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METHODOLOGICAL AND DATA INFRASTRUCTURE REPORT ON ROMA POPULATION IN THE EU

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August, 2016

Abstract

This paper aims to contribute to the policy discussion on the challenges of mapping the realities of Roma living conditions, and attempts to propose cross-country comparative, relevant indicators of Roma inclusion, which are acutely needed for evidence-based policy making. The reason for the special attention devoted to the situation of the Roma population is clear: a large group of EU citizens, 10-12 million people is living in much worse conditions, and with fewer opportunities for upward mobility, than their peers or neighbours. If these people remain excluded, uneducated, jobless and mired in deep poverty, it not only blights their own lives and determinates the possibilities of the next generations, but also has a significant impact on life for the majority, through burdens imposed on the welfare system and the reduced capacity of the local labour markets. Social indicators based on statistical and survey data are essential to provide clear and comprehensive evidence for policy makers. At present, evidence-based policy making aimed at Roma inclusion faces serious limitations, because basic information is lacking about Roma people's social and economic situation. The paper addresses issues related to measuring Roma inclusion and the outcomes of EU wide and national policies aiming at this population. In this effort the paper first outlines the political and conceptual framework and describes availability and limitations of data on Roma populations. In a next section it comparatively overviews indicators of Roma inclusion applied by National Roma Inclusion Strategies in 16 EU Member States and critically assesses them. Finally, it proposes alternative indicators that reflect challenges of Roma inclusion in a comprehensive, multidimensional way and discusses the possible data sources as well as gaps in available data.

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1. Introduction

1.1   Why monitor specifically the Roma people and their social inclusion?

The Roma minority is the most vulnerable ethnic minority group in Central and Eastern Europe, and it also experiences multiple disadvantages across Southern and Western Europe. Most of the 10-12 million Roma (or Gypsies)[1] in Europe (European Commission, 2011b), suffer discrimination and social exclusion, resulting in a poverty trap that is extremely hard to break and that is then inherited by younger generations. This cycle covers all the important spheres of life: a low level of education, employment characterised by unstable and informal jobs, bad housing and poor health. Roma people face multiple disadvantages that reinforce one another.

This paper aims to contribute to the policy discussion on the challenges of mapping the realities of Roma living conditions, and attempts to propose cross-country comparative, relevant, valid and timely indicators of Roma inclusion, which are acutely needed for evidence-based policy making. Data collections covering Roma people are very scarce in some countries, yet are available in others. Both the quantity and the quality of information and data on the living conditions of the Roma population have improved in many countries. A few surveys conducted in this field have been carried out in a systematic way, using a methodology (sampling technique and questionnaire) that could serve as a basis for constructing indicators on Roma inclusion. Moreover, survey data on the Roma are now available at the cross-country level, although the validity (and comparability) of these data is not always reassuring from an evidence-based policy aspect.

Moreover, the Roma are typically a hard-to-reach group, which implies a number of methodological challenges when it comes to surveying the group (Messing, 2014). The collection of sensitive personal information, including data on ethnic minorities, is regulated all across Europe. The multiple nature of Roma ethnic identity and centuries of prejudice and exclusion impel many Roma to hide their identity in official situations (such as the census), which makes sampling of a Roma survey unconventional, due to the lack of a reliable sampling frame. Besides sampling, there are other special methodological issues to consider, such as the definition of 'Roma': who decides who Roma is, and how does one measure discrimination, so as to ascertain whether the vulnerable situation of the Roma is due to structural reasons or to the discriminatory attitudes of the mainstream environment (or to both)?

The reason for the special attention devoted to the situation of the Roma population is clear: a large group of EU citizens is living in much worse conditions, and with fewer opportunities for upward mobility, than their peers or neighbours. If these people remain excluded, uneducated, jobless and mired in deep poverty, it not only blights their own lives and future chances, but also has a significant impact on life for the majority, through burdens imposed on the welfare system. Hence, the social inclusion of Roma is of the utmost interest to the whole of society. Social indicators based on statistical (and survey) data are essential to provide clear and comprehensive evidence for policy makers. At present, evidence-based policy making aimed at Roma inclusion faces serious limitations, because basic information is lacking about Roma people's social and economic situation, and the extent to which policies reach out to them is hard to measure in a valid and comparable way. Improving these tools is very topical, as recent decades have seen an increased risk that the Roma could lag behind even further.

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[1]   We use the term Roma as an umbrella category embracing a variety of highly heterogeneous groups in terms of language, cultural heritage and identity (European Commission, 2011c).

2. Political and conceptual framework on inclusion of the Roma

2.1 European Political Framework

Although the disadvantaged situation of the Roma has been apparent at the European policy level for decades, it was always regarded as a domestic issue for those countries with a large Roma population, and the EU paid scant attention to the issue before its enlargements in 2004 and 2007. Although the majority of Roma citizens in many old Member States also lived in a vulnerable situation, it did not warrant any major policy measure at the EU level before the mid-2000s. This situation has changed step by step, following the accession of post-communist countries: the EU has been more and more attentive to the promotion of Roma integration, as most European Roma live in the new EU Member States of Central and Eastern Europe. The EU was among the many founding organisations that launched the first European Roma integration initiative - the Decade of Roma Inclusion - as it recognised the importance of the initiative. Later, the EU introduced more initiatives aimed at Roma integration, both directly via the EU Roma Framework Strategy and indirectly via the Europe 2020 Agenda. Here, we briefly introduce major policy initiatives that have aimed at supporting Roma inclusion in the EU Member States.

2.1.1 Decade of Roma Inclusion (2005–2015)

The Decade of Roma Inclusion originally presented a ten-year policy framework that focused specifically on Roma minorities. This was a political commitment by both EU and non-EU European governments (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia and Spain) to eliminate discrimination against Roma people and to close the gap between them and the rest of society. Prioritising the areas of education, employment, health and housing, the framework committed governments to take account of the comprehensive nature of poverty, discrimination and gender mainstreaming (Decade of Roma Inclusion, 2005). It was reinforced by other EU frameworks (presented below).

The Decade was supported by a number of international organisations, including the World Bank, and by a number of programmes of the United Nations, the Council of Europe, the Council of Europe Development Bank, and the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights. It operated in partnership with non-governmental organisations, such as the Open Society Foundations and the European Roma Rights Centre. As the original term of the Decade drew to an end.

Among other activities, the Decade sought to draw up a relevant and valid framework for tackling discrimination and poverty among the Roma population, complementing this with awareness raising. The Decade's other important aim was to contribute to the empowerment of Roma minorities by involving representatives of Roma communities in policy discussions that affect their everyday life and social inclusion. It spurred the creation of specialised facilities and the mobilisation of new resources for Roma inclusion. Besides the above, the Decade also initiated, documented and disseminated good practices in the priority areas of education, employment, health and housing. In 2012, the Decade of Roma Inclusion Secretariat Foundation and the Open Society Foundations launched a shadow report project - 'Civil Society Monitoring Reports' - by supporting country teams that work

in civil society in eight countries (Albania, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Macedonia, Romania, Slovakia and Spain) and also, in 2013-2014, coalitions in a further eight countries (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, France, Germany, Italy, Montenegro, Serbia and the United Kingdom). These country teams drew up monitoring reports on the implementation of National Roma Integration Strategies (NRIS) and Decade Action Plans. These monitoring reports are often more evidence based than the actual NRISs, and use better indicators (Decade of Roma Inclusion, 2013; 2014b)

There are, however, a number of shortcomings identified in the activity of the Decade. These have to do with the overly ambitious mission and vaguely defined priorities that are often reflected in the National Roma Integration Strategies. Another recurring problem is inadequate resourcing, in terms of human capital and financial sources. This is reflected in the weakness of the programmes, as well as in the lack of an enforcement mechanism, which results in poor monitoring and evaluation, a failure to address structural discrimination, and consequently poor targeting of the minorities (Decade of Roma Inclusion, 2014).

2.1.2   Europe 2020 Agenda (2010–2020)

The Europe 2020 Agenda was developed by the European Commission as the EU's strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth (European Commission, 2014) and has a relevant but indirect impact on the Roma as a vulnerable social group. Five headline targets have been set for achievement by 2020. These are politically binding and serve as policy anchors: employment; research and development (R&D); climate change and energy; education; and the fight against poverty and social exclusion. Roma people could profit from the achievement of these, especially from those targeting employment, poverty and social exclusion. The agenda also acknowledges that improved educational qualifications would help with employability and assist in boosting the employment rate among Roma, and so would reduce poverty (European Commission, 2010). The European Social Fund (ESF) has also been made available to support the most vulnerable, among them Roma, in an effort to ensure that they are not disproportionately hit by the crisis (European Commission, 2010).[2]

The central aim of the Europe 2020 agenda is to confront the economic crisis by ensuring economic, social and territorial integrity, to increase awareness and recognise the fundamental rights of those who live in poverty and face social exclusion. It seeks to enable such people to live a dignified life and to ensure their active participation in society, using targeted support from structural funds, mainly the ESF. Part of its remit was to develop National Roma Integration Strategies (European Commission 2011c), in order to bring a more comprehensive and evidence-based framework linked to the Europe 2020 strategy.

2.1.3   EU Framework Strategy for National Roma Integration Strategies (2011)

The EU Framework Strategy for National Roma Integration Strategies (European Commission, 2011b) presents an unprecedented commitment by the EU and participating national governments to focus on Roma minorities and their social inclusion, as well as on contesting the centuries-long discrimination and prejudice that the Roma face in Member States. The Strategy was born from a recognition that the Roma are a large and trans-European minority that has experienced social exclusion for centuries in most of Europe's countries.

Social inclusion is based on ten principles developed by the EU to guide EU institutions and Member States on social development policies, including policies related to the social inclusion of Roma (European Commission 2011a). Although the principles are not legally binding, several Member States have committed themselves to adopting them in their national strategies. The ten fundamental

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2   Several Member States have defined this group to include vulnerable migrants, refused asylum seekers, illegal immigrants, economic migrants and ethnic minorities, especially Roma people (e.g. the Czech Republic, Ireland, Cyprus, Malta, Poland, Portugal and the United Kingdom).

principles include: feasible, pragmatic and non-discriminatory policies; policies that explicitly but not exclusively target Roma population; intercultural approach; general integration; awareness of gender mainstreaming; dissemination of evidence-based policies; use of EU instruments; involvement of regional and local authorities; involvement of civil society; and effective participation of the Roma communities. These principles will be applied in the protection of fundamental rights, in order to combat discrimination, poverty and social exclusion, while supporting gender equality and ensuring access to education, housing, health, employment, social services, justice, sports and culture. However, there is little sign that the fulfilment of these principles is monitored in countries of the NRIS; to the best of our knowledge, no tool has been developed to measure or monitor these basic principles.

The national strategies are tailored to each Member State, which coordinates its efforts to close the gap between Roma and non-Roma in the major areas of life (education, employment, healthcare and housing). Although the strategies are developed by individual Member States, a coordinated approach and the engagement of the main EU bodies are critical to achieving success in the four main areas of education, employment, healthcare and housing. The EU Framework creates this opportunity for coordination at all levels (international, national, regional and even local), involving all interested parties, including the Roma. Monitoring of the social inclusion of Roma is closely linked to the National Roma Integration Strategies, which called for efforts to develop tools that enable governments and the EU to comprehensively and comparatively evaluate efforts and funds dedicated to Roma inclusion. However, as we will demonstrate, data for evaluation, as well as indicators for monitoring, are scarce and are far from comprehensive (to say nothing of their questionable potential for comparison across the EU). Section 3.2 will elaborate on the indicators used by the National Roma Inclusion Strategies.

2.2 The concept of integration and the Roma – clarifications in brief

2.2.1 Understanding and defining integration/inclusion

In order to understand the difficulties related to measuring the social inclusion of Roma, we first need to conceptualise certain categories that are key to this paper: 'inclusion', 'integration' and 'Roma'.

In this paper we use 'inclusion' and 'integration' as synonymous expressions, though **inclusion** is broader, conceiving of the notion as a two-way process in which Roma minorities and the non-Roma environment alike need to be actively involved. Such an understanding of inclusion is shared by the broader academic arena, which identifies the major approaches to social inclusion: equal treatment, positive discrimination and mainstreaming equality (Rees, 2006). *Equal treatment* refers to provisions for ensuring that members of various disadvantaged or vulnerable groups are treated equally by the law and have equal access to state institutions. Such policies, however, fail to produce equal outcomes for these groups, because they fail to acknowledge the impact of hierarchies within society: the mere application of an equal-treatment approach tends rather to reproduce disadvantages, as it reinforces structural hierarchies. To give a very simple example: the mere right to public education for all does not prevent children who come from families in the lowest social strata from being educated in the poorest-quality schools and thus having less chance of getting a job, especially a meaningful job. *Positive discrimination* was born from the acknowledgement that equal treatment in itself is insufficient: its fundamental idea is that different treatment is needed according to different circumstances. Thus people who experience some sort of disadvantage need to be supported more: i.e. Roma individuals, who experience discrimination in the search for a job, need to receive additional support and preferential treatment by jobcentres. Positive discrimination by itself, however, will not lead to inclusion, as it seeks to 'correct' the distribution of positions by defining quotas in an effort to create fairness; but it does not tackle the structural causes behind the unequal distribution of positions. It is also

argued that positive discrimination fuels conflict between social groups, as it is essentially based on unequal treatment. True social inclusion is described by the concept of *mainstreaming equality*. This argues that inclusion is a longer-term social enterprise, since it needs to address the structural reasons for inequality by fostering systemic, structural change, rather than by counterbalancing the unequal distribution of positions. In this understanding, the social inclusion of the Roma may be achieved only if the root causes of their low social position - historical and persistent social exclusion - are addressed. True inclusion, thus, is a longer-term process, in which not only the Roma have a role: the direct and wider non-Roma environment needs genuinely to accept the Roma. It needs to regard them as members of society and allow them into social positions at all levels of the social hierarchy.

This understanding of inclusion is much broader than the one used by the European Commission in its conclusion about the 'EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020', which describes integration and inclusion as synonyms, and which refers to measures aimed at improving the situation of Roma living in EU Member States (European Commission, 2011b: 2). The conclusion addresses the Roma: although it acknowledges that the situation of the Roma population is largely a result of their historical and systematic exclusion from mainstream society, and although it affirms that inclusion should be regarded as a process in which **both Roma and the majority society play an active role**, the actual measures described focus exclusively on the Roma population and omit the responsibilities of the majority society.

However, in relation to other vulnerable groups the European Union applies the wider definition of inclusion. For example, migrant integration is generally defined as a process of mutual adaptation between the host society and migrants. The most important EU policy document that drives migrant integration policies at the national level – the 'Common Basic Principles for Immigrant Integration Policy in the EU' - outlines integration as a dynamic, two-way process of mutual accommodation by all migrants and residents of Member States.[3]

We believe that the practice of inclusion as applied by Roma inclusion strategies - regarding the process as a responsibility of the Roma minorities - is inappropriate: without the wider non-Roma environment's recognition of the importance of the integration of Roma minorities (and without determination on its part to see that through), Roma inclusion is doomed to fail. Presently, in the EU sphere of Roma inclusion, most indicators that assess integration focus exclusively on the minority group; there are very few (if any) that assess mainstream society's role in integrating Roma people (or other minority groups, for that matter). We think that the double-sided nature of integration needs to be reflected in the indicators, by including some that measure the majority society's willingness and effort to achieve inclusion. Thus, in this paper, we use the wider understanding of Roma 'inclusion', and propose indicators that refer both to the Roma minorities' greater inclusion in the spheres of the labour market, education, social and health services, housing, etc., and to the non-Roma environment's openness to coexistence, common activity and mutual recognition and communication.

Another issue that needs to be discussed with reference to inclusion is the **interests of the social partners** involved. There needs to be an understanding that the inclusion of Roma minorities is not merely a question of European values (still less a matter of charity), but is in the economic interests of all societies. Moreover, integration is essential not only to help provide economic and cultural benefits, but also to ensure the security and stability of society as a whole. In the long run, just the economic effect (cost) of exclusion and discrimination is immense for society: the social and labour market exclusion of the Roma leads to increased welfare dependency (and thus social expenditure) and to a decrease in tax revenue. Several studies have attempted to calculate the costs of social exclusion. Kézdi and Kertesi's (2006) economic modelling of the costs and benefits of improved educational qualifications among the Roma in Hungary showed that the sheer budgetary benefits (increased tax revenue) of higher educational qualifications would be very significant. The research's starting point was that the educational deficit of the Roma results in substantially lower employment rates

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3   See http://www.eesc.europa.eu/resources/docs/common-basic-principles_en.pdf

and household income, and consequently a lower lifetime contribution to tax and social contributions. The researchers showed that the budgetary return of investing in Roma education would be significant, even in the short term. In addition, social inclusion has a number of other positive consequences for mainstream society: cultural benefits, security and stability. Meanwhile, not only is lack of inclusion very expensive at the societal level, but societies run the risk of social instability and unrest.

2.2.2   Who is a Roma?

'Roma' is another category that needs to be defined for the purposes of this paper.[4] The European Commission defines the Roma as follows: 'The term "Roma" is used - similarly to other political documents of the European Parliament and the European Council - as an umbrella which includes groups of people who have more or less similar cultural characteristics, such as Sinti, Travellers, Kalé, Gens du voyage, etc. whether sedentary or not' (European Commission, 2011c). This definition is formulated in the recognition of 'Roma' minorities as a highly heterogeneous group, living in a number of European Member States and having an immense diversity of language use, ethnic identity, tradition, level of inclusion, history, etc. But this definition does not address many of the ambiguities and difficulties that the category 'Roma' encompasses.

   Although the Roma population varies significantly according to various identity-constructing factors, such as language, tradition, or level of social inclusion, still the majority environment's perception imagines 'the Roma' as a homogeneous and unified group, distinguished primarily by racial characteristics (skin colour) and traits of destitute poverty (Szelényi & Ladányi, 2006). Some authors argue that the concept of Roma is more a construct of the majority society, reflecting its perceptions, rather than an actual ethnic community/group (McGarry, 2014). Such an approach is driven by the hypothesis that societies translate the perceptions of 'otherness' into ethnic terms with deep cultural implications (Szalai, 2011), which leads to a misguided sense of ethnicity. A second issue with regard to conceptualising the 'Roma' is the fact that a large proportion of them possess multiple identities and describe their multiple 'belongingness' (Neményi 2007; Kézdi and Simonovits 2014). If asked about their ethnic identity, many Roma – especially in Central Europe - describe themselves equally as Hungarian/Slovak/Romanian and as Roma/Gypsy (or their subgroups). And this is not a theoretical dilemma, but a consequence of centuries-long turbulent waves of assimilation, integration and racial exclusion. This multiplicity and intersectionality in the construction of the ethnic identity of Roma people is rarely recognised by policy documents.

   The third issue with regard to conceptualizing the category 'Roma' relates to the agent doing the identification of the respondent: 'Who defines who is a Gypsy?' (Willems, 1997: 7). The question is essential to monitoring policy outcomes and to the practical application of integration indicators through data collection. There are two approaches to identifying Roma ethnicity, and these result in only partially comparable findings. In the narrower interpretation, Roma surveys focus on those who identify themselves as Gypsies/Roma ('self-identified Roma'), while the broader concept embraces all those who are regarded as such by outsiders ('ascription-Roma'). This latter group is definitely larger, due to reluctance on the part of Roma to reveal their ethnic belonging and the frequent absence in questionnaires of any way of recording multiple identification. These two approaches have further consequences in terms of who will be represented by the 'data': surveys that allow ethnic identification by the environment will definitely include a larger share of low-status, poor and socially excluded people - irrespective of how those people regard their own ethnic identity - simply because the perception of mainstream society is that the Roma are marginalised and live in destitute poverty. However, data collected from self-identified Roma have to reckon with relatively low response rates and,

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4   This section is based on Messing (2014).

in addition, with a higher share of Roma with a strong ethnic identity, and a low share of assimilated (and thus non-marginalised) Roma.

This leads us to another set of questions: What data sources are available to construct indicators of Roma inclusion? Whom do the most important data sources represent? And what are their limitations?

3. Overview of existing indicators and data sources

3.1 Potential data sources and problems with them

In proposing and constructing indicators, we need to consider what data are available, and also what the advantages and limitations are of those datasets. In this section we look at the data that are available for constructing indicators of Roma inclusion.

The most obvious source of data is the **census**. However, there are several limitations on the use of national censuses. First, in several countries the category of 'Roma' or 'Gypsy' does not appear at all (i.e. France, Greece, Italy and Portugal). In these countries, there is a major obstacle to the collection of any data on the Roma/Gypsy population as censuses serve as a baseline of representative samples for subgroups of society.

In most EU Member States, however, censuses include information about the ethnic background of the population, and Roma identity may be indicated by the respondent. Even in these countries, though, census data should be treated with caution, as for various reasons they heavily underreport the Roma (Ivanov, 2012). First of all, Roma people are reluctant to declare their ethnic identity because of widespread experience of stigmatisation, discrimination and unequal treatment. Second, a large proportion of Roma possess multiple identities: they identify both as Roma and as members of the majority society (Hungarian, Slovak, German, etc.). Most censuses, however, allow only a single identity to be declared. The Hungarian census of 2011 provides a good example of the impact that allowing multiple identities has on the reporting of Roma identity. In this census, the question on ethnic/national identity changed from the previous census (in 2001) to allow equal dual identification. Partly due to this modification to the question, the number of Roma measured by the census increased by 53% from one census (205,000 in 2001) to the other (315,000 in 2011) (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2013). We would argue that census data per se are usually not suitable for constructing comparative policy indicators of Roma inclusion because of these limitations, and also because the census takes place only every ten years. However, census data on the Roma (where such data exist) provide the best source of information about the geographical, gender and age distribution of the Roma, and thus offer the best baseline against which surveys representing the Roma may be constructed (FRA, 2012).

Another - probably most important - potential source of data for assessing the social inclusion of Roma comes from the **national surveys** conducted in individual Member States and, in a comparative manner, across Europe. The practice of surveying their Roma populations varies greatly across EU Member States: some countries have been conducting surveys since the early 1970s to investigate the level of social inclusion and the experiences of Roma people, but in most countries no such surveys were conducted at all. There is no account of Roma surveys available, but we know of recurring representative surveys in Hungary (Kemény et al., 2004); a registry of the Roma population in Slovakia; several surveys on the living conditions of the Gitano in Spain (Fundació Secredariado Gitanol); a survey providing good coverage of Roma in Romania (Fleck and Rughinis 2008); and a comparative non-representative survey in Spain, Bulgaria, Romania and Italy.[5]

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5 EU Inclusive: Data transfer and exchange of good practices regarding the inclusion of Roma population between Romania, Bulgaria, Italy and Spain (see Tarnovschi, 2012).

There are, however, larger, **cross-country comparative surveys** available about the living conditions of Roma populations. The first such surveys were conducted by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in two waves. The first was carried out in 2002 and a remarkable study was published on its findings, entitled *Avoiding the Dependency Trap* (UNDP, 2002; also a downloadable dataset). This covered five Central-Eastern and South-Eastern European countries (Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia), each of which investigated the socio-economic situation of its Roma population. The second wave was carried out in 2004 and 2005 and involved more countries from the region (Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Macedonia, Romania, Slovakia and Serbia; Montenegro and Kosovo are included separately). It resulted in a comprehensive analysis entitled Vulnerable Groups in Central and South Eastern Europe (see UNDP, 2005; also a downloadable dataset).

The successors to these two surveys were two other similar surveys that were carried out at the same time (2011) and had many identical features: the United Nations Development Programme/World Bank/European Commission (UNDP/World Bank/EC) regional Roma survey, and the Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) Roma pilot survey. These surveys have made a great contribution to analysis of the conditions and vulnerability of the Roma population. They were based on updated data and compiled the largest set of data ever gathered on the Roma. Both surveys were conducted in May–July 2011 on a random sample of Roma and non-Roma living in areas with a high density of the Roma population. They covered partly the same set of countries: the UNDP/World Bank/EC regional Roma survey involved 12 countries (the five EU Member States of Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia; the then-candidate member Croatia; and six non-EU countries in the Balkans: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, the Republic of Moldova and Serbia); meanwhile the FRA Roma pilot survey covered 11 EU Member States (Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, France, Greece, Italy, Poland, Portugal and Spain) (Brüggemann, 2012: 14).

All the above-mentioned UNDP surveys (from 2002, 2004 and 2011) and the FRA survey of 2011 were carried out among Roma and the non-Roma people living in close proximity to them. This sample design relied on the principle that the majority population living in the same neighbourhood as a Roma population tends to experience the same socio-economic environment, and can therefore serve as a benchmark against which to measure the situation of the Roma. However, this means that relatively well-off Roma are underrepresented in the surveys, since Roma respondents were sampled from areas where the proportion of the Roma population is at least the average level measured by national censuses. The UNDP/World Bank/EC and the FRA datasets are relevant and inclusive in terms of their themes, and five of the countries (the Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia) were covered in both surveys. In addition, the surveys took a sample of both households and individuals and inquired about a wide range of themes (promoted by the Roma Decade and the EU Roma Framework) that related to the social and economic situation of the Roma population - specifically their living conditions, income, employment, education and schooling, housing and health, and interaction with other ethnic groups and political representation (UNDP/World Bank/EC 2012; FRA 2012). These are also the most up-to-date datasets available; however, a new wave of these surveys is in preparation by the FRA within the framework of the project EU MIDIS 2.

Both the surveys, as well as Roma surveys in general, struggled with the following issues, and yielded different answers:
- *representativeness*: constructing a representative sample of the Roma population. The key barrier is the lack of a baseline against which representativeness can be defined. In several countries, even the census does not include a category for 'Roma' or 'Gypsy' (to say nothing of any subgroups). In any case, for various reasons explainedearlier, censuses typically underestimate the share of Roma people, and are therefore generally imperfect sources for sampling. Depending on the method used

to overcome the problem of how to construct a 'Roma' sample, the surveys may cover very different population segments (Messing, 2014);

- *the definition of who is considered 'Roma'* depends on how surveys operationalise the category of 'Roma', and they may arrive at very different results in terms of basic indicators, such as employment rate, level of education, housing conditions, etc.;

- *protection of sensitive data.* Ethnicity is regarded as sensitive data, to which stricter professional standards apply. There is a large variety of legislation on data protection in the EU Member States, and different institutions may also have varying interpretations of these regulations when it comes to constructing a survey sample and collecting, managing and storing data on ethnic background.

Data for indicators on the social inclusion of the Roma population would potentially be available if **large-scale European-wide mainstream survey**s (Labour Force Survey (LFS), EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC), the European Social Survey (ESS) or the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)) included data on the ethnic background of each respondent. This would provide a very good and comparative source for inclusion indicators – not only across European countries, but also between the Roma and non-Roma populations in individual countries. Hungary has adopted this approach and is piloting a question in its LFS on the ethnic background of the respondent, allowing also for dual identification. We regard this as an innovative but still isolated practice in Europe.

3.2 Indicators applied by National Roma Inclusion Strategies

Apart from Malta, all EU Member States submitted National Roma Integration Strategies (NRIS) in 2011–2012. These strategies, however, vary considerably in their structure and contents (and consequently in their length and level of elaboration), as well as in the quantity and quality of the data and indicators they use. For this paper, we examined the NRISs of 20 EU Member States, in order to explore and compare the quality and quantity of the data and indicators they used. One of the conclusions of our analysis of the National Roma Integration Strategies is that they are almost impossible to compare. Although most of them focus on the key areas of integration defined by the EU - education, employment, housing, health, poverty and discrimination - they are utterly divergent in their content, as well as their quality. This conclusion also applies to comparison of the indicators used in any part of the strategies; hence the possibility of comparing indicators applied to describe the challenges facing Roma inclusion across the EU Member States is very limited.

Our comparison of indicators used by NRISs covers almost all EU Member States: only a few countries that have no significant Roma population were excluded (although a number of countries with very small Roma populations were included, in order to paint a comprehensive picture). The countries involved were: Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom. We applied a rather broad definition of 'indicators': we collected any information that adds in any meaningful way to our knowledge of the quality of Roma people's life or that is linked to past, current or proposed policy measures in various social domains (demography, education, employment, housing, health, poverty/income, discrimination), so long as that information has been or could be converted into statistical data. This approach, of course, is far broader than a conventional 'social indicator' definition, but it allows us to gain a more complete picture of how Member States approach policies that target their Roma populations.

Of the 20 countries examined, four (France, Germany, Belgium and Portugal) did not use indicators in an assessable manner (they either did not use indicators at all, or provided a maximum of just two). Thus, it was impossible to analyse these countries' NRISs with respect to the indicators and data sources they applied. Hence, we excluded the NRISs of these Member States from our study.

The reason for the lack of indicators or any statistical data in the NRISs is similar for both France and Germany, both of which identify Roma inclusion as part of general inclusion policies, and believe that Roma integration should be achieved exclusively through mainstream programmes; thus they implicitly reject the need for ethnically targeted programmes that address the Roma. France's NRIS is in fact not a strategy, but rather an integrated set of policy measures incorporated into the country's social inclusion policies, without the identification of any indicators. Similarly, the German NRIS states that a specific Roma strategy is not required in Germany; and nor is a national strategy necessary for those foreign Roma who arrive in Germany as immigrants or refugees and have the right to permanent residence, since they have access to the same integration programmes as other groups of foreign nationals. In addition, the German NRIS highlights the fact that no statements can be made about the educational, housing or health status of German Sinti and Roma or foreign Roma, since the relevant data are not collected in official statistics on the basis of ethnic origin. Portugal also alludes to the scarcity of information on Roma communities; it intends to conduct a broad study, in order to collect relevant information for defining and implementing suitable policies for Roma inclusion. These strategies highlight a major challenge - lack of suitable data - to designing and monitoring Roma integration policies that is not exclusive to these four countries.

The NRISs from the remaining countries that we could analyse are still extremely varied in terms of the quantity and quality of the indicators they use. Altogether we identified 272 indicators in the 16 NRISs. Looking at the most essential aspect, the number of statistical indicators ranges from four in Ireland and six in Finland, to over 30 apiece in Spain, Slovakia and Hungary; this clearly reveals how different approaches were applied by the Member States in elaborating their Roma strategies. Not surprisingly, countries with a larger Roma population use more indicators (Spain, Slovakia and Hungary: at least 30; Romania, Bulgaria and Italy: at least 20), but there are notable exceptions. On the one hand, the Netherlands should be highlighted because of the high number of indicators that its NRIS used (24), despite the low number and share of its Roma population (compared to other Eastern and Southern European countries). At the other end of the scale we find the Czech Republic and Greece utilising fewer indicators (11 and 9, respectively) when detailing their Roma inclusion strategies, despite the rather significant Roma population in these countries (Figure 3.1 and Appendix 1).

Although the number of indicators used in an NRIS could be seen as a proxy that suggests the level of elaboration and the attention paid to the issue of Roma inclusion in a particular country, these pure numbers conceal a lot of qualitative differences among countries. Most of the countries published exact numeric figures as indicators, but in a number of cases only rough figures (in percentages) or proportions were presented. The most extreme in this regard is Sweden, which mentions only rough proportions, instead of exact numeric figures, in connection with all the indicators that appear in the Swedish NRIS.

Figure 3.1   Number of indicators used in National Roma Inclusion Strategies (2011) in 16 EU Member States
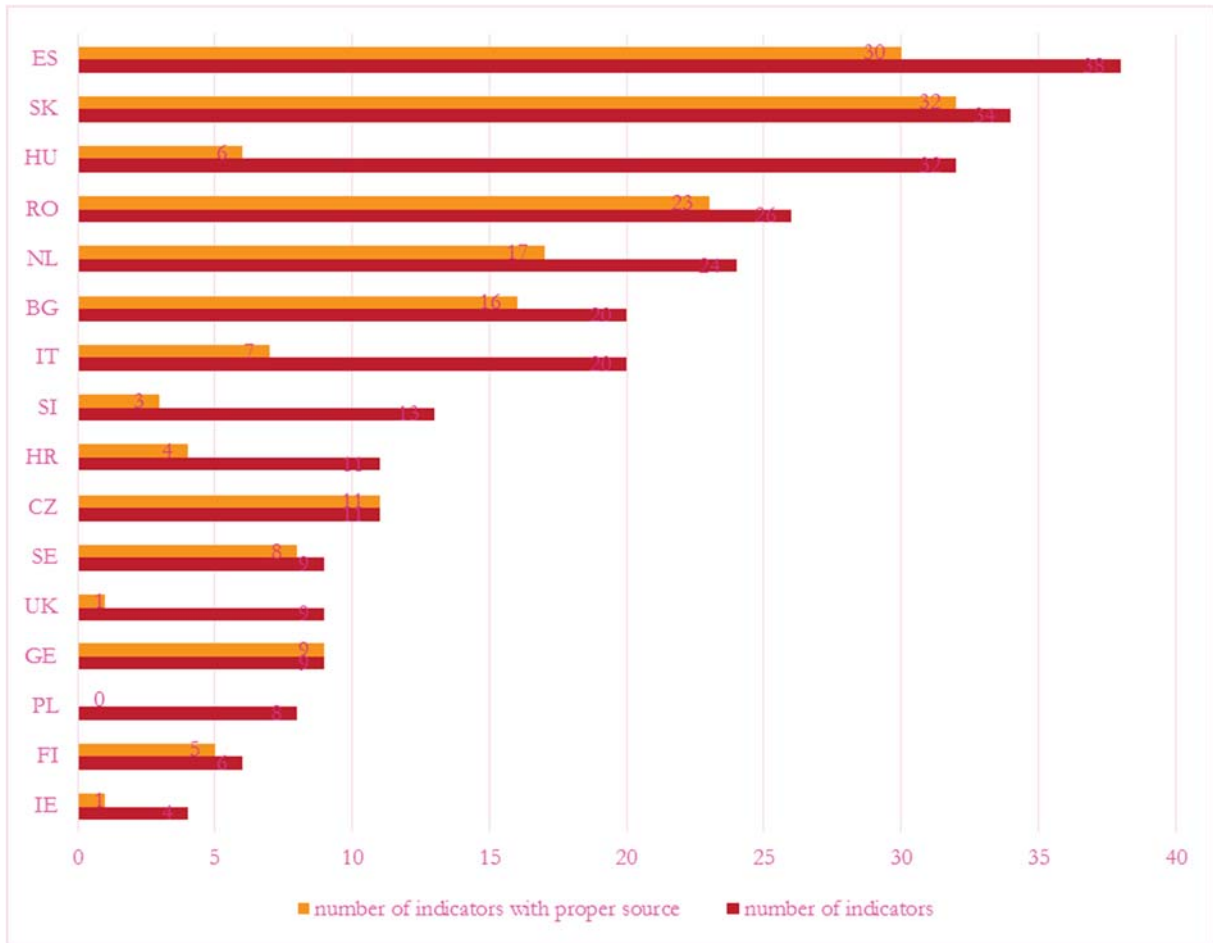
Source own compilation from National Roma Inclusion Strategies (2011–2012)

One of the issues we studied concerning the quality of indicators used in NRISs was whether proper references to data sources were provided. Slightly more than half of the indicators (57%) in the 16 NRISs had a more or less proper reference;[6] for the remaining 43%, only very unclear or no data sources were mentioned. In this regard the Czech and Greek NRISs performed best: these two countries included references for all the indicators they used; however, the total number of indicators was low in those countries. The Slovak, Bulgarian, Finnish, Swedish and Spanish NRISs published at least 80% of their indicators with a proper reference to its data source. Poland should be highlighted, as it has no proper sources indicated for any of the indicators mentioned in the Polish NRIS; but certain other countries (such as the UK, Ireland, Slovenia and Hungary) are in a similar position, having published their indicators with at most 25% having a proper reference or source.

The number of indicators by domain also varies significantly (Figure 3.2). Most indicators cover the field of education: every fourth indicator (N=69) focuses on this domain. It is followed by housing (N=53), health (N=46) and employment (N=41) - i.e. approximately every fifth or sixth indicator covers one of these fields. Other indicators, representing domains like demography, poverty or discrimination, are less frequently referred to.

In sum, these documents use indicators in an unsystematic fashion: the data sources and the reliability (and actual content) of the indicators are not always explicit and transparent, and they are not

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6 Here we applied a less strict method in deciding which references are 'proper': not only those with complete publishing information (name of the dataset/survey or the title of the report/book, etc.; name of the author(s), if any; date; publisher; link, etc.), but also those with enough information given to find them.

comparable across countries at all. We might also look at whether they refer to the source of the data; whether they use the data in a critical way (validity); and whether the indicators are suitable for designing inclusion policies at all. In the domain of employment, many of the forms of work performed by the Roma (informal, irregular, unreported, in kind, etc.) are not captured by classic employment indicators; these need to be broadened out in order to measure Roma inclusion.

On the basis of the lessons learned from the indicators used in these policy documents, we can say that better and more transparent (and valid) data are needed. More precisely, the indicators should be constructed in a way that reflects the actual issues and challenges that policies should respond to. Also, we may conclude that although there are huge discrepancies and considerable doubts about the validity of data sources for indicators, this should not justify the lack of effort invested in constructing better - i.e. more reflective, more valid and more comparable - indicators.

Figure 3.2   Number of indicators by domains used in National Roma Inclusion Strategies (2011) in 16 EU Member States
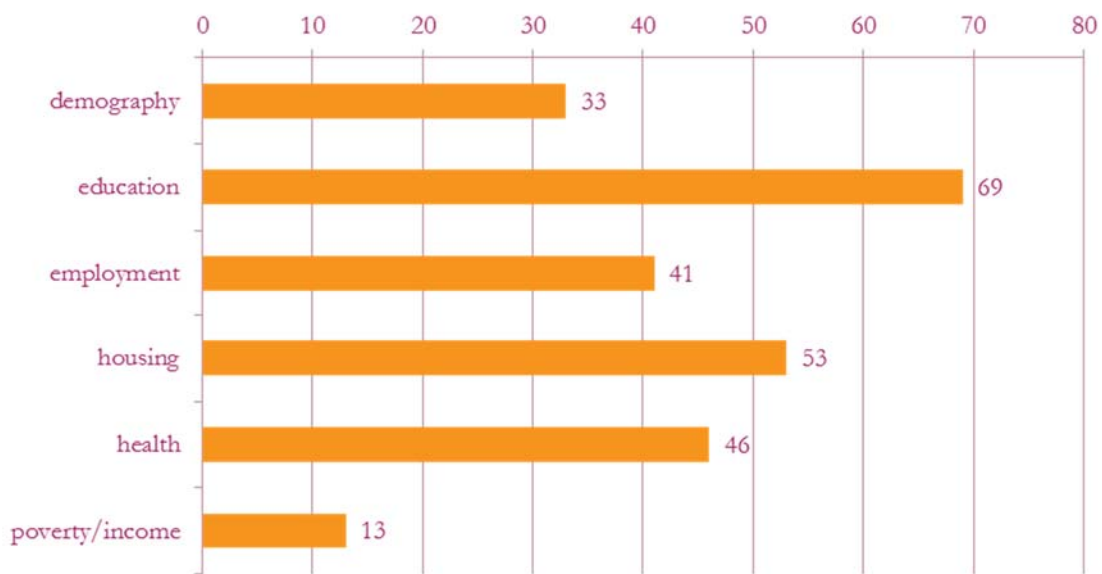
Source Own compilation from National Roma Inclusion Strategies (2011–2012)

3.3   An example of Roma-focused indicators: The Roma Inclusion Index of the Decade of Roma Inclusion Secretariat Foundation

The Decade of Roma Inclusion Secretariat Foundation drew up a set of indicators to measure the progress of Roma inclusion according to the priorities of the Roma Decade (Decade of Roma Inclusion Secreteriat Foundation, 2015). The aim of this project is similar to ours; but there are some notable differences, too.

The similarity is that both the Roma Inclusion Index and our project aim to identify relevant indicators regarding Roma inclusion that are comparable across countries. One major difference between the two indicator initiatives is that, aside from drawing up indicators, the Roma Decade intends to gather data and present the values of the indicators, by country, from existing datasets, which is not the aim of our current work. Another difference is that while the Roma Decade project is built solely on existing data, as well as those existing datasets we propose additional data sources that (while they also exist) are not yet appropriate for indicator building in the field of Roma inclusion. By extending these large-scale data collections (such as EU-SILC or LFS) using variables on the ethnicity of the

respondent, it should be possible to end up with more reliable data sources that can serve as a basis for elaborating Roma indicators. Finally, the coverage of the topics also represents a difference between the two similar initiatives, as the Roma Inclusion Index follows the progress of the Roma along the areas highlighted in the Roma Decade (employment, education, health and housing, with the cross-cutting areas of non-discrimination, gender equality and poverty reduction), whereas our project covers these topics, but also other important domains, such as demography, inclusive environment and empowerment, with the cross-cutting areas of gender, age and settlement type.

Since the aims and the coverage of the domains of the two indicator projects overlap, a number of the proposed indicators are the same. Clearly, both projects also aim to take account of those social indicators that are currently widely used in the EU.

4. Proposed Indicators: potential and limitations

4.1 General remarks

As mentioned above (Section 3.1), there are some inherent challenges related to statistical data collection on the Roma population all over Europe. The main barrier to statistically appropriate Roma surveys is the lack of proper baseline statistics adequate to construct representative samples for each Member State; thus Roma surveys in general cannot meet all the requirements of representativeness. One of the main reasons for the lack of such baseline statistics is the protection of sensitive data, including data on ethnicity in EU countries in general. Furthermore, the lack of consensus among scholars, politicians and lawyers on the central question of 'Who are the Roma?' also hampers the elaboration of proper Roma surveys. In general, potential data sources of proper indicators, based on statistical data in the field of Roma inclusion, should meet the followings requirements:

- they should be based on representative sampling;
- they should be comparable across countries;
- they should be comparable with non-Roma/total population;
- the sample size should be sufficient for the Roma subsample;
- they should be available in all/most Member States.

Ideal data sources are national censuses, cross-country Roma surveys like the FRA/UNDP surveys (but only if it is possible to create from these Roma surveys general, widely used indicators that are designed for the overall population) and large-scale comparable EU surveys such as LFS or EU-SILC (if a variable on (multiple) ethnicity or Roma identity is available). The main reason why the Roma should be included in such large-scale EU surveys is that they are the only minority group that can be found in almost all EU Member States, and most of them - in whatever country - live in poor and vulnerable conditions; therefore involving them in these surveys would be meaningful.

Moreover, ideal datasets provide both individual and household data: some of the relevant domains require household-level information, and in some cases, such as income or work intensity, individual information on all household members (or just those of active age) is also required.

In what follows, the proposed Roma inclusion indicators will be presented by domain. In this paper, we consider only those indicators that can be produced from population surveys and the census. We have excluded data sources collected by state authorities (ministries, government bodies), because these vary greatly across countries in terms of their structure, their quality and their content. These data, although they could be very useful sources, follow the logic and principles of the given authority, and can rarely be compared to other types of data. In addition, they are seldom (if at all) available for purposes of research.

In the following sections, the cross-cutting categories for indicators in each domain are gender, age and settlement type of the individual or the household. It should be noted that the set of indicators below are only proposals and merely constitute an ideal for Roma indicators, taking the actual conditions and available datasets into account as far as possible.

4.2   Demography

Indicators proposed:

DEM1: number and share of Roma population

There are a number of problems related to this essential indicator. One important limitation relates to the issue of how 'Roma' category is conceptualised and who is regarded as Roma. Do the data reflect self-identified Roma, or do they also include those people regarded by the direct environment as Roma? Ethnically, the first approach is more acceptable; but if we are concerned with policies that target discrimination and racism, then the actual target of such policies should be those that are regarded as Roma by the out-group. These two distinct approaches to conceptualising the category of 'Roma' may lead to highly divergent indicators with reference to the number/share of the Roma population.

A further dilemma - also described above - relates to the multiple identities of Roma in many countries. Data should reflect the historical fact that many of Europe's Roma identify as much with the mainstream society's national identity as with their Roma ethnic background. Applying multiple identity questions in surveys or censuses is a proper method to resolve this issue.

A third dilemma regarding the conceptualisation of the category of 'Roma' relates to the fact that identity is rooted in various intersecting factors, such as language, tradition, cultural identity and race. Which of these constituents (or their intersection) serves as the basis of defining 'who is Roma', and consequently how many Roma live in a country?

Based on these dilemmas, several scholars question whether the 'Roma' population in Europe can actually be counted.

Other demographic data may be derived from censuses, because even though they significantly underestimate the Roma population, still the distribution by age, gender and other demographic traits reflects the reality quite well.

Potential data source: census where ethnic data are collected; in other countries: large-scale surveys.

DEM2: age structure

The importance of this indicator lies in the fact that the age pyramid of the Roma and of the non-Roma populations differs greatly in most countries. One issue for consideration concerning the age structure is the categories for use. We propose to include a more detailed categorisation for children than the 0–6 and 7-16 (or 18) generally used. We argue for the need to split children into several age groups (0-3; 4-6; 7-12; 13-18) because of the relatively high proportion of young children within the Roma. Moreover, a more detailed categorisation is essential for policy-making purposes. A vital sphere of policies relating to Roma inclusion has to do with children - more specifically, early childhood development and the empowerment of mothers with young children. Other policies aim at the inclusion of socially disadvantaged children in early childhood education and the 'shepherding' of children from Roma families into kindergarten and pre-school as early as possible. Primary and lower secondary schools are also key areas for Roma inclusion policies, while a focal point of inclusion policies relates to the reduction in early school leaving. Young people (16-24) should be treated separately in terms of effects on policy design on youth unemployment and active labour market policies that target early-career youth. These aspects need to be taken into account when age categories for indicators are defined.

Potential data source: census where ethnic data are collected; in other countries: large-scale surveys.

DEM3: Number and share of migrant (non-citizen) Roma

Roma migration from the new EU Member States to older Member States has become an issue in the past decade, especially since the EU accession of Romania and Bulgaria. It is important to have

information on the extent and nature of such migration, but there is hardly any source for producing reliable, valid and comparable indicators on migration.

Potential data source: there are two questions in the FRA Roma survey about migration expectations; LFS or EU-SILC, if they include (multiple) questions on ethnicity.

Indicators proposed:
DEM4a: fertility rate of adult women or
DEM4b: number of children per adult woman or
DEM4c: number of children per household

This key demographic indicator may be deduced from census data. Generally speaking, we know from statistics that Roma women have higher fertility rates than exist within the general population of European countries. Still, there is very little information about the extent to which the fertility rate among the Roma exceeds the trends of the population. Also, there is little knowledge about the causes of high fertility rates: is it due to the general demographic rule about the level of poverty and the number of children, meaning that poor families tend to have more children, or is it due to some cultural characteristics? Also, the geographic distribution of fertility rates may be an important factor for policy.

Potential data source: census where ethnic data are collected; in other countries: large-scale surveys.

DEM5:   average life expectancy
This key demographic indicator may be deduced from census data. In general, the statistics show significantly lower life expectancy in the Roma population than in mainstream society. In Hungary, for example, the difference is approximately ten years. The reasons underlying this huge gap include poverty, poor health and higher child mortality.

Potential data source: census where ethnic data are collected; in other countries: large-scale surveys.

4.3   Education

Education has a central role to play in the process of the inclusion of the Roma, and therefore special emphasis should be placed on progress in education. Most of the indicators relevant in this field are identical to the mainstream EU indicators and thus provide an opportunity for comparison between Roma and non-Roma. Only a few indicators should be devoted to issues specific to Roma people, such as school segregation and home schooling. Educational indicators should be divided by life-cycle into adult and children sections, like the mainstream education indicators used in the EU.

4.3.1   Indicators for adults

School systems differ significantly, which makes comparison of educational levels very difficult. Indicators on the number of school years completed and the educational level attained according to the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) are the two options that may be compared across countries. The first is much easier, but raises issues of comparison: would kindergarten or pre-school count (e.g. in some countries, the last year of kindergarten serves as pre-school)? Does adult education or non-formal education (training) count? What about drop-outs returning to school? ISCED, on the other hand, gives a picture of actual qualifications and raises fewer questions; thus it seems to be a more practical indicator from the point of view of comparison across countries, as well as between Roma and non-Roma. Though ISCED provides less-detailed information than

the number of years at school, ISCED levels also explain a lot about the educational career of the Roma and about the gap between Roma and non-Roma.

Indicators proposed for adults:

EDU1: educational levels by ISCED categories
EDU1.1: share of those with no primary education (ISCED 0)
EDU1.2: share of those with only primary education (ISCED 1)
EDU1.3: share of those with lower secondary education (ISCED 2)
EDU1.4: share of those with vocational qualifications
EDU1.5: share of those with upper secondary education (ISCED 3)
EDU1.6: share of those with tertiary education (ISCED 4) and above

Potential data source: LFS (if it includes a question on ethnicity); census where ethnic data is collected; in other countries: large-scale surveys.

EDU2: share of illiterates
Potential data source: census where ethnic data is collected; in other countries: large-scale surveys or FRA EU MIDIS 2 survey.

4.3.2 Indicators for minors

Many of the data on the education of minors are produced by state authorities. However, they usually do not include information about the ethnic background of the child. Thus, the suggested indicators below may be produced on the basis of population surveys. This, however, raises another barrier: for methodological reasons, comparison across countries is difficult. The census does not include data specifically on education. Therefore, we need to rely on survey data, which are not totally representative; but we at least know what kinds of biases are inherent in them (e.g. overrepresentation of socially marginalised families).

Indicators proposed for minors:

EDU3: share of participation in early childhood education (kindergarten)
EDU4: average age of entering institution
EDU5: average age of starting primary school (ISCED 1)
EDU6: share of children attending special schools (based on parental knowledge)
EDU7: share of 'home-schooled' children
EDU8: share of early school leavers; as defined by Eurostat – i.e. 18–24 who have completed at most lower secondary education and are not at school
EDU9: share of children in segregated school setting
EDU10: share of children in special classes/schools (designed originally for disabled children with special needs)
EDU11: share of those aged 15 and above continuing in upper secondary education
EDU12: share of those aged 18–24 who are not in education, employment or training (NEET)
EDU13: drop-out rate (share of children who dropped out of school before they reached the official school leaving age, as defined by the given country)

Potential data source: FRA EU MIDIS 2.

4.4 Employment

Generally speaking, the workforce in Europe is shrinking, mainly as a result of demographic changes. In addition, the EU has around 80 million people with low or basic skills, indicating that they earn

lower returns than better-educated people. This group includes the majority of Roma in almost all the countries where they live. Sources of reliable data in the field of employment are also limited. Censuses in most EU Member States do not include such information; the LFS and EU-SILC do, but there is no information on ethnic background to be derived from the LFS. Therefore, we need to rely on survey data, which, though not totally representative, do highlight basic patterns and problems. However, this also highlights the urgent need to include ethnicity in the LFS and EU-SILC, in order to acquire better data on the situation of minorities.

Indicators proposed:
EMP1:   employment rate (aged 16 to 64)
EMP2:   Unemployment rate (aged 16 to 64 who are economically active)
EMP2:   Formal employment rate: share of those aged 16 to 64 who are economically active and have a formal work contract
EMP3:   Share of those aged 16 to 64 who perform any in-kind work (housework, helping friends, etc.)
EMP4:   Share of those individuals aged 16 to 64 receiving unemployment benefits
EMP5:   Share of those individuals aged 16 to 64 who participate in any active labour market policy (ALMP) initiative (public works or activation schemes)
EMP6:   Share of the self-employed in the active population aged 16 to 64
EMP7:   Work intensity

Potential data source: FRA EU MIDIS 2; LFS, EU-SILC if they include a variable on ethnicity.

4.5   Housing

Decent housing is a fundamental right. But poor households, including Roma, often dwell in substandard housing, with poor neighbourhood or settlement infrastructure. The poor housing conditions are very often embedded in an economically and ethnically segregated neighbourhood, in which the various types of disadvantage enhance each other. It is hard to measure these disadvantages using statistical tools, as they appear at different levels: the household and the neighbourhood/settlement level. Some of the relevant data on Roma housing are generally available in censuses. In addition to the census, EU-SILC could provide relevant data on housing conditions, but the recurring barrier regarding EU-SILC is that there is no information on ethnic background; furthermore, the sample size is too small to glean data on the Roma. Therefore, we need to rely on survey data; but again, these data are not totally representative, since most of the surveys overrepresent Roma living in a segregated environment.

HOU1: Settlement type at NUTS4 level
HOU2: type of housing
HOU3: segregated vs integrated environment (self-estimated share of Roma households in the neighbourhood/settlement)
HOU4: overcrowding rate (room/person) – adequate personal space
HOU5: households without basic facilities (water, electricity, type of heating, sewerage, bathroom, kitchen, etc.)
HOU6: inadequate housing conditions (based on EU-SILC, e.g. leaking roof)

Potential data source: census, FRA EU MIDIS 2; EU-SILC if it includes a variable on ethnicity.

4.6 Health

Research clearly shows that life expectancy and the health condition of the Roma population are far worse than the majority society in most countries where Roma live. Poor health might be both the cause and a consequence of the Roma population's poor social status – covering unhealthy nutrition and housing conditions, less ability to access healthcare provisions and the necessary medicines, and also the damage caused by smoking and alcohol consumption. The EU's health-specific data source - the European Health Interview Survey (EHIS) - would be a good source of information if it included data on ethnicity. The same applies to the EU-SILC, which includes some questions that are also relevant to Roma health. FRA EU MIDIS 2 is a third possibility: in this case, the Roma focus is evidently available, but the sampling and the set of health-related questions are more problematic.

Indicators proposed:

HEA1:   share of population aged 16+ with chronic disease or disability (EU-SILC)
HEA2:   smoking and alcohol consumption
HEA3:   access to healthcare
HEA4:   ability to access/buy medicine
HEA5:   unmet needs (EU-SILC)

Potential data source: FRA EU MIDIS 2; EHIS and EU-SILC if they include a variable on ethnicity.

4.7 Income and Poverty

The poor conditions in all the social factors presented above directly or indirectly lead to inadequate income, poverty and social deprivation, and Roma people in general are more affected than the majority population in all those countries where Roma live. In the area of income and poverty, all the proposed indicators could rely on EU-SILC if it included a variable on ethnicity, even if the sample size were too small to isolate the Roma in some questions. FRA EU MIDIS 2 could be an alternative to some extent, but only if the indicators were calculated in line with EU-SILC definitions, so that the situation of the Roma and the majority population could be properly compared.

Indicators proposed:

POV1: Relative poverty (below 60% of median income)
POV2: Severe social deprivation (EU-SILC methodology)
POV3: Lack of proper food (EU-SILC, one item in the deprivation questions)
POV4: Lack of proper heating due to lack of money (EU-SILC, one item in the deprivation
          questions)
POV5: Income/social transfers and benefits (EU-SILC)

Potential data source: EU-SILC (if it includes ethnic data); FRA EU MIDIS 2.

4.8 Inclusive/discriminatory environment

The poor social situation of the Roma population derives from both structural factors and discrimination. Indicators related to a wide range of structural factors have been discussed above. In most cases, it is proposed that these indicators should be based on databases (e.g. censuses, EU-SILC, LFS - all of these only if an ethnicity variable is also available; FRA EU MIDIS 2) that allow a controlled comparison between Roma and non-Roma. As well as this indirect measurement of discrimination, direct indicators can also be applied (e.g. based on the experience of discrimination reported by the respondents). However, discrimination can also be measured in a less direct way, as it appears in various forms in everyday life; thus 'inclusive or discriminatory environment' is a more appropriate

approach to measuring the interpersonal relations of social inclusion than the term 'discrimination' itself. For example, indicators on interethnic support networks or access to basic services are also essential to reveal hidden patterns of discrimination and to provide a wider aspect of inclusive/exclusive social environment.

Indicators proposed:

INC1:   experience of discrimination in the past 12 months

INC2:   reporting of discriminatory experiences

INC3:   interethnic support network: number of Roma and non-Roma friends

INC4:   attitudes towards Roma of the majority in the local community

INC5:   access to institutionalised provisions/services

INC5.1: access to support (benefit) for the unemployed

INC5.2: participation in active labour market policy programmes

INC5.3: support with learning difficulties for children/extracurricular activities in education

INC5.4: support for mothers with young children

INC5.5: access to legal aid

Potential data source: FRA EU-MIDIS 2; ESS.

4.9 Empowerment

Empowerment of vulnerable social groups and ethnic minorities, such as the Roma, usually receives less emphasis in policy discourse, especially in discourse on how to measure the quality of life of these groups by using social indicators. Political participation is still one of the most widely used indicators in this domain; but a distinction should be drawn between active and passive forms of participation, and such an approach is less widespread in Roma surveys. Empowerment is closely linked to the issue of identity, with an emphasis on both positive and negative feelings related to identity. Knowledge or use of the Roma language would seem to be a fitting indicator to measure identity directly; but measuring identity solely on the basis of knowledge of the Roma language would be misleading, as in some Member States the proportion of Roma-language speakers is small, even though these people might have a strong Roma identity. There are some other possible indicators that in theory seem appropriate, but in practice present difficulties with measurement (such as the indicator on civil activity in minority issues). In some Member States with a significant Roma population, civil activity within the population as a whole is still very low, and this leads to inadequate sample size on such questions. Data sources on empowerment are scarce in general, and thus improvement in data collection is highly recommended. Nevertheless, some comparable datasets (such as FRA EU MIDIS 2 and ESS) do provide some information on these questions. As supplementary data sources, information from equal-opportunity authorities and election office data on minority representatives and voting in minority elections (in countries where that is applicable) would make a great contribution. However, what is at issue is a cross-country comparison, and therefore our proposals do not build on such data sources.

Indicators proposed:

EMW1: Political participation (active and passive)

EMW2: Positive–negative identity

EMW3: Knowledge/use of Roma language

EMW4: Number of human rights organisations representing the Roma

EMW5: Existence/lack of media channels for ethnic minorities/the Roma

EMW6: The share of Roma employees in the mainstream media

Potential data source: FRA EU-MIDIS 2; ESS (R8).

Number of indicators in National Roma Inclusion Strategies in 20 Member States

	Demography		Education		Employment		Poverty, income		Housing		Health		Discrimination		Sum		
	N	Source	N	Source	N	Source	N	Source	N	Source	N	Source	N	Source	N	Source	% of indicators with source
HU	2	2	6	1	2	0	8	0	9	1	2	1	2	1	0	0	31
IT	5	1	6	6	0	0	1	0	6	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	20
BG	2	2	6	6	5	5	3	3	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20
CZ	2	2	3	3	6	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11
GE	5	5	3	3	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	9
SK	2	2	7	7	2	2	7	5	10	10	2	2	4	4	0	0	34
RO	1	1	3	3	2	0	12	12	2	2	2	1	4	4	0	0	26
ES	2	0	11	9	8	5	5	5	8	8	3	3	1	0	0	0	38
UK	3	1	1	0	0	0	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9
IE	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
SE	1	0	3	3	0	0	1	1	2	2	2	2	0	0	0	0	9
FI	0	0	2	2	3	3	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	6
NL	4	4	7	7	6	1	3	2	3	2	0	0	1	1	0	0	24
PL	1	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	8
SI	0	0	1	1	3	2	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13
HR	3	2	4	0	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11
sum	35	22	69	51	41	26	54	29	47	26	14	9	13	10	0	0	273
countries excluded from analysis due to very low number of indicators																	
FR	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
DE	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
BE	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
PT	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1

Source: own compilation from National Roma Inclusion Strategies (2011–2012)

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InGRID
Inclusive Growth Research Infrastructure Diffusion

Referring to the EU2020-ambition of Inclusive Growth, the general objectives of InGRID – Inclusive Growth Research Infrastructure Diffusion – are to integrate and to innovate existing, but distributed European social sciences research infrastructures on 'Poverty and Living Conditions' and 'Working Conditions and Vulnerability' by providing transnational data access, organising mutual knowledge exchange activities and improving methods and tools for comparative research. This integration will provide the related European scientific community with new and better opportunities to fulfil its key role in the development of evidence-based European policies for Inclusive Growth. In this regard specific attention is paid to a better measurement of related state policies, to high-performance statistical quality management, and to dissemination/outreach activities with the broader stakeholder community-of-interest, including European politics, civil society and statistical system.

More detailed information is available on the website: www.inclusivegrowth.be

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Contract No 312691

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