

University of Twente

# **Minority Integration in Central and Eastern Europe**

**How EU Conditionality has Affected Roma Integration  
during Accession Negotiations**

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8/20/2011

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### **Abstract**

Today, the issue of Roma integration is as pressing as 20 years ago, when the EU decided to include a provision for “respect for and protection of minorities” in the Copenhagen Criteria, thereby making the provision conditional for EU membership. This multiple case study of Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania and the Czech Republic aims to establish how conditionality, as the EU’s main instrument of the enlargement strategy, has influenced Roma integration in the sampled states during accession negotiations. To analyze the research problem, the European Commission’s yearly issued Regular Reports and a 2002 UNDP dataset provided valuable sources of information. The findings of the study suggest that the minority provision has had little impact on Roma integration. Since the possible effect of conditionality was not exhausted to its full extent, candidate states’ compliance with EU rules was low and progress with regard to Roma integration was hardly visible.

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## 1. Introduction to the Problem and Research Question

When, in 1993 the Copenhagen European Council defined the membership criteria for upcoming EU enlargements, the EU decided to include a provision for “respect for and protection of minorities” under the political criterion. The provision, that addressed the issue of minority rights for the first time in EU history, constituted a significant step with far-reaching consequences for the minority groups living in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). Accordingly, especially the situation of the Roma<sup>1</sup> minority, which remains one of the most marginalized minorities to date, was monitored by the Commission during the accession process.

With an estimated population of ten to twelve million, Roma are the largest minority in Europe (Ringold *et al*, 2005). But without a home country and with hardly any proper political representation, basic rights of this minority have often been violated (Ibid, 2005). History shows, that even though Roma have lived in and travelled across Europe for centuries, attitudes towards the minority have mostly been characterized by maltreatment and discrimination. Their nomadic lifestyle, their own set of values and traditions and their unique way of life overall helped them escape from the hatred they encountered. But on the negative side, it also enforced stigmata and stereotypes. Assimilation, which was the general policy of the communist regimes towards the Roma, was an alternative for some, whereas others chose not to abandon their culture and traditions (Liegeois and Gheorghe, 1995). These Roma now often live on the breadline making it even harder for them to overcome prejudices.

At the outset of negotiation talks in the beginning of the 1990s, the EU recognized the need to improve the devastating status of the Roma minorities in the Central and Eastern European states. With the inclusion of a minority provision in the so-called Copenhagen Criteria, the Council attempted to deal with this issue by setting a precedent. Henceforth, the declared policy goal of the EU was the social integration of Roma. On this account, several factors were said to be indispensable for an improved situation of the Roma. Amongst others these were education, employment and housing.

The main instrument the EU used during the accession period to influence candidate states was conditionality. It implied that complying with the Copenhagen Criteria was conditional for the CEE states to becoming a full member of the European Union. The negotiation period that preceded the accession of the CEE states, varied between the sampled states: the Czech Republic and Hungary were subjected to conditionality from 1997 till 2002, Bulgaria and Romania from 1999 till 2004. This paper will center on the question whether EU conditionality had the intended effect of improving the situation of the candidate countries’ national Roma minorities during the negotiation process. To research the aforementioned problem, this study tries to answer the following question:

**What is the effect of EU Conditionality on Roma integration in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Bulgaria and Romania during the EU accession process?**

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<sup>1</sup> “For the purpose of this paper, the term “Roma” is used [...] as an umbrella term including also other groups of people who share more or less similar cultural characteristics and a history of persistent marginalization in European societies, such as the Sinti, Travellers, Ashkali etc.” (European Commission, 2008)

During the course of the paper several sub-questions will be addressed within the analysis chapter to fully answer the main research question. The accession process, when the Copenhagen Criteria had to be translated by the countries that were striving for EU membership, will give a central timeline to this study. During this period, the EU exposed the problems encountered by Roma communities in the respective candidate states. In order to be able to give sound recommendations, the Commission pointed to insufficient domestic policies targeting the Roma population and minorities in general. Hence, the first sub-question we pose will be:

1. What problems did the EU notice concerning Roma integration during the accession process?

To give a comprehensive picture of the pre-accession period, this study will not only highlight the problems that the EU uncovered during the accession process, but also which devices and mechanisms were in place in order to grant effective EU conditionality. Thus, the second question that can be derived is:

2. Which EU policies that aimed at Roma integration in candidate states were in place during the accession process?

The third and last sub-question will focus on the policies, which have been developed concerning Roma integration in the candidate states. The Commission's Regular Reports that served as the primary source of monitoring and evaluation during the accession negotiations will serve as the main indicator for this study. Within these Reports, the Commission named the main areas that still needed attention, but also where improvements had been made. This paper will examine how the deviation from the status quo in the period in question has proceeded. The question we derive is:

3. What kind of policy responses have been developed by the candidate countries as measured within the progress reports?

To analyze these questions, this paper is structured as follows: We will start to present the external incentives model as developed by Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier. Within this theoretical framework several hypotheses will be obtained. This will be followed by an introduction to the methodological approach that we will take before getting to the analysis of the Commission's Regular Reports. Here, we will compare and contrast the impact of conditionality in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Bulgaria and Romania. Concluding, we will present our findings and evaluate the results of our study with regard to the main research question.

## **2. Theoretical Framework**

In the following chapter we will take a closer look at the concepts that are commonly used to explain the EU's influence on domestic policies and politics during the accession period. Recent studies on the EU's 'transformative power' in Central and Eastern Europe have employed the concept of 'Europeanization' to explain the change brought about by the EU in applicant states (Grabbe 2001, Kelley 2004, Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2005). To assess the power of the EU's leverage, we need to define what Europeanization means and implicates for this study. Thus, we will assess two concepts within the framework of Europeanization, namely 'conditionality' and 'normative pressure'. Another concept taken into consideration here will relate to minority integration. During the course of this chapter we will show how these concepts are defined and how they relate to our study.

### **2.1. Minority Integration in the European Union**

The first concept applied within the context of this study is minority integration. The integration of the Roma into the European community is considered an "ongoing concern" (Pouliot, 2010, as cited in Uzunova, 2010). To grasp the concept, we will elaborate here on the instrument the EU uses to ensure equal opportunities for its citizens: antidiscrimination legislation.

The issue of minority integration is highly controversial. After all, the term 'minority' has not yet been defined universally and is thus not legally binding. Many scholars refer to the definition of Capotorti who suggested that a minority is "[a] group numerically inferior to the rest of the population of a State, in a non-dominant position, whose members – being nationals of the State – possess ethnic, religious or linguistic characteristics differing from those of the rest of the population and show, if only implicitly, a sense of solidarity, directed towards preserving their culture, traditions, religion or language" (Capotorti, 1977, as cited in Pejic, 1997).

Why and on which grounds "the EU has been able to influence minority policies in the candidate countries" has been explored by a number of scholars (Vermeersch, 2004). Vermeersch argues that the protection of minorities gained in importance "after the collapse of communism in Central and Eastern Europe" (Ibid, 2004). In the light of the outbreak of violence in the Balkan region then, the EU feared for comparable scenarios in the Central and Eastern European countries (CEECs) and hence stressed "the role of minority protection in the enlargement process" by making it "part and parcel of the EU's external relations towards the candidate countries" (Ibid, 2004). Similarly, Guglielmo and Waters (2005) claim, that the European institutions changed their policies towards Roma minorities at the outset of the 1990s. What had started as an "open concern with the potentially destabilizing effects" of Roma migration to the west, increasingly became a "rhetorical emphasis on discrimination and positive minority rights" (Guglielmo and Waters, 2005). Thus, despite the above mentioned absence of a legal definition of the term 'minority', the Copenhagen Council of 1993 concluded that a candidate country must have accomplished "stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and the respect for and protection of minorities" (European Council, 1993) before accession. With regard to Roma minorities, Vermeersch maintains, that especially after 1997 "it became clear that the European Commission found that the situation of the Roma was to play a certain role in deciding whether a candidate state would be ready to join the EU" (Vermeersch, 2004).

In the due course of the accession process, candidate countries were thus pressured by the EU to adopt policy programs which “would deal with discrimination, unemployment, lack of education, bad housing, spatial isolation, and poverty among Roma” (Vermeersch & Ram, 2009). These policies included the transposition of the 2000 Race Equality Directive 2000/43/EC, the 2000 Employment Directive 2000/78/EC and the ratification of the Council of Europe’s Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (Schwellnus, 2009). According to Schwellnus (2009), the Racial Equality Directive forms the cornerstone of Community law in the field of minority protection. The Directive covers a broad range of provisions such as a definition of direct and indirect discrimination, and harassment. In addition to this, the Directive includes, among others, the fields of employment, education, and housing (Ibid, 2009).

## **2.2. Europeanization and Its Two Mechanisms – Conditionality and Normative Pressure**

The existing literature on Europeanization is manifold and scholars have interpreted the concept of Europeanization in numerous ways (e.g. Hughes *et al.* 2004, Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2005). In general, the term is used to scrutinize the ‘influence of the EU’ or the ‘domestic impact of the EU’ (Sedelmeier, 2006). Due to the recent accession of the Central and Eastern European Countries (CEECs) the opportunity to research the impact of the EU on candidate states was given, at least in a theoretical sense. Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier describe Europeanization to be concerned with “the impact of policy outcomes and institutions at the European level on domestic politics, polities and policies.” (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier, 2005). The scholars attempted to conceptualize Europeanization by distinguishing two types of alternative mechanisms: ‘the logic of consequences’ and ‘the logic of appropriateness’, set within the framework of institutionalism theory. The latter mechanism implies that domestic actors conduct the most appropriate or legitimate way and are thus motivated by internalized identities, norms and values. In Comparative Politics, this course of action can be ascribed to the approach of sociological institutionalism (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier, 2005). The former mechanism – ‘the logic of consequences’ – can be attributed to the analytical approach of rational institutionalism, based on the assumption that states are driven by rational cost-benefit calculation, seeking to maximize their own power (Ibid, 2005). According to Trauner, the rationalist approach has proven to have strong explanatory power, reasoning that the alignment of Central and Eastern Europe to the *acquis* was predominantly driven by utility-maximizing factors (Trauner, 2009).

This argument is shared by Kelley (2004), who contrasts the use of ‘conditionality’ in her book “Ethnic Politics in Europe”. She defines conditionality as “a technique by which an actor makes the transfer of positively valued resources contingent on the recipient behaving consistently with the actor’s preferences.” (Kelley, 2004). In accordance with the aforementioned rationalist approach, Kelley says, that the theory of conditionality explains state behavior since policy makers base their decisions, concerning the requirements of international institutions, on utilitarian reasoning. Political reforms are therefore reached by using positive incentives. In addition, Kelley states that within the area of minority policy, the EU did not solely rely on conditionality, but claims that the issue area was always combined with ‘normative pressure’ by international institutions, namely the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the Council of Europe (CoE) and the European Union (EU). ‘Normative

pressure' is defined by a set of socialization mechanisms, such as soft diplomacy, persuasion and social influence. The main difference between normative pressure and conditionality, apart from the mechanism, is the reward, since external actors try to change state behavior through normative pressure by simply connecting policy change to the approval of the external actor, whereas the ultimate reward for compliance with conditionality (in this case) is EU membership. According to some researchers, rationalist institutionalism and sociological institutionalism are not necessarily mutually exclusive, but can be viewed as complementary (Kelley 2004, Sedelmeier 2006)

Normative pressure is usually seen as the method of first resort, since it involves changing policy preferences through persuasion or social influence only. The method was a primary tool during the 1990s, when Western European institutions used it on post-communist states in transit in form of social influences such as shaming and praise (Kelley, 2004). The efficiency of the method is partly credited to the target states' desire to be accepted by external actors. In practice, normative pressure in the field of minority rights was inducted through international agreements and conventions on human rights issues. Though in theory, the system of shaming and praise may work; there is considerable controversy about the factual implications, since pre-condition for a change of policy preference is another interfering variable: 'change of belief'. According to the rationalist school of thought change of belief is only given, when the change of policy preference is also in the interest of the target state (Ibid, 2004). Other researchers have pointed to normative mechanisms like EU-induced social learning and domestically motivated lesson-drawing, but find it hard to trace them back during the accession process where they are hardly separable from rationalist calculations (Jacoby 2004; Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2005). In accordance, Kelley (2004) stresses that only membership conditionality had the power to overcome domestic opposition and hence tipped the scales in favor of reform whereas solely applied norm-based pressure did not. Following Kelley's conclusions on the concepts of normative pressure and conditionality, the former does not have sufficient explanatory power to account for a change in domestic policy behavior in the target states (Ibid, 2004). Since several scholars, including Kelley, Sasse, Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier explain candidate state's compliance with EU rules with the concept of conditionality; this study will use EU conditionality as its explanatory variable.

### **2.3. Conditionality and the External Incentives Model**

According to Sasse, conditionality is understood to be the crucial mechanism of Europeanization in CEE (Sasse, 2005). To explain the EU's policy transfer in the accession process, Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier (2005) have established several models that specify the different mechanisms of Europeanization. Due to its high explanatory power and its relevance for this study, the 'external incentives model' will be outlined here and applied in the course of the analysis. As already mentioned above, conditionality, as opposed to normative pressure, operates through incentive-based rewards to alter states' behavior. In more general terms, international institutions can use conditionality to promote certain policies; or as Schimmelfennig puts it: "International organizations offer material and political rewards in return for norm compliance but do not coerce non-compliant governments." (Schimmelfennig, 2002, as cited in Kelley, 2004). During the pre-accession stage the ultimate reward for the CEE candidate states was EU membership. This strong power asymmetry between the European Union and the CEE allowed for the EU to influence the candidate states in the policy areas covered by



the Copenhagen Criteria. Therefore the conditions for effective conditionality in CEE were in principle good (Schimmelfennig and Schwellnus, 2006). However the extent of the impact of conditionality varied depending on the policy field and on domestic conditions and actors (Sasse, 2009). For example, while the impact of CEE countries on the economies of member states was only moderate, candidate states were heavily dependent on access to the European market and on financial support of the EU. Hence, in the economic area, EU bargaining power was high as the CEECs benefited much more from EU accession than the other way around (Schimmelfennig and Schwellnus, 2006).

The external incentive model, which was established by Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier (2005), is based on the assumption that EU conditionality upsets the domestic distribution of preferences and bargaining power – the domestic equilibrium – in each respective society. This process is purposively induced by the EU. Incentives in form of rewards are offered in return for compliance with EU conditions (i.e. the Copenhagen Criteria). Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier argue that the effectiveness of conditionality is dependent on a set of factors: the determinacy of conditions, the credibility of rewards and threats, the size and speed of rewards, the number of veto players and the size of adoption costs (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier, 2004). For the purpose of this study, we will analyze each factor in the area of Roma integration, except for the number of veto players and the size of adoption costs, as these factors are mostly dependent on domestic constellations and the preferences of each candidate country's government. To research these would go beyond the scope of this paper.

The credibility of EU conditions and rewards was one of the factors that have proven to be central to the effectiveness of conditionality. During the accession phase, conditions varied over time, but not across the sampled states, as the starting point was similar for each country in our sample, in the mid-1990s. When in 1997 the EU decided to open accession negotiations with the first group of candidate countries in 1998, among them the Czech Republic and Hungary, and thereby excluding other countries like Bulgaria and Romania, the goal of EU membership became more concrete and hence, credible accession conditionality was in place. Partly because of non-compliance with the political criteria, opening of accession negotiations with the laggards had been postponed till 2000. This implied a serious drawback for these countries, but at same time enhanced the aforementioned competition among the candidates. We can maintain that conditionality was in place from the beginning of the accession negotiations. In addition, rule adoption by candidate countries becomes more likely, the closer the setting of the accession date to the EU gets. Recent studies have shown that “a credible and conditional membership perspective for the target states was a necessary condition for the adoption of initially contested political rules” (Schimmelfennig and Schwellnus, 2006). Since we assume that target states are rationalist actors, who seek to maximize their own benefits, we formulate the following hypotheses:

*Candidate states are more likely to comply with EU rules, when EU conditions and rewards become more credible.*

To recall, Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier (2005) have argued that the effectiveness of conditionality depends on a number of factors including the determinacy of conditions. The theory says that the likelihood of rule adoption by candidate countries increases the clearer the conditions are and the more these conditions are enshrined in EU law. Following the rationale of Schwellnus (2009) who says that

“non-discrimination is a well-established norm of Community law, which has recently been extended towards the minority-relevant area of racial discrimination” (Schwellnus, 2009) the implementation of the Race-Equality Directive in 2000 should have been a boosting factor for the determinacy of conditions. Accession negotiations were completed with the forerunners in 2002 and in 2004 with the laggards respectively. With setting the accession date, the ultimate reward, EU membership, had been paid out and could not be withdrawn in case of non-compliance with the conditions. Determinacy of conditions is further important for candidate states as, for one, they know what to do in order to receive the rewards and secondly, it binds the EU to its promise to pay the reward when candidate countries comply. On the basis of these considerations, an additional hypothesis is derived:

*Candidate states are more likely to comply with EU rules, when the determinacy of EU rules increases.*

A third factor that explains effective conditionality is the size, and in relation to that, the speed of rewards. As for the size, the reward of becoming a full member of the EU is equal for each selected country in this study and does not differ among the accession period. In contrast, the speed of reward varies. The closer the candidate states come to the reward (i.e. accession), the stronger the incentives to comply are. In return, this means that rule adoption is more unlikely when accession is far ahead. The hypothesis that is derived from this reasoning is:

*Candidate states are more likely to comply with EU rules, when the size and speed of rewards increase.*

The now established hypotheses that were drawn from the external incentives model by Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier (2005), will give an indication for the analysis of the effect of conditionality on Roma integration. Figure 1 illustrates the inference between conditionality (the independent variable) and Roma integration (the dependent variable) including the aforementioned sub-factors that we are going to analyze in the main section of this study. The arrow indicates the direction of the causal inference. As stated in the main research question, this study assesses the effect of conditionality on Roma integration. Here, this study has partitioned each variable into several indicators. These are the credibility of conditions and rewards, the determinacy of conditions, and the size and speed of rewards for ‘conditionality’, and Roma education, Roma employment and the housing situation of Roma for the variable ‘Roma integration’.

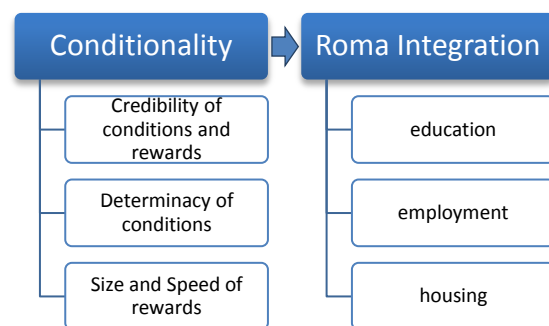


Figure 1: Independent and Dependent Variables

Before we begin to scrutinize our research question, we have to add that while some scholars are convinced of the new member states’ (NMS) progress due to Europeanization, others are more critical of the process. Part of the critique involves arguments that ascribe domestic policy changes not only to Europeanization but also to factors like the democratization process that the CEE underwent in the aftermath of Communism; specifically programs targeting Roma integration as for example the “Decade

of Roma Inclusion”; or financial incentives, e.g. PHARE provided over 77 million euro to Roma-related projects between 2001 and 2003 in the CEECs (European Commission, 2004). For an overview of the critique, Spirova and Budd (2008) give a comprehensive picture: Even though Vermeersch (2003) does recognize a connection between EU leverage and minority rights policy in some selected NMS, he remains doubtful about the impact of the EU and whether it has the power to change minority policies in candidate states for the better. Derived from the evaluation of the European Commission’s (EC’s) Regular Reports, Hughes and Sasse’s (2003) conclusion is connatural and therefore skeptical of the EU’s impact. Guglielmo (2004) sees potential in the EC’s ability to change behavior in domestic policies towards the Roma, but she is not convinced of its long-term effects. Criticism is also voiced by Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier (2004) who argue that EU conditionality might not be effective in achieving rule transfer in certain policy areas due to supersession of other mechanisms. Domestic policy makers may accept EU rules independently of conditionality but because they simply view them as the best solutions to domestic policy challenges, or due to a process of persuasion and learning in which the EU institutions socialize the CEEC actors (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier, 2004).

The overall framework of Europeanization gives a mixed picture on the actual impact of EU conditionality on Roma integration. To summarize the findings in our theoretical framework, we have to shortly recapitulate the concepts of normative pressure and conditionality that are set within the framework of Europeanization. This chapter has highlighted both concepts, conditionality and normative pressure, that have been scrutinized by scholars such as Kelley (2004) and Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier (2005) in a similar way. Normative pressure (or ‘the logic of appropriateness’ as Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier have labeled it), although seen as the method of first resort, is deemed insufficient in the “compliance game” by most scholars (Steunenberg and Dimitrova, 2007). Only when viewed in combination with the concept of conditionality (or ‘the logic of consequences’), scholars assume that the accession process has an impact on domestic policies. According to Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier (2005), the effect of conditionality depends on a set of factors: the determinacy of conditions, the credibility of conditions and rewards, and the size and speed of rewards. From these factors we derived three hypotheses on the effectiveness of conditionality in the area of Roma integration. These will allow for an evaluation of conditionality in the analysis chapter. Together with the findings of the dependent variable’s indicators (i.e. education, employment, and housing) we will be able to make an inference about the effect of conditionality on the Roma situation in the candidate countries. On a final note, there remains some doubt to factual implications of conditionality, be it due to inconsistencies within the EU framework or due to domestic obstacles. Since this study will mainly focus on Regular/Progress Reports issued by the European Commission and other documents published by the EC we will be able to scrutinize if and how the EU has influenced Roma integration in candidate states. The following chapter will aim to give an overview of the methodological concepts.

### 3. Methodology

On the basis of the theory we have determined a primary concept that might explain the compliance of the EU candidate states and the change of domestic policies during the accession process. To improve our understanding of the causal relationship between our variables, conditionality and Roma integration in selected CEECs, a qualitative case study of four CEE candidate states is foreseen within the scope of this paper. Even though, some of the findings may be representative for future accession candidates, we have to add, that the sample is of limited generalizability. This chapter will be opened by the description of the research design, followed by the operationalization of our variables. The case selection and the limitations to the study will conclude our methodology chapter.

#### 3.1. Research Design

The focal theoretical concept, conditionality, sets the scene for this study, whose foundation in the field of minority integration is based on the conditions for EU accession of candidate countries – the Copenhagen Criteria. These were formulated by the 1993 Copenhagen Council, including among economic and *acquis* criteria, a political criterion that lays down that a candidate country must meet “stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, human rights, the rule of law and respect for and protection of minorities” (European Council, 1993). The European Commission, which was given supervisory powers of the CEECs enlargement by the Council, henceforth issued Regular Reports for each candidate country in each year during the accession negotiations. The Commission monitored progress for every criterion, including around thirty chapters of the *acquis*. For this study we will evaluate these Regular Reports especially regarding Roma integration. The first Regular Report for each country was issued in 1998 by the Commission. The final Regular Reports for the Czech Republic and Hungary were released in 2002; for Romania and Bulgaria in 2004. Set within the political criterion, under the heading “Minority rights and the protection of minorities”, the Reports indicate the main trends and progress in the area of minority integration. Since each Report broadly follows the same construction following the style of the Copenhagen Criteria in a formulistic structure, this will allow for a pair-wise cross-country comparison of the Regular Reports over time.

The most important data for both our variables will be retrieved through a content analysis of the Commission’s Regular Reports. Therefore, special attention will be given to information that contain data on the credibility of conditions and rewards, the determinacy of conditions, and the size and speed of rewards as well as on Roma education, employment and housing. For further information and to give a more balanced view on Roma integration, we will rely on data from the “United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Vulnerable Groups Dataset” (UNDP, 2002) and several reports from the Open Society Institute (OSI). Even though, the UNDP dataset gives us the possibility to compare the countries – also with quantitative data – the data does not allow for a comparison across time, as the survey has been conducted only once. Nevertheless, the data should provide for a comprehensive overview of the situation of the Roma during the accession period since the survey took place in each of our sampled countries around 2001 or 2002. Further data will be obtained from Eurostat, Eurobarometer and scholarly literature. To sum up, by collecting secondary data, we will assess the sampled states’ progress towards their attempts to improve the situation of the Roma during the accession process.

### **3.1.1. The Dependent Variable**

Our dependent variable is 'Roma integration'. A set of indicators will enable us to evaluate the overall progress of the situation of the Roma in the sampled countries. These indicators are education, housing and employment; for the purposes of our study they will be compared and contrasted in the period of accession negotiations. While it is a given that these indicators are interdependent, each of them gives indication to what extent discriminatory practices prevail and how countries cope with the situation. Even though pointing to the interdependence of e.g. education on employment rates would be interesting, the lack of reliable data over time does not allow for an inference between the indicators. Returning to the operationalization, improvement in the field of education implies the development of particular programs targeting Roma integration and to reduce segregation in the educational system. Like the European Commission (2011), we think that education is the key to an improvement of the situation of the Roma, since it allows them to successfully enter the labor market later on. To illustrate the situation of Roma education and Roma school children segregation, not only the Commission's Regular Reports will serve as a source, but also secondary data on Roma school attendance rates and Roma school enrolment rates. The situation of Roma education will be evaluated as improved, should Roma school children segregation decrease and Roma enrolment rates for school as well as Roma school attendance rates increase over the accession period. Employment, which can be one of the results of education, is also included in the set of indicators. Whether efforts to improve the employment rate among Roma residents in our sampled countries are successful will indicate if respective programs are effective. This will be measured with the help of data on the socio-economic situation; especially Roma employment and unemployment figures in all four countries. On top of that, Eurostat will function as a valuable source of information regarding national average employment rates. Again, we will estimate the employment indicator as improved if employment rates for Roma increase and unemployment figures decrease. The final indicator, housing, is of importance as residential segregation of Roma settlements is a wide-spread practice in our sample (OSI, 2010). These segregated communities often lack the basic necessities like legal electricity supply, running water or an in-house toilet. Data on these factors is available from the UNDP and will serve to compare the living situation of Roma across the sampled countries. We expect that due to the continuous Europeanization of the countries, the improvement in the fields of education, housing and employment will demonstrate the overall progress in Roma integration. In general, we expect some form of national legislative framework to be implemented in the accession period to improve Roma integration.

### **3.1.2. The Independent Variable**

In our theoretical framework we identified several explanatory variables within the context of Europeanization. Closely interlinked, conditionality and normative pressure are the main concepts accountable of pre-accession alignment of the CEECs with the Copenhagen Criteria. However, since normative pressure does not deem us powerful enough to change policy behavior, our empirical case study will focus on the use of conditionality as the independent variable. To analyze the progress made in the field of Roma integration in the four sampled countries, we will trace the issue over time. The formulation and inclusion of the 'respect for and the protection of minorities' in the political criterion of the Copenhagen Criteria forms the initial point for the content analysis. With the inclusion of the provision, the four countries were pushed by the European Commission to improve the situation of

minorities. Therefore we can expect that the pre-accession period was especially accelerating concerning Roma integration policies. The Regular Reports issued by the Commission will illustrate how the EU's conditionality has influenced the CEECs. Within the theoretical framework, we have argued for the application of the external incentives model as developed by Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier (2005). Several sub-concepts to conditionality can be distinguished when following this model, which implies that target states are more likely to comply with EU rules when conditions and/ or rewards are increasing in credibility, determinacy, and size and speed (Ibid, 2005). Accordingly, we have set up three hypotheses which have one concept in common: Compliance with EU rules. Compliance means that national actors amend existing or introduce new legislation that is required by the EU to improve the situation of their Roma minorities. Non-compliance means that EU rules are not sufficient to change domestic policy behavior and hence, candidate states are not conform with EU conditions.

For the first hypothesis we assume that candidate states are more likely to comply with EU rules, when EU conditions become more credible. The credibility of conditions and rewards will be mainly assessed on the basis of the EU's threat to withhold membership in case of non-compliance with EU requirements. As this has been discussed in the corresponding literature before, we will evaluate the 'credibility factor' with the help of findings of Hughes and Sasse (2003), Sasse (2004) and Avery (2009) in combination with a content analysis of the Commission's Regular Reports. Especially the latter will be filtered for information that undermines or confirms the credibility of EU conditions. Secondly, we conjectured that candidate states are more likely to comply with EU rules, when the determinacy of EU conditions increases. To scrutinize the determinacy of EU conditions, the language the European Council and the European Commission used to formulate their conditions, to insert pressure on applicant countries, or to report about the situation of the Roma in the respective countries, plays a significant role. Again, the relevant literature will give guiding impulses on the analysis of the second factor. Thirdly, we theorized that candidate states are more likely to comply with EU rules, when the size and the speed of rewards increase. Whereas the size of the reward (i.e. EU membership) did not vary throughout the monitoring period, the speed of rewards increased with a closer getting accession date. To analyze how the factor influenced the sampled countries, the Regular Reports will give an indication of the progress of the situation of the Roma minorities over time. Hence, the Regular Reports should reflect an amplified use of data or more comprehensive and detailed information and reporting on the situation of the Roma, the longer the compliance game is on.

### **3.2. Case Selection**

For the analysis of this study we have selected four member states of the Central and Eastern European region: the Czech Republic, Hungary, Bulgaria and Romania. These cases were chosen for a multiple case study on the basis of non-probability sampling.

As regards common characteristics, the sampled countries were part of the Soviet Bloc, thus sharing similar political precondition regarding minority integration policies. Liegeois and Gheorghe (1995) found, the prevailing approach towards minority policies during the era of communism was assimilation. Secondly, with the fall of the iron curtain many countries of the region declared that their aim was to become member of the European Union and applied for membership in the beginning of the 1990s. In 2004 eight of the CEECs were admitted to the EU, namely the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia,

Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia. In 2007 two more CEE countries joined: Bulgaria and Romania. Today, the 2004 and the 2007 accessions are labeled the 'fifth enlargement wave'. Since the selected countries were subjected to the accession process of the European Union and therefore to the *acquis communautaire*, we can safely assume that the sampled states were subjected to the concept of Europeanization and the inherent methods of normative pressure and conditionality.

To be able to compare and contrast the findings in our analysis, we chose four countries within the European Union with significant Roma populations. Two countries commensurate with these criteria in the first accession wave: Hungary and the Czech Republic. The two countries entering the EU with the latter accession wave in 2007, Bulgaria and Romania, also answer to the criteria. Accounting for variation, each pair of countries was at different stages of transition during the accession process. This has not only shown in their dissimilar accession dates, but also with regard to each of their Roma minorities: in Hungary and the Czech Republic efforts to promote the situation of the Roma were consistent throughout the late 1990s, whereas Bulgaria and Romania only started to progress in 2002 and 2004, respectively (Spirova and Budd, 2008). Therefore, the countries can easily be paired up into forerunners and laggards.

### **3.2.1. The Forerunners**

The Czech Republic applied for EU membership in 1996, Hungary applied in 1994 (Spirova and Budd, 2008). Both countries concluded accession negotiations together with eight other candidate countries in 2002 and became official member states in 2004. According to the CIA World Factbook the Czech Republic's population is made up of 90.4% Czechs and several other ethnic groups; among them 0.1% Roma (11,746 people). 92.3% Hungarians make up the majority of Hungary; 1.9% (189,984) is Roma according to the 2001 census (CIA, 2011). However, the share of Roma population may be significantly higher. Due to the attached stigma of being a Roma, the majority of them prefer to declare a different identity. NGOs estimate the number of Roma in the Czech Republic to be as high as 200,000 out of a total population of 10m; in Hungary an estimated 700,000 people are Roma (UNDP, 2005).

### **3.2.2. The Laggards**

Bulgaria and Romania each applied for EU membership in 1995, however were not allowed to open accession negotiations until 1999 and finally became members three years later than the Czech Republic and Hungary; in 2007 (Spirova and Budd, 2008). The ethnic composition of Bulgaria and Romania differs from the countries described above as they are not as homogeneous but more scattered with several minorities. According to the CIA World Factbook 83.9% Bulgarians pose the majority in Bulgaria. The second ethnic minority next to the Turks (9.4%) are the Roma (4.7%; 370,908 people). A similar distribution can be found in Romania, where 89.5% are Romanian, 6.6% are Hungarian and 2.5% Roma (535,140 people) according to the 2002 census (CIA, 2011). Again, experts and NGOs claim that the actual share of Roma in Bulgaria lays around 720,000 people (UNDP, 2005) or 9% (Rechel, 2009). For Romania social scientists estimate the respective number of Roma between 1.8 and 2.2 million (UNDP, 2005) or 6.5-11.5% of the population (Ram, 2009). This means that Romania has the largest Roma minority in Europe (UNDP, 2005).

Before we get to the analysis we have to note that there are some limitations to this study. The primary source of our analysis, the Commission reports, has been criticized for being partially inconsistent and incomplete (Knill and Tosun, 2009). This may be the result of the variety of sources the reports drew from. According to Sasse (2004) sources in the political sphere included the candidate countries directly, the Council of Europe, the OSCE, International Financial Institutions and NGOs, as well as the member states themselves. Nevertheless, these reports are the major source available that enable us to evaluate the transposition effect of the EU on domestic policies. The Reports serve as the key instrument by which the Commission has identified the EU's priorities and concerns, and disseminated these to the candidate states (Hughes and Sasse, 2003). Another caveat to the study is the lack of disaggregated data on Roma. Even though, in 2002 the UNDP has conducted a survey among Roma in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia, the study has unfortunately not been followed up.

In conclusion, the methodology chapter has given an overview of the selected sample, the relevant variables for our study and how to operationalize them, the data collection and the limitations we could face. Our sampled countries will be evaluated and contrasted in pairs: the Czech Republic and Hungary vis-à-vis Bulgaria and Romania. Due to the ineffectiveness of normative pressure in changing policy preferences, the independent variable measured will be conditionality. Three hypotheses, based on the factors determinacy of conditions, credibility of conditions and rewards, and the size/ speed of rewards will test the compliance of candidate states during the accession process. Furthermore, the dependent variable will be accessed through a number of indicators which have been defined and justified in this chapter. These are education, employment and housing. After presenting the relevant data, we have provided for a balanced discussion of its quality. In the next chapter, we are going to analyze explanatory as well as dependent variables before discussing the findings. At this point we want to emphasize that the hypotheses to be tested will primarily focus on the theoretical aspect of the study whereas the sub-questions are designed to provide for a practical overview of Roma integration.



## **4. Analysis**

The following chapter will focus on a qualitative analysis of the question “What is the effect of EU Conditionality on Roma integration in Central and Eastern European countries during the accession process?” First, the variables ‘EU conditionality’ and ‘Roma integration’ will be assessed separately, resulting in the evaluation of afore established sub-questions in addition to the hypotheses that were suggested in the introductory chapter. However, before diving into the analysis of the Regular Reports, we will assess each sampled country’s Roma situation before accession negotiations with the EU started to provide for an approximate insight of the candidate states’ individual starting points.

### **4.1. Anti-Discrimination Policies**

According to Guglielmo and Waters (2005), historically, policies towards Roma have a strong security-oriented bias in common. In the nineteenth and the early twentieth century, when the concept of minority rights became more frequently used, Roma used the opportunity to organize themselves (Guglielmo and Waters, 2005). However, initially policies for minority rights protection were not designed with Roma in mind. Subsequently, the benefits for Roma were marginal to the intended policies’ purpose (Ibid, 2005). Despite being one of the largest minorities in post-war socialist states, Roma were repeatedly categorized as an ‘ethnic’ rather than a ‘national minority’ as they lacked a kin state. The condition for belonging to a ‘national minority’ was to be represented by a nation state. Since Roma were not qualified for this criterion, they were often demoted to a secondary minority status resulting in less preferential treatment (Ibid, 2005).

#### **4.1.1. Minority Policies in the Sampled Countries Prior to Accession Negotiations**

##### *The Czech Republic*

While minorities in general and Roma in particular, enjoyed minority rights and minority integration policies in Czechoslovakia, the situation changed drastically after the dissolution of the federation into the Czech Republic and Slovakia (Sobotka, 2009). From 1993 onwards, the Czech government aimed at creating a market economy and strengthening democracy to eventually become member of NATO and the EU. Human rights or minority issues were hardly even second-rank resulting in the exclusion and assimilation of the Roma minority. On top of that, a newly crafted Citizenship Law left thousands of Roma, who had been long-term or lifelong residents, stateless and subject to eviction to Slovakia en masse. Racially motivated incidents against Roma increased in intensity and participation of minorities in policy-making during 1992 and 1997 was marginal. Even though government officials were shocked by the racial discrimination, amendments to the Citizenship law were not made and practical proposals to the situation of the Roma in the Czech Republic fruitless (Ibid, 2009).

##### *Hungary*

Hungary was one of the first states to adopt comprehensive and consistent minority rights protection legislation in Central and Eastern Europe (Vizi, 2009). According to Vizi (2009), the government agreed on the ‘Minority Law’ due to their concerns for the large numbers of Hungarian minorities living in neighboring states, thereby however neglecting the primary problems of the socially marginalized Roma

communities. Nevertheless, Hungary's legislation in the field of minority rights, which has been called "without known precedence" (Venice Commission, 1993), guarantees a variety of rights. These are for example the right to equal opportunity in cultural and political life, the rights to use minority languages in private as well as in public and education, and the right to establish educational, cultural and scientific institutions. Moreover, the establishment of minority self-government on local, regional and national levels is legally endowed. Besides all these minority rights policy achievements in Hungary, the factual situation remains problematic. A number of factors contribute to this: for one, there is no sustainable funding available for minority self-government since the budget they receive varies from year to year. A further problem regarding these governments, are the hardly defined competences between the different levels. On a final note, specific programs or legislation targeting the social integration of the Roma were scarcely formulated by Hungarian politicians until 1997 (Vizi, 2009).

### *Bulgaria*

According to Rechel, little has changed with regard to minority rights policies since the 1990s in Bulgaria (Rechel, 2009). The key policy changes since 1989 were in general the reversal of communist assimilation campaigns. However, due to nationalist protests, this was done in a half-heartedly matter over a long-drawn-out period of time (ibid, 2009). This is why Bulgaria's post-communist constitution was considered to be one of the most illiberal in CEE, which did in fact not acknowledge the existence of minorities in the country. Merely with increasing pressure from the EU, a governmental body with advisory functions only, has been set up for minority issues in 1997. Rechel concludes that the overall development since 1989 evolved from assimilation policies towards "a minority rights regime that offers non-territorial cultural minority rights" (Ibid, 2009).

### *Romania*

According to the Council of Europe, Romania was among the worst countries in the world regarding its civil and political rights and one of the least promising in terms of democratic consolidation (Council of Europe, 1994). Similar to the aforementioned countries, minorities in Romania were subjected to forced assimilation and denial of minority rights. Throughout the 1990s violent attacks against the Roma minority were reported and awareness to the lack of minority rights for Roma only increased in the late 1990s. Some key policy changes, which were made in the post-communist period, were the constitutional guarantee to a seat in parliament for all national minorities in 1991 and the set-up of a Council for National Minorities in 1993 (Ram, 2009).

The elaboration of the situation of minority rights with focus on Roma has shown that each of the sampled countries has taken measures to improve the situation of minorities before accession negotiations with the EU had started. However, the outcome of these policies was often marginal. In the following the analysis of the Commission's Regular Reports will give an insight on the development of Roma integration in a situation where conditionality can be considered present: during the accession period.

#### **4.1.2. Anti-Discrimination Legislation in the European Union**

In the theoretical framework, we have already briefly mentioned the existing EU framework on anti-discrimination policies. Here, we are going to provide for a more comprehensive overview of the legal framework that was in place or came into effect during accession negotiations, since, according to Schweltnus (2009), the “adoption of anti-discrimination legislation in Central and Eastern Europe is closely related to European Union (EU) rules and conditions.”

The original non-discrimination framework of the EU (then EC), which foresaw gender equality and the abolition of discrimination on the basis of nationality, is grounded in the 1957 Treaty of Rome (Schweltnus, 2009). With the Treaty of Amsterdam entering into effect in 1999, the framework has been extended, newly including Article 13, complementing Article 12 which prohibits discrimination on the grounds of nationality. The Article in question enables the Council to combat discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation. Based on Article 13, two directives were brought on the way in 2000. The Employment Directive 2000/78/EC prohibits discrimination in employment and occupation on the grounds of; inter alia, religion and belief and more importantly the Antidiscrimination Directive 2000/43/EC (the so-called ‘Racial Equality Directive’), which prohibits discrimination on the grounds of race or ethnic origin. According to the general wording the latter Directive which says to ensure “equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin”, the clause includes the prohibition of discrimination on grounds of ethnic origin. On these grounds, Schweltnus (2009) claims that the Racial Equality Directive forms the cornerstone of Community law in the field of minority protection. The Directive covers a board range of provisions such as a definition of direct and indirect discrimination, and harassment. In addition to this, the Directive includes, among others, the fields of employment, education, and housing. This shows that the Racial Equality Directive goes even further than the Framework Directive on equal treatment in employment and occupation that is only concerned with discrimination in the sphere of the workplace. Nevertheless, several authors do not think that the principle of non-discrimination suffices as a basis for the Copenhagen political criterion (see e.g. Hughes and Sasse, 2003). Sasse (2005) stated the minority condition “lacked a firm foundation in EU law and concise benchmarks”.

In addition, the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (CFR) includes “Any discrimination based on any ground such as [...] membership of a national minority” in its non-discrimination clause (Article 21). With the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon in 2009, the CFR became legally effective; however Article 51 (1) of the CFR limits the scope of the provisions of the Charter. Accordingly the Charter will bind Member states only when ‘implementing Union law’. The Lisbon Treaty, which amended the TEU and the Treaty establishing the European Community (TEC), newly included in Article 1a that “The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities.”

To sum up the existent legal framework in the field of minority protection, the concept of non-discrimination is enshrined in Community law most prominently through the 2000 Employment Directive and the 2000 Racial Equality Directive, the Charter of Fundamental Rights and the Treaty of Lisbon.

## **4.2. Explanatory Factors – Conditionality Revisited**

For the use of this paper, we have outlined in the theory chapter that the external incentives model explains the EU's policy transfer in the field of domestic minority rights. In the model three factors – determinacy of conditions, credibility of conditions and rewards, and the size and speed of rewards – are identified accounting for the variation of conditionality (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier, 2005).

### **4.2.1. The Credibility of EU Conditions and Rewards**

In terms of credibility of rewards, Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier (2004) claim that “the credibility that the EU will reward rule adoption with membership [...] emerges as the most important factor influencing the cost-benefit calculations of CEEC governments.”

Avery takes a similar stand; he says that the most credible threat for a candidate country was the possibility of delay of its accession date in case of non-compliance with the EU's requirements (Avery, 2009). By linking the issue of minority protection to EU accession, assumedly, the EU should have pushed for the adoption of legal reforms and policies in the candidate states from starting the accession negotiations to fixing the date of accession. However, the nonexistence of fundamental improvements of the situation of the Roma populations in all four sampled countries must lead to different inferences. The OSI as well as the Regular Reports found that, even if political will was apparent, “little has been done to remedy problems of social discrimination or to take concrete action to improve very poor living conditions” of the Roma minorities (European Commission, 2002a). Albeit we are citing the Commission on Bulgaria here, similar quotes can be found in the Reports on the Czech Republic, Hungary and Romania (European Commission 2002b, European Commission 2002c, and European Commission 2002d).

One factor that explains for the deficiency in the area of credibility could be the Union's priority “to maintain the enlargement process for the countries covered in the Luxembourg European Council conclusions” (European Council, 1998). According to Sasse, the wording of the introduction to the first set of Reports suggests that “harsh criticism was to be avoided in order sustain progress along the envisaged ‘road map’” (Sasse, 2004). Still, the most striking argument that explains the lack of credibility of EU conditions is fact that the Copenhagen political criterion was deemed “fulfilled” in each applicant state by the time accession negotiations were opened (Hughes and Sasse, 2003). This falls nothing short of being a paradox. How could the EU induce substantive pressure in the field of minority rights if the country in question “fulfills the Copenhagen political criteria” (European Commission, 1999a) already?

### **4.2.2. The Determinacy of Conditions**

When focusing on the second factor we have to carefully consider the determinacy of the Copenhagen political Criterion and other conditions with regard to minority integration that were imposed on target states. According to Schimmelfennig and Schwellnus (2006) “A rule is determinate, if it is formulated in an unambiguous and binding way.”

The Copenhagen Criterion in question, ‘the respect for and the protection of national minorities’ is said to leave “wide scope for interpretation” (Sasse, 2005), which would clearly undermine its determinacy. Adding to this caveat, when the Council drafted the Copenhagen Criteria, the minority criterion was not

derived from EU law but drew from different sources: the European Convention on Human Rights, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) documents and UN Declarations (Ibid, 2005). The resulting controversy about the legal status of the minority provision was disputably resolved by the adoption of the non-discrimination Directives in 2000. Schweltnus claims that non-discrimination is a well-established norm in Community law comprising also minority protection (Schweltnus, 2009). Validating this, it seems that the chapter on 'Minority Rights and Protection of Minorities' gained in importance and extent in the year after the adoption of the Employment Directive and the Racial Equality Directive. However, it was in 2002 when the Report on the Czech Republic said that "Real problems remained as regards discrimination against the Roma in various fields" (European Commission, 2002b). The Report further concluded that with regard to Roma, "more structural measures are needed in order to achieve significant results in remedying discrimination in access to education, housing and [...] employment" (Ibid, 2002). Hence, while we assume that enacting the Racial Equality Directive on EU level must have put additional pressure on the forerunners in particular since they had to implement the Directives by 2003, we cannot confirm this when analyzing the Regular Reports. Likewise to the Czech, the Report on Hungary reads that despite efforts of the government to address the situation of the Roma, "members of the Roma community continued to suffer from widespread discrimination in education, employment, the criminal justice system and access to public services, health in particular" (European Commission, 2002c). So even though the Czech Republic and Hungary concluded accession negotiations with the EU the very same year in 2002 and the non-discrimination Directives had been in place for at least a year at that time, the Reports leave no doubt about the shortcomings of both candidate states with regard to their Roma minorities. The laggards, Bulgaria and Romania, had to transpose the non-discrimination Directives by 2007. Accordingly, determinacy of EU conditions must have been on its peak when the last Reports were drafted in 2004. However, at that time, "The effective and sustainable integration of Roma remains an issue of major concern" and "Key reforms in combating discrimination in education, healthcare and housing are still outstanding" (European Commission, 2005a) can be read in the Reports on Bulgaria. Comparably, Romania showed promising efforts, but the Report also said that "the situation of the Roma minority still requires fundamental improvements" (European Commission, 2005).

Furthermore, the Regular Reports showed continuity and consequent follow-up monitoring only with regard to certain issues. When it comes to housing and employment, concrete data and information are scarce and programs that are mentioned in one Report are hardly ever discussed within the next. Exemplary is the 2001 Regular Report of Bulgaria which mentions projects to build homes and to generate employment in the municipalities of Sofia and Plodiv (European Commission, 2001c). The issue is briefly continued within the 2002 Report (European Commission, 2002a) yet afterwards any resumed reporting on projects in those municipalities is missing. This example demonstrates the lacking coherence of Commission reporting on Roma related problems.

In relation to the Copenhagen provision for minority rights and its determinacy, further conditions the candidate countries had to comply with were those proposed in the Accession Partnerships and further requirements that were produced by the Commission within the scope of the Regular Reports. The former, e.g. called for "further efforts to integrate the Roma and consolidation of protection of

individual liberties” in the case of Bulgaria in 1999 (European Commission, 1999b). Thus, not only the Copenhagen Political Criterion itself, but also the formulation in the Accession Partnerships can be described as vague, leaving wide scope for interpretation once more. The latter is expressed by the Commission in each Regular Report; an exemplary requirement of the Commission e.g. reads “further efforts need to be undertaken to strengthen the rule of law and protect human and minority rights, particularly of the Roma population, where recent government decisions need to be followed by concrete measures with appropriate financial resources” (European Commission, 1999b). Again, clearly assigned goals or structured tasks to improve the integration of Roma are missing.

#### **4.2.3. The Size and Speed of Rewards**

The last factors we determined as relevant for our study is the size and speed of rewards. The former can be easily defined: EU membership. When in 1997 and in 1999 the EU decided to open accession negotiations with the candidates “a fully-fledged credible accession conditionality was in place” (Schimmelfennig and Schwellnus, 2006). Once accession negotiations were progressing, candidate states could be certain of their eventual entry into the EU. The size of reward therefore – even though staggered for two years between forerunners and laggards – was equal throughout the accession process.

On the contrary, the speed of the reward did vary during the accession process. In theory, we have argued that member states are less likely to adapt EU rules when accession is far ahead. In the Regular Reports of the forerunners a steadily increasing comprehensiveness and depth of the Roma situation can be observed. While in 1998, the section ‘Minority Rights and the Protection of Minorities’ contained only about half a page in each Report, the final Reports for the forerunners in 2002 comprised almost three pages under the respective heading. Noticeable is also the increasing use of data. Concrete counts and statistics are first cited in the 1999 Reports which talk about “250.000 to 300.000 Roma” in the Czech Republic (European Commission, 1999c) and “Roma minority numbers between 400,000 and 600,000 people” in Hungary (European Commission, 1999d). One year after, in 2000, both country Reports give more specific ethnic data, foremost in the fields of education and employment (European Commission, 1999c and 1999d). The improved effort to give a better picture of the situation of the Roma leads to the conclusion that an increasing coverage of Roma integration in the Regular Reports comes along with more attention for the topic in the domestic spheres.

A similar progress can be observed in the cases of the laggards. Initially the Roma issue received limited attention in the Regular Reports. The 1999 Report on Bulgaria reserved half a page for the minority issue; Romania superficially covered it in one page. This seems surprising when regarding the number of Roma living in the latter country; according to the Commission an estimated 1.1 – 1.5 million (European Commission, 1999a). The laggards’ final Reports do not give as much attention to the topic as the forerunners’. Slightly more than two pages can be read on minorities in each Report in 2004, even though, according to a 2006 dataset of the OSI, in both countries nearly 9% of the total populations are Roma (OSI, 2006). Nevertheless an increase in coverage can be examined. As for the content of the Regular Reports, it seems that the use of specific data is less frequent than in the forerunners’ Reports. The 2002 Report on Bulgaria only indicates that “Roma make up about 32% of children in “special” schools and 21% of children in labour education schools” (European Commission, 2002a). However, as

opposed to the data on Roma children in the Czech Republic and Hungary, there is no information on how many Roma graduate from primary school or how many unemployed Roma there are. The same can be applied to the Regular Reports of Romania. This evidence suggests less attention of the national governments to the situation of the Roma minorities in Bulgaria and Romania compared to the Czech and the Hungarian cases.

### **4.3. Policy Analysis – The Regular Reports**

In 1997 the EU began to systematically monitor the compliance in the accession process of each candidate country through the Regular ‘Progress’ Reports. In the light of the Copenhagen Criteria, the candidate countries’ progress was evaluated and chapter after chapter was closed. In November 1998 the Commission issued the first set of Regular Reports. The issues of minority rights and, on this account, the Roma were most prominently featured within the political criterion under the heading “*Minority rights and the protection of minorities*”. Here, several key issues can be identified which have been repeatedly evaluated in the Regular Reports. These are discussions about the indicators as defined by us, namely education, employment, and housing, and above that, citizenship, health, and political participation. Roma are further mentioned occasionally with respect to racially motivated violence, and the role of the media. While all of the key issues are interlinked and discrimination can be named as one of the sources of illiteracy, unemployment and poor living-conditions, this study shall focus on each indicator separately to give a comprehensive picture of the effect of conditionality on Roma integration. In sequence, we are going to evaluate the Regular Reports of the Czech Republic and Hungary, followed by Bulgaria and Romania for each indicator. We will start off with an analysis of the educational situation of Roma children.

#### **4.3.1. Education**

Many Roma communities are characterized by low educational levels or even illiteracy. Poor school attendance of Roma children can, sometimes, be traced back to traditional values of the Roma. In some Roma communities, education and the integration into society that schools stand for are seen as an attack to their traditional lifestyle and cultural heritage (IRS, 2008). However, in today’s society, that praises itself on being a so-called knowledge economy, having an education plays a crucial role and being deprived of this fundamental right, almost automatically leads to social exclusion and poverty. This is why the European Union has repeatedly stressed that “Education is considered to be a main priority in improving the situation of the Roma” (European Commission, 1998a) in the Regular Reports. The progress, the candidate states made during the accession period can be mainly evaluated with the help of data on the enrolment of Roma school children and the progress in the attempts to desegregate Roma children as in all four candidate countries, one prior concern, which is monitored throughout the accession period, is the denial to open access of mainstream education through segregation of Roma school children.

#### *Roma Education in the Czech Republic and Hungary*

Considering, that education is a long-term process and policies that target this area take time to show results on secondary and tertiary levels, a Roma primary education rate of 97% was an extremely positive sign in the Czech Republic. However, in comparison with the majority population in close

proximity to Roma, Roma fell behind when it came to secondary and tertiary education. According to UNDP data, 41% of Roma children – only about half of the percentage of the test group – were enrolled in secondary school. Tertiary education and hence a university degree was only in sight for 2% of the Roma (UNDP, 2002). Even though these figures do not show whether the students in fact completed the school level they were enrolled in, they are a valuable indicator for the situation of Roma education just one year before the accession negotiations between the EU and the Czechs were finalized (see appendix, Figure 8). An example for the widespread practice of segregation is given in the 1999 Report on the Czech Republic. Here it says that Roma children “make up some 70 % of children sent to special schools for the mentally handicapped” and “out of the 100 preparatory schools set up in 1998 to prepare Roma children for mainstream primary schools, around a third [...] have actually been set up in the schools for the mentally handicapped” (European Commission, 1999c). With regard to segregation of Roma children, the 2000 Report unveiled that *de facto* segregation remained an issue as schools that ought to prepare Roma children for mainstream primary schooling were actually set up in special schools (European Commission, 2000a). In 2001, the percentage of Roma children sent to special schools had stagnated at 70% - the same percentage as in 1999 (European Commission, 2001a). Nevertheless, the Commission concluded that “Increased and, in some areas, significant efforts have been made since last year regarding the situation of the Roma community, notably with regard to the education system” (Ibid, 2001a). Despite some positive efforts, the Czech government failed twice (in 2001 and 2002) to phase out the system of special schools and to integrate Roma into mainstream primary schools as a proposal to amend the respective law was rejected by Parliament (European Commission, 2001a and 2002b). In 2000 the Czech government adopted a long-term strategy towards Roma which, according to the Commission Report showed the most concrete results in the field of education (European Commission, 2000a). However, a study by the OSI has shown that “the measures implemented have not gone far enough to address the root causes of discrimination or to enact structural changes” (OSI, 2002). The OSI (2002) further points to a hampered implementation due to the lack of “adequate comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation [...] and the inability of central governmental bodies to effectively influence local policies.”

In Hungary, the enrolment rates for Roma in 2002 do not differ much from the rates of the Czech Republic (see appendix, figure 12). Primary school enrolment is high for both, Roma and the majority population in close proximity to Roma. Roma enrolment in secondary schools is even 5% higher than in the Czech case while enrolment for tertiary education is at an equal low of 2% (UNDP, 2002) (see appendix, figure 9). The UNDP survey in Hungary was conducted in 2002, the year that accession negotiations with the EU were completed. As already mentioned above, the survey does not provide information on the completion rate of the educational level. Here, the Regular Reports indicate that in 2000 less than 46% of Roma completed their primary school education whilst only 0.24% obtained a university or college degree (European Commission, 2000b). During the accession period these numbers changed resulting in the majority of Roma students finishing primary education. Yet, the percentage of Roma students who received a degree in higher education remained beneath 1% (European Commission, 2002c). Regarding segregation of school children, the situation in Hungary looked no better than in the Czech Republic. In 1999 an estimated 150 segregated schools throughout the country were reported by the Commission (European Commission, 1999d). The number of segregated schools



decreased in 2000 to 132 but was reportedly up in 2001 at 150 again (European Commission, 2001b). As in the Czech Republic, the problem of *de facto* segregation of Roma children was not addressed through governmental measures and thus, the 150 schools in Hungary where special Roma classes were maintained, remained in place throughout the accession period (European Commission, 2002c). The 2000 Report finds clear words for the segregation-practice: "This proportion [Roma children placed in special schools] is 94% in certain parts of the country [...] and is considered to be a sign of institutional prejudice and the failure of the public education system" (European Commission, 2000b). Yet, legal provisions on enrolling Roma children in special classes became stricter and the 'special status' of children could be altered at any time. Besides the employment of assistants in schools this had been the first step a government had taken to defy the systematic segregation of Roma children in schools. Measures that were undertaken in the monitored period included the provision of scholarships to 7,580 students in the 2000-2001 school year increasing to 12,500 scholarships in 2002 (European Commission, 2001b and 2002c). According to the Commission, the Hungarian government adopted a medium-term action program to improve the living conditions of the Roma in 1999 (European Commission, 1999d). The OSI has voiced criticism in terms of the coherence of the program and its uneven implementation which has led to "concerns regarding the effectiveness of [the program's] coordinating bodies" (OSI, 2002).

### *Roma Education in Bulgaria and Romania*

The survey on Roma that was conducted by the UNDP in Bulgaria in 2001 clearly shows the gap between Bulgaria and the forerunners (see appendix, figure 12). While Roma primary enrolment rates in the Czech Republic and Hungary were close 100%, only 77% of Bulgaria's Roma received the most basic education around the same time. Despite the fact that enrolment rates for the majority population in close proximity to Roma are higher than in Hungary, Roma are worse off on all levels of education (see appendix 10). Compared with findings of the Bulgarian Ministry of Finance, Roma secondary school attendance in 2001 is even lower (6%) than the enrolment rates found by the UNDP (12%) of the same year (UNDP, 2002). Nonetheless, in the figure below you can see a slow but positive development with regard to Roma attendance rates. For the primary school level, the rate increased from 55% in 1995 over to 58 % two years later and finally, 71% in 2001. Even though school attendance rates, which are around 90% and increasing throughout the period for the Bulgarians at primary school level, the positive development in the case of the Roma on the same level is remarkable. On the contrary, regarding Roma secondary school attendance rates, the level remained at an all-time low between 3% and 6%.

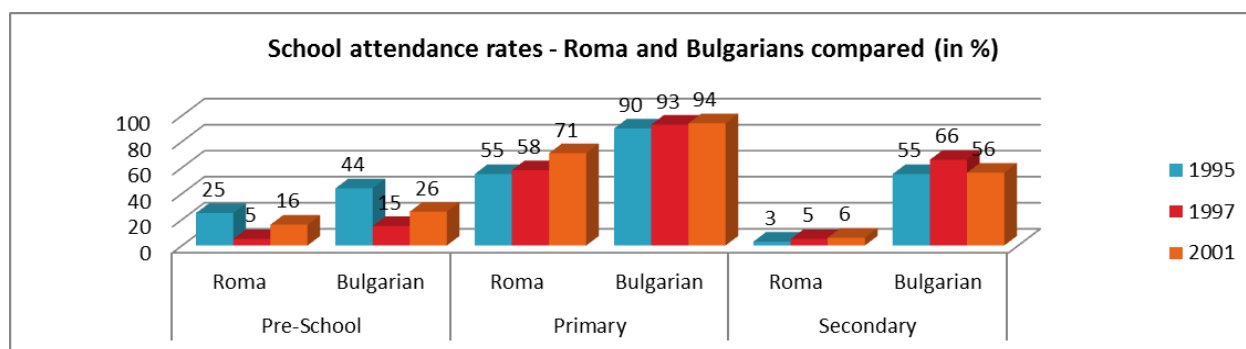


Figure 2 Source: Bulgarian Ministry of Finance (2004)

The issue of segregation is first addressed in the Progress Report of 2001, which also talks of NGO projects to remedy the situation (European Commission, 2001c) as problems are similar to those reported in the forerunner countries. In 2002 the Commission reports that “Roma make up about 32% of children in “special” schools and 21% of children in labour education schools” (European Commission, 2002a). The issue is revisited in the 2003 and 2004 Reports, where it says that new legislation on education had been passed in 2002, attempting to restrict the well-established practice of segregation (European Commission, 2003a) however *de facto* segregation remains in some areas a major obstacle for Roma to access quality education (European Commission, 2004a). In the 2005 Report, the Commission points out that the afore adopted legislation did “not significantly change[d] the situation on the ground” as segregation remained in place and measures taken to facilitate the integration of Roma children in mainstream education failed (European Commission, 2005a). According to the OSI two documents build the cornerstones of the Bulgarian government’s approach to the situation of the Roma: the Framework Program for Equal Integration of Roma in Bulgarian Society, and the “Integration of Minorities”- section of the extensive government program “People are the Wealth of Bulgaria” (OSI, 2002). In theory these policies receive positive reviews by the OSI. In 2002 the institute wrote however that the implementation “has until very recently been at a standstill. Little or no funding was allocated from the Government’s budget” (Ibid, 2002). The Regular Report on Bulgaria in 2001 similarly states that little progress had been made as concerns the implementation of the Framework Program (European Commission, 2001c).

Almost equal to Bulgaria, Romania had Roma primary school enrolment rates of 76% in 2001 (see appendix, figure 12). On the secondary level slightly more of the Roma (17%) were enrolled than in Bulgaria. Compared to 69% of the majority population in close proximity to Roma that was enrolled in secondary education the same year, the figure for the Roma still seems marginal. Access to tertiary education for Roma is with 1% enrolment almost none existent (UNDP, 2002) (see appendix, figure 11). Again, the status of the laggard finds expression in the enrolment rates of the Roma school children in comparison with the forerunner countries. Even though the issue of segregation is, as in the other sampled countries, a major problem in Romania, the first time the topic is mentioned is in the 2004 Regular Report, which states that “the problem of segregated education is being tackled” (European Commission, 2004b). Further detailed information on segregation of Roma children is not provided in any of the Regular Reports even though data from the Romanian Department of Statistics suggest that all in all, 606 segregated pre-schools, primary and secondary schools remained in place in 2006 (OSI,

2007). According to the OSI and the Commission (European Commission, 2001d) the Romanian government adopted a national strategy to improve the situation of the Roma in 2001, which “is notable for its forthright approach to combating discrimination, and in the extent to which it provides for Roma representation at the different levels of Government” (OSI, 2002). At the same time, the OSI criticizes the Romanian government for the little number of measures that had yet been realized to make a tangible difference to the situation of the Roma in 2002 and for the lack of state budget resources that were allocated to the implementation of the strategy (OSI, 2002).

### 4.3.2. Employment

For Roma, the chances on the job market are not only reduced due to their lack of quality education or education in general, but also due to direct discrimination. When Roma were asked to identify the main three reasons for their difficulties in finding a job in the UNDP survey, Roma in all four sampled countries concluded the same: next to their ‘inadequate skills’ and the ‘overall economic depression in the country’, most of the Roma answered with ‘my ethnic affiliation’ (UNDP, 2002). If Roma are employed, these jobs are often seasonal, short-term, informal, and underpaid. To fight rising unemployment rates among the Roma, the Commission requested for discriminatory practices to be tackled in the candidate states.

#### *Roma Employment in the Czech Republic and Hungary*

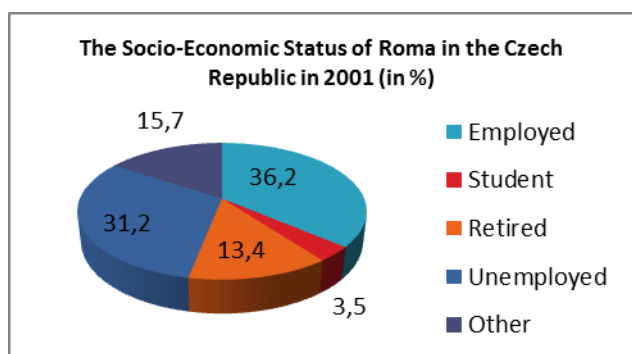


Figure 3, Source: UNDP (2002); see appendix: table 1

The 2001 UNDP survey among Roma in the Czech Republic asking for their current socio-economic status revealed, that slightly more Roma were employed (36.2%) than unemployed (31.2%). The employment rate of Roma set in context with the national average employment rate of 65% (Eurostat, 2011) shows the dimension of Roma discrimination. 13.4% of Czech Roma said to be retired, while 15.7% (listed under ‘other’) declared to be house-keeping, on maternity leave, or other (UNDP, 2002). Clearly, these rates

cannot be compared to those found by the Commission in 1998. According to the 1998 Report, unemployment rates among Czech Roma amounted up to 70% to 90% (European Commission, 1998b). The unemployment rate for Czech Roma reportedly did not diverge in 1999 and 2000, however, an amendment to the Employment Act was said to include an anti-discrimination provision (European Commission, 1999c). In Hungary, Roma unemployment rates are, according the Commission, with 70%, almost

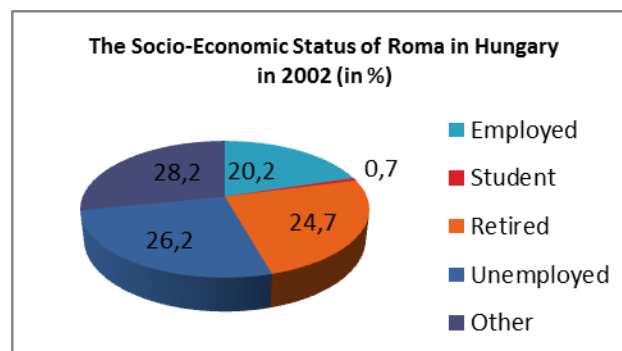


Figure 4, Source: UNDP (2002); see appendix: table 1

as equally as high in the Czech Republic (European Commission, 2002b), but positive measures were taken, when in 2000 the “Roma Policemen Programme” increased the number of Roma staff (European Commission, 2000b) and in the following years, when Roma took part in short- and medium-term governmental employment schemes (European Commission, 2001b and 2002c). Political will was shown by the Czech government in their National Action Plan on Employment for 2002, thus the Plan included several measures to improve the situation of the Roma population (European Commission, 2002c). Nonetheless, the same Report points to the widespread discriminatory hiring practices. As for the UNDP survey, which was conducted 2002 in Hungary, less Roma declared to be unemployed (26.2%) compared to the Czech Republic (31.2%). On the other hand, only 20.2% claimed to be employed standing in sharp contrast to the Hungarian average employment rate of 56.2% in 2002 (Eurostat, 2011). With a share of only 0.7% Roma students, Hungary is almost on the same level as the laggards (both 0.5% students) (UNDP, 2002).

### *Roma Employment in Bulgaria and Romania*

Among the four countries in the study, Bulgarian Roma had the poorest socio-economic status. There, Roma accounted for the largest share of unemployed (56.4%) and the smallest share of employed (14.4%) (UNDP, 2002). The national average employment rate of 49.7% is also the lowest among the sampled countries (Eurostat, 2011). According to the Commission, Roma unemployment rates reached between 60% - 75% in 2001 (European Commission, 2001c). Romania’s Roma, were not much better off, with

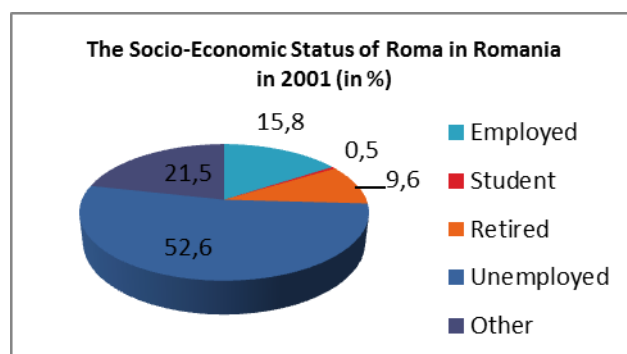


Figure 6 Source: UNDP (2002), see appendix: table 1

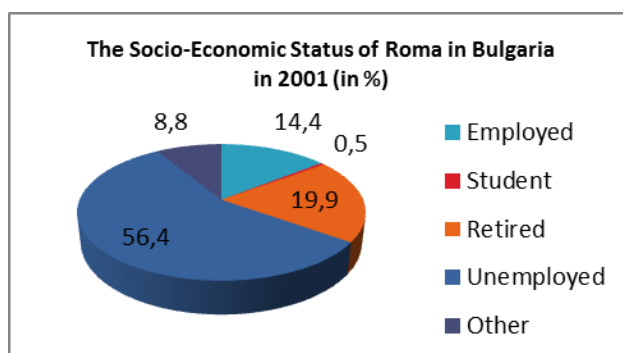


Figure 5 Source: UNDP (2002), see appendix: table 1

an unemployment rate slightly below the Bulgarian one (52.6%) and an employment rate of 15.8% (UNDP, 2002). Romania’s national average employment rate was with 62.4% closest to the Czech average rate (Eurostat, 2011). Hence, the gap between the national average and the Roma employment rate was especially wide in the country with the largest Roma population. One of the positive steps taken by the Bulgarian government to remedy the employment situation of the Roma was a program against youth

unemployment which included the recruitment 50 young Roma into the police force (European Commission, 2000c). This program was further extended up till 2002, where the Report speaks of 158 Roma working in police structures and 60 Roma police men being trained (European Commission, 2002a). Nonetheless, the Commission criticized the lack of commitment to further measures, calling for the adoption of comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation (European Commission, 2002a). In 2003,

one of the major achievements of the Bulgarian government was to launch a program that offered 100,000 jobs to the long-term unemployed (European Commission, 2003a), which continued the following year (European Commission, 2004a). In the Reports on Romania, the Commission reported that measures included hiring over 400 Roma experts to support the implementation of the Roma Strategy (European Commission 2002d), adding in 2004 that “The measures related to [...] employment [...] represent a positive basis for future activities” (European Commission, 2004b).

### 4.3.3. Housing

“Overall, the average European is comfortable with diversity; a notable difference is when it comes to having a Roma neighbour” (Eurobarometer, 2008). The recent survey by Eurobarometer shows that, interrelated with discrimination on the job market and the lack of access to quality education, housing is one of the major fields where Roma face discrimination on a day-to-day basis. According to Eurobarometer, the least comfortable with Roma neighbors are the Czechs (47%). Also Bulgarians (36%) and Hungarians (28%) showed little comfort with Roma as neighbors. Romania alone, where 20% declared that they would be uncomfortable with Roma neighbors, is listed below EU-average (24%) (Ibid, 2008). The discrimination and xenophobia that is revealed through the survey materializes in various forms. Many Roma communities lack the basic necessities, like access to running water electricity or sewage. The figure on the right gives a brief insight into the Roma living standard in the sampled countries. According to the UNDP dataset, 70.7% - 97.3% of Roma had access to ‘legalized electricity supply’, while the rates for ‘running

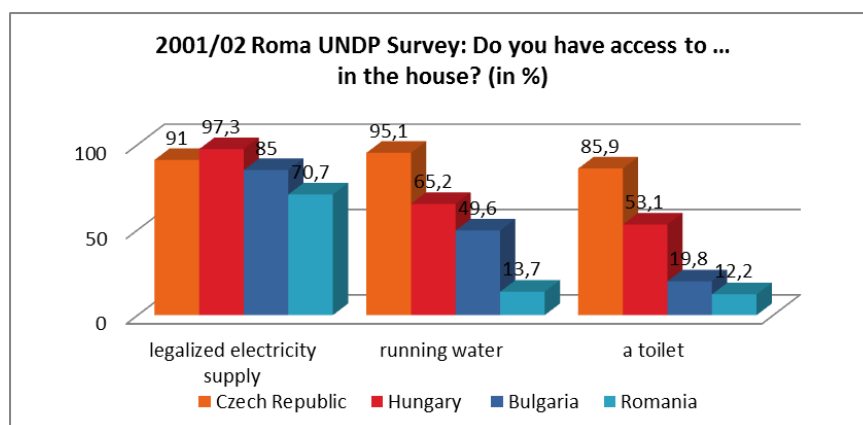


Figure 7 Source: UNDP (2002), see appendix: table 2

water’ and an ‘in-house-toilet’ look – especially

outside the Czech Republic – somewhat different. Only half of Bulgaria’s Roma population and about 14% of Romania’s Roma had access to running water in 2001. Merely half of the Roma in Hungary had an in-house toilet; not to speak of the rates for the laggards (BG: 19.8%; RO: 12.2%) (UNDP, 2002). For all of these reasons, the Roma living situation was among the main fields candidate countries had to address under the ‘minority rights and protection of minorities’ Copenhagen criterion.

### *Roma Housing in the Czech Republic and Hungary*

The Regular Reports on the Czech Republic address Roma housing firstly by pointing to the shortcomings: “There have [...] been some incidents of municipalities proposing to separate Roma from other residents” (European Commission, 1998b). This was followed up by the Commission reporting that “local authorities maintained their decision of last year to build a ceramic fence to separate Roma and non-Roma residents in a street of the city” even though the Czech government had taken a stand

against this proposition (European Commission, 1999c). Positive action was taken in 2000, when several million CZK were earmarked for the reconstruction of two buildings, which were mainly occupied by Roma (European Commission, 2000a) and in 2002, when a housing-project was completed, which had started in 1999 (European Commission, 2002b). Unfortunately, the information on the housing situation of Hungarian Roma is much scarcer than for the Czech, even though each Report mentions very poor living conditions for a large proportion of Roma; which fail to meet the most basic health and safety requirements (e.g. European Commission, 2002c).

### *Roma Housing in Bulgaria and Romania*

The 2001 Report on Bulgaria refers to a survey which found that “approximately 70% of houses in Roma neighbourhoods are built illegally” (European Commission, 2001c). This does not only mean that these houses may have not only not met basic safety standards, but also no access and no right to public services for their inhabitants. Despite governmental calls to legalize these settlements, many municipalities refused to do so over the reporting period (European Commission, 2001c, 2002a and 2004a). Small-scale urbanization projects, aimed at improving the living conditions of extremely poor Roma families, were mentioned in the 2001 and 2002 Reports; however measures were mainly funded through EC and other donors. Like in the Czech Republic, the Romanian government rejected any forms of segregation. Nevertheless, the 2002 Report describes that local authorities used unacceptable living conditions of Roma to move them into segregated neighborhoods (European Commission, 2002d).

To conclude this part of the analysis, the assessment of the factors education, employment and housing gives a rather blunt picture of the situation of the Roma. Although forerunners can crow with better education rates, employment figures, and housing conditions than laggards in nearly all of the categories, this can hardly be regarded as a triumph when large shares of Roma do not have access to education, the employment market, running water or electricity. As regards the aforementioned interdependency of all indicators, we could not observe significant progress in any of the analyzed dependent factors. Since performance rates were poor in each category, it is unlikely that interdependence had an important effect on the overall outcome. A more detailed analysis of the interdependency of Roma education, employment and housing would require a more comprehensive dataset.

## **4.4. Evaluation of the Sub-Questions and the Hypotheses**

In the introductory chapter, we established three sub-questions that we can now address. At first, we asked what problems the EU noticed concerning Roma integration during the accession process. To answer the question, we had to start our examination before accession negotiations with the CEE started; when the EU recognized the soft-security issue the largest minority in Europe potentially posed. Even though the short portrayal of minority rights policies in the sampled candidate states prior to the accession period suggested, that there were some progressive initiatives, the overall outcome of the policies was marginal. This prospect led to the inclusion of a provision for minority rights and protection in the Copenhagen political criterion – a step that signaled a momentum in EU history, and which was followed by close monitoring of the minority situation in the CEECs. Thereupon, the EU’s leverage on candidate countries in the area of Roma integration is observed. While analyzing the Regular Reports,

the shortcomings of each sampled country towards their Roma minorities became visible; especially in key areas such as education, employment and the housing situation of the Roma minorities. Problems persisted in the socio-economic sphere throughout the monitoring period and whilst discriminatory practices were recognized by both, EU and candidate states, groundbreaking progress did not occur. According to our findings, we can trace limited compliance back to subsided credibility of EU conditions and rewards in addition to the inconsequent use of determinate conditions.

The second sub-question addressed the EU policies which were directed at Roma integration. To give a more comprehensive picture of the situation of the Roma in Europe, we first assessed the status of minority rights and protection. As we found, the term 'minority' has not yet been legally defined which led to some controversy about the formulation of the Copenhagen political criterion. Nevertheless, the initial starting point and foundation of our analysis was formed by the requirement for candidate countries to respect and to protect their minorities in the Copenhagen Criteria. However, we uncovered, that this provision was too broad to make a real impact, eventually leading to an undermined determinacy of EU conditions. According to the Commission (2011a) "The European Union has a strong legal framework to combat Roma discrimination, based among others, on article 13 of the Treaty of the European Community and the Directive 2000/43/EC on racial equality". Nonetheless, some scholars claim, that minority rights, and thus Roma rights, do not fall within the scope of the principle of non-discrimination as enshrined in the Racial Equality Directive.

The last sub-question "What kind of policy responses have been developed by the candidate countries as measured within the progress reports?" has, to a large extent, been analyzed through the annual Commission Reports on each candidates state's progress. Accordingly we found that each applicant state had implemented a national action plan specifically targeting their Roma minorities by 2001. Further policies included mostly small-scale and pilot projects to fight discrimination against Roma. Segregation of Roma school children, which was evaluated in almost all of the Regular Reports, was found to be one of the main barriers to equal treatment of Roma. Still, from the reporting you could infer that 'root causes' were not tackled after all. On the other hand, 'symptoms' were treated by training and employing Roma mediators. When comparing the results of laggards and forerunners in education, employment and housing, we observed that forerunners outperformed Romania and Bulgaria in all disciplines, which can possibly be traced back to the enhancing effect of the speed of rewards.

To sum up, the sub-questions have focused on the most important points that needed to be attended during our study; the problems the EU identified with regard to the Roma, the legal instruments available on EU level, and finally, the policy responses of the candidate states. By answering the questions, we have joined the dots to give a comprehensive picture of the situation on the Roma minorities in four of the new member states. Before concluding our study, we will review the hypotheses, which have been established in the theory chapter.

The first hypothesis, "*Candidate states are more likely to comply with EU rules, when EU conditions and rewards become more credible.*" cannot be rejected. The analysis of the credibility of EU conditions and rewards in the area of minority protection has shown that, on account of the EU, the credibility has been

decreased due to a) the predicated assurance of the fulfillment of the political criterion for candidate states and b) the explicitly stated aim of the EU to “maintain the enlargement process”. The former has been attested continuously in each Regular Report even though the analysis of education, housing and employment has shown that Roma integration has been improved only at the margins. Exemplary for the lack of EU leverage is the resistance of the Czech government to amend a law that would have phased out the systematic segregation of Roma children in schools – twice. Despite the fact, that segregation was one of the topics that was continuously monitored, Czech authorities obviously did not feel the pressure to comply with the EU’s requirement to “implement measures to fight discrimination” (European Commission, 2001a). In general, the analysis of the three factors that account for Roma integration has shown that the overall compliance with the EU political criterion was low across all observed candidate states. Due to the lack of variation in the ‘credibility-variable’ we cannot confirm the hypothesis, even though it seems reasonable to assume that the absence of a credible threat has led to less compliance with the EU’s requirements.

The second hypothesis, “*Candidate states are more likely to comply with EU rules, when the determinacy of EU rules increases.*” cannot be rejected either. In the analysis on the determinacy of EU rules we have evaluated several factors that influenced the scope the variable. Despite e.g. the implementation of the Race-Equality Directive in 2000 as well as the repeated calls of the Commission within the Regular Reports for improved measures to integrate Roma, and regardless of the requirements that were formulated within the Accession Agreements, compliance with the EU’s minority provision was low all the same. Minor actions that were taken in the field of Roma employment could not hide the fact that Roma unemployment rates continued to be way above the respective national unemployment figures. Real change could not be observed with regard to the housing situation either, where discrimination persisted and remained a major obstacle to Roma integration. Similarly to the aforementioned hypothesis, we cannot observe variation in the explanatory variable. Therefore, our capability to infer from the determinacy of EU conditions to the compliance of candidate states is severely limited. To sum up, we cannot confirm the second hypothesis, albeit the rationale behind it can hardly be contested.

Lastly, we conjectured that “*Candidate states are more likely to comply with EU rules, when the size and speed of rewards increase.*” During the analysis of the ‘size and speed of rewards-variable’ it became evident that the size of the reward did not differ across applicant states as opposed to the speed of rewards. Here, we noticed variation between forerunners and laggards, as the accession date for the latter was delayed by the EU by several years. The analysis of the independent variable has thus revealed a depleted incentive for laggards to comply with EU rules. And indeed, this manifests in the examination of the dependent variable. With regard to the Roma housing situation, the study has exposed that Roma in Bulgaria and Romania lived under much poorer housing conditions than Roma in the Czech Republic and Hungary. Moreover, employment rates for the laggards’ Roma were below the respective figures of the forerunners and although we observed a steady increase of Roma school attendance rates in Bulgaria, this cannot belie that Roma enrolment rates in Romania and Bulgaria lingered beneath the corresponding forerunners’ averages in 2002. As a result, perceived compliance with EU rules was higher in the Czech Republic and Hungary than in Bulgaria and Romania and the fact that forerunners were closer to accession in 2002 than laggards influenced the progress of Roma



integration. In conclusion, we can confirm the last hypothesis by reasoning that the divergence on the date of accession made a difference to the situation of Roma minorities.

The examination of the hypotheses has shown that compliance with EU rules was at a minimal level when the credibility of conditions and rewards, as well as the determinacy of conditions were low. On these grounds we could not reject the hypotheses. Yet, due to the lack of variation with regard to both explanatory variables, we could not confirm the hypotheses either. Concerning the last hypothesis, we observed some variation in the speed of rewards. Considering that forerunners outperformed laggards in the compliance game, lead us to the conclusion that candidate states are more likely to comply with EU rules, when the speed of rewards increases.

## 5. Conclusion

Roma “face discrimination by the majority population and public authorities, particularly affecting opportunities for education, housing, health care, and employment” (Vermeersch & Ram, 2009). Quotes like this one can be found in various studies on Roma communities in Europe. And even though millions of Euros have been invested to remedy the situation of the Roma in all parts of the continent, all-encompassing solutions and outcomes are missing to date.

Awareness for the cause was raised when CEE countries applied for EU membership in the 1990s. It seems that, when membership became a real possibility, the EU pushed for ‘respect for and protection of minorities’ by making the requirement conditional for candidate countries to accede the Union. Henceforth, the situation of the Roma minorities was under supervision of the Commission during the accession negotiations. From this study we know, that the progress in the area of Roma integration was slow to sometimes even non-existent. With all good intentions, it seems that conditionality, the EU’s instrument to influence the conduct of target states, had a rather superficial effect. Even as we found that only one of the three factors outlined in the external incentives model by Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier (i.e. the size and speed of rewards) contributed to the effectiveness of EU conditionality, we could neither confirm nor reject the effect of the aforementioned factors. Still, it appears that insubstantial credibility of EU conditions and rewards, plus inadequate determinacy of conditions, severely reduced the EU’s scope of leverage, which it had at its disposal during the monitoring period.

Several years after the accession of the Czech Republic, Hungary, Bulgaria and Romania, little has changed in the situation of Roma. The Commission recently published a Communication, to address this challenge “since non-discrimination alone is not sufficient to combat the social exclusion of Roma” (European Commission, 2011b). The Communication and the follow-up Council Conclusion call on member states to implement National Roma Strategies till the end of 2011. The implementation of EU law specifically targeting Roma became necessary after the financial crisis and its deteriorating effect on Roma communities, not only but especially in Central and Eastern Europe. What does this imply for the lasting impact of EU conditionality in the CEECs? It is not on us to give an answer to this question, yet, this could be a noteworthy issue to research in a follow-up study.

Problematic is today, as it was during the accession process, to find reliable and comparable disaggregated datasets. A caveat, that is not easily circumvented, this study was confined to use the 2002 UNDP dataset in addition to qualitative data, which was filtered from the Commission’s Regular Reports. The information gained on education, employment, and housing of Roma in selected candidate countries allowed for an assessment of the main research question “What is the effect of EU Conditionality on Roma integration in Central and Eastern European countries during the accession process?”. In consequence of the target states’ low compliance with EU rules, we found that there is little impact of the provision for minority rights and protection. Progress concerning Roma integration, was only made due to minor measures with limited reach. To a large extent the EU itself is accountable for the restricted effect of conditionality. The EU’s premature assurance that candidates had “fulfilled the Copenhagen political criteria” despite day-to-day breaches of the Roma’s fundamental rights, must lead to an undermined credibility of the EU’s threat to delay accession. In addition, we found that

conditions were of little determinacy since the Copenhagen political criterion on minorities was said to leave “wide scope for interpretation” (Sasse, 2005). The speed of rewards, the factor that had a positive influence on minority rights and protection, could not counterbalance the factors diminishing the effect of conditionality.

Though these findings cannot influence Roma policies in new member states anymore since they are no longer subjected to conditionality, there are lessons to be learned for future accession waves. Several potential candidates and candidate states are host to significant Roma populations<sup>2</sup>. Taking the external incentives model as a template for effective conditionality, the credibility of EU conditions and rewards as well as the determinacy of conditions need to be reinforced. To avoid undermining the credibility of EU conditions, for upcoming enlargements the European Commission should consider not confirming the fulfillment of criteria before accession negotiations are completed. The threat of being excluded from the race towards membership should remain credible until the announcement of the date of accession or even beyond, to ensure compliance with EU rules. On top of that, the determinacy of conditions can easily be strengthened by setting more specific conditions and targets member states have to reach. Accession Partnerships, which so far have been too vague in their formulation, could serve as a medium that stipulates the requirements.

Generally speaking, the ‘respect for and protection of minorities’ criterion, that the EU has made part of the Copenhagen Criteria, should be binding for all member states regardless of candidate or membership status. The new EU Framework for National Roma Strategies, which was already mentioned above, will put peer pressure on all member states to improve the situation of their Roma minorities. Whether these national action plans will be implemented and what effect they will have on Roma integration will be revealed in future. In the end, the EU does not have the competencies to make member states comply with the new legislation since it falls under the jurisprudence of soft-law. Hence, member states must primarily act on their own account to ensure equality among all their citizens, regardless of ethnic and social affiliation.

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<sup>2</sup> According to the Council of Europe these are: Albania (ca. 115.000 Roma), The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (ca. 197.750 Roma), Serbia (excl. Kosovo) (ca. 600.000 Roma), and Turkey (ca. 2.750.000 Roma)

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## Appendix:

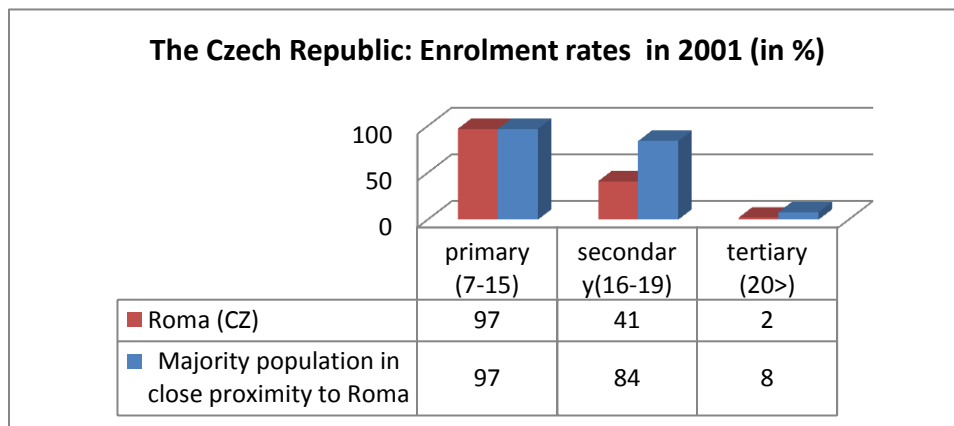


Figure 8 Source: UNDP (2002)

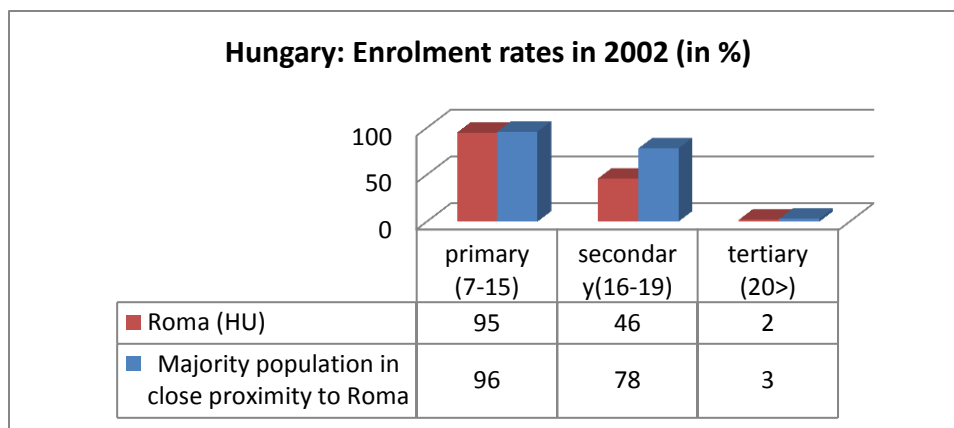


Figure 9 Source: UNDP (2002)

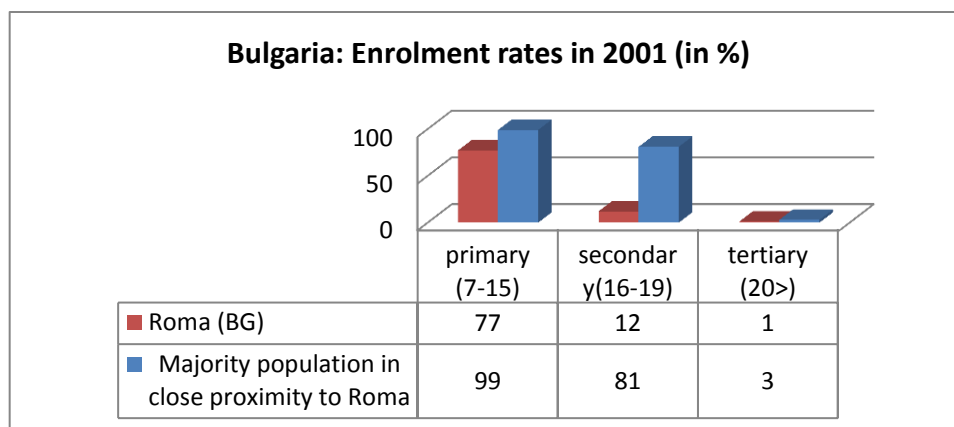


Figure 10 Source: UNDP (2002)

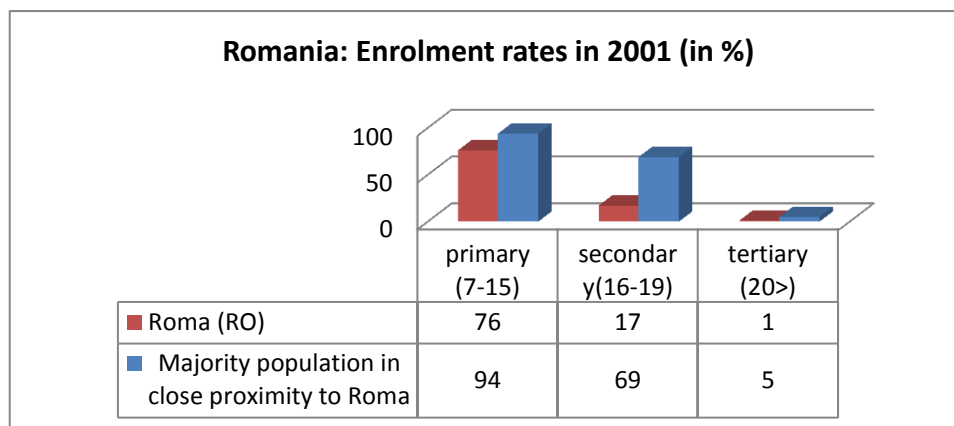


Figure 11 Source: UNDP (2002)

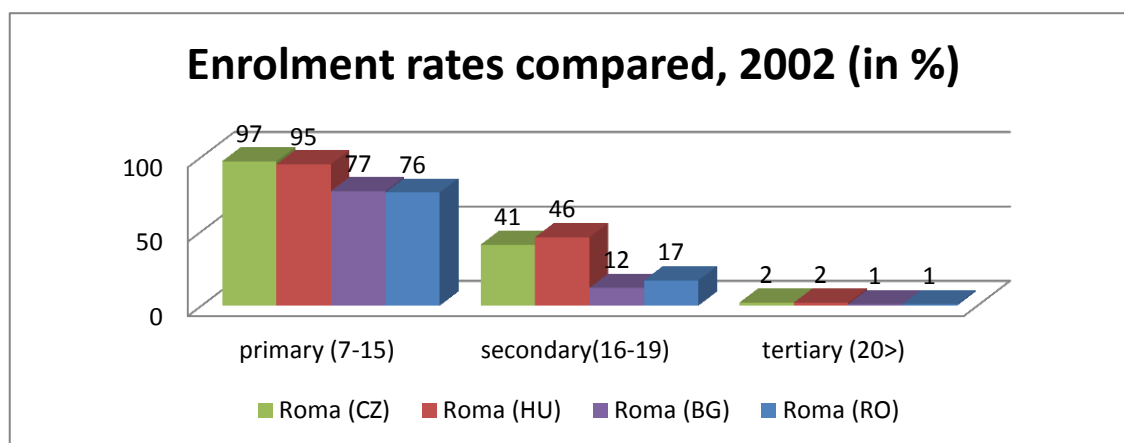


Figure 12 Source: UNDP (2002)

What is your current socio-economic status?				
	Czech Republic	Hungary	Bulgaria	Romania
Roma Employment Rate	36,2	20,2	14,4	15,8
Student	3,5	0,7	0,5	0,5
Retired	13,4	24,7	19,9	9,6
Unemployed	31,2	26,2	56,4	52,6
Other	15,7	28,2	8,8	21,5
National Average Employment Rate	65	56,2	49,7	62,4

Table 1 Source: UNDP (2002)

2001/02 Roma UNDP Survey: Do you have access to... in the house? (in%)				
	Czech Republic	Hungary	Bulgaria	Romania
legalized electricity supply	91	97,3	85	70,7
running water	95,1	65,2	49,6	13,7
a toilet	85,9	53,1	19,8	12,2

Table 2 Source: UNDP (2002)