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Political Representation of European Roma:

European Roma Organizations and the Struggle for Recognition

Bachelor Thesis

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Table of Contents

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List of Abbreviations

EP	European Parliament
ERGO	European Roma Grassroots Organizations Network
ERIO	European Roma Information Office
ERPC	European Roma Policy Coalition
ERRC	European Roma Rights Centre
ERTF	European Roma and Travellers Forum
EU	European Union
FRA	European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights
HRE	Human Rights Education
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NRIS	National Roma Integration Strategies
OMC	Open Method of Coordination
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
REF	Roma Education Fund
RED	Race Equality Directive
TEU	Treaty on the European Union
TFEU	Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union

1.0. Abstract

The community of European Roma constitutes the biggest ethnic minority in Europe, yet its social status and political representation remains influenced by prejudice, discrimination and social exclusion. Acknowledging the special situation of Roma as well as several dilemmas surrounding Roma existence and its political representation, this study seeks to investigate the particular extent of legislative and political representation Roma experience in Europe as well as the course of European Roma organizations being faced with the struggle for recognition. Thereby, the analysis focuses to answer two descriptive research questions, distinguishing *´how is the European minority represented in Europe*" highlighting the European policy dimension of representation and *´what are the major European Roma organizations´* highlighting Roma´s representative engagement at the transnational level. The examination of the European Roma Grassroots Organizations Network, the European Roma Information Office, the European Roma Policy Coalition and the European Roma Rights Centre does not only reveal their political activities but provides insights to the discussion on the struggle for recognition. In terms of the latter, it can be observed to what extent Roma organizations apply Nancy Fraser´s status model balancing claims for redistribution and recognition. In fact, it becomes clear that despite an increased attention which is due to the Eastern Enlargement of the European Union, ambiguities between formal recognition and representation on the one side and discrimination and social exclusion on the other side remain present. Fraser´s analytical distinction between redistribution and recognition claims appears to be generally theory-bound as organizations pursue wide-ranging approaches to advocate Romani communities. After all, it is essential for Roma organizations and the European Union to further acknowledge the implications of Romani identity at the same time as the necessity for socio-economic improvements in holistic policy approaches in order to improve the lives of Roma citizens in the long run.

2.0. Introduction

Despite being characterized as Europe´s biggest ethnic minority (European Commission, 2012), European Roma suffered and continue to suffer from wide-ranging discrimination and marginalization affecting their social status as well as their political representation and participation patterns. Faced by numerous prejudices, the persistent struggle for recognition, thereby, constitutes one of the eminent features of Roma existence. Acknowledging representation and the struggle for recognition as the crucial concepts in this context, the study seeks to investigate the particular extent of legislative and political representation Roma experience in Europe and the course of European Roma organizations being faced with the struggle for recognition. To be more precise, the research concentrates on two empirical, descriptive research questions. Designed to obtain in-depth knowledge on Roma representation, the first question serves to analyze how the Roma minority is represented in Europe. As the question focuses on the legal aspects of representation as well as initiatives targeting European Roma, the European policy dimension towards Roma or the outward appearance of Roma in Europe is elaborated. In contrast, the second research question concentrates on the political aspects of representation focusing on the internal representation of Roma communities. Thereby, examining the roles of the four chosen European Roma organizations does not only serve to outline their particular political activities but deepens the discussion on recognition politics. In fact, it allows the application of Nancy Fraser´s status model to investigate to what extent European Roma organizations balance claims for recognition and redistribution. Ultimately, it is the study´s intention to spotlight Roma representation alongside its European representatives. However, before further details concerning the relevance and execution of this research are provided, it is necessary to revisit the complexity of Romani identity being shaped by recognition struggles as well as the dominant themes of historic discrimination, marginalization and social exclusion that continue to display great influences on representation. Especially with regard to the latter and the outward appearance of Roma in particular, issues of identity and history bear an important meaning as outlined in the subsequent abstracts. Not until these circumstances are acknowledged is it reasonable to assess and understand contemporary Roma representation

In its original Romani meaning, the term ´Rom´ refers to ´man, human being` whereas the expression ´Roma´ is widely used to identify ethnic minority groups originating from the Northwest region of the Indian subcontinent (Vermeersch, 2001). Although linguistic research allows such an explicit regional classification since various Romani languages share remnants

of the ancient Indian language Sanskrit that was spoken in these districts, a common identity does not follow naturally from such geographical origin (OSCE, 2000). In fact, it remains vague what Romani identity exactly implies reflecting the contradictions between outgroup and ingroup perceptions. Considering the majority population representing the outgroup in this context, its Roma-image is predominantly influenced by stereotypes and prejudices projecting "the presence of a highly homogenised and unified group" (Csepel, Simon, 2004, p. 129). On the contrary, stressing the clear differentiation between Roma and non-Roma, the actual Roma population distinguishes itself as being highly heterogeneous displaying a great level of difference. The incorporation of several additional communities such as "Sinti, Travellers, Ashkali, Manush, Dom and Lovari" adds to this fact (Murray, 2012, p.570). In spite of such factors making it difficult to determine the Romani identity to its full extent, there are a number of characteristics and external influences that, nevertheless, unite and distinguish the Roma from other population groups. Apart from biological kinship, lifestyle and behaviour patterns including the issues of language, appearance and occupation, it is especially the underlying struggle for recognition respective historical developments like the diaspora, the absence of the nation state as well as widespread discrimination that stand out in this respect (Barany, 1994, 2010; Boscoboinik, 2008; Csepel, Simon, 2004; McGarry, 2008, 2011; Vermeersch, 2006). As a matter of fact, "the multiple impacts of various orders (economic, political, ideological, etc.) on the part of the macro-society, in which they live, have left their significant imprint on their overall development as community and the common structure of their identities" as it is outlined in the subsequent abstract (Kyuchukov, Hancock, 2010).

"Similar to the Jewish diaspora, the Roma have lived in what Jean-Paul Clebert terms a dispersion that dates back to the 10th century AD" (Barth, 2007, p.370). Being prone to migration, one of the first appearances of Roma-Indians on the European continent is ascertained to ancient Byzantium during the 9th century, although scholars agree that substantial migration waves took place between the 9th and 14th century. But despite being an organic part of European societies, Roma suffered from multiple forms of discrimination and exclusion, prejudice and intolerance living predominantly in a state of poor socio-economic conditions and constant marginalization affecting political, social, economic and cultural realms of life (Barany, 1994; European Commission, 2012). According to William K. Barth it is a history that "almost lacks credulity because of the degree and consistency of persecution against them that continues through to the current day" (Barth, 2007, p.370). Thereby, reasons to discriminate and persecute appear rather multifaceted; Romani culture, historic nomadism

and a different-minded economic understanding being among the main reasons. Even though "in contrast to the Jewish peoples, the Roma do not suffer discrimination solely based upon religious beliefs" (Barth, 2007, p.370), "Europe´s persecution of the Roma has been consistent if not unrelenting in one central goal, that is, to eradicate Roma culture, especially the Roma cultural practice of travelling (nomadism)" (Barth, 2007, p.397). The same applies to Roma´s different-minded nomadic economic trading. Besides the existing dispersion and the absence of a nation state, nomads and travelers were often considered as being stateless persons unqualified for social welfare which left them in a state of social exclusion and cultural alienation (Barth, 2007). At the base of all such treatments stand "two major approaches of the majority society" that prevailed until the mid 20th century (Kyuchukov, Hancock, 2010, p.74) set up "to reduce differences" between Roma and non-Roma (Csepel, Simon, 2000, p. 132). While the policy approach of exclusion resulted in Roma expulsion from the country, persecution or physical liquidation, "the efforts to assimilate the Roma constituted the more progressive solution" attempting to include Roma into societies at any cost (Kyuchukov, Hancock, 2010, p.74).The term of ´any given costs´ often resembling the "outright absorption into a dominant group with subsequent loss of ethnic distinctions" (Barany, 1994, p. 325). Consequently, the Romani aversion to these treatments, the desire to be recognized as a distinctive group as well as its group attitude to cope with ongoing processes of "adjustment and adaptation to a changing environment" (Mirga, Gheorghe, 1997, p. 12) do not only reflect understandable responses to these developments, they also reveal the complex layers of Romani identity formation.

Today, estimated 15 million Roma live across America, Australia, Africa and some parts of Asia, whereby Europe remains the continent with the largest population concentration representing approximately 10 to 12 million Romani citizens (Barth, 2007; European Commission, 2012). But even though since the end of the 20th century, policy approaches gradually changed towards integration and the protection of minority rights proving forced assimilation to be ineffective and unnatural (Kyuchukov, Hancock, 2010), recognition struggles, inequalities and social exclusion continue to be present in the life of six million Roma citizens living in one of the 28 European member states. Population patters reveal that the plight of Roma is especially apparent in Central and Easter European countries as the majority of Roma tend to live there. Circumstances that especially during the 1990s and in the run up to the Eastern enlargement of the European Union (EU) contributed to increased attentions towards "the problems of official discrimination against the Roma- including unequal access to housing, education, and employment- as well as the racist attitudes towards

them of the general population, and often extremely substandard living conditions" (Ram, 2007, p.492). Although integration efforts and political attention initiate gradual improvements, Romani communities still happen to be "subject of hostile perceptions" facing "profound challenges in virtually every sphere of social life" with "rates of unemployment, poverty illiteracy and infant mortality" being "staggeringly high" (OSCE, 2000, p.4ff). As injustices predominantly occur in the realms of education, employment, health care, living conditions and racism (Human Rights Watch, 2012), exclusion in education displays particular far-reaching and harmful effects. The long standing habit of routing Romani children to "special schools for the mentally disabled" is only one example of direct discrimination depriving children "of the equal opportunity to learn and to develop as capable and self-reliant citizens" and disqualifying them from opportunities of higher education (OSCE, 2000, p.7). In addition, "Roma have been decreed illegal residents on their own property, banished beyond municipal boundaries, and left outside the community of common concern" (OSCE, 2000, p.4). As research reveals "Roma are ten times poorer than the majority population", they even "live 10 to 15 years less than others" being isolated and detested by the rest of the population (World Bank, 2011). In terms of discrimination, a survey among 500 Roma citizens living across Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Poland, Romania, and Slovakia reveals that every second respondent experienced discrimination, whereby 78% of all respondents resist to report such assaults to authorities. In addition, the overall awareness towards domestic anti-discrimination legislation remains rather low (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2009).

Based on these facts, it is legitimate to agree with Zoltan D. Barany (1994, p.132f) in that respect that historically Roma "have suffered from particular and systematic disqualifications from representation and participation in state affairs" whereby their ethnic identity remains either unrecognized or threatened. Even though the extreme heterogeneity of Roma subgroups makes it difficult to unify, shared characteristics are nonetheless existent among the various subgroups. The absence of a nation state, historical discrimination and exclusion, weak levels of political mobilization are shared features as well as similar lifestyle characteristics. However, the unitary classification and recognition struggles constitute particularly meaningful impacts on Romani identity (Vermeersch, 2006) that are reflected in the common usage of the term ´Roma´. In fact, as Roma and various other ethnic minorities "share the same history in that their name has traditionally evoked negative connotations from the rest of society, the introduction of the term Roma", according to Peter Vermeersch "reflects an attempt to break away from this social stigma and to produce a more positive

image" (McGarry, 2008, p.449). Not only does the endonyme ´Roma´ represent a "catch-all term" for its various subgroups enabling unified representation, it also reflects "oneness" of a group struggling for recognition that nevertheless is dedicated to embrace its diversity (McGarry, 2008, p. 449f). Especially in terms of recognition struggles it is undeniable that the usages of the name Roma as a common denominator is closely connected to Roma´s political mobilization, or as Thomas Acton and Nicolae Gheorghe describe it, the creation and strengthening of unity stands in the foreground (Vermeersch, 2006). Altogether, the advantage of a common denominator is that it is able to represent an endonyme serving as a basis for demands for recognition and calls for appropriate political representation, an issue that obviously has been neglected for a long time (Vermeersch, 2006, a). On this account, opposing the many discrepancies between majority population and Roma representatives, this development in itself is supported by the Romani community stating that "we share the tradition, culture, origin, language, therefore we consider ourselves to be a nation, even though we do not strive the creation of a Roma state. We present to the mankind a request to be represented as a nation which we are. We seek representation and new ways of representation of individuals" (Kyuchukov, Hancock, 2010, p.54).

In fact, it seems to be neglected at times that Roma are never just Roma, a subordinate minority, but always citizens of a national state and members of a community (Flasiková, Swoboda, Wiersma, 2011). Moreover, it seems wrong to claim the social status of Roma being just a self-made problem considering the history of discrimination and social exclusion. Opposing these viewpoints, the research takes on Roma´s request for representation incorporating the eminent implications of recognition struggles. In its intention to highlight the official European policy dimension of Roma representation alongside Roma´s own approach of transnational representation being unified under a common denominator, the study follows and extends existent research issued by Aidan McGarry, Colette Murray and Melanie Ram that primarily focuses on general Roma representation and the political activities of European Roma organizations. Thereby, the extension becomes noticeable as the study does not only focus on the European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC) or the European Roma Information Office (ERIO), but includes the European Roma Grassroots Organizations Network (ERGO) and the European Roma Policy Coalition (ERPC) as well. Besides, in order to emphasize the struggle for recognition, the status model of Nancy Fraser is exclusively applied to European Roma organizations, a model that originally relates to injustices occurring in the realms of nationality, gender or race. In addition, "since Roma are a transnational minority which has no kin state, it means their situation is not comparable with

any other minority group in Europe" (McGarry, 2008, p. 453) making it a unique research area to concentrate on. Moreover, the fact that "collective voices need to be represented at policy and NGO levels in member states and the EU level" (Murray, 2012, p.570) allows the implementation of an exclusive European research approach in which the European Policy dimension can be contrasted with Roma´s personal approach of representation.

Regarding the structure of this study, the following chapter constitutes the theoretical framework of the research examining the leading concepts of representation and the struggle for recognition. While the elaboration of representation builds on existing knowledge deriving from Hanna Pitkin and Anne Phillips, the elaboration of recognition struggles is based on fundamental research issued by Nancy Fraser, Axel Honneth and Charles Taylor. In addition, the study´s further course of argumentation is emphasized by Roma-specific literature issued by Nicolae Gheorghe, Martin Kovats, Peter Vermeersch and Huub van Baar.

Subsequently, the methodological chapter renews the proposed research questions and defines the analytical tools that are required in order to answer these questions. As the main data is qualitative in nature, the study predominantly focuses on secondary source analysis and policy analysis. Thereby, the European Roma Policy Framework and the four European Roma organizations reflect the main units of observation. Apart from that, it is another aim of the study to observe to what extent abstract, theoretical concepts are applied and reflected in real life circumstances. A fact, that becomes especially meaningful with regard to the second research question.

Following the methodological arrangements, the first part of the analysis focuses on the European Policy dimension of Roma representation, outlining the main European legislations and initiatives targeting Roma citizens. In fact, it becomes clear that the Eastern Enlargement of the European Union (EU) has evoked an increase of policy initiatives targeting European Roma as well as initiated an increase in formal Roma representation and recognition. However, since discrimination and exclusion remain present, ambiguities between formal recognition and actual implementation efforts remain undeniable. In order to highlight Roma´s perspective on these issues, the second part of the analysis concentrates on the four major European Roma organizations shaping transnational Roma representation. It turns out, that Roma organizations are keen to fight discrimination, advocate Roma rights and advice European institutions to improve the situation of Roma communities. In terms of recognition struggles, the wide-ranging approaches of these organizations seem in general to contradict the theoretical distinction between redistributive claims and claims for recognition

and instead call for holistic policy approaches that incorporate cultural as well as socio-economic aspects.

Resuming the marginalized status of European Roma, wide-ranging discrimination and complex identity layers as a call for appropriate representation and recognition, the following chapter elaborates the main theories of representation being used in this context and outlines the theoretical implications of recognition struggles.

3.0. The Struggle for Roma Recognition

According to Honneth and Taylor, social struggles have proven that "justice demands more than the fair distribution of material goods" and that recognition needs to be acknowledged as a "vital human need" (Honneth, 1995, p.7). However, population groups across the globe continue to get "systematically denied recognition for the worth of their culture or way of life, the dignity of their status as person, and the inviolability of their physical integrity" (Honneth, 1995, p.7). One of these disadvantaged groups represents European Roma. Although a period of "national awakening" during the 19th century enabled them to "claim recognition as an ethnic minority", the previously described "difference" still remains a common variable to explain their "impoverishment, social tension and conflicts, migration and the failure of integration initiatives" (Kovats, 2003, p.2). As "the living conditions and life chances of most Roma people in the post-communist states of Central and Eastern Europe have actually undergone dramatic and ongoing decline" (Kovats, 2003, p.1), it is obvious to some authors, Mirga and Gheorghe being among them that Roma still remain "among the last groups in Europe to struggle for a political space of their own" (van Baar, 2005, p.3). Acknowledging this political space as the dualistic desire for appropriate representation and recognition, this theoretical framework elaborates the concepts of representation and recognition, the latter referring to the broader theory of social justice that are needed in order to answer the research questions. Thereby, the connection between theory and real life circumstances is expected to immerse the analysis, emphasizing the various dilemmas surrounding Roma´s political appearance including the potential Europeanization of political representation and the influence of identity. Ultimately, understanding the complexity these issues bear on Roma is essential to assess Roma representation and organizations´ political activities.

In terms of representation, one of the most straightforward definitions of the concept is provided by Hanna Pitkin (1967) specifying representation as an activity of "making citizens´ voices, opinions and perspectives present in the public policy making processes" (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2011). In short, "political representation occurs when political actors speak, advocate, symbolize, and act on behalf of others in the political arena" (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2011). Accordingly, the actors representing, their interests and the setting in which representation is taking place are crucial elements to focus on. With regard to the context, it implies Roma organizations pursuing their political activities on the transnational, European stage. Besides, regarding representation as a mere concept of presence and engagement from European institutions to officially acknowledge the situation

of Roma with legislations and initiatives constitutes another area to concentrate on. However, returning to Pitkin´s approach, the symbolic- and substantive view of representation require special explanation. As symbolic representation comprises the way of representation, it can be related to the contextual demands of politics of recognition. For though "the more symbolic element in representation is sometimes linked to arguments about making political institutions more legitimate, more obviously and visibly representative" it is more about "what Charles Taylor has called the politics of recognition" (Phillips, 1995, p.40). After all, "if your way of life is not recognized as of equal value with others, this will be experienced as a form of oppression" (Phillips, 1995, p.40). As a result, it is especially the issue of access functioning as a "condition sine qua non" (Bouwen, 2002, p.366) that has to be analyzed in terms of symbolic representation. As the European Parliament (EP) points out "organizations of women, human rights activists and other social interests tend to be weaker than their counterparts in the sectors of industry, trade and agriculture" referring to representation (European Parliament, 2003, p.19). The same holds for minority ethnic groups which, in general, are considered as being widely dispersed, lacking sufficient organizational ties. As a result, it seems rather difficult for such interest groups to reach one of the numerous access points granting recognition and representation at the transnational stage (European Parliament, 2003).

In contrast, substantive representation refers to the rather practical activities of representatives referring to the issues of manner and political-claim-making in this context. But before explaining the scope of these issues in more detail, the Europeanization of Roma representation as an influential factor towards representation as a whole has to be emphasized. In essence, the "Europeanization of Roma representation has led to an increased attention to the difficult and often deteriorating situation in which a substantial number of Roma live in Europe" (van Baar, 2008, p.383). In fact, "highlighting the Roma´s plight as a special concern", enables the European institutions to demand additional action from its member states (Vermeersch, 2012, p.1197). However, at the same time, such an approach and especially spotlighting Roma as a particular European minority "provides ammunition for the view that the Roma belong more to Europe than to the individual member states" (Vermeersch, 2012, p.1198). According to Kovats, such perspective does not only mark Roma as a separate nation without a state but far more importantly it "supports the nationalisms that have pushed the Roma out of the other national communities in Europe" leaving Roma people in a constant state of social exclusion (Vermeersch, 2012, p.1204). Moreover, "the negative potential of such a reframing becomes apparent when the problems facing the Roma are

described in cultural or ethnic terms" (Vermeersch, 2012, p.1205). Although it might help to recognize a different community, it can as well "become an argument in blaming them for creating their own problems" (Vermeersch, 2012, p.1205) illustrating that the "Europeanization of Roma representation does not seem to be able to cope with the populist, national and often Romaphobic movements in Europe" (van Baar, 2012, p.288). It remains to be seen how Roma representation evolves from such propositions. With regard to the issues of manner and claim-making, it has to be noted that manner in this context refers to organizational structures, for instance, distinguishing grass-root representation from elite one. Since national and transnational treatments of Roma tend to differ, the setting of representation recurs in this respect revealing the European approach of this study once more. Furthermore, in order to assess representation and especially the organizations´ activities in terms of political claim-making, the general expectations of minority representation to stress human rights approaches, minority rights approaches as well as community development approaches have to be analyzed (Guy, 2001). However, recalling the issues of historic marginalization, impoverishment and discrimination, social justice or the struggle for recognition influencing political activities cannot be ignored in this process as it is outlined in the following abstract.

In its traditional definition deriving from Hegelian philosophy, the term recognition describes the "phenomenology of consciousness", designating "an ideal reciprocal relation between subjects in which each sees the other as its equal and also as separate from it (Fraser, Honneth, 2003, p.7ff). Furthermore, it is common practice "to distinguish questions of justice from questions of the good life", aligning "distributive justice with Kantian Moralität (morality) and recognition with Hegelian Sittlichkeit (ethics)" (Fraser, 2001, p.22). Charles Taylor and Axel Honneth, the two most prominent theorists of recognition, therefore regard recognition as "a necessary condition for attaining full, undistorted subjectivity" (Fraser, 2001, p.26), a fact that corresponds to Roma´s pervasive request for recognition and representation. Accordingly, as the theory builds on the principles of ethics, misrecognition ultimately denies the ability to achieve a good life depriving someone´s "basic prerequisites for human flourishing" (Fraser, 2001, p.26) as mentioned in the introductory abstract of this chapter. In addition, there seems to be a growing tendency in dividing claims for social justice into either redistributive claims "which seek a more just distribution of resources and goods" or "politics of recognition" "where assimilation to majority or dominant cultural norm is no longer the price of equal respect" (Fraser, 2001, p.21). As a result, recognition claims "tend to promote group differentiation" while "redistribution claims, in contrast, often call for

abolishing economic arrangements that underpin group specificity" promoting de-differentiation (Fraser, 1993, p.74). However, considering contemporary circumstances, the concept of recognition can no longer be classified as a pure issue of ethics, but has to include the notion of justice as well; a fact that according to Fraser (1993, 2001) ultimately consolidates the distinctive claims of redistribution and recognition. In fact, the figures on discrimination and social exclusion exemplified in the introduction of this research support this argumentation, claiming that it is not only cultural or ethical aspects that expulse Roma communities but it is the unjust redistribution of resources and goods as well. So, in order to improve the situation for Roma, adjustments in both realms are necessary.

A response to this claim constitutes Fraser´s status model that calls for equal redistribution and recognition patterns as opposed to the traditional identity model. Regarding recognition as a conception of justice and not as a conception of ethics, the status model does not require group-specific identity but demands equality in social interaction as a matter of recognition (Fraser, 2001). In fact, "to view recognition as a matter of status is to examine institutionalized patterns of cultural value for their effects on the relative standing of social actors" (Hobson, 2003, p.27). Therefore, reciprocal recognition and status equality is given when actors are regarded as peers while misrecognition and status subordination occur when actors are excluded, invisible or weaker than their counterparts in social interaction (Hobson, 2003). To redress the injustice requires a "politics of recognition (…) a politics aimed at overcoming subordination by establishing the misrecognized party as a full member of society, capable of participating on a par with other members" (Fraser, 2001, p.24). A fair distribution of material resources as well as equal respect and opportunities are thereby the underlying conditions to reach a parity of participation (Fraser, 2001). Besides promoting justice and equal participation, the model also relates to the distinction between interest-based and identity-based advocacy. Thereby, according to Fraser, interest-based advocacy implies "a shift in the grammar of political claim-making by which claims for the recognition of group difference have become increasingly salient and have at times eclipsed claims for social equality (Vermeersch, 2006, p.451f). As a result, activism can go beyond demanding recognition focusing on the "demand for the elimination of unequal access to opportunities and resources" (Vermeersch, 2006, p.469), once again emphasizing the need of both redistribution and recognition to achieve thorough justice. Even in this context it becomes clear that the model is designed to locate the wrong in social relations rather than focusing solely on questions of identity (Fraser, 2001, 2003, Hobson, 2003). Ultimately, the notion of equality can therefore be related to the traditional principle of citizenship, granting people full

and equal membership in society by providing civil, social and political rights (Kymlicka, Normann, 1994).

However, since the model originally applies to the contexts of nationality, gender, sexuality or race, its application to the four European Roma organizations somehow constitutes a new approach assessing their claims and political activities in terms of politics of recognition. In fact, it remains to be seen whether they adapt to this model or whether they rely on the identity model stressing the importance of identity politics in transnational Roma representation. This is especially important, if one reflects the attitude of various Romani activists who got acutely aware of the power identity can imply. As a matter of fact, minority advocates continue to "turn the cultural identity of marginalized and discriminated minorities into the central focus of a political struggle for recognition" (Vermeersch, 2006, p.451). An identity, as mentioned earlier, that embraces heterogeneous groups under a common denominator that shares the typical characteristics of discrimination, marginalization, absence of a nation state and geographical dispersion (McGarry, 2011). In reality, it means that "Romani activists can make their voice heard successfully by engaging in identity politics and asserting Romani identity as the main focus of political action" (Vermeersch, 2006, p.6). To instance Romani political parties, it is not unlikely to "have an identity-based agenda, but simultaneously they are unsure about how to turn that agenda into clear, unambiguous policy demands" revealing a "strong crucial disconnect between the mobilization efforts of internationally oriented activists and local Romani activists who are seeking the support of a local population" (Vermeersch, 2006, p.463). The "growing tendency among Romani elites and organizations to participate in a globalized holocaust discourse to deal with processes of Romani identity formation" that has intensified over the last decade illustrates another example in this category (van Baar, 2010, p.115). Although the particular homogenization of Romani identity to create a more positive image of Roma communities and to foster oneness is appreciated and proclaimed, the sole focus on identity as a means for the struggle for recognition runs "the risk of reifying, politicizing, and perhaps even intensifying the boundary between minority and majority identities" (Vermeersch, 2006, p.545). In fact, using Romani identity in the context of political representation creates a certain dilemma. On the one side, identity is used in order to highlight the plight of Roma citizens, on the other side, the pure focus on identity risks promoting a stereotypical image of the Roma as an un-integrated group" and creates large-scale exclusion of a group accused to actively resisting integration into mainstream society (van Baar, 2008, p.383ff). Ultimately, such homogenization describes a dangerous development for activists trying to shape Roma politics in their own way.

Therefore, a great deal of balance seems beneficial promoting equality and social justice while acknowledging the diversity of Roma communities.

Considering the aims of this study, this chapter has delivered the argumentative foundation of the thesis. Researchers agree that in spite of formal recognition, difference still remains a powerful variable to explain Roma´s impoverishment. In fact, the potential Europeanization of the Roma issue alongside Roma´s own identity struggles adhere dilemmas that have to be acknowledged with regard to political representation. After all, as representation depends largely on the social position of one particular group vis-à-vis other groups (Barth, 1969), it is important to acknowledge not only particular historic complexities surrounding Roma existence as done in the introduction, but also the aforementioned issues shaping the overall desire for appropriate recognition and representation. Although there is extensive knowledge on national Roma parties, the specific patterns of European Roma organizations require additional explanation. This is especially the case with regard to their role in transnational representation whereby the exclusive application of Fraser´s status model is expected to describe the organizations´ politics of recognition in greater detail. Based on these theoretical assumptions, the study continues to question how Roma are represented in Europe reflecting Roma-specific legislation and initiatives. Taking on the issue of manner, recalling the concept of substantial representation, do they follow Escobar´s understanding of networks that "avoids the problematic dichotomy between top-down or bottom-up approaches" (van Baar, 2005, p.15)? What are dominant concerns and what is the organizations´ course in claiming recognition? The exact methodology on how these questions are answered and how the research is administered is provided throughout the subsequent chapter. It does not only specify the main research questions, it also elaborates the relevant topics of research design, data collection and data analysis.

4.0. Methodology

Being subdivided into four subchapters, this chapter is set up to clarify the aim and realization of the research. According to the study´s main aim to highlight Roma representation in Europe alongside its transnational representatives, it is important to clarify not only the appropriate research design to obtain in-depth knowledge on contemporary Roma representation but also to specify the exact methods of data collection and data analysis that serve the analysis. As a matter of fact, issues of validity threats and research-related limitation are discussed accordingly. But before this is done, the following subchapter recalls the research questions and explicates the exact focus of the study.

4.1. Research Question

In order to obtain in-depth knowledge on Roma representation and political activities of Roma organizations in terms of recognition struggles, this study focuses on two major, descriptive, empirical research questions. Thereby, the first one serves to provide extensive information on contemporary Roma representation focusing on the legal aspects of representation as well as on initiatives targeting European Roma. By doing so, the European policy dimension towards Roma or the outward appearance of Roma in Europe is elaborated. The necessary theory derives from Hanna F. Pitkin providing thorough information on the issue itself and its development. Since the events of the 1990s and especially the enlargement process of 2004 caused an increase of legislations and initiatives, it is absolutely necessary to elaborate Roma representation having regard to these developments. Building on this knowledge, the second research question elaborates representation from an internal point of view concentrating on four major European Roma stakeholders and their political activities, namely the European Roma Grassroots Organizations Network, the European Roma Information Centre, the European Roma Policy Coalition and the European Roma Rights Centre. In principle agreeing with Nicolae Gheorghe and Andrzej Mirga that Roma communities continue to struggle for a political space of their own respective appropriate representation, it is necessary to examine Romani representation on the European stage since national treatments remain diverse. The fact that the EU has replaced the nation-state concept of equality with a Europe-wide concept of equality (Gerhards, Lengfeld, 2011) adds to this argument referring to the potential of transnational European Roma representation. Therefore, the question concentrates to reveal the organization´s main political activities and their mission statements. From this follows another sub-question intended to assess to what extent these organizations apply Nancy

Fraser´s status model with regard to their overall claims and political activities stressing the underlying struggle for recognition. To sum it up, the research questions are stated as follows:

1.0. How is the Roma minority represented in Europe?

　　1.1. What are the major legislations and initiatives targeting European Roma?

2.0. What are the major European Roma organizations and what are their main political activities?

　　2.1. To what extent do these European Roma organizations apply Nancy Fraser´s status model?

Based on this, the next chapter elaborates the appropriate research design that is required in order to answer these research questions.

4.2. Research Design

It is the general conception of research designs to offer analysis strategies for empirical evidence utilizing research methods to answer particular research questions. Although this study adapts to certain features of a baseline study, the latter can hardly be identified as an appropriate research design. Therefore, the characteristics of a cross-sectional design appear more suitable considering the demands and expected outcomes of this empirical, descriptive research. In fact, it is the advantage to perform in-depth observations at a single point in time without having to include pre-or posttest phases that distinguish this particular research design (Babbie, 2007). Although threats to internal validity have to be acknowledged, it is the research´ main concern to obtain extensive knowledge on European Roma organizations justifying a cross-sectional design in this case. In order to achieve that, general insights of the European Roma Policy Framework and general Roma representation in Europe are required as well.

According to the main attributes of this research, being empirical, descriptive and unobtrusive in nature, the research methods consist of policy analysis and qualitative, secondary source analysis. The former being "concerned with the development of a methodology for determining the outcome of a specific course of action and for making comparisons between alternative courses of action in terms of their likely outcomes" (Colebatch, 2009, p.5) allows specific examination of the European Roma Policy Framework reflecting Roma´s representation on the transnational level. Thereby, understanding the policy process and involved stakeholders is essential to achieve thorough problem solving. Even

though it is not the aim of the research to solve a concrete policy problem surrounding European Roma, the analysis of the current policy status quo, concerned stakeholders as well as the identification of policy objectives are important components to focus on. Only after such a comprehensive assessment is it possible to assess European Roma organizations, their activities, and their course in a struggle for recognition. To examine the latter, the analysis draws on the theoretical status model issued by Nancy Fraser. In fact, the examination of contemporary Roma representation using Pitkin´s theory and the examination of European Roma organizations in terms of Fraser´s status model is expected to provide deeper insights on Roma representation in general and its European representatives in particular.

To continue, specific explanations on the process of data collection and data analysis are provided throughout the following subchapters. While the chapter on data collection summarizes sources and types of data in use, the chapter concerning data analysis points out how the selected data is utilized to answer the particular research questions.

4.3. Data Collection

As the research defines the European Roma Organizations and the European Roma Policy Framework as the main units of observation, it is unsurprising that the main set of data derives from these sources. To be more specific, the analysis takes on four European Roma organizations which have been sampled on purpose. These organizations include:

The European Roma Grassroots Organizations Network (ERGO)
The European Roma Information Centre (ERIO)
The European Roma Policy Coalition (ERPC)
The European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC)

The specific commitment towards Roma people is one of the main reasons why these organizations have been selected. In fact, it is these organizations that represent European Roma besides being repeatedly mentioned in contemporary Roma literature. Furthermore, all organizations provide sufficient online information and they even share their European approach within their titles. As this research is eager to embrace a European approach, these are all reasons why other organizations like the Fundación Secretariado Gitano, the International Romani Union, the Open Society Foundations, or the Policy Centre for Roma and Minorities are considerably left out from the analysis.

With regard to the demands of the research, the analysis focuses on a number of qualitative resources. Apart from contemporary secondary literature supporting the course of argumentation, primary data derives equally from the organizations´ homepages and the European Roma Policy Framework. The time span of utilized documents embraces a time from 1993 to 2012. It has deliberately been chosen since it includes the pre-accession phase as well as the enlargement of 2004 that brought additional attention to European Roma, initiated a new wave of policy engagement and provided an increasing pool of qualitative data. In order to achieve meaningful results on Roma representation, the analysis draws on the European Roma Policy Framework embracing a variety of documents including legislations, communication documents, press releases or initiative descriptions. As a matter of fact, documents like the ´Race Equality Directive´ (RED), the ´Decade of Roma Inclusion´, ´The Situation of Roma in an enlarged European Union´, the ´EU Framework on National Roma Integration Strategies´ (NRIS) or the ´Council Resolution 1203´ are used to examine general Roma representation in Europe. In turn, the analysis of the four European Roma organizations mainly derives from their online appearance including their history, mission statements, political activities and approaches. Since not all of these four organizations provide equally sufficient information on their engagement in Roma-specific initiatives and projects, the analysis solely focuses on primary information deriving from the organizations´ homepages. In fact, it is the study´s aim to base its analysis on an equal distribution of data deriving from all four organizations so that it justifies an exclusion of such secondary data in this context. Statistical evidence released by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) is used to support the study´s course of argumentation. However, regarding this last part of the analysis, despite adopting certain features of a baseline study, limitations concerning the scope of the study have to be acknowledged. In fact, it is the limited range of utilized data that restricts the analysis. Nevertheless, it also provides potential opportunity for future research to focus not only on mere online information but to spread the analysis towards social interactions as well as associated national campaigns and performances in order to gain further insights on the struggle for recognition. Next, an explanation on how the data is analyzed to answer the research questions is provided.

4.4. Data Analysis

Corresponding to the different demands of the proposed research questions, the type of data analysis has to be adjusted accordingly. As it is the research´ primary aim to acquire extensive knowledge on European Roma and its representatives, the gathering of information and its plain analysis are in general appropriate tools to answer the research questions and to achieve meaningful results. However, more detailed explanation on the process of answering these questions has to be expressed in this context.

Since the first question is set up to elaborate Romani representation from a European perspective spotlighting the outward appearance of Roma, the previously described procedure of data analysis applies in general. At this point, representation is first of all regarded as a concept of mere presence and European engagement towards Roma outlining the existence of the main legislations and initiatives. However, considering Pitkin´s theory on symbolic representation as well, the variable of ´access´ referring to quantitative increases of Roma organizations at the European level is equally important to assess the development of Roma representation in Europe. After all, without functioning access to governmental levels, it is nearly impossible to achieve formal representation and particular recognition.

In terms of the second research question, the theoretical assumptions surrounding substantive representation and Fraser´s status model come to the fore. Focusing on a Roma-specific perspective in this context, the elaboration of the four European Roma organizations and their political activities draws on the variables of ´manner´ and ´political claim-making´ deriving from the theory of substantive representation. While the variable of manner incorporates practical attributes like forms of collaboration or organizational structures, the variable of political-claim making includes the attributes political approaches and mission statements. Thereby, according to the principles of policy analysis, the measurement of such variables is qualitative and context related. It means that the context of organizations´ homepages is analyzed with regard to these attributes focusing on the aforementioned online sections of organizations´ history, mission statements, political activities and approaches.

Turning the view to the second sub-question, it is necessary to define the distinction between redistributive claims and claims for recognition respective the distinction between interest-based advocacy and identity-based advocacy that distinguish the status model issued by Nancy Fraser. Since these concepts appear to share the same outcomes, claims for recognition are related to identity-based advocacy in this context while redistributive claims are related to interest-based advocacy. Therefore, the concepts are used interchangeably. As the status model draws on social justice as the ultimate outcome, it is expected that a balance

of redistributive claims and claims for recognition resembles this target. In contrast, a preference towards identity-based advocacy refers to the traditional identity model while the sole focus on interest-based advocacy somehow pays less attention to the importance of identity and is therefore neglected in this context. But in order to assess to what extent these European Roma organizations apply Fraser´s model or relate to the traditional identity model, it is equally important to elaborate how recognition claims and claims for redistribution are measured with regard to the organizations´ online appearance. In fact, both concepts are associated with a number of keywords respective contexts that are expected to occur within the online appearance making the analysis qualitative and contextual once more. With regard to redistribution, the latter in general refers to the economic structure of a particular society calling for social and economic adjustments in this context. To distinguish this concept, therefore, implies contexts referring to particular community development programs including a variety of keywords stressing socio-economic developments like improvements in the sectors of education, employment, health, or housing. In turn, recognition refers to the status order of a particular society emphasizing issues of honor, dignity, prestige or esteem that contribute towards equal participation. Regarding marginalization as one of the main issues serving Roma´s negative perception by the outgroup in this respect, contextual keywords calling for awareness-raising, equal citizenship as the final product of equal participation, positive identity formation alongside the eradication of discrimination and exclusion based on cultural or ethical terms are essential elements to focus on. Although, such an approach is limited in its extent, the elaboration of organizations´ online appearance having regard to these issues provides a good impression to what extent European Roma organizations apply Fraser´s status model.

All in all, this chapter has outlined the fundamental methodological aspects that define this research. Being descriptive and unobtrusive in nature, the focus is directed towards Roma representation elaborating the European policy dimension towards Roma as well as the internal dimension by concentrating on four European Roma organizations. Based on secondary source analysis and policy analysis, not only representation is elaborated but also the political activities of these Roma organizations having regard to the struggle for recognition. Although threads to internal validity have to be accepted in this cross-sectional study, the intention to obtain in-depth knowledge on European Roma and its representatives, highlighting their unique case justifies the decision to opt for such a design. In the following of this theoretical and methodological elaboration, the analysis of the expressed research questions is provided, starting with the European policy dimension of Roma representation.

5.0. Roma Representation in Europe

Resuming the dominant features of discrimination and social exclusion that continue to affect European Roma (Barth, 2007; Kovats, 2003; OSCE, 2000), it is necessary to examine the scope of Roma representation at the European level. In order to achieve meaningful results in that respect, the theoretical framework of Pitkin is applied, whereby the variable of access as a part of symbolic representation is examined at first before Roma specific legislations and initiatives are elaborated.

Regarding the situation of Roma, the previous statement of the European Parliament and the importance of access functioning as a condition sine qua non seems to only tell half the truth about general Roma representation. In fact, political engagement has attracted increasing attention since the 1990s and continued to increase after the European Eastern Enlargement of 2004. "For a number of years, activists have been able to attract massive international attention to the plight of the Roma and have indeed been able to exert a considerable impact on government policy" (Vermeersch, 2006, p.453). Unsurprisingly, "the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the World Bank, the Council of Europe, and the European Union have all become increasingly aware of the situation of the Roma and have introduced special initiatives targeting this group" (Vermeersch, 2006, p.457). The growing number of Roma representatives working at the European level and even the quantitative expansion of national Roma organizations proof this fact. Regarding access therefore as a formal given, the access to transnational institutions constitutes an important element since national differences concerning the Roma issue remain visible providing the transnational level potential power. To fathom this argumentation, the following abstract concentrates on Roma specific legislation and initiatives demonstrating the European engagement towards Roma. The acknowledgement of representation, its presence as well as the Union´s dedication to combat discrimination and exclusion stand in the foreground.

5.1. Legislation and Initiatives targeting European Roma

According to Article 2 of the Treaty on the European Union (TEU), "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". But since minorities are exposed to a multitude of social inequalities, the European Union also "recognises the rights, freedoms and principles set out in the Charter of Fundamental Rights (Article 6 (1), TEU). The proclamation of non-discrimination is thereby essentially

meaningful. In fact, the Charter prohibits discrimination "based on any ground such as sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation" (Article 21, Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union). After all, the EU discrimination policy and its ambition to "combat social exclusion and discrimination" (Article 3 (3), TEU) has been part of the Acquis Communautaire since the Treaty of Amsterdam in 1997. Set out in Article 19 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), the institutions are entitled to "take appropriate action to combat discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation." Although these provisions do not specifically address the situation of Roma, they do provide a first level of constitutional protection.

Regarding specific Roma representation in European legislation, the Copenhagen Criteria of 1993 constitute the first "EU obligations with regard to the situation of the Roma" (Ram, 2007, p.495). In essence, the Criteria demands compliance from domestic institutions of new and aspiring EU member states with the principles of "democracy, the rule of law, human rights, and respect for and protection of minorities" whereby the additional request for minority participation in public affairs reflects particular contextual importance (Ram, 2007, p.495). Another important directive in this respect contains the Racial Equality Directive 2000/43/EC adopted in 2000 and considered being "the key piece of EU legislation designed to combat racial or ethnic discrimination" (Willers, 2009, p.11). "It emphasizes that individuals should receive no less favourable treatment regardless of their racial or ethnic characteristics and prohibits discrimination in the areas of employment, education, social protection including social security and healthcare, and access to and the supply of goods and services, including housing" (Willers, 2009, p.11). Calling for the development of equality bodies, "member states shall ensure that the competences of these bodies include providing independent assistance to victims of discrimination in pursuing their complaints about discrimination, conducting independent surveys concerning discrimination, publishing independent reports, and making recommendations on any issue relating to such discrimination" (Chalmers, Davies, Monti, 2010, p.576). Even with only a gradual implementation impact (Ram, 2007) and exceeding Roma as the only target group, the Directive and the Copenhagen Criteria alike account for constraining pan-European Roma discrimination. Besides, the Race Equality Directive "also provided a new weapon for Roma rights activists to further their agenda" (Ram, 2007, p.494). To quote the European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC): "it recognised early the value for the Roma rights agenda of ensuring

that governments adopt and fully implement comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation in accordance with EU standards (Ram, 2007, p.495).

As a matter of fact, European legislations but especially the Race Equality Directive alongside the increase of political attention towards Roma in the course of the Eastern Enlargement initiated a number of important developments. In fact, several programs and initiatives emerged since early 2000 targeting awareness-raising on the plight of Roma citizen and the promotion of Roma representation in Europe. "Recognising that discrimination could not be eliminated through legislation alone", the EU established a six-year European Community Action Programme lasting from 2001 to 2006 (Ram, 2007, p.496). The identification of Roma as a particular target group in need of funding and social devotion enabled this Action Programme to "to raise awareness and understanding of the issue, help people of their rights and obligations, and otherwise support the fight against discrimination" (Ram, 2007, p.496). Between 2001 and 2003, the according financial assistance derived mainly from the pre-accession assistance program PHARE that provided 77 Mio € to Roma in order to support "infrastructure, public awareness and sector-specific projects" (Spirova, Budd, 2008, p.24). Further political commitment and notice was sparked by the Decade of Roma Inclusion (2005-2015). This unprecedented international initiative that built "on the momentum of the 2003 conference ´Roma in an Expanding Europe- Challenges for the Future´" unites 12 governments of Central and Eastern European member states dedicated "to eliminate discrimination against Roma and to close the unacceptable gaps between Roma and the rest of society" (Decade of Roma Inclusion, 2012). Thereby, governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental stakeholders as well as the participating Romani civil society reallocate their resources from a multitude of donors to improve drawbacks in the Romani education, employment health or housing sector. Besides, a number of subordinate institutions support the execution of operational elements including National Action Plans, policy coordination, the provision of information and expert support. To name only one of these institutions, the Roma Education Fund (REF) is set up "to expand educational opportunities for Roma communities in Central and South-eastern Europe, closing the gap in educational outcomes between Roma and non-Roma through policies and programs including desegregation of educational systems" (Decade of Roma Inclusion, 2012).

The intention of the European Union, national governments and Romani civil society to maintain and further Roma politics and representation at the European level is undeniable. However, the question of permanency introduces itself when the momentum of the Eastern European Enlargement is expected to lose its potential. But since discrimination and in

particular discrimination against Roma has become a pan-European phenomenon, the attention towards Roma and their political engagement continues to be present. To monitor the progress of anti-discrimination, post-enlargement challenges and policy priorities, the Green Paper on ´Equality and non-discrimination in an enlarged EU´ was published in 2004 (Ram, 2007). The European Roma and Travellers Forum (ERTF) was established the same year granting Roma communities an official platform for recognition and representation at the European stage. Not only "receives the Forum assistance in terms of financial and human resources" it also possesses "privileged access to the various bodies and organs of the Council of Europe" which enables exact exertion of influence (European Roma and Travellers Forum, 2012). A similar ground for enhancing equal participation and empowerment constitute the European Roma Summits which are organized on a two-year term since 2008. Bringing high level representatives of EU institutions, national governments and civil society organizations together allows discussing Roma issues at the highest decision-making levels of the European Union or as Commission President Barroso suggests "a unique opportunity for getting the problems of the Roma higher on the agenda than ever before" (European Commission, 2012,a). After all, it is commitment, communication and dialogue that prepare and ensure continuous progress. For instance, the study ´The Situation of Roma in an enlarged European Union´ of 2003 or the ´Action Plan on Improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti within the OSCE area´ issued by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) in 2003 provide necessary in-depth assessments, while communications between EU institutions call for concrete policy solutions. The Communication from the Commission COM(2010)133 on the Social and Economic Integration of the Roma or the EP Report on the EU Strategy on Roma Inclusion illustrate good examples in this respect. Whereas the Commission Communication calls for "measures to overcome Roma exclusion", set "within the wider framework of European equality, inclusion, and growth policies" and the achievement of "an inclusive society, not a new form of ethnic segregation" (EUR-Lex, 2012), the EP report demands the adoption and implementation of an EU Strategy on Roma Inclusion in due consideration of existing programmes, funds and an improved communication (European, Parliament, 2012). At last, the aforementioned post-enlargement increase of Roma representatives in European institutions, especially within the European Parliament does not only demonstrate existing access and political representation but at the same time allows the involved stakeholders to impose certain pressures on the policy process. One of the results of such commitment and dialogue is the rather recent ´EU Framework on National Roma Inclusion Strategies´. It "addresses Roma inclusion and clearly links it with the Europe 2020

strategy", whereby "three out of five Europe 2020 headline targets are directly linked to the EU Framework targets for Roma inclusion" including "the fight against poverty and social exclusion, raising employment levels, and reducing school drop-out while increasing attendance in tertiary education" (National Roma Integration Strategies, 2012, p.7). However, as the European Roma Policy Coalition points out, the focus of national governments alongside their implementation efforts remain diverse and require further improvement in order to foster equal treatments (ERPC, 2012).

Although legal Roma representation can be regarded as a given in terms of pure access, formal presence and engagement, the influence resulting from such access, the implementation efforts of such joint initiatives as well as the balance of power between the involved stakeholders remains to be considered rather carefully. Besides all good intentions, Roma activists still call for more consultation, participation and transparency (European Roma Policy Coalition, 2012). The rather distressing results of the previously mentioned surveys on discrimination, impoverishment and unemployment add to this tendency, revealing rather ineffective implementation processes. In fact, the ambiguities between legal representation, recognition and formal protection on the one side encountering continuous forms of discrimination and exclusion taking place in real life on the other side are rather striking. In fact, such development questions the implementation of equal participation and finally equal citizenship. Therefore, it seems legitimate to assent van Baar in claiming that "the introduction of Roma-related policy at a variety of institutional level is considered inadequate because its practical implementation has been evaluated as ineffective or counterproductive with regard to its aim to integrate the Roma in mainstream society" (van Baar, 2005, a, p. 2). A similar impression is issued by Peter Vermeersch claiming that the introduction of official policies and initiatives does not automatically imply substantial impact upon communities (Vermeersch, 2006). In spite of being formally represented and recognized at the European level and despite the Eastern Enlargement that caused an increased interest in the Roma issue alongside an increase in the number of initiatives, the scope and efficiency of this representation leaves room for improvement. In fact, as the issue predominantly remains of national concern, it is a necessity of the European institutions as well as transnational stakeholders to further push the effectiveness of initiatives such as the NRIS using instruments like the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) in order to convince countries to improve their national Roma policies. However, as the content of legislation and initiatives reveals, the EU itself is focused on fighting discrimination and the causes of Roma´s marginalization targeting socio-economic community development programs (Guy, 2001,

Kovats, 2001). Thereby, the sole focus on socio-economic improvement risks abandoning the politics of recognition. As Aidan McGarry describes it, "the EU has not addressed the politics of recognition and pursues an ethnicity-blind approach to minority protection" ignoring "the prejudice which Roma endure because of their ethnic identity" (McGarry, 2011, p.133). At this point, it is essential to incorporate European Roma organizations into the discussion in order to examine their political ambitions as a potential answer to this European approach and the underlying struggle for recognition. Since representation also depends on the social position of one particular group vis-à-vis other groups (Barth, 1969), the internal point of view having regard to representation and the struggle for recognition is an important aspect to focus on.

6.0. European Roma Organizations

The focus of this chapter is directed towards major European Roma organizations and their political activities advocating Roma communities on the transnational European stage. The theoretical approach of Hanna F. Pitkin on substantive representation guides this analysis focusing on the variables of manner and political claim-making in order to distinguish the approaches of the four chosen European Roma organizations. But before starting, some general information on Roma organizations should be provided.

According to Huub van Baar, "there are no minorities in Europe that have become such a focal point of NGOs and private foundations as the Romany ones have over the last one and a half decade" (van Baar, 2005, p.3). Even though, precise European registers are not yet in place to enlist all such interest groups, the official registers of ERRC and ERIO affirm the statement as they list at least 208 civil society and non-governmental organizations existent across Europe dedicated to support the Romani population either in direct or indirect ways. Hereby, the number is expected to represent only a tip of Roma organizations since pseudo or illegal organizations created to receive international funding still happen to exist. As Zoltan Barany points out, "the number of Romani parties continues to grow although, according to some Romani activists, many that claim ´national´ status are in fact ´phantom´ parties which consist of single families, which have no more than a handful of members, and which are founded purely for financial gain" (Barany, 2010, p.318). In addition, there are at least 10 international organizations like the Open Society Foundation fighting for Roma rights. As a response to the earlier described Europeanization of the Roma issue and as a response to the absence of a nation state, Roma increasingly turn their attention towards the transnational level to advocate their concerns, to gain recognition and protection (Barany, 1994, McGarry, 2011). That is why it is important to focus on the four major European Roma including ERGO, ERIO, ERPC and ERRC that represent Roma interests and call for international attention on the plight of Roma citizens. In order to distinguish the particular political activities and mission statements, each organization is shortly characterized.

6.1. The European Roma Grassroots Organizations Network

The European Roma Grassroots Organizations Network as it exists now was founded in 2004 as an informal gathering of organizations engaged in Roma empowerment. Identifying exclusion as the root cause for Roma marginalization, the fight for equal citizenship and inclusion composes one of the organization´s main political concerns. In fact, the improvement of public and political citizenship shall be achieved by "enhancing positive cultural identity, addressing stigmatization and discrimination, advocating effective supportive policies and ending exclusive policies" (ERGO, 2013). To counter the still dominating deprivations occurring in the fields of economy, employment, education, health care and housing, ERGO is operating at the grassroot level as well as at the political level. Accordingly, the organization´s approach focuses on network building to foster empowerment and leadership, campaigning to improve Roma´s image in the public, advocacy to improve public policies targeting Roma citizens, and knowledge building to improve projects led by Romani people. Referring to the historic plight of Roma living in Europe, the enhancement of a positive identity and the interaction between Roma and non-Roma to address the issues of discrimination and stigmatization are further important objectives to focus on. ERGO works "to achieve equal opportunities for Roma in their societies and encourages them to take an active role in accomplishing respect for their rights and equal citizens" (ERGO, 2013). To accomplish that, the organization is linked to 15 organizations spread across Europe reaching from community based organisations to leaders and even youth branches. By promoting grassroot empowerment and being involved with the work of communities, ERGO is able to bridge the gap between the grassroot and EU level in order to overcome discrimination, anti-Gypsyism and stigmatization. As van Baar describes it, "the ERGO network has found and still develops alternative ways to combine local initiatives and activism with experiences and knowledge shared on the basis of ´horizontal exchanges´ between Romany communities in different districts and regions" (van Baar, 2005, p. 14). Thereby, "processes of issue solving, selforganization, and ´learning by doing´" are not only "key elements in initiatives to mobilize a particular Romany community, they are also central to the ways in which the network itself operates" (van, Baar, 2005, p.14). Acknowledging the notion of networking, the engagement with grassroot levels enables to advocate EU policies from the bottom-up, to call for human resource development and civil society capacity building. After all, "respect cannot be forced, but the necessary conditions, equal citizenship and inclusion can be built" (ERGO, 2013).

Financial support to achieve such targets, constitute the European Commission, the World Bank, the Dutch Foreign Affairs ministry as well as the Dutch organization Kerk in Actie.

6.2. The European Roma Information Office

Standing in slight contradiction to ERGO, the European Roma Information Office, established in 2003, constitutes an international advocacy organisation promoting political and public discussion on Roma issues. With regard to the organization´s objectives, however, the protection and promotion of fundamental rights of Roma in relevant EU policies and the fight against anti-Gypsyism and racism resemble those of the European Roma Grassroots Organizations Network. By providing factual and in-depth information on a range of policy issues to various stakeholders, "ERIO has created a large, informal network comprised of Roma and non-Roma organisations spread throughout Europe" bringing greater impact to the organization´s own advocacy activities (ERIO, 2013). In the end, the convergence of Roma organizations with EU and international institutions forms the goal to strive for. Furthermore, ERIO is eager to "support national Roma organizations to voice their demands to EU institutions and national governments" and to access programmes and policies "aimed at the integration of Roma communities throughout Europe" (ERIO, 2013). Although, the topics of concern are wide-ranging, discrimination, education, the eradication of power, social inclusion, and Roma participation remain once again driving issues to focus on. The trans-European network which includes organizations from 19 European member states as well as organizations from candidate, potential candidate and even other states is thereby the key feature in the development of Roma advocacy, empowering the overall fight against discrimination and social exclusion. Thereby, financial support derives from the European Community Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity, the European Commission, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation as well as from the Centre Pour Égalité (ERIO, 2013).

6.3. The European Roma Policy Coalition

The European Roma Policy Coalition represents "an informal gathering of non-governmental organizations operating at EU level on issues of human rights, anti-discrimination, anti-racism, social inclusion, and Roma and Travelers' rights" (ERPC, 2013). In accordance to the previously mentioned agendas, the promotion of inclusion and participation of Roma in public and political spheres stands in the foreground. This is mostly achieved by providing policy

response, commenting on European initiatives as well as publicity work sparking attraction on the plight of Roma citizens. In order to accomplish thorough improvements for Roma, the ERPC, for instance, engages in recommending the adoption of the earlier mentioned EU Framework Strategy on Roma Inclusion. Building on extensive knowledge, the organization suggest "the EU Framework Strategy should be built on three pillars: equal access to education, health, services, housing and employment; accountability of the authorities in their actions to protect the rights of the Roma community; and empowerment of Roma community-through ensuring full participation and responsibility for the effective implementation of measures taken by the European Union and the member states" (ERPC, 2013). Besides recommendations, the ERPC is unhesitant to disapprove EU initiatives. As McGarry (2011) points out, "the ERPC is disappointed that while the Framework recognizes the need to fight discrimination against Roma and ensures their equal access to all fundamental rights, it fails to specify measures to combat discrimination, intimidation, anti-Gypsyism, hate speech or violence against Roma" (McGarry, 2011, p. 133). Although, this case illustrates a rather specific example of the organization´s mission, it emphasizes once more the target areas of Roma interest groups. Apart from the organizations assessed in this context, the ERPC is supported by a number of influential transnational and European institutions and organizations including Amnesty International, the European Network against Racism, the Fundación Secretariado Gitano, the Minority Rights Group International, the Open Society Foundations, the Policy Center for Roma and Minorities as well as the Roma Education Fund (ERPC, 2013). As a number of such partners are financially supported by European and national institutions or the World Bank, it can only be assumed that financial contribution derives from similar sources.

6.4. The European Roma Rights Centre

"The European Roma Rights Centre is an international public interest law organization working to combat anti-Romani racism and human rights abuse of Roma through strategic litigation, research and policy development, advocacy and human rights education" (ERRC, 2012). Founded in 1996, the ERRC strives to empower Roma fighting against discrimination, demanding equality in the realms of justice, education, housing, health care and public services. Keeping consultative status with the Council of Europe as well as the Economic and Social Council of the United Nation while being financially supported by the European Commission, the Open Society Foundations and the United Nations Democracy Fund inter

alia, allows the organization to be active in wide-ranging areas. Focusing on strategic litigation, research and advocacy, the organization´s strategic priorities concentrate on the issues of "violence against Roma and hate speech, education, housing, women´s and children´s rights as well as movement and migration" (ERRC, 2012). Besides thoughtful campaigning, Human Rights Education (HRE) constitutes one of the special activities the European Roma Rights Centre pursues. Empowering Romani activists deriving from all parts of society is not only expected to raise human rights awareness but to empower "individuals to fight for equality through the acquisition of knowledge, understanding and experience in human rights and internal human rights law instruments." To sustain long-term successes "the ERRC receives funding from a number of sources including private foundations, international organizations and governments" (ERRC, 2012).

Regarding these observations, it is undeniable that the circumstances leading up to the European Eastern Enlargement did not only cause an increased attention in Roma´s general representation but provided additional room for political representation as well. The founding years of the presented organizations proof this fact. Reflecting the variable of political claim-making and its attributes, it is evident to state that "each organization pursues its own path in attempting to improve the situation of Roma across Europe, whether acting as interlocutor between Roma and EU institutions in order to gather and disseminate relevant information to the broader Roma activist network (ERIO); using the tool of anti-discrimination legislation to address human rights violations (ERRC) or lobbying on behalf of Roma across the EU" as ERPC and ERGO do it (McGarry, 2011, p.284). Despite conducting such slightly differentiated approaches, these observations emphasize the shared values and activities European Roma organizations pursue in order to improve the lives of Roma citizens. Activities that focus on awareness-raising, advocating and lobbying since the Roma issue largely remains of national concern. Although one could argue that such variety of activities causes further dispersion disrupting fragile organizational ties and supporting Roma´s decay into heterogeneity, it is exactly the pursuit of different approaches alongside a determined commitment towards the Romani community that allows and enables comprehensive political representation in the first place. Thereby, attention is not only directed towards human rights approaches but also towards community development approaches requiring the involvement of local communities. In fact, as Roma´s historic marginalization and social exclusion is comprehensively acknowledged by every organization as being the root of the problem, only

wide-ranging approaches and activities involving different administrative levels appear to ensure constant improvements.

In terms of the variable manner and its attributes, the different forms of collaboration including the concepts of networks and informal gatherings add to this observation. As new forms of collaboration are needed (van Baar, 2005), informal gatherings and networks connecting grassroot- and governmental levels are the appropriate tool to spread representation and influence beyond pure access. Even if "grassroot Roma politics is only at a very early stage of development" (Kovats, 2003, p.3) considering the time span since the enlargement, organizations like ERGO proof that the involvement of grassroot groups is a vital and commonly used element in advocating Roma interests refuting the notion of elitism issued by Gheorghe (van Baar, 2005, a). Taking into account the multitude of campaigns and projects, as well as the large amount of national and regional organizations operating at this level, it is secure to claim that grassroot connections are established and developing accordingly. However, as the focus of the four organizations remains on the transnational level, natural limitations to national commitment cannot be ruled out completely even though the ambition to improve the life of Roma is pervasive. Surveys from the World Bank alongside the diverging commitment of member states towards initiatives instancing the National Roma Inclusion Strategy emphasize this fact. Besides demanding more political participation, it seems to be rather a matter of influence, time and implementation efficiency than formal organizational ties, access and engagement that displays a greater impact on Roma politics. After all, four organizations operating at the European possess only limited scope. Nevertheless, according to their minority status, the different forms of collaboration allow using this limited scope to the full extent at the same time. Agreeing with Escobar on the concept of networking, the enabling of bottom-up pressures avoiding the "dichotomy between civil society and state apparatuses" (van Baar, 2005, p.15) provides unique platforms for involved stakeholders to unitarily advocate on behalf of Roma diminishing the negative perceptions of the outgroup while expanding political representation and communal cohesion.

Altogether, this chapter has outlined the political activities of the four European Roma organizations. The concept of network is thereby a crucial element helping to overcome small quantity with large qualitative connections. Although, being different in their structural and organizational appearance, the dedication to improve the situation of Roma, to fight discrimination and proclaim human rights is mutually shared. To what extent the organizations apply Fraser´s status model in their political pursuits is elaborated in the next chapter.

6.5. Application of the Status Model

As previously outlined, there are a number of discrepancies and dilemmas surrounding Roma existence. Referring to recognition struggles and in particular to the social status model of Nancy Fraser, this chapter examines to what extent the four European Roma organizations apply Fraser´s status model balancing redistributive claims and claims for recognition as a matter of justice, or whether they base their political activities completely on the traditional identity model in order to stress the importance of Roma´s cultural and ethical identity.

Based on previous observations, it is legitimate to claim that all four organizations predominantly apply Fraser´s status model conducting politics of recognition. In fact, Roma representation under a common denominator, the pursuit of shared interests as well as ongoing integration efforts indicate that the strict differentiation between recognition claims promoting group differentiation and redistribution claims emphasizing de-differentiation cannot be maintained in real life circumstances. Abandoning the concept of assimilation and fighting for justice, the organizations´ political activities proof that the latter are dedicated to improve the relative standing of Roma citizens in redistributive patterns as well as in terms of recognition. Although identity always carries a special meaning with regard to Roma communities, the sole focus on identity-based advocacy cannot achieve thorough justice as an equation of equal material resources and equal respect. Incorporating the previously mentioned keywords that shall distinguish the two approaches, it becomes obvious that they appear across the board. In terms of socio-economic developments, the eradication of social inequalities and the ambition to improve the sectors of education, employment, housing and health are the most dominant ones. To instance the ERRC and ERGO in this respect, the focus lies on the issues of "violence against Roma and hate speech, education, housing, women´s and children´s rights" (ERRC, 2012) as well as on the fight against "deprivations occurring in the fields of economy, employment, education, health care and housing" (ERGO, 2012). However, such approaches can only achieve partial success when Roma citizens are not acknowledged as equal citizens owning dignity, respect and self-esteem. Reflecting the existence of identity-based keywords in the previous description of the four organizations, the promotion of positive pictures of Roma identity as opposed to the negative perceptions of the outgroup as well as awareness-raising towards Roma´s stigmatization and discrimination demonstrate organizations´ equal engagement in identity-based advocacy. In contrast to national Roma parties, it appears that the organizations at the European level have found a

way to avoid the homogenization of identity, using the Roma name to act against wide-spread stereotyping and stigmatization.

After all, to locate the wrong in social relations requires balancing of redistributive claims and claims for recognition at the same time, a task that these four organizations based on their online information pursue. The promotion of oneness while acknowledging the diversity of Roma is thereby an issue that remains visible. Therefore, it can be concluded that the European Roma organizations apply Fraser´s status model, whereby the distinction between recognition claims and claims for redistribution is a theoretical distinction that is not maintained in real life circumstances and neglected in the pursuit of political activities that are rarely bound to one specific aspect. The shortcomings in education as introduced earlier illustrates a good example in this respect uniting the call for an equal distribution of resources by setting up schools, but also calling for respect and equal participation as children need to be treated as equals in the further process. However, as this approach only focuses on organizations´ online appearance certain limitation to the extent of such an application cannot be ruled out completely and future research needs to reveal to what extent the application of this model is reflected in the broader network of European Roma organizations and its associates.

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7.0. Conclusion

This study has outlined the special situation of Roma living in Europe. Paying attention to the historic and wide-ranging influences of discrimination and marginalization, the complex identity of Roma has been revealed. In spite of constituting the biggest minority in Europe, Roma´s social status and political representation remain influenced by outgroup prejudices, discrimination and social exclusion, facts that according to Gheorghe call for an own political space demanding appropriate representation and recognition. Acknowledging this need, the study investigates the particular extent of contemporary legislative and political representation taking place at the European level as well as it investigates the political activities of four European Roma organizations and their course in the struggle for recognition. As national treatments of Roma remain diverse, the transnational level cannot be ignored throughout such a discussion and is an important element to focus on. Therefore, it is the study´s ultimate aim to spotlight Roma representation alongside its European representatives.

Building on a cross-sectional research design that uses policy analysis and secondary source analysis as the main research methods, the concepts of representation issued by Pitkin and the concept of recognition by Fraser stand in the foreground and guide the argumentative course of the analysis. In order to contrast the European policy dimension with Roma´s personal approaches on representation, the European Roma Policy Framework illustrating the outward appearance of Roma and the online appearances of the four European Roma organizations compose the main units of observation. Thereby, certain limitations regarding the scope of the study need to be acknowledged. With regard to the analysis, it becomes apparent that despite an increased attention due to the Eastern Enlargement of the European Union, ambiguities between formal recognition and representation on the one side and discrimination and social exclusion on the other side remain present. Although access functioning as a condition sine qua non is a given in terms of transnational Roma as reflected in a quantitative increase of organizations and activists advocating Roma issues, or as expressed in the establishment of the European Roma and Travellers Forum, the exertion of influence does not follow naturally from such circumstances. However, the momentum of the enlargement has created an increase in Roma-specific legislation and policy initiatives dedicated to fight discrimination and social exclusion. Recognizing that legislation is not the only way to counter such developments, various initiatives set up to improve the socio-economic situation of Roma and to foster equal participation have been launched. Returning to the issue of influence, beside all good intentions, Roma activists still call for more

consultation, participation and transparency (European Roma Policy Coalition, 2012). The rather distressing results of the previously mentioned surveys on discrimination, impoverishment and unemployment add to this tendency, revealing rather ineffective implementation processes. With regard to the four European Roma organizations, the shared interest in advocating Roma rights is undeniable. Using the common denominator ´Roma´ as a unifying principle and positive image to fight against outgroup stereotypes and stigmatization, it has to be noted that the organizations´ political activities are widespread. In fact, they cover advocating for community development programs as well as lobbying for human rights approaches. The understanding of networking, thereby, constitutes a crucial element allowing organizations to reach not only grass-root levels but institutional and governmental levels as well in order to claim their issues. In their struggle for recognition, the analytical distinction between redistribution and recognition claims appears to be generally theory-bound as organizations pursue extensive approaches that cannot afford to neglect either cultural or socio-economic aspects throughout the fight for thorough justice. After all, to locate the wrong in social relations, it is important to focus on a fair distribution of resources as well as on equal participation, opportunities and finally equal citizenship.

However, as the issue remains of national concern, it remains the role for organizations´ to advocate at the transnational level and to advice European institutions in their policy developments. The pursuit of holistic approaches like organizations pursue them within their political activities appears most appropriate. In fact, the EU has to withdraw from its ethnicity-blind approach in order to improve the outgroup´s perception on Roma citizens. At the same time, the attention that surrounds the topic since the Eastern Enlargement cannot be reduced. To quote Commission President Barroso, the Roma summits have illustrated "a unique opportunity for getting the problems of the Roma higher on the agenda than ever before" (European Commission, 2012, a). Regarding the continuous discrepancies on the issue, it is a fact that allows further attention. In fact, this attention should be transformed into deeper collaborations between Roma organizations and EU institutions on policy initiatives like the NRIS. Not only is there room for comprehensive adjustment but member states need to be further pushed by the EU using OMC to improve their national legislations targeting Roma. In terms of future research, the exclusive application of Fraser´s status model needs to be expanded beyond organizations´ online appearance in order to gain more insights on the struggle for recognition. Besides, regarding the financial support of these organizations, the independence of the latter in the pursuit of Roma specific politics need to be further investigated.

8.0. References

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