this problem has been insufficiently addressed, I will show all the facts and arguments regarding this problem.

Background

The Macedonian military conflict in 2001 brought changes to the internal political relations in the Republic of Macedonia, introduced by the *Ohrid Framework Agreement* (2001). This Agreement was signed by the two largest Albanian political parties, the Party for Democratic Prosperity and the Democratic Party of the Albanians, and the two largest Macedonian political parties, the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organisation – Democratic Party for Macedonian National Unity and the Social Democratic Union of Macedonia. The Agreement ended military activities and provided decisions for Macedonia's future. As well, the document made certain changes in the Macedonian constitution and in legislation so that any further change would have to be within the boundaries provided by the Ohrid Agreement.

One of the basic principles of the *Ohrid Framework Agreement* is non-discrimination and fair representation. This principle will apply in particular to employment in public administration and in public enterprises to provide fair representation of all communities in central and public bodies and at any level of employment. The principle of fair representation of the Roma community, the most marginalised group in the Macedonian state, opens possibilities for larger participation of the representatives of the Roma community in the institutions of the state.

The Problem

The participation of the Roma community in the institutions of the state was very low before the Framework Agreement. In order to measure the extent of the problem and to understand the degree of participation of the Roma in public administration, we have to determine whether fair representation of the Roma occurs and to what degree they participate in state institutions and in other public institutions relative to the representation and participation of other ethnic communities.

This problem has not been studied sufficiently and, to this point, only one research project has been conducted. The study by Dalipovska, Mustafov, and Durmis (2004) focused on Roma participation in the public administration and found only limited and unequal representation of the Roma.

However, according to the principles of the government of the Republic of Macedonia, the participation of ethnic communities has to be representative of their

proportions in the total population of the Republic of Macedonia. According to the last census data (Government of the Republic of Macedonia, 2002), Roma participation should be around 2.66% of the total administration workforce (that is, the number of Roma employed in the state authorities and in the other public institutions should be around 1,868 persons). Table 1 summarises the 2002 census data. Even so, this number is not trustworthy, since the Roma community did not recognise the 2002 census. According to non-governmental organisations and representatives of Roma political parties, 80,000 to 100,000 Roma live in the Republic of Macedonia. According to these agencies, the reasons for the discrepancy are lack of documentation for many Roma families and failure to record whole Roma settlements.

In addition, despite efforts and many contacts with relevant ministries (Ministry of Finance, Civil Servants Agency, the Government of the Republic of Macedonia, and the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy), the Ministry of Finance submitted only incomplete records for the period 2003–2006 for this study. As well, the Government of the Republic of Macedonia and the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy presented no understanding of or cooperation with this study.

Table 1: Census of Population and Households 2002

	Total	Percent	Men	Women
Republic of Macedonia	2,022,547	100	1,015,377	1,007,170
Macedonians	1,297,981	64.19	648,178	649,803
Albanians	509,083	25.17	258,195	250,888
Turks	77,959	3.85	39,550	38,409
Roma	53,879	2.66	27,137	26,742
Vlachs	9,695	0.48	5,146	4,549
Serbs	35,939	1.78	18,580	17,359
Bosnians	17,018	0.84	8,634	8,384
Other	20,993	1.03	9,957	11,036

Source: Government of the Republic of Macedonia, 2002.

Table 2: Number of Public Employees and Ethnic Affiliation

Year	Total	Macedonians	Albanians	Turks	Vlachs	Serbs	Roma	Other
January 2003	69,896 100%	58,174 83.2%	8,164 11.7%	828 1.2%	323 0.5%	1,183 1.7%	361 0.5%	863 1.23%
December 2003	71,624 100%	58,769 82.1%	9,174 12.8%	905 1.3%	336 0.5%	1,204 1.7%	369 0.5%	867 1.21%
December 2004	70,812 100%	56,871 80.3%	10,294 14.5%	928 1.3%	330 0.5%	1,172 1.7%	376 0.5%	841 1.18%
January 2005	70,620 100%	56,616 80.2%	10,349 14.7%	932 1.3%	331 0.5%	1,186 1.7%	376 0.5%	848 1.2%

Continued from previous page

Year	Total	Macedonians	Albanians	Turks	Vlachs	Serbs	Roma	Other
December 2005	70,039 100%	55,070 78.6%	11,290 16.1%	993 1.4%	326 0.5%	1,135 1.6%	384 0.5%	841 1.2%
February 2006	70,226 100%	55,116 78.5%	11,417 16.3%	1,006 1.4%	330 0.5%	1,137 1.6%	392 0.55%	828 1.18%

In analysing the information, we can see that in addition to a gross under-representation, the participation of the Roma ethnic community did not improve between 2003 and 2006. Although the number increased from 361 in January 2003 to 392 in February 2006, the percentage of the Roma remained the same, since the total administration increased from 69,896 to 70,226 individuals.

Table 2 shows that the biggest increase is in employment from the Albanian ethnic community, with a rise from 8,164 (11.7%) in January 2003 to 11,417 employees (16.3%) in February 2006. This shows that the government takes employment of the Albanian minority as a priority, yet has not placed employment of Roma as a similar priority.

In the Appendix, Table 6 and Table 7 show the participation of all ethnic communities in the public administration. The tables show that in some ministries, no Roma participate, despite the fact that equal representation is the base principal of the newest changes in the constitution. The constitution refers to the principle of equitable representation of members of all communities regarding the employment in state administrative bodies and other public institutions on all levels. This principle has already been implemented in the Law on Civil Servants ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia," Nos. 59/00, 112/00, 34/01, 103/01, 43/02, 98/02, 17/03, 40/03, 85/03, 17/04 and 69/04), the Law on Labour Relations ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia," Nos. 80/93, 3/94, 14/95, 53/97, 59/97, 21/98, 25/00, 34/00, 50,01, 25/03 40/03 and 80/03 consolidated text), and the Law on Public Enterprises ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia," Nos. 38/96, 9/97, 6/02 and 40/03).

Reasons for Restricted Roma Participation

The question of the reasons for insufficient and unequal participation of the Roma community in state institutions and in other public institutions arises. A number of reasons may account for the modest and unequal participation of the Roma ethnic community in the state authorities and in other public institutions:

- the strong influence of nationalist politics on the employment of public officials prevents employment of Roma;
- the low educational level of the Roma community prevents their employment at governmental levels;
- the inability of Roma political parties and of the Roma community to influence and press for improvements in the situation impedes public employment of Roma.

In regard to the influence of nationalist politics on the employment of Roma, after the military conflict ended in 2001, subsequent programs intended for the employment of the members of the ethnic minority communities, either by the state or by international organizations and other European states, were primarily directed toward the employment of members of the Albanian ethnic community. At that time, the European Agency for Reconstruction implemented the training of over 600 participants from ethnic communities for work in the state administration authorities. Only 18 Roma were included in the program (Government of the Republic of Macedonia, 2005) despite the fact that, according to the principle of fair and equal representation, if the Roma constitute 2.66% of the total population of the ethnic communities, 46 Roma should have been included in this program. Certain ministries (particularly the Ministry of Internal Affairs) planned for the employment only of members of the Albanian ethnic community in 2005, while for the other ethnic minority communities such measures were not planned (Government of the Republic of Macedonia, 2005).

A government department (led by the Deputy Prime Minister of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia) is responsible for implementation of the *Ohrid Framework Agreement,* but the department takes care to ensure the representation only of the Albanian ethnic community. The author of this article submitted a request for an interview with the Deputy Prime Minister of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia about the participation of the Roma community in state institutions and in other public institutions, but did not receive any reply.

The current representation of the Roma in state authorities and other public institutions is on a level that does not provide for their significant influence and they are proportionally under-represented. The State Civil Service Agency provided data on the make-up and structure of the civil service according to ethnic origin. This information is summarised in Table 3, which shows that the number of Roma employed in state institutions increased from 26 in 2003 to only 33 in 2006.

Table 3: Ethnic Origin of Civil Servants, 2003-2006

Nationality	31.01.2003		31.01.2004		31.01.2005		31.12.2005		31.01.2006	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Macedonians	9,567	90.55	9,818	90.30	9,283	89.67	8,778	84.88	8,785	84.92
Albanians	538	5.09	607	5.58	647	6.25	1,118	10.81	1,112	10.75
Turks	77	0.73	79	0.73	81	0.78	99	0.96	99	0.96
Roma	26	0.25	20	0.18	26	0.25	33	0.32	33	0.32
Vlachs	88	0.83	90	0.83	80	0.77	83	0.80	83	0.80
Serbs	183	1.73	174	1.60	161	1.56	158	1.53	160	1.55
Bosnians	26	0.25	26	0.24	23	0.22	27	0.26	27	0.26
Other	61	0.58	59	0.54	51	0.49	46	0.44	46	0.44
Total	10,566	100	10,873	100	10,352	100	10,342	100	10,345	100

Of the 33 Roma civil servants, 21 have the job title "junior administrator;" one has the job title "administrator;" five have the job title "senior administrator;" three have a job title of "independent administrator;" and one each has the job title "senior assistant," "head of department," and "head of sector." According to the Law on Civil Servants from 2005, civil servants are classified in three groups and titles:

- I: managing civil servants (secretary general, secretary of municipality, state advisor, head of sector, assistant head of sector, and head of department);
- II: expert state servants (advisor, senior assistant, assistant, and junior assistant);
- III: expert and administrative state servants (independent administrator, senior administrator, administrator, and junior administrator).

According to the law, civil servants in groups I and II require a university education, while for those in group III, a high school education is the basic requirement.

Of the total number of 33 Roma with the status of civil servant, only three have a university education and the other 30 have a high school education and, thus, work in posts that do not provide any decision-making responsibilities. However, even Roma who have a high education and professional experience and are included in an executive level, have a lower than average salary. The average net salary in December 2004 of the members of the Roma ethnic minority community is 17,168 Macedonian Denars, while it is 23,598 Denars in the Vlach ethnic minority community, and 20,942 Denars in the Albanian ethnic community.

The second factor that influences the representation of Roma in state authorities and in the administration is the low educational level of the Roma community. According to the official data from the Employment Agency, at the time of writing only 19 Roma with university education are registered in the Employment Bureaus as unemployed, as shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Qualifications of the Roma Community according to the Employment Agency

	Total	Women
Non-qualified	15,014	6,725
Semi-qualified and lower education	401	71
Qualified and highly qualified	793	171
High school education	376	139
Higher education	8	1
University education	19	7

Source: Government of the Republic of Macedonia, 2005.

A large number of high school students have great potential and could be employed in state institutions and in other public institutions. According to the data for the 2002/2003 school year (Government of the Republic of Macedonia, 2002), 673 Roma were high school students. The situation in the universities is similar (see Table 5).

Table 5: Ethnic Affiliation of University Students, 1992-2005

Year	Total	Macedonians %	Albanians %	Turks %	Roma %	Vlachs %	Serbs %	Other %
1992/3	26,299	90.4	2.23	0.65	0.05	0.29	3.19	3.20
1993/4	26,834	93.1	2.85	0.62	0.03	0.36	1.69	1.29
1994/5	28,559	91.6	3.41	0.61	0.06	0.56	1.82	1.89
1995/6	29,153	90.8	4.12	0.75	0.06	0.73	1.81	1.69
1996/7	30,441	89.7	4.62	0.91	0.07	0.77	1.88	2.05
1997/8	31,768	91.2	4.12	0.77	0.11	0.90	1.63	1.22
1998/9	34,850	89.2	5.50	1.06	0.14	0.94	1.91	1.22
1999/0	36,679	88.9	5.53	1.11	0.19	1.02	1.95	1.23
2000/01	40,075	88.3	5.70	1.1	0.26	1.01	1.86	1.56
2001/02	45,493	87.44	6.68	1.32	0.28	0.92	1.81	1.58
2002/03	47,798	85.31	8.98	1.43	0.29	0.92	1.69	1.38
2003/04	51,311	85.06	10.4	1.18	0.19	0.70	1.37	1.1%
2004/05	61,556	79.44	15.50	1.34	0.31	0.78	1.52	1.12

Source: Government of the Republic of Macedonia, 2005.
Note: Data for 2004/05 are for the universities "Ss. Cyril and Methodius," "St. Kliment Ohridski" – Bitola, and the SEE University in Tetovo, The Faculty for Social Sciences in Skopje and in the newly established State University in Tetovo (commenced activity on 01.01.2004).

The third factor relevant to the lack of participation of Roma in public administration is the powerlessness of the Roma as a political influence. After the introduction of political pluralism, the Roma took an active part in political life through establishing political parties. Several Roma political parties were established: the Party for Complete Emancipation of the Roma, the United Party of the Roma, the Party for Unity of the Roma, the Roma Union of Macedonia, and the Party for Integration of the Roma. Later, the Party for Complete Emancipation of the Roma and the United Party of the Roma merged into the United Party for Emancipation. Starting from the first multi-party elections, the Roma have been represented in the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia (in 1994, the Roma had two members in parliament; in 1998 and 2002, one member).

The change of the electoral model from majority to proportional representation forced Roma political parties to make coalitions with the larger political parties (primarily with Macedonian political parties) and, due to the inconsistency of the Roma electorate, in most cases the Roma did not take part in the coalition governments at the level of minister or deputy minister. Since the 2004 reconstruction of the government led by the Social Democratic Union, the Roma have participated at the level of the Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, but his modest competences, and the limited possibility to influence the number of Roma in state and other public organisations have not led to any positive results.

Recommendations

Here, I offer several recommendations to address the factors that influence the small representation of Roma in state organisations and other public institutions.

- In regard to overcoming the high level of political influence in employment affairs, it is necessary to create mechanisms for making educational status and qualifications more important in employment than the political orientation of candidates. The Republic of Macedonia should be promoted according to Amendment IV of the Constitution of 2001:

> The citizens of the Republic of Macedonia, the Macedonian people, as well as citizens living within its borders, who are part of the Albanian people, the Turkish people, the Vlach people, the Serb people, the Roma people, the Bosnian people . . . taking responsibility for the present and future of their fatherland . . . equal in rights and obligations towards the common good . . . have decided to establish the Republic of Macedonia as an independent, sovereign state, with the intention of establishing and consolidating the rule of law, guaranteeing human rights and civil liberties, providing peaceful coexistence, social justice, economic well-being and prosperity in the life of the individual and the community, and for it to be a state for all its citizens equally, not only of those of Macedonian and Albanian ethnicity.

- In regard to increasing the educational level of the Roma community, it is important to:
  - Establish and maintain national quotas for Roma in the high schools and increase the quota for enrolment of Roma students from 2% to 4%;
  - Provide scholarships for Roma students, especially for the most talented, and provide mentor assistance;
  - Increase the number of Roma students at the Pedagogical Faculty to achieve an optimal number of trained teaching staff.
- In regard to strengthening of the power of the Roma political parties, it is necessary to create a new electoral model that will provide better representation of the smaller ethnic communities in the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, and, therefore, obtain a realistic possibility of taking part in coalition governments. A new model will provide the possibility for the creation of an effective "Roma lobby" that will be competent for securing the protection and promotion of the Roma interest in the institutions of the state.

References

Dalipovska, G., Mustafov, S., and Durmis, D. (2004). *Fair representation of the Roma in the public administration.* Skopje: Minority Rights Group International.

Government of the Republic of Macedonia. Secretariat for European Affairs. (2005). *Answers to the questionnaire for the preparation of the European Commission's opinion on the application of the Republic of Macedonia for membership of the European Union* [online]. Available from: http://www.sei.gov.mk/questionnaire [Accessed 10 April 2007].

Government of the Republic of Macedonia. State Statistical Office. (2002). *Census of population, households and dwellings in the Republic of Macedonia, 2002*. Skopje: The State Statistical Office.

Ohrid Framework Agreement [online]. (2001). Available from: http://www.usip.org/library/pa/macedonia/pa_mac_08132001.html [Accessed 27 March 2007].

Appendix

Table 6: Number of Public Employees and Ethnic Affiliation (December 2003)

User	Total #	Macedonians %	Albanians %	Turks %	Vlachs %	Serbs %	Roma %	Other %
President of RM	36	86.1	5.6	5.6	0.0	2.8	0.0	0.0
Intelligence Agency	228	89.9	5.3	0	1.3	2.2	0.4	0.8
Assembly of RM	318	79.6	14.8	1.9	0.3	1.6	0.6	1.2
State Audit Office	59	100.00	0	0	0	0	0	0
Constitutional Court of RM	26	84.6	7.7	3.8	0	3.8	0	0
Government of RM	132	80.3	14.4	2.3	0	1.5	0	1.5
Department for general and common activities of the Government of RM	294	91.5	3.4	1	1	1.4	0.7	1.0
Legislation Secretariat	14	78.6	0	0	0	14.3	0	7.1
Public Attorney's Office	94	94.7	5.3	0	0	0	0	0
Agency for Development and Investments	15	93.3	6.7	0	0	0	0	0
Civil Servants Agency	57	87.7	12.3	0	0	0	0	0
Ministry of Defence	9,916	90.4	4.6	0.4	0.3	2.3	0.4	1.6
National Security Authority in NATO Context	9	100.00	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ministry of Internal Affairs	11,671	84.3	11.0	0.6	0.1	1.9	0.7	1.5
Ministry of Justice	718	79.0	15.2	2.6	0.6	1.4	0.4	0.9
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	338	86.4	12.4	0.6	0	0	0	0.6
Ministry of Finances	692	91.0	4.8	0.1	0.9	1.7	0.6	0.9
Customs Administration of RM	875	90.2	7.1	0.9	0.5	0.8	0	0.6
Stock Reserves Bureau	27	88.9	7.4	0.0	0	3.7	0	0
Directorate for Public Revenues	1,316	91.3	5.0	0.7	1.1	0.9	0.2	0.7
Ministry of Economy	448	88.2	8.3	0.9	1.3	0.9	0	0.7
Industrial Property Protection Office	24	83.3	12.5	0	0	4.2	0	0.4
Ministry of Environment	94	89.4	2.1	0	0	6.4	0	0

Continued from previous page

User	Total #	Macedonians %	Albanians %	Turks %	Vlachs %	Serbs %	Roma %	Other %
Ministry of Transportation and Communications	501	92.2	5.8	0	0.4	1.0	0	2.1
Directorate General of Civil Aviation	278	87.4	5.0	0.4	1.1	3.2	0.4	0.6
Telecommunications Administration	95	93.7	3.2	1.1	0	2.1	0	2.5
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy	386	88.3	5.7	0.8	1.0	2.8	0.3	0
Agency for Support of the Agriculture	132	93.9	2.3	0.0	0	2.3	1.5	1.1
Directorate for Hydro-Meteorological Activities	209	96.2	1.0	0.5	0	1.9	0	0
Ministry of Labour and Social Policy	399	79.4	15.8	0.5	0.8	2.0	0.3	0.5
Social Protection of the Children	3,431	89.9	5.4	0.7	0.5	2.3	0.6	1.3
Social Protection	905	83.5	8.6	1.5	1.5	2.4	0.4	0.6
Ministry of Education and Science	29,799	73.6	20.9	2.0	0.5	1.4	0.5	1.9
Ministry	203	79.8	15.3	1.0	0.5	2.5	0	1.2
Primary	19,273	67.8	26.4	2.8	0.3	1.1	0.5	1
Secondary	6,898	80.6	15.2	0.8	0.6	1.6	0.3	1.1
University	2,775	90.9	1.5	0.6	1.0	2.7	0.5	0.8
Institutes	650	93.7	2.0	0.3	0.8	1.4	0.8	2.8
Bureau for Development of the Education	150	84.7	13.3	1.3	0.7	0	0	1.1
Agency for Youth and Sports	23	91.3	4.3	0	0	4.3	0	0
Ministry of Culture	39	82.1	7.7	5.1	2.6	2.6	0	0
Financing Cultural Activities	2,437	87.9	3.6	2.0	0.8	2.6	1.5	0
Ministry of Health	149	87.9	8.7	0	0	2.0	0	1.5
Ministry of Local Self-government	15	73.3	26.7	0	0	0	0	1.3
Emigration Agency	17	88.2	5.9	0	5.9	0	0	0
Information Agency	27	70.4	25.9	0	0	3.7	0	0
Commission for Relations with the Religious	4	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
Communities and Groups								
State Authority for Geodesic Works	911	94.6	2.0	0.8	0.3	1.2	0.3	0.8
State Statistical Office	321	86	6.2	0.9	0.9	3.4	0.6	1.9

Continued from previous page

User	Total #	Macedonians %	Albanians %	Turks %	Vlachs %	Serbs %	Roma %	Other %
State Archive of Macedonia	216	94.4	1.9	0.5	0.5	1.4	0.5	0.9
Bureau for Judicial Expertise	29	79.3	0	3.4	6.9	3.4	3.4	3.4
Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts	58	98.3	0	0	0	0	0	1.7
Bureau for Economically Underdeveloped Areas	9	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
Judicial Branch	2,837	91.4	3.8	0.7	1.4	1.2	0.7	0.8
Public Prosecutor's Office of RM	382	92.4	5.5	1	0.3	0.8	0	0
Ombudsman	32	84.4	6.3	0	3.1	6.3	0	0
KPD Idrizovo	168	92.3	6.5	0.6	0	0	0.6	0
Correctional Institution – Tetovo	35	94.3	5.7	0	0	0	0	0
KPU Bitola	45	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
KPU Gevgelija	13	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
KPU Ohrid	27	92.6	7.4	0	0	0	0	0
KPU Tetovo	17	64.7	35.3	0	0	0	0	0
KPU Skopje	81	84.0	12.3	0	0	3.7	0	0
KPU Struga	14	64.3	28.6	0	7.1	0	0	0
KPU Stip	32	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	71,624	82.1	12.8	1.3	0.5	1.7	0.5	1.0

Table 7: Number of Public Employees and Ethnic Affiliation (March 2006)

User	Total #	Macedonians %	Albanians %	Turks %	Vlachs %	Serbs %	Roma %	Other %
President of RM	26	88.5	7.7	0	0	3.8	0	0
Intelligence Agency	234	85.0	9.4	0	1.7	2.6	0.4	0.8
Assembly of RM	298	76.8	17.1	2.0	0.3	1.7	0.7	1.3
State Audit Office	76	80.0	7.9	0	1.3	3.9	0	1.3
State Agency against corruption	5	80.0	20.0	0	0	0	0	0
State Election Commission	9	66.7	22.2	0	11.1	0	0	0
Commission for protection of competency	12	83.3	8.3	8.3	0	0	0	0
Agency for protection of personal data	4	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
Constitutional Court of RM	29	82.8	13.8	3.4	0	0	0	0
Government of RM	218	51.8	44.5	1.4	0	1.4	0	0.9

Continued from previous page

User	Total #	Macedonians %	Albanians %	Turks %	Vlachs %	Serbs %	Roma %	Other %
Department for general and common activities of the Government of RM	312	86.2	7.1	1.9	1.0	1.6	0.6	1.6
Legislation Secretariat	20	80.0	5.0	0	0	10.0	0	5.0
Public Attorney's Office	90	93.3	5.6	0	0	1.1	0	0
Agency for Development and Investments	10	90	10.0	0	0	0	0	0
Civil Servants Agency	46	78.3	13.0	2.2	0	0	6.5	0
Secretariat for European Issues	53	83.0	11.3	3.8	1.9	0	0.0	0
Ministry of Defence	8,122	81.5	12.7	0.8	0.3	2.3	0.7	1.7
Agency for information	29	86.2	10.3	0	3.4	0	0	0
Agency for salvation and protection	242	90.9	5.0	0.4	0.4	2.5	0.4	0.4
Directorate for crises management	214	92.1	4.2	0	0.5	2.3	0	1.0
Ministry of Internal Affairs	12,219	80.7	14.9	0.6	0.1	1.8	0.6	1.4
Ministry of Justice	658	76.0	18.7	2.9	0.6	1.1	0.3	0.5
Department for Executing Sanctions	524	86.3	10.9	0	1.1	1.1	0.2	0.4
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	340	80.6	17.9	0.6	0	0	0.3	0.6
Ministry of Finances	610	87.0	8.9	0.2	0.8	1.5	0.8	0.8
Customs Administration of RM	858	89.0	7.9	1.0	0.5	0.8	0	0.7
Stock Reserves Bureau	23	91.3	4.3	0	0	4.3	0	0
Directorate for Public Revenues	1,156	89.6	5.4	1.0	1.7	1.5	0.3	0.6
Ministry of Economy	392	81.1	14.5	1.3	1.3	1.3	0	0.6
Industrial Property Protection Office	25	76.0	20.0	0	0	4.0	0	0
Ministry of Environment	101	83.2	10.9	0	0	5.0	0	1.0
Ministry of Transportation and Communications	231	85.3	11.3	0.9	0.4	0.9	0.4	0.8
Directorate General of Civil Aviation	261	87.7	5.4	0.4	1.1	3.1	0.	2.3
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy	429	81.8	11.7	1.4	1.2	2.6	0.	1.1
Agency for Support of the Agriculture	125	93.6	2.4	0	0	2.4	1.6	0
Directorate for Hydro-Meteorological Activities	202	95.5	1.5	0.5	0	2.0	0	0.5

Continued from previous page

User	Total #	Macedonians %	Albanians %	Turks %	Vlachs %	Serbs %	Roma %	Other %
Ministry of Labour and Social Policy	279	78.5	14.0	0.4	1.4	3.2	1.1	1.4
Social Protection of the Children	3,234	89.7	5.6	0.7	0.5	2.2	0.5	1.6
Social Protection	1,013	80.8	11.8	1.7	1.2	2.3	0.5	0.7
Ministry of Education and Science	30,158	71.7	22.8	2.2	0.4	1.3	0.5	1.7
Ministry	223	60.5	30.9	2.2	0.9	3.1	0.4	1.1
Primary	19,300	66.0	28.2	2.9	0.3	1.0	0.5	1.8
Secondary	7,205	79.1	16.7	1.1	0.6	1.5	0.4	1.1
University	2,880	88.1	5.8	0.5	0.9	2.0	0.6	0.8
Institutes	550	94.2	1.6	0.4	0.7	1.3	0.7	2.0
Bureau for Development of the Education	143	83.2	14.7	1.4	0.7	0	0	1.1
Agency for Youth and Sports	20	85.0	10.0	0	0	5.0	0	0
Ministry of Culture	75	81.3	9.3	2.7	4.0	2.7	0	0
Financing Cultural Activities	2,288	87.3	4.2	2.1	0.7	2.7	1.4	1.5
Ministry of Health	176	76.1	19.9	0.6	0	1.7	0.6	1.1
Ministry of Local Self-government	20	55.0	35.0	0	0	0	5.0	5.0
Emigration Agency	16	75.0	18.8	0	6.3	0	0	0
Information Agency	23	65.2	30.4	0	0	4.3	0	0
Commission for Relations with the Religious Communities and Groups	5	80.0	20.0	0	0	0	0	0
State Authority for Geodesic Works	876	92.5	3.8	1.0	0.3	1.5	0.1	0.8
State Statistical Office	253	84.2	9.5	0	0.8	4.0	0	1.6
State Archive of Macedonia	213	86.4	10.3	0.5	0	1.4	0.5	0.9
Bureau for Judicial Expertise	26	76.9	0	3.8	7.7	3.8	3.8	3.8
Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts	57	96.5	1.8	0	0	0	0	1.8
Bureau for Economically Underdeveloped Areas	11	81.8	18.2	0	0	0	0	0
Judicial Branch	2,714	88.4	6.4	0.9	1.4	1.0	1.0	0.9
Public Prosecutor's Office of RM	354	89.5	7.9	1.1	0.6	0.8	0	0
Ombudsman	69	53.6	36.2	1.4	2.9	2.9	2.9	0
Total	70,226	78.5	16.3	1.4	0.6	1.6	0.6	0.9

Together in Alliance – The Roma Ashkali Egyptians of Kosovo: The Challenges of a Unified Political Party

Sakibe Jashari

The purpose of this study is to analyse two principle issues that exist between three minority communities of Kosovo, the Roma, the Ashkali, and the Egyptians (known collectively as the RAE). The issues discussed here are (1) the cultural and traditional distinctions and (2) the challenges of establishing a unified political establishment that may enable better RAE representation in Kosovo's decision-making bodies. First, I will analyse life and the political beliefs of the RAE in Kosovo before, during, and after the 1999 conflict. Other issues that will merit attention are the electoral system in Kosovo and the participation of RAE political parties in the election system. I will conclude with practical recommendations that might result in better representation of the RAE in the Kosovo parliament (the central level) as well as in the municipal assemblies (local level) and that might lead to the empowerment of Kosovo RAE in decision-making structures in Kosovo, thus improving the general RAE situation in Kosovo.

In this discussion, I shall not focus on the poor economic status of these communities, nor on the discrimination and disadvantages that they face in day-to-day life; nor shall I focus on violations of human rights, educational disadvantages, or unemployment and marginalisation within Kosovo society, as these difficulties are common to the three communities. Rather, I will focus on the issues that divide them that prevent their coming together to forge an alliance that could play a more meaningful role in elected bodies.

I will present the findings and recommendations of this study to the RAE Kosovo Forum, their political party leaders, the Roma Documentation Centre, the Commission for the Rights and Interests of Communities and Return in the Kosovo Parliament, as well as to the members of the Kosovo parliament representing RAE.

Background: The Kosovo Roma Ashkali Egyptians

A recent official estimate of the population of Kosovo does not exist. Different estimates range from 1.7 million to 2.4 million. According to the Statistical Office of Kosovo (SOK, 2006), the best estimate is 2.1 million residents, of which 92% are Albanians, 5.3% are Serbs and the remaining 2.7% include Bosnjak, Turks, Roma, Egyptians, Gorani, and Ashkali.

According to the last census, conducted in 1991, the Kosovo population was some 1,607,690 people, of which 82.2% were Albanians, 9.9% were Serbs, 2.9% were Muslims, and 2.2% were Roma (including both Ashkali and Egyptians) (Mertus, 1999). However, this census was not seen as accurate and no other census has been conducted since 1991; as well, most of the Albanians did not participate in the 1991 census. Furthermore, the 1999 conflict that produced refugees, internal and external displaced persons, lost lives, kidnapped persons, and immigrants, make subsequent estimates uncertain.

Most Kosovars do not recognise the accuracy of the 1991 census. Many believe that numerous people did not declare their ethnicity because of different perceptions, fear of persecution, and, on certain occasions, a mixed background. This failure to declare was more frequent in the case of individuals from RAE communities. In their fight for survival, they tended to remain neutral, to minimise the ill effects of conflict between the two rival communities of Kosovo, the Serbs and the Albanians. Unfortunately, this phenomenon is still prevalent in Kosovo. It is, thus, very difficult to estimate the precise number of RAE in Kosovo. Other difficulties contribute to the lack of precise data pertaining to these communities. This poses a real difficulty in identifying who may be Roma, Ashkali, or Egyptian. The difficulty is further compounded by the fact that Albanian and RAE names and surnames are quite similar. On the other hand, it is quite easy to differentiate Albanian from Serbian names as Serbian surnames invariably end with the suffix *-ic*.

Before the 1999 conflict, as the international community prefers to say, or the 1999 war, as Kosovars prefer to call it, the RAE were known primarily as Roma or as Gypsies. Only two characteristics truly differentiated Roma from non-Roma (Ashkali and Egyptians): language and religion. Those who spoke the Romani language were distinct from those who preferred the Albanian or Serbian language; those who followed the religion of the Roma were distinct from those who belonged to the Muslim faith or who followed Orthodox beliefs.

Prior to the conflict, none of the RAE communities had their own political party, but some of them affiliated themselves with the two main political parties of Kosovo, the Albanian political party, called the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK), and the Serbian political party called the Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS). Not all RAE who spoke Albanian were active members in the Democratic League of Kosovo. Similarly, not all RAE who spoke Serbian or belonged to the Orthodox faith contributed to Socialist Party of Serbia activities. Most RAE made a conscious effort to distance themselves from the main political parties to avoid negative consequences for their respective communities. They generally maintained a neutral stance. One of the active members from a Roma community in the Socialist Party of Serbia was Luan Koka from Prizeren. During 1997–1998, he was the first Roma member of the Serbian parliament (at a time when Kosovo was legally part of Serbia).

During the NATO intervention in Kosovo in 1999, many RAE were displaced into neighbouring countries like Albania, the Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia, Serbia, Montenegro, and other western European countries. Due to lack of official data, it is difficult to know exactly how many RAE left Kosovo during the NATO intervention. According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees report on the Kosovo 1999 crisis (UNHCR, 2000), the number of Kosovo Albanians that fled Kosovo during the NATO strikes was about 860,000. Most Albanians went to the neighbouring countries and Western countries, like the RAE.

The fact that RAE communities were also displaced and refugees dispersed shows that not only Kosovo Albanians and Serbians experienced difficulties, including death of family members, kidnapping, and loss of property, but that many RAE shared the same destiny – or perhaps worse – since they were between the two sides without

clear support of either and without their own clear direction. The RAE were accused and criticised, and often attacked by both sides.

In 1999, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees built three camps (Zitkovac, Cesmin Lug, and Kablare) in northern Mitrovica for RAE internally displaced in Kosovo. The camps were located near the Trepca mines (lead and other minerals), which were later closed by the United Nations Mission in Kosovo because of the danger that they represented to health and to the environment. In fact, in 2000, the World Health Organisation found that children and adults living in these camps had blood lead concentrations higher than authorised levels.

Kosovo Roma

Roma are known to originate from Indian roots. Roma migration started from India, Pakistan, Egypt, Iran, and, subsequently, groups migrated to other parts of the world and Europe. Roma were recorded in Kosovo for the first time on 1348 (The Patrin Web Journal, 1998). Before the 1999 conflict in Kosovo, some 120,000 to 160,000 Roma were concentrated in Prizren, a Kosovo municipality known for its multi-ethnic and cultural diversity.

Before the 1999 Kosovo war, Roma religion was diverse. The majority of the Roma were of the Muslim faith and only a small minority belonged to the Orthodox religion. After the war, Roma with an Orthodox belief left Kosovo along with the Serbs, because of the prevailing insecure conditions. Currently, all Roma that live in Kosovo are of the Muslim faith.

After the 1999 turmoil, many Roma left Kosovo. More than 10,000 Roma still live in Serbia; about 2,500 are in the Former Republic of Macedonia and about 2,000 are in Montenegro. The number of Roma that left Kosovo during and after 1999 and that are currently living in European countries is unknown. At this time, Germany is planning to deport about 10,000 RAE to Kosovo. Currently about 15,000 to 20,000 Roma live in Kosovo.

Since 1999, Kosovo Roma have been represented by a Roma leader, Mr. Haxhi Zylfi Merxha, presently a 70-year-old Roma who has shown courage in protecting Roma interests and rights after the conflict, amidst strong insecurity and in a volatile environment. He was the first to confront diplomatically the Albanians for the intimidation and harassment of the Roma, and to advocate protection of Roma human rights. After a brief representation of the Roma community that evolved after the inter-ethnic conflict, in 2000 he formed the first Roma political party called the United Roma Party of Kosovo (PREBK) and became its first president. Formation of the party enabled Kosovo Roma to take part in elections and, as a result, currently the party occupies one seat in the Kosovo parliament. The Roma party is presently widely perceived as nepotistic, since, for example Mr. Merxha's daughter is the director of the Roma Centre in Prizren and the president of the Prizren party branch. Favours and privileges are frequently given to family, friends, and close relatives.

The overall percentage of Roma employment is very low in comparison with other non-Albanian communities. No Roma are employed in the central Kosovo government or ministries. At the municipal level, those Roma that are employed are usually hired

in municipal community offices. Municipal community offices were established in 2000 and designated to work on community- and minority-related issues. Most RAE working in these offices are directors, chiefs of staff, community officers, and drivers. Only two Roma work with the United Nations Mission in Kosovo. The Kosovo Protection Corps, the former Kosovo Liberation Army, employs a significant number of Serbian, Ashkali, Boshnjak, and Turks; however, only two Roma have positions, and in the lowest ranks.

Briefly, the Roma community is not involved in decision-making bodies, and is under-represented at every level of Kosovo institutions. Thus, to date, their full integration in Kosovo life has been difficult, and a positive impetus would aid in their better integration.

Kosovo Ashkali

Kosovo Ashkali believe that they originated from ancient Persia and that the name Ashkali comes from the Ashkanian (or Parthian) dynasty that ruled Persia from 247 BCE to 224 CE (Can Carpat, 2006). Ashkali are Albanian speakers of Muslim belief. Before the 1999 conflict, about 30,000 to 50,000 Ashkali lived in Kosovo. During the conflict, they were displaced as refugees, primarily into Albania and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. However, no data specifies how many Ashkali were refugees or internally displaced. Approximately 20,000 to 35,000 Ashkali presently reside in Kosovo, the majority concentrated in Fushe, Kosove, Kosovo Polje, Ferizaj, and Urosevac municipalities.

Immediately after the conflict, the Ashkali community sought to distinguish themselves from the Roma community to avoid Albanian retaliation, as Roma were seen by Albanians as allies of the Kosovo Serbs. They made a conscious effort to be pro-Albanian in espousing the cause of independence. The Kosovo Ashkali president, Mr. Sabit Rrahmani, often took this stance. In all his public speeches, he advocated Kosovo independence on behalf of the Kosovo Ashkali.

In December 2000, Mr. Rrahmani became president of the first Ashkali party, which was initially called the Democratic Party of the Ashkali Albanians of Kosovo. After competition in the first municipal elections in 2000 and the presidential elections in 2001, the party changed its name by removing the "Albanian" part, as it was believed that the former name conveyed the impression that it represented two communities, the Ashkali and the Albanians. The new party name is the Democratic Ashkali Party of Kosovo. Like the Roma political party, the Ashkali political party is perceived to be nepotistic. Decisions are typically made with people close to the chairperson, and benefits received in behalf of the community are closely shared with those who obey the chairperson.

Currently, the Ashkali community is one of the most integrated minority communities in Kosovo because of its pro-Albanian stance. The language and, in some cases, the religion contributed to its smooth integration with the Albanian majority after 1999. Ashkali and Albanian communities have a few cases of happy intermarriages, whereas cases of intermarriage between Roma and Albanian communities are rare, particularly since 1999.

Ashkali and Egyptians do not see eye-to-eye over the issues of each other's background and origin. They fiercely deny and dispute one another's history and background. This often manifests in the form of strong antagonist behaviour towards each other. This antagonist approach is visible in the Ashkali and Egyptian websites (Ashkali Website, 2007; Egyptian Website, 2007).

Kosovo Egyptians

Kosovo Egyptians claim that their ancestors are Egyptian soldiers from ancient Egypt who came to the Balkans in the fourth century. Most Egyptians currently live in Kosovo, Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Bulgaria, Greece, Albania, Central Serbia, and Vojvodina.

Kosovo Egyptians speak Albanian and belong to the Muslim religion. Before 1999, about 87,000 Egyptians lived in Kosovo (Wikipedia, 2006). During the 1999 conflict, like all other communities, they fled Kosovo to Central Serbia, Vojvodina, and Montenegro. Since the conflict, some 20,000 to 30,000 Egyptians have resided in the Dugagjini area of Kosovo (i.e., Peja, Gjakova, and Rahovec).

The first Egyptian political party, called the New Democratic Initiative of Kosovo (IRDK), was formed in 2000 and is represented by its president Bislim Hoti. Hoti is also a member of the Kosovo parliament. In contrast with Roma and Ashkali communities, Egyptians are more conscious of their education. Therefore, their needs are different and they emphasise educational enhancement, rather than poverty. The employment rate in the Egyptian community is not much different that that in the Roma and Ashkali communities, but due to higher education, members of the Egyptian community have jobs in central government structures. One example is Mr. Ibish Bajrami from Peja, working as Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Returns and Communities. Other Egyptians currently work in the Ministry of Education and Science.

Relations between the Ashkali and Egyptians are very tense, as both consider themselves as two separate groups with roots from two different places. However, the Youth Forum of Egyptian and Ashkali, which represents both Ashkali and Egyptians, argues for political and social reunion of the two communities. They believe that segregation between these two small communities benefits only others and brings no benefit to them. In 2005, a protest was organised in Germany with about 1,500 participating Ashkali Egyptians and Roma to show their willingness to advocate union of the three communities; the motto, "Together we are stronger," was displayed prominently (Union of Balkan's Egyptians, 2007).

Current Problems: Identity

The identity problem between the Roma Ashkali and Egyptian communities surfaced immediately after the 1999 conflict. Most who described themselves as Ashkali or Egyptian wanted their communities to be differentiated from the Roma community. One reason was that the Roma community was seen as a "collaborator" with the Serbs. They thought that this change would put them in a better political position, and thus give them a different political approach to deal with the difficult situation created by the Albanian majority for the Roma community.

Fear of retaliation by the Albanian community was the main reason why these communities wanted to distance themselves from the Roma community. To justify this fear, each community started internal movements that initially led to the formation of groups of people, later to non-governmental agencies (often initiated by the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe), followed by formation of political parties. They adopted this approach to distance themselves from "criminal Roma elements." Subsequent formation of the Ashkali and Egyptian political parties helped individuals to pursue their own agendas and political goals, while denying each other's identity was the key priority for party leaders.

Only these communities recognise the differences among them; they are ignored by non-Ashkali or non-Egyptians. They speak same language (Albanian) and they have the same religion (Islam). The RAE in Kosovo have the same traditions in marriage, funerals, and childbirth. All three communities practice the same tradition of male circumcision, applicable in the Muslim religion. Family structures are patriarchal in all three communities, where the oldest male in the house is the decision-maker. The lifestyle of RAE communities is essentially the same; changes depend only on the earnings of a family and its educational profile. Family background plays an important role as to how a family is perceived and respected.

National and international agencies also ignore the differences between the communities. In most statistics and data in Kosovo's Provisional Institutions of Self Government, the United Nations Mission in Kosovo, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and other agencies, Roma Ashkali and Egyptians are portrayed as "others" (Can Carpat, 2006). In addition, for Albanians, Serbs, and other communities, including the international community, all three communities are seen as "Gypsies," regardless of what language they speak or which religion they practice.

Current Roma Ashkali Egyptian Political Status

After the 1999 conflict, in 2000 the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe Mission organised the first municipal Kosovo elections. Kosovo Assembly elections took place in 2001, 2002, and 2004. Municipal elections were to be conducted in 2006, but have been postponed by the United Nations Mission in Kosovo Special Representative of the Secretary General, Mr. Petersen, because of the ongoing process of Kosovo status negotiations. Elections are likely to occur in 2007.

Kosovo elects a national level head of state – the President – and a legislature. The President is elected for a three-year term. The Kosovo Assembly has 120 members, also elected for a three-year term. One hundred members of parliament are elected with proportional representation, and twenty minority members have reserved seats: the Serbian minority has ten seats; the Roma, one; the Ashkali, one; the Egyptians, two; the Bosnjak, three; the Turks, two; and the Goran community, one. These seats are in addition to any seats that a community may win out of the 100 seats determined through the votes of all electors. The Kosovo election system was designed on the premise that proportional representation gives minorities a greater chance of election to the legislature.

In the first municipal election in October of 2000, the United Roma Party of Kosovo did not participate, as the party was still at the constituent stage. The Ashkali political

party took part in the elections of 2000 with its initial party name of Democratic Party of Ashkali Albanians of Kosovo. Bislim Hoti, former president of the Egyptian political party, participated in the elections of 2000 as an independent candidate.

Table 1 summarises party participation and results (OSCE, 2005) of the elections conducted in 30 Kosovo municipalities in 2000, 2001, 2002, and 2004.

Table 1: RAE Election Results

Party	Elections 2000	Elections 2001	Elections 2002	Elections 2004
Roma (PREBK)	0 votes	2717 votes	924 votes	1049 votes
Ashkali (PDASHK)	1552 votes	3411 votes	2760 votes	2555 votes
Egyptian (IRDK)	206 votes	3976 votes	3146 votes	2658 votes

Voter Turnout

The voter turnout in Kosovo elections has decreased steadily since the first elections, partly due to cynicism that participation in elections brings no benefits. Accordingly, the number of non-voters in Kosovo has grown. The number of Kosovars who did not vote in 2002 was twice as large as the number of people who voted for the majority party (Malazogu, 2004).

According to Table 1, the RAE voter trend presents the same downward trend from 2000 to 2004. This is due to two main reasons: first is the belief among RAE communities that they do not gain any benefit from participating in the elections – particularly those voting for RAE candidates. The second reason is the fact that many people from RAE communities, for different reasons, prefer to vote for Albanian political parties.

Part of the problem also lies in the fact that political parties operate in ways that limit citizen participation. In Kosovo, great emphasis is laid on long-standing loyalty to party leaders. This limited citizen participation is reinforced by an electoral system where party leaders determine the ranking of the candidates on closed lists (UNDP, 2004).

However, the Kosovo Central Election Commission (KCEC) is planning to make certain changes, particularly concerning the closed list process, during the next municipal elections (now postponed to 2007). With future positive changes in the election process, all Kosovars will have better possibilities in voting for the best candidates, rather than for the party as a whole. In every democracy, it is essential for citizens to participate in the decision-making process.

In the Kosovo political context, a number of questions become relevant to the future of the Roma. What will be the outcomes of future election results for the three parties that represent the RAE in Kosovo institutions? What will happen in Kosovo institutions if the RAE decide to form an alliance and then contest elections while preserving their individual political identities?

Discussion

The RAE in Kosovo have gone through considerable suffering for a long time, particularly during the post-war period. The RAE communities are still the most marginalised groups in Kosovo. Compared to other communities, the RAE enjoy the lowest access to economic assets, including land and livestock (OSCE/UNHCR, 2003). After intervention of the international community, RAE communities continued to face discrimination, intimidation, and violation of their basic rights to freedom of speech, freedom of movement, and the right to return to their property.

Presently, Kosovo is entering a new era of democratisation, pluralism, diversity, and reconciliation. This presents an opportunity for RAE to make full use of the advantages that pre-final status discussions offer. The RAE need to direct all energies for the best use of given resources, whether human or financial, for full integration into Kosovo society.

The direct participation of the RAE in the Kosovo status talks is not granted by Kosovo Albanian leaders, although, according to the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities* (UNHCHR, 1992), minorities have full rights in participation with regard to decision-making at the national level. Accordingly, the possible establishment of a RAE political alliance will give them a greater advantage in lobbying for direct representation in the Kosovo status talks at the United Nations Office of the Special Envoy for Kosovo. Therefore, it is important to educate and sensitise the majority community about the problems that the Roma community faces in the post-conflict period. The international community must start a reconciliation process among Roma and Albanians, as it did for the Serb community. Unfortunately, no attempt has been made by the United Nations Mission in Kosovo in this direction. Roma continue to be politically marginalised in Kosovo. Once Albanians abandon their "hate the Roma" campaign, Ashkali and Egyptians will find no reason to distance themselves from Roma, increasing chances of their political integration and bringing enhanced political advantages for the entire RAE community.

The international community must support the Youth Forum, which is advocating the union of all RAE political parties. This would strengthen the minorities politically in Kosovo. The Kosovo government, the international community, and non-governmental organisations need to emphasise education among RAE communities. This would make youth aware of their political, economic, and social rights.

The international community's approach in recognising only the Serbs as a minority (although on paper they are supposed to advocate equality for all ethnic groups) weakens the position of RAE communities. The United Nations Mission in Kosovo must insist on granting the same rights for all ethnic minorities. The steps taken for the protection of the rights of Serbs must also be taken simultaneously for RAE communities. As well, the international community must place the highest emphasis on closing the RAE camps in northern Mitrovica and Plementina before the final Kosovo status is determined.

Recommendations

The following recommendations relate specifically to RAE political unification in future Kosovo elections. The political unification of the RAE will open up possibilities for active participation in the decision-making process, which, in turn, will translate into direct involvement in local and central governmental structures.

Currently, in many Kosovo Assembly municipalities, no RAE participation occurs, no doubt because the respective RAE political parties did not win enough votes to become members of the local assemblies. It is important for the RAE to have active participation in local municipal assemblies, as this is one of the best forms of integration and participation in the decision-making process. Participation will give the RAE a better position to speak out their concerns, and help them to improve their education, employment, health, and housing. The same effects would occur at the central level if more RAE individuals were elected to the Kosovo parliament.

The next Kosovo municipal elections are likely to take place with a modified structure and process, with the probability of no reserved seats for minority political parties. This will make it very difficult for RAE political parties to win enough seats in the central government to make effective changes.

Accordingly, I make a number of recommendations.

- All three RAE political parties should immediately discuss the issue of coalition or alliance formation within the year 2007 and jointly agree to take further steps for political integration.
- All three RAE communities should be informed about the formation of the coalition or alliance between the three political parties.
- Educated people should lead the coalition or alliance, especially youth.
- The coalition or alliance should be formed with the same objectives and goals with regard to the three communities. However, RAE political parties can still maintain their own objectives in their agendas and leaders.
- A RAE political party meeting should be held to discuss the advantages as well as disadvantages of forming such a coalition. The larger interest of the minority communities should supersede the interests of constituent political parties and their leaders.
- The three leaders of the RAE political parties should not see themselves as adversaries; rather, they should focus on the improvement of the RAE situation in Kosovo institutions and government.

Conclusion

The Kosovo Roma and Ashkali Forum is a body promoting a common political identity, where RAE political leaders, activists, and organisations come together and deliberation is encouraged. The Kosovo Roma and Ashkali Forum recently published a position paper in which it presents the position of the Kosovo RAE. Although a problem exists with Egyptian political leaders' representation in the Forum, the main

objective of the Forum is "to promote the political, economic and social development and integration of the Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities" (KRAF, 2006, p. 3). The position paper further informs the RAE public of the position of the Forum with regard to the full integration and participation of RAE in Kosovo society. It also states that the Forum's policy is to open a dialogue between the RAE and then with other non-RAE communities in Kosovo. Thus, the Kosovo Roma and Ashkali Forum is active in bringing the RAE together and in helping them to learn to work together. The mechanism is positively perceived by the RAE in Kosovo.

In conclusion, the RAE should take the lead for integration in Kosovo and in its future status, regardless of what the status determination will be. The Utilitarian idea of "the greatest good for the greatest number" should be used in a justification of RAE political unification. One's conduct should be determined by the usefulness of its result, and the greatest good for the greatest number should be the main consideration in making a choice.

References

Ashkali Website. (2007). *Egyptian association is trying to join our (Ashkali) party* [online]. Available from: http://www.ashkali.ch/info.html [Accessed 2 April 2007].

Can Carpat. (2006). *The others: Kosovo of non-Albanians* [online]. Available from: http://www.axisglobe.com/article.asp?article=858 [Accessed 12 April 2007].

Egyptian Website. (2007). *Manipulations of Sabit Rrahmani* [online]. Available from: http://www.egjiptianet.de/Kercenohet%20shoferi%20i%20Sabit%20Rrahmanit.html [Accessed 2 April 2007].

Kosovo Roma and Ashkali Forum [KRAF]. (2006). *Our position*. Position paper 1/2006.

Malazogu, L. (2004). Discussion paper: *Where does the legitimacy in Kosovo really lie?* Kosovo Institute for Policy Research and Development.

Mertus, J. A. (1999) *Kosovo: how myths and truths started a war.* Baltimore, MD: Modern Humanities Research Association.

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees [UNHCR]. (2000). *The Kosovo crises: an independent evaluation of UNHCR's emergency preparedness and response*. Geneva: UNHCR.

Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, Mission in Kosovo, and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees [OSCE/UNHCR]. (2003). *Tenth assessment of the situation of ethnic minorities in Kosovo* [online]. Available from: http://www.unmikonline.org/press/reports/MinorityAssessmentReport10ENG.pdf [Accessed 2 April 2007].

Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe [OSCE]. (2005). *Election results. Kosovo Election Operations*. Available from: http://www.kosovoelections.org/eng [Accessed 1 August 2005].

Statistical Office Kosovo [SOK]. (2006). *Indicators on population* [online]. Available from: http://www.ks-gov.net/esk/ [Accessed 15 March 2007].

The Patrin Web Journal. (1998). *Timeline of Romani history* [online]. Available from: http://www.geocities.com/~patrin/timeline.htm [Accessed 12 May 2006].

Union of Balkan's Egyptians. (2007). *Demonstrations in Duesseldorf, March 2005* [online]. Available from: http://www.balkanaegypter.de [Accessed 15 March 2007].

United Nations Development Programme [UNDP]. (2004). *Human development report - Kosovo 2004* [online]. Available from: http://hdr.undp.org/reports/detail_reports.cfm?view=927 [Accessed 2 April 2007].

United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights [UNHCHR]. (1992). *Declaration on the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities* [online]. Available from: http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/d_minori.htm [Accessed 2 April 2007].

PART 3:
CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Roma Diplomacy:
A Challenge for European Institutions?
Brussels, 8 – 9 December, 2005

Opening Address

Josep Borrell Fontelles, President of the European Parliament

It is a great pleasure for me to welcome you to this House, which is your own house as Europeans.

You, the Roma people, are the European Union's largest "Trans-European" minority – you number 15 million in 25 countries.

The word "Roma" means "human being." Unfortunately, what are denied you are the most basic human rights.

You are the most discriminated against minority in Europe. Your very past is often denied; but the Roma people too were the object of genocide during the Second World War.

Full-blown historical amnesia has engulfed the persecution you have suffered, an amnesia largely due to the fact that the Roma often have no official status.

Today I am addressing the "elite" of the Roma people. As lawyers, political commentators and active members of NGOs, all of you have actively committed yourselves to working for the insertion of your people within our European societies.

In fact, I would rather speak of "European society" in the singular, since as you know, last April the European Parliament asked that you be recognised as "a European minority."

The Roma people has no state, because it transcends borders. You are, in fact, Europeans, whatever others may say or not say. And it is on that basis that the European Parliament is behind you in the steps you are taking.

The very title of your conference, "Roma Diplomacy," shows the scale of what you are trying to do; we for our part should be no less ambitious.

If the European Union wants to respect the values on which it is founded, it must be right there alongside you.

The struggle needs to be undertaken for you and with you. It will be won on the day when the international community no longer needs to keep 8 April as International Roma Day. On that day the discrimination of which you are victims will no longer have any reason to exist.

The European Parliament itself has a lot to do. In the past, only one of its members was a Roma, my friend Juan de Dios Ramirez Heredia. I am sorry that he is no longer an MEP.

An outstanding speaker, he left his mark on the Parliament. It was he who said *"If we manage to take part in political decision-making, we will have a better future."* You are following in his footsteps.

Today, we have two MEPs who are Roma. And I take this opportunity to salute the work of Mrs. Livia Jaroka and Mrs. Viktoria Mohacsi. They work extremely hard for the recognition of your rights.

Parliamentarians under the leadership of Mrs. Levai have set up the European Parliament Roma Forum.

And although intergroups have no official existence within the European Parliament, I would stress the importance of the role of Mrs. Levai's forum. It has become a site for dialogue between parliamentarians, the Commission, NGOs and active supporters of the Roma cause.

The 2005 report of the Observatory for Racism and Xenophobia in the Member States makes it very clear just how much the Roma are discriminated against, and discriminated against in all spheres.

Last June, the European Parliament asked that the Roma community be granted special protection. This community has, historically, been marginalised; its culture, history and language have often been at best, neglected, and at worst, trampled on.

It is essential that we root out endemic "Romaphobia" at local, national, regional and European Union level.

What that struggle is about is the recognition of otherness.

It is a struggle in the legal sphere, a struggle for jobs and education, a struggle against urban ghettos and violence.

The Struggle for Legal Existence

Parliament's call for the Roma to be recognised as a European minority is all the more important in view of the fact that there are too many countries where the Roma are not recognised as possessing any rights whatever.

Without any official papers, a human being has no right to anything, and counts as nothing. This is where we need to start.

Parliament will be keeping a very close eye indeed on all this, particularly in view of the forthcoming accession of Romania and Bulgaria.

The Struggle for Access to Jobs

You are unquestionably the frontline victims of discrimination when it comes to access to jobs.

The fight for employment needs to be an integral part of our fight against all discrimination, particularly discrimination on the basis of ethnic origin.

It is not an accident that your community has such a high unemployment rate, as do communities of African, Middle Eastern, Asian and even central or southern American origin.

At the end of the 1960s in France, a journalist dreamt up a catchword which has had devastating effects. Raymond Cartier invented the phrase, which only works properly in French: *La Correze avant le Zambeze* – La Correze before Zambezia.

This pernicious ideology of "national preference" was present in the European Constitution referendum campaign, with the now mythical image of the "Polish plumber." The danger simply did not exist, but the damage was done.

This rejection of "foreigners," of "others," is absolutely unacceptable.

Only access to jobs can provide a way out of endemic poverty.

The Struggle for the Right to Education

You who are here today have overcome the barriers to integration at the level of schooling. This has not been true for the overwhelming majority of Roma. Racial segregation, a concept nowadays dismissed by modern science, is all too alive and well in a good number of Member States.

I well remember the caricatures in the pages of my own school books. The white man was, naturally, wearing a suit and tie. The Indian, covered in feathers, looked as if he had come straight out of the world of Buffalo Bill. The black man, completely naked, was your standard issue savage. And the yellow people, in their pointed hats, looked like characters out of Tintin and the Blue Lotus.

Do you know who it was that on 28 July 1885 declared to the Court of the French Chamber of Deputies, *"There is a point that I have to address ... and it is the humanitarian and civilising aspect of the question. The superior races have a right in relation to the inferior races. I say that they have a right because there is a duty to civilise the inferior races"?* Well, the author of this comment was none other than Jules Ferry.

And yet it was he who in 1905 forced through the separation of Church from State in France. At the time he was considered a progressive politician. Today, fortunately, things have changed. The MPs would call for his immunity to be waived and he would face criminal prosecution.

It is absolutely unacceptable that any human being, on the basis of ethnic characteristics, should be automatically assigned to establishments for the handicapped!

It is absolutely unacceptable that any human being, for the same reason, should be placed in a separate classroom from his or her schoolmates.

We must put an end to this exclusion in schools. Otherwise, there is no equality of opportunities. That is the only way to put an end to cliches and prejudice.

I remember, as a boy in my small village in the mountains of Catalonia, seeing the travellers arriving with their caravans, and people taking fright, and shouting, *"Gitanos, gitanos."*

The Struggle against Urban Ghettos

The European Parliament has called for this. The need is highlighted by the Observatory for Racism and Xenophobia.

Unfortunately, no exact statistical study exists of discrimination relating to housing.

However, all witnesses and all the evidence agrees on the fact that minority groups – migrants, refugees and asylum seekers – are in the front line for being refused housing. And Roma head the list.

Struggle against Violence and Racist Crime

A few Member States have efficient tools for collecting data concerning what we can politely describe as racist, xenophobic and religious incidents.

The UK registered 52 694 racist incidents between 2003-2004; France registered 1 565 in 2004.

Amongst the ten new Member States, the number of these offences registered in Hungary totalled 25 in 2004, and 209 in the Czech Republic between January and November in the same year!

One could be forgiven for assuming that there is nothing to worry about. Because clearly, there are no racist incidents. The reality is horribly different.

The Observatory's report highlights the fact that Roma, Jews and Muslims are the most frequent victims.

The real picture will be somewhat clearer once we have harmonised the way we define this type of crime.

And when the methods for collecting data have likewise been harmonised.

And, above all, when all the legal, psychological and political factors which discourage people from denouncing these crimes have been eliminated.

If we really want to work effectively to achieve an inclusive society, we need to put an end to every single one of these different forms of discrimination.

Exclusion, in all forms, leads to situations which can become explosive ...

Given that existing models for integration, such as those of the UK and France, are now obsolete, it is up to us to work together to construct a European system for integration.

And here, it is up to us to be convincing.

I wish you all the very best in your work.

Liberals Demand Greater Participation of the Roma Community in Europe's Political Process

Press Release by the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe, Brussels, 8 December 2005

"The Roma community must find ways of effectively representing themselves at national and international level, both to protect their common interests and identity, and to ensure that they are recognised within a united Europe," urged Graham Watson, leader of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe, at the occasion of an international conference hosted today at the European Parliament, entitled "Roma Diplomacy: A Challenge for European Institutions?" Outlining the current situation of the 12-15 million Roma living in Europe, he stated that the Roma remains Europe's most disadvantaged ethnic group. Please find below some key excerpts from his speech:

> "Roma lacked both a visible, vocal elite and institutions committed to protecting their rights. This translates into little or no political influence and complete under-representation at government level."
>
> "I would like to congratulate the Roma Diplomacy initiative for helping to foster a new generation of public 'diplomats.' Young Roma will be the leaders and the opinion-formers of tomorrow and who - I hope - can help bridge the gap between Roma society and the institutions of government. I believe that one of the final outcomes of The Roma Diplomacy initiative could be the formation of a 'think tank' to put Roma issues at the top of the EU agenda."
>
> "But there is more that we can yet do. Political families like ALDE are becoming more and more important as politics and policies increasingly traverse national boundaries. In an enlarged Union European Liberals must work together to lobby our partners and governments to ensure that they pay more than lip service to diversity - we must see it on our electoral lists. And we must make sure that our policies are up to date, accountable and inclusive. That is why myself and Viktoria Mohacsi MEP (SzDSz, Hungary) are working for the creation of a working group on Roma which will give new impetus to action on current issues."

The Role of Diplomacy and International Action in Curbing Anti-Gypsyism in Europe

Beate Winkler, Director of the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC)

Chair, (President), honourable members of Parliament, Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is a pleasure and honour for me to accept this invitation to address you today. I believe that to look at the role of European institutions and Roma diplomacy is a useful step in a process of making equal treatment of Roma reality in Europe.

I am pleased that the EUMC, an independent EU Agency, is a partner to the discussion.

Diplomacy means first and foremost an ability to communicate, ability to create an environment of shared understanding and acceptance across cultures.

The European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC)

The EUMC's core task is to help the European Union's institutions and Governments to fight racism, anti-Semitism and xenophobia. This is done by providing them with evidence based data and information. The EUMC has therefore set up RAcism and XEnophobia data collection network, which it calls RAXEN for short.

Diplomacy is central to our mandate: collection of data, or evidence if you like, would be meaningless if it was not communicated through and did not serve the ultimate goal of changing perceptions and fighting racism in Europe. We have provided policy input into the work of various Commission services (Justice, Employment, Enlargement, Education and Culture, External Relations, EUROSTAT, etc.). The EUMC regularly informs the work of the European Parliament and EU consultative bodies, the European Economic and Social Committee, and the Committee of Regions. Through the network of EUMC's government liaison officers we attempt to impact on Member State policies. Through our network of cities we have facilitated exchange of good practice among policy officers in local administrations. The EUMC cooperates with the Council of Europe, OSCE and UN.

Roma Diplomacy

Addressing racism against Roma and Travellers communities falls squarely within the mandate of the EUMC. This year's annual report of the EUMC concludes that Roma emerge as the group most vulnerable to racism in the EU. They face discrimination in employment, housing and education – as well as being regular victims of racial violence in all EU member states. Our upcoming report on the situation of Roma in public education shows that a major obstacle for Romani children in the education system remains segregation.

Anti-Gypsyism as a particular form of racism is a challenge for all of us, policy makers, European and national institutions and Roma diplomats. The *European Parliament Resolution on the Situation of the Roma in the European Union*, adopted earlier this year, sent a strong signal to all of us. The Resolution represents a vision

of a new partnership based on consultation, cooperation and collective action. A partnership united by principle and the rule of law and supported by an equitable sharing of both, cost and commitment.

The European Parliament Resolution on Roma is a clear indicator that addressing anti-Gypsyism in the European Union and providing equal opportunities is far from complete and has to be undertaken in partnership on equal footing with Roma.

We operate in a common framework. The EU anti-discrimination law has triggered numerous positive initiatives and measures. While four Member States (Germany, Luxembourg, Austria and Finland) have failed to transpose the two relevant EU directives in this field, others have introduced legislation which gave improved protection to ethnic minorities and populations of migrant origin.

For the European level, we have attached great importance to the Proposal for a Council Framework Decision on Racism and Xenophobia and we continue to work towards the day, when the proposal is adopted in the Council.

Upcoming Priorities

For the upcoming period the role of Roma diplomacy and European institutions would be best played in the following areas: (1) policy implementation, (2) empowerment of Roma, (3) combating anti-Gypsyism and last, but not least, (4) data collection.

Let me now comment on each of those four areas.

AD 1: When it comes to *policy implementation*, a multi-sectoral and multi-dimensional approach needs to be adopted. Not so long ago, in October this year, the participants of the Joint international conference on the implementation of policies on Roma, Sinti and Travellers, co-signed by the OSCE, Council of Europe, EUMC, Republic of Poland and Republic of Slovenia, uniformly concluded that full implementation of policies addressing anti-Gypsyism in education, housing, employment and health, requires coordinated strategy covering all key fields of life in which Roma are subjected to unequal treatment. Mainstreaming and targeting of Roma in policy making needs to become a common approach by all parties involved.

AD 2: When we are talking about *empowerment*, we have to think in terms of including Roma in policy development, implementation and evaluation and related activities. Roma need to have opportunities to participate equally in public affairs at the local, national, and European level, in public service, and through consultative bodies. Expanding the capacity of Romani grassroots to participate in public life needs to take place also at grassroots level.

AD 3: Thirdly, *Anti-Gypsyism* as a particular form of racism needs to be addressed by all segments of society. European institutions and national governments should take a lead, though media and civil society also play a role in recognizing and openly condemning all public expressions of anti-Gypsyism. As the European Parliament Resolution on the situation of Roma in Europe points out, the media also bears an important responsibility in ceasing to promote anti-Gypsy stereotypes and instead providing objective information about the situation of

Romani communities. Roma media could inform mainstream media work on and provide insight into internal Roma community debates, most up-to-date issues, that the majority society rarely learns about through mainstream media reporting. Here, the European Council could consider including combating anti-Gypsyism across Europe among its priorities for the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All in 2007 and the European Year of Inter-cultural Dialogue in 2008. Funding could be made available to awareness raising projects that would seek partnership across a board of actors, Roma, Roma media, mainstream media, policy makers and politicians.

AD 4: The *collection of objective, reliable and comparable data* is key to the development, monitoring, and evaluation of policies. Inadequate or non-existent data collection is a profound problem when attempting to gauge the extent and nature of racist violence and crime, track the level and extent of racial discrimination, in order to design effective policies and measures. Without any data collection or information it becomes very difficult to target policy effectively, measures its impact and monitor any progress. It is especially important to capacitate Roma to be able to monitor anti-Gypsyism and also to be involved in collection of data disaggregated by ethnicity. What would be particularly useful is conducting regular EU-level surveys on discrimination of Roma and other disadvantaged communities.

Conclusion

(1) The EUMC remains to be an ally to addressing racism against Roma in Europe. Over the coming months, the EUMC will implement its *Multi-annual Strategy for the fight against racism on Roma, Sinti and Travellers and anti-Gypsyism*, with a particular focus on improving comparability of data, cooperation with other organisations and dialogue with governments and civil society. We are particularly keen to continue to support grassroots efforts of Romani women to address particular forms of racism that they face. We will be expanding our work on Roma women issues. The EUMC will also examine its capacity and possibilities at the local level, where integration of Roma eventually takes place.

(2) The EUMC is open to talent. We have opened traineeship program and I encourage Roma to take this opportunity and come to spend some months in the EUMC. The traineeship programme could provide you with experience of what it means to work in a field of data collection, communication and policy development at the EU level.

(3) Finally, next year will be challenging for the EUMC. The extension of the EUMC mandate to become the EU's Fundamental Rights Agency is on the agenda of the EU institutions and Member States. We hope that you will continue to support the transformation of the EUMC into a Fundamental Rights Agency – and that this Agency will have a strong enough mandate and sufficient resources to have a real impact.

How Can Roma Diplomacy Use the European Parliament?

Richard Corbett, Deputy Leader of the Labour MEPs in the European Parliament

"Unity with Diversity" is the official motto of the European Union. None can symbolise that better than the Roma community – a minority that exists within every Member State of the European Union and that has been part of the fabric of European society for countless generations.

Yet, far from being valued, the Roma are marginalised and discriminated against to a greater extent than any other minority in Europe. Over half of the 12 to 15 million Roma living in Europe suffer from poverty and social exclusion. Many face hate-speech and physical attacks by extremist groups and even by official authorities and local police forces. These facts are well documented and need not be repeated here. Nevertheless, how the European Union and its Member States respond to this situation will be a test of its success or otherwise in achieving the objectives of equality, non-discrimination, and equal treatment laid down in treaties.

It is in this context that I welcome the development of "Roma Diplomacy." The development by Roma organisations themselves of an effective network operating across Europe and in Brussels, reminding and pushing public authorities, political parties, and civil society; the development of programmes of action and ideas – all is essential if we are genuinely to change the plight of the Roma.

What can be done at the level of the European Parliament? The Parliament is both an important forum and, of course, co-legislature in European-level legislation. It also monitors and scrutinises the actions of the European Union executive (the Commission) and its agencies. All these dimensions must be exploited and the Parliament must be obliged to examine its own internal structure and conduct.

Using the European Parliament as a Forum

Bringing together representatives of virtually every political party in Europe, from left to right, in government or opposition, large and small, the European Parliament is well placed for transmitting political ideas, spreading innovative practices, learning from each others' national experiences and forging ideas for joint action at the European level. All this can be important in helping confront stereotypes. Members of Parliament and, through them, their parties can learn what has been tried and what has worked in different European countries; they can compare and contrast national programmes and legislation, and learn from each other's experiences.

The establishment of an all-party Roma intergroup is important in this regard. It will ensure a structured dialogue on these issues and can become a focal point for Roma Diplomacy.

Shaping European Union Legislation, Budget, and Policies

A significant proportion of European legislation is relevant to the ending of discrimination against the Roma. One immediately thinks of the non-discrimination

legislation that flows from Article 13 of the EC Treaty, but other aspects of European Union law can also be important, as well as the way in which structural funds are spent.

Yet, much of this law was not framed with the situation of the Roma in mind. Arguably, it all needs to be reviewed and reassessed in order to be updated and improved wherever it is found wanting. Roma Diplomacy, in conjunction with Members of Parliament, should focus on this task.

Executive Action

Parliament's role in scrutinising the European Union executive in the form of the European Commission must also be put to good use. This has two dimensions to it: monitoring what the Commission does and putting new ideas to it.

In terms of putting new ideas to the Commission, Parliament should press the Commission to draft a Green Paper on the position of the Roma across Europe, examining problems, identifying best practice, and preparing the way to make recommendations for action. It should encourage the Commission's services, especially the Eurostat statistical agency to collect relevant data and ensure that all Member States actually have such data. The Commission could also usefully follow the model that it has already established for certain horizontal issues, such as gender and disability, by setting up a Roma unit within the Commission that could drive forward the existing Roma interservice group.

In terms of monitoring what the Commission is doing now, Parliament must increase its scrutiny of the use of structural funds, and of the social fund in particular, to ensure that Roma communities receive their fair share – a share that should be more than proportional to their population given the concentration of social problems in the Roma community.

Parliament should monitor internal Commission operations for equal opportunities in the recruitment of staff as it seems that few Roma staff have positions with the European Commission – a situation that is astonishing. One would have thought that some Roma experts would already be in place in units where knowledge of the Roma community would be useful, but even this appears not to have happened.

Change within the Parliament

Even within the Parliament, we find a total absence of Roma staff among the permanent officials of the European Parliament. Only among Members of Parliament assistants, employed under the direct authority of the Members themselves, are any Roma staff operating within the Parliament. This situation has to be rectified. The Parliament already makes special efforts to improve recruitment and promotion of other categories and this must now be done for Roma.

Parliament should also examine what can be done about the Roma language. Parliament has taken measures to allow the public to write to the European Parliament, for instance, to the Petitions Committee, in languages other than the official languages of the European Union (e.g., in Catalan). Such efforts should include the Roma language.

Roma Women in Diplomacy and Politics

Lisa Pavan-Woolfe, Principal Advisor, Directorate-General Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, European Commission

The European Union has been promoting gender equality for five decades. As a result, we have a solid body of legislation that regulates issues such as equal pay for women and men, equal treatment in employment and social security, parental leave, and protection during pregnancy and motherhood. In 2004, the European Union adopted the first directive prohibiting gender discrimination outside the field of employment. It ensures the equal treatment of women and men in access to goods and services.

However, legislation alone is not enough to prevent discrimination on the grounds of gender and to change people's attitudes. The Commission, therefore, uses a combination of instruments: legislation, financing through programmes and the Structural Funds, gender mainstreaming and specific actions, social dialogue, and dialogue with civil society. The goal is to ensure equal participation and representation between women and men in all areas of life.

In this context, we strongly support the increase of women in economic and public decision-making positions. This requires the removal of obstacles that keep women on the sidelines of the decision-making process, such as stereotypes and bias in the recruitment process. It also requires policies that promote the reconciliation of work and private lives, including flexible work arrangements, more and better facilities for the care of dependants, and an increased participation of men in household duties. We promote these measures through the European Employment Strategy to fully utilize the labour potential of women and to allow them to take on jobs in decision-making.

To measure progress, we have established a database, which includes accurate information on the number of women and men in public companies and in national administrations. It covers the twenty-five Member States, as well as candidate and EEA countries. Soon it will include information on Turkey as well. The database shows that in 2004 women held only 24% of high-ranking jobs in national administrations. This figure is even less, 16%, for the top jobs.

Because these data show the situation on the ground, it has a value in raising awareness at both European and national levels for the need to promote women's presence in high ranking and top positions. This is an important tool, as we have to remember that efforts to promote women's presence in politics largely lie at the national, regional, and local level.

* * *

Romani women face particular challenges. They often bear the double burden of gender discrimination and ethnic discrimination from the majority of society. Empowering Romani women to take part in diplomacy and politics is, therefore, crucial and, it is, I believe, a sign of mature democracy. I am very encouraged to see the emergence of a new generation of female leaders representing the Roma community in Europe – including the two MEPs of Roma origin.

The Commission is committed to address the discrimination and exclusion of Roma people with all instruments at its disposal. These include:

- The enforcement of the "Race Equality" Directive (2000/43/EC), which fully covers Roma and guarantees their right to live a life free of discrimination with regard to employment, social security, education, and access to goods, services, and housing. The Commission will insist that it be correctly transposed and applied in Member States.
- The use of financial instruments, namely, European Structural Funds and, in particular, the European Social Fund. During the last funding period, projects aimed directly at Roma inclusion were supported with approximately 300 million euros. Indirectly, Roma could also benefit from projects aimed at vulnerable groups in a broader sense, which received nearly 1 billion euros. The Commission has invited Member States to take the objective of Roma inclusion into consideration when drawing up their operational plans for the new funding period, 2007-2013.
- A strong effort to raise the awareness of Roma people and the public on the non-discrimination rights of Roma and the benefits of diversity. The European Year 2007 and the ongoing information campaign, "For diversity – against discrimination," are a great chance to promote the representation of and the respect for Roma people in society.

The Commission welcomes very much the achievements made by the Decade of Roma inclusion 2005-2015 now with nine participating national governments from Central and Eastern Europe and the Western Balkans (including five Member States). For the first time, national governments have committed themselves to learn from one another which strategies are successful in improving the situation of Roma employment, education, housing, and health protection. We appreciate particularly that this is done in close cooperation with Roma civil society.

We acknowledge the need for forward-looking policies. The High Level Advisory Groups of Experts on the social and labour market inclusion of ethnic minorities has a strong interest in Roma issues. It will publish its recommendations by the end of 2007. These should give a powerful signal for the shaping of future European policy for the inclusion of ethnic minorities, including the Roma.

The European Commission promotes the inclusion of the Roma, among other things, through its internship programme, which has allowed, with support from the OSI, ten young Roma graduates to undertake a Traineeship in the Commission in 2005, with continuation in 2006 and 2007. In fact, of the ten *stagiaires* who participated in this scheme in 2005, six were women. This, I believe, is a good example of how we can begin thinking about concrete actions to involve more Romani women in politics.

The Commission has actively engaged in promoting gender equality and in enhancing a more balanced representation between women and men in decision-making positions. It recognizes the positive repercussions of empowering Romani women, who have an important role to play in bringing the specific issues they face to the political arena.

The Role of Civil Society in Facilitating the Transition to Equal Opportunities for Roma

Elly Rijnierse, Programme Officer, Cordaid

Cordaid has been supporting Roma civil society organisations for several years. Cordaid considers the Roma a specific group with much to offer to European society.

It is rightly stated in the positioning of this conference that access to Europe of new countries that are home to the majority of the Roma raises political attention towards the situation of the Roma. However, it is also true that the European Commission has set clear norms regarding integration of Roma as a condition for accession, and that this creates a major incentive for Roma civil society to grow. This creates opportunities for both the Roma and Europe.

Cordaid's basic philosophy starts from the dignity of the individual, and the strength of the individual to ameliorate his or her own environment. Cordaid focuses on creating social capital, on facilitating social inclusion of vulnerable groups, and, finally, on social cohesion in society as a whole.

In this process, Cordaid values explicitly the specific role and mandate of civil society, in relation to governmental structures, as well as in relation to the private sector. In the era of globalisation, where societies are not structured merely by their own government, but by international institutions, international enterprises, and in which access to information and the media highly influences local communities, civil society organisations (CSOs) become even more crucial in peoples' lives, peoples' identities, and the expression of peoples' needs and ambitions.

Cordaid has supported Roma CSOs over the last years, in Romania, Bulgaria, Moldova, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and in the Netherlands. We have also supported internationally-oriented CSOs, like the Minorities Rights Group, the European Roma Information Office, and the Spolu/ERGO network. We try to be as complementary as possible with other international funding non-governmental organisations like the Open Society Institute. The idea is to support Roma CSOs from the local level to the international level, to strengthen the development of a transnational civil society, *in casu* striving for the equal participation of Roma communities in society.

Diversity and Social Cohesion

Cordaid has worked over the last three years together with Justitia et Pax the Netherlands on a trajectory *Equal Participation of Minorities in Europe*. This collaboration started in 2001 with the common participation in the World Conference Against Racism in Durban. Justicia et Pax invited Mr. Rudko Kawczynski to organize a workshop during that conference.

From this event, a network of minority organisations was born, uniting CSOs from Georgia, Romania, Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, and the Netherlands. In this network, different minority groups were represented, not only Roma.

Almost by definition, organisations representing minority groups work in isolation in their own country. The basic idea of this network of minority CSOs was to break this isolation, to work together, and to find a common vision on equal participation of minorities in society.

By creating a network of these organisations, by facilitating exchange of experiences, by facilitating professional growth, and by joining them actively, the position of each individual organisation was substantially strengthened. Moreover – and this is a crucial step – by claiming the rightful position for minorities, also the majority is addressed to structure society more in compliance with the European ideal of a culturally diverse society. The Council of Europe has extensively elaborated the idea of diversity and social cohesion. The objective of this network is not only to strengthen the position of the minority groups it represents, but to work from a vision of society as a whole, on how the relation between a minority and the majority can be shaped and maintained. As a consequence, the minority position changes: from that of a "vulnerable group" defending its own interest, to a group that is proactive and in the forefront of the transition process in its own country, in compliance with the European ideal of diversity and social cohesion. This is a very empowering change of perspective for minority groups that take part in the network.

The network is small, and intends to develop and express its vision based on concrete experiences in the particular context of the participating organisations.

Amalipe

One of the participating non-governmental organisations in this network on equal participation of minorities is Amalipe from Bulgaria. I will describe briefly Amalipe's activities, to show how Amalipe expresses the needs and the ambitions of the Roma, and how it works in a constructive, though critical way with the local and national authorities in Bulgaria. I will also describe how Amalipe works with the European Commission Delegation, and how it addresses simultaneously the basic attitudes of the majority.

Amalipe started with a programme for the integration of Roma folklore as an optional subject into the mainstream curriculum of primary schools in Bulgaria. Amalipe has succeeded in this objective, since the topic of Roma folklore has been integrated in the curriculum of a considerable number of schools, and Roma and non-Roma children are participating in these classes.

Following this programme, Cordaid stepped in. In 2004 and 2005, Amalipe started to monitor and evaluate educational programmes, financed in the frame of the National Strategy on Roma Integration in Bulgaria (a Phare programme financed by the European Commission Delegation). The monitoring and evaluation report has had considerable effect in the sense that it has influenced on major points the elaboration of a follow up Phare programme on the same topic. To this end, Amalipe has created entrances to the local and national authorities in Bulgaria, as well as with the schools. Amalipe maintains also good relations with the European Commission, both in Bulgaria (the EC Delegation) and in Brussels.

Amalipe participates in several European Roma networks, as well as in national Roma networks. These networks create opportunities for exchange of experiences within Bulgaria as well as in different countries in Europe, and these networks facilitate access to the government and to European institutions.

Organisations such as Amalipe can play a significant role in the coordination of policies and actions of the authorities and institutions that address Roma communities. In this example, the policies of local authorities on education and Roma integration were not coherent with the policies of the national authorities. The fact that Amalipe monitored and questioned the policies and the effect of these policies revealed the lack of coordination.

Well-documented feedback on the Phare project to the European Commission Delegation in Sofia forced both the European Commission Delegation and the Bulgarian government to reconsider the nature of the future contract, and the conditions set by the European Commission to the Phare programmes in Bulgaria.

While the life of the Roma communities in Bulgaria is clearly influenced by policies of the European Commission Delegation, as well as the national government and local authorities, Amalipe has been able to give coordinated feedback to every level of authority.

Conclusion

I started with the statement that in the era of globalisation, CSOs may become even more crucial in the lives and identities of people. By monitoring the effects of the interventions of different authorities – local, national, international; governmental and non-governmental – on minority groups and on the population as a whole, CSOs can contribute significantly to the coordination of these actions, and at the same time express the needs and ambitions of minority groups.

Minorities in general, but especially the Roma, may fight in the front lines for the creation of diversity and social cohesion in Europe. Minorities cannot ignore the majority. Therefore, they are forced to develop clear ideas about the way they see diversity and social cohesion. Majorities can for a long time ignore the issue and, therefore, lag behind in the discussion about a reality that is already present.

The Roma may play a special role in this respect, since, first, they cannot rely on a mother country that can put its diplomatic weight in the game: they cannot play the traditional diplomatic game. The only way is the long way of fundamental change in power relations in society as a whole. Second, since they are dispersed over Europe, they are obliged to explore all opportunities offered by the globalisation process: from the struggle for universal human rights and minority rights to the opportunities of information technology.

Therefore, I think it is in the direct and ultimate interest of the European community and transnational civil society to support and to cherish this struggle of the Roma for equal participation, because this kind of struggle shapes the quality of the European society for which we are all longing.

Concluding Address

Vladimir Spidla, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, and Equal Opportunities, European Commission

Members of the European Parliament, ladies and gentlemen, dear friends: It is a great pleasure for me to deliver this concluding address at your conference, and to reflect together with you upon the question contained in its title.

Please allow me first to say a few personal words. Today, I represent the European Commission here, but, of course, I bring into this job all the experience I have accumulated during my life in the Czech Republic, experience from many "ordinary" jobs, which I carried out until 1989; from work in a labour office in a small town, and later from work as a Member of Parliament, Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, and Prime Minister. In all these phases of my life, I gained experience with members of Romany communities. I was always keenly aware how difficult and specific their position is; how difficult it is for them to overcome barriers stemming from misunderstanding on part of the majority societies, as well from real cultural differences. As I am a historian by training, I always realised how different is their historical experience from those of members of the majority – and how their current problems are linked to previous centuries of marginalisation and discrimination.

I mention the word "problems." I realise that some of you might argue: why should we always speak about the Roma in connection with *problems*? Why should we not, rather, say something reassuring and optimistic, for instance, about the political emancipation of Roma in Europe?

The reasons why we should have the courage openly to discuss the problems of the Roma are twofold. First is the need to be credible. It makes no sense to hide behind nice-sounding phrases. Why are conferences organised, why are initiatives established, and why are special programs created? Precisely because Roma in contemporary Europe face enormous problems.

A second, even more important reason why, in my position, I deal above all with the problems of Roma is linked to the role and competencies of the European Commission. The Commission has its role defined by treaties, of which it is the guardian. Minority policies, in the real sense of the word, that is, policies aiming at the support of positive, collective rights of national or ethnic minorities, are simply not in the European Commissions competencies. The support of such cultural rights, as well as the issue of collective political interests of minorities, is a task for the Member States, not for the European Union. By contrast, the European Commission does have a number of legal commitments concerning equality, including the protection from discrimination, and concerning social inclusion.

The growing attention paid to Roma in today's European Union is surely linked to the fact that the three most numerous Roma communities in the new Member States – in Hungary, Slovakia and the Czech Republic – account for about 1.3 million people. This means that by their accession to the Union, the number of Roma living in the European Union has doubled, according to some estimates. It appears that an even

greater number of Roma will become citizens of the European Union when Romania and Bulgaria enter. More important than the numbers themselves, which are sometimes used to support this or that argument, are the conditions in which these people find themselves; namely, that most of them suffer poverty and social exclusion; that many of them encounter discrimination in all areas of life; and that some of them now live, as citizens of the European Union, in conditions unworthy of the Union, in *de facto* ghettoes. This applies not only in the new Member States, but also in the territory of some old Member States.

As we can see from recent events in France and from examples in other Member States, social and ethnic segregation is a recipe for permanent social inequality and exclusion. Ghettoes are not compatible with equality. I am convinced that we cannot accept the existence of ghettoes, because they are in conflict with the European idea. After all, our Union has been created from the outset as a space for equality of citizens – not just formal equality, but equality of opportunities, solidarity, and social cohesion.

In other words, we cannot accept the current situation of Roma in the Member States for the basic reason that it contravenes the fundamental principles of human equality, which is the key principle of the European Union. To paraphrase the statement of the founder of Czechoslovakia, Tomas Garrigue Masaryk: States – or in this case, unions of states – survive by holding true to the ideas on the basis of which they were established. That is why the European Union cannot accept becoming a space of socio-ethnic ghettoes; and why it cannot accept that members of some ethnic groups would be second-class citizens.

Ladies and gentlemen,

As Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, I consider it my duty to use all the influence the European Commission has in dealing with discrimination on an individual level, with the help of anti-discrimination directives approved in 2000, which are among the most progressive in the world. Yet, that is not enough: we must use also the financial instruments, such as the European Social Fund, to increase the chances of all, including the Roma, to become fully included in the social and economic life of our societies. To make use of what has already shown itself useful in some Member States, a High Level Group on the Integration of Disadvantaged Ethnic Minorities into the Labour Market will be established early next year.

We are aware that the difficulties faced by the Roma have multiple causes. It would be incorrect to simplify and claim that all of these difficulties are the result only of cultural differences; or that they are the result only of historic disadvantages; or that they are the result only of today's prejudice, discrimination, and racism; or that they are caused only by recent structural changes in the socio-economic domain. Such simplifications are often used to point a finger on those who are to be blamed, or else to explain that all this is inevitable and no one is to blame. It should be evident, however, that in reality the current problems of the Roma are caused by a combination of all the above factors.

In searching for solutions to these problems, we should first of all apply imagination, because a mechanical approach would be unproductive. Second, we should deal with them with humility, because it is not at all easy to find the right balance between sensitivity to Roma cultural tradition and the pragmatic needs of modern societies, which rest on economic efficiency and on education and qualification of individuals. Third, we should deal with these issues with the participation of those concerned. We cannot create policies for Roma without the Roma. We need to search very patiently for a consensus while bearing in mind that on these issues, different, if not contradictory, opinions co-exist legitimately. Just as there is no "single correct opinion of the majority", there is not – and cannot be – any "single correct opinion of the Roma." With the growing participation of Roma in the political life of the individual Member States, on local as well as on national levels, we may expect that this natural diversity of opinions will continue to grow.

Nonetheless, the time has come for me to bring this speech to a more optimistic ending. I am indeed very happy that this conference is different from others, that it takes places within the framework of a very positive project of diplomatic courses for the Roma. For me, personally, this project is a great source of inspiration in the way in which it uses modern technologies; but its results will surely be inspiring in other ways as well. The graduates of this diplomacy course will not even have to be necessarily "spokespersons" for the Roma; they may find their role in various areas of public life. The more it will be normal that we meet Roma in all layers of European society, in its cultural life, in its public service, in its diplomacy, the more it will be clear how abnormal it is that hundreds of thousands of Roma still lack realistic opportunities for success in society.

Therefore, the question that is in the title of this conference should, in my view, be answered as follows: It is the contemporary, unsatisfactory situation of the Roma communities in old as well as new Member States that is a challenge for the European Union. The creation of a highly qualified, articulate group of European Roma with diplomatic skills is not a challenge for the European Union; rather, it is a very useful asset in our efforts to deal with that challenge of Roma inequality and social exclusion.

And I believe that together we will be able to move ahead.

Final Recommendations

Roma Diplomacy Conference Participants

Considering the seven-century-long presence and contributions of Roma to Europe in the fields of language and culture, as well as the existing potential for better participation of Roma in building a more tolerant and prosperous European society;

Concerned with the existing levels of anti-Gypsyism (Romaphobia or Gypsyphobia), the limited communication between Roma and European Institutions, the limited transparency of initiatives and projects focused on Roma, and the deficiencies in the flow of information;

Mindful of recommendation 23 of the European Parliament resolution of 28 April 2005: "Supports the continuing moves within the EU institutions towards incorporating the Roma-to-Roma approach, as developed by the OSCE, in the future hiring of staff for Roma - as well as non-Roma-related vacancies;"

In view of the lack of ethnic segregated data and indicators, and problems related to the lack of Roma participation in collecting such data;

Noting the fact that the lack of effective Roma participation in European Institutions strongly affects Roma visibility in Europe and sends a negative signal to the Roma communities;

Considering that the lack of Roma representatives within international institutions facilitates, both directly and indirectly, the perpetration of the social stigma associated with the Roma identity and hinders any sense of ownership and participation among Roma, related to the activities of these institutions;

Aware of the success of the OSCE/ODIHR Contact Point for Roma and Sinti which is closely linked to the employment of people of Roma ethnicity, including the Senior Advisor, a move which considerably increased the visibility of Roma on the international level;

We recommend:

1. Policy Measures

a. Develop, as recommended by the European Parliament's resolution of 28 April 2005, a comprehensive policy on Roma which is multi-sectorial, recognising the varying needs of EU member states as well as candidate and potential member states. The first step should be the publication of a green paper on the situation of Roma by the European Commission identifying the most urgent issues for action;

b. Establish a steering committee at the level of the European Parliament with the task to assess and evaluate the implementation of the Resolution of the European

Parliament on the Situation of Roma from 28 April 2005; the steering committee should include Roma MEPs and take into account Roma expertise;

c. Develop a specific European Action Plan on Roma, based on the existing National Action Plans and Joint Inclusion Memorandums' chapters on Roma and taking into account existing national and international plans and strategies;

d. Encourage European Institutions, as well as European Commission Delegations and national governments, to collect data and report on countries' progress on integration of Roma on an annual basis in separate reports or chapters of the required reports for the European Union;

e. Adopt a special, accessible, budget targeting the capacity of Roma grassroots organizations;

f. Initiate common public awareness campaigns concerning the discrimination faced by Roma using various mediums, including the Internet, and provide steering and moral leadership in the fight against anti-Gypsyism;

g. Actively participate towards maximizing the impact of existing initiatives on Roma. For instance, the European Commission and European Parliament need to be involved and use to the maximum the potential of the Decade of Roma Inclusion, the initiatives of the Council of Europe, OSCE, UNDP and World Bank as well as some good initiatives of the national governments;

h. Increase awareness of the implementation of the OSCE Action Plan on Improvement of the situation of Roma and Sinti in the OSCE area;

i. Strengthen coordination with relevant European Roma organizations such as the European Roma and Travellers Forum and promote a similar kind of partnership agreement as emphasized in the Partnership Agreement with the European Institutions;

j. Given the special interest of Roma in the future of Kosovo and considering the failure to include Roma in the negotiation teams on the future status of Kosovo, the European Institutions and especially the European Parliament and European Commission should increase attention to the status of Roma and their participation in the future Kosovo;

k. Encourage the development of Roma human resources capacities and develop a inter-institutional task force with the competence to combat widespread European anti-Gypsyism;

l. Establish European prizes for achievements in the fields of Roma culture, studies, and policy making (particularly combating racism/anti-Gypsyism);

m. Provide a budget for the translation of the major documents and texts of European institutions, and those related to Roma, into the Romani language.

2. Institutional Measures

A. For the European Commission:

1. Establish a Roma Unit, using the existing models of horizontal units (gender, disability);

2. Strengthen the existing Roma Interservice Group through a secretariat including Roma experts with a clear budget line. Increase transparency concerning the activities of this group. The role of the secretariat should be to steer the actions taken by the European Commission;

3. Facilitate and actively encourage a Roma advisory role for the cabinets of the most relevant Commissioners of the following DGs: Enlargement, Employment and Social Affairs, Regional Development, Justice, Education and Culture, External Relations;

4. Recommend and support the publication of annual reports monitoring anti-Gypsyism as one of the priorities of the future Human Rights Agency;

5. Actively include Roma in the Consultative Bodies for the European Institutions and, especially, in the European networks of experts, none of which at this moment include any Roma;

6. Actively promote the inclusion of Roma women and Roma related issues in the activities of the future Gender Institute;

7. Prioritize the mainstreaming of ethnic minority and multiple discriminated women in the activities of the Gender Equality Unit. Include Romani women issues in the general policy framework dealing with gender mainstreaming;

8. Monitor and take steps to ensure the observation and implementation by both EU member states and candidate countries of the obligatory criteria regarding human rights protection as enumerated in the Copenhagen criteria;

9. Develop measures to increase the participation of Roma human rights NGOs in European funded projects and ensure their sustainability and independence from national governments. Provide technical support for Romani NGOs to apply for EU funds and to implement EU projects successfully and stimulate the training and employment of Roma managers of EU funded projects.

B. For the European Parliament:

1. Establish a steering committee (see point 1b) to assess and evaluate the implementation of the Resolution of the European Parliament on the Situation of Roma (28 April 2005);

2. Request an independent evaluation of the European Commission activities focused on Roma;

3. Initiate a public awareness campaign on Roma issues and provide steering and moral leadership in the fight against anti-Gypsyism;

4. Encourage relevant committees and subcommittees in the Parliament (Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs, Women's Rights and Gender Equality, Human Rights, Culture and Education, Employment and Social Affairs, Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, Regional Development, Petitions) to produce annual reports on the most pressing issues affecting the Roma communities;

5. Organise a hearing and publish a "handbook" of good practices of member states related to Roma issues, to highlight positive experience and provide ideas to other countries about how to improve the situation;

6. Taking into account the recognition of the good practices of the OSCE as highlighted in the European Parliament resolution of April 28, 2005, adopt a similar Roma advisor scheme for the European political parties;

7. Mainstream issues faced by the Roma population by facilitating and actively encouraging Roma participation and advice in Intergroups focusing on particular grounds of discrimination (for example disability, gender, age, sexual orientation).

C. For the Council of Europe:

1. Promote successful initiatives and establish mechanisms to share and replicate the good experiences of the Council of Europe;

2. Publish annual reports focused on the most critical issues affecting Roma.

D. For the UN/UNDP:

1. Adopt a policy of employing and capacitating Roma individuals within its structure, similar to existing measures targeting disadvantaged groups identified by the main European institutions, such as gender and disability;

2. Ensure that Roma are not excluded during the process of designing the programming documents at the country and regional levels;

3. Establish a permanent UNDP Roma organisational body at the international level which should be consulted and must approve Roma related policies and activities, and should serve as a Steering Committee for all the Roma projects at the country level;

3. Regularly report on the results and impact of Roma-related projects according to clear and precise indicators, especially those referring to the involvement of Roma in designing and implementing projects;

4. Apply pressure to UN member states to respect UN conventions related to ethnic minorities and women's rights and to fulfill their obligations with emphasis on ethnic minorities and especially Romani women;

5. Actively participate in international initiatives related to Roma and link them to the other UN initiatives like Millennium Development Goals.

E. For the World Bank:

1. Re-vitalize the National Delegations of Roma Civil Society in order to facilitate independent monitoring of social accountability;

2. Advocate and facilitate inclusion of Roma in national governments in order to enable them to participate in the institutional implementation of the Roma Decade;

3. Ensure active involvement of Roma in designing and implementing World Bank policies/programs targeting Roma communities;

4. Initiate, stimulate and form partnerships with grassroots level Roma organisations in order to address the problems of Roma communities;

5. Extend existing programmes or create new opportunities offering access to microcredits for Roma, in particular Roma women, in partnership with Roma NGOs;

6. Introduce Roma as a component in the programs of the Country Offices, especially in the field of entrepreneurship and employment;

7. Promote better communication and coordination of the implementation activities related to the Roma Decade.

3. Human Resources Arrangements

A. For the European Commission:

1. Develop a strategy to attract and employ Roma within the European Commission and increase the visibility of role models from discriminated groups, especially the Roma;

2. Introduce knowledge of Romani language in the non-required but mentioned candidate profile for internships, temporary and permanent contracts for the European Commission in order to ensure the recruitment of Roma;

3. Make real efforts to advertise new opportunities in the Romani media;

4. Propose a minimum percentage of Roma employees and a timeframe for that target to be reached. This should be developed based on the existing legal framework which addresses gender balance employment and recruitment of people with disabilities;

5. Appoint, within DG Enlargement, a Roma expert to assist with the formulation and implementation of policies/programmes on Roma targeting candidate countries and focused on monitoring the Copenhagen Criteria and anti-discrimination framework in relation to Roma in the candidate countries;

6. Appoint Roma women within the Equal Opportunities Unit and promote the issue of Roma women for its future agenda;

7. Encourage the recruitment of Roma within the future Human Rights Agency and Gender Institute;

8. Continue and make more visible the existing Roma internship scheme for Roma from EU and candidate countries and launch an internship scheme for the cabinets of the Commissioners;

9. Employ Roma experts in the EC Delegations in countries with a high Roma population, in particular, candidate countries and those which are part of the Stabilisation and Association Process;

10. Ensure that Roma students benefit from scholarships in the framework of EU programmes, including, but not only, for Roma studies.

B. For the European Parliament:

1. Encourage the political groups to establish and maintain a Working Group specifically dealing with Roma issues, with the task to ensure proper implementation of current policies, and work towards further policy creation;

2. Target the employment of Roma Advisors for Roma issues within the Political Groups;

3. Introduce a criteria referring to knowledge of Romani language in the list of required skills for permanent and temporary jobs and internships within the European Parliament;

4. Appoint Roma within the MEPs cabinets and strive to reach 0.3% Roma employment within the permanent and temporary jobs of the European Parliament;

5. Promote a Roma internship scheme within the main European Parties.

C. For the Council of Europe:

1. Encourage the inclusion of Roma within the relevant Divisions of the Council of Europe (Divisions III and IV), as well as establish a minimum percentage target and time frame to be reached for employees of Roma origins;

2. Reinforce the existing MG-S-ROM through involving more Roma within its structure and activities;

3. Actively include Roma in the activities of the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe by employing a Roma advisor and involving Roma interns in its activities;

4. Ensure the participation of Roma experts in the Council of Europe programs (evaluation; field missions, etc.) at national, regional and international levels.

D. For the UN/UNDP:

1. In order to empower Roma, target the employment of at least 1 Roma in each country office that develops projects on Roma, and create 1 position for a Roma Coordination Officer at the Europe and CIS Office in Bratislava by the end of 2006; also strive to employ Roma in permanent positions;

2. Establish an internship scheme such as those offered by the Council of Europe and the European Commission;

3. Create a Roma Advisor position at the level of UN following the example of the OSCE.

E. For the World Bank:

1. Establish a numeric target of Roma to be employed by the end of 2006 in the World Bank structures, including some permanent positions;

2. Employ Roma as focal points within the Headquarter and Country offices to work with the governments and Roma NGOs on the implementation of the Roma Decade and improve communication with Roma NGOs;

3. Support leadership training and human rights activities to ensure fulfilment of Millennium Development Goals and the Decade of Roma Inclusion.

Roma Diplomacy is a collection of papers written or inspired through DiploFoundation's 2005-2006 Roma Diplomacy project. The volume includes statements by European level civil servants presented at the 2005 Roma Diplomacy conference in Brussels, papers by academics working in the human and Roma rights fields, and research by Roma rights activists from across Europe aimed at promoting awareness of the situation of Roma in different regions and countries. This volume should be of interest to students and practitioners of human rights and diplomacy alike, and it provides practical knowledge for policy makers, Roma, and human rights activists.

Valeriu Nicolae is the General Secretary of the European Roma Grassroots Organisation (www.ergonetwork.org), an international network of Roma organisations working at the community level. He has many years of experience lobbying for Roma rights on the international level and in Romania. He holds an MA in Contemporary Diplomacy from the University of Malta. From 2005 to 2006, he worked in cooperation with DiploFoundation as coordinator of the Roma Diplomacy project.

Hannah Slavik is the Educational Programmes Director for DiploFoundation, a non-profit development organisation providing online education for diplomats and others involved in international relations (www.diplomacy.edu). She has eight years of experience in designing educational methodology and policy for online learning in the fields of diplomacy, international relations, and human rights. She holds a Postgraduate Diploma in Online and Distance Education and an MA in Linguistics.

Idea
400 West 59th Street
4th Floor
New York, NY 10019

idea
www.idebate.org