FORGOTTEN CITIZENS OF EUROPE
Participatory Action Research for Local Human Rights

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Introduction: aims and scope of this report

This report is a final deliverable of WP6 which aims at

I. articulating research requests from CSOs for the future cooperative research agendas, and describe this in multi-annual PER action plans;

II. providing pilot reports on Local human rights issues from three teams (ESSRG, UCC, URV) involved in WP6 to show what they achieved in their participatory research with and/or for Roma, Travelers.

As the core objective PERARES WP6 aimed to enter into research co-operation with CSOs on Roma/Travellers’ issues, share existing knowledge and articulate research needs in such a way that makes it possible to monitor and learn from the engagement process.

The cooperation extended to three phases: linking of the research process, research outcomes and the application of research results with practical problem-solving. All three partners invited local CSOs, researchers, concerned citizens and centres of research to join in the pilot activities.

Country reports contain the following detailed descriptions or explanations:

- the process of setting the question(s) to be studied or engaged with in cooperation with the CSO partner (problem-structuring phase, defining the perception and political dealing with Human Rights in the general process) – justifying a certain understanding of HR, permanent process, revisit the question of HR
- the process and content of actions initiated together with partner CSO(s) (action phase)
- summary of results reached, outcomes produced, lessons learnt, particularly with regard to the successes and failures (ups and downs) of the engagement process together with the CSO(s) partner, including most important policy implications as well (post-engagement phase)
- conduct an evaluation exercise of the pilot according to the guidelines set by WP9 and refine or complement it
- the process and/or reasons for methodology choice(s)

The cooperative research offers practical insights that can be forwarded towards improving the ways that research funders can support research with CSO partners. Therefore WP6 reflected on particular incentives and rewards needed for such cooperative research, as well as gained insights on the potential impact of Roma/Traveller’s issues research activities on citizens and civil society.

WP6 shared experiences and good practices of involving CSOs in various phases of research with local, regional and national stakeholders and with other Science Shops and similar research centres. As a main achievement WP6 ensured increased participation of civil society actors in research activities and an enhanced incorporation of needs and concerns of civil society in research strategies.

As a contribution to WP9 (Monitoring and evaluation of PER through science shops and variants and knowledge debates), WP6 evaluated and monitored CSO engagement with research on local human rights. Finally the topics and results from Roma/Travellers’ issues research will enter the arena of Transnational Knowledge Debates on the website of the Living Knowledge network and will be opened up for discussion online from October 2012.
Main tasks and indicative efforts in WP6

**Tasks in WP6 in detail from the DoW**

**M6.1** Gather basic information on how partner CSO-s currently use research in their daily practice. Literature overview of available research, with special regard to research on Roma/Travelers and research with (or for) them. Report on the experiences of related CSOs about how they work with researchers and research institutes (months 1-3). Share experiences with partner organisations (month 4) -- Months: 1-4

**Pilots:** Perform pilot projects with a strong involvement of (a) CSO(-s) both in problem definition and implementation of the study: Initial planning with CSO(-s) (target group, main topics, methodology, analysis) (months 4-6), Set up structure of project reports (month 6), Reflect continuously on investigators’ roles, project relevance, objectives, partnership building and communication processes and change project plan if necessary (months 7-20), Performing study (month 7-20) -- Months: 4-20

**Evaluation:** Assessment of the on-going and newly initiated pilot processes of CSO involvement in research work through testing criteria developed in WP9: Discuss evaluation criteria with the developers in WP9 (months 4-6) and deliver ideas; Evaluation of the formulation of research questions, objectives and methods, Evaluation of the practical applicability of research outcomes (such as specific actions as results of knowledge generated), Evaluation of the relationship between the CSOs and the researchers, Evaluation of the processes of revisions in research focus, problem formulation and methodology based on CSOs concerns. Monitor (month 4-20) and evaluate (Month 12-20) the processes in this WP with the criteria developed in WP9 and give feedback to the developers -- Months: 4-20

**Student involvement:** Connect CSOs with students in some of the pilot projects in the three partner organisations. Recruiting students for various phases of the pilot projects, preferably to be done as part of their curricula (months 2-4). Mentoring of student’s work (providing readings, consultation, inviting them to the project workshops and involving them in report writing etc.) -- Months: 4-20

**M6.2:** Three reports to be circulated within the consortium: a. Brief report on human rights issues concerning the Travelling community in Cork County, Ireland, including research questions for the future research agenda’s (UCC, month 20); b) Brief report on human rights issues concerning the Roma people in Szeged, Hungary, including research questions for the future research agenda’s (ESSRG, month 20); c) Brief report on human rights issues concerning the Roma communities in Spain, including research questions for the future research agenda’s (URV, month 20). These will lead to D6.1.

**Dissemination:** Publication on the results of cooperation between CSO and researchers; Short public policy briefings to concerned governmental bodies and CSOs (local, national, European), elaboration of the concept of continuing dissemination of results -- Months: 20

**D6.1:** Collate the results into multi-annual PER action plans -- Months: 24
Indicative efforts per beneficiary in WP6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beneficiary No.</th>
<th>Short name</th>
<th>WP1</th>
<th>WP2</th>
<th>WP3</th>
<th>WP4</th>
<th>WP5</th>
<th>WP6</th>
<th>WP7</th>
<th>WP8</th>
<th>WP9</th>
<th>WP10</th>
<th>WP11</th>
<th>WP12</th>
<th>Total per beneficiary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
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<td>9</td>
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<td>0.5</td>
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<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During the pilot ESSRG works together with Protect the Future – Szeged Group. University College Cork works together with the Travelling community in the Cork region. Universitat Rovira i Virgili works together with the Drom Kotar Mestipen (Romani Women Association), CEG (Centre of Roma Studies) and the Catalan Federation of Roma (FAGIC).

In WP6 financial reservations have been made to allow for the full cooperation of CSO partners to enable them to contribute towards PERARES research; in addition, they will be the beneficiary of results in Science Shop research partnerships.
I. Research agendas from Spain, Hungary and Ireland

(Multi-annual PER Action Plans)
Research Questions

Based on the results achieved in the three priority actions carried out by CEG and Roma associations, research questions have been identified for future research agenda, to contribute to the human rights of the Roma Community. These are as follows:

"Human Rights Code" for research with the Roma people

1) How to disseminate the “Human Rights Code” for researchers among the international scientific community, as well as among the public administrations in charge of research? How to make it a reference document in Europe as regards ethical issues of research with the Roma people?

Promoting the academic and scientific profession among Roma young people

2) How do universities develop affirmative action in the access and progress of Roma young people in the academic and scientific profession?

3) How are universities working with the community, with primary and secondary schools containing Roma population, in order to develop affirmative action, especially in the most underprivileged areas?

Support to the Roma Other Women from research

4) How to promote a space for public debate, participation and decision in all the social areas, where Roma women can participate, especially those who are more disadvantaged because of a lack of educational opportunities?

5) How to promote the debate from the feminism on the 21st century, and how eradicate gender violence?

Research Method

Following the principles of the communicative methodology, the previous research questions identified will be prioritized together with the Roma associations participating in the CEG in order to give them a response from research. Therefore, the actions will be decided jointly.

Who will be involved

1) The Roma associations through the CEG

2) URV team, the PERARES project main researcher and a postdoctoral researcher contracted by PERARES.

When will it take place

From January to June 2012.
The research explores local human rights problems and the experiences of the Roma communities in Szeged.

Research Method:

- Participatory research that invites Roma communities and local experts from Szeged to discussion groups and debates on local human rights issues
- Engaging and network building of local stakeholders, professionals, activists, schools, municipality

Participation:

- Perares-Szeged steering group (György Málovics, Barbara Mihók, László Jakab, Elizabeth Lakatos, István Szentistványi)
- ESSRG team (Bálint Balázs, György Pataki, Györgyi Bela)
- Local Roma communities from Szeged

Questions for further research

- **Content level** What are the most pressing human rights dimensions (housing, food, healthy environment, education) of marginalization in case of the Roma communities in Szeged?
- **Process level** How can we facilitate the positive development of the research process as well as the personal and group performance of the participants? How can we support the organizational sustainability of the research group?
- **Outcome level** How can we establish local consensus around an Extra-curricular afternoon school for marginalised Roma families?
- **Output level** What are the most important social conditions for an extra-curricular afternoon school? How do different stakeholders understand these preconditions? How do they envision the ideal institution? What are the most typical organisational issues (location, age groups, pedagogical program, motivation for participation, preventing dropout) to tackle?

Involvement processes implemented in the pilot

- Building up trust-based relationships with stakeholders: the pilot offered continuous dialogue with and involvement of the Roma community members from the design to the evaluation of the pilot.
• Embeddedness of researchers in the local community, their „civic roles”, personal relations and onintuous presence sometimes provided access to resources but other times closed certain doors (e.g. other experts).
• The team involved Roma students to enhance the praxis links of the team to parallel „processes” within the wider community. Beyong the inclusion of their voices in the research design student received practical research training, and managed to get other research contracts.
• Planning the feedback loops: based on extensive listening within the community relevant actions were chosen by the community itself to help them improving their situation. The open talks within the community also helped to permanently finetune and show the practical usefulness of research.

**Further plans to carry out the research agenda**

**Building internal networks**: based on the Human Right Code elaborated in the Spanish report on the overcoming of ROMA people’s abuse on research the team will continue to link to other groups in Hungary to disseminate the research agenda.

**Building external network**: draw attention of the following institutions to our research agenda

• DG EMPL, Anti-discrimination Unit, and DG JUSTICE 4 Non discrimination policies and Roma coordination Unit

• European Roma Rights Center: The European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC) is an international public interest law organisation working to combat anti-Romani racism and human rights abuse of Roma through strategic litigation, research and policy development, advocacy and human rights education. Since its establishment in 1996, the ERRC has endeavoured to provide Roma with the tools necessary to combat discrimination and achieve equal access to justice, education, housing, health care and public services. The ERRC has consultative status with the Council of Europe, as well as with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations.

• European Academic Network on Romani Studies: The European Academic Network on Romani Studies is a new joint action between the Council of Europe and the European Union. The overall aim is to facilitate intercultural dialogue and support efforts towards the social inclusion of Romani citizens in Europe. It will raise the visibility of existing research and foster cooperation with policymakers, by providing evidence for better conceived policy initiatives. One of its key roles will be to provide references and guidance to policymakers and young researchers.

• European Roma Policy Coalition (ERPC) is an informal gathering of non-governmental organisations operating at EU level on issues of human rights, anti-discrimination, anti-racism, social inclusion, and Roma and Travellers’ rights. The ERPC is committed to the principle of inclusion through participation and aims to promote the participation of Roma in all relevant processes. The Coalition recommends the adoption of an EU Framework Strategy on Roma Inclusion, to promote and strengthen EU and national action aimed at the social inclusion of Roma in Europe.

• Roma Education Fund: The Roma Education Fund (REF) was created in the framework of the Decade of Roma Inclusion in 2005. Its mission and ultimate goal is to close the gap in educational outcomes between Roma and non-Roma. In order to achieve this goal, the organization supports policies and programs which ensure quality education
for Roma, including the desegregation of education systems. Through its activities, the REF promotes Roma inclusion in all aspects of the national education systems of countries participating in the Decade of Roma Inclusion, as well as other countries that wish to join in this effort.

- European Roma Information Office: The European Roma Information Office (ERIO) is an international advocacy organisation that promotes political and public discussion on Roma issues by providing factual and in-depth information on a range of policy issues to European Union institutions, Roma civil organisations, governmental authorities and intergovernmental bodies. ERIO cooperates with a large network of organisations and acts to combat racial discrimination and social exclusion by raising awareness, lobbying and developing policy.

- ERGO Network for European Roma: ERGO Network wants to achieve equal opportunities for Roma in their societies and encourages them to take an active role in accomplishing respect for their rights as equal citizens. ERGO Network connects organisations that share the conviction that Roma can and should participate as active citizens in their own societies. ERGO Network provides expertise to policy makers and politicians to design and implement more effective Roma inclusion approaches as part of mainstream policies.
IRELAND | Research Proposal West Cork Travellers September 2011

(submitted to Kathy Crocket, WCT on the September 13th, 2011)

Exploring the experiences of Travellers starting school in West Cork: Searching for ways to guarantee equal access to education

We want to enter a serious debate on substantial discrimination within the Irish educational system, searching for changes that allow Traveller children to participate on equal terms with all other Irish children. Although discrimination and even breaches of the law occur and have been publicly highlighted, nothing seems to change in practice. This research is an attempt to address these issues based on a partnership between West Cork Travellers and University College Cork.

Research Questions:

1) What happens when a child from the Traveller community starts junior infants?
2) What do parents from the Traveller community expect from the educational system in Ireland?
3) Do parents from the Traveller community have any specific concerns or suggestions in relation to their child’s education and the educational system in general?
4) To what extent is the child accommodated to fit into the group?
5) What do teachers/principals expect of children from the Traveller community when they enter school?
6) Are there any specific guidelines for teachers in relation to Traveller pupils in the schools? Are there any other specific educational supports in place for these children?
7) Is there a specific local forum between professionals and Travellers where educational issues can be discussed?

Research Method:

1) Invite Travellers to take part in a small discussion group where these questions are explored and documented.
2) Invite teachers/principals from local schools to take part in a small discussion group to explore the same questions.
3) Locate other existing research on this topic, if any, and liaise with other Traveller groups in the country.

Who will be involved:

1) A steering group from WCT made up of 2-3 people.
2) UCC team with 1-2 people including a student who will facilitate the actual research.

When will it take place:

During the coming year 2011-2012 with the aim of starting in November and finish in May/June.
II. Pilot studies from Spain, Hungary and Ireland
Spain:

Perform and Evaluate Project Pilot Human Rights And The Roma Communities

Together we are going along the same path. Drom Kotar means the road to freedom, the path of freedom that all women should take, and Roma women as well. It is the path of freedom and equality, against discrimination, the path of many things that we still need to achieve. (RW1:11).

President of the Roma Women’s Association Drom Kotar Mestipen
Aims and scope of this report

This country report is part of the WP6 the main objective of which is to explore the ongoing, and initiating new processes of actively engaging CSOs in many steps of local human rights research, so that the research matches the community’s needs, particularly the needs of minority groups, in order to ensure that the most urging R&D concerns are addressed and that research will have more significant policy relevance concerning progressive changes in human rights both in a local and a European context.

Therefore, this country report informs about the results of the following activities:

Perform pilot project with a strong involvement of (a) CSO(-s) both in problem definition and implementation of the study:

- Initial planning with CSO-s (target group, main topics, methodology, analysis) (months 4-6)
- Set up structure of project reports (month 6)
- Reflect continuously on investigators’ roles, project relevance, objectives, partnership building and communication processes and change project plan if necessary (months 7-20)
- Performing study (month 7-20)
Months: 4-20

Evaluate on-going and newly initiated pilot processes of CSO involvement in research work through testing criteria developed in WP9:

- Discuss evaluation criteria with the developers in WP9 (months 4-6) and deliver ideas for:
  1) Evaluation of the formulation of research questions, objectives and methods
  2) Evaluation of the practical applicability of research outcomes (such as specific actions as results of knowledge generated)
  3) Evaluation of the relationship between the CSOs and the researchers
  4) Evaluation of the processes of revisions in research focus, problem formulation and methodology based on CSOs concerns.
  5) Monitor (month 4-20) and evaluate (Month 12-20) the processes in this WP with the criteria developed in WP9 and give feedback to the developers
Months: 4-20

Connect CSOs with students in some of the pilot projects in the three partner organizations. Recruiting students for various phases of the pilot projects, preferably to be done as part of their curricula (months 2-4). Mentoring of student’s work (providing readings, consultation, inviting them to the project workshops and involving them in report writing etc.) (Months 4-20)
Months: 4-20
1. Perform Pilot Project: human rights issues concerning the Roma communities in Spain

In the joint work of the researchers of the Centre for Roma Studies (Centro de Estudios Gitanos - CEG) with Roma CSOs specific activities were defined as part of the pilot Project. The different activities are based on specific needs or constraints faced by Roma in order to overcome the situation of discrimination in which they are. The problem definition and developed actions (the basis to work on the Pilot Project), have been defined in continuous meetings with the Roma associations and with the advisory council of the CEG (for more details visit the methodology section).

The target group of the pilot project is the Roma people in Spain. There is a special interest in non-academic Roma women because of the triple situation of inequality they suffer – for being women, Roma and not having had access to education.

The Roma in Spain currently make up a community of 650.000 to 800.000. For more than 500 years they have been the object of segregating social and educational policies that have placed them in the situation of inequality, especially in education and work. Also in large parts of the society there is a profound rejection of the Roma population, with negative stereotypes and misinformation. On the other hand the research and other actions regarding Roma have often ignored their voice and participation and in many cases the results have only increased their exclusion (Flecha et al. 2004). In Catalonia in the recent years there has been a considerable progress in including Roma in the research. On 21 November the Catalan parliament passed unanimously a resolution recognizing the identity of the Roma people (Resolution 1046/VI, 2001) and commissioned a study on Roma in Catalonia that had an advisory board - a scientific board which included Roma. The organization and management of the advisory board involved 20 Roma organizations, marking a scientific and social milestone in the Roma studies (ibid.).

This pilot project has been planned and implemented as a result of 15 years of joint work of the Centre of Roma Studies with Roma CSOs. The CEG was created in 1997 in the framework of CREA, Centre of Research in Theories and Practices that Overcome Inequalities at the University of Barcelona. The CEG involves researchers of three universities in Catalonia: the University Rovira i Virgili and University of Girona in addition to the University of Barcelona.

This pilot project was aimed at identifying 3 problems and contributing to the development, analysis and evaluation of the actions implemented to overcome these problems.

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1 Information extracted from: [http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/romatravellers/default_en.asp](http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/romatravellers/default_en.asp)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main topics and problems identified</th>
<th>Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Need for a regulatory framework</strong> to guarantee that is not possible to realize a <strong>research project on Roma</strong> without their agreement and support, as well as without their participation in the design, implementation and the evaluation of the project.</td>
<td>Elaboration of a code of conduct for researchers and definition of research agenda by the CEG.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| The Roma people suffer a serious **educational exclusion** as a result of centuries of marginalization and segregating educational practices. This exclusion is limiting their possibilities to develop academically, as well as socially and in the area of labor. | Educating Roma students on doing research.  
Identification of Roma students at the university and an affirmative action educating them on research and promoting their academic career. |
| **Exclusion of non-academic Roma women** from spaces of participation, public debate and decision-making. | Supporting the organizations of Roma women with research and by university professors and students:  
Joint work of the researchers of the CEG and the Association of Roma Women Drom Kotar Mestipen in the organization of the First Congress of Roma Women, in Barcelona, October 2010.  
Support to the Association of Roma Women Drom Kotar Mestipen in the constitution of the new Association Sonakay of Reus (Tarragona).  
Supporting the Foundation of Jesús Gómez in realization of a course aimed at Roma organizations on the development of European projects. |
2. Methodology

You may know something from the academy but if you talk to someone who experienced this you will know better, because with the perspective of the university only you cannot know what happens in a marginalized neighbourhood, or maybe not marginalized but you cannot know something you do not live. In the Drom it is like this, we gather normal people, not academic ones, some academics and then it is among all of us. Where one doesn’t get the other one will. We all go in the same direction. (RW1:11). President of the Roma Women’s Association Drom Kotar Mestipen.²

The methodology used in this Center for Roma Studies (CEG) is the communicative critical methodology (Gómez, et al. 2006), which focuses on the teamwork based on dialogue and equality among the researchers and the Roma community. This methodology makes possible to realize excellent research projects with a great impact on the overcoming of discriminatory situations of the groups that are worked with, in this case the Roma community.

The implementation of the pilot project involved researchers and students of various Catalan universities and different Roma associations. Some of the researchers and students involved are personally committed to the improvement of the rights of the Roma community and work as volunteers in the associations. Others got involved during the implementation of the pilot project.

Meetings, working groups, and advisory council

The definition and realization of the actions require continuous meetings with the Roma associations, as well as meetings with the working groups and with the advisory council of the CEG. Thereby during the time period from April 2010 (month 4) to September 2011 (month 20) the following meetings have taken place:

- Quarterly meetings of the Advisory Council of the CEG, composed by representatives of the Roma associations and people of the Roma community with diverse profiles, policy makers of the regional government, and researchers of diverse disciplines and different countries such as Spain and Romania.

- Monthly meetings of the CEG researchers, including Roma trainee-researchers.

- Meetings and working groups in the Roma Women’s Association Drom Kotar Mestipen giving support to the organization of the I International Congress of Roma Women: The Other Women, celebrated October 8th, 9th and 10th of 2010 in Barcelona. Roma researchers and other researchers have participated jointly with Roma women of low educational level in the organization of the congress, participating in meetings and assemblies of the organization (Roma Women’s Association Drom Kotar Mestipen). Furthermore, meetings were held with the public administration in order to obtain resources for the congress, in which both, researchers and Roma women of low educational level participated. In the organization of the congress university students volunteered. As a total of the people involved in the organization are 30 volunteers among them the researchers and the university students of different Catalan universities.

² The Roma Women Association Drom Kotar Mestipen (Road to Freedom) was born on 1999 as a result of the dialogue between women of different ages, Roma or not, with a primary objective: fighting for equality and non-discrimination between women and men within the Roma people and in the majority society, as well as encouraging the support of activities between women coming from different cultures.
- Researchers have participated in the meetings and activities realized by the Jesús Gómez Foundation, that among others has the purpose to contribute to overcome the social exclusion of the Roma community. Some of these researchers participated as teachers in the courses on the elaboration of European projects addressed to Roma associations.

- University professors and students of the University Rovira and Virgili (Tarragona) gave support to the foundation of the Roma Women’s Association Sonakay in Reus (Tarragona) through the Roma Women’s Association Drom Kotar Mestipen. Their collaboration consisted in giving support to the organization of the meetings with Roma women of the neighbourhood, to the elaboration of the association’s articles, to the organization of the public ceremony where the association was presented and where local and regional politicians assisted, and finally giving support to the realization of the course for school cafeteria supervisors.

- The university professors involved in the CEG try to identify Roma university students. There are very little numbers of Roma students in Spanish universities and no institutionalized affirmative actions exist in order to facilitate the access for Roma students. The existing affirmative actions, not institutionalized, are meetings and tutorial sessions with the Roma students in order to train them in research and promote their academic career.

- The university professors involved in the CEG organize conferences in the university with students and participants of the Roma associations. The aim is to put in contact the students with the Roma associations. Therewith it is possible to contribute to overcome the racist stereotypes on the Roma community and promote the volunteering among the university students.

**In-depth interviews, communicative daily life stories and communicative focus groups**

In order to analyse and evaluate the implemented actions in the pilot project in-depth interviews, communicative daily life stories and communicative focus groups with directly involved people were carried out. All these techniques were implemented by Laura Ruiz, researcher at PERARES and Aitor Gómez. The main criterion to select the sample was to maintain the different profiles of people that had been participated in the different stages of the PERARES project. The main difference between a Communicative Daily Life Story and an in-depth interview is located in the role of the researcher and the “researched”. During a communicative daily life story the researcher contributes to the dialogue with scientific knowledge and the people give their opinions about it. There is a common interpretation of reality through an egalitarian dialogue between both.³

³ The quotes of the report have been extracted from the in-depth interviews, the communicative daily life stories and the communicative focus group. The outlines of these three techniques are in the Annex 1.
In the following chart there is a brief description of the different profiles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Profiles</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>In-depth interviews</th>
<th>Communicative Daily Life Stories</th>
<th>Communicative Focus Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Researcher and professor of the University of Barcelona. She has a long experience or participation in the feminist movement. Member of the CEG and volunteer in the Association of Roma Women Drom Kotar Mestipen</td>
<td>WR1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher and professor of the Autonomous University of Barcelona. She has international experience in Roma studies and participation in Roma social movement. Her research has had an influence on the international scientific community by publishing in journals of the Journal Citation Report. Member of the CEG and volunteer in the Association of Roma Women Drom Kotar Mestipen.</td>
<td>WR2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Researcher and professor at the University Rovira i Virgili, collaborates in the association of Roma women Sonakay of Reus</td>
<td>WR3</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Researcher of Roma origin from Romania. Member of the CEG. Initiated the first association of Roma immigrants from Romania in Catalonia.</td>
<td>RWR</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student of Roma origin at the University of Barcelona. Has obtained his first degree in education and currently studies for master degree. Member of the CEG</td>
<td>RMS</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Roma student in the Master programme on education at the University Rovira i Virgili. Collaborates in the association of Roma women Sonakay of Reus.</td>
<td>WS</td>
<td>1</td>
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3. Development of the practices: analysis and evaluation

The frame of the practices developed is the collaborative work conducted by the Center for Roma Studies (CEG) and the Roma organizations. For this reason we introduce here a brief description of the CEG and next the analysis and the evaluation of all the practices already conducted.

The Center for Roma Studies was created in 1997 from the need to scientifically analyse the situation of exclusion that Roma population encounter and the factors that contribute to overcoming it. Integrated by an interdisciplinary team of researchers, from different universities, Roma and no Roma, students, and representatives from all the Roma organizations, they are carrying out research projects that address the key elements that underline this community’s process of social transformation. The CEG works with Roma organizations that have been struggling for a number of years for the rights of Roma people, such as the Secretariado Gitano, Unión Romaní and regional Federations of Roma organizations. CEG is open to all these organizations’ contributions in order to carry out a serious research based on high quality, given real answers to the Roma people requests. CEG also privileges to train Roma students to provide them with the opportunities to go to the university, thus they will have the chance to become future researchers as well.

CEG is conducting research in real alternatives for social transformation, using the skills, which the Roma population has as a starting point, and has as its objective the promotion of their identity as gypsy people within different areas of society; such as education, culture, and the labour market, etc. From the scientific knowledge obtained from the different contexts of the gypsy population, the following lines of research have been established, and they are the backbone of the projects carried out by the CEG:

- Laying down the foundation for theoretical development and intercultural research.
- Researching the ways in which to develop economic potential for the Roma population.
- Studying the different cultural identities of the Roma population and the role that they have in the social structure.
- Researching the emancipation of Roma women and their participation in various areas of society.
- Promoting training as a tool for overcoming exclusion.
- Creating an advisory board within CEG formed by Roma and non-Roma people.
- Monitoring and analysing the rise of racism in Europe.
- Analysing the recognition processes of the Roma population.¹

The rigor of the research work conducted by CEG is due to a strong theoretical background as well as the knowledge of emancipatory alternatives analysed collaboratively with Roma organizations. The impact of research is not just within the European scientific community, but also in the promotion of policies that are contributing to improve the rights of the Roma people, as well to overcome their unequal situation. An example for the impact of the researches developed by CEG is the European project WORKALÓ: The creation of new occupational patterns for cultural minorities. The Gypsy case, within the 5th Framework Program of Research of the European Commission, already described in the Brief Report on how partner CSO-s currently use research results in their daily practice, carried out in this current work package.

¹ Information extracted from: http://utopiadream.info/crea/?page_id=69
Next we introduce the analysis and the evaluation of the practices drawing on the collaborative work conducted among CEG and the Roma organizations: 1) Creation of an “Human Rights Code” for researchers and definition of the research agenda; 2) research training for Roma students; 3) support to the Roma organizations drawing on the research and also with the collaboration of professors from the university, as well as undergraduates and graduate students.

3.1. Creation of a “Human Rights Code” for researchers and definition of the research agenda

Process for the creation and agreement of the “Human Rights Code”

The creation of the “Human Rights Code” for researchers came from a collaborative work between researchers and Roma people, involving big and small organizations, and Roma people with a range of different backgrounds not involved in any kind of organization. The process to create and reach agreement on that code was conducted within a number of meetings carried out by CEG and the Advisory Board.

Here we introduce the results from 3 of the meetings by CEG, conducted during the last months (February 28th, April 11th, and May 9th) and 2 meetings by the Advisory Board (March 18th, and June 20th). We also collect contributions from two researchers from CEG (a Roma person and another non-Roma person), about the type of work that they are doing with the Roma organizations. These contributions coming from the interviews complete the analysis and the evaluation carried out by CEG and the Roma organizations. The meeting point and the timing for the meetings changed in order to facilitate the attendance of Roma people non-working at the University.

The Advisory Board of CEG has the goal of checking all the work carried out by CEG in order to guarantee that it gives answers to the needs of Roma people, especially looking for make sure that the results of the researches conducted may contribute to overcome the inequalities that they suffer.

The Advisory Board is formed by people belonging to Roma organizations, such as Asociación Gitana de Mujeres Drom Kotar Mestipen, Unión Romani, Federación de Iglesias Evangelistas, Federación de Asociaciones Gitanas de Catalunya, Centro Cultural Gitano de la Mina, and also people from the Plan Integral del Pueblo Gitano de Catalunya, conducted by the Catalan Government and Roma and non-Roma researchers from a number of fields, such as Law, Education, Economy, Sociology, Politics, Anthropology, among others; as well as different countries such as Spain and Romania. The Advisory Council of the CEG will evaluate the results of the Pilot Project implementation (a part of the PER Action Plan) before the final version of the report.

Identification of the problem and decision to act
Need of a normative framework to guarantee that researchers cannot conduct a research about Roma people without their agreement and support, as well as with Roma people involved in the study design, implementation and evaluation.

Although this was a problem noticed many years ago by the Roma organizations and the researchers that supported them, the CEG and its Advisory Board have identified the need to quickly create a “Human Rights Code” for researchers. Roma organizations are used to receive many demands from researchers that want to conduct research about Roma people. Many times researchers do not inform them about what kind of implications the study will have for the people, what are the objectives, and what are the interests behind. These studies use to reproduce the prejudices against the Roma people and their culture, and as a consequence, they do not contribute to improve the situation of discrimination that Roma people suffer; they reinforce it. The existence of a mandatory “Human Rights Code” in order to get public funding may promote studies focused on the overcoming of the Roma social exclusion, rather than focus on personal interests.

Something that worried me was the role of researchers. During the first meeting of the CEG Advisory Board somebody mentioned the number of abuses. For example, the representative of the FACA, the Federació d’Associacions Catalanes Evangelistes, researchers use to come so often, and he was worried. But you know, if somebody from the university phones you and he asks for lots of information, you give it to him, but you have no idea how are they going to use it, because the university is so big. They feel kind of vulnerable, so he was asking for a “Human Rights Code” so any person looking to do research with the Roma people will need to follow it (...) (WR:2). Researchers from CEG

The same researcher claimed that we need this code in order to stop the instrumental use that researchers made of Roma people, conducting studies that do not have the aim of improve the situation of the Roma people.

To stop the instrumental use that people does with Roma, and in order to be respectful and to protect the Human Rights, because it is a shame what some researchers do, and, of course, people are reluctant. They see that money going to research is used to improve researchers CVs, and the studies do not have any impact in their lives. (WR2: 2). Researcher at CEG

Many studies conducted by CEG are funded by public entities, so it is mandatory to contribute back to the society. That means that the new knowledge created has to have a political impact. In order to be a positive and effective contribution, improving the Human Rights of Roma people, we use to have a dialog with the Roma people, from the beginning, the design, the main idea of the research project, to the implementation and the final conclusions. We work either with representatives from the Roma organizations or with people from the street. (WR2: 8-9). Researcher at CEG.

As soon as we identify the problem, we agree on the creation of a code for researchers. The aim is that this ethic code may become a regular procedure adopted by the public administration funding and managing research. The proposal was formulated and elaborated within CEG meetings, with the Advisory Board, during the months of April to June 2011. The proposal was elaborated starting from
the recommendation regarding the European Letter of Researcher and the Code of conduct for the recruitment of researchers, adopted by the European Commission by March 11th 2005.  

In the meetings about the proposal of the code of conduct, crucial topics demanding answers appeared. For example, the Advisory Board came with different problems and alternative proposals to overcome them. A Roma person from that Board explained a case of a group of researchers from the College of Sociology coming to his organization to conduct an interview with him. He told how embarrassed he felt during the whole process, because questions posed by the researchers did not come from the real situation of the Roma people. The researchers were full of prejudices and stereotypes. For example, one of the questions was why Roma people do not want to send their children to the school? Such researchers are not aware of the real reasons of social inequalities that Roma people suffer; neither of the main contributions coming from the studies conducted with the Roma people. These studies have proved that the educative system is not aligned with the needs and interests of Roma, but when there are practices that incorporate their voices and culture, then Roma families become involved in the schools. That is, these researchers have no idea about the main contributions and about what are the successful practices that are already promoting the educative and social inclusion of the Roma people, besides the fact that they did not included Roma people in the design of their study (CREA-UB, 200-2003; 2010; Gómez & Vargas, 2003; Sordé, 2006).

In the Advisory Board other Roma people presented different examples of researches were CEG was involved and in which successful practices promoting the social and educative inclusion of the Roma people were analysed (CREA-UB. WORKALO 2001-2004; INCLUDE-ED-COSTORIUM 2006-2011). One of this persons explain how in the schools turning into Learning Communities families and members of the community participated actively in all the spaces of decision, management and learning, including the classroom. The result is the improvement of academic achievement, the overcoming of conflict and absenteeism, of all children, including children belonging to cultural minorities such as Roma.

A Roma researcher from Romania, who participated in the Advisory Board, explains how in her country there is a commitment from the Government to include the Roma people. In this country they have a policy that recommends asking Roma people before conducting a study with them. This policy has contributed to increase the number of Roma persons attending university, and at the same time they become involved in the studies.

Another Roma individual involved in different studies conducted by CEG explains how all of them has been designed, implemented and evaluated together with an Advisory Board including Roma and non-Roma researchers. This way to do things is the reason explaining why these studies have produced a real impact in terms of improvement of the situation of the Roma people, such as the case of Workaló. The results of this research were presented in the European Commission, and afterwards, some months later, this fact contributed to the acknowledgement of the Roma people as a minority in Europe, by the CE and also by the Spanish Government.

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A researcher from CEG explains how during the last year CEG has moved forward, so now not only the studies have an Advisory Board, but also CEG itself has one of them, as we have mentioned above.

Up to now the Advisory Boards were linked to the projects. Last year we created an Advisory Board connected to CEG, which do the follow up. During the first meeting all organizations were represented, the umbrella organizations. They concentrated all Roma population. There was the Evangelistic Church, the Roma federations, the responsible from the Catalan Government, the representative of the Advisory Council of the Pla Integral del Pueblo Gitano (supported by the Catalan Government), but there were also other people not representing any organization, that were participation by themselves. (WR2: 9) Researcher at CEG.

An important aspect that CEG takes into account, according to the critical communicative methodology, is to have a good representation of the whole diversity of Roma people within its Advisory Boards, as well as within the CEG. During the first meeting of the Advisory Board we noticed that we missed the profile of a Roma woman without academic degrees.

Somebody told us: “Here there is missed the profile of a Roma woman without academic degrees”. All women attending the meeting had certification. Then (next meeting of the Advisory Board), we invited a woman (not coming from the scholar field), a grand-mother which is also a volunteer in his grand-children’ school, who is not involved in any organization, but will also be part of the Advisory Board. (WR2: 9). Researcher at CEG.

Many times people working in organizations are not a clear picture-matching people from the street. Drawing on the critical communicative methodology, CEG try to make sure that we include the “street’ voices”. For example, if we are talking about “Roma women”, many of them are illiterate, and still many of them work on street markets as vendors. Thus, we want in our Advisory Boards or in our research team Roma people living the way that most of the Roma people do”.(WR2: 8-9). Researcher at CEG.

Another component highlighted by a full professor who is a very well-known researcher internationally, with a strong background working with Roma people, is the importance of making sure that nobody will use the studies in order to receive money or to improve his/her CV. He pointed out that the main goal of CEG is to do research in order to overcome the inequalities of Roma people, and struggle for their rights. A non-Roma researcher also pointed out that researches should make contributions to overcome the inequalities, not just analyse them.

After discussing all these issues, CEG came with a proposal about a code of the researcher’ conduct that will includes how to manage the ethnical control of the research process, from its design, to the presentation of the results. A crucial fact included in this proposal was that conclusions should be written in an easy language, aim to the whole community, not just the research people. The Advisory Board validated the proposal, and they decided to send it to the authorities in education as well.
Dissemination and introduction of the code of conduct to the public authorities and researchers

Next step is the dissemination and the presentation of the ethic code of conduct to the local, national and European public authorities, with competences to manage the research regarding Roma people. From the beginning, when we decided to identify the problem and create a code of conduct, we also decided to carry out a research conference aimed to show to the big audience of authorities and researchers that code. Roma organizations and researchers will organize this event, and it is now under the process of design and organization.

Another of the decisions coming out from the meeting was the dissemination of the code through the social networks, such as Facebook and Twitter, and CEG’s web site.

Shared definition of the research agenda. Solidarity between Roma and non-Roma people, towards the human rights of Roma people

Another of the crucial components making easy the collaborative work with the Roma organizations is the fact that researchers from CEG are also involved in Roma social movements. The personal and social commitment of researchers makes easier to keep an ethical coherence among their professional work. This fact brings researchers a sense of the real picture of the Roma people’ needs. The involvement of researchers among Roma organizations creates also a climate of trust and dialog making easier the identification of those aspects that need more attention to find answers and concrete solutions.

Most of the CEG’s researchers, professors and students with grants are directly involved in Roma social movements, in terms of their personal life. There is not a disconnection between research and personal involvement. Even the one who promoted the creation of CEG, Ramon Flecha, was nominated with the FAGIC Award because the best practices in 2010. This makes easier to provide answers to the real needs, rather than the case of a person attending the place only because s/he needs it. We are coming not only when we need it, but because there is this continuity, a dialog and a trust build along this compromise. (WR2: 11). Researcher at CEG.

CEG draws on the solidarian work between Roma and non-Roma people, following the principles of the critical communicative methodology. This is how a researcher was explaining it: We do not believe in organizations without Roma people, nor in organizations only Roma. We believe in solidarity between Roma and non-Roma people. (WR2: 11). Researcher at CEG.

Drawing on the principles of the ethical code of conduct and the critical communicative methodology, we are working together with Roma organizations to design future researches at regional, national and European levels.
Now there is a new section of the Work program of the 7th Framework Program about Roma. In our meetings with the Advisory Board we are already discussing about how to design the next project that we want to submit. (WR2: 14). Researcher at CEG.

The fact that a number of different Roma people are participating in the process of definition, decision, and design of the topics to investigate, is a way to guarantee the focus on the improvement of the Roma people living in worse conditions; those ones who barely have guarantees in terms of their more fundamental Human Rights. One of them is the immigrant Roma coming from Romania to other countries in Europe, in our case, Spain. The fact that one of the CEG’s researchers (in training) is Roma from Romania, makes easier to establish direct contact with this group and their needs. In addition, this researcher has promoted the creation of an organization of Roma immigrants from Romania, in order to work for their rights.

First at all, we want to conduct a study about the situation of Roma from Romania in Barcelona, how many are they, how are they, how many children... create a census. (RWR: 8). Roma researcher from Romania at CEG.

It must to be the voices coming from the people “we need this, we believe that this is better for us, rather than that.” (RWR: 8). Roma researcher from Romania at CEG.

The no existence of Roma organizations of immigrant people from Romania is the reason that explains why this group of people was not represented in the social movements that are already working for the Human Rights of the Roma people, thus the lack of many of their needs. The creation of this organization will promote their participation in public arena, so they will be able to decide on their situation and the ways to overcome it. Nowadays this organization is making contacts and working together with other Roma organizations in Spain.

Now we are making contacts with many organizations and establishing agreements of collaboration among us (among the Roma organizations). (RWR: 13). Roma researcher from Romania at CEG.

The connection between this new organization and CEG, through the Advisory Board, make easiest for the local authorities to know about them and have them into account to invite them to public discussion forums.

Saboré organization is part of CEG’s Advisory Board. Over there we meet the responsible for the Plan Integral del Pueblo Gitano of the Catalan Government, and they invited us to introduce our organization, because he did not know about us. They invited us (to the meetings with members of the Catalan Government) in order to discuss what can we do for the Roma people from Romania. (RWR: 14). Roma researcher from Romania at CEG.

The result of this way of working is a better social utility of the research and a bigger political impact. This is the case of Workaló, according to one of the researchers from the CEG:

For instance, in Workaló project, it is the only one that has been supported by the Framework Program in terms of Roma people, led by Ramon Flecha; it had an important impact. The conclusions were presented within the European Parliament, and they approved them by unanimity. They presented them over there, and there were members of the parliamentary
groups that brought them back to their Parliaments. This research project is really transformative. Usually when we talk about access to the labour market of Roma people what we talk about is what they need, what are their lacks, always coming from a deficit approach. The fact that we need to define the research agenda drawing on dialog with Roma people switches the focus from the deficits to the possibilities. The whole research project was focused on identify and analyse those competences and skills Roma people have developed along the centuries, which are useful to get into the labour market in the Digital Era. Without this dialog, if we only have defined the research agenda by ourselves (the researchers), I do not know, but probably we had come with a deficit model, probably. (WR2: 13). Researcher at CEG.

3.2. Training and involvement of Roma students within the University

Introducing the problem

Roma people suffer a dramatic educative exclusion, consequence of centuries of marginalization, and segregator educative practices. This exclusion is cutting off their possibilities of educative growing, as well as occupational and social.

The extended history of exclusion and persecution of Roma people, with all the prejudices and racist stereotypes on the top of things, has limited their access to social services, education, and labour market (Sordé, 2006). This lack of training makes difficult for Roma people to opt for permanent and qualified jobs, pointing them out to temporary jobs such as street market, farm workers, labourers, etc. (Vargas, 2004). All those are jobs now in a clear decrease, and with low salaries that are not enough to maintain a family (Íbid).

Furthermore, segregator practices within the educative systems and the schools, have pointed out the Roma people to a feeling of distrust towards education (Sordé, 2006). Roma students use to be separated from the mainstream, in special classrooms, or teachers also use to place them in low-level schools or groups, thus they suffer the curriculum adaptation base on decreasing the learning expectations. Teachers justify this type of practices because the problematic behaviour Roma students may have, or because their bad performance (CREA-UB, 2010). In one of the CEG’s studies there is the story of a girl, who was a Roma student in middle school. This story brings us the evidence of the barriers she found to make real her dream of going to the university, because she had no an education with enough quality to guarantee her educative success, and as a consequence this impacted negatively on her chances in terms of employment and society. This girl was attending a school with low expectations, where many other Roma students were attending too, because lack of a better school.

My name is Soraia, I’m 14 years old and I’m the youngest in my home. I’m in my second year (middle school), in a high school near Barcelona. I would like to finish my middle school, but I think that the quality of my school is not enough; it is the fact that we are Roma what fells down the level? It is because we are stupid? I think that we all have the same rights, and we cannot be discriminated because we have a different culture. My dream is to be able to get to
the university, and learn as better as I will. I think that this is crucial to get my chances to access to the labor market and be able to fulfill oneself as a woman. (Sordé, 2006).

However, teachers also use to have low expectations towards Roma students, because they think that Roma are not interested at all in education; and on the top of things, in the schools there are also prejudices towards them (CREA-UB, 2010). An undergraduate Roma was telling us about this prejudices and racism that he was also suffering. At the same time, he explained to us the deep feeling that his father experienced when he knew his son was studying at the university, because he was the first one in his family to go to the university. This is an evidence against the discourse that Roma people do not care of education.

At the middle school you have to bear those types of discourses, and really you ask yourself about them. Look, I finished my middle school, and I did not wanted to go always through the same story; finally it became like a challenge to me, a personal challenge. I remember that day when I told my father that I was admitted in the University of Barcelona. He was crying... This has no prize. The positive experiences are much reward than the negative ones. (RMS: 1). Roma undergraduate student.

All these reasons have provoked a negative feeling about schooling among Roma people. They see the school as a place where you cannot learn, and where you lose your time. The consequence is a big rate of absenteeism and drop out (Sordé, 2006). These difficulties are even higher in the case of Roma women, especially among those who have not a school background. They suffer a triple discrimination: because being Roma, because being Women, and because not having opportunities to go to the school (ibid). In addition there is the poor situation that many families have. Lots of them need from their children to go to work when they are still children, because they need the money to survive (Vargas, 2004). In addition, Roma people are a nation without territory that has kept its cultural identity, but this is also the reason for being victim of the authoritarian policies of different hegemonic cultures from different countries. There is a lack of their own history or culture in school textbooks, for example. This is one of the reasons that many Roma students do not feel belonging to the curriculum used by the schools (Gómez & Vargas, 2003), so that is also the reason why there is a high rate of drop out in higher education (CREA-UB, 2010), as reported by the Roma undergraduate that we already mentioned: From middle to high school, I felt the change: lots of them were left behind. (RMS: 1)

The same student explains how is the real life of all these Roma students that have to left behind their school because they need to work, because a range of reasons: their families’ economical needs, the lack of identification with the school curriculum, and the low expectations that teachers use to have about them. All these components lead them to drop out.

In elementary was somehow difficult, because my brothers drop out when they were really young; I was already a little predestined at that time. Many teachers, without thinking explicitly on it, they assumed that I would reach until 6th grade and then I will start working with my father. In fact, I was a student that always uses to get Cs and Ds, because I did not felt interested at all. My life was totally different from what the school was. (RMS: 1) Roma undergraduate student.
The international scientific community has proved that the educational practices that are not segregator and do not lead students to low-level schools, while providing them with support and resources, within the same classroom, without split them out of the classroom, are the ones in which all students are having success, no matter the ethnic origin, and the socio-cultural context (CREA-UB, 2010).

Practice: To identify Roma students, to encourage their training in research, and to promote their school careers

The number of Roma students attending the University in Spain is unknown because in Spain it is not allowed to collect this kind of data (Sordé, 2006). One of the practices that CEG is carrying out is to identify Roma students among universities in order to give them the opportunity to promote their school career, providing research training to them. In fact, Ramon Flecha, full professor at the Universitat de Barcelona and CEG’s founder, promoted a Roma undergraduate that was starting his Bachelors in Sociology. This student went to the university because Flecha’s and other professors’ support; all of them were involved in social movements, as we mentioned before. This Roma student was involved in an adult school where professors were volunteers, and they encouraged him to try the university.

CEG was created in 1997 with a Roma undergraduate. He was the first Roma student in Sociology, and Ramon Flecha encouraged him. It was because him that he started Sociology, and now he is still working on it. (WR2: 12). Researcher at CEG

With this affirmative action it is possible to give the opportunity to members of excluded groups. In doing so, it is possible for all these people that are interested to receive a research training in order to get involved in the studies about Roma people, to have a chance. It is also an opportunity for them to have a chance to get other grants and research contracts, that may open them some professional opportunities in the research field, in order to overcome the inequalities that Roma people afford.

Because in Spain you cannot ask about ethnicity, then you cannot know how many Roma students are in the universities. However there are very few of them. All professors and researchers working at CEG know that we conduct affirmative action. They know that since we identify a Roma undergraduate, we come to him and we talk with him. We promote that universities would get more used to Roma; we work to increase the number of Roma students in the university. We have been working a lot to provide this kind of opportunities, knowing that the starting point is unequal. We have encouraged so many, some of them are still connected to CEG, and some of them are not, they are with other people. (WR2:12). Researcher at CEG.

Unfortunately we are few (in the university), but soon we will be more. You have to think that way (…) Of course there are (Roma) people really strong, but there are more barriers for them (…) People in education representing Roma because they are Roma and students; people in Health representing Roma because they are Roma and doctors; people in Courts representing
Roma because they are Roma and lawyers; in the public authorities. (RMS:1). Roma undergraduate student.

This practice it is not institutionalized, but it is informally carried out. As one of the researchers from CEG claims, it means to pay attention to Roma students, request them for advisory meetings to meet them, figure out what are their interests, inform them about CEG, the studies, the social and educative projects conducted by CEG’s members:

However there is not a methodology. You are within a classroom and you explain something (related to the Roma people) and then somebody shows up and says: I’m a gypsy; sometimes they send us an email; sometimes another professor tell us that s/he has a Roma student. (WR2:12). Researcher at CEG.

It is to have this positive attitude and do recruitment, the kind of recruitment that universities do in terms of affirmative action; this is the kind of practices that we are conducting informally from the CEG. (WR2:12). Researcher at CEG

As we already have mentioned, CEG’s researchers are involved as volunteers in Roma organizations and educative projects that are contributing to the overcoming of inequalities and discrimination that Roma people suffer. Drawing on this involvement within the organizations and the schools with Roma people makes more easy also to identify Roma teenagers looking forward to go to the university.

Also CEG researchers are involved in Roma organizations themselves, in their free time. Also supporting Roma teenagers that are kind of lost in professional terms, or those ones who are finishing their high school and they think that there is nothing else afterwards. Providing the information, creating kind of a platform (using Facebook, and the social networks). (RMS: 12). Roma undergraduate student.

The undergraduate in teacher training explains how having this opportunity to meet professors involved in this type of research and knowing these organizations that work to overcome the Roma people inequalities, encouraged him to pursue his studies and get involved in the research field focused on the Roma people. This also helped him to empower his identity as Roma.

The more important fact during my time as undergraduate has been to realize that many people want to work to transform the situation. Because when I was a freshmen, I never hided that I was Roma, and I will never do, but... (RMS:12). Roma undergraduate student.

(Regarding meeting professors sensitive towards to work about the rights of Roma people, in order to overcome their situation) As Roma and as student it is really rewarding. It encourages you to keep working; and specially to be aware of the real situation. (RMS: 12). Roma undergraduate.

I want to keep my trajectory involved in the social movements, from the educational side. I’m doing a master on social intervention, and I want to go to a PhD program and write a dissertation related to the Roma people. I do not want from them asking me if I am or I am not a Roma. I want to talk about what Roma people are, about all invisible Roma all around us. (RMS: 13). Roma undergraduate student.
They contribute to create a scientific knowledge because they contribute with their experiences, and their knowledge about the social reality

The involvement of Roma students within research and social and educative projects with Roma people itself provides a referent model to many Roma children and Roma teenagers. When these children see other Roma members studying at the university, this creates new expectations for them.

A few times ago we met people from Albacete, me and Toñi (a Roma undergraduate in Psychology). Those children look at you, they see that you are at the university, and they say: You are gypsy, I am a gypsy too. I’m here right now, and now you are at the university. I can too.” (RMS: 13). Roma undergraduate student.

The Roma researcher from Romania who is working at CEG explains how in her country, in addition to having affirmative actions within the university; she was also involved in an organization visiting neighbourhoods and little towns to talk with Roma women about education. The fact that Roma researchers who know the real situation first hand, specially the situation of other countries where people apply affirmative action, is a value added, because these people may bring their experience and background.

In my country it is an affirmative action and I believe that here you can get it too. Because there are places saved for Roma people in the university. When one knows that there are places for you, it gives you encouragement to go to the university. There are Roma children that are really good students, with good grades, and they have no money. The State, the Government helps them, so if you have a place waiting for you, this pushes you through, because you can get it. Because of that, drawing on my organization, we can contribute with this idea to the universities, here in Spain. In Romania we follow children from the school up to the university. (RWR: 13). Roma researcher from Romania at CEG.

Drawing on these affirmative actions universities must have a quota for access to the university, and also they must to follow students from the elementary and middle/high schools up to the university. Organizations like the one where work this Roma researcher from Romania is an example of this. The organization in Barcelona that she is collaborating with has also the aim to do the same type of work, as well as to support Roma children from Romania, Roma children in general, or children from other minorities, in order to help them to go to the university.

Now in Romania there are more Roma women than men in the university. There has been a big change and all is because the work of these organizations. Why? What they did? They came to the Roma people with good examples, with good practices, with successful actions. I went many times to explain that I was an undergraduate student so the girls may look at me as a reference. We used to meet with people and we told them, look, if I was able to reach up to here, you also can do it. We explained our experiences, and we encouraged the father because many times he used to think that his daughter had to be at home until find a Roma boy with money, and get married. But their way to think also changes and they become proud of getting a professor within their family. Then fathers talk to each other fathers, because that’s the Roma way. Look my son, my daughter, now is working at the police, and now is
working as a teacher. It makes you be proud. (RWR: 13). Roma researcher from Romania at CEG.

3.3. Support to Roma associations from research and from the university faculty and students

Another of the priorities that are being conducted from the CEG is to support the strengthening of the Roma associations offering them on the one hand, the theoretical framework generated by research and, on the other hand, the voluntary involvement of teachers, researchers and students in their activities.

Some of the actions being conducted from different members of the CEG, other faculty and collaborating researchers as well as university students are:

1. Support in organizing the *First International Congress of Roma Women: the other women* organized by the Women’s Roma Association Drom Kotar Mestipen. One of the results of their work is the creation of October 8th as the International Roma Women’s Day.

2. Support for the activities of this association as the promotion of new associations or Roma women, such as the case of Sonakay Association.

3. Support to Jesús Gómez Foundation in the development of the training course on European projects development for Roma associations.

4. Agreements with local Roma associations in order to provide knowledge about the educational and social actions that are contributing to successfully overcome inequalities of the Roma people and improving their rights. The aim is to provide the results of this research to associations in order to promote actions based on successful practices already checked out.

5. Support to the creation of a local association of Romanian Roma and to offer them required knowledge from research conducted with the same Romanian Roma.

Among these actions we discuss in depth the collective work of researchers related to CEG with the Women’s Roma Association Drom Kotar Mestipen and the Jesús Gómez Foundation. This partnership has consisted of: A) Support to Drom Kotar Mestipen in the organization of the *First International Congress of Roma Women: the other women*; B) Collaboration with the same association for the establishment of the new Association Sonakay and the development of some of its activities; C) Support to the Jesús Gómez Foundation in the development of the training course for the development of European projects from Roma associations.

A) Collaborative work from CEG researchers with the Women’s Roma Association Drom Kotar Mestipen for the organization of the *First International Congress of Roma Women: the other women*, Barcelona October, 2010

**Identifying the problem:** the exclusion of Roma women in non-academic areas of participation, public debate and decision.
**Action:** First International Congress of Roma Women: the other women.

More than 30 researchers, mainly women from different Catalan and Spanish universities, as well as Roma and non-Roma university students were involved in supporting the organization of the *First International Congress of Roma Women: the other women* in jobs of logistical support, infrastructure, coordination and organization.

The other women are those that because of having no academic qualifications or belonging to cultural minorities have been left out of decision spaces and public debate, for which they suffer a deeper inequality. The situation of discrimination gets worse for Roma women for the fact of being women and belonging to a cultural minority and for not having academic education. Traditionally the women's movement had also left out of the spaces of public debate the other women, the majority of women (De Botton, Puigvert & Sánchez, 2005; Beck-Gernsheim, Butler & Puigvert, 2003).

*In fact the title of the congress is the first International congress of Roma women: the other women. The other women are all the other that in a normal day we are not at a congress, in our daily lives nobody asks us. But in the other hand we do suffer all the policies, and all the no policies done for the Roma people (...) the ones to suffer it directly are they (the other women)who are suffering (discrimination).* (RW1:11). President of the Drom Kotar Mestipen Roma Association of Women.

Today from dialogic feminism or feminism of the equality of differences, the limitations of past trends such as feminism of equality or the feminism of difference is overcome and there is a commitment for a feminism in which includes the voices of all women regardless of their academic and cultural background. In this dialogical feminism all women work together to overcome the inequality of women, especially those who are worse off. (Ibid.)

The First International Congress of Roma Women: the other women was held in the grounds of CaixaForum Barcelona, a social and cultural center of a prestigious bank in Spain, on the days 8, 9 and October 10, 2010. The congress brought together more than 300 Roma women from 15 different European countries (Austria, Bulgaria, Spain, France, Greece, Holland, Hungary, Ireland, England, Italy, Macedonia, Portugal, Czech Republic, Serbia and Ukraine) who over the tree days talked and discussed the problems they shared as Roma women and how to overcome them.

The majority of the participating Roma women were the “other women”, Roma women without formal education and without representative positions, which had never been in spaces of public opinion and knowledge creation like this.

This congress had a transformative purpose: to create a space for dialogue and debate facilitating the connection between the academic field with the successful paths of many Roma women that support and generate successful actions, and the voices of these grassroots Roma women. During the congress, granddaughters, daughters and grandmothers constructed knowledge based on their personal biographies, which together with the contributions from the international scientific community who has worked with the Roma and not on the Roma people, will help to improve the social situation in general of the Roma people. The congress was structured around three themes: education, labour market and feminism. On Friday October 8th political authorities and representatives of Roma organizations opened the congress, and Saturday 9th and Sunday 10th worked in the three set areas.
Here are some of the key elements of the common work between the researchers and the women non Roma and Roma women in the organization of this congress, as well as the social, political and scientific work that such kind of collaboration has had.

*Common dream of Roma and non Roma women: the central role of the Roma other women*

The initiative to organize a congress of Roma women was a long-time dream of the women at the Drom Kotar Mestipen Roma Association of Women which finally took place as the result of collective hard work, solidarity between academic women and non-academic, and between Roma and non Roma women and networking with associations of Roma women in Europe. All of them worked to make the voices heard outside of the non-academic Roma women.

*The congress is a long-time dream. All have dreamed with it both the academics as well as the wants that are not. There was a time that we saw the possibility for it to be real and we have all worked for it (...) Within Drom there are also academic women who are Roma fortunately (...) but the ideas is for the ones to come to speak outsider of their neighbourhoods, women who are not academic, those who are never at a conference. We all worked in a network; from Spain we created a big network of work across Europe including the United States.* (RW1:8) President of the Drom Kotar Mestipen Roma Association of Women.

The dream was not only to make possible a congress of Roma women but a space of debate of the non-academic Roma women.

*There exist congresses of Roma women but the difference of this one to others was that this one was “the other women”, the Roma women that usually have not had the opportunity to participate in conferences, without Studies, grassroots Roma women, not the Readers or academics (WR1:8). Professor at the University of Barcelona, collaborates with Drom Kotar Mestipen Roma Association of Women.*

From the organization once they saw the possibility to do the congress there was hard work to facilitate that were the “other women” the ones attending the congress. Among the different actions that took place it was decided that the academic Roma women were able to attend if they promoted in their territory the participation in the congress of grassroots Roma women. To the grassroots women based on the criterion of selection based on the minimum income of each country were granted a fellowship to afford the travel expenses and subsistence.

*Some Roma women because of their social position and because they had the opportunity to access higher education attend conferences and can make their voice heard. One of the criteria stated for the congress was that these women can attend if they brought at least 9 grassroots Roma women along. Taking into account the minimum income of each country the grassroots Roma women obtained fellowships accordingly for registration, travel and subsistence.* (WR1:8). Professor at the University of Barcelona, collaborates with Drom Kotar Mestipen Roma Association of Women.

*Co-organizing the congress*

The democratic organization and solidarity of the Drom Kotar Mestipen Roma Association of Women moved to the organization of the congress. This association is composed by Roma women and non-
Roma women, academic and non-academic, that have the same goal: to work for the overcoming of inequalities and for the rights of the Roma women and the Roma people in general. The decision-making body of the associations is the assembly. In the assemblies all members participate as equals.

I attend the assemblies of the association, I am a member as a vocal position, never in a responsible position. There we all participate as equals. In the assemblies we share and decide issues. (WR1:11). Professor at the University of Barcelona, collaborates with Drom Kotar Mestipen Roma Association of Women.

Some of the members and volunteers of the association collaborators are researchers and professors at the university.

There are many relationships of Drom with the university. Because we attend to give talks, many of our members are university professors. The relationship is continuous (... we operate through the assembly. Everything is discussed at the assembly, everyone has a say and decide the majority proposal, it does not matter who states the proposal, whether is the president or another member. (RW1:11). President of the Drom Kotar Mestipen Roma Association of Women.

The decisions for the organization of the congress took place in the assemblies and in meetings in where all participated. Each makes its contribution from the reality that each one knows.

The academic Roma women or not were helping and supporting us but the ones to have the voice were the non-academic women. (RW:11). President of the Drom Kotar Mestipen Roma Association of Women.

Presentation of the Project to the public administration to find funding

One of the key tasks has been to search for resources. Some of the faculty that collaborates in the association has experience in the relationships with the public administration. This enables the association to be advised of possibility of seeking public funds to finance the congress.

I have always been devoted to volunteering with social organizations and now I am advising, although I do not like the word, the Drom Kotar Mestipen Roma Association of Women. I agree to voluntarily attend one day a week for counseling. Especially in the relationships in which we may be more knowledgeable (public administration, private organizations). My work as well as the other people (women researchers that participated) is primarily to connect and facilitate the relationships but always taking into account that my role is invisible. (WR1:11). Professor at the University of Barcelona, collaborates with Drom Kotar Mestipen Roma Association of Women.

The women who have a voice in these meetings with the public administration are grassroots Roma women. When one of the cooperating faculties attends these meetings with the Roma women is to support them. The fact that a non Roma women and professor at the university accompany them to meetings with the representatives of public administration or private organizations, contributes to overcome the possible stereotypes that sometimes can be a cause of discrimination with respect to attention and access opportunities when contacting a policy maker or an officer or director of social work in a bank.
They go to these meetings but they have to go with knowledge of the environment and with all the information. (...) Sometimes because of stereotypes there are doors that are already closed for being a Roma, and therefore, in some cases, we accompany them the first time. (WR1:11) Professor at the University of Barcelona, collaborates with Drom Kotar Mestipen Roma Association of Women.

Generally if a collaborator professor of the association attends she has experience in dealing with the people working at the administration and therefore facilitates that policy makers specify which the possibilities to obtain support and resources are.

(For the organization of the congress and search of resources) At the meeting with the Director (Catalan Government), I accompanied them. Because of my experience in dealing with policymakers my role was to make him reach specific agreements on the issues posed by the Roma women of the association. Trying to systematize very specifically what Roma women needed and demanded to make the congress they were dreaming a reality. This dream was achieved; there was a commitment (by the Director). From there we began to manage the entire congress. It was a joint effort. (WR1:11). Professor at the University of Barcelona, collaborates with Drom Kotar Mestipen Roma Association of Women.

*Joint development of the congress contents. Contributions from the international scientific community and revitalization of the debate in the associations*

From this joint work between researchers and Roma women different activities were developed to organize the congress. One of these activities was to define the content and agenda. In the meetings and joint meetings the different lines of work of the congress were defined.

> We conducted meetings in which everyone provided their ideas (...) Gathering all our contributions appeared the congress (...) In the contents we have worked together Roma women and non-Roma women, academics and non-academic, because there are academic Roma women. Not by the fact of being Roma you are not academic. (RW:8). President of the Drom Kotar Mestipen Roma Association of Women.

Roma women bring their knowledge of reality that helps to focus on those issues that most concern them. This knowledge is supplemented by contributions from the international scientific community that researchers are conducting. The combination is very rich since it combines the contributions of academic Roma and non-Roma women with the contributions of researchers that provide the scientific knowledge, but it is developed with the Roma people. This ensures that the contents of the congress are centred in the key topics to overcome the inequalities that suffer Roma women and the topics that will contribute to achieve their rights as Roma and women.

> You can know something from an academic point of view but if you speak to someone who has experience it you will learn it better, because from the university you cannot know what happens in a marginal or not neighbourhood. You cannot know something that you do not experience. In Drom we have that, we put together grassroots people, non-academic people with others that they are and we do it together. If you cannot reach some place another will do. Among all we are walking the same path. (RW:11). President of the Drom Kotar Mestipen Roma Association of Women.
Involvement of university students as volunteers

In the organization of the congress dozens of university students collaborated as volunteers. The university professors who are also volunteers in the association explain the association and its work. In many cases the Roma women of the association are invited to class of these professors to explain the work they are doing. These visits have been made in the Undergraduates of Teachers, Social Education, Pedagogy, Sociology, Social and Cultural Anthropology, among others. Students have the opportunity to meet directly a reality and the work that the association does for the overcoming of inequalities and for the improvement of rights of the Roma people. In addition to those who have concerns to engage in social movements is an opportunity to introduce them to a world to fight the one for many was unknown until then.

Thus the university students that got involved as volunteers conducted many diverse tasks, from collaborating on the translation of documents into several languages, to distribute the material at the registration table, being a person of reference to provide valuable information to the participants on the conference, accompany Roma women around the city of Barcelona, collect the conclusions of the working groups, make the association and the congress visible in the social networks, among many others.

I teach sociology of education in Social Education and I always put in contact the associations with the students. Students are highly motivated because they see that in the social world many things are taking place, actions that work. That contribute to overcome racism and stereotypes that exist about the Roma. Also for them to change the vision they have of Roma women. They come to class and explain what they do in the association. After these presentations in the classrooms some students become involved in the association as volunteers in the different working groups for the organization of the congress, from document translation into English, to organize the presence on the social networks such as Facebook. (WR1:12). Professor at the University of Barcelona, collaborates with Drom Kotar Mestipen Roma Association of Women.

This way of working together researchers and Roma women makes possible a political, scientific, personal and social impact that contributes to overcome inequalities and discrimination that the Roma people suffers, as well as to improve their rights.

Political impact

One month after the congress, on November 8th 2010 there was an official ceremony which presented the findings and proposals developed in the Congress. In this event it was given to a political leader of the Catalan Government the conclusions document and the Roma Declaration of Barcelona, specifically to the Director of Governance and Public Administration.

These conclusions and the Declaration were also sent to the European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth, who ensured to continue supporting the Roma cause, to work with associations to improve the situation or Roma women, and to advance in the social inclusion of the Roma in different European countries.

The conclusions are in the Generalitat (Catalan Government), in the City Hall (of Barcelona), also in the Ministry (National Government) in Madrid and in the European Commission because the Commissioner of Education also participated in the congress. The least they can
do is to read them and from them to make policies so that all these women claimed can become a reality. (RW1:14). President of the Drom Kotar Mestipen Roma Association of Women.

ROMA DECLARATION OF BARCELONA OF THE OTHER WOMEN FOR THE COMPROMISE WITH THE ROMA OTHER WOMEN

The dreams of improving our lives and those of all the Roma women have led us to Barcelona. During three days, Roma women from around the world, we have made our voices heard, the voice of other Roma women that, without either academic education or profession, from their neighbourhoods are making possible the social transformation of our people. We know our history, our difficulties and our possibilities. And we also know the successful practices that benefit us the most, to our daughters, our people and us.

In this congress, we have dreamt about the future and we have built the present, in solidarity with all the Roma women of the world. We have the right to live the life that we dream and we have the responsibility to open this door of change, of transformation and hope for our daughters and all the women that could not be here.

For all this, today we want, we claim,

- To continue doing steps towards this dream that allows us to study, learn, work and to raise all over the world the voice of the Roma people and the Roma feminism of the 21st Century, breaking the silence in front of the gender violence.
- Doing it together, in solidarity with all the Roma women, a global solidarity that gives us strength and emotion to keep on fighting and that gives us the hope and illusion because we know that all this is possible.
- Write, like we are doing now, the history of the Roma women of the 21st century, in which we the other women are the main characters; a history of solidarity, compromise, justice and equality, and explain to the world with our voices and with all the women.
- Continue with this spirit that has been together with us in Barcelona and to do other steps towards the creation of a global network of Roma women, because all the Roma become the main characters of their own lives and the lives of their people.
- Compromising ourselves to continue fighting and helping the other women wherever we are, making our voices heard, like we have done here, and making them the main characters of this transformation that, thank you to all the Roma women is possible.
- Achieve the acknowledgement of the 8th of October as the International Day of Roma Women.

Together we can achieve everything.
Khete na shay sa te resas.

October 10, 2010, Barcelona

Scientific impact

The Roma Declaration of Barcelona is not only having a political impact but also a scientific impact because it is through this declaration that there is a commitment both from female researchers as well as the academic Roma women or with representative positions in associations for not excluding non-academic Roma women from research, and spaces of debate and decision.
As time goes by everyone will realize that it is not possible to do anything without counting with the voice of the people that “you are researching on”. (RW1:11). President of the Drom Kotar Mestipen Roma Association of Women.

This has been the first step but it will not be the last. Since the congress it won’t be possible to do a congress or study, or at least it should be done, without counting with the women or the grassroots individuals. (RW1:8). President of the Drom Kotar Mestipen Roma Association of Women.

One of the initiatives that emerged at the congress and that is already being implemented is the creation of a network of Roma associations with the priority that any action aimed at Roma women will never leave out at the margins the non-academic women, the “other women”.

Those that were there we developed a declaration in which all the organizations present committed to not doing anything without non-academic Roma women, the grassroots women in our area. Thus there is already a commitment to these organizations of 14 European countries that already have this intention. This intention will be contagious and will achieve positive results. (RW1:11). President of the Drom Kotar Mestipen Roma Association of Women.

Fairly recently after the congress a network is being created. The idea is to engage women of all types to make visible the issue of Roma women but especially to count on the voice of the non-academic Roma women. The impact has been significant (RW1:11). President of the Drom Kotar Mestipen Roma Association of Women.

On the other hand, the Drom Kotar Mestipen Roma Association of Women had already participated in European public calls on education contributing with the voice of the other Roma women. Currently, the researchers who collaborate with associations and Roma women are working on the design of new European projects that strengthen the work for the rights of the other Roma women.

Now we are discussing the incidence of the association in Europe, in European projects. We (researchers) have information on how is this topic in Europe and this is what you contribute (to the assemblies). (WR1:14) Professor at the University of Barcelona, collaborates with Drom Kotar Mestipen Roma Association of Women.

Personal and social impact

The congress had an impact both in the lives of many Roma women that participated as well as social transformations that are being promoted. In different territories from which grassroots women participated that were not members of associations are encouraged to create new associations to continue working in their neighbourhoods for the rights of the Roma women. Others have proposed to start studying and are preparing the entrance examination to university.

The impact has been great, since women that were encouraged to create an association in their city, to women who have decided to study and prepare themselves to enter the university (WR1:13). Professor at the University of Barcelona, collaborates with Drom Kotar Mestipen Roma Association of Women.

From the congress many women have returned to college, or to study... in the open space on the web there were women who posted “I am pregnant but it does not matter, I will go back to school” (...) from the congress women have many desires to do things, study, it has led
them to participate more and create new associations. (On the outskirts of Barcelona and in Catalonia) three new associations of Roma women have been created... they were already thinking about it but they were missing the push that the congress gave them. (RW1:11).

President of the Drom Kotar Mestipen Roma Association of Women.

The care with which from the organization was given to the other women for them to feel that the space was theirs to express their needs, interests and claims created a climate of trust in which all of them felt welcome. For many of the women that participated were the first time they were leaving the country, even for some, it was the first time they went out of their neighbourhoods or villages.

This way of working made everyone feel very comfortable, at ease. There were women who came who had never before took a plane, and live in camps and that had never before left it, or their little village or their neighbourhood and only had relationships within their family environment. They came without husbands, without sons and daughters to discuss on topics (...) For three days they talked, debated on the topics without arguing with each other, in total harmony. (RW1:11). President of the Drom Kotar Mestipen Roma Association of Women.

The climate of trust and harmony created in the congress has strengthened a sense of common identity and solidarity, a collective consciousness that together they can fight and achieve anything they think for themselves because they are not alone.

The congress made a before and an after. Women have seen that they are not alone; they have seen that there are women who have the same problems as they do in the other side of the world. (RW1:11). President of the Drom Kotar Mestipen Roma Association of Women.

We have created a Facebook so that all can share our dreams and our ideas after the conference and there is support among us. Many think that they are alone; they cannot do this or that because, of course, I am Roma... The fact that another Roma woman in the other side of the world can overcome these obstacles makes you to really wanting to do it too. I too, can! And that is what happened in the congress, we realized that we are capable to do anything we want. (RW1:11). President of the Drom Kotar Mestipen Roma Association of Women.

The congress not only reinforced the sense of collective as women but also as Roma. So the congress empowered grassroots Roma women not only to defend their rights as women but also their culture as Roma.

By being here I have learned many things that are happening to Roma outside of Spain. Many things happen in Europe to the Roma people that we the grassroots Roma people do not know, we do not get to know (...) You can defend better your people because you have information on things that otherwise you would not have. (RW1:11). President of the Drom Kotar Mestipen Roma Association of Women.

To know people from other countries was very important for us. They are Roma, but the cultures are different. We had impacted because they were Roma, but you saw that they had other costumes and they talked in his language, the Romani. For me was very nice to be with these women. (ASG1) (Women from the Association Sonakay).

Another of the transformations that the congress is promoting is that has helped to restore the hope and meaning of many women that have been for a long time now involved in social movements and
Roma associations that could have been monopolized by people who do not prioritize the interests of Roma women who are worse off.

The congress made those women who had been in the association world Roma and non-Roma to have again enthusiasm for the associations. (...) For the leaders this has helped them to question many things about how they were working. (WR1:13). President of the Drom Kotar Mestipen Roma Association of Women.

All that lead at the end of the congress to a space called “the dream” of all the Roma women, a Romanian Roma women proposed to promote the imitative to claim the 8th of October (date to be symbolic of the beginning of the Congress) as the International Day of Roma women. The entire room agreed to take this proposal as an imitative to promote from the new created network. This has been one of the priorities at the end of the congress. This is driving a campaign to collect signatures for this claim for this proposal to have enough support to make it a reality.

One of the conclusions of the congress includes the contribution of a Romanian Roma woman that proposed that the date October 8th should be the Day of Roma women. We are carrying out a campaign of support to make it possible. (WR1:13). Professor collaborating at the congress.

The most immediate done after the congress was the campaign... In one of the roundtables at the congress all Roma women were sharing their dreams, the last day a woman (Roma, says her name) stated that her dream had come true because her dream was the congress itself and that it was already accomplished that those days staying in Barcelona had dreamed to achieve the recognition of October 8th because it was the starting day of the congress as the International Roma women day. In commemoration of the October 8th that we had accomplished that so many Roma women from so many different places had come together to the congress in Barcelona. All who were there thought it was a good idea, why not a specific day for the Roma women (...) We all said yes raising our hand. And at this moment we are doing an international campaign to collect signatures. (RW1:13). President of the Drom Kotar Mestipen Roma Association of Women.

Impact in the media

The congress had a major media impact at regional, national and European level. This made that for the first time grassroots Roma women were at the center of an event focused in transformation and overcoming inequalities and discrimination.

The congress was the third piece of news (lasting approximately 3 minutes) in the noon edition of the most watched television broadcasting in Catalonia. As was the theme of the back cover of the La Vanguardia newspaper, one the most read in Catalonia. More than 20 media groups between press and digital media, radio and televisions covered the new of the congress.

For the media was very well, to show how the image of the Roma is distorted. The Roma is not “callejero”. There are many different kind of Roma people, as well as non Roma people. Roma people are very different and the Congress helps in that sense (ASG1) (Women from the Association Sonakay).

B) Support to the Women’s Association Drom Kotar Mestipen in founding the new Sonakay Association of Reus (Tarragona)
University professors involved in both investigations and associations working with the Roma community, incorporate the activities carried out by these institutions in their classroom. This kind of dissemination often leads to foster the students’ interest and participation in these investigations and activities. A professor from the department of pedagogy of the University Rovira y Virgili (Tarragona) and who collaborates with the Drom Kotar Mestipen Association managed to involve students to give support to the foundation of the new association of Romani women in Reus (Tarragona).

This association promotes the creation of new Roma women’s organizations in Catalonia, giving support and advice in administration. One of the new organizations that profited from the support has been the Sonakay Roma Women’s Association, located in Reus (Tarragona). This organization focuses from the beginning on activities that aim to integrate educationally and professionally the Romani women.

For us was very difficult because nobody help us to create the association. Well, the Community Center was the only one that helps us, giving us a space to stay. The Drom Kotar was the only association outside Reus, from Barcelona, that gave us a hand. (ASG1) (Women from the Association Sonakay).

The activities carried out are a trainers’ course for leisure activities; a Catalan course addressed to facilitate the professional integration and at the same time provide the basis to help their children with the homework; as well as courses of first contact with the digital world. Nevertheless, the cultural visits in order to get to know the city and the environment, and the commemorative activities such as celebrating the International Day of the Roma community.

The professor from the University Rovira and Virgili informed the students about the possibility to get involved in the foundation of this new organization, and some students came to collaborate. Their task consisted in participating in the meetings, help finding an office for the organization, supporting in the elaboration of the associations articles, advising in the selection of the priorities and the development of activities. One of the university students explained her collaboration in the association, as well as her participation in the instruction courses where the participation of the women’s children is promoted.

I am a student of a master program and I started to participate because one of my professors of the Pedagogy Department informed us about this possibility. Due to my personal and professional interests I found this initiative very interesting. I collaborated from the beginning, in the organization, such as finding an office, but also in how to organize the schedules. More directly, and especially in the beginning when we decided that there should be a space for the crèche in order to facilitate the participation of the women in the course. (…) (WS: 12). Woman, university student.

The trainer’s course for leisure activities, is officially acknowledged by the Catalan government, and is for free. Its aims are to help professional integration of Roma women. The course includes content on the culture and history of the Roma community, their associations, and administration and informatics. The course has no restrictions to participation. Once they finish the course the participants have to elaborate a written report, but for those who are illiterate the evaluation is oral. The university student helped the participants in the development during the whole course.
I have also been some afternoons with them when they were assisting to the course discussing about what they think about the course, if there could be some changes or improvements. Once they finish their internships i am supposed to help them with the elaboration of their report that they have to write in order to pass the course. (WS: 12). Woman, university student.

The evaluation that the student does of her participation in the association was very positive, as it made possible to her to have greater knowledge of Roma women, their needs, and the actions that help to overcome their exclusive situation:

The evaluation is very positive, both on professional and personal level it was very positive and I would participate again with my eyes closed, and right now. For many reasons, on a personal level it is an enrichment and on professional level because it was an unknown reality to me and it approaches you to the Roma community and it provides you with a whole new perspective not only on the Roma community but also on the success of these kind of initiatives. I learned many things from the Roma community itself, mainly from the women. Also that if we want, we can, that there are ways to transform society, that there are ways for these women that historically were supposed to go to the market or stay at home without any options or choices, there are ways to transform this, in order to make a progress so that they can integrate in the labour market and develop themselves as women, mothers, workers, all that they want to. (WS: 12). Woman, university student.

As we have mentioned before the CEG highlights that the investigations on the Roma community, as well as the actions that derive from the investigations should have a social usefulness. The connection that could be seen among the university professors and their students with the Roma Women’s organizations follows the principle that this connection among the academy and the practice and the reality of these women. This tight connection is very positively evaluated by the university student, who has experienced to what extent university can approach the real problems of these women and help them overcome their exclusive situations.

Yes, yes it influenced me. The fact of working as a professor in the university seemed to me to be disconnected from the daily life (Life world) and the territory. This collaboration with this project helped me to understand the role that university should have which is being always in contact with the territory. (...) The research, the projects have to be part of the daily life of the women that are in the streets, in the territory. It helped me to corroborate that this was the option I wanted to choose, this kind of research and this kind of collaboration with the practice, not only from the theories and from the office. (...) The possibility to participate in a ceremony of the presentation of the association and during the course I could see the opportunities it gives (the collaborative work among the university and the associations to do research that contributes to the improvement of the human rights of the Roma community). The impact of this research is great. It is important to start research with this involvement (...) having in mind the realities of the people, in order to improve the people’s life in general. (WS: 12-13). Woman, university student.
C) Support to the Jesús Gómez Foundation in the development of the formation courses on the elaboration of European projects for Romani associations.

The Jesús Gómez Foundation is a non-profit organization, with the head office in Barcelona, and carries out formative activities, seminars and investigations addressed to continue the work done by the deceased professor of the University of Barcelona Jesús Gómez Alonso. The professor Jesús Gómez elaborated a wide range of scientific research focused on the overcoming of inequalities, social, gender and cultural inequalities. In the latter he worked especially for the overcoming of the exclusion of the Roma community.

One of the activities that the foundation carries out is a formation in the elaboration of European projects for Roma associations in Catalonia. In Spain, the Roma associations increased their influence during the democratic transition and channelled many of Roma communities’ demands (Sordé, 2006). Therefore, it became important to introduce the Roma organizations of Catalonia into the programs and subventions given by the European Commission, and to promote their access to the existing European resources and facilitate their presence in these spaces.

The course further deals with technical aspects in order to fulfil the requirements of participation, as well as the orientation on administration and evaluation. The course is divided into two parts, one focused on theory and the other on practice, emphasizing in the second part the use of the computers and the search in internet as key elements of the work process. The methodology used during the course is dialogic and participative. From the beginning of the course a meeting with all the participants is arranged in order to decide on the schedules and the sessions all together.

The content of the course is divided into three parts: the European Union; the presentation of proposals of European projects; and the administration of approved projects. The teachers of the course are professionals of the academic field that can prove a wide participation in social movements and that have participated and coordinated European projects. At the end of the course an evaluation is done where the participants can express whether their expectations of the course have been fulfilled or make suggestions for improving the course.

The participants use to give very positive evaluations on the methodology of the course, as it allows a continuous dialogue with the teachers and clarify doubts and questions that come up. Furthermore they evaluate very positively the structure and the content of the course, from a general perspective – European Union – to more concrete issues, as for example the administration of the budget, most of the participants have no knowledge on how European projects work. One of the representatives of a Roma association outlined the usefulness he found in the explication on the administration of the project’s budget that was given in the course: They gave information I didn’t know and some other that I did know but it made it very clear. For example the economic part is much clearer to me now. (RWR:13). Likewise they expressed the usefulness of the course to enable them to participate in European projects:

I have been representative of the association and I have a very positive evaluation. It helped me very much, not only me but also all the associations. You can present proposals for European projects that you know that will help you (...) I understood very well that I can apply for these projects, at least as a partner but not coordinating one. (RWR:13). Romani Romanian Researcher and participant in the Saboré association of Romani Romanians in Spain.

Among the recommendations that the participants have given it is noteworthy to mention the possibility for the Foundation to continue offering formation for free and that these are specifically
addressed to recently founded organizations. Furthermore it is to highlight new courses such as the one on the national, regional and local projects; or the training on how to access to financial aids; or courses on the writing and elaboration of European projects; on the preparation of issues and calls for projects; and project simulations.

4. Summary of results

The following section is a summary of the results achieved in the three main priority actions carried out by CEG and Roma associations, as a result of the research process carried out within PERARES project.

Results on the process to elaborate a code of conduct for researches and to define a research agenda.

6. Elaboration of a code of conduct for researches, agreed by the main associations of the Roma community, as well as by researches of renowned prestige in the Roma community research

7. It is a contribution to establish a normative frame, which guarantees that no research on Roma community can be developed without its agreement and support, as well as its involvement in the design, development and evaluation of the study itself.

8. Organization of a symposium in order to disseminate the code of conduct among researches and policy makers.

9. Definition of new projects to be submitted to the 7th Framework Programme on European Research designed by researches and Roma associations.

Training on research of Roma students and their involvement in associations

10. Contribution to the promote having more Roma students with higher studies. Roma students who are trained on research on Roma community and who start their master studies.

11. Those Roma students are involved in associations and projects in which CEG is involved: Roma Association of Women Drom Kotar Mestipen, I International Congress of Roma Women: the other women; Learning Communities.

12. A network of Roma and non-Roma researchers who identify Roma students and promote their access to the university.

13. Affirmative actions in the promotion of academic careers among Roma students.

Support to Roma associations from research, faculty members and university students.
Support to Roma Association of Women Drom Kotar Mestipen in the organization of the I International Congress of Roma Women: the other women

14. More than 300 grassroots Roma women made their voices heard in a public and international space of debate; and stated their needs, interests and proposals to overcome the inequalities and discrimination of Roma women and Roma community.

15. A positive image of the Roma women and Roma community was promoted: during three days a lot of discriminative situations were known, but they also talked about these other ones conducted by Roma women, that contribute to overcome the inequalities that they have to face. The mass media disseminated the transforming sense of the congress and showed the best practices conducted by many Roma associations.

16. Information of the situation of the Roma women and the Roma community in Catalonia, Spain and Europe was gathered.

17. The atmosphere of debate and dialogue generated during the conference allowed to discuss in depth gender inequalities, as well as to promoted a sense of equality among genders: men and women working together for a more fair society.

18. It was reinforced and enlarged an active network of Roma women who, being or not members of associations from different European countries, explained their practices to overcome situations of inequality and their successful careers. After the congress the contact among them is still alive, and they have disseminated the main conclusions of the congress in their own countries.

19. A contact with other networks and groups of Roma women has been established. This fact extended the sensitization work about and the knowledge of Roma community, in general, and of Roma women, in particular; moreover it was useful in order to overcome the isolation they face.

20. During the conference participants conducted a debate on the Roma feminism on the XXI century and how to eradicate gender violence. They agreed on promoting a pacific and enriching coexistence between men and women.

21. Participants gathered best practices about solutions to problems that Roma women have to face, as well as those that contribute to improve their situation.

22. Organizers sent the conclusions of the congress to public administrations at local, national and European levels. After the conference they conducted several meetings with policy makers.

23. Agreement on the Roma Declaration of Barcelona 2010 which focuses in the inclusion of the Roma other women in all the spaces of participation, debate and decision.

24. Promoting the campaign to collect signatures to celebrate the 8th October International Day of Roma women

25. More than 30 Roma and non-Roma researches and university students were involved in different activities of the conference.
Collaboration with the same association in order to constitute the new Association Sonakay and the development of some of their activities.

26. Collaboration of professors and university students with the same association in order to create a new one: Association Sonakay and support it on the development of some of their activities such as, for instance, the Official Trainers Course in the specialty of school canteens for Romani women.

27. Contact among professors from Rovira and Virgili University (Tarragona) and Roma women in order to foster the new association in its territory.

28. Public presentation of the association in the city hall of Reus (Tarragona) with the presence of local authorities and policy makers. Promotion of a positive image of the Roma community in the territory.

29. Involvement of university students as volunteers in the activities of the association such as training activities in VET programs, for instance. Promotion of their access to the labour market.

Support to the Jesús Gómez Foundation in the development of the training course for the elaboration of European projects addressed to Roma associations of Barcelona.

30. Professors and professionals from the associative sector taught 6 sessions of 5 hours each. He main topics were: European Union, submitting proposals for European projects and management of European projects.

31. Attendance of people ranged from 10 Roma and non-Roma associations.

32. Course specifically designed for the interests of participants.

33. Participants also get practical teaching in the use of technologies in order to better manage the information required to design and conduct research and intervention projects.

34. Information resources about how to look for European calls to submit proposals, etc.

35. The course focused on the design and elaboration of a project: justification, state of the art, objectives, work plan, evaluation and budget.

36. Implications of the role of project coordinator and partners.

37. Information about how to register a partner in a data base.

38. Group evaluation of the course. A session with the involved participants in order to evaluate the achievement of their prospects was done.

5. Conclusions

In order to close this report, we introduce the main conclusions coming from the common work conducted by researchers and Romani associations that contribute to the research on human rights.
of the Roma community that meet the needs and claims of this community. All this work has been developed in the framework of PERARES project. It implies a common and closed work between the Roma community and the researchers of PERARES.

**Relationship and communication process among the researchers and university students with the people from the Roma community’s associations.**

- Create spaces for dialogue with the associations where the Roma people can express their needs, interests, and concerns.

- Egalitarian dialogue among the researchers and the Roma community (Gómez & Vargas, 2003). The decisions are made according to the most valid arguments and not according to power dynamics. This means that the proposals of a researcher are not more valid than those proposals made by a Roma woman with low educational levels. The proposal is evaluate

- Involvement of the researchers and university students as volunteers in social movements and associations in their cities fighting for the rights of the Roma community. This involvement does not correspond to the personal or professional interests but to the commitment of contributing to improve the rights and the situation of the Roma community.

- Respect to all range of ways of living. All people have the right to decide on his/her own way of living (Flecha, 2000).

- Involve university students as volunteers in the activities conducted within the organizations split in the territory.

- Organize and conduct talks within the universities in order to teach them the situation Roma people has, as well as the kind of work Roma organizations are conducting.

**Identification of the problem and decision on the practices to conduct**

- Have a thorough knowledge of the situation of Roma at local, national, European and international levels. Access the results of previous investigations which have been developed with the Roma people and not for the Roma, thus avoiding those results biased and prejudiced against the enhancers Roma.

- Provide knowledge about the contributions of the international scientific community, i.e. the actions (education, work, housing, health, social and political participation, etc.) Have shown that they are contributing to overcoming discrimination and Roma social inequalities.

- Identify with the associations' concerns and problems of the Roma people, deciding actions to be taken jointly, both from the definition of research that will contribute to overcoming such problems as the development of practical activities such as training or organization congresses and conferences.

- Decide on actions that can be achieved in the short and medium term so they can see and evaluate the results. This will generate more meaningful decisions and continue to participate in partnerships when visible results of the proceedings.
Implementation of the studies

- Unmonopolizing the expertise (Beck & Lash, 1994) by creating advisory councils composed of representatives of Roma associations and Roma in many different profiles that are not in associations, to conduct monitoring and evaluation of research on the people Gypsy.

- Create multicultural research teams with persons Gypsy Research.

Affirmative action with Roma students

- Promoting scientific and academic careers of young Roma university students.

Social utility of the results in the improvement of Roma rights. Social and political impact

- To facilitate contacts and access to policy makers by Roma associations. Accompany the representatives of these associations, if requested, meetings with policy makers on the basis that who have the voice are Roma people. The role of researchers is purely facilitating the research process.
References


ANNEX 1. Outlines of the in-depth interviews, the communicative daily life stories and the communicative focus group

CENTRO DE ESTUDIOS GITANOS

Entrevista en profundidad a profesora de Sociología e investigadora de la Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona con larga trayectoria de investigación con las asociaciones de la comunidad gitana.

Entrevista en profundidad a profesora de Educación Social en la Universidad de Barcelona, colaboradora en el CEG y con la Asociación Gitana de Mujeres Drom Kotar Mestipen

Qué rol tienen el CEG en la conexión entre la investigación, la comunidad gitana, las políticas sociales y las políticas de investigación

Qué objetivos tiene a corto y medio plazo

Cómo funciona: consejo asesor, rol de las personas investigadoras, estudiantes en formación (estudiantes gitanos/as)

Cómo las investigaciones que se impulsan están contribuyendo a la mejora de los derechos del pueblo gitano

Cómo se define la agenda de investigación del CEG

Cómo se evalúan los resultados de sus investigaciones

Impacto de estas investigaciones en las políticas para la mejora de los derechos del pueblo gitano

Cómo se podría potenciar que más jóvenes gitanos y gitanas estudiaran en la universidad y se implicaran en la investigación

Evaluación: en función de participantes, entidades que se implican, impacto, transformaciones que potencia...

Entrevista en profundidad a investigadora del CEG. Ella es gitana de Rumanía. Su familia inmigró a Barcelona

Proceso que le lleva a participar como investigadora en el CEG.

Cómo puede el CEG contribuir a una investigación que den respuesta a las necesidades del pueblo gitano.

Cómo puede contribuir su investigación a la mejora de los derechos del pueblo gitano, especialmente de los más vulnerables como los gitanos inmigrantes de países como Rumanía. Diferencia con la situación de los gitanos de Cataluña y España (Derechos Humanos)

Cómo se puede contribuir a la elaboración de políticas que contribuyan a la mejora de los derechos del pueblo gitano.
Cómo se pueden llevar las demandas y necesidades de las asociaciones locales gitanas al CEG.

Como se podría potenciar que más jóvenes gitanos y gitanas estudiaran en la universidad y se implicaran en la investigación

Relato comunicativo de vida cotidiana a estudiante gitano. Cuando empezó el proyecto PERARES estaba finalizando la carrera de Magisterio, actualmente es estudiante del Master de Intervención Socioeducativa en la Universidad de Barcelona. Colabora en el CEG

Cuál ha sido el proceso que te ha llevado a estudiar magisterio y posteriormente a colaborar con el CEG

Como se podría potenciar que más jóvenes gitanos y gitanas estudiaran en la universidad y se implicaran en la investigación.

Como el CEG pude contribuir a la mejora de los derechos del pueblo gitano

ASOCIACIÓN GITANA DE MUJERES DROM KOTAR MESTIPEN

Entrevista en profundidad a la Presidenta de la Asociación Gitana de Mujeres Drom Kotar Mestipen

¿Qué relación existe entre la asociación y la universidad. Como es esa relación en la organización de actividades como el congreso, las trobadas, o el curso de monitoras (rol de las mujeres investigadoras que han dado apoyo, relación entre mujeres investigadoras y mujeres gitanas)?

¿Qué impacto tienen este tipo de organización en los resultados de estas actividades. En el congreso? En las trobadas? En el curso de monitoras?

¿Cómo desde la universidad, desde la investigación, se recogen las demandas y necesidades expuestas en el congreso?

¿Cómo se podría contribuir desde la investigación a la mejora de los derechos del pueblo gitano?

Impacto del congreso en la agenda de investigación europea

Impacto del congreso en la elaboración de políticas

Implicación de estudiantes universitarias/os en la organización. ¿Qué impacto tiene esta colaboración?

ASOCIACIÓN SONAKAY (REUS)

Grupo de discusión comunicativo con mujeres participantes de la asociación
¿Cómo surge la asociación?
¿Qué hacéis?
¿En qué ha consistido el apoyo de profesoras y estudiantes de la universidad? ¿Cómo os han ayudado?
¿Qué impacto ha tenido este apoyo?
Acto de presentación pública de la asociación: quién ayudó a organizarlo, quién asistió, qué impacto ha tenido?
¿Cómo ha sido el proceso de participación en el congreso de mujeres gitanas? ¿Quién os informó? ¿cómo os organizasteis para participar? ¿Qué cosas explicasteis en el congreso? ¿Qué es lo que más os gustó?
¿Qué influencia ha tenido el congreso en vuestra asociación?
¿Cómo surgió la iniciativa del curso de monitoras?
¿Creéis que os ha sido útil el curso?
¿Cuántas mujeres han participado en el curso? ¿Cuántas han encontrado trabajo de monitoras u otro puesto relacionado?
¿Se van a hacer más cursos?
¿Cómo ha contribuido a mejorar la situación de las mujeres gitanas en Reus?
¿Cómo ha sido la relación con las estudiantes de la universidad que han colaborado?
¿Cómo desde la investigación se puede contribuir a la mejora de los derechos del pueblo gitano?

Entrevista en profundidad a profesora de la URV y colaboradora de la asociación

¿En qué ha consistido tu colaboración con la asociación?
¿Cómo contactaste con las mujeres?
Explica el proceso de preparación del congreso
Explica el proceso de preparación y desarrollo del curso
El acto de presentación pública de la asociación: impacto
Impacto en la asociación del congreso y del curso
¿Cómo desde la investigación y la universidad se puede contribuir a la mejora de los derechos del pueblo gitano?
¿Cómo pusiste en contacto a estudiantado universitario con la asociación?

¿Qué impacto ha tenido en el estudiantado y en la asociación esta colaboración?

Relato comunicativo de vida cotidiana a estudiante voluntaria en el curso de monitoras organizado por la asociación

¿En qué ha consistido tu colaboración?

¿Cómo valoras esta participación? ¿volverías a participar?

¿Qué has aprendido?

¿Esta colaboración ha influido de alguna manera en decisiones que puedas tener en tu futuro profesional?

¿Cómo crees que la investigación y desde la universidad se puede contribuir a la mejora de los derechos del pueblo gitano?

¿Crees que el curso ha sido útil para las mujeres que han participado?

FUNDACIÓN JESÚS GÓMEZ. CURSO DE PROYECTOS EUROPEOS

Entrevista en profundidad a participante del curso de proyectos europeos

¿Cómo surgió la iniciativa de crear este curso?

¿Cómo te enteraste del curso?

¿Ha sido útil para tu asociación? ¿Crees que ayudará a que podáis presentar proyectos europeos?

¿En qué temas estaría interesada tu asociación para presentar un proyecto europeo?

¿Cómo crees que desde la universidad y la investigación se puede colaborar en la mejora de los derechos del pueblo gitano?
Hungary:

Participatory Action Research for Local Human Rights - The Case of Roma Minority in Szeged, South-Hungary

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1 Szeged Group of Protect the Future
2 Environmental Social Science Research Group (ESSRG)

Introduction:

The Social Context: the Roma in Szeged

In 1997, the Roma community consisted of 2500-3000 people in Szeged (Rátkai 1997), while based on the interviews conducted the current number is more likely to be 4500-5000. There are two larger segregated areas in the town but the majority of the Roma in Szeged live scattered all around the town (Rátkai 1997). Based on their descent and social situation the Roma population in Szeged shows a rather diverse picture. Because of the high level fluctuation (i.e. people migrating from the countryside and also leaving the city) it is difficult to estimate their number. By the 1980’s the majority of the Roma population had legal income from employment while the level of schooling did not increase. After the regime change in 1989-1990 – that brought about a swift decrease in the demand for unskilled labor – members of the Roma population could not find their place in the new job market (Rátkai 1997). Recent research points out that the problems have become significantly greater – for instance, the housing situation of the Roma, a generation after the regime change, returned to its level in 1971 (Dupcsik 2009). The lack of education and professional training is the primary obstacle to employment. In addition, increasing social prejudices also contributed to this employment situation, thus the social welfare system has become the major source of income for Roma as early as in 1997.

Rátkai (1997) also points out the low level of self-organization and political representation of the Roma in Szeged (as elsewhere in the country), and our interviewees confirm the same about the current situation. These problems have only deepened in the upcoming years. The functioning of the Roma Self-Government (RSG) is continuously hindered by the lack of human and financial resources.

“The financial sources available to support the community disappear on various levels of the administration and these initiatives cannot reach our main objective. We need a well thought out education program that would enable us to create a layer of intellectuals in 20-25 years that is a prerequisite for the emergence of a middle class.” – the president of the RSG in Szeged stated in our interview. An effective political representation of Roma would require that all of the representatives

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6 For a short introduction on the history of Roma before the 1990s’ in Hungary and in Szeged, please see Appendices!
in the Szeged Local Assembly considered this as a crucial issue and the RSG had its influence on the decisions – this is however not the case currently.

The human rights context as a theoretical framework can be hardly recognized in the political discourse in Szeged. Our analysis on current media appearances of the Roma issue in the city (based on regional newsportal) shows the same⁷. Human rights are constantly violated according to the articles/news published, but no exact mention of the HR concept is detectable. Our findings in the light of the HR framework will be further discussed in the results section.

*The research context*

The focus of our research is on one (or more) Roma communities and the related human rights in their local context. We hope that our research allows us to examine the local appearance of certain human rights problems associated with the Roma communities.

*Participants of the Research*

The research project is basically a cooperative enterprise between an academic group having special expertise on the social aspects of environmental problems and a local group of a national eco-political civil organization involved in environmental justice issues in Hungary. Since the local activists of the civil organization do not consider themselves as legitimate representatives of the interests of the Roma in Szeged, the cooperation is extended from two to three parties. Members of the Roma community are involved as a third party as well as experts familiar with the conditions and the problems of the local Roma population. Thus, one aspect of the cooperation is realized between ESSRG and the Szeged Group of Protect the Future (further referred to as SGPF) in which the research group supports the work of the civil organization by its formerly accumulated knowledge and expertise. The other aspect of the cooperation connects the Szeged group of Védegylet with the members of the community and a group of experts, more or less familiar with the problems of the community.

Currently there are 6 persons continuously and actively participating in SGPF, three of them are volunteers and three participants work for a modest compensation. The group consists of two college students, one person with a newly obtained master degree, a member of the local government, and two scholars holding a PhD. Five out of the six participants have former experiences in volunteer work and civil activities. By profession, there is a social worker, a politologist, an economist, an ecologist, an IT specialist and a literature teacher among the members of the group. Two members of the group are of Roma descent.

*The Research Process*

*Problem identification and choice of methods*

The research started in February 2011 with the forming of the research group and by studying the professional literature on participatory research. Those scientific studies that contrasted participatory research with traditional (conventional) forms of research proved to be the most

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⁷ See Appendix for details.
helpful (Cornwall & Jewkes 1995, Chung & Lounsbury 2006). We have observed these characteristics in order to comply with the criteria of participatory research during the entire research process (Table 1).

In addition to literature discussing participatory research in a dichotomy of participatory/traditional research, we also studied writings on research methodology, especially in the contexts of critical communicative methodology (Gómez et al. 2011, Munté et al. 2011), means of community engagement (Egészséges Városok Magyarországi Szövetsége 2004, Tanaka é.n.), and photovoice (Zenkov & Harmon 2009, Strack 2004, Streng et al. 2004, Dennis et al. 2009, Castelden et al. 2008, Catani & Minkler 2010). We also devoted attention to power related problems emerging in participatory research (Chung & Lounsbury 2006), as well as ethical challenges (Minkler 2004).

Table 1 Participatory and traditional research: a comparison of processes (Cornwall & Jewkes 1995)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Participatory research</th>
<th>Traditional research</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>What is the objective of the research?</strong></td>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Understanding, possible subsequent actions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>For whom is the research conducted?</strong></td>
<td>For the local people</td>
<td>To satisfy institutional, personal and professional interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Whose knowledge counts?</strong></td>
<td>The local people</td>
<td>Scientists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What influences the choice of topics?</strong></td>
<td>Local priorities</td>
<td>Funding priorities, institutional agendas, professional interests,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What is the main factor in selecting the methodology?</strong></td>
<td>Empowerment, collaborative learning</td>
<td>Disciplinary traditions, &quot;objectivity&quot; and &quot;truth&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Who is involved in research?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem Identification</td>
<td>Local people, researchers</td>
<td>Researchers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data collection</td>
<td>Local people, researchers</td>
<td>Researchers,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpretation</td>
<td>Local concepts and frameworks</td>
<td>Disciplinary concepts and frameworks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>Local people, researchers</td>
<td>Researchers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation of the results</td>
<td>Locally available and useful</td>
<td>In the researchers community or to the funding agents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The results-based action</td>
<td>Is an essential element</td>
<td>May or may not be taken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Who acts?</strong></td>
<td>Local people, with or without external assistance</td>
<td>External agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Who owns the results?</strong></td>
<td>Shared</td>
<td>Researchers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What is the focus of the process?</strong></td>
<td>Process and Outputs</td>
<td>Outputs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Along with literature on participatory research we also started to overview the Hungarian literature focusing on the Roma population. We researched literature both offering a national overview (Bodorkós & Szombati 2009, Kócze é.n., FRA 2010, Rostás & Farkas 2001, Szuhay 1999, Dupcsik 2009, Ladányi & Szélényi 2004) and focusing on local issues (Rátkai 1997, Rátkai & Sümeghy 2001, Boros et al. 2007, Boros 2007).

We started the field work simultaneously with our library research. As a first step we created contact with the local Roma community, and started to obtain relatively significant information about their conditions and internal network of relations (to understand their situation in the context of their possibilities). For this reason, we decided to conduct a semi-structured interview research (Kvale 2005). Before the interviews, those group members without experience were trained. We interviewed about two dozens of people in March and April of 2011. The interviews were made in pairs (sometimes in threes, including at least one experience interviewer) with notes taken that were later recorded in interview summaries of a formerly defined format.

We applied the method of snowball sampling when selecting our data providers and we tried to find people working for or being in an active relationship with the Roma population of Szeged, people with a general understanding about their past and present problems. The range of interviewees includes local Roma leaders, social workers, experts responsible for the field in government institutions, representatives of civil organizations, the leaders of a school integration program, as well as other experts related to the field. Our interviewees also included a few Roma families living in and around one of the segregated areas, but at this phase of the research we made only limited contacts with the Roma families and their community.

We raised and discussed the following topics in the interviews:

**Topic 1** The general situation of the Roma population of Szeged (the most crucial problems affecting the lives of Roma families in Szeged, their living conditions and possibilities, etc.).

**Topic 2** The situation of those living in the segregated Roma areas of Szeged.

**Topic 3** The organizations and the self-organization of the Roma community in Szeged (which organizations have the greatest influence on the lives of the people in the Roma community, is there self-organization within the Roma population).

**Topic 4** Anything else that may help us understand more about the situation of the local Roma community.

**Second phase: feedback and joint action-planning**

In the second phase we processed the available information broken down into thematic groups based on the interviews, and evaluated the data we received in the context of civil rights. We gave account of the findings of the analysis in a short summary (see Results).

We used this summary as an invitation for all of our data providers to a group discussion (forum). As we indicated in the invitation, our intention with the forum was to receive feedback from our interviewees, to find out “whether we managed to gain an accurate insight into the situation of the Roma population in Szeged” and to provide space within a discussion for drawing up plans for our future cooperation. We also indicated that we were expecting suggestions “about the topic(s) we should focus our scientific resources on for the interest of the Roma population of Szeged.”

Seven out of the two dozen interviewees participated in the forum in May 2011. The participants were deeply interested and very active, and we reached our primary objective: we
gathered research/project ideas for the upcoming phase of the work. The forum also contributed to further enhancing a mutual attitude of trust among the participants.

Third phase: joint selection of the action/project

The aim of the second forum (June 2011) was to select one or two projects that we would realize together. Our team presented five ideas for discussion that had come up in the interviews or during the first forum (see Results), and the participants of the second forum chose two out of them, both (or one) of which we planned to realize together.

Before the second forum the potential participants were sent a summary of the project ideas as an invitation for forum. When planning the second meeting we paid special attention to 1) prepare a realistic schedule (as a consequence of the very limited time available for the participants); 2) create a process in which the final decision is not made on the basis of the preferences of a few dominating participants but by engaging a wider circle of people; 3) apply a decision making process that prefers cooperation over competition. For this reason – and for other reasons – we may describe our research as a “pragmatic approach” (Bodorkós 2010). This approach aims at the production of practical knowledge by creating consensus, developing feasible action plans, engaging a wide range of participants, relying on close cooperation, and forming a mutual platform for the participants. Thereby we tried to limit the possibilities of conflicts or disagreement that are in the center of the criticisms of participatory research. A consensus seeking process would have best served this purpose, but it seemed difficult to control in light of our former problems of keeping the schedule – a potential problem of deliberation mentioned by the relevant literature (Csanádi et al. 2010). Therefore, we tried to create a decision making process in which a “moderate” debate, characterized by balanced power relations, ends with a non-competitive majority decision.

Based on the above considerations, we followed the steps below during the decision making process:

- **Selection of the three most attractive projects and providing reasons for the choices.** The participants were asked to choose three ideas that they liked the most and to give reasons for the choices. After this point, however, there was no space for further debate or reflecting on each other’s positions and arguments

- **Decision about which ideas to realize.** After the first step participants were asked to select the two most attractive projects and to put them in order of preference giving them a score each. The two projects with the highest sum of scores were selected for further work and detailed planning.

By September 2011 we have managed to select one project idea as a result of a thinking process together with those concerned (considering all of the conflicts within the circle of those concerned – see below) that they also regard as relevant for the future of the local Roma population. The preferred project is the establishment of the alternative school for Roma children.

Our research is currently before the phase “action based on results” in the process presented in Table 1. The infrastructural requirements are being assessed and explored in the city along with the financial possibilities. Besides this, in October, two discussion forums were being organized for the families interested in the establishment of the alternative school in both segregates. The aim of the discussion forums is to explore and to articulate the needs of the families regarding the
institution; to register the optimal circumstances for them to collaborate in the functioning of the school and to facilitate further community planning between the school organizers and the families.

At the present phase of the research we cannot venture to evaluate the entire project but we can reflect on the processes that are visible so far. This is the goal of the following section.

Results

The Results of the First Phase

According to the information we received, the problems of the marginalized Roma population of Szeged are centered around the major problems detailed below, similarly to the results of more comprehensive international studies (Rorke 2011). Despite this focus on the problems, we should not consider the Roma population as a social group that is characterized by problems, but rather, as a socially marginalized ethnic group that plays the role of an outside “mirror” in which the majority of the society can see itself in a more favorable light (Dupcsik 2009). The human rights context in itself was not articulated explicitly by our interviewees as an operative concept. They mentioned the violation of rights (e.g. discrimination at workplaces) in certain cases, but not as an overall perspective when discussing the situation.

Housing, housing conditions and related issues of medical conditions. During our interviews we gathered disillusioning experiences about the housing conditions of the segregated areas in Szeged. These conditions clearly violates the right for appropriate housing (set up in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)) in terms of conditions, legal status and affordability. The living area is generally very small, 8-15 people live in 20-30-50m² apartments. At least 20% (some say more) of the inhabitants in one segregate live there without a legal title. Many families are behind with payments for the utilities, and the rent for the houses is relatively expensive. The general health conditions of the inhabitants of the segregated areas are very poor, the average age is relatively low, many people suffer from asthma and pulmonary diseases.

Job opportunities, employment. According to the interviews 90% of the marginalized Roma population is affected by unemployment. Low level of schooling, social prejudices and the lack of opportunities nearly make employment impossible – creating a situation of constant violation of the right to work (see UDHR, ICESCR). Changes in the community work program negatively affected the Roma population, several interviewees pointed out that their situation is that of a “poverty trap”.

Education. Views on education are diverse: our interviewees claim that education cannot provide opportunities for the marginalized families before their basic needs are met – they may only aspire to learn a trade. Families need to find income as early as possible and a part of this is making the child learn a trade. While attitudes towards desegregation processes are rather contradictory, everybody agrees that segregated schools are not the way to go but they are also critical about “integrated” education. The right for appropriate education is a fundamental human right also declared. Many Roma children apparently do not get the appropriate education due to the lack of appropriate professional programs, capacity and experts (e.g. Roma teachers). They (and their non-Roma peers) also do not receive any particular knowledge of Roma culture, literature etc. which would be a necessary implication of this HR concept.
Security, access to information, perspectives for the future. A majority of the Roma population in Szeged is facing an insecure future when it comes to long-term housing – many of them do not know whether they will have anywhere to live in the future. This insecurity also characterizes their general outlooks (work, future perspectives), and it is made worse by never being sure what new regulations come out and how they actually affect the people in the community. This is due to the fact that these people are never asked to offer their opinion about the decisions and they are not even informed about them. As an important component of the feeling of security, many of them mentioned the need for a confidential relationship with the representatives of authorities and social organizations.

Equal treatment, self-management. Negative discrimination as a direct link to the human rights violation appears in every aspect of life, especially in employment and education, as well as in the relationship with the public service providers. The negative discrimination of the Roma population (in Szeged) is probably closely related to poor self-management skills in the Roma population, and the lack of representation of their interests both locally and in the national context. The HR perspective was the most recognizable issue here mentioned in the interviews.

Action/Project Ideas and the Selected Action/Project

1. Public debate or public hearing in the Local Government. The interviews and the first forum made it clear that the members of the community think that the Roma population does not have proper representation in Szeged, and they feel that this should be changed. The objective of this project idea was to organize a public debate or a public hearing in the Local Government that focuses on the situation of the local Roma population (or more generally: the disadvantaged local groups), and discusses the plans, measures and the activities of the Local Government and the local community in this context.

2. The situation in kindergartens, an experimental program for kindergartens. According to the interviews and the first forum the members of the community believe that kindergartens have an outstanding role in improving the later performance of their children in school and in the process of catching up with the majority children. The objective of this project is the realization of an experimental program for the education of Roma children in a particular kindergarten.

3. A series of forum discussions/lectures. The members of the community practically all confirmed that prejudices against the Roma population have increased in the past period. Along with the growing social prejudices only a few people are familiar with the Roma culture, customs, traditions, their history and position in society. The goal of the project is to launch a series of forum discussions/lectures that helps eliminate the various misbeliefs and to raise awareness in the general public about the Roma population.

4. “The place where we live and where we wish to live” - Photovoice survey. Nearly all of the interviewees mentioned housing, i.e., the lack of proper housing and poor housing conditions, among the most severe problems. The objective of this project is to find out how people living in segregated areas in Szeged see their environment and their home, and what they mean by an ideal home/residential area.

5. Chances/possibilities to establish a special school. Several people mentioned in the interviews the need for a well functioning public space – a special school/community center. It also turned out that the current official educational system alone – despite the effects of the former and ongoing desegregation experiments in Szeged (Fejes & Szűcs 2009) – is not capable of solving/decreasing the
disadvantages of Roma school children. The objective of the project is to identify the characteristics of “special school” needed for Szeged and to reveal its professional and practical requirements – thus enabling the realization of the right for appropriate education as a fundamental HR.

During the second forum two projects were selected out (see Methods and means) of the projects listed above: the Extra-curricular afternoon schools (Tanoda) (13 points) and the Kindergarten project (7 points).

Information derived from the two discussion forums in October 2011 regarding the demands and needs related to the Extra-curricular afternoon schools, EcAS (Tanoda)

The groups discussions in Cserepes row and in Dorozsma provided a substantial list of requirements and real needs of the Roma population related to the EcAS. However, in spite of the information on the exact time and location of the forum circulated in many ways (through our personal contacts, through the social workers), the number of people attending was rather low in Cserepes Row – only four women participated. Most likely it reflects the overall hopelessness of the Roma community, the - almost traditional - lack of real empowerment by the society that can lead to the attitude of ignorance (i.e. Nothing would happen, why bother going to a discussion forum anyway...). In Dorozsma, the number was higher – 11 (including the leader of the Roma Self-Government).

The main findings and suggestion related to the EcAS are the following:

- There is a real need for the education and tutoring of the children in the community. The EcAS would be the most beneficial for the children aged between 6 (before the primary school) and 10,
- The best time for the opening hours would be either in the weekdays afternoons (after lunch) or in the weekend mornings. It would be great to have an intensive period during the summer, before the school starts, to help the children prepare for the school-year.
- There would be willingness among the parents to escort the children on the way to the EcAS and to attend the sessions. However, they clearly expressed that some sort of payment would be necessary, as this task is responsible, requires a lot of time etc. It became clear by a social worker, that there could be an official help in this regard – record this activity as public work (which is a requirement towards receiving of social aid).
- The EcAS should provide extra motivation for the kids – activities they really like, such as table-tennis, internet connections, playing games, basketball etc.
- Regarding the location – specific suggestions arised and the overall concept of not being far from the segregates.
- One of the most important feature of the personnel fo the EcAS would be to have a very good nexus with the community, a trustful and familiar person.
- It is very welcome to teach Gypsy language and traditions to the children - moreover it would be necessary to teach those to Hungarian children as well.
- Adults could be also educated and trained in the EcAS.
Evaluation of Results, Reflections, Lessons Learnt

Theoretical Dilemmas and the Preliminary Results of the Collaborative Learning Process

Before we contacted the members of the community we expected to face certain dilemmas that we could not or did not want to solve right at the start. Below is a list of the dilemmas that have emerged so far and the answers given to them by the members of the community, at this phase of the mutual learning process:

We needed to clarify the use of certain terms, when (how) and why do we use expressions like Roma, Roma and the Roma community. We wanted to find out about the views and the suggestions of those concerned (and educated in the history of the Hungarian Roma community). Our experiences show that the members of the local Roma population (as well as the experts working with them) do not entirely agree on the proper terminology. Some of the participants found the wide-spreading of the term, Roma as controversial (because they felt it is more of a private expression that entails a rather intimate relationship) They repeatedly emphasized that the term, Roma community is ambiguous and it is important to clarify who we mean by it. (For instance, whether they are Carpathian, Boyash or Olah Gypsies.)

Another basic dilemma was to clarify what we mean by the term, Roma population of Szeged (at least during the project) that we defined as our target group. Originally we intended to contact marginalized people living in segregated areas (Cserepes sor, the Roma settlement in Dorozsma). Our first contacts, mostly from the elite of the local Roma population, expressed their opinion that we should not limit our approach to those living in the segregated neighborhoods because the Roma community also includes integrated Gypsies who do not really differ in their life style/living standard from the majority of the society.

Another dilemma was to find out whether we can talk about disadvantaged (or marginalized) group(s) “en bloc” within the context of the Roma population of Szeged, and if we can, what are the well defined criteria to do so. This problem did actually emerge in the interviews and during the discussions afterwards: several participants emphasized that we should not identify the disadvantaged social groups (living in poverty or deep poverty) with the Roma community as such, even on the level of terminology. They also questioned the existence of a clear-cut and close correlation between these categories.

In close relationship with the previous dilemma we needed to decide whether we want to define and characterize the Roma population as a social category (group) and/or an ethnic (cultural) community. The members of the community themselves are likely to have diverse views about this question as well, in the sense that it is difficult to weed out whether the problems we intend to solve/treat are social questions or those of the Roma population in general.

Regarding the focal issue of integration, or the need for such efforts, we were primarily interested, again, in the views of those concerned: what integration means from the perspective of their own culture and identity. The discussions showed a diverse picture concerning this issue as well: sometimes integration is so successful that people trying to break out of their original environment do regard full assimilation as the key to their upliftment. Others emphasize the preservation (or even strengthening) of cultural and ethnic identity: they claim that the integrated (intellectual etc.) layers have a special responsibility to serve as catalysts for the less successful members of the community by strengthening their cultural and ethnic identity.
The question of segregation is a closely related issue. People tend to view segregation in a negative light if it refers to forcing people into a segregated area/ghetto/camp despite their volition (prison, labor camp, refugee camp, etc.). But when the members of a community choose to segregate themselves (e.g. ecovillages), the term may have positive connotations, too. The fact that the EU does not deny the right of Travellers to lead an unusual life style may be considered as another example for the positive interpretation of segregation in which it takes place in the interest of the community from a human rights perspective. Some of the participants voiced their opinion that a simplistic approach to the problem of segregation often leads to a (more or less inevitable) resegregation process in education: in the higher grades of primary school most of the Roma students end up in special schools despite all efforts for their integration.

We also expected the need to thematize the way some of the classic dichotomies operate. For instance, how can we properly use the majority society/minorities distinction and what are the practical consequences of an adequate interpretation. How does this ethnic divide relate to such broad(er) distinctions as privileged/marginalized social groups, or the relationship between the prevailing elite and the majority society in which the ethnic category is replaced by a social/economic category. The prominent, respected figures of the local Roma population (that we were mostly able to contact) have nearly all become members of the social elite (in a broader sense). When we (primarily) focus on the problems of the (mostly) disadvantaged groups of the segregated areas, to what extent can we consider them as a concerned party.

Dilemmas and Challenges Faced During the Working Process

We may summarize the problems and challenges we had to face during the actual working process in the following way.

1) Who did we reach? The approaching of marginalized (and mostly vulnerable/defenseless) social groups, and earning their trust as strangers coming from outside, is an extremely hard task. However, the two university students of Roma descent in our team made things easier for us, and we also planned to rely on help from experts familiar with the “field” in locating and contacting the members of the community. In the second round (during the planning process of the special school) we will make attempts to perform a more effective channeling of the opinions and views of the most directly affected groups.

2) The influence of power structures and power relations within the community on the research. Internal relations of the local Roma population fundamentally influence people’s willingness to cooperate. It became clear for us that our interviewees have a long past together that is not free from conflicts (and might inhibit further collaboration between them), as we found ourselves among solid structures of hierarchy and power relations.

3) Conclusions of organizing and conducting focus group discussions
One of the greatest challenges in the forums was the task of moderating the discussion. Some of the participants were not willing to keep the time limits we suggested and the moderator (a member of our team and not an outsider) could not “discipline” them in this respect. One of the reasons was that (1) these “undisciplined” participants were on the top of the hierarchy of the community with unquestionable authority (or at least position), and therefore, the moderator’s efforts to control them would have negatively influenced their future cooperation, and (2) the forum was not assisted by a qualified moderator as a result of choosing a team member and not an outsider who would be
not familiar with the internal relations of the group. Certain prestigious/dominant participants were significantly more active than others, and some participants nearly did not say anything. In a group with such a solid power structure and hierarchy, however, it is interesting to consider whether we want to “intervene” (from outside) into the process (and the power relations) to such an extent, and how legitimate and ethical that would be.

**Group Work Dynamics**

Since the evaluation of the forms of wider cooperation (the whole international research group, and the Hungarian team consisting of two groups: ESSRG and SGPF) points beyond the limits of this paper, the following conclusions are presented by focusing on the smallest group, SGPF.

As one of the characteristics of participatory research, the actual tasks of the group are only defined during the course of the work. Nevertheless, the Hungarian research is organized according to the traditional project approach (detailed planning, measurability, timing, assigning resources to the tasks, planning of resources, etc.) as a part of a large grant. The characteristics of the participatory research and the project approach together create an interesting hybrid that posed a number of challenges to our Working Group to be discussed in the following section.

**Efficiency and/or participation – the development of organizational culture**

In the beginning it was important to engage researchers with Roma descent who would do much of the field work and take the interviews. During the work the participation of Roma members proved to be very important, and greatly contributed to the legitimacy of the group.

The topic of the research, together with its ideological background and methodology made it obvious that the operation of the group should be based on the principle of participation. A democratic, consensual, and proactive attitude of the group members was an important element of the planned working process. The initial approach showed the characteristics of the task culture (Handy 1985). In this culture the organization focuses on the distribution of responsibilities and the tasks to be performed, and assigns the resources accordingly. The influence of the members depends on expertise rather than formal position. During the process of the research so far the initial task culture approach faced various challenges. Decision making and the organization of the working process became more hierarchical, although decisions were made by consensus. This is partially due to the time limitations and the lack of capacity made quick planning and decision making necessary in order to keep the deadlines and come up with results. Therefore, the informal leader often had to undertake these tasks. In addition, the tasks of planning and timing the research were mostly performed by the members with more experience in these areas. If the members entering the group have never participated in such a non-hierarchical working group (and they hardly have a chance to do so during their time spent in the official educational system – primary school, high school, university), they may have different ideas about the organization of work. For instance, they might expect more guidance and a clearer distribution of tasks etc., while a leader with a different background may expect more proactivity from the members. This situation is made more complex by the employer-employee relation because that entails a hierarchical relationship in a group that operates on fundamentally different principles.

As a summary, our experiences show that the context of the project, the time limitations, and the different background of the members significantly moved the original, non-hierarchical
approach towards a more hierarchical structure. At the same time, there was a clear demand in the group for an inspiring atmosphere of debates or group discussions.

The context of the project, that defined the Hungarian research as well, raised another question, in addition to the setting up and the operation of the group: the issue of actual resource planning. Since the tasks and the related demands only materialize during the working process, we may only think in looser terms during the planning process. In case of group work, the level of competence of certain group members is also revealed only in the course of the work, and the distribution of tasks has to be performed by continuously adapting to the changing circumstances.

Conclusions

Poverty and marginalization have plenty of faces but it certainly has a strong connection to the lack of basic human rights: rights to appropriate housing, food, healthy environment. In the last decades the “rights-centred” perspective of poverty has overcome the “needs-centred” approach in the development debates: as in the 1970s, 1980s the poor were seen as bearer of needs, now they are seen as bearer of rights (Sachs 2003). In this perspective, poverty is originated not from the lack of money, but rather from the lack of power (or freedoms in the sense developed by Sen 1999). This means that empowerment of the marginalized community, to take its members as citizens and not as people “waiting for handouts,” is a political must for every political forces committed to human rights.

Our experiences showed that in this community the rights-centred approach in the discourse regarding Roma issues is not well established yet. The lack of practicing citizenship and the Roma community’s lack of power of forming their environment and life is apparent. In this regard, empowerment of the community is a step towards practicing human rights and a more equal and sustainable society.

The optimal functioning of the CSO is also a question in focus. How can we facilitate the positive development of the research process as well as the personal and group performance of the participants? How can we support the organizational sustainability of the research group? Our experiences show that the forming of the group itself should be an important part of the planning process. We should think ahead about the type of activities dominating the project: research or rather organizing and coordinating action, or both. The group should be able to react to changes in the tasks during the research, there should be competent members available for the new task (e.g.: library research after organizing a series of forums in case of tasks related to content analysis).

Before forming the group, the members should clarify whether the available time and resources allow for the group to utilize substantial resources for the empowerment of potentially unexperienced members (e.g.: additional support in field work, or even personal mentoring in order to help the development of the member(s)). In case of marginalized, disadvantaged minority groups, members with some kind of ties to the target group may provide legitimacy for the team. In such cases the composition of the team is itself a source of collaborative learning. We need to continuously communicate the possibility that the team may be restructured in the course of the research. Depending on the new tasks the initial distribution of the work and the tasks may change. In this regard, continuous adaptation is a key factor towards organizational sustainability.

In addition to efficiency, team building is equally essential because in such a work mutual thinking is crucial for a deeper understanding of the research material. It may sound obvious, but this aspect is often neglected due to time pressure and the logic of the project. In the case of such a project the participants need to reevaluate their prejudices, patterns of thinking, and their ideas.
about the world. Participatory research, therefore, may be regarded as a process of self-recognition, if the participants are open to mutual learning.
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**APPENDICES**

1. An introduction to the history of the Roma population in Hungary and specifically in Szeged (László Jakab, Elizabeth Lakatos)
2. Media representation of the Gypsy issues in the local media (Summary in English) (Elizabeth Lakatos)
3. Photos from the discussion forums
4. Evaluation in mid-term
1. An introduction to the history of the Roma population in Hungary and specifically in Szeged

The Roma arrived in Europe in the 15th century. Although there were serious conflicts and measures against them in the Western part of Europe, relationship between the Gypsies and the Hungarian population was more or less conflict-free until the 16th century. This is due to their contribution and well-established roles in the local manufactures (e.g. forges) and their integration into the communities as craftsmen. The Gypsy communities were regulated by the “vajda” who acted both as a leader and as a judge. The power and the representation of the vajda was recognized by the lord of the land as well. The rights and protection of Gypsies were guaranteed by official documents signed by the king.

Under the Habsburg reign, however, attitude towards the Gypsy became more violent and hostile. Marie-Theresa (queen of Hungary, 1740-1780) in her enactment “Regulatio Zingarorum” (1749) ordered strict measures towards forced assimilation. Gypsy children were taken from their parents and given to Hungarian families. Use of Gypsy language, cultural activity, horse keeping and marriage between Gypsies were prohibited. They were to be called as “Newhungarians”. These regulations advanced their settlement. Gypsy segregates were created in the vicinity of the towns and villages.

The second wave of immigration of the Roma took place in the 18th century. The so called “oláh Gypsies” and “beás Gypsies” entered the country from Romania. Oláh Gypsies spoke Gypsy language and were well-known experts of horse keeping and breeding. As “ramblers” they provided many specific services to the villages and settlements they visited (e.g. basket works, grinding, building of adobe walls). Beás Gypsies in Romania were the properties of the landlords as slaves until their liberation in the 19th century when they migrated to Hungary. These immigrant groups also provided and practiced different services and they settled down in the vicinity of the settlements.

In 1893 a national census was conducted in Hungary. According to the records, the number of the settled Gypsy population was around 220000.

In the 20th century unemployment increased radically among the Roma as mass production and industrialization led to the decrease of demands for small-scale Gypsy products and services. In the 2nd WWR, according to the estimations, 30-80000 Gypsies were deported from Western-Hungary to Nazi concentration camps. After the war ended, Gypsies were entirely ignored and left out from the land divisions. The socialist regime considered the “Gypsy-issue” as a social rather than an ethnic problem and efforts to assimilate them became stronger. In line with the “work for everyone” policy, Gypsies were employed in newly established industrial factories. The Party regulation in 1961 ordered the ban of Gypsy language, culture and traditions in order to force their assimilation. (These activities were considered as a threat to society and the overall system). Therefore any cultural or community activity was strictly prohibited among the Gypsies. Furthermore, education was obligatory. As a result, analphabetism was reduced by the 80’s to 24%. Demolition of the segregates and the integration of their inhabitants into villages and towns started in the 60’s facing strong opposition from the non-Gypsy habitants. Rate of employment reached 80% among the males in 1970’s.

The losers of the transition were clearly the Roma population. As the rate of employment steeply descended, the income of the Roma population decreased dramatically and the population of the segregates increased again.
According to Kamill Erdős⁸ in Hungary, there are two major Gypsy groups:
A) Gypsy-speaking
B) Non-Gypsy speaking
of the first group there are two sharply different parts:
A¹: In this group the so-called Carpathian Roma is spoken
A²: In this group the Vlax Gypsy language is spoken.
The A¹ consists of three groups:
a) Nógrád County
b) near Budapest (Paty, Csobánka, Pomáž, Zsámbék, Pilisvörösvár, Bia, Pesthidegkút, Budakalász) and Transdanubian (Budapest, Mohacs, Versend, Dunaújváros).
c) grinder and ringlispíles Gypsies (across the country they call themselves "German" and "Vend" Gypsies).

The indicated subgroups A¹ and A² cannot understand each other. The A² (Vlax) Gypsies includes several different tribes and types. Their tribal names indicate their occupations, locality of their origin, or nicknames. The tribes and genera names can be hundreds of years old or they may as well be around only for decades. These names can be as follows: Lovary (horse traders; Horsemen), Posot'ari (pickpockets), Kherari (casual workers, housing judges), Kelderari (coppersmith, tinkers), Cerhari ("tent makers"), Mašari ("fishermen"), Drizar ("thieves") Gurvar (pan maker). The main Vlax Gypsy clans are for example: Čirikl'i (meaning bird), Ruva (meaning wolf), Kozak, Kolompár, Stojko, Rafael etc.

The second group consists of people whose native language is not Gypsy.
There are two sub-groups:
B¹ group includes Hungarian-speaking Gypsies. These includes Romungro ("Rumungro") with two different “class”: the musicians and the poorer caste.
B² group consists of Romanian-speaking Gypsies.

Approx. 5,000 Roma live in Szeged, 300 to 400 of whom are staying in segregates. There are currently three larger Gypsy colonies: the one in Kiskundorozsma, the Cserepes row, and the Hunyadi square (having the smallest group). There was also a fourth at the airport, but this was eliminated.

Figure 1.: The two segregates (Lower one: Cserepes row, Upper one: Hunyadi square) in the inner city of Szeged. Kiskundorozsma (not indicated) is a settlement joint to Szeged in the NW, where the segregate consists of 2 streets in the edge of the village.

*Kiskundorozsma* segregate was established when Gypsies (kolompár Gypsies speaking Gypsy language) from the region between River Danube and Tisza migrated into Kiskundorozsma. They lived in mud-hut among subhuman circumstances in a deep trench. The site was demolished in 1979, when the Coordinating Committee for Roma Affairs was established in order to eliminate the Gypsy sites. The huts were dismantled and Gypsies were moved to the Búza street. 24 houses were built for the Roma on both sides of the street, each apartment was 32 m² in size including one room and no bathroom. Sometimes 10-12 persons stayed in the room. There were also flats, which had only four beds. On the other side of the street, the so-called “csé” apartments (low-value homes) were a little larger with 2 rooms.

Approximately 400 to 500 Roma lived in Dorozsma, when until they began migrating to the Búza street. After a while 100 to 150 people remained, the others began to move in Szeged. Most of them moved near to the airport and the Hunyadi square. After 10 years, the Búza street segregate was
closed, and the inhabitants were moved to another street (Árpa street) 50 m far from the Búza street. These homes were built of brick and were in a slightly better conditions. Nowadays a part of these houses are renovated, others are in a deteriorating condition.

Cserepes row was established, when in the 1960’s governmental programs were launched to demolish the Roma segregates, providing better housing to the Gypsy people. Originally, these apartments in Cserepes row were built for officials. However, because of the lack of modern standards, these did not meet the civil servants' needs, the apartments remained uninhabited until they were given to Gypsy families.

The situation of Roma living here was better than those living in Dorozsma. People from Dorozsma were relocated here, however, the site at Dorozsma was also being developed, so a few families stayed there.

**Hunyadi Square, other areas:** Gypsies began to flow into this area in the '90s as there were many uninhabited houses and flats around. In Újszeged (the area in the other side of River Tisza) lived the so called “Serbian Gypsies” with different cultural traditions compared to the below mentioned groups.

There are also Gypsies in the town (e.g. the “Rafael” who came from the County Heves (Northern Hungary) speaking a special language.
2. Media representation of the Gypsy issues in the local media (Summary in English) (Elizabeth Lakatos)

Summary
In my work I aimed to analyze the articles related to Gypsy issues in terms of Human Rights at the local online newsportal, www.delmagyar.hu. Fifty-five articles were studied from 2010 answering the points below: 1. What is the article about? 2. Did HR appear in the text? 3. Have certain human rights been violated according to the article? 4. Did the article have positive or negative effect on the reader? 5. Positive or negative comments?

Results
- In more than 50% of the articles the current situation in Győngyöspata was reported. This village has an ongoing and violent conflict between Roma and non-Roma people. The Group for a Better Future (a far right-wing military organization) was “patrolling” in the village regularly “because of the increased crimes”. Conflicts and fights started and the police seemed not to be able to calm down the situation. The articles raised the issue many times in relation to the political parties (on their attitude, opinion, actions of its plans for a solution)
- More items are about the success of famous Roma people (“celebs” as well), who can set an example to the younger generation. For example, the singer Ferenc Molnár, Caramel.
- There are also articles about different initiatives regarding education, marketable skills, public work etc. Published by the Government.
- Articles also discuss the situation and elections of the Local Roma Minority Government, the scandals of the LRG in Hódmezővásárhely, where the president of the LRG could not account for the government money of 2 million HUF received for Roma children camps.
- There is also an ongoing prosecution against the leader of the National Roma Minority Government. It began in November 2009, heads of the charge include defalcation and financial abuse.

Evaluation in terms of HR
Human rights in the articles don’t appear almost at all. It is indicated in only two cases out of 31, but it can be deducted from the text in 12 cases (regardless of not mentioning the HR context) that human rights have been violated. Most it is related with security (in 7 cases) and also can be associated with right to proper education (2 cases), employment and housing (2-1 cases, respectively).

More than half of the processed texts (in 60%) reflects a strong negative impression on Roma: they steal, cheat, fight, they are altogether criminals, and having children only for the benefits and living allowances. However 40% of the articles analyzed show a positive effect. It includes situations where someone stands up for the Gypsies, the protests that were made for the support the Roma and the peaceful solutions in Győngyöspata and also about people, organizations advocating the interests of Roma.

Seventy percent of the comments are negative, they generalize and blame Gypsies. All Gypsy is guilty, they can only steal. They don’t like working, but wants the benefits always. “If they have the same rights as myself, me as a Hungarian citizen, why not get any benefit from the Government” as one comment asks.
In two cases positive comments were added, and in four cases both positive and negative comments. Political discussions and the blaming of politics and parties were also regular.

1st forum (May 2011)

2nd discussion forum (June 2011)
Mid-point evaluation – Hungary

The Védegylet, Szeged group conducted the mid-point evaluation in September, after the completion of the first phase of the research process. Each members of the group gave a score and a short explanation of her/his decision. Below we summarize the scores given by the Szeged group, the additional comments regarding the evaluation of the process and the opinions on the evaluation sheet.

1. Evaluation of the project
The scores given to the Framing aspects (1-6) reflect a diverse perception of the initial phase of setting the research objectives and questions and the changes since then. According to some members, there was no clear and well-defined research question set up in the beginning, so it is difficult to evaluate the possible changes of these questions. Others argued that the participatory research in itself does not allow the researchers to design a detailed and exact research scheme in the beginning, as the research questions are being formed and re-defined through the process. For this reason, the group did not define precise research questions, only broader ones: e.g. what are the main problems of the Roma community, how they perceive their environment etc., but stucked to these points afterwards. Changes were regarded by the members as both the natural phenomenon of a research project of this kind and also a constant challenge to plan and re-plan the process.
Questions were raised however regarding the exact meaning of the evaluation points. For example: who are exactly the “parties” - members of the Védegylet group, members of the Roma community etc? What do “minor modifications” refer to?
Almost every participant agreed that members were able and willing to re-shape the research process, and modifications were the results of a joint decision.
Regarding the objectives, for some, the lack of initially defined exact research question made it difficult to relate the current situation to the objectives set for this point. Also the question was raised on what are the parties to which the points refer. Others, however, considering the broader terms and the methodological decisions (i.e. that we will make interviews and try to explore the main problems of the Roma community) found the process successful so far. It was also agreed that as the second phase of the project (establishment of the alternative school) has just begun, the objectives are needed to be re-defined.
Transparency: In the larger context, the project management, financial allocations were clear. In our smaller group, however, according to some members, the responsibilities of the group members were not clear and were changing, proper discussion on these responsibilities and expectations should have been necessary. Questions regarding the meaning of project management were also raised – what does management mean exactly – does it refer to the administrative measures, the group dynamics, the delegation of tasks etc.
Resources: Overall, the financial resources were rated as appropriate, though more resources would have resulted in more active people and therefore more outcome. On the other hand, most of the group member found the number of the personnel satisfying. Some members have the impression, that people employed were not entirely suited for the tasks – it is because the tasks and also the requirements were changing throughout the process.
Regarding involvement, it was agreed that the participants had real opportunity to contribute to the project’s content, however, regarding the methodological choices, it was not so obvious. It depended
substantially on the participants’ knowledge, experiences and skills and also on the preconception of
the larger context (e.g. ESSRG).

The reorientation of the project is a clear demand now, it was agreed among the participants that
because of the natural progress, the project should be re-orientated.

2. Evaluation of the evaluation sheet
Below are conclusions/suggestions related to the evaluation sheet:

- Some points were difficult to interpret and need to be clarified: No. 4 – what do minor
  modifications refer to? (objectives, administration etc?); No 5 and others: to whom the
  word ”parties” refer to exactly (NGO+research group or the Roma community?; No12: what
  does project management mean – administration, setting targets and meeting deadlines,
  managing group dynamics/members?; No 21: what does this question exactly mean?
  (Financial instruments, communication, frequency of meetings?)
- There were some redundancies among the points: for example: no. 2 and 3, No. 12 and 16,
  No 25-26
- We found it difficult to answer the questions related to the initially set objectives. In a
  research process of this kind (participatory research), the objectives may be in constant
  change. This means that it is hard to implement and follow the strict logic of the project
  framework (i.e. setting objectives, achievement, deadlines etc) while the particular outcome
  depends on the actual status of the process (for example some actions are planned but never
  fulfilled as the direction of the project changes, or some new initiative starts without any
  previous plan etc). So it would be useful to explore and emphasize the conflict/challenge of
  matching the strict project framework and the always changing landscape of the
  participatory research through this evaluation process.
Scores given by the participants, Védegylet NGO, Szeged

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<td>2. The experience has demonstrated that the main questions were well defined at the start</td>
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<td>3. There have been no significant unexpected issues to cause the main questions to be redefined</td>
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<td>4. Only minor modifications have had to be made</td>
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<td>5. Any modifications have been agreed between the parties to the project</td>
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<td>6. The parties to the project are open to redefining some questions and aims if the situation demands it</td>
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<td>7. The project has achieved the objectives set for this point in the process</td>
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<td>8. Any delay experienced so far in realising the project’s objectives can be overcome</td>
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<td>9. The parties to the project are aware of factors that may cause deviations from the original timetable</td>
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<td>10. The parties to the project need to re-set the objectives for the later stages of the project</td>
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<td>11. The various roles and responsibilities on this project are clearly established</td>
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<td>12. The project is being managed efficiently</td>
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<td>13. It is clear how personnel resources have been allocated for carrying out this project</td>
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<td>14. It is clear how financial resources have been allocated for carrying out this project</td>
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<td>21. The project has adequate administrative facilities</td>
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<td>24. The parties to the project are working well together</td>
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<td>25. The project needs no significant change in direction</td>
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<td>26. Some changes in direction may be necessary in the future</td>
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**Ireland:**

**Development of the Research Design and Process**

Peter Herrmann, UCC and Anna Kingston, UCC

**Introduction**

Working on developing a PER pilot project confirmed very much the social patterns that had been outlined in the stock-taking exercise: the difficulties of accessing the group, the difference of language as matter of different life-spheres. The latter is an issue that expresses different moments:

* The University representative being familiar with a specific understanding of research, very much bound to the agenda of the academic system,
* being linked to the traveller issue only by ‘sympathy’,
* which itself is by definition derived from the normative framework of the settled and privileged society.
* and ‘intrudes’ into the realm of a different ‘understanding of the world
* facing mistrust, nourished by previous experience of relevant people.

Language does not refer to linguistic matters; rather it is a matter of different hegemonies and - on both sides - the specific ‘expectation of the other’. The severity of this difficulty is underlined by a brief look at a ‘naturally given’ control group as it emerges from existing other projects that are successfully hosted by the Science Shop. All expressions of interest are coming from groups that have in one way or another already a basic knowledge of and trust into the agenda of academia and the mainstream social system.

**Setting the Question**

Following up on the last remark the development of the question showed the following main difficulties:

Firstly, the members of the group showed a very pragmatic approach to various questions of their daily life: they simply wanted to be treated as ‘normal’, like other people. This means at the same time that they had been rejecting ‘privileges’ such as, for instance, measures of positive discrimination. This can be exemplified by briefly looking at the issue of support teachers. In many schools it is standard to provide this support automatically if a child is known to have a background in the travelling community. Parents however, see this support as a form of discrimination as it suggests that these children are ‘by origin’ less able.

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9 *Anna Kingston*, UCC Science Shop co-ordinator, CSO liaison officer and researcher in WP6 of PERARES project; *Catherine O’Mahony*, Chair of UCC Science Shop committee and joint coordinator of UCC Science Shop’s involvement in WP6 activities for PERARES project; *Deirdre Fox*, Graduate of Masters of Social Work, UCC; *Peter Herrmann*, coordinator of UCC Science Shop’s involvement in WP6 activities for PERARES project
Secondly, some members of the group referred to preceding disadvantage, seeing expecting it as appropriate that special support is provided for the children. Thirdly, although this is only evidenced from experience from other engagement and the literature, some members of the travelling community claim more fundamental changes, expecting a change that is more geared to the fundamental parameters of the system. It is expected that the distinct culture of the community is accepted as having the same value as that of the settled community. This means, in the area of education, the explicit need of change in the curricula on the one hand (making them antidiscrimination proof), and on the other hand it is a matter of requesting mutual learning. Debates on finding an appropriate question had been very much starting from the area of the accessibility and quality of the educational system as area of special concern.

**Traveller Contact Report**

The first meeting with members of the Traveller community in Cork took place on the 24th of March 2011 with representatives from the Traveller Visibility Group (TVG), a local group comprised mostly of travellers, who are active as advocacy group and also provide a forum for members of the travelling community, giving them the opportunity to discuss issues of relevance to them and to organise activities. The TVG team requested more information regarding the PERARES project, which was emailed to them the day after this meeting. After a long delay the group came back on the 13th of April to say that they could not take part in the project at this moment in time. The co-ordinator Chrissie O’Sullivan (a Traveller) made it very clear from the beginning that unless there was financial compensation in some way, they did not want to pursue any research. The group was also very disappointed that they could not access local data from a previous and recent national health study that had been undertaken.

A final attempt to get in touch with the Traveller community in the Cork/Kerry area was made through the Irish Traveller Movement. An email from the ITM in Dublin resulted in a response from the West Cork Traveller group in Clonakilty (who had been emailed directly previously in March but did not reply). This time the co-ordinator Margaret Allen (a non-Traveller employed by the group and funded by the health board) agreed to meet the representative of the PERARES project (Anna Kingston) to discuss the project. The meeting took place on the 4th of May. She was very positive and brought the idea of conducting research to the WCT steering group the following Friday. Margaret replied on the 11th of May to say that the Management Committee was interested in pursuing the research. They would like to look at discrimination in relation to education, accommodation and employment, which are the three main concerns of the local Traveller community. On the 19th of May a draft of a research contract (Appendix 2) was sent to the group for their consideration and included these three topics. Margaret Allen replied four days later to say that she would bring the draft contract to the steering group on the 20th of June.

On the 1st of June Anna Kingston was invited to attend the launch of WCT group’s new centre where around 100 people had gathered. It was not really a good time to raise questions about discrimination and human rights issues as they were highlighting the progress that has been taking place since 1979. However, Margaret Allen had been contacted the day after the launch and asked if there was a possibility to meet with representatives from the Travellers sooner than the 20th of June to discuss potential research questions or problems that concerned them. Margaret replied to say
that the issue of why so many Traveller children have special needs teachers was raised by an individual who believed that it is simply because the children are Travellers. She wondered if the project could identify how many Traveller children had been diagnosed as having special needs? Margaret also said that she would contact the WCT Development Worker and get her to arrange to meet the groups earlier. As a consequence, Kathy Crockett, a Development/Support Worker with the WCT group (a non-Traveller employed by the centre with funding from the Health Service Executive), sent an email to various groups she works with in Bantry and Clonakilty on the 7th of June regarding the WP6 project. It was obvious from this communication that the participatory research process had not been understood as she referred to “the research that you (UCC) are hoping to undertake”. She highlighted that the groups would only meet for another couple of weeks before they would break up for the summer and that there were already a couple of things arranged for certain groups in this time. After a further exchange of emails it was decided to leave the research until September when all groups resumed activities in the centre. The draft research contract was not brought to the WCT steering committee as their meeting on the 20th of June was cancelled due to a funeral that they all had to attend.

Contact was resumed with the WTC group on the 21st of August when Anna Kingston emailed the WCT Group co-ordinator regarding the possibility of meeting up with the Travellers. The WCT Group Development Worker, Kathy Crockett, responded on the 24th of August to say that the groups were back on the 12th of September, but it would be good to let them settle in first. After more clarification regarding the research - that it was not research for the Science Shop or its representative rather it was the group’s research and their own undertaking - it was decided to meet and talk to a few of them regarding their previous experiences of research and their opinions on research in general. It was hoped that this conversation would lead to the identification of some questions/issues by the group which could be formulated into a research proposal.

A meeting was arranged on the 7th of September in the WCT centre in Clonakilty. Kathy Crockett facilitated the meeting which was attended by Mary and Margaret O’Driscoll, a daughter and a mother from the Traveller community who are employed at the centre under a FÁS scheme. Three other local Traveller women also joined the discussion (two in their early 20s and one in her 40s). The word research was met with silence - the participants explained that none of them had any first-hand experience of research (either of being researched or conducting research). However, as the discussion moved into the practical experience of education they started to engage. The group argued that Traveller children are being assessed/diagnosed as having special needs to a greater extent in comparison with children from the settled community. This sparked off a great discussion with Margaret O’Driscoll recalling how her then 4/5-year old son was going to be sent to COPE foundation special needs school because the mainstream schoolteacher wished to do so. Margaret said she refused to let that happen and went to the school and “kicked up”. The same son is now 27 and never went to special needs school. The other mature woman spoke about how her two young children were assessed behind her back when they went to school and that she did not know that they had received resource teaching until they came home and told her that they had met a “health nurse”. She then contacted the school and was told that they had been allocated resource teaching.

Mary added that the attitude seems to be that the schools assume the Traveller children are “stupid” or have special needs just because they are Travellers. The discussion went on to discuss several
examples of how this still goes on and there was a suggestion that this focus on Traveller children and special needs has to do with the grant that schools receive for providing Travellers with an education. The suggestion that this could be a very interesting piece of research to pursue was met with scepticism. One young girl, for example, objected to undertaking any research as she felt it would not lead anywhere anyway and that they have raised this issue on numerous occasions (even had teachers invited to meetings to discuss this but that they (the parents) were in denial about it).

The stigma surrounding Traveller children in the school setting was also discussed – the bullying, the name calling etc. which could perhaps be seen as reasons behind extra support being sought for by the schools. Someone mentioned immigrant children getting into trouble in the school yard and this being explained by them not having the English language but that they were not assessed for special needs - whereas if Traveller children were in trouble it was automatically assumed that they had learning difficulties.

The discussion went from education to childbirth and breast-feeding at one stage, where Mary mentioned that there is a specific blood test for babies born to Travellers (someone thought that it had to do with the higher incidence of first cousins marrying each other). There is also a special baby formula given to new-born Traveller babies which, according to Kathy, means that if a Traveller woman wants to breastfeed her baby she cannot do so because they insist that the baby drinks the special formula for the first three days (which seems strange considering the importance that is currently being attributed to breastfeeding in Ireland).

After approximately one hour Kathy Crockett thought it best to round up the meeting and let the women think about what had been said. In a quick explanation of the Science Shop concept it had been stressed that this would be their research, they would be in control and that the UCC/PERARES-team would assist them with all the support needed to make this a piece of scientific and important research. They agreed for Anna Kingston to go ahead and formulate a research proposal based on the discussions, to suggest a methodology for the research, and to send this draft proposal back to the group for their approval before they would make a decision on whether to undertake the project or not.

A week after this meeting, a research proposal (Appendix 3) was emailed to Kathy Crockett, to bring back to the Travellers. She decided that she was bringing it to a group of young parents who meet on Tuesday mornings and she said she’d “run the info with them and get back to you”. One week later, it had been communicated that Kathy had been unable to meet with them due to illness. There was still no reply from the WCT group by the end of September.

**Defining Methods**

An important part of the methodology is what in academia is not commonly known: taking time as an inner discourse for the group. Usually research starts on the grounds of more or less clearly defined identities of the own group, the ‘other’ and the addressed institutional system. The difficulty emerging in these cases is frequently that of (partially) wrong expectations. However, as such it is usually more or less simple to address this point by way of clarifying the existing parameters. This is rather different in the present case. In comparable cases the challenge is defining the own identity by way of juxtaposing the ‘we’, and relating it to
* the historically experienced other
* the currently real immediate other
* the currently real general other
* the given institutional system.

This implies more or less that previously unquestioned identities are dissolving during this process, i.e. that the corrosion of seemingly distinct identities go hand in hand with the emergence of new identities, the latter between assimilation and radical rejection and sealing off.

First, on the level of developing an appropriate method, time-consuming discursive processes have to be allowed, not least leaving the relevant people alone so that can define their own agenda.

Second, extensive listening is another requirement, allowing groups to translate ‘their issues’ into the language of the envisaged research agenda. Commonly used participative methods/activities are inclined to fail as they always start from something in and from which ‘the other’ can take a part. Lacking alternatives, it is important to apply ‘open talks’ and, at a later stage, focus groups and the like.

Third, in parallel, it will be required to develop approaches of open document analysis, i.e. supporting members of the group to access official documents or making analysis accessible without explicit evaluation of the obtained data.

Fourth, steps of establishing trust have to be frequently inserted – in particular by establishing permanent praxis links – as long as time is on the one hand crucial as the available means for identity building, it is not available for planning processes, or promising an impact in an unforeseeable future. The practical usefulness of research has to be shown permanently.

Fifth, mediating activities are also possibly needed i.e. answering conflicts within the group which may emerge as part of the process of identity building.

An important point that has to be taken from this experience is that the wish to introduce participatory research is easily in danger of subservient behaviour on the side of the researcher(s)/science shop. It seems to be that the ‘original research idea’ may be easily given up in order to gain the support of the group. However, on the one hand this is surely due to the overall setting as it is given in the concrete situation (the project as part of a wider project, with a given deadline); nevertheless it remains on the other hand a genuine general problem and is more a matter of finding a right epistemological approach. It is useful to work further on this issue in a matter of looking into the actual opportunities and limitations of participatory research - very much an issue deeply rooted in the difference of social positioning.

**Action Points**

After much contact between Anna Kingston and the West Cork Traveller Centre a tentative proposal of relevant questions had been formulated (see Appendix 2). This proposal has been agreed to by the WCT group and the UCC/PERARES team are currently exploring how best to organise and support the project fieldwork.

**Outcomes**
Although the results are at first glance somewhat frustrating and disappointing they are truly valuable.

First, it is evident that the barriers to entering traditional research institutions and agendas are deep seated. As important as commonly discussed socio-institutional barriers are, the more important part is the hegemonic system that actually lessens interest in getting involved. Several issues behind this have already been pointed out in the stock-taking document. Subsequently a core requirement is the thorough opening of the political process and the commitment and display that participation is not about instrumentalisation and not about ‘silent oppression’.

Second, the time frames of relevant reforms have to be set much broader, and they have to be open. Third, ‘set research’ can only be undertaken with groups who are partly used to the ‘academic and political agendas’.

Fourth, this can also mean that existing contacts - on individual or group level - emerging from other contacts (existing voluntary engagement, individual members of the relevant group acting as pull-factors ...) can be a means of circumventing the outlined difficulties.

Fifth, it is likely that certain groups - and certain topics - cannot be made subject to the work of Science Shops.

Sixth, it is important to systematically set up relevant advisory bodies etc. that allow the ‘establishment of bridges’ to those who are most excluded by way of standing completely outside of the hegemonic system of policy making.
Appendix 1: Review of the Literature on Travellers and Accommodation in Ireland

Deirdre Fox, UCC, and Peter Herrmann, UCC

Introduction

‘The Traveller community means the community of people who are commonly called Travellers and who are identified (both by themselves and others) as people with a shared history, culture and traditions including historically, a nomadic way of life on the island of Ireland’ (Equal Status Act, Government of Ireland, 2000). Christie (2004) emphasises how the large scale social and structural changes synonymous with the changing economy in Ireland witnessed Travellers become gradually more defined as a social dilemma for settled communities. This was due to the fact that traditional halting sites began to disappear with new developments in infrastructure and housing and Travellers became increasingly dependent on state benefit. O’ Connell (1993) points out that even a short search of the literature on the history Travellers demonstrates that accommodation was consistently viewed by commentators as a primary concern.

This review will begin by highlighting the policies and legislation which have been either directly or indirectly relevant to Travellers in the area of accommodation. This will be followed by an examination of human rights documents on the subject including that of the Irish Human Rights Commission and the Equality Authority. I will discuss the pivotal role played by Non-governmental Organisations such as Pavee Point and the Irish Traveller Movement in striving to raise awareness and bring about improvements in Traveller accommodation in Ireland. Media coverage on the topic will be mentioned. Finally, the literature review will focus on some of the key issues relating to Traveller accommodation which have created debate within the human rights arena such as forced evictions and the gender element.

Table 1 will briefly outline the three key reports which can be seen as tracking the change in policy and approach towards Travellers in the second half of the twentieth century (see Christie, 2004:147).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Report</th>
<th>Key Features and Objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Report of the Commission on Itinerancy 1963</td>
<td>To identify the needs of Travellers, to encourage Travellers to adopt the norms of settlement and waged employment i.e. assimilation, this was to be achieved mainly through the provision of housing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report of the Travelling People Review Body 1983</td>
<td>Policy of assimilation seen to be failing. Report accepts that Travellers have their own distinctive lifestyle, traditionally nomadic. Despite this, nomadism is still viewed as problematic and no resources are allocated to promote Travellers nomadic culture (Crowley, 1999) A policy of integration is adopted whereby Travellers choosing to adopt settled way of life are supported. Report advocates for employing experienced social workers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report of the Task Force on the Travelling Community 1995</td>
<td>A Task Force was appointed to advise and report on the needs of Travellers with specific reference to ‘the co-ordination of policy approaches by Government Departments and local authorities’ (TFTC, 1995). The culture of Travellers is defined as those activities different to the settled community. Language changes from Itinerants to Travellers. An addendum was made to the main report by four dissenting voices arguing that alternatives to nomadism should be encouraged and integration with the settled community is inevitable (Christie, 2004).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act, 1998**

Since the Task Force Report (1995), the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act 1998 was introduced. This Act states in law that the local authorities are to provide culturally appropriate accommodation in all forms including halting sites, transient accommodation, group housing schemes and standard houses. This was to take the form of Traveller Accommodation Programmes (TAPs) with five year accommodation plans (O’Toole, 2009). The 1998 Act also provides for the establishment of Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committees (LTACCs), their role being to advise the Local Authorities in relation to the design and implementation of any accommodation programmes in their area (O’Toole, 2009). At a national level the legislation called for the creation of the National Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee (NTACC) under the aegis of the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government to make suggestions to the Minister on ways of improving consultation with Travellers at local level and on general matters concerning the TAPs (O’Toole, 2009).

**Housing (Miscellaneous Provision) Act, 2002**

Section 24 of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provision) Act 2002 amended the Public Order Act 1994 by criminalising trespass on public and private land with an object, including a caravan and making it an offence (Crowe et al. 2009). This legislation has curtailed Travellers right to be nomadic as they are not able to move freely and it can be seen to be in direct conflict with the 1998 Housing Act, which outlines that annual patterns of movement of Travellers must be catered for (Irish Traveller Movement, Charting a Future Strategy for the Delivery of Traveller Accommodation, 2002).

In 2001 the National Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee issued a document entitled *Guidelines for the Operation of Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committees (LTACCs)*. This advises the LTACCs on issues such as communication and training, methods of operation and conduct of meetings. Each local authority is recommended to adhere to these guidelines, however, the guidelines are not enforced. A substantial number of local authorities have undergone criticism for their Traveller Accommodation Programmes based on the fact that the language used is often vague and non-committal (Fahy, 2001). Examples of this can be seen in an Irish Traveller Movement (ITM) document entitled *A Lost Opportunity? A Critique of Local Authority Traveller Accommodation Programmes* (2001). A prime example is Dundalk Urban District Council’s programme in which the ITM point out, ‘The provision of a new transient site is not included in the programme. Accommodation will not be provided for ‘nomadic traders’. No details are given in relation to resources, estate management policy or dealing with problems as they arise. There is a distinct absence of specifics in relation to consultation mechanisms, timeframes or locations of accommodation units’ (Fahy, 2001:21).

Other criticisms include statements such as ‘*This is a very weak document and pays little attention to practically all the guidelines*’ made in relation to Roscommon County Council (Fahy, 2001). The widespread criticisms of the local authority Traveller Accommodation Programmes made by the Irish Traveller Movement raises questions about each local authority’s commitment to Traveller accommodation as a human right. O’Donavan (2009) confirms this point by attributing the local
authorities’ minimum culture of compliance to a lack of commitment to an institutional human rights culture.

**Human Rights and Traveller Accommodation**

The right to shelter is a basic human right as outlined in the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights where it is stated that, ‘Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family including food, clothing, housing and medical care’ (Article 25, UN Declaration of Human Rights).

In 2002, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights expressed its concern that some 1,200 Traveller families were residing in roadside encampments lacking access to satisfactory water and sanitary facilities and could possibly face eviction against their will. The Committee urged the Irish Government to improve its efforts in providing these families with other accommodation as well as meeting its target of offering all required Traveller accommodation to be put in place by 2004. No court exists to enforce a breach of the Covenant that declares the right to housing. However, the Government must report to the United Nations on failure to comply with the Covenant (Simon Community, 1995). There is no specific right to housing mentioned in the Irish Constitution (Bunreacht na hEireann, 1937). The Irish government in particular have been criticised for failing to introduce a constitutional right to housing and for not creating anti-poverty strategies from a rights perspective (Simon Community, 1995).

In 2006, Thomas Hammarberg, the Council of Europe’s Commissioner for Human Rights stated in the Housing Rights in Europe Conference, ‘The Roma and Travellers are still disproportionately represented among the homeless and those living in substandard housing’. He advocated for a right-based housing policy and clearly stressed that there is a necessity for vulnerable groups to be informed about their housing rights and how to exercise these rights (Hammarberg, 2006).

**The Irish Human Rights Commission**

*Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) Hearing- Remarks to the Committee 23/02/2011, Dr Maurice Manning President of the IHRC*

Dr Manning expressed his concerns that the cutting of the budgets of the Human Rights Commission and the Equality Authority in addition to the shutting down of the National Consultative Committee on Racism in Ireland and the Combat Poverty Agency has caused harm to the protection and promotion of human rights that will take years to reverse. He acknowledged that Travellers are among the most marginalised communities facing continuous discrimination in Ireland in 2011. He stated that ‘There must be a concerted effort by the state with full participation of Traveller representatives to address the real discrimination faced by Travellers in health, education, employment, housing, provision of services and other area. Any such efforts must ensure specific targets and timeframes’.

*IHRC Submission for the Twelfth Session of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review. Ireland, March 2011*
In this submission, the IHRC recommends that Ireland should recognise Travellers as an ethnic minority group in accordance with CERD. The IHRC links this non recognition with the substandard housing provided to Travellers by Local Authorities. They subsequently advise that the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2002 be repealed or changed so that it is no longer an offence to camp on public land.

**IHRC says Ireland is not prioritising the elimination of racial discrimination Issued 22nd February 2011**

Mr Michael Farrell IHRC Commissioner speaks out about the racial discrimination which Travellers have experienced for generations. He criticises the public authorities highlighted the fact that they have been unsuccessful in fulfilling their statutory duties to adequately house Traveller families. He argues that harsh cuts in funding to necessary services are undoubtedly making these problems worse.

**IHRC says serious gaps in human rights protection in report to the United Nations, Issued 14th March 2011**

This reiterates what has been said in previous reports with the core recommendation being to recognise Travellers as an ethnic minority and to make targeted measures in accommodation, education and health a top priority ensuring that Traveller representatives play a pivotal role in their development and functioning. Again, the recommendation to revoke or amend the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2002 is clearly stated. Finally, it is advised that the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act 1998 be implemented at national level as oppose to being left to the discretion of local authorities.

**Not enough action taken by Ireland on key civil and political rights Issued 8th June 2008**

The IHRC requested the United Nations Human Rights Committee to consider the issue of the State’s refusal to recognise Travellers as an ethnic minority. If this recognition was achieved then Travellers would have the rights and protections that ethnic groups presently enjoy under international human rights law. The nomadic lifestyle of Travellers is being compromised under the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2002 and it is an unjust interference with private and family life.

**The Equality Authority**

**Traveller Ethnicity: An Equality Authority Report 2006**

The report acknowledges that there has been much debate on Traveller ethnicity. Reference is made to the publication ‘Building an Intercultural Society’ (2002) which was published to support the preparation by the Government of the National Action Plan Against Racism and where the introduction sets out - that racism is not a new phenomenon. It has been the experience of the

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10 The Equality Authority reports are mainly in relation to employment not accommodation and therefore will be covered more in depth in the review on employment.
Traveller community over a long period. As a minority ethnic group with a nomadic tradition the Traveller experience has its own specific dimensions’ (2002:4). Accommodation is not focused on specifically, however, it is indirectly linked to Traveller’s status as an ethnic minority as it is clearly stated that ‘policies and programmes that respond to the needs will only be effective to the extent that they take into account the culture and identity of the group concerned’ (Traveller Ethnicity, 2006).

**Non-Governmental Organisations**

In the past decade national Traveller organisations such as Pavee Point and the Irish Traveller Movement have advocated for a rights based, equality approach that focuses on the distinct ethnic status of Irish Travellers (Donahue et al. 2003; Fay 1992; Pavee Point, 1996). Both of these organisations have had no reservations about making strong statements in their efforts to ensure that the Traveller community are afforded their rights in all areas. One report by the ITM stresses the point that Travellers are being persuaded to agree to housing in many areas where their first choice is a halting site, ‘This policy of forcing Travellers to live in houses is strong in most areas and reinforces the assimilist approach that if Travellers live in houses they will no longer be Travellers’ (Irish Traveller Movement, Charting a Future Strategy for the Delivery of Accommodation, 2002).

The failure on the part of local authorities to provide adequate Traveller accommodation is documented in a substantial number of Irish Traveller Movement publications. For example, in ‘Progressing the Provision of Traveller Accommodation to Facilitate Nomadism’ it is stated ‘The lack of provision and the refusal to provide it in the future, by the various local authorities clearly reflects the inability for these issues to be progressed at local level. The impact of this is clearly felt across the Traveller community who are denied their right to a service, due to the failure of the local authority to apply its resources and fulfil its legal obligations in this regard’.

This discussion document highlights the barriers to the provision of nomadism and repeats the recommendations made by the IHRC that Section 24 of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2002 be repealed ‘as a matter for urgency and the issue of provision tackled to ensure human rights are not further eroded ‘(ITM Progressing the Provision of Traveller Accommodation to Facilitate Nomadism).

Pavee Point has a number of publications in relation to the issue of accommodation including ‘Traveller Health and Accommodation Status’ which is a case study of Traveller health in the Coolock Area. It underlines the relationship between poor living conditions and poor health. Still No Place to Go- this is a survey of Traveller Accommodation in Dublin in 1994. It draws attention to the lack of progress in meeting Traveller’s accommodation needs. Pavee Point devised a document which was submitted to the Homeless Agency on The Action Plan on Homelessness 2007-2010. This takes a holistic view of Travellers and homelessness stating that, ‘As Travellers do not form a homogenous group, policy development and services’ responses should be premised on an analysis and understanding of the particular experience and impact of homelessness on Traveller women, Traveller youth, Traveller men and Traveller families’.
This submission outlines how the implementation of section 24 of the Housing (Misc Provisions) Act left a number of families with no other option than to become homeless as their caravans were seized while parked on public land. This raises clear concern for human rights.

**Human Rights, Travellers and the Law in Ireland**

The report entitled ‘Travellers Cultural Rights- The Right to Respect for Traveller Culture and way of Life’, published in 2008 by the Irish Human Rights Commission and Pavee Point, states that Travellers are often not consulted properly in the development of the wide range of law and policies which can affect them. In the case of O’ Donnell and others versus South Dublin County Council, Mr Justice Laffoy had found that the council has failed to adhere to Article 8 of the European Convention of Human Rights for not providing a caravan for a family with three severely disabled members living in overcrowded accommodation (Crowe et al. 1999). In O’ Reilly and others versus Limerick County Council Mr Justice Mac Menamin stated that the applicants in the case had little formal education. Therefore it was the council’s duty to advise them properly on their housing requirements (Travellers Cultural Rights, 2008). In 1992, the Irish Traveller Movement (ITM) published a document entitled ‘Traveller Accommodation and the Law-Action for Change through the Courts,’ as a result of a meeting organised by the movement to discuss the legal position of Travellers in Ireland. Members of the ITM accommodation subgroup had attended the High Court to give support to Limerick Travellers during their case. These members were surprised by the Travellers poor awareness of legal action in relation to court procedures, the language used, the resources needed to take a case and the knowledge of judgements in preceding cases. The Travelling community and to create materials that chart Traveller’s rights in certain circumstances like evictions and means for affirming those rights (Traveller Accommodation and the Law, 1992).

**Media Coverage**

**Irish Independent**

**08.07.201 - State ‘has fostered Traveller apartheid’ - Fergus Black**

Fergus Black accuses the Irish state of ‘fostering apartheid’ in relation to Travellers and deems Ireland’s treatment of the Traveller community as ‘one of the most serious social embarrassments. A study by Mary Rose Walker entitled ‘Suicide among the Irish Traveller Community 2000-2006’ found that type of accommodation was not a key factor in suicide although research shows that families living on roadsides are at greater risk than those in housing.

**17/06/2007 - The young Travellers Tigers who have amassed millions in land and money - Jim Cusack**

Cusack argues that the provision of Traveller accommodation, rather than fostering good relationships between the Traveller and settled communities has begun a sizable land grabbing operation by families involved in crime. Figures for this period by the Department of Environment show that between 2005 and the end of 2006 the number of families squatting illegally in Ireland rose from 589 to 629.
Better to Dump the romantic notions of nomadism than the usual rubbish’ - Gavin Halley

Halley puts forward the argument that good health, dignity and respect have always been Travellers main priority but that ‘trendy NGO’s’ representing them are more concerned with the romantic notion of their ‘cultural identity’ and status as ‘a distinct nomadic ethnic minority’. Halley believes that the settled community have been given reason to hate Travellers because they have abused their goodwill and states that this has been made more obvious by the good behaviour of economic migrants and refugees from abroad.

Irish Times Media Coverage

23.02.2011 - Government defends record on racism and human rights - Jamie Smyth, Social Affairs Correspondent

The Government defended its record and refuted accusations that it is overlooking the human rights of Travellers and asylum seekers. Diarmuid Cole, director general of the Department of Culture referred to the states acknowledgment of Travellers cultural identity but the outgoing Government has not reached an agreement that Travellers were not ethnically different from the majority Irish population. 178 million euro was spent on Traveller specific accommodation between 2005 and 2010. The number of families living on unauthorised sites has reduced from 601 in 2004 to 422 in 2009.

17.01.2011 - Rights group begin election campaign - Cian Nihill

Equality and Rights Alliance (ERA) launched its election 2011 campaign today. Martin Collin of Pavee Point drew attention to what he said was continued discrimination against Travellers particularly by publicans.

Irish Examiner Media

10.05.2010 - Travellers self-esteem crushed - Rosaleen Mc Donagh, Development Worker with Traveller Organisation

An example is given of the neglect of the human rights of Travellers- John Ward a Traveller is fatally shot in the back by Padraig Nally in 2004 and Nally walks free.
‘State policies continue to erode Travellers’ human rights and assimilation policies have had devastating effect on the fabric of our community’. Mc Donagh argues that racism towards Travellers has been prevalent in many ways, poverty, segregated education and lack of good quality, culturally appropriate accommodation.

02.02.2011 - Travellers turn down 378 Council houses - Fiachra O Cionnaith

One sixth of all local authority housing offered to Travelling community members in 2008 and 2009 were turned down due to claims of intimidation, family feuds and other personal reasons. A
significant number of families who turned down housing offers decided to continue living in unauthorised sites.

10.12.2010 - Watchdog slams Ireland over race discrimination

Ireland’s record on eradicating racial discrimination was condemned by the human rights watchdog today. The IHRC ordered the Government take greater action to protect the rights of the Traveller community, asylum seekers, victims of human trafficking and migrant workers. President Dr Manning stated ‘Not enough good quality halting sites are being provided to the Traveller community by local authorities’. ‘The criminal trespass legislation criminalises trespass on public land in circumstances where the public authorities have systematically failed in their statutory obligations to house Traveller families’.

Indymedia Ireland Media

27.03.2006 - Out of Site, Out of Mind Travellers in Ballymun

Residents of Saint Margaret’s Halting Site face a number of issues in relation to standard to overall accommodation notably the lack of electricity at present. There are 63 families in a space designed for 30 families. This is a direct consequence of Dublin City Council’s failure to fulfil its obligation to provide suitable and culturally appropriate accommodation for Travellers as in laid out in the Traveller Accommodation Programmes arising from the Traveller Accommodation Act 1998.

Relationships between the key stakeholders in Traveller Accommodation

In ‘The Development of Traveller Tenant Participation in the Management of Accommodation’ (2001), an ITM document, it is acknowledged that due to the backlog of provision of Traveller accommodation, a history of tension between Travellers, local authorities and Traveller organisations exists.

(Note: From my own experience of attending Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee meetings, this tension is evident through each stakeholder fighting for their own corner with a lot of defensiveness and accusations flying. This often overshadows the real issue which is the Travellers).

The High Level Group on Traveller Issues (2006) stated that a key way of enhancing service delivery is the development of a co-ordinated interagency strategy, ‘Effective consultation between Travellers, Traveller organisations and statutory bodies is needed to support the development of an interagency approach and to improve communication at national, regional and local level’ (HLG Report 2006 cited in Travellers Cultural Rights, 2008).

Evictions

Forced evictions from Traveller accommodation are a clear breach of human rights. In 2009 a Traveller family of five, including 18 month old twins with special needs were evicted from their halting site in County Waterford. Conor Kane, reported for the Irish Independent reported how the family were not believed to have been involved in any trouble while living in Kilbarry. Mother of the
family stated ‘I don’t know where we will end up, probably somewhere on the side of the road’. According to Damien Peelo, director of the Irish Traveller Movement, ‘\textit{this is one of the most shocking cases I have come across in over 10 years of working with Travellers}’ (Irish Independent, 2009).

The All Ireland Traveller Health Study ‘Summary of Findings’ underlines how ‘accommodation impacts on all aspects of Traveller lives from exposure to physical hazards in the poorest quality accommodation to the impact on mental health and wellbeing of living in stressful situations’ (AITHS, 2010:168). The link between evictions and effects on Travellers’ mental health is reiterated in \textit{Your Rights. Right Now, Ireland’s Civil Society Universal Periodic Review}.

**Human Rights, Traveller Accommodation and Gender**

Women can often face double discrimination on the basis of being a Traveller and of being a woman. In an article published in the Irish Independent in 2004, Kathy Donaghy gave examples of some of the harsh realities for women who are marginalised due to poverty, disability, being part of an ethnic minority or member of the Traveller community. Two of these examples are ‘\textit{being afraid to tell your employer your address for fear of losing your job if they found out you were a Traveller or being turned away from rented accommodation because of the colour of your skin}’.

The National Traveller Women’s Forum advocate on Traveller women’s behalf. In a Submission to the National Plan for Women by the National Traveller Women’s Forum and Pavee Point (2002) it is stated that Traveller women are overburdened by human rights violation. It is Traveller women who have to raise their families in the aftermath of cultural, social and economic violations i.e. without electricity, water, poor service provision and the constant fear of being evicted from their homes. The submission recommends that Traveller women need to be included in the Traveller debate and the human rights debate as well as being informed of their rights as Travellers and as individuals.
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Ireland’s Civil Periodic Review ‘Your Rights, Right Now’ (www.rightsnow.ie)


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Robinson Awards for the Design of Travellers’ Accommodation, Dublin, Pavee Point Publications.


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United Nations Declaration of Human Rights (1948) Article 25,

Note: All newspaper references can be found on the newspaper websites- www.irishindependent.ie, www.irishexaminer.ie and www.irishtimes.ie.
Annex 2: Research Contract: UCC/West Cork Travellers

Emailed to Margaret Allen, co-ordinator West Cork Travellers, Clonakilty on the 19th May 2011

This research aims to explore the issues of discrimination in relation to education, accommodation and employment. Despite individual projects and commitments by officials, very little has changed over the last decades and many cases of discrimination are examples of breaches of human rights.

The envisaged research will systematically explore:
- Policies in terms of ‘socio-economic rights’ – the straight availability of education, accommodation and employment and relevant legislation, facilities, support mechanisms, respect of differences etc.
- Policies and genuine implementations in terms of institutional and organisational approaches.
- Provision and maintenance of open spaces for intercultural and inter-ethnic communication.

Suggested research methods:
- Focus-groups in the local community investigating the range and scope and kind of discrimination in the area of education, accommodation and employment.
- Secondary analysis looking at relevant national legislation and other existing data (both at local, community and the national level) and including media coverage.
- The way(s) of dissemination and use of the results will follow later consultation.

The work will be undertaken in the following steps and with following responsibilities:
1. Main field researcher is a consortium, consisting of the UCC Science Shop, represented by Anna Kingston, the West Cork Travellers, represented by Margaret Allen and possibly a student from the MSWS-programme in UCC. Firstly, the details of the project will be formulated. This includes the exact formulation of the research question. Furthermore empirical material will be collected and a first evaluation will be undertaken, including the qualitative issues of the research.
2. The overall responsibility is shared by PERARES, represented by Peter Herrmann and Bálint Balázs, the West Cork Travellers, represented by Margaret Allen and the UCC Science Shop, represented by Catherine O’Mahony and in cooperation with Anna Kingston. This work is especially concerned with the elaboration of the framing, namely the exploration the Human Right-framework.
3. The evaluation will be undertaken in collaboration between Anna Kingston, Margaret Allen and Peter Herrmann (and possibly the UCC-student).

The property rights of the empirical raw data/material is – where applicable – with the West Cork Travellers. PERARES has the right to evaluate the data. Results of the study can only be published after reaching basic consent among the participants.
A separate, non-public report is concerned with the experiences of the collaboration. This report will not be published and is solely used for work within the PERARES-project.
Margaret Allen (West Cork Travellers)

Anna Kingston  (Science Shop, UCC)