The Role of Diplomacy in Achieving Representation and Participation for the Roma

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Declaration

I hereby declare that this dissertation is my own original work.

Valeriu Nicolae Ciolan
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Acknowledgements

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"I am blighted by the Foreign Office at present. Earlier today, a creepy official, who is 'in charge' (heaven help us) of South America, came over to brief me ahead of my trip to Chile. All crap about Human Rights. Not one word about the UK interest; how we saw the balance, prospects, pitfalls, opportunities in the Hemisphere."

Alan Clark - British MP and former Minister for Defence Procurement (The Economist, 1997)

Chapter 1: A role for Diplomacy in interethnic conflict?

In this dissertation, I take the position that conventional diplomacy needs not only reform, but also the development of efficient approaches towards the prevention and negotiation of interstate/intrastate ethnic conflicts. The increasing exclusion of and discrimination against Roma in the European Union (EU), coupled with a growing awareness of long-term discrimination within Roma communities, has produced an increasingly strained relationship between the majority populations in Europe and Roma. This is a serious threat to European stability and needs redress through different tools, including diplomatic ones. Widespread and accepted anti-Gypsyism needs to be recognised and addressed as an indicator of stress and potential conflict. I propose that a European Roma diplomatic corps may offer a solution in negotiating more sustainable European inclusion policies as well as in resolving inter-ethnic conflicts and in bringing about a change of attitudes within not only diplomatic and political circles, but also within the majority populations in regard to Roma.

In 1984, the *Wall Street Journal* ran an article asserting the increasing irrelevance of diplomacy. It elaborated the political appointments of often incompetent people and the reduced influence of career diplomats as they were bypassed by political leaders. Analysing

the disastrous failure of diplomacy in the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, the Iraqi invasion of Iran, the Argentina-United Kingdom dispute over the Falkland Islands, the US-Nicaragua conflict, the occupation of Grenada by the US, and the failure of the UN in Afghanistan, the article argued that diplomacy had become "irrelevant" and needed reform. Inter-ethnic conflicts motivated by racial hatred were not mentioned in the article, which may be read as an indication that diplomacy in general has not been concerned with resolving conflicts that typically take place within the borders of a national state.

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

The salience of ethnic conflicts led to the coining of a new expression, "ethnic cleansing," in the early 90s, an expression often used in media coverage around the world. Public diplomacy, humanitarian diplomacy, and preventive diplomacy have developed as alternatives to traditional diplomacy and are increasingly used as viable complementary actions to conventional diplomacy as defined by Berridge (2005). Still, it seems almost impossible to end most interethnic conflicts through negotiations. The failure of the UN to solve or address the Rwandan genocide and the current Darfur crisis, in conjunction with the slow and far from perfect reform of the UN Human Rights Council, as well as the restart of violence in conflicts

considered "solved," as in Sri Lanka, East Timor, Turkey, Lebanon, and Israel indicate, according to many, the need for a reform of diplomatic services and their approach. As Will Kymlicka (1995) writes, "resolving these disputes is perhaps the greatest challenge facing democracy today" (p. 1).

Roma, the largest ethnic minority in Europe, seem to present a significant risk of inter-ethnic conflict. I argue here that increasing racism against Roma (anti-Gypsyism) is a clear indicator of conflict risk.

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

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

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discriminated ethnic minority in Europe.

Europe in general, and Eastern and Central Europe plus the Western Balkans in particular, should be concerned, because their democratic regimes face multiple problems due to the extreme socio-economic exclusion of Roma and rampant anti-Gypsyism. The riots in February 2004 involving Roma from Eastern Slovakia resulted in the largest deployment of Slovak army troops since the Second World War and had many commonalities with the riots in the autumn of 2005 in France. These incidents show clearly that both new and old European democracies can have dramatic setbacks if they do not seriously address widespread racism and social exclusion.

So far, diplomacy has not played a role in addressing the tensions between the majority populations and Roma minorities. In fact, the Roma problem is largely seen and presented as a social problem rather than an ethnic one. Consequently, the Roma have been almost completely excluded[1] from diplomatic services or initiatives, even when they represent an important stakeholder.

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

Currently, the case of Kosovo is probably the most salient. The third minority in the ex-

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[1] I recognise the exceptions of Nicolae Gheorghe, working for the OSCE, and, perhaps, Miranda Voulasantra, seconded by the Finnish Government to the Council of Europe.

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

In this paper, I argue that the European Union, despite being instrumental in promoting issues regarding discrimination of disadvantaged groups in general, has failed to go beyond words to deploy a strong political and diplomatic effort for the Roma. The European Union has tried, and in a few cases arguably succeeded, to replicate the successes of Green Peace, Save the Children, Amnesty International, Oxfam and other International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs) which have managed to introduce their themes in the mainstream political and diplomatic scene. These successes will be examined, namely the progress made by the European Union to fight discrimination on grounds other than race, with a particular focus on comparing the fight against gender and disability discrimination with efforts made in the case of Roma.

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

The growing involvement of international institutions and their attempts to grapple with the complex range of problems faced by Roma would be greatly enhanced by the establishment of a European Diplomatic Corps charged with three main tasks:

- to assist with preventing and negotiating interethnic conflicts within and outside

European states;

• to develop European diplomatic networks and advance the issues of the only European minority without a state ready or willing to defend it;

• to negotiate and work for the implementation of a European Roma integration policy within the Member States of the EU.

To elaborate, I believe that a group of Roma should be trained to function as a part of a European Diplomatic Initiative focusing on Human Rights or a European taskforce of preventive diplomacy and negotiators focused on interethnic conflicts. Every EU state includes Roma citizens assimilated within different minorities[2] in those states. Roma have, at the very least, legitimacy to take part in the very difficult process of negotiating ethnic conflicts within member states or among them.

Such a diplomatic corps could also contribute to providing a visible, positive, and non-stereotypical image of Roma, changing general attitudes about the Roma and implicitly curbing anti-Gypsyism while preventing escalation of tensions and possible conflicts. Member states seen to have problems with structural racism as reported by the European Commission (2006a) could solve part of their image problems by promoting Romani diplomats and politicians, as done, for example, in Hungary through the presence of two Romani members of the European Parliament in Brussels.[3]

In order to influence European policies, perhaps the only long-term sources of sustainable pressure and funding available, the Roma need assistance in developing negotiating teams able to deploy diplomatic tools and ensure access to the existing European funding. The

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[2] For example, the Hungarian Roma in Romania and Slovakia, Turkish Roma in Bulgaria, Serb and Albanian Roma in the republics which formed Yugoslavia, Slovak Roma in the Czech Republic, Romanian Roma in Hungary, Poland and Moldova.

[3] Hungary has two Roma MEPs in the European Parliament in Brussels, Livia Jaroka of the EPP and Victoria Mohacsi of the ALDE.

limited participation of Roma in the design and implementation of national strategies focused on Roma has resulted in an overall failure of those policies and no significant progress in the Roma communities. The lack of efficiency of European initiatives addressing the social issues affecting the Roma was made clear in the Phare evaluation of the European Commission, Directorate General (DG) Enlargement (2004a). The existing top-down approach of solving Roma issues in Europe is widely seen by main stakeholders as seriously flawed, due mainly to the lack of participation of Roma in processes targeting or affecting them. A corps of Roma negotiators supported by a reliable network of Roma experts could make the difference in the future. Such a corps should be part of a larger European diplomatic initiative focused on Human Rights issues, led by a European Ambassador for Roma issues and backed up by a Roma Unit within the European Commission, similar to the existing Gender and Disability Units.

Here, I argue for the involvement of diplomacy in curbing the existing social distance between Roma and the majority population. I demonstrate that the failure of governments and international institutions to address properly the situation of Roma can be related to the limited involvement of Ministries of Foreign Affairs (MFAs) and "international diplomats"[4] in issues related to Roma as well as to the almost total absence of Roma from diplomatic services and international institutions dealing with Romani issues.

Before further developing arguments to support my hypothesis I believe it is relevant to present an overview of the situation of Roma in Europe.

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[4] By "international diplomat," I understand people working in the units, departments, or divisions of international institutions that have significant influence in the activities of national governments.

Chapter 2: The Current Situation of Roma in Europe

An estimated seven to nine million Roma live in the EU and the two candidate countries, Bulgaria and Romania. The member states of the Council of Europe have an estimated 10 to 15 million Roma within their citizenry. Most European Roma, no matter where they live in Europe, have living conditions closer to those of sub-Saharan Africa rather than Europe, according to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2003, p. 126).

The first comprehensive resolution of the European Parliament to focus on Roma was passed on 28 April 2005 (European Parliament, 2005a). It followed five other resolutions of the European Parliament (1984a, 1984b, 1989, 1994, 1995) and two resolutions of the European Council (1989, 1995), starting with 1984, all of which focused on the discrimination faced by Roma in Europe. In its introduction, the Parliament Resolution of 2005 underlines that Roma "are suffering racial discrimination and in many cases are subject to severe structural discrimination, poverty and social exclusion, as well as multiple discrimination." It acknowledges the "substandard and unsanitary living conditions and evidence of ghettoisation [that] exist on a wide scale, with Roma being regularly prevented from moving out of such neighbourhoods" and "that police forces and other organs of the criminal justice system are affected by anti-Romani bias, leading to systemic racial discrimination in the exercise of criminal justice."

The European Parliament resolution (2005a) calls for the inclusion of Roma in political affairs; it calls Roma "a European minority" and "urges the Commission to include the issue

of combating Anti-Gypsyism/Romaphobia across Europe among its priorities for the 2007 European Year of Equal Opportunities for All, and calls on political and civil society at all levels to make it clear that racial hatred against Roma can never be tolerated in European society."

The *Communication of the European Commission on the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All (2007) Towards a Just Society* (European Commission, 2005) published in June 2005, emphasizes the fact that Roma are the "most disadvantaged ethnic minority group in Europe" and writes about the "significant barriers in employment and education" Roma face. The document also states that "disadvantages experienced by some communities, e.g., the Roma, are so wide-scale and embedded in the structure of society that positive action may be necessary to remedy the nature of their exclusion" (p.26).

Discrimination and exclusion are integral parts of Roma daily life. Hate speech and incidences of racist violence against Roma are frequent, but they receive little or no attention. In this chapter, I present a general overview of the situation and a more detailed European survey focused on employment, education, and housing to help better understanding of the living conditions of Roma and potential risks for social destabilisation in regions where Roma constitute an important part of the population.

Widespread Discrimination

The socio-economic distance between Roma and the majority population in member countries of the EU and in candidate countries is, in the opinion of most stakeholders, worrisome. The conclusion of the World Bank report (2005) that examined the situation of Roma in countries with a large number of Roma from the Central and Eastern European regions was that the economic and social situation of the Roma is simply getting worse. The report states:

"[I]ncreasingly severe poverty among Roma in Central and Eastern Europe has been one of the most striking developments in the region since the transition from socialism began in 1989" (p. 32).

In the absence of effective measures to combat racism and discrimination against Roma, a widespread and widely-accepted form of European racism remains pervasive. Anti-Romaism or Romaphobia, more popularly known as "anti-Gypsyism," is deeply rooted in European culture and society, and manifests itself in long-standing patterns of exclusion and segregation and the prevalence of negative stereotypes. Even in those countries where little visible Romani presence exists, such as Denmark, Luxembourg, and Malta, anti-Gypsyism forms an integral part of the common cultural heritage (OSCE, 2005).

A majority of the European population holds strong negative stereotypes about Roma, and makes no effort to hide them. A survey of European media, conducted by More Colour in the Media (2004) proves that, "in terms of groups with different national or ethnic origin, Sinti and Roma/Travellers are . . . most often portrayed negatively--in almost one third of the cases--but they do represent a very small group in the sample (i.e., 14 mentions in total). Their portrayal was neutral only half of the time; other groups were portrayed neutrally more often" (p. 31). Such hostility is further compounded by ignorance and indifference when it comes to issues such as the Nazi-orchestrated Roma Holocaust, which wiped out over 95% of the Roma in Austria and Germany.

Exclusion and reluctance to accept or include Roma in political life within the EU is also clearly reflected within the European institutions and international organisations. Of all the ethnic European groups, Roma are the most poorly represented in the European intergovernmental institutions (according to personal research) that employ staff based more-or-less on a quota system linked to nationality. The European Parliament is the only European

institution that claims to employ people based on another principle--that of language. However, in practice (European Parliament, 2005b) the Parliament has a good balance of EU nationalities and makes a serious effort to equally represent those. If we take into consideration the language principle applied by the European Parliament, at least five times more speakers of Romani live in Europe than, for instance, Maltese speakers.

Currently (July 2006), no European institution employs Roma and just one Hungarian Roma is employed (in a very junior and almost invisible position) by the European Ministries of Foreign Affairs in the 41 members of the Council of Europe. In fact, the worst exclusion faced by Roma in employment, considering the number and participation of all the other European ethnic minorities, is within European and national institutions.

The European institutions' initiatives largely continue to ignore a focused approach to Roma issues. Lack of a consistent approach often results in ignoring the Roma communities in projects meant to address their social exclusion. This is in strong discord with the fact that the numbers related to unemployment, lack of education, poor housing, and health-related problems are the greatest for Roma communities. For example, Antje Hofert, the Co-ordinator of EQUAL 1 in Germany, in a letter dated 3 February 2005 to Odile Quintin, Director-General of Employment and Social Affairs, writes: "whereas the German guidelines for EQUAL place a special emphasis on projects that assist the integration of Roma people, in particular Roma refugees, no projects dedicated to the labour market integration of Roma and Sinti has so far been selected." The letter concludes that "it is not acceptable that Germany as a leading economic power withdraw from its duties towards Roma and Sinti."

At the level of the European institutions, good acknowledgement of the often-abysmal situation of Roma is to be found. The problem remains that this acknowledgment has yet to result in mainstream concrete and effective actions meant to change the situation.

Employment

The vicious circle of poverty, lack of education, segregation, and social stigma associated with Romani ethnicity has a strong effect on the labour market situation of Roma. Roma are disproportionately affected by unemployment, with unemployment levels reaching 100% in some communities. Roma have been traditionally confined to dirty, unskilled, and sometimes dangerous jobs. They were the first to lose jobs with the economic regression that followed the collapse of the socialist state system and the ensuing political and economic transition. Even in Western Europe, Roma continue to face discrimination in the labour market. Consequently, many Roma depend on social welfare that, ironically, fosters the old stereotype that Roma live on the backs of other people. Roma who have succeeded in their professional careers have often had no other choice but to deny their ethnic origins, which further fosters stereotypes and deprives young Roma of the positive role models which are needed to encourage individual career ambitions.

The Labour Market Situation of Roma according to International Reports

The employment situation of Roma in Europe and its potential consequences have been described in a document of the Council of Ministers of the Council of Europe (2001). It states that large groups of Roma in Europe "suffer from the effects of long-term unemployment and poverty, which could present a threat to the social cohesion of member states. . . .[T]he labour market will not open up many job opportunities for Roma/Gypsies and Travelers in the near future without pro-active measures . . .(p. 1).

The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) has criticized the discrimination of Roma with regard to access to employment in its country reports. As the following examples illustrate, this is a recurrent practice in all European countries. For

example, in its last country report on Italy, ECRI (2002a) writes that Roma face "widespread prejudice and discrimination on the part of potential employers as well as by additional disadvantaging circumstances such as the fact that Roma/Gypsies often live in camps."

On Denmark, ECRI (2001a) has noted a "reluctance to recruit persons with a different ethnic minority background than Danish. ECRI notes that discriminatory practices and perceptions act as important obstacles for ethnic minorities, not only during the recruitment process, but during all stages of an individual's career." As well, in its report on Germany, ECRI (2004a) writes: "Members of Roma and Sinti communities continue to face serious social disadvantage and to be confronted with prejudice and discrimination, including in some cases blatant direct discrimination, in such fields as employment, housing and education." The earlier findings of ECRI (2001b) regarding Austria are comparable to those regarding Germany.

In its report on France, ECRI (2000) has also highlighted the particular situations that Travellers face as a result of a lack of camp sites:

> A considerable part of the Roma/Gypsy population of France is not permanently sedentary. Although a 1990 law imposes on municipalities with a population of over 5,000 that they provide a place where travelers can stop, implementation of this law is reported to be unsatisfactory, *inter alia* because many municipalities have not provided such spaces or because the spaces provided are not suitable. This results in Roma/Gypsies settling in areas from which they are often expelled. The denial of travelers' right to stop also has important repercussions on their employment and education opportunities.

In Central and Eastern Europe, many Roma lost their jobs as a result of economic downsizing in the context of transition. This has, for instance, been highlighted in the World Bank (2003) report on Hungary:

> The shift to market liberalization leading to the collapse of state enterprises has hit the Roma hard with at least 60 percent of working age Roma unemployed as against a national average of 12-13 percent. This is a dramatic reversal from the pre-1989 situation when the Roma employment rate was almost on a par with that of ethnic Hungarians. (p. 21).

As a result, unemployment rates among Roma have spiraled and reached almost 100% in some settlements. This is, for instance, the situation ECRI (2004b) has reported for Bulgaria, where unemployment rates are above average, often up to 90% or more. In this context the ECRI report highlighted the fact that even when Roma have the education required for a particular job, they are often turned away due to their ethnic origins.

Disproportionately high levels of unemployment and the resulting dependence on social benefits have led to the re-emergence of old stereotypes. The World Bank (2005) has pointed out:

> Popular stereotypes characterize Roma as lazy. However, survey data indicate that Roma actively seek employment. In Bulgaria in 1997, 46 percent of unemployed Roma reported that they were looking for a job, compared to 19 percent of the total unemployed population. In Romania, 35 percent of unemployed Roma sought employment during the previous week, in comparison with 15 percent of the overall population. Similar results were found for Hungary. (p. 41)

The United States State Department (2004) noted that in Spain "Roma continued to face marginalization and discrimination in access to employment, housing, and education." In the Czech Republic, the United States State Department (2004) reports that:

> Roma who wished to integrate into mainstream society faced practical difficulties in the areas of employment and education. Some employers refused to hire Roma and asked local labor offices not to send Romani applicants for advertised positions." While overall unemployment in the Czech Republic was 10.3%, unemployment among the Romani population was estimated at over 70%. Those able to find employment worked primarily in low-paying jobs.

Presently, some of the most vocal international and European organisations asking for affirmative action for Roma also fail to employ Roma. This is despite the fact that those organizations have programs focused on Roma. Probably the worst case is the European Roma Rights Center, an organization largely seen as the most important Roma organization. Despite advocating for over 10 years on behalf of Roma in Europe, this group has never employed any Roma at the level of director or deputy director.

Education

Segregation, special schools, low quality education, high drop-out rates, low rates of secondary and post-secondary education, prevalent racism in schools, reduced opportunities to education, and very limited access to education in their mother language are parts of the reality faced by Roma children all over Europe. Abject poverty, exclusion, social stigma, and discrimination are other facts of everyday Roma life that seriously hinder access to education for Roma children.

The dramatic situation can be seen in Bulgaria, where less than 10% of Roma have some secondary education, while the number of Bulgarian children with secondary education is six times higher. Child mortality is also six times in favour of non-Roma Bulgarians (Save the Children, 2002). According to Yulian Nakov the Deputy Minister of the Bulgarian Ministry of Education and Science (2004), the gap in tertiary education is even bigger--at least 20 times more non-Roma Bulgarians are enrolled in tertiary education.

The Situation According to International Reports

Roma are disadvantaged in education by having to face a combination of discrimination, social exclusion, and poverty. The situation described by the European Network Against Racism in its shadow report on Italy applies to most European countries.

> A particular situation concerns Roma minors: it is very difficult to ensure regular and successful schooling of Roma children because of their difficult living conditions. . . . Roma children also have to struggle against prejudices and stereotypes transmitted and pronounced both by Italian teachers and parents, as well as by school-fellows. Also, Italian children say words like "gypsy", in an insulting sense. The difficulties of integration and the problems with their indigenous school-fellows usually lead to Roma children abandoning school. (2002, p. 17)

A similar situation is described in the ECRI (2005) report on Sweden, where ECRI reports that in the field of education,

Roma children are still marginalised, tend to be channeled towards special "observation" classes at the primary level and have high absenteeism. Only a small percentage of Roma children complete secondary education and go on to tertiary education. Less than half the Roma children entitled to bilingual Romany/Swedish education actually benefit from this entitlement, reportedly because many schools do not inform them of their rights. There is also a lack of Romani teachers. Provision of educational material for the Roma in their own language and also material for the whole population on the Roma culture and language, is insufficient.

The ECRI (2003a) report on Spain noted that

school drop-out rates and absenteeism are still very high among Roma/Gypsy children and concern approximately 70% of children over 14 and 90% of girls over 14. Difficulties have also been reported in Roma/Gypsy children's access to pre-school education. While a certain resistance on the part of Roma/Gypsy families to entrust small children to non-Roma/Gypsy institutions has been reported, uneven territorial distribution of such institutions, disadvantaging eligibility requirements and discrimination are also reported to be important factors in determining the low representation of Roma/Gypsy children in pre-school education. The rate of adult illiteracy is still very high, and, although slowly increasing, the number of Roma/Gypsy university students is still extremely limited.

The European Commission (2003) underlined the European characteristics of this phenomenon in its report on diversity from October 2003: "There are specific problems in education, where the Roma confront discrimination and even exclusion from mainstream educational institutions" (p.20).

In 2000 the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (Committee of Ministers, 2000) summed up some of the problems and noted that the problems faced by Roma/Gypsies "in the field of schooling are largely the result of long-standing educational policies of the past, which led either to assimilation or to segregation of Roma/Gypsy children at school on the grounds that they were 'socially and culturally handicapped.'" It considered that Roma are in a disadvantaged position that cannot be overcome without serious effort.

Housing Situation

Since their arrival in Europe in the 12th century, Roma have faced prejudice and ensuing discrimination. The establishment of Roma *mahalas* (quarters) or neighborhoods in Central and Eastern Europe was the result of a policy that aimed to isolate Roma and prevent them

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from settling down in areas inhabited by the majority population. Under Communism, these policies were reinforced. Following the fall of the Iron Curtain and the establishment of democratic regimes, economic crises in conjunction with rampant nationalism have contributed to the re-emergence of Roma ghettos in Eastern Europe.

The World Bank, for instance, has noted that the number of isolated Roma settlements in Slovakia has increased, as well as the number of Roma who are forced to live in such settlements (World Bank, 2003). Roma evicted from housing due to their incapacity to pay rent often have no other choice than to move to settlements on sometimes infected industrial land or garbage dumps; they are not only isolated from the majority population, but also lose access to basic public utilities such as clean drinking water, electricity, or waste collection.

Despite clear indicators showing that life in Roma ghettos has appallingly low standards, including a low life expectancy (sometimes 20 years less than that of the majority population (ECOHOST, 2000), an unemployment rate close to 100% (UNDP, 2003), abject poverty (World Bank, 2005), frequent police and social violence (European Commission, 2004b), and enormous drop-outs rates from school (Save the Children, 2002), those ghettos continue to be preserved or created.

For example, in Craiova, Romania in June 2005, five people, one mother and four children (the mother and one of the children AIDS positive) lived in a shack of 10 square meters made out of material extracted from the nearby city garbage dump. Almost 200 Roma live in similar conditions close by. They have no running water, electricity, or sewage disposal. In Craiova, three neighbourhoods from over 20 have a clear majority of Roma. The entire town, except those three neighbourhoods, is connected to the sewage disposal system.

Many people, in particular in Western Europe, continue to regard Roma as nomads despite the

fact that most of them have settled generations ago. The alleged nomadism of Roma has sometimes served as an excuse not to address the housing problems faced by Roma and as a justification for segregationist policies. Those Roma who do still travel face a particular situation: some states have created provisions that should make it possible for Travellers to overnight in various locales. In practice, however, facilities are often unsuitable to the use of people living in caravans or too scarce to provide a place for all of them.

In Western Europe, Roma are confined to settlements avoided by the majority. Slum-like settlements are to be found in Italy, France, Greece, Portugal, and Spain. In Italy and France, it is mainly Roma asylum seekers who end up in these camps, due to official unwillingness to provide proper housing for asylum seekers. While the housing problems of Roma have many reasons, they also have widespread consequences to the lives of Roma. Exclusion, discrimination in health and education, violence, and difficult access to social services are just a few.

The Housing Situation of Roma According to International Reports

The UNDP (2003) concluded in its report on the situation of Roma: "Roma in central and eastern Europe have living standards closer to those of sub-Saharan Africa." Likewise, in September 2002, Alvaro Gil-Robles, Commissioner for Human Rights for the Council of Europe, in his report on Greece said Roma "live under conditions very remote from what is demanded by respect for human dignity" (2002, p. 8). The European Commission (2004a) described the housing situation of Roma in Bulgaria as follows: "Roma housing and education are de facto segregated and enormously inferior."

The situation has remained the same, or worsened, in at least the last 10 years. In a Council of Europe report from 1994 the situation was described as follows:

> Accommodation remains one of the most serious aspects of the current situation, particularly in certain States: lack of water and electricity, unhealthy dwellings, damp, lack of the most basic sanitary services (i.e. rubbish collection), pollution, overcrowding, quagmire conditions in winter as a result of non-existent surfacing/footpaths, the need to build shelters out of salvaged materials resulting in shantytown appearances to which officials sometimes react by bulldozing what little people have (even though the dwellings may, thanks to extraordinary efforts, be perfectly acceptable on the inside): all of this is characterised by conflict with the environment, increasing ghettoisation, and lack of management at local level. (p.14)

During October 2001, the mayor of Piatra Neamt, Romania, declared his intention of creating a ghetto for Roma inhabitants in a remote industrial site that was to be surrounded by a barbed wire fence and guarded by policemen with dogs. Other mayors, particularly in Bucharest, have been evicting Roma from their illegal dwellings, burning the temporary shelters, driving out the Roma squatters and offering no alternative housing possibilities (European Commission, 2002a).

The situation in Spain is as bad as that in Eastern Europe. Roma inhabit approximately 95% of the *chabolas* (makeshift housing and slums) around larger cities in Spain (Congress of Deputies, 1999b). "Around 80% of these houses are smaller than 50 square meters and house more than four people. . . . The lack of sanitation and running water in these areas threatens the health of the inhabitants" (World Bank 2003, 121).

In 1994, the municipality of Madrid transferred Roma to housing near a municipal rubbish tip, where trucks carrying rubbish arrived at a rate of three a minute. Madrid's mayor ordered a wall to be constructed so that the Roma could not be seen. Another Roma settlement has been constructed at the intersection of the two main highways where pollution is the highest in Madrid's area, according to researcher Paloma Gay Basco (1999).

A particular problem is the situation of those Roma who lead an itinerant or semi-itinerant life. Aside from the manifold consequences this can have with access to social benefits, education, and sometimes even the exercise of citizens' rights such as participation in

elections, accommodation in itself is a problem. The ECRI report on France (2000) notes, for instance:

> A considerable part of the Roma/Gypsy population of France is not permanently sedentary. Although a 1990 law imposes on municipalities with a population of over 5,000 that they provide a place where travellers can stop, implementation of this law is reported to be unsatisfactory, *inter alia* because many municipalities have not provided such spaces or because the spaces provided are not suitable. This results in Roma/Gypsies settling in areas from which they are often expelled. The denial of travellers' right to stop also has important repercussions on their employment and education opportunities.

The issue has become particularly salient in Great Britain where Romani and other Travellers have become the target of political campaigns by nationalist forces that pursue their eviction every time they try to establish in a locality. The report of ECRI (2005) on Great Britain notes:

> ECRI also expresses concern at reports of forced evictions of Roma/Gypsy families from illegal sites. ECRI understands that the British authorities are taking steps to remedy this situation. To the extent that such evictions reflect a shortage of legal camps, ECRI urges the British authorities to ensure that local authorities make adequate provision of campsites throughout the country.

The situation of Travellers in Great Britain is comparable to their situation in Ireland described by the ECRI (2001c).

Europe has seen a re-emergence of what some wrongfully and stereotypically consider as nomadism among Roma. It is a result of the deterioration of the economic situation, violence, and wars. Many Roma have become refugees in Western Europe. The failure or refusal of the states to provide appropriate residence conditions for asylum seekers in general or for Roma asylum seekers in particular has had the result that many of them have no other choice than to settle in encampments. In February 2004, two Romani girls from Romania died in a fire in an illegal settlement in Lyon. The only tangible consequence was that the immanent eviction of the other settlers was delayed. In the former Yugoslavia, many Romani refugees are still waiting for an end of their legal limbo.

Not described in the above-mentioned reports is the violence against Romani settlers in attempts to chase them away. The persecution of Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptians in Kosovo is currently the most dramatic example of the majority population seeking to rid themselves of Roma neighbours or trying to prevent them from settling. In 2003, as reported to the European Roma Information Office, a Roma man from Belgrade was threatened by neighbours when he attempted to buy a plot of land and build a home in the suburb of Sremcica. Examples like this are frequent across Europe. They reach from prevention of access to public facilities such as electricity and water to verbal threats, physical assault, and the destruction of houses.

As one can see from the reports quoted above, the situation of Roma is a complex issue that can be addressed only on the basis of a comprehensive policy. This policy must consider simultaneously the poverty among Roma, their social exclusion, and the discrimination that they experience. While such a policy can be developed only at the national and local level, where it also needs to be implemented, the EU and its institutions could provide incentives to its development and an important forum for exchange. Political action at the EU level seems even more indicated, since the discrimination and marginalisation of Roma in the fields of employment, education, housing, health, access to public services, and social participation are appearing with great similarities in most of the countries of the EU. The involvement of Roma in a European diplomatic taskforce meant to address the issues presented here is a solution for which I argue in this thesis.

Chapter 3: Towards a Definition of Anti-Gypsyism

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

The purpose of this chapter is to develop a definition of anti-Gypsyism. I will start by giving an example of anti-Gypsyism in Romania.

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

The thesis of this essay rests on the premise that the attitudes of the majority towards, and pervasive hostility to, the presence of Roma minorities in Europe represent a factor potentially destabilizing to the European societies. This challenge to stability and peaceful interethnic

coexistence needs to be understood as a complex, multi-faceted, pan-European issue, and the means to address this challenge should be complemented by diplomacy. The indicator of this potential for ethnic conflict is the growing anti-Gypsyism in Europe--a form of racism particular to the situation of Roma in Europe and capable of adapting to changes in this situation. Before describing the potential role for diplomacy and Roma diplomats, it is important to set out a clear definition and description of anti-Gypsyism.

Currently, no recognized or widely accepted definition of anti-Gypyism is available. This definition builds on a previous one published on the site of European Roma Information Office (ERIO, 2005) I argue here that anti-Gypsyism is a distinct type of racist ideology. It is, at the same time, similar, different, and intertwined with many other types of racism. Anti-Gypsyism itself is a complex social phenomenon which manifests itself through violence, hate speech, exploitation, and discrimination in its most visible form. Discourses and representations from the political, academic and civil society communities, segregation, dehumanization, stigmata as well as social aggression and socio-economic exclusion are other ways through which anti-Gypsyism is spread. Anti-Gypsyism is used to justify and perpetrate the exclusion and supposed inferiority of Roma and is based on historical persecution and negative stereotypes. Despite the fact that anti-Gypsyism fits academic descriptions of racism, until very recently the academy/ academics in writings/ discussions/ analyses of racism have by and large ignored or simply paid cursory attention to the plight of the Roma, and have not made much effort to theorize/analyze the discrimination faced by Roma. Dehumanisation is pivotal to anti-Gypsyism: the process through which Roma are often seen as a subhuman group closer to the animal realm than the human realm. Even those rare cases of seemingly sympathetic portrayals of Roma seem to depict Roma as somehow not fully human, at best childlike. Roma are in the best cases described as free-spirited, carefree, happy, and naturally graceful. All these characteristics are frequently used to describe animals. This chapter outlines a definition of anti-Gypsyism, showing that the phenomenon has profound

similarities with the complex of phenomena called racism.

Neo-Racism or Differentialist Racism

Many authors regard the latest manifestations of racism against different minority groups in Europe as what Baker (1995) and Taguieff (2001) call "differentialist" racism. Seen by both authors as a form of racism focused not on biological but cultural differences and what its perpetrators call "natural preference" for a specific "cultural" group this form of racism promotes the incompatibility of cultures and has similar results as biological racism. According to Rorke[5] (2006) this is "a profoundly more dangerous, more insidious form of racism, it has a longer shelf life and can infect the mainstream of political thought and action with greater ease than biological racism." Proponents of differentialist/new racism consider that biological racism was fatally discredited with the defeat of German Nazism and in the wake of the Holocaust. However, when it comes to Roma, biological racism is alive and well; dehumanisation is still central to the anti-Roma discourses. Rorke also considers anti-Gypsyism to be "protean and polymorphous." This complements what Rorke wrote in 1999:

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

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

The interpretation of racism based on cultural differences fails to take into consideration social psychological research carried out in various countries (Spain - Pérez, Chulvi and

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[5] In a personal interview in 2006

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Alonso, 2001; Pérez, Moscovici and Chulvi, 2002; Chulvi and Pérez, 2003; Britain and Romania: Marcu and Chryssochoou, 2005). This research has revealed that, unlike other minorities, the Roma are perceived as being closer to the animal realm than to the human one. In Romania for example, while the prejudice against the Hungarians was expressed (Marcu 2005) in terms of negative human attributes (e.g., *hypocrite*), prejudice against the Roma was expressed in terms of negative animal traits (e.g., *wild*). Given the existing high level of contact between the majority population and the Roma, it is clear that dehumanisation is not based on misconceptions or ignorance on the part of the majority population. Instead, dehumanisation of the Roma appears to be a legitimising myth that serves to justify the majority's abusive behaviour towards this minority.

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

Many academics underline the superficiality of differentialist racism. For example, Balibar (1991) writes: "the neo-racist ideologues are not mystical heredity theorists but realist technicians of social psychology." According to Balibar, it is only at a superficial level that differential racism "does not postulate the superiority of certain groups or peoples in relation to others but 'only' the harmfulness of abolishing frontiers, the incompatibility of life-styles and traditions." His point is particularly relevant in the case of anti-Gypsyism, as behind the talk of difference between the majorities and Roma, old notions of hierarchy remain intact as

proved by the polls in Europe (see OSCE report, *Anti-Gypsyism in European Mass Media* [2005], Annex1). Unfortunately, there seems to be no doubt in the minds, actions, and policies of the majorities which life-styles are modern and civilized and which are not.

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

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

Biological racism

> "And yet, though there are no races, racism certainly exists!"[6]
>
> Jacquard and Pontalis (1984)

The concept of racism is a relatively new. According to Zack (1996), *The Oxford English Dictionary* dates the earliest appearances of the term "racism" to the 1930s. However, in practice, racism was at the basis of exclusion and violent conflicts since long before. A series

of theories find the roots of biological racism (racism based on an essentialist notion of race, which links itself to nationalism and to the state) much earlier than the 19th century theory of Arthur de Gobineau, considered the father of biological racism and the first to write about distinct human races in his publication *Essai sur l'inegalite des races humaines* (1853-55). Zack (1996) considers that "modern concepts of race derive from eighteenth and nineteenth century pseudo science that rationalized European colonialism and chattel slavery" (p. 3). Like Zack, Williams (1995) believes racism preceded the theories of Gobineau and argues that racism was created to justify the enslavement in Africa. Kant is also seen by Zack (1994) to have contributed to the creation of European concept of racism as he drew on Aristotle's theory of essences of natural kind where he thought barbarians to be natural slaves. Probably the earliest introduction of racist concepts is found in Plato (2002), who wrote in *The Republic* that there are people "constructed of intrinsically inferior material" (p. 39). In 1940, Ruth Benedict defined racism as "the dogma that one ethnic group is condemned by nature to congenital inferiority and another group is destined to congenital superiority" (p. 21).

Scientific or biological racism, based on 19th century theories of biological superiority and inferiority of races, is largely seen as compromised and no longer acceptable in political and public discourse. However, in the case of Roma, we often still encounter virulent forms of biological racism, both in political and public discourse (OSCE, 2005).

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

The European Commission country reports often underline the structural racism against Roma in countries of Central and Eastern Europe, yet some of those countries have already joined

the EU and others will join soon. Violence and acts of discrimination, including state-sponsored rejection, which seem impossible for any other minorities, are often occurrences in the case of European Roma. For example, in 1998, Great Britain re-imposed visa restrictions on Slovakia in order to prevent Romani asylum seekers from having their case heard in the UK. In summer 2001, the UK government established a "pre-clearance" of air passengers at the Prague airport, which served to single out Romani passengers and prevent them from boarding airplanes destined to the UK (BBC[7], 2001). Also in April 2001, the UK government adopted a "special" border policy, singling out persons belonging to seven named groups: Kurds, Roma, Albanians, Tamils, Pontic Greeks, Somalis and Afghans, for "special" measures. Of these groups, Roma and Kurds do not hold passports stating their ethnicity (Roche , 2001).

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

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[7] As available on the BBC website at http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/1445494.stm

between Roma and others.

Anti-Gypsyism in the UK is not demonstrated only in state policy, but also through official and popular sentiment. Jack Straw, in charge of British diplomacy until May 2006, is known for derogatory comments[8] targeting "travellers," who he saw as good for nothing but defecating at people's doors.

"Should we let Gypsies invade England?" was the title of a poll in January 2004. Around 20,000 people paid to call in and tell readers of the *Daily Express* that they were not going to put up with the "gyppos." The poll was part of a larger media campaign in the British press led by tabloids which lasted for several months (ERIO, 2004). The government reacted by starting talks about measures to restrict access for Roma to the UK.

UK Prime Minister Tony Blair said in the following days in the House of Commons: "It is important that we recognise that there is a potential risk from the accession countries of people coming in." One day later, accordingly, the *Daily Express* echoed Blair, with banner headlines "Gypsies: you can't come in."

The ideas of Arthur de Gobineau are still widespread in Europe and salient when it comes to Roma. The fear of degeneration coming from mixing of majority "races" with Roma is held by a majority. According to a 1999 poll, less than 1% of non-Roma Bulgarians can imagine marrying a person of Romani origin (Nahabedian, 2000) In 2003, a Gallup poll in Romania discovered that 93% of Romanians would refuse to accept Roma in their families (IPP/Gallup, 2003). In a poll conducted by Focus Institute in 1999 in Slovakia, 80% of the interviewees said that they would never allow their children to marry a Roma ([Pisarova] Slovak Spectator). In an opinion poll conducted among Slovenian secondary school students in 1993,

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[8] As available on Diplo website at
http://textus.diplomacy.edu/Blunders/links/index.asp?FilterTopic=%2F39565&Keywords

60.1% said they would avoid any contact with Roma (Ramet, 2005). In a survey conducted in 1986 and 1988 at Spanish schools, 70% of the teachers said they would be upset if their child married a Roma (Calvo Buezas, 2001).

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

Opinion polls in Malta[9], Luxembourg[10], and Denmark[11] show that anti-Gypsyism operates even in the absence of direct contact with the Roma. Despite no social interaction, in conflicts and, in most cases, in any form of contact, the majority populations reject Roma. This reinforces my view that anti-Gypsyism is a racist ideology which has strong similarities with specific forms of racism such as anti-Semitism. Anti-Gypsyism often serves to justify the existing social order whereby the Roma are permanently kept in an inferior social position.

Anti-Gypsyism is also reflected in the form of false consciousness on the part of the Roma themselves. A significant number of Roma deny their roots in an attempt to escape the social stigma associated with Roma identity. Most of them, especially the professionally successful Roma, manage to hide their parentage and eventually lose their ethnic identity and assimilate

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[9] "Who would you not like to have as a neighbour?" in: European Values Study 1999, quoted according to: Special Tasks Minister for Social Integration 2003: Cultural Diversity and Tolerance in Latvia, Riga
Over 30% of those interviewed declared that they would not want to have Roma as neighbours. No Roma reside in Malta, according to the official census.
[10] Les voisins qu'on n'aimerait pas avoir, par groupe de population, in: Legrand, Michel (ed.) 2004: Les valeurs au Luxembourg. Portrait d'une société au tournant du millénaire, Editions Saint-Paul Luxembourg, p. 348. The poll shows that 25% of Luxembourgish people would not like to have Roma as neighbours, despite the fact that according to the census, no Roma live in Luxembourg. The strongest rejection is found among workers and housewives, the lowest among people who have a liberal profession.
[11] "Who would you not like to have as a neighbour?", in: European Values Study 1999, quoted according to: Special Tasks Minister for Social Integration 2003: Cultural Diversity and Tolerance in Latvia, Riga
The report shows that 15.2% of respondents would not like to have Roma as neighbours. In Denmark, practically no Roma reside (less than 0.001%).

to the majority that normally rejects Roma. This is usually not possible for other groups facing racism and could be held as an argument that anti-Roma feelings are not based on race or ethnicity, but on stereotypes and historical prejudices against Roma. This is well-reflected in the discrepancies between the estimated number of Roma and the lower results of official censuses as reflected by the documents of the Council of Europe (2002).

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

Ambalvaner Sivanandan, director of Britain's Institute of Race Relations, wrote in 1973 that racism was "an explicit and systematic ideology of racial superiority." By 1983, he had come to think that "racism is about power, not prejudice." In 1985, he related it to "structures and institutions with power to discriminate." Anti-Gypsyism includes features from all of his definitions of racism; however, it is not reduced to only those. Anti-Gypsyism is a very specific form of racism, an ideology of racial superiority, a form of dehumanisation and of institutionalised racism. It is fuelled by historical discrimination and the struggle to maintain power relations that permit advantages to majority groups. It is based, on the one hand, on imagined fears, negative stereotypes, and myths and, on the other, on denial or erasure from

the public conscience of a long history of discrimination against Roma. It ignores not only events where Roma were killed with bestiality, but also any non-stereotypical characteristics in the life of Roma. Prejudices against Roma clearly go beyond racist stereotyping which associates them with negative traits and behaviours. Dehumanisation is its central point. Roma are viewed as less than human; being less than human, they are perceived as not morally entitled to human rights equal to those of the rest of the population.

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

In the next chapter I will examine the political and diplomatic dimensions of Anti-Gypsyism as they are the most relevant for the argument of my thesis.

Chapter 4: Political and Diplomatic Anti-Gypsyism

"[Roma] are antisocial, mentally backward, inassimilable and socially unacceptable.[12]"

Vladimir Meciar, Prime Minister of Slovakia

In this chapter, I assert that anti-Gypsyism is not accidental within the political and diplomatic elites of Europe, but is, rather, the acceptable and non-punishable racist escape valve of extreme nationalism in Europe. Serious cases of anti-Gypsyism within the European Commission, Council of Europe, European Parliament and the United Nations, institutions charged with fighting racism and discrimination and with promoting the implementation of measures to ensure respect for human rights, provide evidence in favour of this assertion. Due to its effect on the mass media and public consciousness, anti-Gypsyism at the diplomatic and political level is a strong factor in legitimising and perpetuating discrimination and racial abuses against Roma.

It is exceptional nowadays to hear government representatives, politicians, or diplomats in Europe expressing racism openly. The smallest "slips of tongue" or diplomatic blunders once reported attract a strong reaction, not only from human rights activists, but from the large majority of mainstream politicians in Europe. Anti-Semitic and lately Islamophobic politicians are rarely accepted as members of mainstream parties. Racial innuendos about blacks, despite some popular support, sometimes surface in the national and international mainstream political arena, but are condemned quickly by governments and diplomats. Racism is generally seen as shameful and since February 1998, the Charter of European

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[12] As reported by the Media Wise (2004, p. 26).

Parties for a Non-Racist Society[13] has prevented racism in political spheres. In its introduction, the Charter states:

> Being convinced furthermore that representation of ethnic minority groups in the political process is properly an integral part of the democratic process, since political parties are or should strive to be a reflection of society . . . [we] strive for the fair representation of the above mentioned groups at all levels of the parties with a special responsibility for the party leadership to stimulate and support the recruitment of candidates from these groups for political functions as well as membership . . . [and] to reject all forms of racist violence, incitement to racial hatred and harassment and any form of racial discrimination.

Such positive developments seem to have bypassed Romani people. At this moment, none of the over 80 national parties [14] who signed the Charter have any Roma representing them at the national level despite the fact that Roma are the largest ethnic minority in Europe.

Hate speech against Roma is so pervasive and blatant that many fail to perceive it as racism. Anti-Gypsyism has strong public support and is often used by political leaders and sometimes by diplomats. Anti-Gypsyism is seen as part of mainstream discourse and rarely triggers a reaction from the political and diplomatic elites. Anti-Gypsyism is rarely fought against and most often justified by the perpetrators and the institutions or parties for which they work. Failing to include or deleting incidents of blatant racism against Roma from the reports and speeches of European politicians and diplomats adds another dimension to European political and diplomatic anti-Gypsyism.

As a Roma, I have encountered diplomatic anti-Gypsyism on several occasions. In 1999, I attended a reception given by a consulate in Strasbourg for Romanian interns within the Council of Europe and the European Court of Justice; in fact, the young Romanian political elite. At the reception, one young diplomat made a joke: "What are 32 Gypsies good for? You

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[13]As posted on the EUMC website at
http://www.eumc.europa.eu/eumc/index.php?fuseaction=content.dsp_cat_content&catid=3ef0500f9e0c5&contentid=3ef0568924fa5
[14]As posted on the EUMC website at
http://www.eumc.europa.eu/eumc/material/doc/3ef05750d60f4_doc_EN.pdf

can make 8X4 soap from them."[15] Most of the people present laughed. A few months later, the young diplomat received promotion to a cabinet director position within the Romanian national government. This incident shows not only the ingrained and therefore acceptable anti-Gypsyism in the Romanian society but also the extent of it within the Romanian diplomatic services. As I will demonstrate in this chapter these incidents are to be found all over Europe.

In 2003, I was invited to an official dinner with academics working in the field of diplomacy research. When I mentioned that I was Roma, the Bulgarian man sitting across from me, holding a Ph.D. in political sciences, told me, "You know, the problem with Gypsies is that they have far too many children."

On 19 January 2005, the European Commission organised the conference, "Human Rights and EU Migration Policy," in Brussels. During his speech, the newly appointed Slovak Ambassador to the EU Mr. Maros Sefcovic expressed his view that his Roma compatriots were "exploiters of the Slovak welfare system" (ERIO, 2005). A similar declaration targeting any other ethnic group in Europe would have started a diplomatic row and most likely would have ended the conference focused on human rights. In this case, both during and after the conference in Brussels, no reaction took place.

In an interview broadcast on Dutch TV on 1 May, 2004, European Commission Ambassador to Slovakia, Eric Van der Linden, proposed to remove Romani children from their parents and place them in boarding schools.

> It may sound simplistic,--he said--but it is, I think in the root of the cause that we need to strengthen education and organise the educational system in a way that we may have to start to, I'll say it in quotation marks, force Romani children to stay in a kind of boarding schools from Monday morning until Friday afternoon, where they will continuously be subjected to a system of values which is dominant ("vigerend")

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[15] 8x4 was a well known German brand of soap in Romania at the time.

in our society. (ERIO, 2004)

When the interviewer objected that Roma might be opposed to such a measure, Van der Linden proposed the use of financial incentives to counter initial resistance. He agreed that, "we do live here in a democracy, so you cannot force it, but you can of course try to let it develop more smoothly through giving financial incentives." He expected that families would, as a result, send their children to school and that "the generation that will be educated then and at the same time raised, will fit better in the dominant society, they will be able to cooperate in a productive way to the growth of the economy."

Van der Linden seemed oblivious to the racism inherent in his argument that Romani values are different than those of the majority populations and that Roma youth should assimilate to the dominant society. In fact, during his mandate in Slovakia he often accused the Slovak government of less subtle forms of racism against Roma.

Based on pressure from journalists, the European Commission held a press conference to address Van der Linden's statements during the interview. The Commission spokesperson saw Van der Linden's statements as "an unfortunate choice of words in an interview which was otherwise quite good and talked about important things." He also said that Van der Linden had been requested not to give interviews "on this topic" again, and that Van der Linden "thinks that he regrets" his statement. The ambiguous "think that he regrets," stops far short of an official apology, or statement of institutional regret. Although European Commission country reports on Slovakia have repeatedly underlined the discrimination, violence, and racism faced by Roma in Slovakia, the Commission instructed its Head of Delegation for Slovakia to avoid this topic in interviews for the future. The entire reaction of the Commission was an unfortunate blow to efforts towards curbing pervasive anti-Gypsyism in Slovakia. Many right-wing extremists in Slovakia gained the impression that the European

Commission is on their side.

Another case related to the political class in Slovakia began on August 28, 2005, when the extremist Slovak nationalist party, the *Slovak Pospolitost,* organized a one-hundred-man march in the honor of Josef Tiso, the first fascist president of the Nazi Slovak Republic, created in 1939 by Adolf Hitler. In his opening speech, Marian Kotebla, leader of *Pospolitost,* urged Slovaks to stop paying taxes used for "gypsy parasites that keep breeding on like hungry and desperate pythons." Asked to comment on the racist statements against Roma, the spokesperson for the President of the Slovak Republic, Ivan Gasparovic, said: "everyone is free to celebrate the defeat of fascism by the allied forces in the manner they want." No reaction was reported from Prime Minister Miklulas Dzurinda or from members of his cabinet (ERIO, 2005).

Similar speeches targeting the Hungarian minority in Slovakia have been drastically condemned not only by the mainstream Slovak political scene but also by the EU and international organisations (European Parliament, 2006). However, in this case, the European Commission refrained from commenting.

In another instance, on May 10, 2004, the chairwoman of the Monitoring Committee of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Josette Durrieu, stated that usury within Roma communities is the greatest problem faced by Roma. Focusing on the criminality within Roma communities, rather than on the fact that Roma are the most discriminated and socially excluded minority in the Czech Republic, seems a strange approach from the representative of a body which deals with human rights. No reaction was reported from the Council of Europe.

Making Roma issues invisible, and deleting important facts or words are other ways that anti-Gypsyism is manifested on the international political and diplomatic scene. In its report of

March 12, 2004, the UN Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination found that gypsies in Spain encounter difficulties in the fields of employment, housing, and education and that a number of cases report discrimination in daily life. By using the pejorative term, gypsy, in its document rather than the correct term, Roma, the Committee shows a disregard for the strong stigma associated with the term gypsy.

In addition, the different language versions of the texts are not identical. The strongest wording is found in the French version[16], which talks about "les difficultés auxquelles nombre de ces derniers [Gitans] continuent d'être confrontés dans les domaines de l'emploi, du logement et de l'éducation, ainsi que par les cas de discrimination qui se produiraient dans la vie quotidienne" and the recommendation to the Spanish government "et recommande à l'État partie de prendre toutes les mesures nécessaires en vue de promouvoir la tolérance et d'éliminer les préjugés et stéréotypes négatifs, afin de prévenir toute forme de discrimination à l'encontre des membres de la communauté rom (gitane)." This part of the text is not found in the English version.[17] The English version of the text is the most read version of the UN documents and this type of discrepancy between translations is a known technique in the diplomatic world to dilute an initially strong message (Kurbalija and Slavik, 2001). This is a case of diplomatic anti-Gypsyism through the erasure of facts or diplomatic ambiguity (Pehar, 2001).

The European Parliament is another institution that is supposed to advance human rights issues, but which has failed to address anti-Gypsyism among its members. Leading intellectuals and opinion makers within the European Parliament are known to have openly promoted anti-Gypsyism. For example, at the end of September 2003, I met a German MEP from the Christian Democrat party, Ms. Doris Pack. She is currently the President of the

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[16] As posted on the UN website
http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/(Symbol)/CERD.C.64.CO.6.Fr?Opendocument.
[17] As posted on the UN website
http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/(Symbol)/CERD.C.64.CO.6.En?Opendocument.

parliamentary committee that deals with South Europe and Western Balkans, and has a reputation for being open-minded and friendly towards minorities. Our meeting was arranged by one of the directors within the European Commission. My goal was to pursue and schedule a hearing on Roma matters with different players in the EU institutions. She started the meeting by listing the problems with "you Gypsies," most of them related to our vagrant way of living. Too many children, disrespect for Western culture, and begging were the next items she mentioned before I could say anything more than my name. During the Holocaust over 250,000 Roma and Sinti were killed in Germany. A similar reaction of a German politician with an Israeli delegate is simply unconceivable.

Another example of political anti-Gypsyism concerns one of the best known intellectuals and liberal politicians in Romania, Adrian Cioroianu. Cioroianu is a Euro-observer (a future Member of the European Parliament) in Brussels and he writes regularly for the Romanian intellectual magazine *Dilema*. In his article for 3-9 February 2006, Cioroianu implies that Roma in one of Bucharest's neighbourhoods, Chitila, smell bad and are criminals. His article, which defends an illegal eviction of Roma, accuses Romani women of starting a fight which triggered the police action, as the police "tried to protect the children from their own irresponsible parents." He also accuses the Romanian police of being too soft on the Roma. In the same article, Cioroianu uses the strong pejorative "pirande" for Romani women, a word with similar connotations and strength as "nigger."

In the previous paragraphs I tried to expose anti-Gypsyism at the diplomatic and political level and the insufficient or lack of reaction of the main International institutions. The European Commission, Council of Europe and the United Nations are indeed the most recognised intergovernmental institutions involved in the fight against racism but not the only ones. Next, I examine some other stakeholders.

Other Diplomacies

The Vatican is regarded as an important diplomatic power in issues linked to human rights. It has often been successfully involved in negotiating solutions to interethnic conflicts. Yet, like international and European institutions, the Vatican seems far from immune to anti-Gypsyism. On March 1, 2006, the International Herald Tribune [New York] published an article entitled "Vatican seeks to Catholicise Gypsies" based on a Vatican press release.[18] The article is not only misleading and misinformed, but offensive to Roma (ERGO, 2006). To start with, the Vatican, usually careful with terminology, used the pejorative and politically incorrect term "gypsy," rather than Roma.

Vatican spokesperson Archbishop Marchetto said, on the occasion of the press conference, that: "the peculiar nature of gypsy culture makes evangelisation merely 'from the outside' ineffective." He continued:

> a genuine incarnation of the Gospel--called inculturation --cannot indiscriminately legitimise every aspect of their culture. . . . Indeed, the universal history of evangelisation affirms that the spread of the Christian message has always been accompanied by a process of purification of cultures.

The Archbishop is also quoted by the Catholic News Agency as referring to Roma by saying that "honesty at work is a civic and Christian virtue, which cannot be disregarded."

If the Vatican launched a press release seeking to Catholicise the Canadians, English, Dutch, Jews or Arabs, perhaps also seen by the Vatican as "by nature religious," I believe many governments would react angrily. In this case none did.

Anti-Gypsyism at the Highest Political Level

In 2002, British tabloids reacted hysterically to what they termed a Czech Roma "invasion" of hundreds of thousands. Interesting figures, considering that the official census in the Czech Republic in 2001 indicated a total of 11,716 Roma, while the most generous social estimate

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[18] As posted by the Catholic news agency at: http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/new.php?n=6115.

suggest there may be around 90,000 Roma in the Czech Republic. British Prime Minister

Tony Blair wrote a letter to his then Czech counterpart Vladimir Spidla (currently serving as

Commissioner in charge of Roma issues) concerning the "problem." The letter, which cannot

be described as diplomatic in any way, provides surprising examples of anti-Gypsyism within

the political class in the UK.

Mr Blair wrote in the letter:

> There are no grounds for Czech citizens to seek protection abroad. We need to take action. At our end, we are introducing legislation that will give us further powers to combat asylum abuse. This includes to remove claimants before their appeals are heard, when their claims are manifestly unfounded.[19]

However, during the same year, an EU accession report (2002b) highlighted cases of police

abuse and racially motivated violence against Roma, segregation of Romani children in

schools, and discrimination against Roma with regards to access to employment and social

services in the Czech Republic. The European Roma Rights Center also reported forced

sterilization of Romani women in the Czech Republic.

The letter employs what is often referred to as "coded" racism, in this case, the assertion that

Roma claims for asylum are unfounded: "In addition the Roma community needs to know

that unfounded asylum seekers will be returned immediately. We will of course be happy to

work with you to ensure that this message is communicated rapidly and clearly." No

diplomatic reactions occurred at the European and international level to protest the racist

border policy set up by the UK government.

In another example of anti-Gypsyism, Anca Boiangiu, Romanian European Integration

Minister, declared on March 28, 2006, for *La Libre Belgique,* that "Roma are used as negative

examples but that is not significant for our country" as in fact the majority of ethnic

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[19] See complete transcript in the annex.

"Romanians are intelligent and honest." It is unlikely that the minister would have kept her job if she had suggested that the Hungarian or any other minority in Romania was stupid and criminal. There was no reaction or apology from the minister or the Romanian government aside from a personal and ambiguous letter received by the author after protests were made.

National Politicians

This subchapter looks at a recurring anti-Gypsyism theme: burning the Gypsy Criminals.

In 1992, German Chancellor Helmut Kohl was severely criticized for the formulation of his apology for the burning of a house in Molln where two teenagers and a 51-year-old were burned alive by skinheads. He said "To the Turks in *our country,* who have lived here for many years, whom we asked to come here . . . and without whose assistance we would not have been able to achieve the level of prosperity attained in *our republic* over the decades." This phrase was seen as unacceptable because it clearly separated ethnic German citizens from Germans of Turkish background and was seen as implying that Germany is only for the ethnic Germans.

Unfortunately, apologies of any kind are unheard of in cases of violence against Roma. In the best cases, incidents are ignored, and in the worst cases, insults are added to injury, often by leading political figures.

Since 1992, hundreds of Roma have been killed in Central and Eastern Europe in racially-related violence. Incidents involving the burning of Romani households and sometimes burning people alive have been reported in Romania, Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Slovakia, Italy, France, Spain, the UK, Russia, and Hungary. One victim of the pogrom in Hadareni, Romania, in 1993, had 83 distinct wounds on his body (at least 30 of them deadly) and another one was burned alive (Pro Europa). However, in Romania the political class and

diplomacy have avoided discussion of these pogroms against Roma and no apology has ever appeared in the media.

The European Roma Rights Center[20] writes about Romania:

> Following the changes in 1989 Romania was the site of approximately 30 anti-Romani pogroms in which non-Roma killed Roma, burned many Romani houses, and forced several hundred Roma to flee. These past abuses have remained unsanctioned and the pogroms have been replaced with police raids. Many of the victims of the pogroms have ended up on the outskirts of Bucharest living in inhumane conditions and unable to secure residency permits.

In Slovakia, on July 21, 1995, 17-year-old Mario Goral was beaten and then burned alive at the site of a Gypsy pogrom of World War II. On August 23 of the same year, Jan Slota of the Slovak National Party stated on *Slovak National Radio* "I love roast meat Gypsy-style very much, but I'd prefer more meat and less Gypsies."[21] Russian municipal legislator Sergei Krivnyuk declared for *Volgainform*, on November 17, 2004 "Residents are ready to start setting the gypsies' houses on fire, and I want to head this process."

Not only is no political or significant diplomatic stand taken against these practices, which in itself is a factor in anti-Gypsyism, but calls from national and local politicians encouraged such practices.

Anti-Gypsyism from the Ministers of Interior

The Ministers of Interior of EU member states are not just political leaders but also public opinion makers, especially in Eastern and Central Europe. Their opinions about the way Roma issues should be addressed is of utmost importance in designing national policies focused on Roma.

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[21] As reported by Nevipe Foundation, "Press Rrom News Agency Report",Slovakia in a interview with director Eva Godlova.

On February 27, 2004, *Radio Prague* broadcast a program focused on measures needed in

"stopping the exodus of Roma" into the Czech Republic. The Minister of the Interior,

Stanislav Gross, was interviewed and affirmed his strong stand against Roma migrants from

Slovakia. The minister focused on the "violent riots and looting" of Eastern Slovakian Roma

during social unrest in Slovakia and restrictive measures against a "possible Roma invasion."

Despite these allegations against Slovak citizens, the Slovak government did not react, nor did

anyone else.

In 2003, the Romanian newspaper *Adevarul* published the following excerpt

> The coordinator doctor of the [fertilisation] bank, A.M., says that all men between 18
> to 40 who have an athletic body, have never had syphilis, diabetes, obesity, AIDS or
> genetically transmittable illnesses and have at least a high school diploma can donate
> sperm. We are also giving a financial bonus, but I do not want to say the amount
> because we will have here a huge crowd tomorrow. The gypsies will come to donate,
> and when they are refused and told that we look only for the Caucasians, they will
> just tell us they have no idea what we are talking about.

In fact, Roma are also Caucasians and it is impossible to distinguish Roma from Romanians

based on physical characteristics. The above article would seem to have no link with political

or diplomatic anti-Gypsyism if, unfortunately, similar racist statements wouldn't have come

from Ioan Rus, Romanian Minister of Administration and Interior. In a document published

on the Romanian government website in January 2004 he is quoted saying:

> The armed gangs of Gypsies or Romanians, criminals, rapists or thieves that arm
> themselves and keep entire towns under terror, have to disappear. I know that
> this is not strategic, that is not a politically correct language, but, I agree with
> positive discrimination only when a social category is in difficulty. I understand
> that we have to do whatever we can in favour of equal opportunities and to
> create decent living conditions for all disadvantaged categories. But when Roma
> or Romanian criminals are grouping with a clearly criminal purpose, we have to
> say it straight.

Because this is not as blunt as the article published in the mainstream Romanian media, the

official speech on the government website provides a good example of "hidden" or "coded"

anti-Gypsyism. The minister makes a distinction between Roma and Romanian citizens on the

basis of imagined racial characteristics and stereotypes, as no genetic tests can distinguish pure ethnic Romanians from Romanians belonging to the Roma minority.

Further examination of the text shows that the Romanian governmental representative more often uses the pejorative "tigani" (gypsy) than the politically correct "Roma." The use of linguistic tricks, such as referring to "Gypsies or Romanians" rather than simply "Gypsies" is widely used in diplomacy (Kurbalija and Slavik, 2002) and, in this case, has the effect of making racist statements appear acceptable and publishable on the government website. However, without doubt, Mr. Rus refers exclusively to Roma when he talks about criminal activities, because in Romania, no discussion of "positive discrimination" in favour of ethnic Romanians has occurred. Mr. Rus could have more clearly included reference to Romanian criminals other than Roma by using the formulation "Gypsies and Romanians." His sentence clearly associates and, indeed, almost equates Roma with criminals, rapists, and thieves.

Dehumanisation of Roma: The Case of Mayors

Roma are often seen as a subhuman group closer to the animal realm than the human realm. Even those rare cases of seemingly sympathetic portrayals of Roma seem to depict Roma as somehow not fully human, at best childlike. Roma are in the best cases described as free-spirited, carefree, happy, and naturally graceful. All these characteristics are frequently used to describe animals.

In 2000, a case evolved around a group of Roma from the central Hungarian village of Zámoly who sought asylum in France in response to forced evictions and the threat of serious violence (ERRC, 2000). On April 27, 2000, Dezső Csete, mayor of the town of Csór, commented "I believe that the Roma of Zámoly have no place among human beings. Just as in the animal world, parasites must be expelled." This is one of the bluntest examples of anti-

Gypsyism focused on dehumanisation of Roma. In relation to the same case, Hungarian Social and Family Affairs Minister Péter Harrach said, on August 5, 2000, that "some were going abroad to discredit Hungary, not only demanding compensation but making groundless allegations against the state and government." Despite the fact that asylum was eventually granted to the Roma, the Hungarian government never offered an apology.

Dehumanisation of Roma and comparison with animals by politicians and the public is frequent in the EU and mainly unpunished. For example, Italian Councilman Pierpaolo Fanton commented on Roma for TV news in Treviso in 2005: "Nomads, they are animals." He went on to suggest a vaccine for Roma children who, with their saliva and spit, might "infect" Italian children attending the same schools. The mayor of Treviso was known to have implied that Roma should be used as rabbits for training the local hunters. Pietro Zocconali, President of the National Association of Sociologists of Italy, said in February 2005 "Roma steal children and then sell them, sometimes in parts." (ENAR, 2005)

In 2001, Ion Bulucea, then mayor of Craiova, the largest city in southwest Romania, said "those stinky Gypsies should be exterminated" as reported by Medicine sans Frontieres (2003). This statement followed the scandal and strong reaction from the Council of Europe to a plan proposed by the mayor of Piatra Neamt, Romania, Ion Rotaru. Mayor Rotaru wanted to create a concentration camp for Roma. Gheorghe Funar, then mayor of Cluj (the largest city in Transylvania), has frequently and publicly declared his adversity to Roma. In 1999, Mircea Bot, at that time Chief of the Bucharest Police and a strong candidate for a ministerial position within the Romanian government, said "Those scum Gypsies are responsible for all the wrong-doing in Romania" (ERIO, 2004).

On May 4, 2005, the present Mayor of Craiova said for the newspaper *Gardianul*, "I pee on them, those mother f… Gypsy jerks and hooligans." The local politician elected on the list of the ruling Social Democrat Party made it clear in less than four hundred words what he thinks

of Roma: "stinky ugly gypsies," "shits," "jerks," "dirty," "hooligans." He described a "war" against gypsies and expressed his wish to deport them from his city. In 2005, the Mayor was fined twice for racist speech against Roma and blacks. In 2006, he joined the main Romanian party and received the highest distinction offered by the Romanian Orthodox church.

In 2003, Traian Basescu, mayor of Bucharest (currently the Romanian President), declared in Strasbourg during a meeting of the Council of Europe that Gypsies "are nomads and nobody can do anything about them . . . they will bring their horses into the flats and there any try to civilize them would end . . . we should build special camps and keep them outside our cities" (Adevarul, 2003).

Due to its effect in the mass media and public conscience, diplomatic and political anti-Gypsyism is the main and most dangerous way to legitimise and enforce discrimination and racial abuses against Roma. Even in Poland, where the Roma population is well integrated and politically irrelevant as it consists of less than 0.01% of the population, an opinion poll of racial prejudice conducted by the Demoskop Research Agency and published in April 1991 discovered that 48% of Poles interviewed declared they would be against accepting Roma in the Sejm (Polish parliament) (OSCE, 2005).

Incidents of anti-Gypsyism at the political and diplomatic level have been reported in most European states in 2005 and 2006. Here, I have presented some extreme cases focusing on countries with a significant Roma population. At this moment, in Western Europe we usually witness political and diplomatic silence in regard to violence and discrimination against Roma within the EU member states before 1 May 2004. I argue here that a link exists between the widespread popular support against Roma and the political and diplomatic anti-Gypsyism. European elites are quiet and seem concerned to resonate with, rather than stand against, the nationalistic and sometimes extremist feelings of the majorities. This type of anti-Gypsyism

is particularly dangerous as it legitimises racism against Roma. Government and state representatives deploying racist discourse against Roma encourage, whether consciously or not, both the dehumanisation and exclusion of Roma and institutional racism.

Chapter 5: The Role of Diplomacy in Combating Racism and Anti-Gypsyism

In this chapter, I bring together two ideas. First, that curbing anti-Gypsyism must be a priority in Europe in order to maintain social stability, and this requires a significant change of attitudes within the majority population. And second, that both conventional diplomacy and multilateral diplomacy need reform, having failed to address inter-ethnic conflicts and racism in general, and within Europe, anti-Gypsyism in particular. I propose that the involvement of Roma in European and national diplomatic exercises can be a step towards achieving both goals. Such a strategy would promote a positive image of Roma to both majority populations and Roma communities. Furthermore, the work of a Roma diplomatic corps could contribute to the European process by carving out some European diplomatic niches: negotiation and prevention of inter-ethnic conflicts, promoting social inclusion, and adoption of policies targeting elimination of poverty and segregation. Roma, as the largest ethnic group in Europe without a state, could be at the basis of a European Roma Policy that later could provide legitimacy for a common European Foreign Policy.

At the moment, the most common type of diplomacy remains bilateral diplomacy, in both its conventional and unconventional forms. In this chapter, I propose and describe a means to address anti-Gypsyism in particular, and racism in general, through developing a European diplomatic niche that could make possible bilateral diplomacy between the EU and the member and non-member states focussed on particular issues. This niche diplomacy could strengthen public diplomacy and pressure currently applied by national and international non-

governmental organisations (NGOs) which is, at the moment, the only diplomatic tool available for the Roma in Europe.

To begin, I will outline the main diplomatic concepts I draw on in this chapter. As already stated, bilateral diplomacy, in both traditional forms (between states, through accredited resident missions) and unconventional forms (Melissen, 1999) is widely used despite the recognized need for multilateral diplomacy in a globalised system. The rare occasions when the EU has deployed bilateral diplomatic approaches (for example, in the context of European enlargement) are perhaps its most successful initiatives.

Berridge (2005) considers that "together with the balance of power, which it both reinforces and reflects, diplomacy is the most important institution of our society of states" (p. 1). Indeed, diplomacy plays an important role today not only in relations between states, but also, through public diplomacy, in shaping public opinion. Berridge provides a rather narrow definition of public diplomacy, which he sees as "an euphemism for propaganda conducted and orchestrated by the MFAs" (p. 1) rather than a form of multistakeholder diplomacy.

The Murrow Center[22] describes public diplomacy as follows:

> Public diplomacy . . . deals with the influence of public attitudes on the formation and execution of foreign policies. It encompasses dimensions of international relations beyond traditional diplomacy; the cultivation by governments of public opinion in other countries; the interaction of private groups and interests in one country with those of another; the reporting of foreign affairs and its impact on policy; communication between those whose job is communication, as between diplomats and foreign correspondents; and the processes of inter-cultural communications. Central to public diplomacy is the transnational flow of information and ideas.

It is important to note that public diplomacy targets mainly individual citizens and civil society organizations such as NGOs, unlike traditional diplomacy, which targets

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[22] Quoted from the website http://www.publicdiplomacy.org/1.htm.

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governments. This is relevant in the case of anti-Gypsyism because, as mentioned above, the main institutions engaged in promoting the rights of Roma are NGOs, which use public diplomacy in order to enter dialogue with state and inter-governmental representatives.

Even within conventional practice it is acknowledged that the shape of diplomacy is changing. Rana (2004) points to the interconnected nature of foreign affairs and internal civil society concerns:

> The partition between domestic and external affairs has largely evaporated. Public opinion is deeply concerned with foreign issues that are perceived as vital to national interests. Organizations of civil society of many different shades are enmeshed in foreign affairs, forcing foreign ministries to practice internal diplomacy and outreach which in turn calls for new mindsets of inclusiveness and transparency. (pp. 5-6)

In this thesis I adopt an extended meaning of public diplomacy which covers not just diplomatic initiatives of the government, but also those of intergovernmental institutions and international and national organisations and individuals. Civil society organisations in Europe not only influence the public diplomacy of their governments, but they also shape public opinion--and, therefore, are "users" of public diplomacy.

The need for reform and niche diplomacy has been widely debated by academics (Keohane, 1969; Pratt, 1989; Nye, 1992), but, so far, no one has identified a niche targeting racism, and in particular anti-Gypsyism, in Europe. The struggle against Apartheid in South Africa provides relevant experience in this regard (Black, 1997). In reference to the focus on South Africa of the diplomacies of Australia, Canada, and Sweden, Copper, Higgott, and Nosal (1993) identified a "general characteristic of middle power diplomacy--that is, a propensity towards concentration on specialized issues-areas, or niche playing" (p. 88). Niche diplomacy, in most cases, has developed as a matter of necessity rather than choice, as most states do not have a decisive structural power and therefore have strong incentive to develop sophisticated

diplomatic skills.

Multilateral diplomacy has been a feature of interstate diplomacy since the First World War (Hankey, 1946) and is identified with intergovernmental organisations such as the UN, OSCE, Council of Europe and more recently, the EU. Since 1909, when 37 intergovernmental organizations were recorded (Berridge, 2005), to 2006, when the number rests at about 300, peaking at a maximum of 378 in 1985[23] the role of multilateral diplomacy has increased dramatically, as has the input of the international and national NGOs.

In recent years, many other types of alternative diplomacy have been developed and deployed. Humanitarian diplomacy, conference diplomacy, virtual diplomacy, ad-hoc diplomacy, relief diplomacy, and shadow diplomacy are just a few. These developments can be interpreted as a response to the perceived need to supplement or adjust traditional diplomacy to modern circumstances, but, unfortunately, none has focused on combating racism.

Post Cold-War Stability and the Failure of OSCE Diplomacy in the Case of Roma

"In three and a half years…the very nature of the international system as we had known it was transformed. In this transformation diplomats can--and should--take only modest credit."
Baker and De Frank, 1995, p. 672

In Europe, the post-Cold War environment, no longer dominated by superpowers, brought dramatic changes. Aside from positive aspects such as the collapse of Communism and a significant reduction in weapons of mass destruction, these changes led to a decrease in international stability related to the explosion of previous suppressed tendencies like extreme nationalism, religious extremism, and the escalation of racism and inter-ethnic conflict. Diplomacy not only played little role in the collapse of the USSR and the end of the Cold War, but since then it has played practically no role in reducing the negative consequences of

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[23] Statistics available from http://www.uia.org/extlinks/pub.php.

these events (Mullerson, 1997). Ignatieff (2003) claims that since the 1990s, due to the international state diplomatic approaches, "Human rights is increasingly seen as the language of a moral imperialism just as ruthless and just as self-deceived as the colonial hubris of yesteryear"(p. 3). The double standards of the United States and of European governments, in the way they address human rights of their citizens and the human rights of non-citizens of Muslim or African countries have been exposed regularly in *The Economist*. In 2003 *The Economist* published a statement that:

> Racism among Europe's longer-standing indigenous populations towards newcomers often with darker skins is certainly common and may have become more acute as the numbers swell.

Any diplomatic initiative focused on racism has limited or no legitimacy coming from the side of national states in Europe as most of them struggle with racism. In the post-Second World War era, every advance in the field of human rights, anti-discrimination, and anti-racism has been driven to a great extent by non-state actors. As Ignatieff (2003) states, "without the advocacy revolution of the NGOs . . . it is likely that the passage of so many human rights instruments since 1945 would have remained a revolution on paper" (p. 8). Ignatieff's view is also shared by Clark (2001), who presents the case of Amnesty International which had a leading role in changing or strengthening the human rights norms. Complementary to the pressure and public diplomacy of NGOs, which often proves more effective than that of governments, I believe there should be a common European diplomatic approach to racism with the ability to legitimise and empower the efforts of non-governmental actors.

As outlined in previous chapters, few members of the political or diplomatic elite in Europe have taken a stand or expressed an interest in learning about or speaking against historical discrimination and violence against Roma. A number of international institutions have exerted top-down pressure in recent years with the aim of curbing racism; their efforts were

reinforced by a number of bottom-up approaches initiated by NGOs or individuals. While it is surely not the sole role of diplomacy to fight racism and prevent ethnic conflicts, up to this point in the combat of anti-Gypsyism traditional diplomacy has played no role.

A number of activists have spoken out in favour of an independent Roma state. A Roma state would ensure a political and diplomatic presence of Roma and would be a significant factor in curbing anti-Gypsyism, as Mullerson (1997) argues. However, aside from practical difficulties with this idea, in the case of Roma, a movement towards self-determination would lead to inter-ethnic conflicts and would dramatically affect the stability of Europe. The situation of the Roma minority in Europe is very specific and requires tailored measures and initiatives. When it comes to human rights, and in particular to anti-Gypsyism, a diplomatic niche is ready to be explored and used by the EU, drawing on the experience of EU middle and small powers in developing and using niche diplomacy.

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

For example, in 1993, when negotiating the frictions between Hungary and Slovakia due to

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

Slovakia provides a number of good case studies in terms of the potential destabilising power of ethnic conflict related to Roma. Hate speech in Slovakia regarding ethnic minorities is similar in the case of Hungarians and Roma. However, while the Hungarian minority is well represented in the national parliament and defended by the Hungarian state, the Roma are simply ignored. Surely it could be argued by the Slovak government that Roma are not ignored, as there is a Roma Plenipotentiary in the person of Klara Orgovanova, that much effort is devoted by the relevant ministries to address problems relevant to Roma, that Structural Funds are directed towards these ends, that Slovakia has signed up to the Decade of Roma Inclusion, that the Slovak government represents all its citizens, and that the category of ethnic minority is distinct from national minority. All above arguments can be easily deconstructed.

In an interview, as well as during a speech at a conference organised by Erbert Stiftung Fundation in 2005, Klara Orgovanova complained that her position is a "window dressing position" as she is ignored by the Slovak ministries and has no decision power on budgets. She also argued during the meeting of the Decade's Steering Committee that "Slovak involvement in the Decade of Roma Inclusion is opportunistic and had meant nothing to the Slovak Roma." According to Colin Wolfe, the chief of Slovakian and Austrian Division of the

Directorate General REGIO during a Seminar of the Roma Diplomacy[24], the Slovak government has very limited interest in using European Structural Funds in Roma communities and often the ministries act as obstacles rather than facilitators.

In November 2002, the *Slovak Spectator* published the following quotation by Ján Slota, chairman of the Real Slovak National Party: "Minorities terrorize the majority. Everybody [in the world] is fighting terrorism, but here we don't know who or what we are fighting." Slota was reacting to news that his party was to be prosecuted for its pre-election broadcasts that allegedly incited hatred against ethnic minorities. At this moment (July 2006), Ján Slota is part of the Slovak government. He was also quoted by the same newspaper in 1998 saying that the best policy for Roma is "a long whip and a small yard"[25].

The explosive potential of ignored ethnic problems was witnessed in February 2004, when Slovakia deployed the largest army and police force since the Second World War in order to re-establish order after Roma took to the streets to protest cuts in their insignificant social benefits. Ironically, during the crisis Slovak politicians gave themselves a bonus and raised their already generous wages.

These protests were one of the worst social explosions in years in Europe. However, press coverage was limited and the events were largely ignored by EU politicians and international organizations dealing with human rights because this took place just two months before Slovakia was due to enter the EU. Slovakia's seeming disregard for the Copenhagen criteria that require "stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities" (European Commission, 1992) seemed of no concern. No significant position from international institutions against what happened in Slovakia was made public and no diplomatic effort was put into easing the crisis.

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[24] For more details see http://www.diplomacy.edu/roma.
[25] According to Radio Rota available at: http://www.dzeno.cz/?r_id=33.

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

The Role of the European Union in combating anti-Gypsyism

The EU (and it predecessors) has a history of involvement in human rights. Concern for human rights was introduced in Europe with the adoption in 1950 of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, and was reinforced by a European Commission of Human Rights and by the European Court of Human Rights. Despite reluctance from Greece, Portugal, and Spain (at that time still far from being the functional democracies they are now) the European Economic Community adopted, for the first time in 1973, the phrase "respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms" as a norm for the future EU. Risse-Kappen (2001) argues that the EU has been fundamental also

in the emergence of human rights norms in East-West relations and, therefore, the introduction of human rights issues in the superpower diplomacy before the end of the Cold War. The Helsinki Final Act of 1975[26], which saw the states under the Iron Curtain conceding to their citizens the right to have human rights organisations, was undoubtedly one of the main successes of European diplomacy.

The lack of tension and the economic interlinks among EU members, combined with the fact that the enlargement process is seen as the main factor in inhibiting interstate wars are already significant achievements of the EU. In combination with the increasing convergence of hitherto discrete national security and economic interests within an enlarged EU (with the possible exception of the United Kingdom) these factors limit the already minor role that member state diplomacies play in Europe. However, this trend can also be seen as signalling a successful path forward for a future European Foreign Service.

"Conventional wisdom says that Conventional Diplomacy is dying" said *The Economist* (1998) in its "Cook's lumpy foreign broth" article. European diplomacy as a whole needs to find a diplomatic niche to provide visibility and legitimacy to its foreign affairs policies before the EU can become an alternative power pole for the United States. The European legal framework targeting the elimination of discrimination and racism is considered to be the most advanced in the world (European Commission, 2004). The adoption of the Fundamental Charter of Human Rights[27] and its inclusion in the proposed European Constitution is a clear signal that Europeans have some tools and experience in implementing a basic human rights framework. Elements of this framework are listed below:

- According to Article 29 of the EU Treaty, one of the EU's objectives is to "provide

    citizens with a high level of safety within an area of freedom, security and justice by

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[26] Document available at http://www.hri.org/docs/Helsinki75.html.
[27] Available at : http://www.europarl.europa.eu/charter/default_en.htm.

developing common action among the Member States in the fields of police and judicial co-operation in criminal matters and by preventing and combating racism and xenophobia."

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

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

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

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

Niche diplomacy also has a strong history in European states. The European block is mainly composed of middle and smaller powers that are skilled in developing diplomatic niches. In

the case of Netherlands, Denmark, and Sweden such niches include human rights diplomacy, before and following the void of leadership at the end of the Cold War (Puchala and Coate, 1988).

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

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

Sooner or later, the countries of the EU will be obliged to assume moral responsibility for their past, and they are increasingly aware of this. Most of its members have a history of abuse and discrimination in their former colonies. In addition, Europe can be considered in my view as the cradle of biological racism. At the academic level, these issues are already being examined, and the results have started trickling down into mainstream curricula. The recent UN initiative for a human rights education curriculum, significantly, was mainly promoted and lobbied by EU member states.

A European human rights diplomatic niche might also function as a much-needed counterbalance to the converging right-wing movement in Europe based on a combination of

neo-racist, neo-fascist, and anti-Gypsy movements. Numerous analyses show beyond any doubt the re-emergence of racism in Europe and expose political and intellectual efforts to make racism respectable (Gilroy, 2001; Williams, 1998; Modood, 1997; van den Berghe, 1995; Wieviorka, 1995; Gellner, 1994; Goldberg, 1993; Balibar and Wallerstein, 1991). It is not only the extremist right, such as Le Pen and the Front Nationale in France, Jorg Heider and the FPO in Austria, Umberto Bossi and the Lega de Nord in Italy, the Vlaamse Blook in Belgium, and the Fremskrididtpartiet in Denmark and Norway, but also mainstream parties on both sides of the political scene that have started to deploy theories partially justifying racism.

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

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

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

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

Finally, inclusion of Roma might aid in creating relevant and powerful alliances with India, the largest democracy in the world, as India is the only state that has shown concern for Roma which it considers of Indian origin.[29] China, Indonesia, and Sri Lanka, which include more than a quarter of the world population, and which struggle with ethnic conflicts, might also be more interested in such a diplomatic corps than they are at this moment in European diplomacy.

European Union Public Diplomacy and its Failure in the Case of Roma

NGO public diplomacy has seen some significant successes in recent decades. Greenpeace managed to transform a grassroots movement into a political ideology and to introduce environmental issues in the political and diplomatic world. Amnesty International is often a major player in diplomatic efforts concerning the violation of human rights, along with *Medicines sans Frontiers.* Save the Children managed to convince the European

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[28] Available at :
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do;jsessionid=EE238B28FEF5BBAEBC34B3CD872555E7.node1?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P6-TA-2005-0151+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN
[29] From a discussion with Nicolae Gheorghe senior adviser for Roma and Sinti of OSCE/ODHIR about a visit of a group representing International Roma Union in India, February 2004.

Commissioner for Justice and Civil Liberties to adopt the Rights of the Child as his main priority in Europe.

The European Union has regularly employed the technique of using the public diplomacy efforts of NGOs and think tanks as a pressure tool in advancing issues which are "delicate" for its member states. However, in the case of advancing Roma issues, the EU has failed to effectively employ the work of Roma NGOs or organisations dealing with human rights and discrimination in general. A look at the structure and funding of EU support for such institutions reveals the extent to which Roma issues are currently marginalised, despite the fact that the tools and techniques to address them are well developed.

The European Networks of NGOs dealing with antidiscrimination, backed and financed by the EU, has been at the forefront of many EU initiatives focussed on discrimination. These four networks of NGOs [30] (respectively focused on racism, age, disability and sexual orientation discrimination) currently receive around 800 000 Euros each per year from the Commission. In 2005 the Commission published a call for core funding of 120 000 Euros for one Roma organisation, however this has not yet been allocated. It is interesting to note the amount currently dedicated to the Network is almost seven times more than that envisioned for capacitating a Roma NGO. In addition, none of the European Network NGOs has every employed a Roma or even hosted a Roma intern.

In addition to the anti-discrimination NGOs, the Commission supports a similar strand of NGOs with identical funding dedicated to social inclusion. Similarly, none of them includes any Roma in their structures or in their advisory boards. With one exception, [31] none of these

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[30] For a description and more details about the European Networks dealing with antidiscrimination please visit http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/fundamental_rights/civil/civ_en.htm.
[31] In 2005, under strong pressure from ERIO, the European Network Against Racism included Roma related issues in their working plan.

NGOs has made any concrete efforts to advance Roma related issues or build capacity within the Roma population.

Another channel for the European institutions to advance difficult issues are the European think tanks, and in the case of human rights issues in particular, the European Union Monitoring Center (EUMC). The Commission plans, according to its proposal for a Council Decision[32], to spend on average 108 000 Euros per year for each of the 52 (2007) to 100 (2010) people to be employed in its future Human Rights Agency in Vienna. This agency will build on the existing EUMC which employees 37 people at the same rate of 108 000 Euros per year per person. No Roma has ever been employed by the EUMC, and only late in 2004 did the institution include as a consultant (?) an expert on Roma issues in a very low position. Nonetheless, the EUMC has repeatedly identified Roma as being the ethnic group facing the most severe discrimination in Europe. In it ironic that the funding envisioned by the European Commission to capacitate one Roma organization is only slightly more than the funding dedicated to each individual employed by EU organizations dealing with similar issues. Annex II presents in more detail the discrepancies between the level of financial, political and diplomatic support targeting, on the one hand, disability and gender issues, and on the other, issues related to Roma.

I believe the European Union pays only marginal attention to Roma related issues compared to other similar issues. Other initiatives focused on antidiscrimination, as in the case of gender, disability and age, are aided by a strong political and diplomatic lobby on top of targeted support received from the European Institutions.

The boards of all the European Network Organisations dealing with anti-discrimination issues include well known politicians and diplomats. The Directors of those networks have regular

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[32] The full text of the Council Decision can be found at
http://europa.eu.int/comm/justice_home/doc_centre/rights/doc/com_2005_280_en.pdf.

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meetings not only with the European Commissioners and the President of the European Commission but also with the European Union Presidencies (prime ministers and foreign ministers). A similar type of support for the Roma organisations is missing.

Intergovernmental Multilateral Diplomacy

Here, I look at the effect of the multilateral diplomacy of intergovernmental institutions and national governments regarding inter-ethnic conflicts. I also analyse the diplomatic approaches in Kosovo where Roma were ignored, despite being a major stakeholder in a future multi-ethnic Kosovo.

The UN, the OSCE and the Council of Europe, once considered legitimate negotiating intergovernmental institutions in inter-ethnic related issues, have repeatedly shown their inability to address the repoliticisation of race in Europe and outside it. The failure of these institutions, and also the EU diplomacy, to address inter-ethnic conflict and basic violations of human rights has been exposed in numerous cases, not only in former European colonies (Nigeria, Rwanda, Liberia, Cambodia, Indonesia, Uganda) but also in Nagorno-Karabakh, Ossetia and Abkhazia, and Chechnya. The Yugoslav conflicts, the tensions in Estonia and Latvia between the locals and the Russian minority, the Cypriot and Corsican problems, the riots in France in 2005, the unresolved Basque and Catalan issues in Spain as well as the recrudescence of racism all over Europe signal the need for an inside reform at the international and European diplomatic levels.

As far as national diplomacies are concerned, despite being main players in what is called human rights diplomacy (Mullerson, 1997), Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands, Germany, UK, and Norway have failed abysmally in addressing the conflicts in Bosnia and in Kosovo. All these countries have a significant proportion of population supporting Anti-Gypsyism.

The only relative success we have seen in Europe, when it comes to ethnic minorities, is from the European Parliament. Members of the European Parliament from ethnic minority backgrounds have brought to light issues regarding the Hungarian minority in Slovakia[33] and Romania,[34] Romani[35] issues, and the situation of the Basque,[36] Catalan,[37] and Muslim minorities.[38] Their successes, especially when it comes to awareness raising in issues concerning Roma communities, should be replicated by encouraging diplomats of minority backgrounds to play an active role in the negotiating teams of the EU.

Kosovo: A Case Study of a Diplomatic Failure

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

The conflict in Kosovo provides a good case study to demonstrate that diplomatic efforts should not only take anti-Gypsyism into consideration, but should train and involve Roma and other vulnerable minorities to help negotiate ethnic conflicts. According to Nicolae Gheorghe,[39] senior advisor for the OSCE on Roma and Sinti issues, the Roma in Kosovo were among the most successful and educated in Europe. Numerous Roma were integrated within both communities and seen as successful role models. An intellectual Roma elite was present in Kosovo prior to the conflict. Therefore, exclusion of Roma from negotiations regarding the future of Kosovo cannot be justified through the lack of appropriate candidates.

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[33] Edit Bauer--of Hungarian descent representing Slovakia
[34] Kinga Gal--born in Romania of Hungarian ethnicity, representing Hungary in the EP.
[35] Hungarian Roma MEPs Livia Jaroka and Victoria Mohacsi.
[36] Jose Ortuondo.
[37] Bernat Joan.
[38] Cem Ozdemir.
[39] Personal communication with Nicolae Gheorghe, March 2006.

In 1999, the majority of Roma[40] in Kosovo were forced to flee by ethnic Albanians in an "ethnic cleansing" process which included Serbs, Gorani, Bosniaks, Turks, and Croats, following the withdrawal of Yugoslav forces. Accused by both Serbs and Albanians of collaborating with the other side, the Roma were caught in the middle of a violent and long-standing conflict between the main ethnic groups in Kosovo. As most Roma were generally integrated within the Serbian minority, but a significant number were also integrated within the Albania majority, they became a scapegoat for both parties: Albanian separatists on the one hand and the Serbian nationalist/Milosevic regime on the other (European Roma Rights Center, 2003).

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

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

> It is unacceptable that more than several years after the end of the conflict in this country and several years after the end of the conflicts in neighboring countries, there are still an estimated 50,000 Roma displaced in in the Balkans and between 40,000 and 60,000 Roma refugees in Western Europe. We….need to act together with Roma representatives to address the root causes of this continued forced displacement in the region and beyond the region. We have to map out what tools we have in our arsenals in order to find a sustainable solution to the issue of forced displacement. (ERRC, 2003)

According to European Roma Rights Center reports (2003), EU member states and

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[40] For the sake of simplicity, I use the term Roma to include the Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities in Kosovo (sometimes referred to as RAE).

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

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

Similarly, the ERRC reported on the situation in Denmark:

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

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

Belgium, the UK, and Italy have also in recent years collectively expelled Roma. In October 1999, Belgium expelled 74 Romani asylum seekers from Slovakia, following a press campaign against Roma and racist pronouncements by leading Belgian politicians which were lately similarly replicated in Italy and the UK. The European Court of Human Right found in Conka v. Belgium (no. 51564/99) Belgium guilty for the collective deportation of Roma.[41]

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

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

In June 2006, during a conference in Brussels focused on Kosovo, German MEP Doris

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[41] For more details see http://www.statewatch.org/news/2002/feb/05belgium.htm

Pack,[42] member of the centre right European People Party and chair of the European Parliament delegation for relations with the countries of south-east Europe, declared that Roma should not be included in the negotiations as they would "interfere" in the negotiations between the Albanians and Serbs.[43] I suggest, on the other hand, that the presence of Roma in the negotiating process may be the only way to ensure a sustainable solution as a significant number of Roma in Kosovo are mixed Roma Albanians and Roma Serbs and therefore have a strong interest in the peace process. A European diplomatic corps, including European Roma along with Serb and Albanian Roma, focused on achieving a long term and sustainable truce might be better received and supported by the local and regional leaders. The involvement of Roma MEPs and Roma diplomats, backed up by international organisations and the USA, could lead to a significant breakthrough and provide a positive case study for the development of a European diplomatic niche involving minorities and focused on peace negotiations in inter-ethnic conflicts.

The Failure of Public Diplomacy in Addressing Anti-Gypsyism- the UN Case

NGOs and intergovernmental organisation public diplomacy have been instrumental in the last years in making Roma issues visible to some degree on the international scene. Their efforts underline the need for the involvement of Roma in European society at all levels including the political and diplomatic ones. Unfortunately, none of these actors has been seriously involved in building capacity within Roma communities or supporting the appointment of Roma professionals in positions which would allow them to participate in the diplomatic processes and negotiations in Europe.

On August 18, 1993 in an article in *The Independent*, McRae suggested that the role of NGOs on the international scene is often more relevant than the diplomacies of small and medium powers. In this vein, a series of important international NGOs including Amnesty, Human

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[42] I refer to Doris Pack in the previous chapter where I underline her prejudices against Roma.
[43] The author was present at this conference.

Rights Watch, Open Society Institute and Minority Rights Group have recently taken strong

stands against anti-Gypsyism in Europe. Their actions can be considered a form of public or

multilateral diplomacy (Gregory, 2005). As I point out later in this section, the lack of any

significant stand on the part of national diplomatic services on issues related to anti-Gypsyism

is often related to the lack of Roma diplomats able to bring up the issues. It is unfortunate that

the main recommendation of the above-mentioned NGOs regarding the effective inclusion

and participation of Roma fall short of convincing, because aside from the Open Society

Institute, none of these NGOs employ any Roma in their staff or have Roma involved in their

boards of directors.

The rights of other vulnerable groups in Europe are defended by both their countries of origin

(in the case of religious and race discrimination, by a number of countries) and as

demonstrated above, by European NGOs[44] dealing with the issues. In the case of Roma who

have no state of their own and no European state willing to stand up for their rights, Roma

NGOs are of utmost importance. Higgot (1997) states that:

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

Unfortunately, vulnerable groups exposed to racism in general have limited input as

negotiating partners within the national states. Therefore their input on domestic policy is not

only not required as Higgot describes, but, when available, is received with scepticism by the

national governments. In the case of Roma, the strong rejections from the side of the majority

populations (OSCE, 2005) and strong nationalism in the countries were they live in makes the

situation even worse as they are rarely consulted in anything of interest for their communities.

When it comes to Roma, Higgot's assumption on lost insulation of diplomacy from domestic

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[44] European Anti-Poverty Network, European Disability Forum, FEANTSA (homeless people), ILGA (gay and
lesbian people), European Women Lobby, Social Platform, etc.

policies is simply wrong.

According to personal research, the World Bank and the European Development Bank, as well as the UN and European Commission, all strongly involved in multimillion-Euro programs of assistance and development targeting Roma communities and all main players in traditional and public diplomacy, fail to employ a single person of Roma origin in their well over 50,000 staff members working in Europe. Roma have a population larger than 10 of the 25 European member states.

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

The failure of the UN in addressing human rights issues is well documented by numerous authors on human rights and multilateral diplomacy, as well as *The Economist* (1999, 2000, 2001, 2004, 2005, 2006). It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to examine the failure of the UN in general terms, however a few points are relevant here. The need for reform of the UN was addressed in the 2005 report of the High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change: "A More Secure World: Our Shared Responsibility." The group, established by Kofi Annan, identified six clusters of threats that the UN needed to address differently. These included economic and social threats, including poverty and deadly infectious disease; internal violence, including civil war, state collapse and genocide; terrorism; and transnational

organised crime.[45] All of these issues are relevant for the situation of Roma when it comes to Europe. The clusters mentioned are also to be found in the Action Plan on Improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti within the OSCE Area (2003) adopted by the OSCE. The OSCE report has an entire chapter focused on the importance of active participation of Roma in initiatives and policies targeting them. Currently, no indication shows that the UN makes any effort in including or training Roma.

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

Since the publication of this agenda, the UN has not made any efforts to develop a diplomatic corps of ethnic minorities and has not employed any of the over 20 million Roma worldwide in its structures. The report specifies that "Preventive Diplomacy may be performed by the Secretary-General personally or through senior staff or specialized agencies and programmes, by the Security Council or the General Assembly and by regional organizations in cooperation with the United Nations" (p. 46). None of the above mentioned bodies and organisations include any Roma. No known senior diplomats of Roma origin exists. In combination with the strong and popular anti-Roma feeling in countries where Roma live, the chance of preventive diplomacy as promoted by the UN including Roma is very limited. Not only the

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[45] The entire document can be accessed at http://www.un.org/secureworld/

UN, but also other stakeholders should have been involved in training and developing a corps of Roma diplomats which would put pressure of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs to include Roma if the UN would be serious about including ethnic minorities in their actions seen as preventing diplomacy.

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

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

Structure and Function of the European Roma Diplomtic Corps
The establishment of a European Diplomatic Task Force to deal with issues related to human rights, and in particular, the establishment of a Roma Diplomatic Corps may appear to be an almost impossible task and a logistical nightmare. The modest results of the UN, after 60 years and billions of dollars, indeed could be used as an argument against such an initiative.

On the positive side, however, the EU has already developed tools to address human rights problems, despite opposition or reluctance on the part of member states. The passing of anti-discrimination legislation is just one of the many examples. This was made possible through

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the establishment of an Anti-Discrimination Unit within the DG Employment and Social Affairs which was strongly supported by the Greek Commissioner Ana Diamantopolu and the very influential French Director General Odile Quintan. The British Head of Unit, Barbara Nolan, also played an important role along with her compatriot, Director General of Justice and Freedoms Jonathan Fowl, who was responsible for the implementation of the legislation. A fundamental role was played by the Commissioner for Enlargement, the very influential Gunter Verheugen, who managed to obtain political support for the anti-discrimination framework in the candidate countries.

The interest and influence of these high level European functionaries as individuals in pushing through anti-discrimination legislation led to, or in a way "forced" the support of the diplomatic services of their countries. The Anti-Discrimination Unit as well as the Gender Equality and Disabilities Units have provided the needed guidance and support for European diplomatic efforts addressing related issues, especially in the case of candidate countries. A similar initiative, namely, a Roma Unit, within the European Commission could serve to steer and provide guidance and monitoring for a European Roma Diplomatic Corps, along with the necessary short and long term goals for such an initiative. In effect, the Roma Unit would function as the headquarters for the diplomatic body.

Like any Unit within the European Commission, a Roma Unit would function on the basis of independent expert national input and would work closely with the national governments. It would also exert pressure on the other Units and European institutions to mainstream Roma issues in their activities and to provide political and diplomatic support for the initiatives of the Roma Diplomatic Corps.

The activities of the Roma Diplomatic Corps, and of a larger European Diplomatic Task Force should be evaluated and monitored according to the rules of the European Commission.

The initiative should be institutionally linked with the other intergovernmental institutions which could participate in the evaluation board. The appointment of a European Ambassador for Roma issues could be linked to either the European Commission (as in the case of the Commission's National Delegations) or the European Council.

The high level of priority placed by the EU on social and economic cohesion provides a good argument in favour of the development of a Roma Diplomatic Corps. As demonstrated in earlier chapters, Roma could become a real threat to the social and economic stability of the Union. At the moment, social and economic cohesion are addressed through the "Open Method of Co-ordination", which has had almost no impact on the social and economic inclusion of Roma. The Open Method of Co-ordination (OMC) was first introduced in the European arena at the Lisbon Summit of March 2000 in order to help the EU become "the world's most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy, capable of sustainable economic growth with better jobs and greater social cohesion." (source?) The OMC was presented as the appropriate tool for an integrated approach toward achieving economic and social renewal. The method was first applied in the employment field and in the fight against poverty and social exclusion.

The OMC is based on a peer pressure system, which has not worked in the case of Roma because member states are not willing to name and shame their peers, as they all have significant problems with anti-Gypsyism and exclusion of Roma. In general the incentive to engage in such a procedure is low: individual members are hesitant to make enemies, and they may fear adverse consequences in other policy areas where they have progressed slowly.

As an alternative to the OMC, the training and establishment of a European Roma Diplomatic Corps could take place within the framework of the European Commission's Lisbon agenda. The Roma diplomats could contribute to the negotiations of the often difficult social inclusion

policies with the national governments and function as a welcome outside pressure tool by those governments.

Towards a Solution

Anti-Gypsyism may be an indicator for potential instability in Europe, and thus provides ample justification for the development of an efficient type of preventive and niche diplomacy. The Roma Diplomatic Corps may be the seed for a successful common European Foreign Policy targeting racism and inter-ethnic conflicts. Involvement of Roma as part of a European Diplomatic Corps working on these issues is a logical and much needed step for the EU. The EU recognises the need (European Parliament's Resolution, 2005a) to promote positive role models within the Roma communities, and this could be done very effectively at the diplomatic level. The OSCE initiative to appoint a Senior Advisor for Roma and Sinti proved highly successful[46], but in order to see a significant change this model must be replicated hundreds of times. The need for capable negotiators and promoters of change capable of reversing the current trend of isolation and rejection from outside and sometimes from inside the Roma communities is growing visibly. Communication strategies are a recognised need in Europe and the lack of Roma employed by the European institutions has led to a severe lack of dialogue between the EU and Roma communities. The rejection of the European Constitution by France and the Netherlands in 2005 triggered calls for a rethinking of the way Europe communicates with its citizens and for increased dialogue between Brussels and the Europeans. The new strategies need to include the seven to nine million European Roma citizens which up to this point have been ignored.

A further problem within the existing Roma movement so far is the closed nature of the system. The ingression of new people is extremely limited and upward mobility is reserved for a small group of people. The closed system results in low or unrealistic expectations, as

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[46] According to the American Ambassador to the OSCE during a conference in Cordoba, 2005.

the pool of ideas is very small. As in any closed system, criticism is discouraged, leading to limited and often bad ideas carried forward. Autocratic leadership encourages isolation in order to avoid exposure of often-serious flaws or lapses in education or judgement. Progress is often perceived as an attack to tradition and culture. Change is not just feared, but also opposed, and the traditional leaders quickly downplay any new expertise.

The serious involvement of intergovernmental institutions and national governments can easily and efficiently address these shortcomings. Unfortunately, so far the main stakeholders on the international and national scene have done little to capacitate a new generation of Romani leaders, but rather have helped preserve the existing status quo by giving visibility and support to traditional leadership, as for example, with the newly established European Roma and Travellers Forum.

Chapter 6: Conclusions

Europe democratic regimes in general, and Eastern and Central Europe plus the western Balkans in particular, should be concerned about the extreme socio-economic exclusion of Roma and rampant anti-Gypsyism. The February 2004 riots in Slovakia, which resulted in the largest deployment of army troops since the Second World War targeting the Roma population in Eastern Slovakia, have many commonalities with the French riots in the autumn of 2005 by excluded youth and Muslims. These incidents show clearly that both new and old European democracies can have dramatic setbacks if they do not seriously pursue tackling widespread racism and social exclusion.

The increasing exclusion of and discrimination against Roma, coupled with a growing awareness of long-term discrimination within Roma communities has produced an increasingly strained relationship between the majority populations in Europe and Roma. This is a serious threat to European stability and needs address through different tools, including diplomatic ones. Widespread and accepted anti-Gypsyism needs to be recognised and addressed as an indicator of stress and potential conflict. In this dissertation I have shown how a European Roma Diplomatic Corps, part of a larger European Diplomatic Initiative focused on Human Rights, may both offer a solution in negotiating more sustainable inclusion policies and resolving inter-ethnic conflicts, as well as bringing about a change of attitudes within diplomatic and political circles, and also within the majority populations in regard to Roma.

The involvement of Roma in European and national diplomatic exercises is a way to promote a positive image of Roma. Including Roma in negotiations aimed at preventing inter-ethnic conflicts, promoting social inclusion, adoption of policies targeting elimination of poverty and segregation are just a few obvious diplomatic niches where Roma professionals could contribute to the European process. A European Roma Policy might provide legitimacy, eventually, for a common European Foreign Policy.

There are some significant factors in favour of involving Roma in the diplomatic efforts in Europe. First, Roma are the largest ethnic minority in Europe and the third largest minority group in practically all European "hot spots" (Kosovo, Macedonia) and potential risk zones for ethnic conflict (Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Turkey). Roma are well integrated both in the majority groups and the minority ethnic groups between which tensions exist (Serbian-Albanian, Macedonian-Albanian, Romanian-Hungarian, Slovak-Hungarian, Czech-Slovak, Turkish-Kurd, Bulgarian-Turkish). Significant groups of Muslim, Orthodox, Catholic, Protestant, and other religions exist among European Roma. The administrative autonomy of regions, often the issue of difficult discussions, is of utmost relevance to the Roma. The many well educated Roma in Europe could and should take part in European initiatives targeting inter-ethnic tensions and racism. Roma remain up to this moment completely excluded from the most powerful institutions promoting the fight against racism: the European Commission and the UN.

In an insightful discussion of identity, Lebanese author Amin Maalouf (2003) described the special role of people who, like most Roma, carry different, and often conflicting elements within their identities. He wrote:

> They live in a sort of frontier zone criss-crossed by ethnic, religious and other fault lines. But by virtue of this situation--peculiar rather than privileged--they have a special role to play in forging links, eliminating misunderstandings, making some parties more reasonable and others less belligerent, smoothing out

difficulties, seeking compromise. Their role is to act as bridges, go-betweens, mediators between the various communities and cultures. (p. 5).

The appointment of a Roma person, Nicolae Gheorghe, in 1999 as the OSCE Senior Advisor for Roma and Sinti was a significant step towards allowing Roma to fulfil this bridge-building role. Unfortunately, this has been the only step so far in promoting Roma "diplomats" within European institutions. Despite the increasingly limited influence of the OSCE on the European scene, Gheorghe's appointment was a great success as it brought the attention of the international institutions and national governments to the abysmal situation of Roma. It also:

- greatly increased the level of expertise on Roma-related issues with these institutions, a much needed step;

- established reliable communication bridges between these institutions and Roma communities;

- was a concrete measure, rather than just talk, towards the principle of diversity in employment for one the most visible international institutions;

- signalled and set an example for national governments and OSCE missions elsewhere;

- dramatically raised awareness about Roma, ethnic minorities, diversity and multiculturalism in general in a highly effective way;

- resulted in further short and long term employment and stimulated competition for educated and qualified Roma;

- helped bring about a change in attitude among the many successful Roma who were reluctant to assume their Roma identity and diminished the existing stigma associated with the Roma identity;

- offered a concrete and effective solution to the often mentioned need for positive role models for Roma.

Aside from the OSCE initiative, diplomacy has not played a role in addressing the tensions

between the majority populations and Roma minorities. In fact, the Roma problem is largely seen and presented as a social problem rather than an ethnic one. This has often served to obscure the degree of racism and discrimination, play down the specificity of the types of exclusion faced by Roma, and effectively deny Roma a voice when it comes to policy remedies. Such exclusion is so commonplace and pervasive within nation states that it should come as little surprise that this disregard spills over into the international arena. Even in those international conflicts where Roma are one of the endangered ethnic groups, no effective representation is made of their interests, their plight is overlooked, and any claims made on their behalf are viewed with outright scepticism.

Consequently, up to this point, the Roma have been almost completely excluded from diplomatic services or initiatives, even when they represent an important stakeholder, as I have shown in this dissertation. Despite the fact that the UN, the Council of Europe, the European Commission, the OSCE and international NGOs underline the need for education and express concern about the lack of Roma representative at the national and international level, no training efforts led or financed by these institutions target Roma diplomacy. This lack of commitment from European institutions unfortunately helps to maintain a vicious circle which leads to the almost complete absence of Roma in the negotiations and design of policies which have a major effect on their lives. Initiatives such as of the Roma Diplomacy Program[47] need to be replicated and supported by the main stakeholders.

It was not possible to cover every aspect of this topic within this dissertation. Some further areas for future research are sketched out below. Open communication and interaction between political elites and civic society elites is considered one of the fundamental conditions of a representative, working democracy. Theoretically, such communication ensures that individuals are treated equally, regardless of their race, creed, gender, or ethnic

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[47] See www.diplomacy.edu/roma.

origins. John Locke (2005) saw government as the trustee of civic societies, but this ideal, as well as open communication and interaction, are clearly not the case in the countries coming from the ex-soviet sphere of influence. Communication and interactions between national governments and Romani elites need to be analysed in depth.

The majority of Roma (around 90%) live in the ex-Communist countries of Eastern and Central Europe. Over 40 years of Communism destroyed civil society in most of those countries. The state had complete responsibility for looking after the interests of the people and any civic initiative, whether it was religious, economic or cultural was regarded as subversive and quickly punished. Most of the people in power in Eastern European countries today were part of the communist political class or at the least, were educated during that time. As a result, reluctance remains among politicians when it comes to consulting or respecting civic society, which is regarded and often accused of being extremist. Further research on anti-Gypsyism during communism could contribute to a better understanding of the phenomenon. The period between the arrival of Roma in Europe (around eleventh century) and the twentieth century needs also to be covered. Finally, institutional Anti-Gypsyism is another topic that needs to be better researched.

Annex 1

Letter sent by Prime Minister Tony Blair in July 2002 to Prime Minister Vladimir Spidla of the Czech Republic, the text of which follows:

Dear Vladimir,

As you know I attach great importance to our relations with the Czech Republic, I enjoyed our meeting in Prague in April. It was pleasure to be able to congratulate you on your election victory. I now have to seek your urgent help over the recent surge in asylum claims by Czech citizens.

There were 332 claims in May and 878 so far in June. This puts the Czech Republic among the biggest sources of asylum claims in the UK. Abuse on the current scale damages both our countries and undermines the integrity of the asylum system.
The UK is proud of its record in providing asylum to those who need it. But the Czech Republic is a valued member of the democratic family, a NATO ally and on the threshold of joining the EU. There are no grounds for Czech citizens to seek protection abroad.

Since I wrote to Milos Zeman in September 1999, we have worked closely together to this shared problem. I am very grateful for the help we have had over pre-clearance at Prague airport. While the scheme has undoubtedly helped, claimants have started to get round it by travelling overland to Dover and other UK ports. The number of claims is now higher than it was before pre-clearance.

We need to take action. At our end, we are introducing legislation that will give us further powers to combat asylum abuse. This includes to remove claimants before their appeals are heard, when their claims are manifestly unfounded. But this will take until November and we need to bring the problem under control straight away.

At present the bulk of the claimants from the Roma community, arriving in the UK on long-haul coach services. They are clearly well organised and being assisted in taking advantage of our immigration laws. That is unacceptable.

So I hope that you will take whatever action is necessary against the coach drivers, to stop this abuse now. In addition the Roma community need to know that unfounded asylum seekers will be returned immediately. We will of course be happy to work with you to ensure that this message is communicated rapidly and clearly.

It has always been our policy to work with your government to tackle this shared problem. I hope this approach can be successful again. But I cannot rule out any option for dealing with this unacceptable situation.

I wanted to share my concerns with you frankly. I believe that we should be able to end unfounded claims by rapid action. We can then focus on the wider agenda of European reform and renewal, which we share

Annex 2

Disability

Legislation

The Commission is preparing a disability directive to complement the existing Directive 2000/78 EC[48] which forbids discrimination in employment for people with disabilities.

Disability NGOs

In 1999 the Commission decided to support 10 networks[49] dealing with disability issues with core funding of around 100 000 Euros for each. In 2002, according to European Commission documents,[50] five European Networks dealing with disability issues each received around 100 000 Euros per year.

All these NGOs are on top of the European Network called the European Disability Forum (EDF) which receives, according to its documents, over 1 000 000 per year since 1999. The European Commission is responsible for at least 90% of the funding. In none of the available yearly reports[51] Roma are mentioned.

This is far from being all the funding. Most of these organizations take part in many projects funded by the European Commission. For instance the EDF received an extra over 400 000 Euros in 2004 for mainstreaming disability issues, according to the documents[52] of the Commission.

At the same time with the proposal for the core funding for one Roma organisation, the Commission also decided to fund an extra six smaller disability networks, each of them receiving on average more than the 120 000 Euros targeted for a Roma organisation.

At this moment there are 11 NGOs financed by the Commission dealing with disability issues according to the Disability website[53] of the Commission. None of them receive less funding than what is planned for the Roma organisation.

The most recent (October 2005) comparative analysis of the Mapping study done for the EU Commission by the Human European Consultancy assisted by Migration Policy Group writes about national level that:"[G] generally speaking Disability organisations seem to have better access to public funding."

The same document writes for Czech Republic what is characteristic for all the other countries: "Relations of NGOs representing Roma minority can be very difficult in the Czech Republic, mostly as Roma are perceived as a "potential source of trouble" by regional governments."

There is absolutely no argument that there is a great need for addressing the discrimination faced by people with disabilities. The fact that none of those NGOs covered by this research

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[48] http://www.era.int/web/en/resources/5_2341_1924_file_en.2554.pdf.

[49] http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/tenders/1999/90_fr.pdf.

[50] http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/fundamental_rights/prog/VP2002_009result_en.htm.

[51] http://www.edf-feph.org/en/about/annual_rep/anrep.htm.

[52] http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/calls/2004/vp_2004_008/post_information_table_en.pdf.

[53] http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/fundamental_rights/civil/civlinks_en.htm.

has employed or has in their management board Roma is in stark contrast with the fact that the percentage of people with disabilities in Roma communities is over the average.

The Commission had a very successful initiative in 2003 called the European Year of People with Disabilities[54] which had a total funding of 12 million Euros. There is no reported action which included Roma with disabilities.

From 1995 to 1999 the Commission provided 500 million ECU (euros) in the Horizon[55] initiative for projects focused on people with disabilities. On the website of the Commission I couldn't find any projects focused on disabled Roma.

From the European Social Fund, at least 500 million Euros were spent from 2000 up to now in initiatives focused on Disability issues, which means at least 50 times more than EU spent on Roma issues. I wasn't able to track any EU funded project which had a focus on disabled Roma[56].The list of funded proposals[57] available on the Commission website also gives no indication whatsoever that disabled Roma were either a target or included.

Existing Structures

Group of Commissioners

The Fundamental Rights, Anti-discrimination and Equal Opportunities Group

Up to this moment the group has been very strong on disability, gender issues and the rights of the child. Under pressure the group agreed to meet on the Roma issues but has yet to do it.

- **The Unit for Integration of People with Disabilities**. This unit is strangely secretive about the number of employees. Incredibly enough, the Commission considers the number of employees working for its disability unit to be an internal matter, as I was told during a telephone conversation with one of their employees. Normally one unit employees at least 7 people, which puts the institutional costs easily over one million Euros.
- **The Disability Interservice Group** consists of "Disability Correspondents" from people from relevant Directorates-General. They meet regularly to ensure that Commission policies take on board the needs of people with Disabilities. The Group aims to raise awareness of disability matters throughout the Commission. As with the case of the Roma Interservice Group there is no information on this.
- **The High Level Group of Member States' Representatives on Disability** consists of senior officials from each Member State, with observers from Iceland, Norway and the Council of Europe. The Group meets on a regular bases to exchange information with each other and the Commission on various disability matters.
- **The European Parliament Disability Intergroup** consists of cross-party Members of the European Parliament who focus on disability issues and ensure they figure on the agenda.

The weakest of all this structures is the Interservice Group and this is the only thing available at this moment for what the Commission considers "the most discriminated ethnic group" – the Roma.

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[54] http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/soc-prot/disable/com271/comfinal_en.pdf.

[55] http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/esf/en/public/sr_hor/hor1.htm#top.

[56] http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/equal/tools/search_en.cfm and look for disability.

[57] http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/disability/funding_en.html.

Gender

Like in the case of disabilities, I am strongly for measures meant to close the existing gap between men and women and I believe the measures taken by the Commission are good but far from enough. The main problems remain that: first, discrepancies between the amount of funding, legislation and structures compared to other grounds of discrimination and second, the almost total lack of interest showed by the Commission in tackling the discrimination of women from ethnic minorities or religious minorities (especially Muslim women). Taking into account reports of the EUMC, the situation of Roma women is by far the worst from all the ethnic groups.

Legislation

Articles 2 and 3 of the EC treaty are very clear about gender mainstreaming (and that should have been enough to have Roma women's issues highly visible). Moreover, Article 13 (sex discrimination in general) and article 141 (equality between man and women in matters of employment and occupation) provide a very strong legal basis for fighting against gender discrimination.

Accordingly, we have by far the best law case[58] from the European Court of Justice in the case of gender discrimination compared with all other discrimination grounds.

Thirteen directives are at this moment dealing with gender equality in areas of employment, social security, goods and services.

Gender NGOs

At this moment the main European Network, the European Women Lobby (EWL), has a core funding of 937 500 Euros per year. Despite active criticism since 1990, it has never had a Roma employee or intern, and does not deal with Roma related issues.

The core funding from the Commission for Gender organizations of 2.2 million euros per hear was increased, in 2004 – 2005, to 3.3 million per year. The new antidiscrimination program plans, according to the communication of the Commission, to put around 900 000 Euros on a yearly basis towards one European Network dealing with gender issues, most probably EWL.

But this is just the anti-discrimination unit and not the gender unit, which offers, as in the case of the disability unit, another line of funding for other NGOs. A look on the website of the Partners projects[59] of the gender unit reveals quite an impressive number of NGOs financed by the Commission.

Funding

Between 2001- 2005, besides the funding above, the Commission had a 50 million Euros program for a framework strategy on gender equality.[60] For the 2006 alone the funding was extended with another 11.5 million Euros.[61]

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[58] http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/gender_equality/legislation/case_law_en.html.
[59] http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/emplweb/gender_equality/index_en.cfm.
[60] http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/gender_equality/docs/newprg/newprg_en.pdf.

From 2007-2013, within the PROGRESS, we have a specific Gender strand which complements the actions of the antidiscrimination strand. At this moment, according to the Parliament decision, the gender strand will get 12% of the 854.2 million proposed as the budget, which means 102.5 million for the 7 years period.

A search on Equal website[62] on gender issue provides a very long list of gender initiatives and projects. The same search on Roma discovers just two projects.

It is very hard to estimate the total funding which went into the gender related initiatives but is remarkable that in 10 of the 56 paragraphs of the regulations for the almost 2 billion Euros of the European Structural Funds up to 2006, gender equality is mentioned. A minimal estimation would be that a minimum of 1200 million Euros were spent in specific projects meant to improve the situation of women. An analysis of the projects available on the Commission website focused strictly on women's participation proves:

a. None of the projects (total value of 42 million) specifically or accidentally included Roma women. There are a few which include migrants but with no clear percentages. The evaluation indicators are mostly missing and rarely convincing.
b. There are no clear splits on other grounds of discrimination of any of those projects (disabilities, religion, ethnicity for instance).
c. Costs per person of some of the projects are well over the fees of the most expensive Universities in the world.

The average per year of these projects alone (over 13.000.000 Euros) is more than triple the amount spent on a population of over 6 000 000 Roma in five countries towards employment and training towards employment (according to the European Commission Phare evaluation). Luxembourg spent more for training 89 women per year than the entire amount spent in Slovakia, Romania, Hungary, Bulgaria and Czech Republic towards business development focused on Roma.

Existing Structures

Group of Commissioners

The Fundamental Rights, Anti-discrimination and Equal Opportunities Group

As written in the section on Disability, this group has been strongly promoting gender, disability and the rights of the child, and little else. There are some strong and very influential working groups and committees which support gender focused initiatives.

- The High Level Group on gender mainstreaming
- Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for women and men
- Inter-service Group on Gender Equality
- Group of experts on Gender, Social Inclusion and Employment

The Gender Equality Unit (Unit G/1)

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[61]

http://europa.eu.int/smartapi/cgi/sga_doc?smartapi!celexapi!prod!CELEXnumdoc&lg=EN&numdoc=52004PC0 551&model=guichett.

[62] http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/equal/tools/search_en.cfm.

In my opinion this is one of the most powerful units in the DG Employment and Social Affairs. Proof of its power is the fact that an annual Report on Equality between women and men is submitted to the Spring European Council, which is practically the most important and high level event of the European Union.

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