

www.peer-review-social-inclusion.eu

United Kingdom

Promoting Social Inclusion of Roma

A Study of National Policies

Gary Craig
York Workshops

Disclaimer: This report reflects the views of its author(s) and these are not necessarily those of either the European Commission or the Member States. The original language of the report is English.

July 2011



On behalf of the
European Commission
DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion









Acknowledgments

Producing a report such as this in a relatively condensed period of time requires an author to lean heavily on the commitment and insights of others who have devoted substantial work and time to exploring this most difficult area of policy. They are too numerous to mention by name but their contributions are, I hope, clear within the body of the report.

Contents

Summary 3

1. The Roma population in the United Kingdom 4
   1.1 Definition and nomenclature 4
   1.2 Geographical distribution 8

2. Income Poverty 9

3. Education 10

4. Employment 12

5. Health 15

6. Housing 16

7. Other dimensions of exclusion 17

8. Roma, racism and discrimination 18

9. Civil society organisations 20

10. Government policies and programmes 22

11. Conclusions and recommendations 23

References 26

Appendix: A note on data 32

Summary

The Roma in the UK are defined to be Romani people migrating predominantly since the mid-1990s, either those seeking asylum from persecution in mainland European countries (one report puts the first refugees as arriving in 1993), or, since 2004, as European citizens exercising their right of free movement in search of work, or simply a better life.[1] Within the UK, there are often confusions in terminology as between UK Roma and other 'Romani' groups.

Notwithstanding nuances in nomenclature and definition, many of the issues facing the Roma – their low status, unequalled levels of deprivation and exclusion, and the racism, violence and discrimination they face at both individual and institutional levels – they have in common with Gypsies and Traveller groups or other groups sometimes also called Roma within the UK.

There is an almost total lack of robust national and local level quantitative data regarding this group.Roma is an ethnic group and most data collected in relation to ethnicity within the UK is collected either on the basis of nationality or country of birth, where it is collected at al. There remains concern about the degree to which ethnicity is routinely included as a variable in much national and local data collection.

National estimates of the size of the UK Roma vary widely from about 100,000 to one million. Sizeable communities are known to exist in the North (e.g. Doncaster), North and East London and parts of the South East, and the East Midlands, within England, with some groupings in and around Glasgow (Scotland), Cardiff (Wales) and Belfast (Northern Ireland).

The country of origin of these concentrations varies from one area to another. Despite this concentration, there is a small nucleus of Roma in many areas, with one survey of 104 UK local authorities finding 28 Roma populations from Slovakia, 25 from the Czech Republic, 21 from Romania, 20 from Poland and smaller numbers from other countries both inside and outside the EU.

Racism impacts on the Roma's ability to access all forms of welfare provision, including the labour market, health, housing and education. This is demonstrated by a series of small-scale qualitative studies (which did not have the Roma as their focus) and two larger-scale studies, which did.

There is therefore a pressing political and policy agenda to be carried through in the UK, starting from programmes of data collection and monitoring which makes the Roma 'visible' as a significant minority in the UK context, and which addresses severe disadvantage across the welfare spectrum.

[1] In this report, every attempt has been made to limit the discussion to this group although the way terms are used variably within and between sources makes it sometimes difficult to know with certainty whether the Roma group referred to is indeed Roma as defined here. No source discussing the Roma prior to 1990 is considered here in any case.

1. The Roma population in the United Kingdom

1.1 Definition and nomenclature

Nomenclature and thus definition of the boundaries of the UK Roma population – the scope of this report – present difficult issues; absolutely precise definitions are elusive. Within the European Union, and in most mainland European countries, 'Roma' is used as an all-encompassing term[2]; by contrast, the Council of Europe uses the terms 'Roma and Travellers' whereas the Organisations for Security and Cooperation in Europe (and thus many European police forces, for example) use the term 'Roma and Sinti' (OSCE 2010). In many countries, reference is also made to Gypsies, Manouches, Tsigane and to other vernacular terms. The term Romani is also widely used.

These difficulties are best captured by Youth in Action (2009: p.12) which notes that 'Romani culture is diverse and there is no universal culture per se but there are attributes common to all Roma' including belief in God, loyalty to family, belief in standards and norms (albeit with differing emphases), and adaptability to changing conditions. 'It would be invalid to generalise and over-simplify by giving concrete rules to all Roma … there is no one tribe that can call themselves the one, "true" Roma'. (*Ibid.*) Acton (2003: p.1) notes that the Romani are 'a series of ethnic groups linked by history and the possession of an Indian language (Romani) ….but [compared with the well-known Jewish diaspora] … an even greater variety of cultures. As with Jews, there are many debates over their identity, with radical deconstructionists even questioning any historical validity to the idea of diaspora … [whilst] reaction to the Nazi holocaust and other continuing oppressions has stimulated growing international solidarity …'

Acton notes elsewhere (2005: p.2) also that 'complexity, variety and difference of perspective are thus inherent in Roma/Gypsy/Traveller self-definition from the beginning and any simplification of the above would simply mislead.' Confusion in this territory is not helped by the way that some of the terms are used interchangeably within the same report. Thus a report on elective education in England refers to Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children but then largely refers in the text to Gypsy/Roma (as if they were interchangeable) and Travellers. Ironically, this report (DE 2006) contains a lengthy annex on the use of terminology concluding that in the English context, the broad term Gypsy, Roma, Travellers and Travelling communities is appropriate to cover all these groups but does not cover the UK Roma as defined here. Also, whilst the 2007 report of a consultation on the rights of UK Gypsies and Travellers points to the distinct movement of Roma into the country from the late 1990s, it then observes, in relation to educational exclusion that '15% of Gypsy/Roma children achieved five or more good GCSE grades, compared to 55% of the settled population.' (BHSF 2007: p.5) The report's authors here are clearly referring to 'Romani gypsies' rather than UK Roma. Similarly, a report on housing with regard to 'Roma and Travellers', a 'culmination of research undertaken by the UK National Focal Point, for the FRA Thematic Study 'Housing conditions of Roma and Travellers', then analyses in considerable detail the position of Gypsies, Roma and Travellers referring on occasion to Roma and Travellers, on other occasions to Gypsies and Travellers and yet others to Gypsies, Roma and Travellers, without any attempt to distinguish between these groups. (Staniewicz 2009) A close reading of this long report suggests that the Roma as understood in the present report are not in fact the subject of the investigation at all.

[2] Rrom, in the Romani language, means 'a man'.

The generic term Roma appears to have been associated historically with a movement of people, as Acton puts it, 'descendants at least of Indian emigrants'[3] who first moved into Western Europe in the fifteenth century during the imperial struggles between Western and Turkish powers. (Hajioff and McKee, 2000) Within less than a century, these groups were, in many newly-forming states, outlawed, subject to persecution and extermination and expelled. These reflect familiar processes of scapegoating, blaming the 'other' for economic crisis and decline, a process reaching its nadir during the holocaust (in Romani, 'porjamos') of the Second World War in which Romanis were subjected to a process of extermination equivalent to that of the Jews. Two consequences of this widespread persecution have been the association of Romani and gypsy with (in a hostile political climate) vagrancy or, more accurately, nomadism across national boundaries – often with a commercial orientation – as they have sought a safe, sustainable mode of life. Another has been the creation of a Romani diaspora across the whole of Western Europe; as nation states secured their boundaries, differing national understandings and self-descriptors for Roma emerged within each state.

This has generated a tendency for differentiation between groups within the general Romani population, often because of the need of each to preserve its own culture (Hayes and Acton, 2007), although political alliances between differing Romani groups have been formed from time to time as, for example, in the case of opposition to the deportation of French Roma (Anstead 2010). Nomenclature has remained complex as, over time, some Gypsy populations have defined themselves or have been defined as Roma as if the terms were interchangeable. In the UK context, they are properly not seen as such. Within the UK, Roma has hence a very specific meaning differentiating it from related but separate groupings including Gypsies, Romanies, Scottish Gypsies, Irish Travellers, Travellers and New Travellers (Parry *et al.* 2004). In particular, Gypsies (of various kinds) and Travellers in the UK and (Irish) context are essentially non-sedentary groups notwithstanding the fact that some may have 'settled' in fixed accommodation, whereas UK Roma are not (Ryder and Greenfields 2010: p.136; also Stewart 1997; Kenrick 2006).

Roma within the UK thus refers to Romani people migrating predominantly since the mid-1990s, either those seeking asylum from persecution in mainland European countries (one report puts the first refugees as arriving in 1993), or, since 2004, as European citizens exercising their right of free movement in search of work[4], or simply a better life. In this report, every attempt has been made to limit the discussion to this group although the way terms are used variably within and between sources makes it sometimes difficult to know with certainty whether the Roma group referred to is indeed Roma as defined here. No source discussing the Roma prior to 1990 is considered here in any case. This does not, of course, deny the fact that notwithstanding these nuances in nomenclature and definition, many of the issues facing the Roma – their low status, unequalled levels of deprivation and exclusion, and the racism and discrimination they face – they have in common with Gypsies and Traveller groups and Roma as defined elsewhere. (see special themed issue of *Social Policy and Society 2*008, especially Clark 2008 and Greenfields 2008) A recent survey of Roma in Europe revealed that half of those questioned 'declared they had been discriminated against at least once in the previous year … [and] that 69% of the Roma considered that immigrant or ethnic background represented the main source of discrimination.' (EU Action for the Roma 2009: p.1-2) A 2007 Eurobarometer survey indicated that 77% of European citizens believed that being a Roma tended to be a disadvantage in their country.

Gypsies and Travellers (of various kinds), by contrast, 'have lived and worked in the UK for over 500 years' (NHS West Sussex 2010). European Dialogue summarises the position of the Roma vis-a-vis

[3] From the Inaugural Professorial Lecture by Thomas Acton, Professor of Romani Studies, University of Greenwich, London, 1998: Acton is a leading academic and advocate for Romani Studies within the UK.

[4] Under Directive 2004/38

other Romani groups as the same but different: that is, many share some common language and traditions but 'the Roma clans coming to the UK are different both from the English Gypsies and from each other.' (2009b:13) The same observation might be made about migrants from neighbouring African or Asian countries who are, for the purposes of policy, regarded as separate groupings (but often conflated in socio-economic analyses).

There is a fairly substantial and growing literature on Gypsy and Traveller populations.[5] For example, the newly-established Equalities and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) published a review of inequalities experienced by Gypsy and Traveller communities in 2009 covering 'Romany Gypsies, Irish Travellers, Welsh Travellers, Scottish Gypsy/Travellers and Occupational Travellers (including Showpeople)' (Cemlyn *et al.* 2009). This list did not include Roma who were regarded as a separate grouping albeit also covered – as a defined ethnic group – by the terms of the Equality Act: 'Roma are not included in this review – they are Romani-speaking people who have come to the UK from different countries of Eastern and Central Europe' (p.1) although the review did point to the few occasions on which common issues emerged relating to Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities as in the Gypsy Roma Traveller History Month which occurs annually in June. The EHRC also published a media resource for journalists in Scotland in 2010 but again this makes no mention of Roma at all as a distinct group.(EHRC 2010) A policing report identifies solely the categories of Irish Travellers and Romany Gypsies with, once more, no mention of Roma as a distinct grouping. (Coxhead 2007)

Other major reports on the Gypsy and Traveller communities generally take the same position, which is that the Roma are an entirely distinct group although often pointing to a commonality of experience in terms of intense inequality and disadvantage in key dimensions of welfare, particularly housing, health, education and the labour market. The particular dimensions of this disadvantage may vary from one group to another. One substantial report commissioned by the Irish Traveller movement (Ryder and Greenfields 2010) has examined the extent to which the experience of the Roma differed from that of Gypsies and Irish Travellers, drawing extensively on the only two Roma-focused studies identified also in the course of writing the present report (Poole and Adamson 2009; European Dialogue 2009c[6]), referred to again below: researchers were only able to interview four Roma respondents and their position as a group is largely overlooked. Thus, an independent review of the impact of government policy in light of the Decentralisation and Localism Bill being introduced to Parliament in 2011 examines the position of Gypsy and Traveller communities as, largely, non-sedentary communities, contrasting with the Roma as defined above, despite the fact that by 2011, there were very many Roma within the UK (Ryder *et al.* 2011: p.11). The Roma's situation in this regard is merely one example of the way a dimension of ethnicity is still frequently omitted in policy discussion. (Craig *et al.* 2012) The Roma Support Group (see below) submitted evidence to this review, noting that the UK Coalition government's new White Paper on teaching failed to mention either 'race' or equality'; this view was endorsed by others giving evidence such as Race on the Agenda which argued that 'longstanding disproportionate outcomes in education for some BAME [Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic] groups will be compounded' (*Ibid*.:p.47).

5 Notwithstanding this, the report on equalities published by the outgoing Government in 2010 (*Hills et al*.2010) observed that usable data on Gypsy and Traveller communities was very sparse, particularly given the high levels of deprivation they suffered); no allusion, again, was made to Roma.

6 It is too early to assess the impact of government policy on Gypsies and Travellers generally but this is important as it may give some idea of the impact of policy on the even less 'visible' or politically popular UK Roma. A review of local authorities providing specialist services to Gypsy, 'Roma' [i.e. not UK Roma as defined here] and Traveller children showed that less than one-seventh of the 69 authorities surveyed anticipated having no cuts to their services as a result of expenditure cuts. Ten percent had seen the service deleted altogether; those giving evidence argued that, given the long time it took to build a relationship of trust with children from marginalised families, 'no-one else was able to bridge that gap'. (*European Dialogue 2009c.: p.* 49)

The present review has thus been based on a detailed search for material relating specifically to the Roma: it remains the case, as the European Dialogue mapping report confirms (2009c), that the level and scope of research on Roma settling in the UK is very very poor indeed, with only the Glasgow study referred to below (Poole and Adamson 2009) and the European Dialogue mapping survey itself having the Roma as their main focus, supplemented by fragments of data about the Roma included in a more extensive range of studies focusing on more wide-ranging groups (either Gypsies, Travellers or migrants from Eastern Europe) where the Roma are included but typically at the margins. This clearly points to the need for substantial investment in research and intelligence, particularly given considerable uncertainties even about the size of the Roma population. Typical of these 'marginal studies' is an account of 235 A8 and A2 nationals in Liverpool which noted that the largest group came from Poland, followed by Czech and Slovak nationals, with 5% of the total identifying themselves as Roma (all from the last two named countries). (Scullion and Morris 2009a)

Exclusion and discrimination faced by the Roma in other countries have acted as major drivers of migration to the UK, still, despite its own poor record in the field of racism (Craig 2007) seen as a haven for those fleeing persecution. Thus, for example, for Roma, unemployment rates in Hungary are around 60-80%; in Bulgaria 80% of Roma are jobless; 60% of male prison inmates in Hungary are Roma, and 60% of Roma in Romania live below the poverty line. The OSCE report on policing and Roma from 2006 recognises that Roma have been and continue to be subject to severe violence across the European mainland. Despite this record of victimisation, most Roma who arrived in the UK seeking asylum in the period from the late 1990s to 2004 were refused asylum and deported back to their countries of origin[7]. These drivers from the mid-1990s are reflected in the account of Roma seeking asylum from Slovakia to the Czech Republic (Castle-Kanerova 2002: p.161) where the choice to seek asylum was 'closely associated with the loss of economic and employment status'. Castle-Kanerova comments that 'the case of the Roma [meaning here Roma more generally within Europe] signals that within the heart of Europe, the nearly total exclusion of this specific ethnic minority from the economic activities in the domestic, East European but also in the global/EU labour markets, goes hand in hand with racial discrimination in other spheres of their lives.' (*Ibid.*) In relation to the response of the UK during the 1990s and ahead of the A8 Accession of 2004, 'the admission that racial discrimination is taking place within the "new democracies" would have to be matched by the seriousness with which Roma asylum-seekers' cases are being treated in the countries of the EU.'(*Ibid.*:p.167) The response of the UK to asylum claims cannot, however, be said to have been treating them 'seriously'; indeed it is better described as punitive.

As the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe puts it 'despite the rich cultural, linguistic and historical diversity of the various groups living in different geographical regions of the OSCE, a large number of these … groups share a common problem; they are [all] subject to discrimination and marginalization in all spheres of public life, such as access to public services, housing, health care, education and employment. [They] ... are especially vulnerable to racially-motivated violence and at the same time the possible bias motivation of attacks is often not investigated.' (OSCE 2010, especially Chapter 11: see also OSCE 2008) In Hungary alone in 2009, 6 Roma were murdered in racist attacks. (ERRC 2009: p.17) Poole explains the upsurge in racism in this way: 'given the obvious strains of transformation, the pathologization of social difference has become even more visible as processes of racialization are continually reworked in the context of national renewal. New national-based elites sought not only to defend their newly won independence and control … but also to redefine what it meant to be part of the nation in racial and ethnic terms. This resulted in the continued exclusion of the

[7] The Refugee Council (1999: p. 7) noted that in 1998, the Home Office received 515 asylum applications from Czech citizens, 835 from Slovak citizens and 1015 from Romanian citizens. Almost all these applications were made by Romani people.

Roma' (2010: p.247) who were driven even deeper into poverty. Other literature points to the same drivers for Roma to seek asylum in the UK or, more generally, after 2004, to migrate to the UK. (Law 2011; Law and Swann 2011) In some ways, the UK Roma can be seen to occupy a position which lies somewhere in the 'grey area between "forced" and "voluntary" migration embodied in popular constructions of "economic migrants" and "asylum seekers"' (Poole and Adamson 2008: p.3).

The vast majority of Roma now within the UK will thus have arrived (and not necessarily for the first time) from 2004 onwards. Roma can thus be seen as a *newer* immigrant community within the UK (on a parallel trajectory with, for example, Afghanis, Somalis and Congolese) as opposed to the much longer-established minorities such as Irish Travellers and Gypsies (and those of Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Caribbean origins, although in relation to Travellers and Gypsies, these 'ex-colonial' minorities – arriving in the UK predominantly since the 1950s – might also be regarded as new).

The EU project – involving the free movement of capital, labour, goods and services – is one which, in relation to access to welfare, remains a complex one containing many contradictions. Whilst most nations have built their welfare systems on the basis of nationality, with the 'subordinated inclusion of racial and ethnic minorities deemed to be "in" but not "of" the nation … those previously deemed to be "outsiders" have been reconstructed as "citizens of Europe", legitimate "insiders" in possession of a portfolio of formal rights that cannot be limited by individual national governments …'(Poole 2010: p.255; see also Williams 1989; Lewis 1998). What is also clear, however, and complicating matters even further, is that the Roma do not constitute a nationality as commonly understood: i.e. those born within a specific and defined autonomous territory. Even this is an understanding which is not consistently applied in practice. For example, a study of health and social care needs in East London refers to four nationalities – Polish, Lithuanian, Albanian (including Kosovars) and Roma (Tobi *et al.* 2010); Roma is not, however, a nationality at present.

A further complicating factor is that certain functions of government within the UK are now devolved: thus housing, health care, education and services for children are the responsibility of devolved national administrations whilst employment legislation, social security and immigration legislation are the responsibility of the UK Parliament. This, as Poole notes (2010), creates conflicts and tensions and difficulties for those working at a local level in the devolved parts of the UK polity. Further, it is important to note that the treatment of A8 and A2 migrants has not been identical. Whilst A8 migrants (amongst them many Roma from Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Poland), were able to access the labour market with relative ease, particularly through the Workers Registration Scheme (WRS)[8], the UK government adopted a much more restrictive stance towards A2 migrants (those from Romania and Bulgaria) who were only allowed to work on the Seasonal Agricultural Workers' Scheme and other very limited schemes, but otherwise denied the ability either to work or access public funds (such as benefits or emergency social work payments) unless they could demonstrate financial independence. This has driven many A2 migrants into highly exploitative work situations (see Section 4 below). The contradictions between UK-wide and national (Scottish) policy positions are particularly clear in relation to the 2004 Scottish Fresh Talent Initiative which, whilst encouraging the growth of migration to Scotland, faces the same restrictions on migrants working as within the remainder of the UK.

1.2 Geographical distribution

There has been no large-scale analysis of the patterns of settlement of the Roma, because of the lack of robust and comprehensive data. This may change after the results of the 2011 census are published from 2013 onwards; the reluctance of Roma to engage in ethnic monitoring may undermine its

[8] This scheme was abandoned in May 2011.

accuracy. A series of small-scale studies suggests that the UK Roma are concentrated within a relatively few areas, particularly the North (e.g. Doncaster), North and East London and parts of the South East, and the East Midlands, within England, with some groupings in and around Glasgow (Scotland), Cardiff (Wales) and Belfast (Northern Ireland). The country of origin of these concentrations varies from one area to another although it appears that there is a form of chain migration taking place whereby many Roma come to specific sites of settlement from particular areas within their countries of origin (FRA 2009). Over and above this concentration, there is a small nucleus of Roma in many areas. European Dialogue (2009c) found in their survey of 104 UK local authorities that respondents could identify 28 Roma populations from Slovakia, 25 from the Czech Republic, 21 from Romania, 20 from Poland and smaller numbers from other countries both inside and outside the EU.

Whilst most local studies show a predominance of Roma from Slovakia and the Czech Republic, with Polish Roma present but less strongly represented in most areas, the more recent A2 Accession of Romania and Bulgaria to the EU is changing this picture. For example, in Northern Ireland, where there are estimated to be '"hundreds" of Roma, the overwhelming majority are Romanian nationals' (Allamby *et al.* 2011). Overall, the most numerous of the national groups are thus Slovak, Czech and Romanian communities. The first Roma settlers were, as noted earlier, asylum-seeking refugees, some dispersed by government to particular destinations; later arrivals have tended to gravitate to areas where there were already known to be Roma groups settled. The pattern of settlement is thus partly the result of government policy.

2. Income Poverty

This review of such research and literature as exists on the UKRoma suggests that poverty may be the overarching area of concern but there is no reliable large-scale local or national quantitative data (European Dialogue 2009c: p.89). Poverty affects their need for work, however poorly-paid and badly-regulated, access to decent housing and to other key services such as health care and education. All A8 citizens, including Roma, are entitled to in-work benefits such as tax credit and child benefit (and for those on low income, Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit, providing they were registered under the Workers' Registration Scheme). Those who lost work during the first period of twelve months would not qualify for social security benefits such as income support, housing benefit, council tax benefit and job seekers' allowance. Although A2 workers were also entitled to move and live freely in the UK, the restrictions on them working were – and remain – more severe and most have had to acquire a work permit, obtained for them by their employer, under the Worker Authorisation Scheme. (These restrictions on A8 and A2 workers were waived in the case of self-employed people as they were also to refugees granted leave to remain). A2 workers were allowed to work in the special Sector-Based employment schemes, in particular in the food manufacturing sector, provided that resident workers could not be recruited to fill vacancies. The restrictions on access to benefits for A2 nationals are likely to remain in place until the end of 2011 at least. The EU is currently reviewing some aspects of the UK's benefit regime as it applies to migrant workers, and particularly the 'right to reside' and 'habitual residence' tests, which are used to restrict access to benefits. The 'right to reside' limits benefits to those working continuously for less than 12 months; the habitual residence test is used at an interview to check length, continuity and general nature of actual residence and is often interpreted wrongly by officials.

The low levels of qualification, transferable skill and literacy amongst Roma mean that their access to decent work at decent wages is very limited. In the East London study (Tobi *et al*. 2010), whilst 1 in 5 of the whole sample earned less than £870 per month (a sample which will have included many Eastern Europeans who will have worked at low wage rates and in exploitative conditions – this figure of £870 is

generally below the minimum wage level set by government), the proportion for Roma was 7 in 10, i.e. 3-4 times as many. Ironically, and reflecting the appalling conditions in which some will have worked in their 'home' country, only about 23% – a far lower proportion than for the other groups surveyed – said their work was at a lower level than in their home country.

As with other A8 migrants, Roma arriving in the UK without employment are unable to make claims on public funds: this is established in primary legislation developed by the UK government. As the Govanhill report notes, this even limits 'their access to emergency payments from social work in times of destitution' (Poole and Adamson 2008: p.6). Those remaining unemployed face destitution or reliance on charities and local faith-based organisations, but most are very reluctant to return to their countries of origin, fearing persecution. Those who obtain work, usually at very low pay, can access in-work benefits as described above, but there are often significant delays in obtaining these, particularly because of difficulties of processing claims through the governments of their countries of origin. This study found that only a minority were employed for a year continuously as most available work available was temporary and irregular.

Exclusion from many aspects of social assistance benefits of course, impacts more profoundly on those unable or less able to establish themselves in even the marginal parts of the labour market: women, children, older people and those with disabilities of various kinds.

3. Education

Children in the UK have three basic rights in relation to education: free and compulsory primary education, equal access for minorities to education and equal opportunities within the education system. There are several major structural difficulties in operationalising these rights in relation to Roma children.

The most serious of these is probably income poverty, reflected in turn in lack of access to decent housing and to good quality employment at decent rates of pay. European Dialogue's (2009c) survey noted that this impacted on the ability to purchase educational essentials (uniforms, meals, and transport costs), on children's attendance, and on access to free school meals. In those areas where local education authorities had provided systematic support including, for example, Roma teaching assistants and providing 'advice on employment, benefits or housing issues, levels of attendance tended to be better and a high proportion of adults are in regular employment' (2009a:p.14). Where Roma community members were hired as home-school liaison workers, schools also reported an increase in self-identification as Roma by children in schools. (European Dialogue 2009c: p.84) Other research points to the links between poor educational attainment, disrupted educational experience and poverty (Wilkin *et al*. 2010).

European Dialogue noted, in a report for the UK government (European Dialogue 2009a), that many Roma have poor levels of formal literacy in their own language (often because in their countries of origin they have been placed into remedial schools or excluded from education altogether). Consequently, once in the UK, a higher priority is given by them to finding work and housing, and to provide an adequate standard of living for their children, than to education. Learning English has tended to be a largely oral experience, even more so since the government imposed major cuts in provision of English as a Second Language courses. This difficulty is accentuated where the Roma live in isolated communities with little contact with native English-speakers. As a result it appears that most Roma children go to school with virtually no spoken or written English skills.

The general position of Roma children is reflected in the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child's Report (2008) which argued that Roma children were amongst those suffering significant inequalities in regard to school achievement, having problems being enrolled in school, continuing school, facing bullying, harassment and school exclusions, all educational difficulties often linked to other issues such as poor health, low income or inadequate housing. However, identifying Roma children within the school system is problematic, in large part because ethnic monitoring, as elsewhere within the UK welfare system, is done by country of origin but also because, as noted elsewhere, Roma tend to obscure their ethnic origins for fear of harassment. The East London study of health needs (Tobi *et al.* 2010) identified 2,608 'white other' children out of the total school roll of 33,605 (about 8%) in the Borough and Barking and Dagenham, but of these only 5 were identified as 'Romani (International)'. In the 120 families studied, it was found that only 10% of the Roma adults had completed post-secondary education, and the Roma had the lowest literacy rates, levels of qualification and language skills. European Dialogue notes that where schools have collected data effectively (still very rarely the case), 'they are able to tailor services which are responsive to their [i.e. the Roma's] assessed needs … unfortunately, data on Roma is not collected efficiently even by those local authorities whose work can serve as a model of good practice' (2009c: p.11). Conversely, a number of local authorities have made the Roma a local political football, sending out a clear message that Roma were not welcome: this impacts on local law enforcement, health and other agencies and has led to deteriorating community relations (*Ibid.*: p.12).

A key question facing local authorities in addressing the educational needs of Roma children has been whether to provide separate schooling for them – in recognition of their special needs – or to seek to integrate Roma children within mainstream schools. One local study in a London Borough argued that the local authority concerned was exacerbating both the Roma children's sense of exclusion and separateness, and undermining the more general goal of social cohesion across the Borough, by its policy of separation: 'Education department work with Roma children is a separatist issue; these children need to be schooled … ; Redbridge Borough by singling them out, creating a total new environment, is separating them; there is nothing to help them with integration; they end up separated (*sic*) themselves out …' (Garapich and Jensen 2008). The authors of this report argued that the local authority needed to pay particular attention to 'those new communities that are at risk of being marginalised (the Romanian Roma)' (*Ibid.*: p.44). This recommendation was concerned not only with the educational needs of Roma children but also with the more general policy of the local authority towards community cohesion: in a local and national context where there was very widespread scapegoating of newer arrivals by more settled communities within the UK (and even by other slightly less recent arrivals[9]), it was important to establish means by which Roma could become more integrated in all aspects of local community life.

One response from parents concerned about racism and discrimination in schools may be to withdraw children from schools. This tendency was reviewed in a report for the Department of Education (DE 2006) which noted the 'seemingly marked increase year-on-year in the number of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families opting for "elective home education"' and analysed the adequacy and quality of provision. The report notes that 'some … Roma … families fear "cultural erosion". In some cases, the 'adjustment to British norms and associated acculturation can bring [young people] into conflict with the traditions and values of older community members' (Ryder and Greenfields 2010: 141). Other such

[9] The British former Prime Minister Gordon Brown caught what he understood the mood of the country to be when he called in 2009 for a drive for 'British jobs for British workers'. In some UK cities, anecdotal evidence revealed longer-standing refugee groups complaining about the fact that Eastern European migrants, including Roma, were 'stealing our jobs.' This is a reflection of a process which is an embedded aspect of immigration, whereby each cohort of migrants is criticised for undermining established labour relations only to criticise following cohorts of migrants themselves. (see e.g. Craig *et al*. 2012)

decisions are based on the judged irrelevance of the school curriculum and/or the anxiety to protect their children from racist and other bullying' (*Ibid.: p.*20). Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children remain the lowest achieving ethnic groups in England, are more likely to be identified as having special educational needs and are four times more likely than any other group to be excluded from school as a result of their behaviour. These children tend to be concentrated in schools with below average results. (Wilkin *et al.* 2010) An added difficulty in relation to Roma children immigrating from Eastern and Central Europe is that families may tend, from time to time, to return to their countries of origin to participate in family and cultural events, thus leading to fairly substantial absences for their children from school. This is a familiar phenomenon within the UK with regard to Pakistani families but in the case of the Slovak Roma, it appears that these absences are more regular and for longer periods of time (Poole and Adamson 2008: p.9). This is one of a number of tensions emerging in the education system because of cultural differences: another was the self-perception by Roma young people aged 13 onwards that they were adults, and expected to be treated as such (European Dialogue 2009c: p.78).

Schools do have a mechanism for supporting minorities, through the Ethnic Minority Achievement Service, which has funds hypothecated for helping minorities in schools where there are relatively large minority populations. There is little evidence to date that these funds have been used effectively to support Roma although some Roma have been supported by Gypsy and Traveller projects: not every local authority has specialised services of this kind and some, as noted, have been closed recently as a result of government cuts. The Annual school census should be able to identify Roma but Roma as a category is, unhelpfully, aggregated with Gypsies. Although 'schools are required to assess the impact of policies on the inclusion of these groups' (European Dialogue 2009c: p.33), the European Dialogue Survey found that there was considerable confusion at local authority level as to which department was supposed to have the lead in working with Roma. This impaired effective data collection. Of the 104 local authorities surveyed, less than one-third collected separate data on Roma.

The most comprehensive study of Roma experience of education in the UK is reported in European Dialogue's mapping exercise (2009c) for the-then Department for Children, Schools and Families, gathering data from more than 100 local authorities and interviewing a similar number of Roma respondents. One very important general finding here is that 'Roma children and young people from mainland Europe experience very similar circumstances and barriers as their peers traditionally living in Gypsy and Traveller communities in England'. (*Ibid*.10) Thus, although discrete data does not exist for Roma, it is clear that their educational and other experience is, in general, a cause for considerable alarm. The picture painted in this report is of low levels of provision of specialist services, but high levels of need and significant difficulties for Roma in accessing education because of a combination of poverty, lack of understanding of the system, poor grasp of English, racism, bullying and some cultural conflicts.

4. Employment

As in all other areas of welfare provision, UK Roma experience of the labour market is under-researched; this lacuna extends to research commissioned by the EU itself. Research on Roma's experience of the labour market within the European mainland is, however, increasingly extensive and points to endemic and blatant employment discrimination against Roma, barriers between Roma and non-Roma in employment, Roma being fully absent from the workforces of major sectors of employment and their limitation to those sectors which involve solely delivery of services to other Roma, with particular difficulties faced by women (ERRC 2007). Despite this clear warning in mind, their presence in the UK for almost twenty years and a relatively sophisticated and embedded official

system for collecting data on ethnic minorities, the UK country report on ESF support for enhancing access to the labour market and the social inclusion of migrants and ethnic minorities (Richardson 2010), discussing the position of ethnic minorities and migrants in detail, fails to mention the position of Roma. Whilst this may reflect the limitations of official data to some degree, the failure of this report – which does include data on groups smaller in number than the Roma – to point to what small-scale research is available, simply accentuates the process of 'invisibilising' the Roma from official accounts.

Where they have been explored, through small-scale qualitative studies, experiences of finding employment in the UK tended to mirror those in countries of origin. Thus 'Roma from Poland and the Czech Republic seemed more able to navigate the English systems [of the labour market], unlike A2 Roma. Romanian Roma appeared to be the most disadvantaged and the most vulnerable, living in the most overcrowded conditions and the greatest poverty' (European Dialogue 2009a: p.10). The less restrictive labour market conditions for A8 Roma mean that they have generally found it more possible to get work, often through agencies, although this has not prevented them from being exploited, and very much so in some cases, to the point where they are effectively in forced labour (Wilkinson *et al.* 2009; Allamby *et al*. 2011).

For A2 migrants, those wishing to stay in the UK for more than three months and work are required at present to obtain one of a range of registration certificates or Accession worker cards, depending on circumstances (for example those coming as self-employed, subject to work authorisation from the UK government or who had leave to remain under the Immigration Acts) (UKBA 2007). The restricted access which A2 nationals have as a result of their immigration status, to all public services, impacts on their labour market experience (where they are more prone to exploitation by employers), housing, and access to health services. As a result of this exclusion and other specific difficulties, it appears Roma are more likely to be linked with the criminal justice system through, for example, petty crime and begging. (Roma Support Group 2010b) More generally, the Fundamental Rights Agency points to key fundamental rights violations faced by Roma moving to the UK, despite the introduction of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union associated with the Treaty of Lisbon, such as discrimination in access to jobs, difficulties caused frequently by stereotyping and discrimination, all of which impact on access to housing, health and other services. In general Roma seem unaware of their rights in these areas of citizenship (FRA 2009). Employment agencies – through which many A2 workers might access work – are supposed to be covered by the terms of the Employment Agencies Act 1973 in relation, for example, to equality of opportunity but there is substantial evidence of their poor and even very exploitative practices (Wilkinson *et al.* 2009).

Small-scale qualitative reports on A8 and A2 migrants have provided limited data on A8 and A2 migrants. In a study in Nottingham (Scullion *et al.* 2009), largely focussing on labour market experience, of the 235 migrants interviewed, 7% (or 17) identified themselves as Roma: most were Czech nationals, comprising half the Czech nationals participating in the study. Only one respondent came from Romania and none from Bulgaria; the remainder of the Roma will have come from other A8 countries. Most of the Czech Roma respondents had been unemployed prior to coming to the UK, and Slovak and Czech respondents were least likely to have a particular trade or skill. Whilst this is a small number, it indicates that Roma migrants generally came to the UK with disadvantages additional to those of other migrants. The report also points to housing difficulties, including overcrowding, poor quality housing and homelessness but does not indicate the extent to which these were particularly associated with Roma.

A parallel study in Peterborough, also a large Midlands city with a mixed economy and a large rural hinterland (Scullion and Morris 2009b), found a larger proportion of Roma respondents, 38 (14%) of the total of 278 respondents participating in the study. These were mainly from Slovakia (21) and the Czech Republic (13). Again, significant difficulties with housing and employment were identified but

again the analysis does not indicate Roma experience separately, although, on the basis of other similar studies, it is reasonable to assume that they experienced these difficulties more intensely.

The Govanhill study (Poole and Adamson 2008) provides the most detailed and focused study of Roma in the UK: it points to the difficulties of accessing the WRS for those coming without a job (as was the case for most Slovak Roma) and that this and other barriers to registration resulted in Roma losing legal rights to in-work benefits and health care. Additionally 'Roma migrants cannot access Job Centre Plus or other state services and schemes (such as the New Deal) due to the complex regulations limiting their usage, thus narrowing their employment opportunities.' (p.5) This made Roma vulnerable to being employed by exploitative gangmasters and labour suppliers and their vulnerability was enhanced due to their limited grasp of English or understanding of their rights. The European Dialogue survey (2009c: p.62) found that Roma respondents were critical of services such as Job Centre, partly because of language difficulties but mostly because they found the system 'too complicated, the staff unhelpful … advisors were not always clear about the status of A8 and A2 citizens.' In the Govanhill study, these employment opportunities, involving very low wages (below the minimum wage), illegal deductions, and poor working conditions (long hours, dangerous work etc.) were almost the only ones taken up by Roma. This again knocked on into housing issues since many families had inadequate resources to do other than pool resources and share substandard accommodation. This combination of exploitative employment and poor housing represents a trap from which the Roma are unable to escape, especially in those situations where housing is provided as a condition of employment.

Many Roma have indeed been driven into informal (such as begging or street selling) or illegal activities because of their difficulties in accessing the formal labour market at a level and for income which is adequate to live on. The FRA (2009: p.11) notes generally that 'the widespread evidence of involvement in begging and informal economic activity raises profound questions. First, to what extent do Roma actually want to be engaged in such activities and second how authorities should react, especially when these activities represent the only obvious means of subsistence.' Several respondents to the FRA survey – which covered Roma moving from five Central and Eastern European countries to five Western European countries, including the UK, indicated that they had not begged in their home country but had been forced into it by structural discrimination against them in their new homes.

One particularly worrying issue for Roma in relation to the labour market is, however, that, because of their highly vulnerable situation – high levels of unemployment, marginalisation, abuse and poor wages – they are equally vulnerable in particular to illegal economic activities such as trafficking and forced labour. There is evidence that significant numbers of children and adults have been trafficked from other countries, particularly Bulgaria, Romania and Bosnia, into a number of Western European countries including the UK and there is concern that some Roma children have been trafficked or smuggled (or both) into the UK. (see Craig 2010 for a general discussion of the phenomenon of trafficking in a UK context). Whilst a study in Northern Ireland (Allamby *et al.* 2011) found relatively little direct evidence of forced labour (as defined by the International Labour Organisation: Craig *et al.* 2008) amongst the Roma, many of those interviewed had left Romania because of acute economic pressures and the inability to get employment yet found themselves in marginal employment, vulnerable to exploitation (for example low wages being lowered further by illegal deductions), discrimination and abuse, including physical violence. Respondents still felt, despite these difficulties, that they were better off than they had been in Romania, an alarming reflection of conditions they had hoped to leave behind. Racism – in an area noted for its high levels of sectarianism and racism – became so bad that at one point in 2009, more than 100 Roma left Belfast. 'Unfortunately for many new families, as is the case for children from Irish Travelling families, racism and discrimination is a common experience'(UKCC 2008: 6) (http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/northern_ireland/8100501.stm). European Dialogue (2009a: p.15) reported also that some Roma are working in conditions approximating forced labour: for example

workers who face illegal deductions from the wages, low wages, threats or the reality of violence and a failure on the part of agencies or employers properly to register the workers, thus rendering them (unknowingly) illegal.

Fremlova and Ureche (2000) confirm that the major reason for Roma leaving their countries of origin and coming to the UK was because they perceived the UK labour market as not discriminating against Roma: for most, this expectation has turned out to be illusory (FRA 2009) but nevertheless, most Roma interviewed claimed that their life had improved since moving to the UK. General examination of the employment situation of Roma demonstrates however how 'their survival strategies are impacted by the employment restrictions placed … [particularly] … on A2 citizens' (European Dialogue 2009c: p.60). The experience of Slovak Roma in Scotland (Poole and Adamson 2008) also underlines the fact that most Roma had exchanged one fairly brutal form of exploitation and discrimination for another slightly less overarching but nevertheless harsh experience of discrimination and exploitation. Many Roma took the view that, unlike non-Roma co-nationals who were returning to their countries of origin because of the impact of the financial crisis, Roma were not prepared to do so. They claimed that 'if they did return, they would still effectively end up jobless due to high levels of discrimination in the labour market' (European Dialogue 2009c:p.83).

However, not even every local study with a relatively small-scale focus has been able to say much about the conditions of the Roma, sometimes because the numbers of those present were very small, too much so to be able to analyse and generalise from the data collected or simply because researchers did not take Roma as a specific category of respondent on which to focus. Thus the case study based in Liverpool, exploring migrant workers' motivations for migration and their perceived contributions to the UK (Scullion and Pemberton 2010) , despite reviewing a substantial amount of recent literature on migrant workers, had no specific recommendations to make regarding Roma. General recommendations of particular relevance to Roma people included improving economic intelligence and data capture, more effective targeting of CEE (Central and Eastern European) migrants and housing/community cohesion implications, addressing intra-migrant tensions, recognising and responding to pressures on public services and enhancing economic and community contributions.

Cemlyn *et al'*s (2009) report comments briefly on Roma employment, particularly in respect of gender issues: in contrast to other Romani groups, they observe that in the Roma community men and women are' both expected to contribute to the family income through undertaking different, gender-appropriate work'. (p.227)

5. Health

Research on the health needs of Gypsy and Travellers has been fairly extensive (e.g. more recently, Parry *et al.* 2004; Cemlyn *et al.* 2009; NHS West Sussex 2010) This points to acute health needs, despite the good work done by some health professionals in a limited number of parts of the country (Neale *et al.* 2009), and a failure of most health organisations even to be able to identify the numbers of Romanis within their area, let alone develop services which were culturally appropriate and accessible. However, although Roma, as defined in the UK context, have been coming to the country since 1993 at least, observations made by Hajioff and McKee in relation to the health needs of European Roma apply just as strongly here: that is that 'the health needs [of the Roma population] lack visibility, not only because of the absence of research but also the absence of advocacy on their behalf' (2000: p.868). Their review found particular concern about the health of children and the importance of women's role in accessing health care services (see also Zeman *et al.* 2003).

One of the few detailed local health studies touching on the health of UK Roma was undertaken in Barking and Dagenham, an East London Borough, part of a wider study of the situation of Eastern European migrants. (Tobi *et al.* 2010) The Roma was included as one group alongside three other national groupings because they 'were known to disproportionately suffer worse health and social inequalities.'(p.9) The reference to Roma as a national group is, as noted earlier, confusing particularly as one of the three national groups, Polish, may well have included Roma amongst them. Most Roma identified as such appear to have been identified as Romanian. This study had the advantage of being able to recruit a researcher from the Roma Support Group, whose base is also in East London. Thirty Roma were interviewed and another 13 took part in a large focus group.In terms of health needs, the study noted that mental health issues had been strongly identified within the existing literature, although this literature is not referenced. 'A central theme that runs through most health issues related to the Roma is the pervasive impact of experiencing racism and discrimination throughout an entire lifespan and in employment, social and contexts … [with] … high rates of anxiety, depression and at time self-destructive behaviour (suicide and/or substance abuse).' (pp.15-16) Data from Europe suggests that Roma families have high birth rates (leading to a younger age profile) and low life expectancy; this study tended to provide a similar picture with most families having, for example, at least five children.

As with other services, the Roma's lack of fluency in the English language brings difficulties with accessing health services. Respondents to this study, and to others (e.g. Poole and Adamson 2008), noted the lack of interpreters and the complexity of letters from health professionals, as well as a lack of familiarity with the structure of the health service, as reasons why they had not accessed health provision: barely half had registered with a GP compared with almost 100% of the Albanian subsample. The researchers suggested both that Roma were generally unaware of the nature of many health conditions and 'don't like talking about ill health' or, in particular, disability or mental health issues (Tobi *et al.* 2010: pp.23-24). This also impacted on health care for children: many Roma have come from countries where children from Roma families were routinely categorised as sub-normal and placed in segregated special needs schools and institutions. A significant number of Roma were seeking asylum: as this meant they could not work, this impacted on their mental health, again leading to widespread stress and depression. One respondent suggested that 'every other person is depressed'. (p.26) Because of taboos associated with these issues, many Roma were said not to be prepared openly to work with health professionals and such work had to be on a one-to-one basis to generate trust. Health professionals wishing to engage in outreach work to address issues such as immunisation, malnutrition and public health issues, thus faced severe difficulties because of language problems, mistrust and cultural suspicions (see also Poole and Adamson 2008). Some Roma, however, felt that standards of healthcare were lower than in their countries of origin and did not like the constantly changing identity of their GP (European Dialogue 2009c: p.72).

6. Housing

Given the lack of national data, for the time being at least, most of the information we have about access to and use of housing and the labour market also comes from a series of small-scale qualitative studies of migrant workers, particularly those migrants arriving in the UK since the A8 and A2 accessions in 2004 and 2007, and, earlier on, of Roma seeking asylum from the late 1990s onwards.

Although a number of reasons, mainly in fact related to labour market opportunities, were advanced as motivations for migrants moving to the UK, the Liverpool report noted above refers to another small-scale report undertaken in Leeds, another large northern city, (Cook *et al*. 2008: p.45) which suggested that '(P)olitically, the ability to escape racism and discrimination and to provide a safer environment for their children has also acted as a "push" factor to migrate for certain Roma families.' The Leeds report

noted that Roma felt more able, despite the existence of racism within the city, to express their identity and to provide 'better and safer environments for their children' but other factors were important in their move: for example, being able to secure a job and earn an income. In labour market terms, the report, which included data from 8 Roma out of a total of 34 new A8 migrants, noted that 'Polish migrants enjoy a relatively advantaged position within the labour market when compared to their Slovak and Roma counterparts' (p.45) Given the growing volume of research examining the sometimes desperate position in which migrant workers, including those of Polish origin have found themselves (e.g. Anderson *et al.* 2006; Wilkinson *et al.* 2009), this points to the very exploited housing conditions under which many Roma have existed since arriving in the UK. In one study, Roma were found to be living in 'rat infested squats in the middle of industrial estates' (Tobi *et al.* 2010:p.26) with consequent impacts on, *inter alia,* health conditions.

In housing, as in other welfare areas, the Roma suffer disproportionately high levels of racism with Roma from Romania and Bulgaria worse off than their counterparts from A8 countries on a number of measures: thus in England, the average number of Roma people living in households was 5.9 but in Romanian and Bulgarian Roma households, the average was 9.48, suggesting severe overcrowding. Their situation was barely mitigated in 2011 when, on 1st May, A8 nationals were given the same housing and welfare rights as their other EU counterparts. The WRS and the need to register on it lapsed on that date and thus those subject to homelessness and destitution, or to unemployment, are now eligible, subject to certain conditions, to rights vis-a-vis housing and welfare benefits such as access to a hostel bed, help from local authorities and other forms of income support. This will be of assistance to Roma from the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Poland, for example, but not to A2 nationals.

The Govanhill study (Poole and Adamson 2008), which examined the situation of 3,000 Slovak Roma in some detail, found little evidence of homelessness although some Roma had been destitute for a while. This was because there were substantial stocks of poor quality privately-owned properties. There were nevertheless very serious housing issues faced by the Roma including high rents, overcrowding, poor quality maintenance, public health issues and generally high levels of exploitation. Landlords charged high rents, making illegal deductions and the Roma, often unable to understand formal tenancy agreements or to obtain credit checks, were frequently overcharged (see also Cemlyn *et al*. 2009). This resulted in families sharing accommodation, accentuating problems of overcrowding. Nevertheless, despite clear evidence of housing exploitation, Roma have argued that however serious the problems with housing, it was 'preferable to what they had experienced in their countries of origin' (European Dialogue 2009c: p.67).

Overall, as the UK country report to the European Parliament observed (Cemlyn and Ryder 2010: p.15), there is an urgent need for Roma to be made 'more aware of their housing rights and … a need for greater scrutiny and challenge to unscrupulous landlords.' The Roma share this need with many thousands of migrant workers who have become involved with exploitative gangmasters and their associates (Craig *et al.* 2007; Wilkinson *et al.* 2009).

7. Other dimensions of exclusion

Because Roma are not regarded as an ethnic category in most ethnic monitoring (which, in the UK has focused focus on national origin rather than, say, major language or other form of self-identification), identifying the Roma as a group with specific needs often tends to be very difficult and many studies which have probably included Roma amongst their respondents have overlooked their needs. One good example of this is in the development of interpreting and translation services for migrants for

whom English is not their first language. Thus, whilst the large-scale migration of people from Poland since the mid-1990s is a well-recorded phenomenon (e.g. Adamson *et al*. 2008), and has led to the development of projects and services providing English language help for people speaking Polish, far less well-known is the fact that this Polish immigration 'encompassed both economic migration and asylum seekers, the latter being largely from the Polish Roma community' (Alexander *et al.* 2004: p.8), a group which would have had specific needs – quite apart from for linguistic support – over and above those of their Polish co-nationals. This lack of recognition of their specific needs – albeit for a limited number of Roma since it is, in the most part, a spoken language rather than one which is formally written down and is thus commonly practised only by a minority of Roma – will have enhanced the degree of social exclusion felt by some Roma.

In line with wider definitions of exclusion, one important factor affecting Roma significantly is their inability to participate fully in the society in which they find themselves. We identify elsewhere how generally low levels of literacy and fluency in the English language present huge barriers to accessing most welfare services, and leads to high levels of exploitation in the labour market. In their role as citizens they are also prevented from participating as fully as most other ethnic groups. Whilst there are a few Roma-led civil society organisations (discussed below), Roma have no formal political representatives at national or local government level, and are not generally involved in policy formation other than through the outcomes of research – most of which have had little discernible impact on the policy process. Roma across Europe are beginning to protest this situation (see for example http://policycenter.eu/en/eu-shuts-roma-groups-out-of-policy-making-process – a critique of the EU's failure to include Roma in the development of the EU Framework for national Roma integration strategies up to 2020). Even this modest level of self-organisation has yet to be reflected in Roma activism within the UK.

European Dialogue (2009c) found that in more than 90% of the local authorities surveyed there was no Roma community organisation to negotiate with, and that less than half of the authorities had engaged in any consultation with the Roma. The Govanhill study notes that 'many of the problems of the Roma stem from their deliberate exclusion from citizenship in the EU countries in which they originate' (Poole and Adamson 2008: p.2). These problems are particularly acute for Roma from Slovakia where recent government policy appears to have attempted to create a Roma-free zone in the country. In terms of general isolation, the European Dialogue (2009c) survey found that two-thirds of the Roma communities surveyed were socially isolated, a slightly smaller number were 'slightly integrated' and in only three authorities that the Roma communities in their midst were well-integrated. The low expectation of Roma with regard to political and civic participation is reflected amongst many of their communities within the UK.

8. Roma, racism and discrimination

The Roma, though not a national group, is an identified racial group[10] under the terms of the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000 and the Equality Act 2010, and therefore constitute protected legitimate ethnic minority communities. This legislation places a duty on local authorities and other public bodies such as schools and health authorities, to eliminate race discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and good relations between all racial groups. The existence of this recognition and legislation, of course, does not by itself protect the Roma from racism or discrimination as we have seen. Protection for the Roma is also provided both by the legally binding EU Race Equality Directive (2000/43) and

[10] Although it is also unclear as to whether the term 'Roma' is precise enough to clearly mean UK Roma.

Employment Equality Directive (2000/79), together with Conventions on Human Rights, Fundamental Rights (associated with the Treaty of Lisbon) and on the Protection of National Minorities.

Within each of the four UK national jurisdictions, Children's Commissioners monitor the situation of children. These Commissioners act as a concerted lobby group particularly in relation to devolved governments and the Westminster Government, and as a point of reference in relation to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), which receives reports from the Commissioners. The UNCRC report on the UK in 2008 noted a number of concerns with regard to the situation of Roma children. One was the continuing experience of discrimination and stigmatization experienced by Roma and other marginal groups of children, arguing that this called for affirmative action (UNCRC 2008: p.6). The Children's Commissioners' own evidence (UKCC 2008) has virtually nothing to say directly about the situation of UK Roma although it indicates that Gypsy and Traveller Groups 'fare worst of any ethnic group in terms of health and education' (*Ibid.*: p.12) and that increasing racism, including racist attitudes amongst children and young people, a lack of affordable childcare and inappropriate education provision were also issues facing recent migrants.

Small-scale studies reported elsewhere indicate both that migrant workers in general were the subjects of 'race' hate crime but that amongst these, greatest levels of racism were experienced by Roma. Thus, in Liverpool, Slovak and Czech migrant workers were most likely to experience race hate, but Roma members of those national groupings more so (Scullion and Morris 2009a). In common with experience of minorities more generally elsewhere in the UK, under-reporting of hate crime to the police and thus under-recording, is a serious issue. Interestingly, given the generally high level of hostility to immigration and to migrant workers from East Europe in particular in recent years, a number of studies have suggested that Roma have experienced more hostility on the basis of being Eastern European than as Roma in particular (European Dialogue 2009c). The recent financial crises and recession have impacted disproportionately on migrants who in some quarters are being publically blamed (often accentuated by populist media and political parties) for 'taking our jobs away'. What is clear from such data as is available (reflecting historical patterns) is that minorities tend to suffer disproportionately during times of economic recession (Craig 2007) and high unemployment and this makes it likely that the Roma have suffered more than most (European Dialogue 2009c: p.23).

We referred earlier to the propensity for Roma families to visit their countries of origin for family and cultural events. Although, as EU citizens, they have freedom to move and to cross borders without interference, this did not stop the process of 'ethnic profiling' occurring at some borders. Prior to 2004, the UK government had stationed borders officials within airports in countries such as the Czech Republic whose task was to filter out travellers they regarded as not entitled to travel to the UK: amongst these were a significant proportion of Roma seeking to claim asylum who were turned back before they could travel. This practice was ruled unlawful by the House of Lords which regarded it as 'inherently and systematically discriminatory and unlawful' (*Searchlight* January 2005). The procedure was driven by wider moral and media panics about the alleged arrival of hundreds of thousands of Roma and their impact on the UK economy, also resulting in wide-ranging attacks on Roma living at British Ports of entry such as Dover whilst their claims were assessed. This policy stance and practice is now no longer relevant but has left, according to some Roma respondents, feelings of distrust at the attitude of the British state to Roma more generally. The media panic against Roma seeking asylum drew on a wider hostility to asylum-seekers and, as with other asylum-seekers, ignored the structural reasons for Roma wishing to leave their countries of origin (Seicluna 2007). As Poole notes, 'Roma migration was commonly misunderstood as evidence of a "culture of nomadism", their "social problems" [mistakenly] seen to be an outcome of their own behaviours' (2010: p.250). The virulently hostile media coverage has been analysed by Clark and Campbell (2000).

The media moral panic against the Roma has extended to portraying them as widely engaged in illegal activities such as pickpocketing and shoplifting although the evidence for this is limited (see e.g. BBC News 02.09.2009: 'How Gypsy gangs use child thieves'). Where these issues have surfaced in areas of significant Roma population, one consequence has been damaged community and race relations (European Dialogue 2009c: p.9). Castle-Kanerova and Jordan characterise the involvement of Roma in informal economic activity as the application of 'the weapons of the weak' (2002: p.12), survival tactics for those who are systematically disadvantaged. Nevertheless, as they argue, however small-scale these activities are, they fuel racist stereotypes which are used by media and politicians hostile to them.

One mitigating factor referred to in a number of studies is that, as a distinctly multicultural country (the UK minority population is now around 12% with migrants arriving in large numbers for almost 70 years), the UK has had substantial experience of adjusting to the presence of new migrant groups amongst its population, albeit not without significant tensions from time to time (Craig 2007). The FRA (2009: p.8) thus notes that 'Roma are more likely to be relatively integrated in Member States that have established experience of integrating migrant groups and minorities … [T]hey are less likely to be integrated in societies which are – or perceive themselves as – ethnically homogeneous.' The UK's experience of multiculturalism probably contributes to the Roma's perception that being able to declare their ethnicity publicly and thus engage in a 'celebration of one's ethnic origin, encountered not just at home, but also at school, in the workplace or among non-Roma friends, [which] would not be possible in their country of origin' (European Dialogue 2009c: p.8). This may also explain the paradox of a group being highly oppressed and discriminated against, yet simultaneously celebrating aspects at least of an improved quality of life. As the same report notes, however, coming from a background of having to tolerate extreme forms of discrimination may have meant that Roma arriving in the UK had very low expectations and ambitions. Nonetheless, UK ethnic monitoring traditions mean that it ought in principle to be relatively easy to incorporate data collection and monitoring of the Roma as one minority group amongst many others, even given the fact that the Roma are not defined by nationality.

9. Civil society organisations

Given the relatively recent arrival of most Roma within the UK, the level and scope of civil society organisation is very limited indeed, compared with the network of organisations supporting Gypsies and Travellers, or other minorities in the UK for example[11], or the organisations available to support Roma (however defined) on a pan-European basis. The most high profile Roma organisation is the *Roma Support Group* (RSG) (www.romasupportgroup.org.uk), a community organisation established in 1998, based in London. It is managed by Roma migrants and refugees living in and around London (with 50% of Trustees being from the Roma community) and runs projects covering areas such as training and mentoring, education and health, as well as offering support and advice to individual Roma. It derives a small amount of its funding from government and local government sources although this is not secure. The RSG focuses on issues of empowerment and participation, aiming to encourage greater Roma participation in public affairs (see e.g. Roma Support Group 2010).

Equality (http://equality.uk.com/) is a UK national voluntary sector support organisation with a small core staff team, empowering Roma to resolve employment, housing, healthcare and social welfare issues. It works with Roma and service providers to reduce social exclusion, discrimination and exploitation and help adapt service provision to meet the needs of Roma populations. It undertakes research studies relating to the UK Roma, some referred to elsewhere, and is linked to the European

[11] For a list of organisations working with Gypsies, Travellers and related groups, see the Resources section of the journal *Social Policy and Society*, Vol. 7, No. 1: 129-134.

Roma Information Office network of organisations and to the more generic UK Race and Europe Network (UKREN –the national coordinator of the European Network Against Racism, ENAR) managed by the long-established ‚race' think tank the Runnymede Trust (www.runnymedetrust.org.uk/projects/UKREN). Equality is thus well-positioned to link issues for the Roma community with wider discussions about race, racism and discrimination within the UK.

European Dialogue is a British-based not-for-profit voluntary organisation working between local and national governments and excluded groups. It has conducted a major study of the Roma, also referred to elsewhere, and several other less focused studies both solely and with partners such as Oxfam, the Fundamental Rights Agency and the European Rights Centre (www.europeandialogue.org). It has produced basic information guides for managers and for practitioners, students and teachers (European Dialogue 2009a, 2009b) which address key facts and myths about the Roma community and point to best practice in working with them.

Within specific localities, there are a few voluntary sector support groups which have historically focused on the needs of Gypsy and Traveller communities but recently widened their brief to include Roma populations as the latter have arrived and become significant numerically. A typical example of this is the Leeds GAATE project, a 'Gypsy, Roma, Traveller' organisation (www.grtleeds.co.uk). In general, however, there are very few specialist organisations either within the mainstream of the Third Sector or led by Roma themselves from which Roma can obtain advice. As the FRA notes, 'experience shows that policies for the Roma rarely become effective unless the Roma themselves become involved and participate actively in both developing and implementing them, particularly at the local level' (FRA n.d.: p.2): that is, social inclusion is meaningless without the active participation of those at whom inclusion policies are aimed. There are very few organisations within the UK able and willing to promote this participation. This is an urgent need at local level where Roma communities are greatest in number. In addition, the role of civil society is critical – as it has been for other disadvantaged groups within the UK population – in identifying and responding to new needs or familiar needs amongst new groups so that mainstream NGOs, including, for example, mainstream children's organisations, should be involved in the development of new initiatives. Civil society organisations, whether Roma-led or Roma-targeted, can also play a key role in bridging Roma populations to statutory services.

Many mainstream advice agencies have yet, however, to sensitise themselves adequately to the existence of a distinct, and growing, Roma community in the UK and although some local authority Traveller Education Services offer support to Roma, workers in these situations often feel quite isolated. On the other hand, where local authorities or advice agencies have employed Roma workers, this is reported to have made a significant difference in terms of the general living and working conditions of Roma communities locally (European Dialogue 2009c: p.101). This is far more effective and sensitive as a means of engaging with Roma populations than occasional consultations; as one such co-worker commented, 'to do this work you have to be born Roma, you cannot acquire the skills of understanding unless you have worked with and known the community for a long time' (Ryder and Greenfields 2010: p.145). However the same report noted that the impact of government cuts in 2011 would likely be to reduce this kind of provision.

At a European level, the *European Roma Rights Centre* (ERRC – http://www.errc.org/) is an international public interest law organisation engaging in a range of activities aimed at combating anti-Romani racism and human rights abuse of Roma. It campaigns for Roma rights justice across Europe, in areas such as redress for victims of race hate crime, school desegregation, justice for victims of coercive sterilizations, women's rights and children's rights. Its focus on Roma as understood within mainland Europe means, however, that there is a very limited specific focus on UK Roma communities.

Within Europe, Roma have taken some initiatives, for example in monitoring the progress of the Decade of Roma initiative (DecadeWatch 2007), but this initiative is not widely replicated within the UK.

As Oprea (2003) notes, the position of women is particularly relevant in relation to civil society: 'amongst Roma women, who historically and culturally tend to occupy the role of transmitters of culture, there is an increasing tendency towards political radicalisation, with women engaging with the forum of "Traveller politics"' (Cemlyn *et al.* 2009: p. 224). Other writers have noted the significance of women within the broad Roma community (including here all those of Romani origin), particularly as a result of their interest in health issues (Greenfields and Home 2007). However, delegates from the UK to the International Roma women's network comprised women from Gypsy and Traveller, and not Roma, communities.

10. Government policies and programmes

Following the bombing of the World Trade Centre and other terrorist attacks from 2001, the UK government has designed a number of new national programmes concerned with the maintenance of good community relations at a local level. One such programme has been the community cohesion programme: in the view of the official Commission on Integration and Cohesion (2007: p.9), an integrated and cohesive community '… is therefore one where people from various backgrounds and circumstances live and mix in freedom and peace and thrive in every way. It is based on tolerance, trust, respect, civil rights and a celebration of diversity with equal access to local services.' As an aspiration for good community relations, this would be difficult to criticise. The reality for the Roma is that this is still largely an aspiration since, as we show elsewhere, they remain figures of hostility and even hatred for many of the 'host' community and continue to live on the margins of most societies (see e.g. Garapich and Jensen 2008). This hostility is exacerbated at times of economic recession, competition for jobs and for even the least desirable housing, and is often accentuated by very hostile and ill-informed media coverage (Anstead 2010). 'Lurid reporting on the Roma in Britain has often created a set of stereotypes and misconceptions in a manner identical to that which has beset Gypsy and Irish Traveller populations for generations' (Richardson 2006; Cemlyn *et al.* 2009) leading some Roma to fear that serious racist attacks, common in Eastern Europe, might be replicated within the UK. The UK government's community cohesion programme is in any case widely criticised for deracialising community relations and focusing its attentions on Muslims as potential terrorists rather than analysing the wider social and economic position of all minorities (Worley 2007; Flint and Robinson 2008).

Within Parliament, despite the lack of a serious policy focus on the position of the Roma, there are some signs that they may now be emerging slowly into national political and policy agendas. For example the All-Party parliamentary Group on Traveller Law Reform, established in 2002 to examine issues of sites – an issue of little relevance to the Roma – has now been renamed the All Party parliamentary Group for Gypsies, Roma and Travellers because of what Ryder and Greenfields (2010: p.146) characterise as the 'increasing visibility of Roma in policy debate.' Again, however, this has yet clearly to identify UKRoma as a distinct grouping.

The government's general approach to social inclusion and poverty, drawn together in the National Action Plan, is referred to in the following section. It has no explicit focus on the situation of the Roma.

11. Conclusions and recommendations

There is, within the UK, no coherent policy framework on Roma either at the national or local level, (European Dialogue 2009c: p.110; FRA 2009) a structural gap also highlighted by Ryder and Greenfields (2010) who call for a National Action Plan for Gypsies, Roma and Travellers, recognising both the commonalities of their experiences but also the significant differences between the groupings in terms of history, lifestyle, needs and experiences. In this policy vacuum, local agencies have tended to make up policy as they go along, sometimes shaped by a general stance towards ethnic minorities, sometimes drawing on their experience of working with Gypsy and Traveller populations. This is clearly highly unsatisfactory for a number of reasons: despite a range of national legislation and guidance for the treatment of minority ethnic groups, there is no consistency of treatment of the Roma across the UK, no means for recording and using good practice, other than through the dissemination of occasional (and very few) research reports, and little understanding of the specific cultural and historical context within which Roma operate, itself leading to poor practice in many geographical and service areas.

Technically, at least, the position of the Roma should be covered by the National Action Programme for Social Inclusion (NAP: DWP 2008), developed by the UK government, alongside those of other Member States. The NAP, the fourth such iteration, is part of a strategic programme aimed at extending social justice and opportunity to all EU citizens, and specifically to combat poverty and increase social inclusion. In the UK, this involved 'a commitment to modernising its social model, based on the shared values of social justice and the active participation of all citizens in economic and social life' (Poole 2010: p.253) with 'a strong, stable economy and a fair society with security and opportunity for all' (DWP 2006: vi). The defined means of achieving this are through tackling child poverty, increasing income through participation in the labour market and the development more generally of inclusive policies. Clearly, on the basis of the (albeit limited evidence) above, this goal is far from being achieved for the Roma in the UK and, as Poole notes on the basis of a detailed case study of the Scottish experience, whilst the rhetoric of the NAP is fine, the greatest challenge facing the UK government and, indeed, devolved administrations, is its implementation.

As noted earlier, the EU project gives certain rights to all EU citizens, but most European countries – including the UK – instituted transitional arrangements severely limiting the access in reality to these rights for most Central and Eastern European citizens and particularly, because of their already highly vulnerable position (with, for example, very poor job prospects and low levels of formal education and qualifications), the Roma. The Roma do not feature in the NAP, in any case, as a distinct ethnic group.There is a brief mention of 'Gypsies, Roma and Travellers', which ignores the specific nature of UK Roma, and a reference to the fact that a history month was to be established in 2008. Essentially the Roma in the UK are a substantial but officially – through a lack of data, research or policy focus - 'invisibilised' group. In light of this there are a number of recommendations which can be made, many of which start from the position that the Roma needs first of all to be recognised in practice (as opposed to in theory) as an ethnic group and be treated as such through a series of policies, many of which are already applied to other minority ethnic groups settling in the UK. Thus a coherent policy for the Roma would require:

- Identification of a specific government department to lead on Roma issues. This might be the Department for Education or Communities and Local Government, (CLG) which could develop cross-departmental strategies for social inclusion and the operationalization of social, economic and political rights for Roma. This would need to be mirrored at local level (with a single local authority department also given lead responsibility for working with Roma communities.) CLG recently disbanded the Gypsy and Traveller Unit and merged it into a wider race unit. Whilst there may

appear to be some logic in this, it ignores the disproportionate disadvantage experienced by Gypsies, Roma and Travellers, as well as cultural issues: a separate unit needs to be re-established. This department would lead on the production of a national plan which focused on Gypsies, Roma and Travellers as three distinct groups with both overlapping but distinct needs and experiences: Roma would be understood as a group requiring separate policy and political attention. This would also need to strike the appropriate balance between targeting services to ensure inclusion but at the same time bringing these disadvantaged groups into the mainstream, thus avoiding, for example, the development of 'Roma-only' segments of the labour market.

- The use of existing legislation to respond to the clear needs of Roma. One of these, in relation to the labour market, would be the use of positive action which is encouraged under the Equality Act (2010), whereby employers can 'encourage and train people from under-represented racial and ethnic groups in order to help them overcome disadvantages in competing with other applicants' (ROTA 2009).

- Investment in specific services targeted on Roma families, including housing, health, education, income maintenance and the labour market to help them become fully integrated into UK society. This would require both specialist services and the effective extension of mainstream services so that the Roma do not become, as a result of targeting, isolated from the mainstream, together with multi-agency working where appropriate, in each case with the involvement of Roma personnel. Effective information leaflets and advice are required, provided where appropriate in Roma language(s) (but backed up with oral advice), to ensure Roma are aware of their rights in the UK.

- As with generic race equality training, specific training should be provided for staff working in this area; the research summarised above indicates the failure of many frontline staff in both national and local government departments – for example in Job Centres, police departments and in the health services – to understand Roma experience and culture (for example, awareness of the need for strongly gendered responses to the needs of Roma women) and thus respond appropriately. There is clearly also a need for targeted translation, interpretation and English language tuition programmes; the government has recently substantially cut funding to the latter. Lack of English language competency is a huge barrier for Roma seeking to access work and services.

- Effective data collection ('territorial mapping') and review at both national and local levels: this would involve confirming Roma as a distinct category in mainstream data collection including the census at national level (it is hoped that the 2011 census will provide a very useful demonstration tool) and school census exercises at local level, comprehensive mapping of the Roma population through a series of research studies, and good monitoring procedures to measure significant changes in key indicators. (Roma is a category now beginning to be used in UK school censes but is not at present used consistently or universally, thus undermining the usefulness of the data).

- Investment in capacity-building so that Roma communities can develop autonomous and accountable groups controlled by the Roma which can provide a mechanism for 'voice' for these communities. This might access EU and World Bank funding for Roma-led/targeted projects in which Roma themselves have a strong involvement.

- Information factsheets are needed, particularly directed at the general public and at the media, which frequently propagate distortions and myths about the Roma, to address the widespread racism and discrimination faced by Roma, suppored by more effective regulation of press comment which is widely seen as generating racism. (Clark and Campbell 2000). Responding to the need for an appreciation of Roma history and culture and of the intense marginalisation and victimisation which they have faced, the Roma Support Group has produced one such educational pack (2010a)

which could be used as a model of good practice. This is aimed at primary schools and includes a well-illustrated booklet with handouts and a DVD. This again identifies the UK Roma as those coming from specific European countries: Kosovo, Bosnia, Bulgaria, Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, the Baltic States, Bulgaria and Romania.[12]

- At a European level, there should be a Directive specifically targeted on Roma, as Europe's most disadvantaged group, to sit in parallel with the two key Directives mentioned earlier, the Race Equality Directive and the Employment Equality Directive. Without this, the Roma would arguably continue to be marginalised even within public debates and political policy-making for minorities. At present, there are questions as to whether the Race Equality Directive is 'sufficiently robust to address the particular challenges faced by Roma, specifically obstacles in the way of accessing the legal system, difficulties in establishing that discrimination has taken place, and the use of nationality and/or Roma collective identity, as grounds for discrimination' (Poole and Adamson 2009: p.27: see also OSI 2006). This Directive needs to be developed in a way which acknowledges the distinct nature of the Roma population in the UK, and responds to the call of the European Parliament's resolution of 2nd April 2009 that 'the EU and the Member States have a shared responsibility to promote the inclusion of the Roma as Union Citizens, with a view to enabling the Roma people to fully benefit from the incentives provided by the EU.'

This work needs also to be shaped by the views of the Social Protection Committee of the EU which on May 5th, 2011 noted that 'the situation of the Roma remains a cause of serious concern. There is an urgent need to make progress in improving their socio-economic situation and combating discrimination', progress which involves increasing cooperation between EU and Member States and also EU-level cooperation between agencies responsible for employment, health and housing (SPC 2011).

[12] Unfortunately, even this pack adds to the confusion about nomenclature, noting that there are 300,000 Roma in the UK, this number including Irish Travellers.

References

Acton, T. (2003) 'A three-cornered choice', Paper delivered to the conference of the Gypsy Lore Society, University of Florence, 2003.

Acton, T. (2005) 'Conflict resolution and criminal justice: sorting out trouble', *Journal of Legal Pluralism*, No.51: 2-19.

Adamson, S., Craig, G. and Wilkinson, M. (2008) *Migrant workers in Humberside,* Hull: Humber Improvement Programme.

Alexander, C., Edwards, R. and Temple, B. with Kanani, U., Zhuang, L. Miah, M. and Sam, A. (2004) *Access to services with interpreters: user views*, York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

Anderson, B., Ruhs, M., Rogaly, B. and Spencer, S. (2006) *Fair enough? Central and East European migrants in low-wage employment in the UK*, York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

Anstead, A. (2010) *What do we think of Romani people?*, London: Equality.

BHSF (2007) *Out in the open*, London: Building and Social Housing Foundation.

Boden, P.and Stillwell, J. (2006), 'New migrant labour in Yorkshire and Humber' *The Yorkshire and Humber Regional Review,* 16(3): 18-20.

Castle-Kanerova, M., (2002) 'Migration and poverty: the case of the Slovak Roma', *Social Policy and Society*, 1(2): 168.

Castle-Kanerova, M. and Jordan, B. (2002) 'Local strategies for civic inclusion in a European context', ESRC Working Paper 34/01, Swindon: ESRC.

Cemlyn, S., Greenfields, M., Burnett, S., Matthews, Z. and Whitwell, C. (2009) *Inequalities experienced by gypsy and traveller communities: review,* London: Commission for Equalities and Human Rights.

Cemlyn, S. and Ryder, A. (2010) *Measures to promote the situation of Roma EU citizens in the European Union*, UK Country Report, Brussels: European Parliament.

Clark, C. (1998) 'Counting backwards: the Roma "numbers game" in Central and Eastern Europe', *Radical Statistics,* http://www.radstats.org.uk/no069/aryticle4.htm

Clark, C. and Campbell, E. (2000) '"Gypsy invasion": a critical analysis of newspaper reaction to Czech and Slovak asylum-seekers in Britain', *Romani Studies*,10(1): 23048.

Clark, C. (2008) 'Introduction' to Themed Section, *Gypsies, Travellers and the State*, *Social Policy and Society,* Vol. 7(1): 65-72.

Commission for Integration and Cohesion (2007) *Our shared future,* London: CIC.

Commission for Racial Equality (2006)

Cook, J., Dwyer, P.and Waite, L. (2008) *New migrant communities in Leeds*, Leeds: Leeds City Council.

Coxhead, J. (2007) *The last bastion of racism: Gypsies, Travellers and Policing*, Stoke on Trent: Trentham Books.

Craig, G. (2007) 'Cunning, Unprincipled, Loathsome': The Racist Tail Wags the Welfare Dog, *Journal of Social Policy*, Vol 36, No. 4: 605–623.

Craig, G. (2010) '"Flexibility", xenophobia and exploitation: modern slavery in the UK', *Social Policy Review* 22, eds. I. Greener, C. Holden and M. Kilkey, Bristol: Policy Press: 173-198.

Craig, G., Dawson, A., Hutton, S., Roberts, N. and Wilkinson, M. (2004), *The local impacts of international migration: the information base,* London: Department of Environment, Transport, and the Regions.

Craig, G., Skrivankova, K., Wilkinson, M., McQuade, A. and Gaus, A. (2007) *Modern slavery in the UK,* York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

Craig, G., Atkin, K., Chattoo, S. and Flynn, R. (eds.) (2012) *Understanding 'race' and ethnicity in social welfare,* Bristol: Policy Press: forthcoming.

Crawley, H. (2010) 'Moving beyond ethnicity: the socio-economic status and living conditions of immigrant children in the UK', *Child Indicators Research,* 3: 547-570.

DecadeWatch (2007) *DecadeWatch: Roma activists assess the progress of the Decade of Roma Inclusion*: www.decadewatch.org

DWP (2006) *Working together: UK National Action Plan on Social Inclusion 2006-8*, London: Department of Work and Pensions.

DWP (2008) *UK National Action Plan on Social Inclusion 2008-10*, London: Department of Work and Pensions. (Fourth Version)

EHRC (2010) *Gypsy Travellers in Scotland, a resource for the media,* Edinburgh: Equalities and Human Rights Commission.

ERRC (2007) *The glass box: exclusion of Roma from employment*, Brussels: European Roma, Rights Centre.

ERRC (2009) *Hard times for Roma: economics, politics and violence*, Budapest: ERRC.

EU Action for the Roma (2009) *The ten basic common principles for Roma inclusion,* Brussels: European Union.

European Dialogue (2009a) *New Roma communities in England*: strategic guide for directors and senior management, London: DCSF

European Dialogue (2009b) *Getting to know the Roma Communities in England*, London: European Dialogue.

European Dialogue (2009c) *The movement of Roma from new EU Member States: a mapping survey of A2 and A8 Roma in England*, London: European Dialogue.

Flint, J. and Robinson, D. (2008) *Community cohesion in crisis?,* Bristol: Policy Press.

FRA (2009) *The situation of Roma EU citizens moving to and settling in other EU member states,* Vienna: Fundamental Rights Agency.

FRA (n.d.) *Addressing the Roma issue in the EU: background note*, Vienna: Fundamental Rights Agency.

Fremlova, L. and Anstead, A. 'Discrimination as standard', *Runnymede Bulletin*, Winter 2010-2011, Issue 364: 18-19.

Fremlova, L. and Ureche, Heather (2009)

Garapich, M. and Jensen, O. (2008) *Community cohesion in the London Borough of Redbridge*, Roehampton: CRONEM.

Greenfields, M. (2008) 'Accommodation needs of Gypsies/Travellers: New Approaches to Policy in England', Themed Section, *Gypsies, Travellers and the State*, *Social Policy and Society,* Vol. 7(1): 73-90.

Greenfields, M. and Home, R. (2006) Assessing Gypsies' and Travellers' needs: partnership working and the "Cambridge project"', *Romani Studies,* 16(2): 105-131.

Guy, W. (ed.) (2001) *Between past and future: the Roma of Central and Eastern Europe,* Hatfield: University of Hertfordshire Press.

Hajioff, S. and McKee, M. (2000) 'The health of the Roma people: a review of the published literature', *J. Epidemiol. Community Health*, 54: 864-869.

Hayes, M. and Acton, T. (eds.) (2007) *Travellers, Gypsies, Roma: The demonisation of difference,* Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars.

Hills, J. *et al.* (2010) *An anatomy of economic inequality in the UK,* London: National Equalities Office/LSE.

Allamby, L., Bell, J., Hamilton, J., Hansson, U., Jarman, N., Potter, M. and Toma, S. (2011) *Forced Labour in Northern Ireland,* York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

Kenrick, D. (2004) *Gypsies: from the Ganges to the Thames,* Hatfield: University of Hertfordshire Press.

Law, I. (2011) *Red racisms: racism and ethnicity in Communist and Post-Communist Contexts*, London: Palgrave.

Law, I. and Swann, S. (2011) *Ethnicity and Education in England and Europe:* Ganstas, Geeks and Gorjas, Farnham: Ashgate.

Leeming, C. (2010) 'We are not ashamed, we are proud of being Roma', *Big Issue in the North*, 20-26 Sept.: 16-17.

Lelkes, O. and Zolyomi, E. (2011) *Poverty and social exclusion of Migrants in the European Union,* Vienna: European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research.

Lewis, G. (1998) 'Welfare and the social construction of "Race" in E.Saraga (ed.) *Embodying the social constructions of difference*, London: Routledge: 91-138.

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

Neale, M., Craig, G. and Wilkinson, M. (2009) *Marginalised and excluded? York's traveller community*, York: York Travellers Trust.

NHS West Sussex (2010) *Health and Social Care Needs of Gypsies and Travellers in West Sussex,* Chichester: NHS West Sussex.

Oprea, A. (2003) *The erasure of Romani women in statistical data: limits of race-versus-gender approach,* American Romani Alliance, www.eumap.org/journal/features/2003/april/romastats

OSCE (2008) *Implementation of the Action Plan on Improving the situation of Roma Sinti within the OSCE area, S*tatus Report 2008, Warsaw: Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

OSCE (2010) *Police and Roma and Sinti: Good practices in Building Trust and Understanding,* Vienna: Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

OSI (2006) *Equality for Roma in Europe: a roadmap for Action*, Brussels: Open Society Institute.

Parry, G., Van Cleemput, P., Peters, J., Moore, J., Walters, S., Thomas, K. and Cooper, C. (2004) *The health status of Gypsies and Travellers in England,* London: Department of Health.

Platt, L. (2007) *Poverty and ethnicity in the UK,* Bristol: Policy Press.

Pollard, N., Latorre, M. and Sriskandarajah, D. (2008) *Floodgates or turnstiles? Post-EU enlargement migration flows to and from the UK*, London: Institute of Public Policy Research.

Poole, L. and Adamson, K. (2008) *Report on the situation of the Roma in Govanhill, Glasgow,* Oxford/Glasgow: Oxfam/University of West of Scotland.

Poole, L. (2010) 'National Action Plans for Social Inclusion and A8 migrants: the case of the Roma in Scotland', *Critical Social Policy*, 30: 245-266.

Refugee Council (1999) *Unwanted journey*, London: Refugee Council.

Richardson, J. (2006) *The Gypsy Debate: can discourse control?*, Exeter and Charlottesville: Imprint Academic.

Richardson, M. (2010) *Evaluation of ESF support for enhancing access to the labour market and the social inclusion of migrants and ethnic minorities, UK Country Report,* Brussels: EU Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities/Centre for Strategy and Evaluation Services.

Roma Support Group (2000a) *The Roma: an introduction to their history and customs*, London: Roma Support Group.

Roma Support Group (2010b) 'The Big Issue for Roma: Exclusion or Engagement?', *Summary report of conference* organised in London, 25 Feb. 2010, London: Roma Support Group: mimeo.

ROTA (2009) *Policy Briefing* No. 37, London: Race on the Agenda.

Rughinis, C. (2011) 'Quantitative tales of ethnic differentiation: measuring and using Roma/Gypsy ethnicity in statistical analysis', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 4: 594-619.

Ryder, A. and Greenfields, M. (2010) *Roads to success: Economic and Social Inclusion for Gypsies and Travellers*, London: Irish Traveller Movement in Britain.

Ryder, A., Acton, T., Alexander, S., Cemlyn, S., Van Cleemput, P., Greenfields, M., Richardson, J. and Smith , D. (2011) *A big or divided society?: A panel review of government policy on Gypsies and Travellers,* London: Travellers Aid Trust.

Scullion, L. and Morris, L. (2009a) *Migrant workers in Liverpool: a study of A8 and A2 nationals,* Salford: University of Salford Housing and urban Studies Unit.

Scullion and Morris, G. (2009b) *A study of migrant workers in Peterborough,* Salford: University of Salford.

Scullion, L., Morris, G. and Steele, A. (2009) *A study of A8 and A2 migrants in Nottingham,* Nottingham: Nottingham City Council.

Scullion, L. and Pemberton, S. (2010) *Exploring migrant workers motivations for migration and their perceived contributions to the UK,* Liverpool: Merseyside Social Inclusion Observatory.

Seicluna, H. (2007) 'Anti-Romani speech in Europe's public space: the mechanism of hate, *Roma Rights* 3.

SPC (2011) *Opinion of the Social Protection Committee on Roma Inclusion*, Brussels: Council of the European Union, May 5 2011.

Staniewicz, T. (2009) *Housing conditions of Roma and Travellers,* United Kingdom RAXEN National Focal Point, Warwick, Centre for Rights, Equality and Diversity, University of Warwick.

Stewart, M. (1997) *Time of the Gypsies*, Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press.

Tobi, P., Sheridan, K. and Lais, S. (2010) *Health and Social Care needs of Eastern European (including Roma) individuals living in Barking and Dagenham,* Barking: NHS Barking and Dagenham.

UKBA (2007) *Guidance for nationals of Bulgaria and Romania on obtaining permission to work in the United Kingdom,* London: United Kingdom Border Agency.

UK Border Agency, Department of Work and Pensions, HM Revenue and Customs, and Communities and Local Government (2009) *Accession monitoring report* May 2004 - March 2009, London: Home Office.

UKCC (2008) *UK Childrens' Commissioners' Report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child*, London: UK Childrens' Commissioners.

UNCRC (2008) *Concluding observations: UK Country report on Article 44 of the Convention,* New York: United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child.

Wilkin, A., Derrington, C., White, R., Martin, K., Foster, B., Kinder, K. and Rutt, S. (2010) *Improving the outcomes for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils: final report,* London: Department for Education Research Briefing RB043.

Wilkinson, M., Craig, G. and Gaus, A. (2009) *Turning the tide: migrant workers and the Gangmasters' Licensing Authority,* Oxford: Oxfam.

Williams, F. (1989) *Social Policy: a critical introduction*, Issues of Race, gender and class. Cambridge: Polity.

Worley, C. (2005) ''It's not about race. It's about the community': New Labour and 'community cohesion'', *Critical Social Policy*, Vol. 25, no 4: 483-96.

Youth in Action (2009) *Youth in Action and the Roma community: inclusion of diversity*, Brussels: Salto Youth Cultural Diversity Centre: at www.salto-youth.net/diversity

Zeman, P. (2003) 'Roma health issues: a review of the literature and discussion', *Ethnicity and Health,* 8(3): 223-249.

Appendix: A note on data

Since May 2004, workers from the A8 member states were free to come and live in the UK subject to certain conditions, a 'government decision based on the perceived fiscal benefit of these migrants to the UK economy' (Cook *et al*. 2008: p.3). Nationals from these countries including, of particular relevance to the Roma, Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, were required to register through the Workers' Registration Scheme (WRS). From January 2007, residents of Romania and Bulgaria were also free to move to the UK but had much more limited access to the UK labour market. Pollard *et al.* (2008) estimate that just over one million A8 migrants arrived in the UK between 2004 and 2008, (see also UK Border Agency *et al.* 2009) with another possibly 200,000 to 300,000 in the last three years. Most analyses agree that the number of Eastern European migrants – as measured for example, by National Insurance Number registrations – fell to its lowest level in 2009/2010 since 2004. However, there is no single system to measure the movement of people to and from the UK (Craig *et al.* 2004) and therefore no reliable overall data on the number of A8 or A2 migrants living and/or working in a particular area (Boden and Stillwell 2006). Data from the WRS (identifying the place of work of a registrant) has been available through local authorities, and provided by the Home Office. This data did not include those who were or planned to be self-employed, nor did it keep a count of those who effectively deregistered by leaving the country. The data was collected in terms of country of origin and could not give data on respondents' self-defined identity, i.e. it could not identify who were or were not Roma. The WRS scheme was abandoned in May 2011. National data on UK Roma is thus not available.

National Insurance data is available through the Department for Work and Pensions, and relates to a person's place of residence. A number of analyses of WRS and NI (NINo) data (e.g. Adamson *et al.* 2008) have identified the difficulties of mapping migrant worker populations, not least because many workers lived in urban areas and worked in their rural hinterlands, leading to substantial mismatches between WRS and NI data. Research on migrant workers from the A8 countries suggests that only about one quarter planned to settle permanently in the UK, although this proportion may change as relative economic conditions change as between the UK and the country of origin: it is likely that Roma will be more heavily concentrated in those planning to stay in the UK for reasons outlined earlier. This is important as it suggests that this 'wave' of migration is not a temporary phenomenon for which only transitional arrangements need to be put in place but that policy and service provision need to acknowledge that Roma may form a continuing and perhaps growing fraction of the demography of the UK.

A major difficulty in establishing the size of the Roma population is that, whilst they are regarded within UK law as an ethnic group for the purposes of anti-discrimination legislation, the category Roma has not been regarded as equivalent to a nationality comparable, for example, with Slovakian and Czech (which is where many Roma have arrived from since the mid-1990s). Anstead (2010) estimates, on the basis of the best data available, that more than 100,000 Roma have migrated to the UK from Central European countries since 2000 (compared with an estimated population – by the Commission for Racial Equality [2006] – of British Gypsies and Irish, British and Scottish Travellers of about 300,000). This would establish the Roma as one of the ten largest ethnic groupings within the UK, if Roma were to be accepted as on a par with groupings based on country of origin. WRS and NINo data is, as noted, not helpful in identifying numbers of UK Roma since these are compiled by nationality.

Equality notes in another factsheet (Fremlova and Anstead 2010) that the best estimate for the number of Roma living in the UK is around 500,000: this appears to conflate the numbers of

Roma as commonly defined within the UK with the numbers of other Romani groups. On the other hand, an estimate by the Minority Rights Group International (Liegios and Gheorghe 1995) cited in Hajioff and McKee (2000: p.865) suggested that there were between 90,000 and 120,000 Roma in the UK in the early 1990s. This figure does not allude to the Roma as commonly understood within the UK but to Roma/Gypsy but also seems substantially to underestimate the numbers of Gypsies and Travellers present in the UK. A further estimate (European Dialogue 2009a) suggests that there may be as many as 600,000 to 1,000,000 Roma who have migrated to the UK since the collapse of the Communist Bloc in Eastern/Central Europe. European Dialogue's survey (2009c) specifically identified more than 49,000 Roma in 13 local authority areas[13] and provides a range of estimates, including from Roma respondents themselves, of populations numbering between 110,000 and 1 million. These higher estimates are controversial, including amongst the long-established Gypsy and Traveller populations themselves.

The East London study estimates that there are about 8,000 Roma in London, largely settled in East and North-East Boroughs. Because data is so sparse, and is not collected in a coherent manner, most local authorities appear 'unaware of the numbers, locations or needs of the Roma residents in their areas … [limiting] … the ability of these authorities to provide adequate and suitable services for Roma.' (Fremlova and Anstead 2010: p.19) Another detailed case study in Glasgow (Poole and Adamson 2008) suggests that there are 3,000 Roma living in a concentrated area of Govanhill, probably of no more than 4 streets, the majority of them from Slovakia and, as with other Roma communities in the UK, developed around the core of Roma who came to the UK seeking asylum. To place these figures in context, by 2008 EUROSTAT estimated that around 8 million EU citizens were exercising their right to freedom of movement and residence; this is about 1.6% of the total EU population of just under 500 million. (FRA 2009) This data is not however disaggregated by ethnic origin: taking the mean of a number of estimates of Roma in the EU as 11 million, and the mean number who have arrived in the UK since 1993 as 300,000, the proportion of those moving to the UK is around 2.6%, a significantly higher proportion. If there are 300,000 Roma in the UK, they would constitute about 0.5% of the total UK population, having grown to that point much more rapidly than other minorities (for example, taking an ethnic minority of comparable size, the 400,000 or so Bangladeshis in the UK, this size has been reached largely over a period of 50 years).

Detailed local research points to the limitations of current official counts. For example, interviews in Newcastle upon Tyne, a large northern city to which many asylum-seekers had been dispersed in the 1990s, suggest that the Roma community there is of the order of 1,200, mainly from the Czech Republic and Slovakia. However, European Dialogue report (2009c) that data from local schools suggested there were only 15 primary and 8 secondary school children returned as Roma, clearly an overwhelmingly significant underestimate, presumably as a result of poor data gathering and reluctance on the art of respondents to self-identify as Roma. Similarly, in Haringey the local authority identified that there were 168 children and 91 adults resident in the Borough but separate research suggests there are 1,700 Romanian Roma living there. In Manchester, a Romanian Roma Community project claimed to be working with more than 3,000 such people alone whilst the local authority put the figure at around 700 for all Roma.

The decennial censes have not included a category of Roma under the 'ethnic question' until now (the 2011 census results which may provide some useful data will not be available till 2013/4) and thus are only marginally useful in thinking about the demographic characteristics of the UK Roma population. In 2001 and 2011, respondents to the census were able to choose a 'White Other' category or to define themselves in some other way but it is likely that Roma will not have

[13] There are 433 local authorities in the UK as a whole.

identified themselves as such in many instances, having, with good reason, an anxiety about identifying themselves to official bodies. As a young panellist commented at a conference organised by the Roma Support Group, 'we are just too scared to say we are Roma. We need help and support of "others" in order to be able to admit our identity.' (Roma Support Group 2010b)

Thus, although we know that most ethnic minorities within the UK are socially excluded and deprived on most dimensions, a result of individual and structural racism, discrimination and what is generally now regarded as an 'ethnic penalty' which 'limits the access and achievement of ethnic minorities', (Crawley 2010: p.559; also Platt 2007) there is no robust large-scale data as yet which confirms this to be the case for the Roma within any welfare sector. (This data is in any case usually drawn from large-scale data sets such as the census or the Labour Force Surveys which do not include UK Roma as a category). The conclusions of this report are thus drawn largely from limited qualitative data. The ability of Roma to assert their identity has also been supported, ironically (since it is a vehicle for many Roma to earn some income), by the magazine Big Issue (which focuses on the needs of the homeless, often using homeless people as street vendors): a recent issue contained an article on the Roma entitled 'we are not ashamed, we are proud of being Roma. (Leeming 2010)

Generalising from small-scale qualitative studies, we can assume however, on the basis of what we know about excluded minorities where data does exist (such as for those of Bangladeshi origin) that the social and economic conditions of both adults and children from Roma families are very poor indeed. The fear that Roma families have of identifying themselves, has been discussed in the academic literature where reference is made to the 'widespread politically-laden debates on the "true" number of Roma and by the observation that Roma people prefer not to declare a Roma affiliation in censuses and official contexts' (Clark 1998) because of 'the history and oppression and forced assimilation' (Hajioff and McKee 2000: p.865), which has led to the assumption that ‚a similar reticence may bias unofficial survey measurements' (Rughinis 2011: p.603). It is hoped that after a period of settlement, this attitude may change and indeed some UK Roma respondents to a European Dialogue study argued that they felt proud of their Roma ethnicity for the first time in their lives and 'were able to confidently declare their Roma identity publicly' (European Dialogue 2009b). This contrasts with the present general situation where, on the basis of survey returns to local authorities it was reported that there were 'possibly as many Roma undetected as those registered with schools, the Workers Registration Scheme, health services and social services (European Dialogue 2009a: p.9), the result of choices made by Roma themselves but also because many Roma have yet properly to access the range of services available to them.

Difficulties with data are underlined by the ways in which data is gathered in pan-European studies. Thus the European Centre's analysis of poverty and social exclusion of migrants in the European Union (Lelkes and Zolyomi 2011), drawing on the EU SILC (Community Statistics on Income and Living Conditions) (micro-data on income and social exclusion) notes that SILC only explores 'the stock of migrants with no information on how long they have been in the country … and no information of ethnic status of respondents.' (p.3) Definitions are based on country of birth, an approach which obscures those who might identify as Roma in some way.