The Roma People in Europe
Introduction

The Roma people's origin has been traced back to India and is accounted for by the similarities of the Romani language with Indian Sanskrit. It is assumed that the migration of Roma people from India to Europe was most likely triggered by Turkey's conquest of the north Indian regions Punjab, Sindh and Rajas in the 11th century. It is suggested that while some Roma managed to flee, others were brought to Europe as slaves. The Roma migrated to Europe via Persia, Armenia and Asia Minor between the 11th and 14th century. The Roma arriving in Europe experienced centuries of persecution and discrimination, the latter is still present today. They have historically been one of the most vulnerable, socially excluded and poorest people in Europe. At the first Roma World Conference in 1971, the term ‘Roma’ was chosen and agreed on as a generic name to cover the variety of the ethnic communities. The main groups living in Europe are the Roma, Sinti and Kale. Specific anti-Roma racism is termed ‘anti-ziganism’, or ‘anti-gypsyism’. Today, the Roma people are the largest minorities in Europe, totalling approximately 10-12 Million citizens. Exact numbers of Roma situated in European countries is difficult to establish, due to movement and fear of persecution after revealing their ethnicity to authorities.

The purpose of this report is to identify how the Roma people live and are treated in Europe today. The report is divided into ten sections, each corresponding to one of the countries studied. The countries in focus in this report are: the Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom. Each section then concentrates on six key questions. The first question looked at “Who are they?” focusing on when the Roma people arrived in the country. The second question explored is “Where are they?” The third question “What do they do?” especially considers employment and education. The fourth question examines “How are they treated and perceived?” The fifth question addresses “What organizations are used by the Roma communities, and who engages with them?” The final question “What are the Government policies and attitudes towards Roma?” will look at how the Roma people is treated by the government in the country which they live and also consider the role of the European Union (EU). The report presents information obtained through both primary and secondary sources, including an interview with Miriam Hekkala whose father belongs to the Roma community in Finland.

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3 Ibid
4 The Council of Europe, ‘Protecting the Rights of Roma’, op.cit. p.3.
6 The Council of Europe, op. cit. p.1.

3 | Richardson Institute
Maps of the Roma in Europe historically and today
Czech Republic

Who are they?
There are 200,000 Romani in Czech Republic, out of a total population of 10,513,834, around 0.01% of the Czech population. Roma arrived in Czech lands from around 1423, but may have been as early as 1242.

Where are they?
Around 1/3 Roma live in the countries 400 ‘excluded localities’ or ghettos. These often have substandard housing and hygiene. The growth of Roma-dominated areas is due to housing discrimination, urban gentrification and rent increases. Though housing discrimination is illegal, regulations are often locally applied through legal ‘loopholes’ that still cause problems for socially disadvantaged groups, including Roma families having to pay higher rents to secure properties and to provide ‘skim’ for landlords and local government officials.

What do they do?
Of 124 ‘crime prevention assistants’ in 41 cities, over half are Roma, and act as mediators between Roma and other communities in order to prevent conflict escalation.

How are they treated and perceived?
44% of Czechs are afraid of Roma. 80% of Czechs believe Roma are asocial. 45% would rather the Roma were no present in Czech Republic. 90% of Czechs report negative personal experiences with Roma people. 90% consider Roma as a source of crime, and as detrimental to Czech surroundings and public order. The Czech Republic has a growing level of anti-ziganism, along with a small but growing acceptance of far-right groups, with 23% sympathetic towards such extremist anti-Roma groups.

Roma experience high levels of poverty, unemployment, and illiteracy, and are discriminated against in education, employment and housing. Prejudices sometimes erupt into violence. There were 26 anti-Roma rallies in 2013. Of 47 anti-Roma attacks 2008-2012, 5 people died and 22 were injured including 3 children. There are counter-protests to the anti-Roma ones, for example on 24th August 2013, there were 1,500 anti-Roma protesters, and 1,000 counter-protesters. There are several far-right ‘racist’ political parties in the Czech Republic, who often re-brand after being banned, some for being explicitly anti-Roma.

Some Czech media has engaged in anti-Roma reporting, including some altering of statements and photographs to portray anti-Roma stories, sometimes inciting to violence. Attempts to balance this by training journalists through the Office of the Human Rights Commissioner, and through Romani online analysis, have been made.
What organisations are used by the Roma communities, and who engages with them?
The Agency for Social Inclusion is responsible for minority integration, but has been criticised for failing to respond adequately to anti-Roma violence. There have been attempts by Roma to form their own political party, however this did not meet the required voting threshold to hold parliamentary seats.\(^{18}\)

What are the Government policies and attitudes towards Roma?
There is localised response to anti-Roma violence.\(^{19}\) In 2012, the Czech governments Human Rights Council approved compensation for non-consensual sterilisation between 1971-1991, the majority being Roma. €10,000 ($14,000) was awarded to each woman by the Czech government to pre-empt a larger pay-out resulting from a case then pending before the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR).\(^{20}\) The Czech State generally obeys human rights laws, national and European court judgments, thus reducing some State harassment of Roma.\(^{21}\) However, seeking redress for human rights violations is very difficult in the Czech Republic, and extremely so for the Roma.\(^{22}\) Indeed, some cases for compensation for anti-Roma attacks have been massively delayed and diverted into complex legal channels, which some NGOs stated made fair trials impossible.\(^{23}\) Police can restrict freedom of assembly in cases promoting hatred or intolerance, this has been used to ban several neo-Nazi groups in response to May-August 2013 anti-Roma riots.\(^{24}\) Few Roma are politically involved, there are no Romani members of parliament or government, though there are some national and regional appointees who advise on Roma issues.\(^{25}\) The Czech government does not enforce its anti-discrimination laws effectively, leading to persistent discrimination against all minorities, particularly Roma.\(^{26}\) Though President Milos Zeman has condemned anti-Roma protests.\(^{27}\) In response to European Commission suggestions on Roma integration, several senators made anti-Roma statements.\(^{28}\)

\(^{20}\) US State Department, Czech Republic 2013 Human Rights Report, pg. 2
\(^{21}\) Ibid., pg. 4
\(^{22}\) Ibid., pg. 7
\(^{23}\) Ibid., pg. 22
\(^{24}\) Ibid., pg. 9
\(^{25}\) Ibid., pg. 11
\(^{26}\) Ibid., pg. 15
\(^{27}\) Ibid., pg. 22
\(^{28}\) Ibid., pg. 23

6 | Richardson Institute
Finland

Who are they?

The Roma have full citizen rights and obligations and are therefore equal before Finnish jurisdiction\(^\text{29}\). They tend to belong to the lower social class, with economic and social conditions below average\(^\text{30}\). Though majority of Finnish Roma are part of Christianity there is no particular Church or religious orientation uniting all the Roma people. Strong faith and respect in God often plays an important part in their everyday life and culture\(^\text{31}\), with often God-fearing attitudes, even for people without a particular conviction\(^\text{32}\). However, today, the Finnish Roma generally has a very strong national identity and sense of belonging to Finland\(^\text{33}\). The respect for the elderly and a strong sense of community have continued to characterize the Roma community throughout the history and still today\(^\text{34}\). Social skills are seen as essential asset in life and the common upbringing of the Roma community has tended to lead to socially skillful, extrovert children with strong and sustained ties with their community\(^\text{35}\).

Where are they?

Current Romani population in Finland is estimated to be around 10,000 so it is a rather small minority\(^\text{36}\), though it should be noted that Finland has an overall population of only 5.6 million. The clear majority of Romani in Finland are thought to live in Southern Finland, primarily in Helsinki, or the surrounding areas\(^\text{37}\). In addition there are an estimated 3,000 Finnish-Romani living in Sweden\(^\text{38}\). However, exact details cannot be provided as registering people based on their ethnicity is forbidden by law. Romani arrived in Scandinavia during the 16th Century. Opinions of their exact origins differ between Sweden and the east, with likeliness of both being more or less the truth\(^\text{39}\).

What do they do?

From the 1970s onwards, as a result of structural changes and the modernization of Finnish society, the possibilities for Romani to make a living by traditional means, such as crafts and dealing horses, became significantly more difficult\(^\text{40}\). Their traditional nomadic lifestyle also begun to fade away as it became more and more common for them to settle down in one place, which resulted in deepening discrimination and meant an end to some community ties\(^\text{41}\). With the challenges posed by modernization, more and more Roma people are finding new ways of making a living. Finland’s free education up to the higher education level has been extremely beneficial in this process, providing many children from low-income Roma families - and increasingly older members as well - a chance to enroll in higher education\(^\text{42}\).

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\(^\text{30}\) Ibid. P. 3.


\(^\text{32}\) Ibid.

\(^\text{33}\) Ibid.

\(^\text{34}\) Personal Interview with Miriam Hekkala 23/02/2014.


\(^\text{37}\) Ibid.


\(^\text{39}\) Personal Interview with Miriam Hekkala. 23/02/2014.


\(^\text{41}\) Ibid.

How are they treated and perceived?

After harsh laws such as the ‘Hanging Law’ from 1637, following deportation and denial of the Romani, the attitudes have been cooling down from 1850s onwards. In 1809 as the rule of Finland shifted from Sweden to Russia, Romani become Finnish citizens by law. Throughout the 20th Century the actions and regulations towards Roma people had a focus in adaptation of the Roma community to Finnish society. However, the role the Romani played in the Second World War, fighting against Russia alongside other Finnish citizens had a significant impact on both strengthening their Finnish identity and changing the attitudes, creating some acceptance. Scandinavia and Russia are the only regions known, where the female Romani can be identified from their conspicuous traditional dress. The decision to wear traditional Romani clothing belongs to every woman and is made at the age of 18. The clothing holds a deep message: It is a statement of identity, sign of pride in your tribe and is seen as respectful for older people – all which are strong values in Roma culture.

However as a result the traditional wear, attitudes toward the Roma community tend to be even stronger, with common beliefs and prejudices blaming the Roma people for shoplifting by hiding items under massive skirts. Today, it is very common to see signs on shop doors, forbidding people with ‘traditional wear’ to enter, and where such extreme measures have not been adopted it is still common for a Roma person to enter a shop and be automatically followed by a security guard throughout their visit.

What organisations are used by the Roma communities, and who engages with them?

From 20th Century onwards several organizations promoting and securing the rights of the Roma people have been created. These include Romano Missio Ry, Vapaa Romanilähety Ry, RYHDYS and Gypsies Future. In addition Finland has been exceptional in raising issues and concerns of Roma people to the discussion in the EU, and has thus been credited for increasing awareness of the Roma community throughout EU. With France, Finland’s former president, Tarja Halonen, also initiated a proposal for Europa Roma Forum. However international environment, increasing negative attitudes towards Roma people and rising right wing politics have increased the pressures for Finland to follow the footsteps of other European states, with more strict policies toward Roma people.

healthcare and poor social conditions: Traditionally families look after older members, and even when professional healthcare would be required and available it is not used, due to a lack of confidence.

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44 Ibid.
45 Ibid.
46 Personal Interview with Miriam Hekkala. 27/02/2014.
47 Ibid.
50 Ibid. P. 13.
52 Ibid.
54 Ibid. P. 10.
What are the Government policies and attitudes towards Roma?
In 2000 Finland’s constitution was amended to secure the rights of the Roma people for the first time, stating their rights to exercise their own culture and maintain their own language. It also strengthened the status of the Romani culture and language in education. Regardless of equal laws, the Romani have not reached an equal stance alongside the majority groups in the Finnish society. From the 1960s the amount of Romani-speaking people has continued to decrease with only 8% of Romani school children having a chance to study their own language. Another significant issue with the Roma is, their traditions getting in the way of improving proper access to health care.

France

Who are they?
The Roma people first settled in France at the beginning of the 15th century, and the number of arrivals only increased with time. By 1436, they had established themselves all over the country. Even though they were considered different by the local French population at the time, it took over 150 years before the Roma people suffered under state led repression and persecution. In the late 17th century, King Louis XIV passed anti- “Gypsy” laws, expelling the Roma people from France or forcing them to settle down permanently. In order to avoid the authorities, many Roma groups settled in the border areas such as Alsace and Lorraine. At the beginning of the 20th century, the French government again forced the Roma people to settle down. In the 1970’s France experienced a new wave of migration and tried to improve the situation among the Roma people, employing them as factory workers. In recent years, forceful evictions of Roma have been reported all over France.

Where are they?
The Roma people constitute a fairly large community in France. According to the French organization La Voix des Rroms, the Roma people are subdivided into several groups and it has been reported that approximately 400,000 Roma people live in France today. Exact documentation on where they live is hard to find. Some sources have reported that about 20,000 Roma people live in illegal camps situated all over France today (see table below). They often live in small camps on the edges of cities, in unpleasant environments and without proper access to health care. Historically, they were known as a people who travelled all year around. Some still do, however, today other wish to settle down more permanently, but are forced to live on the road because of housing restrictions. This makes it difficult to put the Roma people on the map, as they never stay long in the same place as a result of accommodation difficulties, halting restrictions and repeated evictions.

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56 Ibid. P. 5.
57 Ibid. P. 11.
59 Ibid. P. 11.
What do they do?

A common perception of the Roma people is that they are criminals, beggars and do not want to work. Reports express concern that “the problem of discrimination on grounds of origin in the area of employment” is still very present today in France. Because of restrictions by the French government, the Roma people mainly work in the informal sector. Roma migrants have had access to employment in France since 2007, however only 150 occupations are available to them. The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance has issued several reports on minorities in France, and has reported that the French government has suggested several laws to ensure minority rights. One example of a suggested law was the use of anonymised CV’s in job applications in companies with more than 50 employees. This law was suggested in 2006; in 2010 it had still not been implemented. Even with measures to improve the situation in labour markets, the key success for Roma people depends on hiding their identity from clients and potential employers.

The fourth ECRI report on France, published in 2010, reports that the Roma people “remain in an extremely precarious situation as regards access of decent housing, health care and education”. It has been reported that Roma people have been excluded from and have dropped out of school because of discrimination. In France, one of the biggest problems is access to schools. There are no schools located close to camping sites, and because of halting restrictions (they are only allowed to halt for 6 months during winter and one or two during summer) stable education for children is further complicated. With the lack of flexibility within the French school system, Roma children are in many places not allowed to attend as they will most likely not attend for long. Because of difficulties with employment for the parents in Roma households, some children are taken out of school to help the family earn money (this usually includes begging). In addition, frequent evictions force children enrolled in schools to leave.

68 Ibid.
How are they treated and perceived?
The French largely refer to the Roma people as “Manushes” and “Tsiganes”, however, pejorative terms such as “Romanichel” and “Gitan” are not unusual. Roma migrants from other countries have been seen begging on the streets, and this is an issue of debate and annoyance among the French population. The French perceive the Roma as poor, dirty, lazy and involved in crimes, and they are regularly denied entry into public places, such as bars, restaurants, nightclubs and stores. They are also frequently refused insurance. The French people are generally peaceful towards these people, however, instances of frequent police abuse and harassment and individual attacks on the Roma people have been reported. During police raids of Roma settlements, large-scale destructions of Roma property have been documented and been cause of concern. In 2007, a Strasbourg court found Michael Habig, mayor of the town Ensisheim, guilty in attempts of destroying a Roma camp. The mayor took part in and ordered his staff to burn the camp down. The town’s residents showed supports for the mayor’s acts, while other French anti-racism and Roma rights groups joined a civil lawsuit against him. Despite a hostile climate and racist prejudice, in a report by the Council of Europe called “Human Rights of Roma and Travellers in Europe”, they reported that some major newspapers in France have helped to improve the general public’s understanding of the Roma “through extensive, well-researched reporting.

What organisations are used by the Roma communities, and who engages with them?
L’Office Francais de l’Immigration and de l’Integration is responsible for Roma migrants coming to France. There are also a number of organizations that work for Roma rights and recognition of their rights before the law. Le Fnasat- Gens du voyage, La Voix des Rroms, Le Collectif National Droits de l’Homme Romeurope, Gisti and Association Nationale Tzigane d’Enseignement et Pédagogie Scolaire (ANTEPS) are only a few of those working to improve the situation for the Roma community.

What are the Government policies and attitudes towards Roma?
The EU has in recent years kept a close eye on France’s treatment of the Roma people. The EU has funded several million euros so that France can improve the situation for the Roma people, however, as of 2013 it is not clear if the money has been used or not. In 2009, European Committee of Social Rights found France to violate the European Social Charter. France did not guarantee the Roma population the right to housing, the right of the family to protection and right to protection against poverty and social exclusion. As of summer 2011, the European Training Programme for Roma Mediators was being carried out, to train school, health and employment mediators to help the Roma people. The Roma people and French citizens are not following the same laws. While regular French citizens are able to vote after 6 months in a given municipality, the Roma people have to wait 3 years until they are allowed to vote. Roma people are given specific circulation documents which they must have on them at all times, in case a police officer was to stop them. In July-August 2010, after a clash between the Roma people and the French police, the French government decided to deport Roma migrants from other EU countries, and stated that they would use force if necessary. The government campaigned using strong anti-Roma rhetoric, describing the Roma people of being a threat to

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the French society and accusing group as a whole of being criminals. In 2010, when the former French Interior Minister Hortefeux talked to the French media regarding the Roma people and Travellers, he stated that “in all three cases – Roma, sedentary Travellers and other Travellers – the consequence is the same: an increase in crime.” The goal was to remove 300 illegal Roma camps in three months and deport 800 persons. By late August 2010, Minister Hortefeux stated 88 camps had been removed and 850 persons had left on a voluntary basis and with some financial support. The EU strongly criticized France for discrimination and abandoning the 2004 EU directive on freedom of movement, however, the EU Commission decided not pursue a legal battle with France, as they meant France had responded positively to their request of implementing the directive. According to opinion polls, 65% of the French people agreed with the French government’s actions against the Roma people. In 2013, Amnesty International released an article stating that France has continued to forcefully evict Roma people, and that 10,000 people were evicted in the first half of 2013.

Germany

Who are they?
There are no precise figures about how many Sinti and Roma are living in Germany today. Different groups can be distinguished. There are German Sinti and Roma, who are recognized as a national minority, and who themselves or their ancestors already lived in Germany before World War II. This group is estimated to be 120,000, with the majority being Sinti. Moreover, there are Sinti and Roma who themselves or their ancestors, immigrated after World War II as foreign workers following recruitment agreements, constituting between 50,000 and 70,000 persons. Since the end of the Cold War, several Roma especially from Kosovo and Bosnia Herzegovina, fled to Germany and still do. Finally, Roma are presumed to be among Romanians and Bulgarians, increasingly migrating to Germany since 2007. The non-registration of ethnicity impedes a statement about how many Roma overall, are living in Germany today.

German Sinti and Roma have lived in Germany for over 600 years. Sinti migrated to German-speaking areas in the 14th century and Roma about the 15th century. German Sinti and Roma often speak German and Romani. The group of Roma migrants in Germany is highly heterogeneous. The majority migrated from Balkan states. Some are bilingual with their countries’ language and Romani, while others cannot speak Romani. Generally, Roma from former Yugoslavian states are orthodox Christians or Muslims, while those from Romania are often Christian.

Where are they?
German Sinti and Roma live across the country. This also applies to most of the foreign migrants from the 50s, 60s and 70s, often already second or third generation in Germany. Roma who claim or have claimed asylum are normally allocated in different cities across the country. Within these cities they often have to stay in specific housing areas and live in worse conditions then the rest of the city, predominantly in remote places. Dependent on their status of residence and the federal state in which they live, Roma are allowed to move. Because Roma often obtain judicial status only for a limited period of time and therefore have less money at their disposal, it is very difficult for them to find good housing.

Often, Romanian and Bulgarian Roma settle in large but poorer cities like Berlin, Dortmund or Duisburg. Some are living under miserable conditions, partially in already socially disadvantaged neighbourhoods. In some areas a kind of ghettoization can be seen. There are several cases of landlords exploiting the migrants’
sitting and charging overpriced flats in overcrowded, dilapidated houses\textsuperscript{96}. There are also reports about missing electricity and water supply\textsuperscript{97}.

**What do they do?**

German Sinti and Roma are working in various occupations. There are tendencies of higher representation in less skilled occupations in comparison to the average population. On average they have lower qualification and less often higher education. There seems to be a higher percentage of people who have not visited school\textsuperscript{98}. Migrant Roma without a permanent residence permit, generally have limited access to education, employment and health care\textsuperscript{99}. They are further excluded from integration programmes, and rely on little money from the state\textsuperscript{100}. They are continuously being threatened by deportation to their home countries.

**How are they treated and perceived?**

According to the latest antiziganism report\textsuperscript{101} in Germany, antiziganism is still widespread. 90\% of the German population do not want to live in a neighbourhood along with “Gypsies”. 78\% think living in Germany as Sinti or Roma is disadvantageous. Almost half of the population think that Sinti and Roma tend to be criminal. Children of German Sinti and Roma are often confronted with anti-Gypsyism through insults by classmates and some feel discriminated or less supported by teachers\textsuperscript{102}. Stereotypes and discriminations are mainly experienced and perceived by adults as a kind of “special” treatment for example at work or at public authorities\textsuperscript{103}. Some Sinti and Roma hide their ethnic origin, fearing negative consequences if it gets revealed\textsuperscript{104}. Roma are overwhelmingly linked with poverty migration, criminalization, social abuse and failed integration\textsuperscript{105}. Roma asylum claims are mainly refused, they are often seen as poverty migrants who abuse the asylum and welfare system\textsuperscript{106}. Other migrants or asylum seekers who fit these existing stereotypes, are often labelled as Sinti and Roma. Examples of well integrated Roma are undermined by predominantly negative cases and reports\textsuperscript{107}. In the media and literature as well as through statements of politicians, remaining stereotypes are still reproduced.

\textsuperscript{96} Zeit online, ‘Verarmte Roma, überforderte Kommunen’, op. cit.
\textsuperscript{97} Zeit online, ‘Verarmte Roma, überforderte Kommunen’, op. cit.
\textsuperscript{101} Romnokher (eds.), ‘Gutachten Antiziganismusforschung’, op. cit.
\textsuperscript{102} Strauß, op. cit., p. 94.
\textsuperscript{103} Strauß, op. cit., p. 94.
\textsuperscript{104} Romnokher (eds.), ‘Gutachten Antiziganismusforschung’, op. cit.
What organisations are used by the Roma communities, and who engages with them?

There are several organizations and institutions concerned with issues of German Sinti and Roma minority. The Central Council of Sinti and Roma in Germany, founded in 1982 by Sinti and Roma, incorporates eighteen organizations. Their pursuit is to represent the interest of German Sinti and Roma minority on national and international level. It is financed by the government and the state governments. The main criticism regarding the Central Council is the predominant focus on past events which neglects recent issues that Sinti and Roma face today. As a kind of response some Roma have built their own Societies, especially in regions with high percentage of Roma migrants without permanent residence permit.

What are the Government policies and attitudes towards Roma?

The German government, as all EU member states, agreed on the “EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies”, to step up the economic and social integration of Roma communities in 2011. Nevertheless, Germany’s 2012 report was criticised by the EU commission with regard to missing data on Sinti and Roma in Germany, making it difficult to improve their situation. The Councils’ recommendations, regarding the improvement of Sinti and Roma inclusion, have to be implemented. Financial support for integration programmes is still missing. Less is done to overcome antiziganism. Instead, individual politicians themselves repeatedly make negative and generalizing statements about Roma who seem to be unwanted in Germany. Roma are not seen as persecuted in Eastern European countries, therefore they do not gain a resident permit based on persecution in their country of origin.

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111 The European Union and Roma - Country Factsheet Germany, op. cit.
112 Romnokher (eds.), „Gutachten Antiziganismusforschung“, op. cit.
Italy

Who are they?
The Roma people reached Italy sometime between the end of the 14th century and the beginning of the 15th century. By 1422, they had established themselves in the regions from the north down to Rome. Although the Roma people’s roots have been traced back to India, where exactly they came from before they settled in Italy is difficult to know. The Roma living in Italy during the Second World War were persecuted. In the 1960’s, a new wave of migrants arrived in Italy. In 2008, The Guardian reported that 30,000 of the Roma today living in Italy descend from those arriving in the 15th century.

Where are they?
There are no accurate numbers on the current number of Roma in Italy. In 2000, the European Roma Rights Centre estimate that around 130,000 Roma people are in Italy today. In October 2013, Amnesty International wrote that about 150,000 Roma, Sinti and Caminanti live in Italy, and that they represent approximately 0.25% of the Italian population. 40,000 out of these 150,000 live in camps, either informal or built by the authorities. Those living in camps live in overcrowded, poor conditions, without adequate access to water and electricity. They are also excluded from social housing. Most of the Roma are separated from the mainstream Italian society. Forceful evictions of camps also make it more difficult to know where exactly the Roma population is situated. In 2011, Filippo Strati published an article where he presented a table with estimates of the regional distribution of Roma in Italy (see table below)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3: Estimates of the regional distribution of &quot;Roma&quot; population in Italy</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Region</td>
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<td>Puglia</td>
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<td>Tuscany</td>
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<td>Liguria</td>
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<td>Friuli - Venezia Giulia</td>
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<td>Basilicata</td>
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<td>Sicily</td>
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<td>Total Italy</td>
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Table 4: "Roma" communities in Italy by prevalent occupation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Prevalent occupation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sinti</td>
<td>Traditionally, &quot;taggare and folk&quot; (Gipsies), e.g. horse trainers, merry-go-round-keepers, artists and performers in amusement parks and circuses. Currently, some dealing in scrap-metal and secondhand cars; others selling artificial roofs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roma and Camuni (Travelers). More specifically:</td>
<td>Precarious activities substituted for traditional occupations, following economic changes (e.g. some families specialized in bricklaying and seasonal agricultural work or working in their own plots of land).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roma Alturenti and Maltravisi</td>
<td>Horse breeders and dealers, palmistry (mainly women).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roma Neapolitani</td>
<td>Traditionally, involved in travelling shows with ponies and player-people; production of fishing tools, training of the parents in palmistry. Currently, some of them still practice the ancestral occupation, but many are small street-bakers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roma Calabresi</td>
<td>Traditionally, involved in street-cleaning activities of agricultural tools. Currently, integrated in local economy and with high education attainments (e.g. university degrees).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roma Lucani (Rana Baccali)</td>
<td>Traditionally, horse breeders and artisans of small metal utensils. Currently, the most integrated communities in local economy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roma Pugliesi</td>
<td>Traditionally involved in traditional activities such as horse-butchers, soap producers, artisans of small metal utensils and seasonal agricultural labourers. Integrated in local economy but with a lower living standard than Roma Lucani.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roma Calabresi</td>
<td>Traditionally, blacksmiths and horse-dealers. Currently, most of them dealing in scrap-metal and few of them involved in some social cooperatives. They represent the poorest of the oldest Roma communities in Italy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comunita' Sanbatili</td>
<td>Traditionally involved in traditional activities such as knive-grinders, maintaining gas cookers, repairing, making and selling umbrellas. Chiefly street retailers and seasonal agricultural labourers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roma Maritima</td>
<td>Traditionally, horse-keepers. Currently, dealing in scrap-metal and second-hand cars, fruits and vegetables.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roma Kalabresi, Citrana and Layna</td>
<td>Traditionally, door-to-door sales of such as metal repair, polishing and finishing sounds of metal articles, producing metal and other goods, palmistry (e.g. women). Currently, retail trade in local fairs, buying and selling old iron, old clothes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roma Khourabani</td>
<td>Traditionally, blacksmiths. Currently, some of them work in clothing sales.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romanian and Ruthenian Roma</td>
<td>Traditionally involved in retail trade, production of wooden articles, selling flowers (e.g. women and children).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: MIUR

Roma/Sinti pupils in state schools by grade in Italy,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of school</th>
<th>Class or grade</th>
<th>Percentage distribution of Roma/Sinti pupils</th>
<th>Percentage distribution of all pupils</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>First</td>
<td>25,20</td>
<td>19,21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Second</td>
<td>20,96</td>
<td>20,18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Third</td>
<td>19,00</td>
<td>20,18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fourth</td>
<td>17,84</td>
<td>20,32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fifth</td>
<td>17,00</td>
<td>20,11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower secondary</td>
<td>First</td>
<td>54,58</td>
<td>34,82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Second</td>
<td>26,36</td>
<td>32,87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Third</td>
<td>19,06</td>
<td>32,32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: MIUR
What do they do?
In 2011, Filippo Strati published an article where he presented a table with estimates of prevalent occupations by the Roma in Italy:\footnote{117}{P. Strati, “Promoting Social Inclusion of Roma- A Study of National Policies”, On behalf of the European Commission, July 2011, p. 38} In 2000, the Italian Education Ministry reported that 8,982 Roma children were enrolled in primary and secondary education\footnote{118}{Ministry of Education (M.I.U.R.), “Indagine sugli alunni appartenenti a comunità nomadi. Sintesi conoscitiva dei principali dati”, 2000, Roma. Available from: \url{http://www.edscuola.it/archivio/stranieri/nomadi.pdf}, accessed on the 28th of February 2014.} In their report it becomes clear that attendance is irregular and that the drop-out rates increase the higher level a pupil reaches (see table below\footnote{119}{Ibid.}). In 1986, the Education Ministry made it compulsory for Roma children to attend school, introducing the concept of “mutual responsibility”. This means that the Roma people have a duty to send their children to school, and the institutions need to respect their cultural identity. These legislative measures were put in place to improve the situation for Roma people; however, in practice they were not successfully implemented. Prejudice and racism are reasons for why they drop out. Another reason for why the attendance rate is so low among Roma children is that some schools refuse to register Roma pupils who live in camps nearby\footnote{120}{European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia, “Roma an segregation camps: a blight on the City of Rome”, 30th of October 2013. Available from: \url{http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/179_roma_report.pdf}, accessed on the 28th of February 2014.}.

How are they treated and perceived?
The Italian newspaper \textit{La Repubblica}, found that three out of ten Italians are afraid of the Roma\footnote{121}{T. Kington, “68% of Italians want Roma expelled – poll”, \textit{The Guardian}, 17th of May 2008. Available from: \url{http://www.theguardian.com/world/2008/may/17/italy}, accessed on the 28th of February 2014.}. Italians generally see the Roma with suspicion. They are perceived as being criminal, and unwilling to integrate into society. In a survey conducted in 2008, 81% of Italian respondents said they found all Roma “barely likeable or not likeable at all”, and 68% responded that they want to see all Roma living in Italy expelled, regardless of whether or not they hold Italian passports\footnote{122}{Ibid.}. Matteo Pegararo, director of EveryOne, a group for international cooperation on human rights, explained that the hostility among the Italian population is “a result of the generally inflammatory language of the current government, as well as the previous one”\footnote{123}{Ibid.}. Racially motivated violence has taken place several times. During police raids of Roma settlements, large-scale destructions of Roma property have been documented\footnote{124}{Council of Europe, “Human Rights of Roma and Travellers in Europe”, 2012, p. 84. Available from: \url{http://www.coe.int/t/commissioner/source/prems/prems76611_GBR_CouvHumanRightsOfRoma_WEB.pdf}, accessed on the 28th of February 2014.}. Since November 2006, even larger security measures have been put into place in 14 different cities in Italy. These “Security Pacts” empower officials to target Roma to remove them from areas they have settled in. In the cities of Milan and Roma (see table below\footnote{125}{Amnesty International, “Italy: Roma segregation camps – a blight on the City of Rome”, 30th of October 2013. Available from: \url{http://www.amnesty.org/en/news/italy-roma-segregation-camps-blight-city-rome-2013-10-30}, accessed on the 28th of February 2014.}), this gives them the power to evict more than 10,000 Roma people from these regions\footnote{126}{Op. Cit.}. Since these agreements came into existence, thousands of properties have been destroyed, and the same amount of people forcefully evicted.

What organisations are used by the Roma communities, and who engages with them?
There are also a number of organizations that work for Roma rights and recognition of their rights before the law. Centro Culturale Zingaro, "Thèm Romanó", Centro Studi Zingari/Romanó Sicarimasko Than, Unione Nazionale Internazionale Rom e Sinti in Italia (UNIRSI) are only a few of those working to improve the situation for the Roma community.

\begin{itemize}
\item \footnote{117}{P. Strati, “Promoting Social Inclusion of Roma- A Study of National Policies”, On behalf of the European Commission, July 2011, p. 38}
\item \footnote{119}{Ibid.}
\item \footnote{122}{Ibid.}
\item \footnote{123}{Ibid.}
\item \footnote{126}{Op. Cit.}
\end{itemize}
What are the Government policies and attitudes towards Roma?
Amnesty International reported that “since 2007, the Italian authorities have increasingly adopted "security" measures, which appear to be discriminatory, affecting disproportionally the Roma and Sinti minority”\(^{127}\). In 2008, as a measure to deal with crime and violence, the Italian government carried out a high profile campaign to fingerprint and document all Roma people living in “nomad camps”\(^{128}\). As described above, in 2007, agreements were signed between the national government and local governments, transferring some powers from the Ministry of Interior to local authorities. The European Roma Rights Centre has reported that the Roma face discriminatory treatment by both judicial and political authorities\(^{129}\).

In 2007, Italian politician Gianfranco Fini, leader of the National alliance party at the time, was cited saying that the Roma believe “theft can be virtually legitimate and not immoral”, he added that “to talk of integration of with people with a ‘culture’ of that sort is pointless”\(^{130}\). Concerns have come to the fore regarding Italian politicians’ hate speech targeting the Roma in Italy. Following a visit to Italy in May 2011, the Commissioner of Human Rights of the Council of Europe Thomas Hammarberg, reported that racist and xenophobic speech towards the Roma community had not improved since 2008 and that “even outside election periods, anti-Roma attitudes have regrettably continued to taint political speech on many occasions.”\(^{131}\)

As of summer 2011, the European Training Programme for Roma Mediators was being carried out, to train school, health and employment mediators to help the Roma people.

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Who are they?
According to the 2011 census, 12,000 people of the Polish population declared themselves to be Roma. However, this figure is thought to be much higher and lie somewhere between 50,000-60,000\textsuperscript{132}. The Roma population is divided into subgroups of the Polska Roma, Bergitka (also known as the Mountain/Carpathan Roma), Lovara, Kelderari, Sinti and the Chaladytka (Russian Roma). The Polska Roma, Lovara and Kelderari are known to be more ‘traditional’ in their way of life, for example they are mainly nomadic and adhere to the basis of mageripen, which is an unwritten code of rules and tabooed prohibitions\textsuperscript{133}. During the Second World War, the Roma people became targets of the holocaust, with many being transported to prison camps or ghettos\textsuperscript{134}. After the war the People’s Poland attempted to assimilate the surviving Roma by offering financial incentives to retire from a nomadic lifestyle, however this soon turned into an outright prohibition of the nomadic lifestyle. Negative stereotypes remain strong within the Polish society, and acts of violence and discrimination against the Roma people are common\textsuperscript{135}.
At present, it is difficult to fully establish the amount of Roma in Poland, and also the general composition of the people, partly due to their nomadic lifestyles and also poorly kept governmental records. Like most minorities, the Roma people were not documented in the National census, but in 1964 the Social and Administration Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs attempted to document aspects of the Roma population; however the department closed down in 1984\textsuperscript{136}. According to a case study undertaken in 1969 in one of the ‘voivodships’ (province), 47\% of the population was between the ages of 1-14. 50\% of the population was between 15 – 64 and only 3\% of the population was over the age of 65 years. According to Andrzej Mirga this profile has not changed dramatically in recent years, and this places increasing importance on the question of education.

Where are they?
While the true population of Roma in Poland is unknown (due to reasons previously discussed), it is believed that the majority of Polish Roma lives in cities, and the 2007 Census indicated that 93\% of the Roma were living in cities, compared to only 62\% of the general Polish population,\textsuperscript{137} According to the census data, 13\% of the Roma population live in the Malopolskie region, 10\% in the Dolnoslaskie, 10\% in the Mazowieckie and the remainder are dispersed across the rest of Poland\textsuperscript{138}. All of this has been described in the charts below:

\textsuperscript{132} ‘Poland: Situation and treatment of Roma, including employment, housing, health and education; state protection (2009 – 2012)’ (Refworld, 2012) http://www.refworld.org/docid/5072bab62.html
\textsuperscript{137} Poland: Situation and treatment of Roma, including employment, housing, health and education; state protection (2009 – 2012)’ (Refworld, 2012) http://www.refworld.org/docid/5072bab62.html
\textsuperscript{138} Poland: Situation and treatment of Roma, including employment, housing, health and education; state protection (2009 – 2012)’ (Refworld, 2012) http://www.refworld.org/docid/5072bab62.html
Regional Dispersal of Roma Population in Poland

- Malopolskie: 67%
- Dolnoslaskie: 13%
- Mazowieckie: 10%
- Dispersed: 10%

Percentage of Population Living in Cities, according to the 2007 Census

- General Polish Population: 60%
- Roma Population: 90%
What do they do?
Each Roma community is known for their distinct characteristics and skills whether it is musical, metal welding or Roma crafts. However, the Roma population has found gaining lasting employment profoundly difficult, and according to a study by the Fundamental Rights Agency, unemployment in some communities ranged from 40% to 100%. The survey also concluded that 35% of the Roma respondents described themselves as unemployed, compared with 15% of non-Roma self-describing as unemployed. The diagram below indicates the FRA’s analysis of Roma unemployment in Poland in comparison to other nations.

Figure 5: Household members aged 20 to 64 in paid employment (pooled data) – excluding self-employment

Source: FRA Roma Pilot Survey 2011

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How are they treated and perceived?

In 1998 the Roma Association in Poland conducted a survey to find out the socio-economic standing of the Roma people. While unemployment has already been discussed, only 25% felt that job-related training would be beneficial to them, and this is partly to do with the low levels of education in the community. The FRA commissioned a report from the Helsinki Foundation of Human Rights about the housing and living conditions of Roma in Poland. Most Roma in Poland live in poor quality communal housing with some dwellings lacking running water, electricity and sewage disposal. A Roma community in the town of Wroclaw have made their homes out of a wasteland and a vegetable allotment patch. This community are currently facing eviction from their settlements with the Polish government failing to provide alternative housing arrangements. The community are regarded as ‘illegal’ residents of the town due to the fact that they are not registered as inhabitants, a challenge that many Roma people face. In terms of education, the Roma people are severely lacking in comparison to the non-Roma population. Many Roma feel that there is discrimination against their children in schools as there is a certain stigma attached to the Roma minority. 20% of Roma children attending school have been placed in special schools that mainly cater to those with disabilities, and the prejudice is especially evident in the Opolski province where 37% of children in special schools are Roma. According to the FRA 2011 survey, less than 30% of the respondent’s aged 20-24 had completed general or vocational secondary education in comparison to 80% of the non-Roma population. Overall, the Roma population are subject to prejudice and adversity due to their nomadic lifestyle. As a community settles, residents of the town may be aggressive and discriminatory because of the belief that with Roma comes crime and waste, and also the fact that they do not pay taxes and do not contribute to the town in which they are living.

What organisations are used by the Roma communities, and who engages with them?

As the population of Roma is so small in Poland (roughly 0.09% of the overall population) finding support and aid may be difficult. There are organisations such as Never Again that seek out cases of xenophobia and may offer support to communities that need it, and there is also the Association of Roma in Poland. However, overall there does not seem to be much of a support network for the Roma of Poland.

What are the Government policies and attitudes towards Roma?

Overall, the government of Poland has found to be lacking in their treatment of the Roma population, with the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) criticising the government for their lax investigation and prosecution of attacks on Roma. However, the EU has created a framework for National Roma Integration Strategies as a way of tackling the discrimination and social exclusion experienced by the estimated 12 million Roma across Europe. The 2012 Commission assessment in Poland found that the government had been implanted these strategies ranging from education to healthcare, however there were still issues regarding implanting anti-discriminatory laws at a local level.

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142 The Roma in Poland’ (Thea Traff for The New Yorker, 2013) http://www.newyorker.com/online/blogs/photobooth/2013/12/roma-in-poland.html#slide_ss_0=1 accessed 20th Feb 2014
Slovakia

Who are they?
There are between 350,000-500,000 Romani in Slovakia, with the UN estimating 402,000,\textsuperscript{149} out of a population of 5,415,459.\textsuperscript{150}

Where are they?
At least 150,000 of Slovakia’s Roma live in poor, marginalised communities and are concentrated in the East.\textsuperscript{151} Many Roma communities are labelled ‘waste dumps’ so that forced eviction and demolition can be performed faster.

What do they do?
Child prostitution is a continuing problem in the poorest Roma areas.\textsuperscript{152} 80-90% of Roma people are unemployed due to employment discrimination.\textsuperscript{153} Roma children are disadvantaged in schools, often either segregated in mainstream schools, or placed in disproportionate numbers within special school for children with mental disabilities (85% of special school students are Roma); later re-evaluations have reported that those Roma children would not have struggled in mainstream education. Transfer from special to mainstream school has been deemed impossible, despite special schools providing inadequate knowledge for higher education, preventing individual progress. Roma children also exhibit a lower attendance record than non-Roma children. \textsuperscript{154} Roma are deemed vulnerable to human trafficking and exploitation, due to underemployment and under-education, there are been reports of Roma being used as forced labour.\textsuperscript{155} There are reports of Roma children being sexually exploited, with most victims exploited by family members or other Roma. Other child labour, such as begging, also occurs in Roma communities.\textsuperscript{156}

How are they treated and perceived?
There is a continuing trend of Romani abuse during police detention, with damage and intimidation by masked police units during raids.\textsuperscript{157} Far-right groups, such as the LS-NS organise anti-Roma gatherings, particularly in locations where there is tension between Roma and non-Roma communities.\textsuperscript{158} Media reports of Roma activities are often more negative than those regarding non-Roma, for example the reporting of crime by Roma individuals often mentions their ethnicity, whilst reporting of crime by non-Roma is often does not.\textsuperscript{159} Roma are discriminated against in employment, education, healthcare, housing, bank loans, and access to restaurants, nightclubs, hair salons, and public transport.\textsuperscript{160} Several hospitals in Eastern Slovakia have begun segregating maternity wards by patient hygiene level, resulting in Roma women being grouped together; this practice is stated not to be based on race.\textsuperscript{161}

What organisations are used by the Roma communities, and who engages with them?
There are a number of civic associations which are involved in Roma communities, and NGOs working towards Roma-Slovak integration.\textsuperscript{162}

\textsuperscript{149} US State Department, Slovakia 2013 Human Rights Report, pg. 21
\textsuperscript{151} US State Department, Slovakia 2013 Human Rights Report, pg. 21
\textsuperscript{152} US State Department, Slovakia 2013 Human Rights Report, pg. 18
\textsuperscript{153} US State Department, Slovakia 2013 Human Rights Report, pg. 24
\textsuperscript{154} US State Department, Slovakia 2013 Human Rights Report, pg. 24-25
\textsuperscript{155} US State Department, Slovakia 2013 Human Rights Report, pg. 29
\textsuperscript{156} US State Department, Slovakia 2013 Human Rights Report, pg. 30
\textsuperscript{157} US State Department, Slovakia 2013 Human Rights Report, pg. 2
\textsuperscript{158} US State Department, Slovakia 2013 Human Rights Report, pg. 21
\textsuperscript{159} US State Department, Slovakia 2013 Human Rights Report, pg. 23
\textsuperscript{160} US State Department, Slovakia 2013 Human Rights Report, pg. 23
\textsuperscript{161} US State Department, Slovakia 2013 Human Rights Report, pg. 24
What are the Government policies and attitudes towards Roma?
Since 2011, the ECtHR has ruled against the Slovak government in three cases of forced sterilisation against Roma women, ruling for compensation of €80,500 ($110,000) to each plaintiff, though the court found no systematic discrimination; there is a forth case pending in Strasbourg.163 The Council of Europe has also urged the Slovak government to investigate forced sterilisation and better educate its doctors.164
Marian Kotleba, leader of a far-right party, known for anti-Roma remarks has been elected chairman of the Banska Bystica region. March 2012 elections brought in the countries first Romani MP since independence, there are also small numbers of Roma mayors and local officials. Such underrepresentation may be a result of vote-buying and anti-Roma rhetoric.165 Jana Dubovcova, national Ombudsman (or Public Defender of Rights) has been obstructed by parliament from reporting on anti-Roma human rights abuses, which rejected her report. Mrs. Dubovcova is known for challenging the government on Roma issues.166
NGOs report that there are incidents of anti-minority violence across Slovakia; the investigation of incidents varies by jurisdiction.167 In June 2012, a Roma settlement was subject to a violent police raid, stated to be in search of wanted offenders, many believe it to be a response to past police car damage by community members.168 The Slovak government and parliament refused to condemn the raid, alleging there was no link between incidents, and that the raid was legal and peaceful, despite reports of injuries to many individuals, including children, and further beatings at police stations.169
Defamation is often only prosecuted in Slovakia when in conjunction with a physical offense, and anti-Roma sentiment is often freely aired, including during electioneering where references to ‘Gypsy parasitism’ were made. Prime Minister Fico has stated Human Rights get in the way of solutions for the exceptional situation of the Roma, such as forced removal of children.170
The governments’ School Inspection Service failed to report segregation in schools based on race, the Ministry of Education states this is not due to institutionalism racism, but individuals. However, mandated by the European commission, the National Strategy for Integration of Roma until 2020 was adopted in 2012, designed to end segregated schools and marginalisation.171 In October 2012, Peter Pollak MP was appointed plenipotentiary for Romani Affairs, to implement Roma policies and improve Roma interactions. However, this has been criticised for failing to implement any useful measures.172
Spain

Who are they?
The Roma presence in Spain dates back to the 15th century, when in 1425 King John II of Aragon granted a certificate of passing through the Pyrenees mountains for a group that called themselves ‘lower Egyptians’ – this name then developed into what Spanish Roma are called today, *gitanos*.\(^{173}\) While embracing their ancestral traditions is incredibly important, and identifying as a *gitano* induces strong feelings, Caroline Fernandez of the Spain’s Gypsy Foundation (FSG) argues that being a citizen is of utmost importance to the Spanish Roma.\(^{174}\) In this sense, she argues that being identified, as a citizen first and foremost is important to the Roma community, over things such as political representation.

According to the Ministry of Equality, the estimated population of Spanish Roma is somewhere between 650,000 and 700,000 persons, representing 1.6% of the Spanish Population.\(^{175}\) However, various NGO’s have estimated this percentage to actually be a lot higher. The Roma population in Spain have an increasingly young population; with the Health and the Roma Community stating that 45% of the Roma population in Spain is under the age of 16.\(^{176}\)

Where are they?
The Roma in Spain tend to be much more sedentary, but are distributed unevenly throughout Spain. Large cities such as Madrid, Barcelona, Seville, Granada, Valencia, Zaragoza and Murcia are thought to be home to 70% of the Spanish Roma Population.\(^{177}\) The picture below was taken from the FSG website and shows the apparent distribution of Roma across Spain:\(^{178}\)

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\(^{174}\) ‘Spain’s Gypsies more Invisible than Ever’ (The Local, 2013) [http://www.thelocal.es/20131122/the-crisis-makes-spains-gypsies-even-more-invisible](http://www.thelocal.es/20131122/the-crisis-makes-spains-gypsies-even-more-invisible) accessed on 21st Feb 2014

\(^{175}\) FAGIC 2010, [http://www.osce.org/home/71777](http://www.osce.org/home/71777) accessed on 21st Feb 2014


\(^{177}\) FAGIC 2010, [http://www.osce.org/home/71777](http://www.osce.org/home/71777) accessed on 21st Feb 2014

What do they do?
The Roma face many more difficulties than other minority groups when it comes to finding employment. They are much more likely to find work as part-time or self-employed labours, as permanent employers are said to be wary of recruiting a Roma179. The following tables show the employment data on Roma in comparison to the non-Roma population, and were taken from the FSG report on Roma employment180:

![Types of occupation among employed]

How are they treated and perceived?
While Caroline of the FSG feels that integration in Spain has been made easier due to the Constitution of 1978 and the impact of gitano traditions on Spanish culture, such as flamenco dancing, she does not deny that there are still large issues of discrimination towards the community181. Jose Sanchez, also of the FSG agrees with this sentiment, stating that while there is still xenophobia and discrimination towards the Roma population, Spain has attempted to integrate the Roma through education, employment and housing programmes182.

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181 Spain’s Gypsies more Invisible than Ever’ (The Local 2013) [http://www.thelocal.es/20131122/the-crisis-makes-spains-gypsies-even-more-invisible](http://www.thelocal.es/20131122/the-crisis-makes-spains-gypsies-even-more-invisible) accessed on 21st Feb 2014
182 ‘Francia expulsa a gitanos de Rumanía y Bulgaria y desmantela sus campamentos, España los ignora’ (Huffington Post 2013) [http://www.huffingtonpost.es/2013/10/05/francia-expulsa-gitanos-rumania_n_4037802.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.es/2013/10/05/francia-expulsa-gitanos-rumania_n_4037802.html) accessed 21st Feb 2014
What organisations are used by the Roma communities, and who engages with them?
The FSG also found in 2005 that slightly over 7 out of 10 Roma over the age of 16 did not and do not complete primary education, with close to 20% of this age group unable to read or write\textsuperscript{183}. Illiteracy rates were found to be higher with women, although exact figures are unknown, and this raises the question of gender equality in the community. In this same report, the FSG detailed 137 cases of discrimination against the population, regarding education, employment, housing, and came from various sources ranging from the police to the media\textsuperscript{184}.

However, the FSG has set up organisations to try and combat the issues of employment, education and housing, through organisations such as Acceder and Promociano\textsuperscript{185}. While there is still a long way to go for the Roma population, Acceder claim that they have 61,000 beneficiaries of their work, with 52.6% being women and 46% under the age of 30\textsuperscript{186}.

What are the Government policies and attitudes towards Roma?
While there are clear attempts to better the integration and improve the lives of the Spanish Roma, violence and discrimination has been somewhat institutionalised, with Caroline Fernandez claiming that many people have bad connotations due to crime and drug use\textsuperscript{187}. Notions like these have only been emphasised through the media, such as the BBC documentary on “Gypsy Children Thieves”\textsuperscript{188}. Tackling these perceptions of the public has now become an agenda for the Spanish government, as they undertook the Multi-Objective Operational Programme “Fight Against Discrimination 2007-2013” which aimed at providing pathways to employment, and further measures being put in place to ensure children complete schooling\textsuperscript{189}.

Overall, the Roma community does attempt to use most provisions provided by the government, but due to the discrimination and adversity that they face this is incredibly difficult. Furthermore, whilst the government has attempted to combat the problems facing the Roma community, they are mostly reliant actions from organisations such as FSG and their sub-organisations as a way of integration in society.

\textsuperscript{183} World Directory of Minorities and Indigenous peoples http://www.minorityrights.org/1532/spain/gypsies.html accessed 21\textsuperscript{st} Feb 2014
\textsuperscript{184} World Directory of Minorities and Indigenous peoples http://www.minorityrights.org/1532/spain/gypsies.html accessed 21\textsuperscript{st} Feb 2014
\textsuperscript{185} ‘What We Do’ (Fundación Secretariado Gitano) http://www.gitanos.org/que-hacemos/areas/index.html accessed 21\textsuperscript{st} Feb 2014
\textsuperscript{187} ‘Spain’s Gypsies more Invisible than Ever’ (The Local 2013) http://www.thelocal.es/20131122/the-crisis-makes-spains-gypsies-even-more-invisible accessed on 21\textsuperscript{st} Feb 2014
\textsuperscript{189} ‘Spain’ (European Network on Social Inclusion and Roma under the Structural Funds) http://www.euromanet.eu/facts/es/30557.html accessed 21\textsuperscript{st} Feb 2014
Sweden

Who are they?
Roma population in Sweden comprises of different national and religious groups, with a history of earliest groups arriving on the territory of what is now Sweden dating back to 16th century. Most Roma in Sweden are Swedish citizens and, in the case of earlier migrant Roma, have permanent residence in the country, with social rights as provided to other citizens. Nearly all Swedish Roma speak Swedish.

Where are they?
The estimated Roma population in Sweden is estimated around 50,000, but is difficult to certify as many Romani in Sweden are not willing to publicly acknowledge their ethnicity. In addition, there are an estimated 3,000 Finnish-Roma living in Sweden. Clearly, matching information about the exact whereabouts is difficult to find, but the majority of Romani seem to be located in the South of Sweden.

What do they do?
Because of their nomad life style and lack of documentation, we were unable to retrieve accurate information on what the Roma people do in Sweden.

How are they treated and perceived?
A 2006 report by the Ombudsman Against Ethnic Discrimination, Margareta Wadstein, revealed high levels of exclusion and discrimination of Romani in Sweden, stating that even today ‘there is still a widespread resentment and negative prejudice against Romani to an extent that can be described as “anti-Gypsyism”’. Several media publications have been reported for their discriminatory content and hate crimes. The report also points out that ‘Romanies have had no opportunities to express their own identities in the majority society’, with many Romani perceiving Sweden as a racist country.

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191 Ibid.
192 Ibid.
195 Ibid. P. 10.
196 Ibid. P. 12.
197 Ibid. P. 15.
The report reveals that the main complaints of discrimination have concerned the undesirability of Romani, resulting in bad service in: the housing market, denial of access to shops/restaurants, and healthcare system. Also to a lesser extent unequal treatment in: the judicial system, education system and labour market. Romani tend to have poor confidence in police, judiciary, social services and healthcare system.

In 2013, a secret Roma-registry held by the police became unintentionally public through newspaper, ‘Dagens Nyheter’. It was hidden even from the Ministry of Justice and the Head of the Swedish Police Department. The police have denied it being a registry based on ethnicity but insists the information gathered to be analytical based on criminal investigation. Registers based on ethnicity are illegal in Sweden. However, the registry covering 4,029 Swedish Roma, youngest being only 2 year old children, implies it to be based on ethnicity above anything, as the children listed due to their biological heritage and relatives, not criminal past. Furthermore, several families on the list do not have any criminal convictions or suspicions that might explain them being included in the registry. While the investigatory commission admitted that many people in the registry were of Roma identity, they ‘could not find grounds to say that the sole reason for them being registered was that they were of Romany heritage’. The Registry brought to surface stifled discrimination of Roma people in Sweden – Critics argued that the registry was nothing new, nor surprising and that Sweden has a long history and tradition of discriminating Romani.

What organisations are used by the Roma communities, and who engages with them?

Since 1996, Working Group on Roma Affairs has been functioning in the Ministry of Culture, where The Roma National Union is also represented. Delegation for Roma Questions is a national institution dealing with Roma issues, supported by The Council of Roma Issues, which is an institution representing Romani interests to national bodies. The Roma National Union (before 1999, The Nordic Romani Council) is a Romani umbrella organization, focusing on social issues for the Roma population and the spreading of information about the Roma culture and history. It is also a part of the International Romani Union. In 2002 the Council of Roma Issues was set up, as an advisory board to the Government and comprised of Roma representatives from the Roma communities.

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198 Ibid. P. 14.
206 Ibid.
What are the Government policies and attitudes towards Roma?

In Sweden much similarly to Finland, largely because of the shared history of the two countries, discrimination of Roma dates back to the 16th Century and their arrival. Between the World Wars the Roma community suffered from extreme human rights violations through sterilization and other discriminating policies. After the Wars the Romani were labelled as ‘travellers’ and expected to disappear with time. As in Finland, laws and attitudes began to shift towards adaptation of the Romani to the Swedish culture, during the second half of the 20th Century. The changes were even further fought for in Sweden, as the Roma population kept rising and demanding rights. Until 1965 Romani had no right to go to school or reside in Sweden210. During the 1990s significant improvements in the status of the Romani took place leading to the recognition of the Romani as one of the five historical ethnic minority groups in Sweden and the recognition of the Romani Chib as a minority language in 2000211. Regardless of these steps taken in policy making and legislation, discrimination and prejudice prevail on a large scale.

Relevant national legislation concerning the Roma is the Constitution, which insures the general law provisions for all Swedish citizens, and the right to freedom and dignity of the individual. Moreover, authorities are under the obligation to provide conditions under which ethnic, linguistic and religious minorities can maintain and develop their own culture212.

In 2001, the Swedish government commissioned the Diskrimineringsombudsman (commissioner for racial equality) with the task of paying special attention and intensifying its efforts concerning discrimination against Romani. They were expected to:

- shed light on and survey the extent of ethnic discrimination or other offensive treatment of Romani
- develop strategies and methods for countering and forestalling ethnic discrimination of Romani
- contribute, by means of information, to an increased awareness of the individual's right to protection among Romani
- work for the promotion of increased mutual confidence between Romani and the authorities. 213

211 Ibid.

31 | Richardson Institute
United Kingdom

Who are they?
The Roma people arrived in Britain from the beginning of the 16th century. The first record of Roma people was in 1505. In 1530, the first law to expel them was implemented, and in 1554 the state implemented a law stating that being a Roma was a crime punishable with death. Some are also transported to America as criminals for centuries. In the 1960’s evictions and harassment of the Roma are approaching a crisis, this leads to the Gypsy Council in 1966.

With the accession of Bulgaria and Romania to the European Union (EU) in 2007, the British people were afraid a large number of immigrants would arrive in the UK. Both countries have a great population of Roma, and some of them have indeed come to the UK. However, the numbers are far smaller than what was feared. Exact numbers on how many Roma are in the UK is challenging to find. However, it has been estimated that there are about 200 000-300 000 Roma in Britain today. There are both Kale and Roma populations in the UK. The Kale people are usually referred to as “Gypsies”.

Where are they?
Due to their traveling life style and evictions, it is difficult to locate where exactly the Roma are situated. However, in 2011 The Guardian published an article where they had listed all caravan sites in England (see map). Most caravan sites can be found in the South-East of England. The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance has reported that many caravans remain parked without permission in the UK and that the “authorities acknowledge the lack of sites and have promoted legal reform and required local authorities to produce needs assessments.” However, local authorities are often reluctant to provide more sites because of extreme opposition from locals. This leaves Roma and Travellers to use unauthorized land. There are also Roma who live in housing.

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215 Ibid
What do they do?
Although the employment opportunities for ethnic minorities in the UK are smaller than for the British population, the gap between minorities and the total population has decreased, and in 2007 it was at 13.8%\(^\text{219}\). In 2011, the Office of National Statistics, published a consensus analysis on 58 000 Gypsies and Irish Travellers\(^\text{220}\). The data presented showed that elementary occupations, within the fields of construction, sales and service, were the most common employment type for Gypsies, with 22% registering this\(^\text{221}\). Only 47% within the same group registered as economically active (see table below)\(^\text{222}\). Reasons for why Roma are seen as underachievers are highly linked to racism and persecution.

In the UK everyone has the right to education and Local Education Authorities (LEAs) have a duty to ensure that it is available for all children between 5-16 years old, also including children with special education needs. Religious and philosophical convictions must be respected. This applies to both permanent and temporary resident, therefore also to the Roma, also those residing on unauthorized sites. However, without a legal or permanent place to stop, this becomes more difficult\(^\text{223}\). The LEAs is bound to promote race equality, and provide transport to schools if a pupil lives further away than walking distance. Contradicting information has been published on how Roma students are treated in school in the UK\(^\text{224}\). However, in 2011, Roma Education Fund published a pilot study of Roma children in the UK\(^\text{225}\). They found that Roma parents value education, and that most of the children interviewed had not experienced anti-Roma sentiments from the British pupils\(^\text{226}\). Data published in 2008, showed evidence that only 16% of Roma pupils gained 5 GCSE's at A*-C grades\(^\text{227}\). Compared to the national average which is four times higher, this is particularly worrying. Specific initiatives have been put into place to improve the situation of Roma children in education\(^\text{228}\).


\(^{225}\) Those interviewed were originally from either the Czech Republic or Slovakia.


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How are they treated and perceived?
The British perceive the Roma as work-shy thieves and troublemakers. These longstanding negative attitudes to the Roma were only fuelled when Bulgaria and Romania entered the EU. Most seem to assume that Romanians equals Roma, although the Roma make up of only 5% of the Romanian population. In November 2013, The Guardian reported that the Roma in Britain are “excluded, ignored and neglected”. The Roma face difficulties when trying to access health care. Under the National Health Service Act 1977 everyone has a right to healthcare provided by the NHS. To receive help from the National Health Service (NHS), they have to fill in forms. This can be a challenge for illiterate Roma, and for those who do not know their birth date. Discrimination and prejudice is also common among the health care professionals, and instances have been reported where doctors have been reluctant to register Roma people because they lack a permanent address. However, today, most of the Roma are registered with a GP. Many live in overcrowded houses and in poverty. Roma life expectancy is about 10 years shorter than one of a non-Roma on average, in the UK. Their low living standard has caused concern, as there is a clear link between poor living education and poor health. Local authorities have no duty to provide water to unauthorized camps.

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232 Ibid.
What organisations are used by the Roma communities, and who engages with them?

The Refugee Council helps Roma migrants who come to the UK. Gypsy Roma Traveller Leeds is known for having established strong relationships between Traveller communities and education institutions, and offer education for both children and adults. They also run services only for Roma, such as the parental self-development course “STEPS”.

Equality works to empower Roma people in the UK. They have developed a programme to empower emerging community leaders to help and assist their communities.

Local Traveller Education Support Services assist those who move into a new area to sort out education and other enquiries.

The Roma Support Group is Britain’s largest charity for the Roma community. They work to improve Roma’s quality of life and raise awareness of their situation. They arrange Roma Culture Workshops for British children to learn about the Roma heritage, and offer Roma related training courses for social services, police, schools, universities, local authorities, NHS and other statutory and non-statutory organisations.

The Travellers’ Times Online is a news platform designed to be the UK’s main source of Roma (and other Travellers) news and resources. It is a Rural Media project, and many of its contributors are from the community itself.

What are the Government policies and attitudes towards Roma?

The Council of Europe has expressed concern that racial hatred and anti-Roma rhetoric is used by public officials, and that the tabloid press publishes hostile and ill-informed coverage on Roma and Travellers. They report that the Press Complaints Commission has failed to take action to ensure this does not happen. Following the attack on 9/11, the UK government “has designed a number of new national programmes concerned with the maintenance of good community relations at a local level”. One of these programmes has been the community cohesion programme. The Commission on Integration and Cohesion defined an integrated and cohesive community: “...is therefore one where people from various backgrounds and circumstances live and mix in freedom and peace and thrive in every way. It is based on tolerance, trust, respect, civil rights and a celebration of diversity with equal access to local services.” Unfortunately, the Roma people remain excluded in many cases, and still face unfriendliness and hatred in many areas where they arrive. The government has mainly focused on the Muslim minority group, rather than focusing on all ethnic minorities.

The British Government has no explicit focus on the situation of the Roma. The Open Government Partnership UK National Action Plan 2013 to 2015 does not mention the Roma community.

237 For a list of their achievements with the Roma, please see: http://www.grtleeds.co.uk/ourService/achievements.html
239 For more information on the Travellers’ Times, please see http://www.travellerstimes.org.uk/home.aspx
242 Ibid, p. 22.
243 For more information, please see The Open Government Partnership UK National Action Plan 2013 to 2015.
Conclusion

In conclusion, Roma are often discriminated against, and persecuted in a wide variety of ways, such as housing, education, employment, lack of legal remedy, and subject to police action. Though all EU governments are committed to ensuring human rights, this is often ignored in the case of Roma people. In several countries, Roma are segregated through housing policies and forced to live in run-down areas, Roma children are educated in ‘special’ schools designed for disabled children, unable to access social services or healthcare. This often leads to poverty, health problems, substance abuse, and crime. Therefore reinforcing stereotypes of Roma as criminal and undesirable creates a cyclical problem. The Roma are being subject to harsh police actions, and some police brutality in both raid operations and during detention appears to be a problem in several countries. Discrimination pervades through some judicial systems also, resulting in legal remedy being incredibly difficult or impossible to acquire, some individuals resorting to the European Court.

Though many countries state their intention to integrate Roma, actual successes are difficult to find. Most countries see Roma integration as a peripheral issue, some appointing Roma officials with little power or influence. In some countries, with powerful human rights groups, Roma plight is being dealt with, though often as part of a wider minority rights platform, not Roma-rights specifically. The wide ranging discrimination Roma peoples suffer is rarely recognised and their culture is often disregarded. The significant and persistent discrimination against one of the most vulnerable minorities in Europe appears to be continuing with little restriction, despite EU countries promising to improve the situation of the Roma people.
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