

DORI:
Goals, Challenges, and Cultural Sustainability

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Acknowledgments

This work is the culmination of research done over the last year and represents my belief that cultural sustainability is entering a new stage dealing with the diverse areas of policy development, community engagement, and human rights protections. Over the last twelve months, many different iterations of this work were created, each one vastly different in scope from the next. It was only through the guidance of my advisors, family, friends, and interview subjects that I narrowed my focus on issues associated with cultural agency, the Decade of Roma Inclusion, and the Hungarian experience. I wish to thank all my family members, friends, colleagues and advisors. I would like to especially thank Amy Skillman, William Westerman, and Carol Silverman, whose guidance and critical reviews have helped strengthen this work into what it is today. I also would like to acknowledge the memory of my maternal grandmother, Pearl Jean Smith Wakeley Johnson, who inspired my work with Romani communities and is sorely missed.

Introduction

“Everywhere in Europe, throughout North and South America and in Australia, as well as parts of Africa and Asia, there are found people who refer to themselves as Romani, and who maintain a language and a culture which set them quite apart from the rest of the world” (Hancock 2002 xvii).

“Roma,” the term for the people referred to as “Gypsies,” “Zigeuner,” “Cigani,” and “Tsigani,” among other terms, are a heterogeneous group of cultures with shared ancestry¹. Roma are perhaps one of the most misunderstood and stereotyped groups of people, with blatant and deliberate acts of racism still being witnessed across the globe (Hancock 2002; Stewart 2012; Balogh 2012; Crowe 2007). Although Roma populations are found around the world, the majority live in Central and Eastern Europe. The largest populations center in the former Communist bloc. With estimates of the total population at 12 million and the majority living in miserable conditions, the attention on Roma has dramatically increased since the end of Communism in Europe² (Hancock 2002). This attention is partially due to the nongovernmental organizations working for Roma rights and also the European Union expansion, which highlighted the need for potential member nations to have an inclusive environment for all citizens (Vermeersch 2013). While Roma people are diverse and vary in cultural traditions, languages, and even ethnonyms, their common bond is a history of persecution and discrimination, which has followed them since their arrival to Europe. Indeed, laws concerning

¹ For the purposes of this paper the term Romani is utilized as an adjective. For further information, refer to the Methodology and Terminology chapter., p. 36

² For some of the statistics on the Romani population’s quality of life, see Chapter 3 and Chapter 4.

Roma people have existed since their first mention in the annals of history³. Their position today, while in some ways improved, is still that of second-class citizens subjected to ethnic violence, racist stereotypes, cultural misconceptions, terrorism, and even targeted killings. With such violence and uncertainty, the hope for a world where Roma are allowed to live without fear is dwindling.

My grandmother, a Romanichal (English Roma) woman, was subjected only to slight discrimination. Although she never felt any kinship with the diverse populations of Roma people, her deeply seeded belief in family, self-determination, and tradition unknowingly bound her to them. She never spoke willingly of being a Romanichal woman, and only after prodding would she speak of her family in England. My work in researching the Roma in Europe began with my grandmother's experiences and has since focused on governmental and nongovernmental approaches to fostering inclusion for Roma. A prime example of this new focus on social inclusion is the Decade of Roma Inclusion, a voluntary initiative that began in 2005, with nine nations initially signing. The initiative involves nongovernmental organizations, Romani civil society representatives, and national governments in creating programming and policies that address the situation of Roma in each participating nation. The policies and programs differ from country to country while still adhering to the goal of creating social and economic inclusion in the priority areas of education, employment, health care and housing.

Since the inception of the Decade of Roma Inclusion, three more nations have joined, and many programs and policies have been created to facilitate inclusion for Roma people. However, many critics have pointed to the substantive lack of progress in the Decade. With its original

³ For further information on the laws concerning Roma see Chapter 3: The Roma and Chapter 5: Hungary and Roma: A Case Study.

time frame coming to a close, the initiative's work regarding Roma inclusion is likely to be largely unsuccessful in meeting its goals. This is not to say the Decade has not attempted to work within the social inclusion paradigm that influenced its creation, but perhaps the way it works is not effective in a predominantly divided Europe.

In 2011, the European Union created the Framework for National Roma Integration, congruent to the Decade and largely influenced by its work, and focused its priorities on areas similar to those of the Decade. Both of these policy initiatives attempt to draw Roma into the fold of social and economic inclusion by targeting the areas most quantifiable and obvious (in terms of data). They largely ignore the cultural implications and undertones that influence the Roma people's ability to be included. This absence of a cultural agenda, which at the core is the most serious flaw of both the Decade and EU Framework, has hampered the ability of Roma to truly succeed in the outlined priority areas. Similarly, the rise in extremist and racist political parties in several nations, the corruption of Romani representatives, and the recent economic recession have further exacerbated the possibility of success of the Decade and EU Framework.

Jon Hawkes defines culture as “both a medium and the message—the inherent values and means and results of social expression. Culture enfolds every aspect of human intercourse” (Hawkes 2001, 3). Therefore, culture is embodied within the structure of society; it is based upon it, influenced by it, and reiterated through its social interactions. I have chosen to use a variation of Hawkes's definition along with the more basic definition of culture, which focuses on traditions, norms, performances, and values. For the purposes of this paper, my definition of culture is as follows: Culture is a collection of values, traditions, beliefs, social expressions, and behaviors articulated in social interactions, policy work, and identity formation. It is expressed by groups of people with shared beliefs, traditions, and values and creates the social framework

for interactions among people. Because culture is adaptable and cultural articulations are likewise ever-changing and responsive to external forces, this becomes especially relevant in terms of the Romani culture, which has adapted to external forces and created multiple subgroups. Romani subcultures are connected by a common linguistic origin and shared traditions and values (Hancock 2002). It is due to these subcultures that a unified Romani culture has remained difficult for scholars, policy makers, and even Roma to express aside from the stereotyped and often performed cultural expressions. This is especially relevant to the discussion of policy work as Romani culture is largely devalued and misconceived in existing policies.

The catchall term of “sustainability” has been used to empower massive movements based on environmental, economic, and social injustices while often leaving out the cultural discussion. Sustainability is broadly defined as being able to last or continue for an extended period of time (Merriam-Webster 2014). Keeping with the same basic definition, cultural sustainability⁴ is the ability of a culture to express its values, traditions, beliefs, and behaviors for an extended period of time. However, cultural sustainability as a new field of academic study recognizes the need for adaptation and re-creation that serves to extend culture while addressing the needs and desires of the cultural members. Inherent within this definition of cultural sustainability is the recognition that multiple viewpoints and multiple subcultures can exist without undermining the tenets of cultural sustainability itself. For example, while Romani culture is varying among subcultures, common traditions and values can be shared and, if given the opportunity, voiced in an effort to sustain them. By recognizing the need for adaptable cultural expressions, values, and traditions that can extend the key tenets of a cultural group,

⁴ Cultural sustainability will be discussed in more depth in Chapter 6.

cultural sustainability can serve as a framework to create policy based on all four sustainability “pillars”: economic, social, environmental, and cultural (Hawkes 2001). I do not attempt to determine which parts of Romani culture(s) are necessary for continuation, nor do I address the specifics of Romani traditional culture. Instead, my focus is on the apparent lack of a cultural lens with which to view inclusionary policy work. This means that issues of education, housing, employment, and health care are addressed without regard to Romani cultural views, traditions, or beliefs, and solutions instead are forced upon them in an example of symbolic violence⁵. I believe that by leaving out this cultural paradigm, inclusion will not be possible or sustainable in the long term. As part of this paper I propose a strategy for including a cultural paradigm within future inclusionary policies in an effort to create sustained changes.

In an effort to examine the issues associated with Roma agency building, Hungary is included as a case study in this paper. Hungary was chosen partially because the documentation is available in English and due to the unique minority government system. With its large Roma populations and statistics that show stark social and economic inequality, Hungary is perfectly poised for positive change through the Decade and EU Framework. However, with the rapid political gains of Jobbik, a nationalistic party running on an anti-Roma and anti-Semitic platform, and the creation of the racist and violent Hungarian Guard, the country has become anything but positive for Roma (Dunn 2014; David 2014; Scheppele 2013). With violent clashes between Roma and non-Roma, and a national government seen as largely anti-European Union, the situation in Hungary is bleak. Positive changes in Hungary seem hard to quantify, and the

⁵ Symbolic violence is defined by Pierre Bourdieu via Robert Koulisch as “the violence of credit, confidence, obligation, personal loyalty, hospitality, gifts, gratitude, piety... It is the subtle form of violence that brings coercion through the power exercised in hierarchical relationships” (Koulisch 2005, 320).

results of the Decade's work seem ambiguous and small when compared to the overall downward spiral that Hungary's Roma are experiencing⁶.

My work is an attempt to address the issues associated with both the Decade of Roma Inclusion and the social inclusion paradigm in which it was constructed. I will use research from the Decade along with independent resources to explore the effectiveness of the Decade in both including Roma and in fostering agency. In terms of this paper, agency can be seen as fostering cultural and political empowerment through active participation and representation.⁷ Paired with policy analysis will be an exploration of the steps needed to create a more sustainable and equitable system of inclusion for Roma with emphasis on truly democratic representation and community-based projects⁸. This paradigm shift from social inclusion to what I refer to as a cultural sustainability paradigm is necessary for progress concerning inclusion in a culturally appropriate and socioeconomically viable manner.

Furthermore, cultural sustainability, as a practice, involves the local cultures in sustainable development and seeks to create collaborative and mutually beneficial partnerships between peoples to ensure culture's role in policy development. A part of this cultural policy would be the recognition of historical stigmatization and racism and the role that historical policies and attitudes play in sustaining popular misconceptions. People know Roma only as stereotypes (all Roma are musicians, Roma deliberately live segregated, Roma do not value education), and therefore Romani beliefs, values, and traditions are further discredited by not addressing these misconceptions (Dunn 2014; David 2014; Hancock 2002). Policies created to

⁶ For further information concerning the Hungarian Roma see Chapter 5.

⁷ Agency is further explained in Chapter 2: Methodology and Terminology.

⁸ Both democratic representation and community-based programs are discussed further in Chapter 6, which emphasizes the corrupt situation of representation for Roma currently used by the Decade and the lack of impactful community projects.

address these misconceptions and stereotypes would serve to bring a sense of pride among Roma scrutinized for their seemingly homogenous (?) culture instead of celebrated for their diversity, a diversity that could hold the key for culturally informed inclusionary policies and community well-being.

I argue that cultural sustainability is key to discussing Roma inclusion in Europe for several reasons:

- Firstly, to truly create an inclusive society, the excluded must be at the forefront of the process creating policies and programs. Done in a cohesive and democratic manner, this process should take into account the historical discrimination and structural racism that have hampered inclusion. This means that a democratic, culturally appropriate, and non-corrupt system of representation should be created in each nation and community, and local-level Roma representatives should be supported. Once they are able to legitimately speak for their communities, appropriate community-focused programs can be created.
- Secondly, funding for the envisioned programs and policies should be focused on local communities, with transparency and direct control over funds being given to local Roma civil society representatives and organizations. By allowing funding to directly impact local Roma, it enforces the key tenets of cultural sustainability, which supports the belief that cultural members are best positioned to determine cultural needs. Programs deemed necessary by Roma can be funded instead of those designed by non-Roma to impact their perceived cultural needs. Additionally, the funding parameters for the programs should be expanded to include more support from the national governments and less from the sometimes non-invested nongovernmental organizations and cash-strapped local organizations.

- Thirdly, the governments and organizations involved with the programs and policy making for inclusion should actually *know* the Romani communities they are attempting to include. Since prevalent stereotypes have largely created a culture where non-Roma and Roma alike are segregated and Romani culture is devalued, creating space for cultural programming and cultural education is key to envisioning a sustainable future. This means that community-level public education and community forums should be created to facilitate cultural awareness and give voice to multiple perspectives. This could pave the way for a time when stereotypes and misconceptions give way to understanding and recognition of human dignity.

While this paradigm shift is one of the potential ways to create an inclusive future for both Roma and non-Roma, I believe this reimagining needs to take place now in order to generate a more equitable future. In this work, I attempt to highlight the failures and successes of the Decade, along with the possibilities for future work in the outlined priority areas. The area of Romani culture in regards to the DORI is further analyzed and a cultural sustainability framework is put forth as part of this analysis. However, I recognize this work is merely one piece of policy analysis and Roma research being undertaken, and I believe that through collaboration and more in-depth ethnographic fieldwork, the solution, or solutions, for the diverse needs of Roma people can be found. As a world, we must to recognize the inherent value of the Romani people's contributions and work toward a time when Roma can truly be free from the discrimination, racism, and misconceptions that have influenced the exclusion they now face.

Chapter 1: Literature Review

To formulate a constructive and substantive argument for change within the Decade of Roma Inclusion—and similar policies involving transnational efforts to create inclusive environments for Roma people—I have broken down the literature into five sections based on content. I first began by examining the literature available from the Decade of Roma Inclusion. I also looked into the various critiques concerning the Decade’s lack of progress. After identifying the common trend in critiques, I examined the role of Roma identity politics and the Roma social movement in creating an environment of inclusion. Once I identified Hungary as a potential case study I began to research the minority government systems and the history of Roma in Hungary. Finally I began to formulate my own role within the literature and how this paper can serve to broaden the field of cultural sustainability, transnational policy development and Romani studies. The five sections covered in the literature review are as follows:

- Literature relating to the Decade of Roma Inclusion, including the critiques of the Decade by scholars and Roma themselves.
- How the Roma have been categorized by states and external governments with special considerations given to the politics of identity.
- Approaches to Roma rights protections.
- Literature on Roma organizational practice in the context of political identification.
- Roma’s situation in Hungary and the Decade work in the country thus far.
- Gaps in literature and the opportunities available for agency building among Roma.

All in all, these sections serve as an analytical framework from which to delve into the need for a new structure that creates inclusionary policies with and for Roma.

Decade of Roma Inclusion Literature

The most obvious place to start an examination of current Roma experiences in Europe is with the *Decade of Roma Inclusion Declaration* signed by the nine founding members of the initiative⁹. The document is a brief outline of the Decade organization's goals and is the first recognition of the need for a transnational organization with national plans of action. The document is historic in its implications for the countries involved. For one, it established their commitment to "eliminating discrimination and closing the unacceptable gaps between Roma and the rest of society," and secondly, it was structured as nongovernmental but invoked the use of action plans carried out by members' national governments. This created a parallel structure of governance that had not been proven successful in the past and has, at best, managed to be mired in complex bureaucracy and missed opportunities.

In the blog article *Another Decade of Roma Exclusion?* written by a *Citizenship in Southeast Europe* contributor, the author questions the role of the Decade in contributing to the greater socioeconomic inclusion of the Roma¹⁰. The piece challenges the specific improvements in education in relation to the Decade's goals to improve the educational status of the Roma, in particular the child-education rate, citing the existence of segregated schools in Croatia and the presence of Roma ghetto education in Slovenia. The author critiques the deportation practices of western European countries in recent years. Most are not part of the Decade, and the majority of

⁹ The DORI Members are: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia and Spain. The United States and Slovenia are considered observers.

¹⁰ Anonymous contributor.

deportees are sent to DORI-affiliated countries. Such practices create a cycle of migration and strain on the fragile systems funded through the affiliates of the Decade. The blog concludes with the author saying, “As we enter the final phase of the Decade, it is arguably not a lack of funding or adequate monitoring that most impedes attempts to improve the lives of Roma people throughout Europe. What seems to be lacking is the will to do so” (Citizenship in Southeast Europe 2012).

Another critique of the Decade of Roma Inclusion work, which echoes the sentiments expressed in the *Citizenship in Southeast Europe* blog, is the article by Valeriu Nicolae, previously of the European Roma Information Office (ERIO) (Nicolae 2005). Nicolae begins with a brief description of the founding of the Decade of Roma Inclusion and then focuses on the various “glitches” that have arisen. The first, is the lack of self-representation of Roma at the 2003 conference¹¹, which spurred the creation of the Decade. Nicolae claims that many of the traditional Roma leaders and the organizers of the European Roma and Travellers Forum (ERTF), an organization recently conceived at that time, were not invited to attend the conference. Nicolae states that the ERTF organizers were deeply offended by not being invited. Furthermore, because of the choices made by the conference, many organizations were left out of the process, and thus competition grew among NGOs once funds were made available through the Decade’s affiliates. In some cases, organizations were forced to compete with one another for projects. The author discusses the absence of cooperation between stakeholders and the apparent absence of communication before the official start of the Decade. Many of his critiques are

¹¹ 2003 Conference entitled “Roma in an Expanding Europe: Challenges for the Future” was co-sponsored by the Open Society Institute, European Commission, and the World Bank (Nicolae 2005)

echoed by other scholars and Roma who see the Decade as an ineffectual policy experiment, lacking ability to affect change on the ground.

Possibly one of the most significant recognitions of the lack of progress comes from the Decade presidency in 2013. The Presidency of the Republic of Croatia put forth a report entitled *To Be or Not to Be...Roma Decade after 2015?* outlining the achievements and failures of the Decade with the outlook for action after the initiative's end in 2015. The article starts with an overview of the Decade's inception and progress to date, including the expansion of its membership to 12 participating countries and the emergence of the European Union Framework for Roma Inclusion. Some of the achievements covered include the overall awareness of issues associated with Roma exclusion in international media, the formation of a political structure unlike any other in Europe, and the inclusion of Roma and NGOs in its governance body. The article also identifies several shortcomings: the overall ambitious mission and lack of progress in several key areas, the deficiency of adequate funding, the nonexistent enforcement mechanism, and the sporadic and inconsistent monitoring. The Decade's future is divided into four different options: ending the initiative in 2015 with no further commitments by the members, transferring the Decade work into other initiatives, continuing it without changes, and lastly, changing the Decade to address the recognized failures. Overall, the article acknowledges its downfalls and portrays the Decade as a somewhat flawed attempt at a good idea.

The Decade Secretariat (which will be explained in further detail under the Decade structure section of this paper) put forth a reform proposal after discussions by the member nations about extending the role of the Decade after 2015. The document, simply titled *Decade of Roma Inclusion Reform Proposal*, is a set of proposed policies to change the Decade while also adopting portions of the EU Framework on Roma Inclusion that was implemented in 2011–

2012. The first set of reforms outlined in the proposal is to change from Decade National Action Plans to the EU's National Roma Integration Strategies and designate the same coordinator for the EU's Framework and the Decade. Additionally, the reporting mechanisms currently used by the Decade would be reformulated to match the ones being used by the EU Framework. The proposal also eliminates the biannual International Steering Committee meetings and redefines the presidency role in the Decade, or even omits it entirely, depending on the opinions of the members. The funding for the Decade would be reformed to include a mandatory 20,000 euros from each participating government, and the Decade Trust Fund would be amended to ensure the funds will efficiently reach member programs. Lastly, the priority areas would need to become more specific with more efficient monitoring metrics, and Roma participation would need to increase. Overall the reforms proposed suggest a move toward a more streamlined Decade in line with the EU Strategies and more access to EU level support in the form of funding and monitoring. Again, while the acknowledgment of failure is significant, it remains to be seen if the reforms will be implemented or if the Decade will fade away into obscurity as just another attempt to address the systemic issues surrounding the Roma people in Europe.

Svjetlana Curcic and Shayna Plaut analyze the educational goals and policies of the Decade in *Roma Education in Europe: Practices, Policies, and Politics*, edited by Maja Miskovic. Curcic and Plaut start their piece by defining why they have used the terminology "Roma" in their research (due to the Decade's use of the term and the recognition by academics that Roma or perceived Roma have been discriminated against in education for centuries). They then describe the Roma Education Fund (REF) as initiated by the Decade in 2005. The fund was designed to finance and collect information about the various educational projects that were part of the Decade's programs. The REF aimed to serve as a somewhat independent venture of the

Decade structure due to the staggering achievement gap between Roma and non-Roma students across Europe. According to the authors, the REF is the only consistent source of funding for Decade programs because of its independent nature and its funds being sourced through multiple donors. The authors point to the problems with the often simplified and vague action plans of the various governments, including relying on numbers alone to show improvement without having baseline data or an accurate count of how many Roma children should be in the programs. Furthermore, the authors state that when relying upon numbers and not the structural problems in the educational system, policymakers resort to blaming low numbers on the intrinsic “cultural” problem with Roma and their lack of education, thereby resorting to the stereotypes of the past. Stereotypes and practices that gave rise to the special schools for disabled children are found throughout the Decade countries despite the many national policies against them. The schools lack in both educational tools and funding and often have a disproportionate amount of Roma students who have not been properly evaluated for mental health issues or learning disabilities. These schools, the authors argue, are the result of both discriminatory attitudes and an absence of cultural understanding on the part of the teachers, who often ascribe to the idea that Roma youth underachieve in school due to their parents’ (and culture’s) lack of emphasis on education. The authors end their piece by discussing the support the Decade needs to provide to truly include Roma in the education system; they stress that the state is in control of the system and needs to be held responsible for failings, that outside funds will not last forever, and that the culture of the education system needs to change of mindset from a problem with the Roma to a failing of the system.

One of the most thorough and in-depth analyses of the Decade was published by the Budapest Institute for Policy Analysis in 2011, entitled *The Role of the Decade of Roma*

Inclusion in Shaping European Roma Inclusion Policies. The report starts by critically analyzing the strategic goals of the Decade and their results as of 2011. The first portion of the report includes a background of the Decade's strategies in the priority areas and an analysis of the involvement of outside NGOs and the EU. The first critique is that the involvement of the EU and its partners has remained largely symbolic while they attempt to create their own rendition of the Decade in the European Framework for Roma Integration adopted in 2011. The authors point out the failings of the Decade to date: the lack of an effective monitoring program, the shortage of public awareness campaigns, the absence of a strong campaign against discriminatory practices, and, finally, the lack of a strong program in knowledge sharing and best practices. The Budapest Institute asserts that these problems stem from a failed attempt to place the burden of responsibility upon individual member nations and that ultimately this responsibility is played out in the half-hearted attempts to address the issues in a meaningful way. This theme of failing to actually address systemic problems associated with Roma is present throughout all the literature concerning the Decade, which is significant. Even though actors affiliated with the Decade are aware of the issues facing Roma, the Decade countries and organizations have not taken steps to resolve them in a meaningful way. With only a year left in the original Decade, it seems as if the actors within the Decade are complacent with its structure; I believe structural and policy changes need to be fluid in relation to the external forces acting upon them. Without change, the Decade is destined to be merely that—a Decade of promises devoid of lasting impact.

Roma Organizing Structures

Cultures throughout time have found the need to organize to achieve a goal. The Roma are no different, and over time they have relied on various organizational approaches to obtain

their specific goals. Aidan McGarry's article, *Ethnic Group Identity and the Roma Social Movement: Transnational Organizing Structures of Representation* examines some of the models of organizing around Roma issues. While the article focuses on organizations dealing specifically with Roma issues, the most pertinent and noteworthy contribution from McGarry is his analysis of group identity's role in shaping the larger Roma social movement. According to McGarry, the movement is not only shaped by external forces and the choices organizations make in organizing structures, but also in how Roma choose to identify themselves as a group. While this seems self-evident to some social organizations, the Roma people's unique situation in terms of their heterogeneous and transnational existence makes it difficult to create a shared group identity. Thus, the identity of the group at any given time can contribute to the overall success of the organizational structure and in turn affect the degree to which the organizations can remain viable.

In *Options of Roma Political Participation and Representation*, Márton Rövid unpacks various approaches to political involvement among Roma organizations over the past 40 years or so, and he focuses on creating an analytical framework for viewing the various avenues for political participation and Roma representation in Europe. The first approach Rövid discusses is the *self-determination* approach, which arose during the 1970s and 1980s. This approach highlights the importance of differentiating the Roma from the majority population. While territorial autonomy is largely seen as unrealistic, cultural and political autonomy based on minority rights protections has been explored in Hungary in the form of "minority self-governments." Next, Rövid analyzes the *human rights* approach, which was prevalent from the 1990s to the early 2000s. The human rights approach calls for full integration of Roma people into the majority society and is based upon human rights protections under international law.

Essentially, this method focuses on the idea of equal status under law and creating a society where different cultural groups are of equal status but can remain culturally active and autonomous. Rövid's third approach of *social inclusion* grew out of the critique of previous approaches to Roma rights and is based on the concept that while human and cultural rights are obviously important, the approaches fail to address inherent issues within the social system. Furthermore, the social inclusion approach critiques the self-determination approaches of the past as contributing to the "ethnicization" of social problems, essentially equating the political disenfranchisement of the Roma with their social situation and making it a "cultural" issue instead of one of exclusion. These approaches—as outlined by Rövid—remain important discourses within the broader context of cultural rights. But as is evident by the lack of progress in relying on one approach, a new approach combined with restructuring the various organizations is needed to create the desired changes within the Roma social movement.

Rövid's article *One-Size-Fits-All Roma? On the Normative Dilemmas of the Emerging European Roma Policy* explores similar issues found in the previous article but focuses more on specific examples of politicization of Roma rights. The first dilemma Rövid writes about is the issue of universal human-rights approaches versus specific minority-rights approaches in relation to Roma inclusion in national policy. The article further explains that this dilemma is complicated by a second dilemma, which is the issue of using specific minority rights versus generic minority rights—where targeted rights are focused on specific community needs and generic rights are those afforded to all minorities under the UN declaration on minority rights. In conclusion, Rövid discusses the idea of the Roma as a transnational nation or as national minorities with implicit minority rights. He concludes that both constructs of identity serve to alleviate the status of the Roma in their sociopolitical standings. However, both also serve to

alleviate the goals of the Roma elite, whereas many Roma are unaware of the broader Romani social movement and don't identify with the term Roma. Thus, both national and non-territorial nation approaches need to be supplemented by an emergence of a Roma middle class and an inclusionary international culture devoid of discrimination and racism. While Rövid's critique of the dilemmas associated with Roma in Europe does address some of the major downfalls within the collective European paradigm, the biggest issue that is not addressed (and maybe cannot be) is that of structural and societal racism and discrimination. Perhaps key to the human rights debate is the absence of discussion on how to affect change among non-Roma in the areas of discrimination and racism, aside from merely giving Roma special treatment in employment, housing, education, and health care. This is the theme of recognition and education that is lacking in all of the efforts by transnational organizations. Without support from national governments to truly address the issues on a societal scale, progress will largely remain sluggish.

Categorizing and Identifying the Roma

The overwhelming majority of articles and books pertaining to Roma go out of their way to clarify the reasons for using the term "Roma," instead of the better known term "Gypsy". For example, in Peter Vermeersch's article *The European Union and the Roma: An Analysis of Recent Institutional and Policy Developments*, Vermeersch justifies his usage of the term by relating it to how the European Union defines Roma to include the broadest group possible, which might even include those who do not identify as Roma (a prime example being the Irish Travellers who are not ethnically Roma). While the rest of the article relates to the European Union's approaches to Roma people, the importance of identifying the Roma in policy is most pertinent to my research. According to Vermeersch, many groups who may not see themselves as Roma are categorized and identified as such in policy. In some cases, this has created divisions

in the Roma social movement because of policies that incorrectly target groups not collectively identifying themselves as “Roma.” The European Union employs a broad-brush definition of Roma to reach a variety of groups they perceive as needing help, which is mainly due to member states’ enlargement policies. According to these policies, new members need to accommodate and create policies for improving underserved ethnic and minority groups. Vermeersch also points out the economic factors that drove the EU to start addressing Roma issues. The unemployment of many Roma may harm the economy, but when they are given education, housing, employment and health care, economic benefits to the members are realized.

Vermeersch’s book *The Romani Movement: Minority Politics & Ethnic Mobilization in Contemporary Central Europe* analyzes both the identity of the Roma and the current and historical Romani social movements. In keeping with the aforementioned pieces, Vermeersch devotes a significant amount of his writing (in this case, a whole chapter) to discussing the usage of the term Roma and the issue of identity of the Roma. The book talks about the rise of the minority political movements and the fragmentation of said movements through competition and limited funding. Additionally, the author describes the influence of national and international actors on the ways to frame the Roma movement in relation to the sociopolitical issues facing Roma. Vermeersch concludes that the Roma movement is faced with the difficult task of identifying the people both as a distinctive cultural group and as equal European citizens. This approach might seem paradoxical when one considers the efforts of the Romani movement to both fight discrimination and likewise advocate for minority protections based upon their differences.

In Istvan Pogany’s article *Accommodating an Emergent National Identity: The Roma of Central and Eastern Europe*, the author explores the dilemma of how the Roma are written into

history but fail to be substantially recognized. Pogany explains that this lack of participation and recognition on a Europe-wide scale occurred for three different reasons: the apparent lack of documentation of the Roma by historians; the separation of the Roma groups from state governmental structures, both willingly and through structural discrimination; and, most poignantly, the absence of a unified identity among the various Roma groups. This absence of identity caused them to be unaware of the other groups' lack of sociopolitical involvement or, in some cases, their existence at all. Pogany likens the Roma's experience with nationalism and identity to the rise of Zionism in the Jewish perspective, albeit without the success of garnering their own nation. According to Pogany, the more recent emergence of national and international policies is due to two factors: the recognition of Roma as victims of the communist states' transition to a market economy and the increased international attention to human-rights abuses occurring against Roma people. While many scholars and activists agree with Pogany's viewpoint, I feel as though it leaves the sociocultural aspects of discrimination and racism out of the equation.

Options for Roma Rights Protections

While many scholars recognize the need for rights protections for the Roma (indeed, the United Nations and other international cooperative organizations have clearly outlined the importance of culture), consensus on how to protect those cultural rights has been elusive. As a comparative example, one could consider the disconnect between general minority rights protections—such as those outlined by the United Nations—and the specific rights given to national ethnic groups. In each case, the cultural rights protections differ drastically in how they meet the needs of their recipients. For example, while the general minority rights guarantee minorities access to cultural expression, specific cultural rights would give a venue and avenue

for the cultural expressions to take place and guarantee protection under national law. The approaches to Roma rights protections are no different, and scholars and policy makers have yet to reach a clear framework or approach.

An example of a potential framework for Roma rights can be found in Galina Kostadinova's article *Minority Rights as a Normative Framework for Addressing the Situation of Roma in Europe*. The article seeks to use the minority rights protections under international law to create a framework for all Roma rights issues, being that the framework for minority rights addresses issues relating to minority physical existence, cultural rights, and social participation. The problem with using just the minority rights approach as defined in the past is that it fails to address the problems within the broader society. While one can give Roma protection under law, it is much harder to change society's view of the Roma as needing protection. Kostadinova advocates redistribution and recognition, where redistribution refers to the direction of material benefits toward Roma groups and recognition describes the support for Roma agency and acknowledgment of a unique Roma identity. However, both redistribution and recognition are necessary to create a successful social program. Thus, while someone can build a school for Roma people, an example of redistribution, the act fails to address the recognition harms of stigma against Roma children or anti-segregation policies. The article argues that the recognition approaches are addressed in the minority rights protections for Roma, and therefore the redistribution harms will be resolved once the recognition harms are addressed.

Redistribution and recognition are again discussed in McGarry's *EU Roma Policy: Between Redistribution and Recognition*. McGarry focuses first on EU members' policies of anti-Roma discrimination and then discusses the heterogeneous nature of the Roma identity in relation to said policies. McGarry argues the EU did not pay much attention to the Roma until

the organization's eastward expansion, meaning the Roma would become EU citizens by default with the same protections and rights as non-Roma EU citizens. He points to the emergence of the EU enlargement process as a tacit way of controlling the member states and forcing them to change their policies on Roma and other minorities. He also acknowledges the use of PHARE¹² funds to attempt to control the migration of the Roma westward and create inclusionary environments for Roma and other minorities. Many critics of the EU Framework of Roma policy and Roma policies in general point to the lack of recognition of the Roma as more than just a social group. They also mention the focus on redistributive measures, which includes creating schools and requiring member states to open up the workforce without dealing with the underlying issues of discrimination, racism, and exclusionary policies against the Roma.

In Nicolae Gheorghe's article *Choices to be made and Prices to be Paid*, the author argues the need for a whole new paradigm in talking about Roma rights and Roma sociopolitical status. Gheorghe speaks of a new way of talking about Roma issues with disregard to political correctness or affiliation to any party. The author also discusses a need to limit the nongovernmental organizations' influence in the Roma civil society, arguing they are beholden to outside donors (that are removed from local-level issues) which limits their ability to truly impart change. The NGOs that Gheorghe speaks of are organizations that are not funded by the governments of any nation (at least in theory) and often focus on a specific issue relating to the Roma. For instance, the European Roma Rights Centre works to address human rights abuses through international law and provides legal support to Roma claimants. Gheorghe discusses the lack of grassroots influence on policy making and argues that the NGOs have become more

¹² PHARE: Poland and Hungary Assistance for Restructuring their Economies. Originally started in 1989 as a fund to help post-communist countries transition into the European Union but expanded to include more than 10 countries (McGarry 2012).

bureaucratized and largely ineffective on a local level. His critique focuses heavily on the top-down approach present in many organizations, an assessment similar to many others.

Hungary and the Decade of Roma Inclusion

The government of Hungary, one of the main driving forces behind the formation of the Decade, has been influential in its implementation and progress and has contributed to the overall discussion on Roma people's role in the enlarged EU. Additionally, Hungary's unique minority government rule has allowed Roma a platform for additional political and socioeconomic agency, a topic which will be discussed further in the paper. The uniqueness of the Hungarian government's approach to Roma begins with their reevaluation of the Roma as a national and ethnic minority starting in the 1990s and continues to this day through the use of the Roma National Self-Governments. However, the rise of far-right and nationalistic parties has impeded the progress of Roma rights in Hungary.

The Hungarian National Action Plan (*Parliamentary Resolution on the Decade of Roma Inclusion Programme Strategic Plan*) and the subsequent *Decade of Roma Inclusion Programme Strategic Plan [Revised 2007]* are targeted to achieve Roma inclusion in Hungary at a national level in the fields of education, health care, housing, and employment. The action plan begins with an overview of the situation of Roma in Hungary, including statistics on education, employment opportunities, health conditions, and availability of housing. In each section of the report, the failings of the Hungarian government to provide opportunity for education, housing, employment, and health care are evident in the large amounts of Roma unemployed, uneducated, and living in impoverished conditions. In each of the priority areas, the plan is split into objectives and indicators of success. Some sample indicators of success include the reduction of

Roma youth in special schools, the increased participation of Roma in formal employment, and the increased access to affordable housing for Roma. However, the issue of culture is simply addressed by the increase of Roma youth programs, promotion of culture through performance, and decrease in human rights cases. Significant approaches to the underlying issues of racism and discrimination are omitted from the “objectives.”

The Hungarian government’s action plan is largely a list of proposed objectives without easily measurable goals, so to create more attainable metrics, the government put out a 2008–2009 report outlining the specific institutions that would oversee the various tasks, entitled *Government Action Plan for 2008–2009 related to the Decade of the Roma Inclusion Program Strategic Plan*. To summarize the plan, the tasks are split between several different governmental bodies, including the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development, the Ministry of Education and Culture, and the Ministry of Finance. These bodies are charged with meeting specified goals for each objective with more specific goals than those outlined in the previous strategic plan. The ministries associated with each task aim to meet specific goals in each priority area, many of which remain rather ambiguous and lack substantive changes. Further information on the ministries and their tasks in each area is not readily available, and for the most part, any information on what they are actually doing is unclear. This is one of the main downfalls of the Decade plan by the Hungarian government, and while it is obvious that one agency could not be responsible for all of the tasks, it is significant that the tasks have become overly bureaucratized.

In 2010, the Open Society Institute (one of the main NGOs funding the Decade and a driving force behind its formation) put out a report entitled *No Data-No Progress: Country Findings Data Collection in Countries Participating in the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–*

2015, which outlined the significant lack of progress on the part of the Decade up to 2010. While each participating country was scrutinized as part of the report, the findings on Hungary's action plan are the most pertinent to this literature review and, as such, will be discussed. The first portion of the report provides an overview of Hungary's involvement with the Decade and its data collection practices. Hungary was arguably one of the most active members and proponents of the Decade in the beginning, but over time it began to step back, which some scholars and Roma activists argue was due to political changes in the country after 2004–2005 and the rise of the nationalist parties in more recent years. The data-collection practices in Hungary lack scope and breadth, and while the Hungarian Central Statistical Office collects data, it does not involve local governments or ministries and does not collect specific ethnic data relating to any of the priority areas of the Decade plan. However, independent data is available and often used as part of official reports by Hungary; this independent data is often funded in part by Hungarian institutes or ministries. Thus, some data is available, but none is official data routinely carried out by government officials or ministries. Furthermore, some data is collected as part of the Roma programs, but often it is not representative of the whole Roma population in Hungary or substantiated by the government. In terms of monitoring the programs associated with the Decade, the Decade does not specify what methodology is to be used to collect data and mostly relies on the participating nations to monitor the data collection as part of “regular surveys.”

Furthermore, the OSI report finds that because most of the programs are funded through EU Structural Funds, which cannot target Roma specifically, Hungarian Roma programs cannot reliably measure their success. In the area of education, the plan simply tries to monitor the number of school dropouts instead of a completion rate among Roma students. In employment, the plans only have one goal and are based upon the increase of Roma participation in the labor

market, but they contain a short list of indicators, including the rates of employment and unemployment among Roma. Regarding health care, the goal is to improve Roma people's life expectancy, but it doesn't rely on the infant mortality rate in any of the plans. In housing, the goals include the reduction of settlements and Roma living in segregation. Overall, the data collected points to a lack of comprehensive statistics and methodology and, in fact, a shortage of data overall with which to monitor the Decade's progress in Hungary.

Similar to the study commissioned by the Open Society Institute, the Decade commissioned *Civil Society Monitoring Report: on the Implementation of the National Roma Integration Strategy and Decade Plan in 2012 in Hungary*, which attempts to monitor the objectives of the Decade in relation to each country's action plan. The comprehensive report brings together researchers from the NGOs working on Roma issues and members of the Decade and outside organizations to critique the country's progress toward the goal of Roma inclusion as outlined in their specific action plan. The report breaks down the plan into the key priority areas and includes recommendations from the participating organizations and individuals. It concludes with case studies from various areas in Hungary. The specific recommendations from the report are divided into the priority areas along with recommendations on monitoring efforts and structural issues. The general recommendations made by the report include the use of a fundamental rights approach, which should be integrated into the strategy for Hungary, and a further cohesion between the EU Framework strategy and the Decade strategy. The report overall encourages a restructuring of the Hungarian National Action Plan and points to the deficiency of data, monitoring, and specific tasks and objectives in each field as the main hindrances to success for the plan.

Concluding Thoughts

Overall, most literature on the topic of Roma issues is prone to either oversimplify or is mired in complexities of identity politics and organizational paradigms. However, it all points to the lack of cohesive policy on Roma inclusion and, furthermore, identifies key themes that the Decade and Hungarian government fail to address in their respective plans. First and foremost, the lack of segregated data is a cause of concern. Objectives based upon demographics are fundamentally flawed in their attempt to correlate the Decade's impact with data. Without a baseline of ethnic data, one cannot determine the potential and actual impact of the programs upon the Roma in Hungary.

The second theme that arose in the literature is the absence of a structure for improving the situation of Roma in Hungary. NGOs compete for dwindling funds and the government relies on the integrity of the National Roma Self Government (NRSZ) to address the needs of the Romani community. Also, Roma are wrongly assumed to be one homogeneous assemblage instead of a diverse multitude of subcultures, including the Beás, Vlach, and Romungro. While the Decade attempts to create a structure for improving the situation of Roma in Hungary and across Europe, it has overlooked or blatantly refused to address some of the issues that are omitted from the scope of the National Action Plans. Overall, the literature available specifically focusing on the situation of Roma in Hungary in relation to the Decade of Roma Inclusion is modest, with many basic resources focused on Roma in Hungary and the Minority Self-Governments (which will be discussed in detail in the Hungarian section); it lacks independent analyses of the Decade.

The themes that seem to drive much of the research in the literature are the terminology and identity politics associated with Roma, the organizing structures that have influenced the Roma movement, and, finally, the models of rights protections impacting the direction of the transnational organizations and NGOs working with Roma. While this literature influences the overall direction of my research, there are some key areas that are missing. Instead of arguing over terminology and centering our attention on lack of progress being made by NGOs, we need to address the underlying issues of structural discrimination and form a new theoretical paradigm. Thus, my research addresses the lack of progress as not the fault of any institution or agency but rather the fault of our collective need of a new paradigm in which to address the Roma in a holistic manner.

Chapter 2: Methodology

Structure Rationale:

The research in this paper is largely based on literature and document reviews paired with interviews with two individuals both close to the Decade of Roma Inclusion and experienced working with Romani people in Hungary. The paper also includes a case study of the Hungarian DORI Plan along with a proposed theoretical paradigm for inclusion of Roma based on the framework of cultural sustainability¹³. In order to gain insight into the DORI, several different approaches were used, including direct conversations and correspondence with DORI officials, DORI documents, and critiques of the DORI, both available online. Additionally, each interviewee was asked several questions about the DORI and its work in Hungary and throughout Europe.

I chose to write this paper in a manner to ensure comprehension by non-academic readers or those unfamiliar with the DORI. This means that the chapters are largely descriptive summaries informed by interviews with individuals with significant insider knowledge along with personal analysis of the DORI and Roma cultural agency. Additionally, this paper will include a proposal for a paradigm shift in Roma inclusion and a tentative framework for a new “Decade” of Roma. The chapters in no way define the totality of the work influenced by the DORI, but are offered to provide a comprehensive and detailed picture of the DORI and its impacts upon the Roma in participating countries. It should be noted that since the DORI is an ongoing initiative, some of its critiques and failings may well be addressed by the proposed ending date of 2015, and thus some criticisms may become obsolete.

¹³ See Chapter 6 Section titled: “Cultural Sustainability: A New Theoretical Framework for Roma Inclusion?”

Interview Methodology

In order to create a research paper with more depth beyond the literature available, I selected two interviewees based upon their involvement and experience with the Decade and/ or working with and for Hungarian Romani communities. The selection process for the interviewees was based upon advice from a capstone committee member. While several individuals were identified as possible interviewees, only two individuals agreed to be interviewed. Due to involvement of the individual interviewees with the DORI and to avoid any chance of repercussions, both of the interviewees requested anonymity. Therefore pseudonyms are used¹⁴. Both interviewees are aware of the DORI and had some insight into their work, but only the interviewee identified as David had direct knowledge of the DORI work itself and was able to provide deeper insight than is available through the published literature. The other interviewee, identified as Dunn, has more experience in Hungarian Romani communities and provided grassroots insights for my case study. Therefore, while similar questions were asked pertaining to the research, the interviewees had different levels of knowledge of the questions and were able to paint a broader picture of the situation for Roma in Hungary than the official documentation. The questions included specifics on the Hungarian Decade Plan, the general political situation of the Roma in Hungary and the DORI programs and interactions with the Roma people on a local level. Additionally, both interviewees shared personal stories of working with Roma people on issues of education, employment, and discrimination and shared personal insights on what change was needed for effectual policy making. A more complete list of the interview questions asked of each interviewee and selected transcriptions of the interviews can be found in the appendix.

¹⁴ The pseudonyms are: Richard David and Kathy Dunn

Overall, the interviews play a crucial role both in creating a broader scope for the research, and also in the specific and more personal details that the literature does not cover. Both interviews serve as important narratives to discuss the often ambiguous policies of the DORI and both serve to influence the direction and scope of the research, especially pertaining to the absence of *culture* in the DORI policies, an idea that will be discussed further in the paper¹⁵. The interviews included in this research do not represent the entirety of the scope of the research but are used to add more personal qualities to the literature, which relies heavily on data, or lack of data in some cases. The interviews were all performed via online interactions using Skype and all were recorded per the interview protocols to ensure that proper transcription could take place. Additionally, the audio versions of the interviews were destroyed upon completion of the transcriptions to ensure anonymity of the interviewees.

Research Methodology

The research conducted as part of this paper was done using both primary and secondary sources available through online journals, blogs, and the official Decade of Roma Inclusion websites, along with books and magazines. The research was selected based upon its relevance to the main topics included in this paper along with their relevance to cultural sustainability and policy making in relation to the Decade. Research materials were drawn from diverse academic fields in an effort to both utilize the different paradigms shaping policy formation and research and to stay true to the tenets of cultural sustainability¹⁶. Overall, the research conducted as part of this paper was directly influenced by the gaps in literature surrounding Roma in Hungary and in relation to transnational policy making, and in particular, the Decade of Roma Inclusion

¹⁵ See Chapter 6

¹⁶ See Chapter 6 for more information on the core tenets of cultural sustainability.

initiative. Those gaps in the literature reflect the gaps in policy making that have not dealt with the more difficult aspects of culture and structural discrimination in transnational policy making. While the policies researched all allude to the relevance of culture to the issues facing Roma people, none directly deal with cultural policy on a significant scale. For that reason, my focus exemplifies the need for a change in transnational policy and perhaps a complete paradigm shift away from redistribution and minority rights recognition¹⁷ to a cultural sustainability paradigm.

Terminology:

While many academics have settled on the term Roma to describe the various cultures that are either Roma or affiliated with Roma people, many still debate the terms used for the various groups. I have chosen to use the term Roma and Romani to describe the various Roma or affiliated groups targeted by the Decade of Roma Inclusion policies. I have done this for several reasons:

1. The term “Gypsy” holds negative connotations and while many people still refer to themselves and or the groups as “Gypsies” Romani academics and leaders condemned the term and recognized the term “Roma” in 1971 at the first Romani World Congress (Hancock 2002). While the Romani World Congress does not hold sway over all Roma groups, Roma has been established as a more accepted and politically correct term in the international arena.
2. Due to the use of the term “Roma” in both the Decade documents and in the literature used as part of this research, and in order to retain a sense of continuity with the academic literature. I use “Roma” as a plural noun and “Roma or Romani” as adjectives in this

¹⁷ See Chapter 1 Literature Review for further explanation.

research paper with the understanding that not all Romani people consider themselves to be Roma.

It should be understood that this paper in no way assumes the homogeneity of Roma groups; although at times certain generalizations are used in an effort to exemplify the unfortunate realities that many groups experience, the Roma people do not always coalesce as a unified group; subgroups often differentiate themselves in social, economic, and cultural ways. The term “Roma” is used as both a description of the whole Roma and Roma affiliated populations and as term for the languages associated with the groups. Additionally, “Roma” is used strategically to draw upon a sense of nationalism in much of the literature; while this research does not cover nationalism, it should be noted that Roma is often used in transnational or national organizations and policies to describe the entire swath of Romani cultures. I chose to use the term Roma in the Hungarian case study, although some of the populations involved do not call themselves Roma and do not speak the Romani language.¹⁸

I also chose to use the terms Holocaust and the Baro Porrajmos¹⁹ interchangeably in this paper due to the usage of both terms in the literature. The majority of the general population has at least a basic association with the term Holocaust. Whilst some Romani scholars have exclusively chosen to use the term Porrajmos or Pharrajimos²⁰ to describe the atrocities of the Nazis in an effort to separate the Jewish Holocaust from the Romani Holocaust, I have chosen to use both to show the similarities between their experiences.

¹⁸ For further information see Chapter 5: Hungary Case Study

¹⁹ See Chapter 3: The Roma for further explanation of this term.

²⁰ Both “Porrajmos” and “Pharrajimos” and other terms stem from different Romani dialects and essentially translate to “Devouring” etc. For more information see Chapter 3: The Roma and Chapter 5: Hungary Case Study.

The term “agency” is defined herein (and in sociology and philosophy) as the capacity of a person (agent) or group of peoples (collective agency) to act in the world (Barker 2003). In relation to the situation of the Romani populations, agency is used to describe the ability to act independently and without undue fear of the majority’s repercussions. This term is used in this paper to examine the Romani group’s ability to create effective change or lack thereof, arguably due to the structural constraints placed upon them by the society including racism, discrimination, and exclusion. My purpose is not to measure the agency of the Romani communities but to show the lack of Romani involvement in the programs created to facilitate inclusion. I argue that while the DORI has created programs, initiated policy work focused on inclusion and created more protections for Roma, Romani communities are still excluded from many aspects of society. Thus, while agency building is not the expressed goal of the Decade of Roma Inclusion, it does relate to its goals of enabling Romani inclusion into socioeconomic life, and is therefore discussed in this paper. In fact, it is the absence of imbedded cultural agency building that in the end hampers the success of the DORI and conclusively points to the need for a paradigm shift in Romani inclusionary policies.

The term “culture” often is understood to be the traditions, customs, norms, and beliefs that govern a group’s worldview; however, in terms of this research, “culture” is the foundation for all human experiences and thus influences every aspect of life, including those seen by many to be unrelated to the popular conception of culture²¹. While this definition is obviously cumbersome, more succinct interpretations, such as those used by the academic fields of anthropology, sociology, and psychology, have *not* served to adequately address culture in

²¹ Chapter 6 will include more information on the cultural components of the DORI and the need for a new examination of culture in policy work.

transnational policy work and instead focused cultural policy on largely arts policies (Hawkes 2001). Therefore, it is the goal of my research to apply a broader cultural scope to the inclusionary policies in an effort to address the lack of an imbedded cultural component to the purely socioeconomic objectives. This includes recognizing the intrinsic value in cultural adaptation and re-creation and acknowledging culture's potential role in creating space for inclusion. That is not to say culture cannot be addressed by examining traditions, customs, etc.; however, merely relegating culture to tangible and measurable things overlooks significant influences of culture. I propose that one of the possible solutions to the lack of Roma social inclusion can be found in reimagining and reinterpreting cultural work in relation to policy. I also propose that the lack of Romani agency and a cultural sustainability paradigm within the DORI is ultimately one of the sources of the inability of the DORI and other transnational policies to create sustained change.

Perhaps the broadest and often misunderstood term used in this research is “cultural sustainability”. I have chosen to define cultural sustainability as such: “the recognition of a cultural group's role in creating community-driven change for the enhancement and preservation of identity, place making, and tradition”. This definition was informed by the work of Jon Hawkes and my personal experiences with cultural work and ethnographic documentation. Additionally, I was influenced by Arlene Goldbard's *New Creative Community*, James Bau Graves' *Cultural Democracy* and the insights from Dr. Rory Turner in his course entitled “Cultural Sustainability Theory”, taught at Goucher College. Both Goldbard and Bau Graves explore the usage of culture in creating community, fostering tradition and empowering agency among diverse communities. These principles are at the forefront of cultural sustainability and are necessary in creating inclusive policies that are culturally informed. Additionally the

UNESCO roundtable document entitled *Cultural Diversity and Biodiversity for Sustainable Development* served to inform my research with the underlying question of why cultural sustainability matters. Ultimately, the issues Roma face are similar in some senses to the issues we all face: it is the question of why cultural diversity is important to the human experience. I believe, as do the participants of the UNESCO conference that cultural diversity ultimately serves to ensure environmental sustainability through multiple human experiences, perspectives, innovations, traditions and cooperation (UNESCO 8).

Cultural sustainability is still a developing field of study and, as such, my definition may not address all of the roles cultural work may serve to influence community development, identity formation, and policy work. I define the core tenets of cultural sustainability as the following:

- Culture is the fabric that serves to bind societies together and needs to be supported through education and discussions among groups.
- Diverse cultures equate to diverse solutions to common problems. As such, cultural members need to have a voice in the process.
- Preservation and re-creation of culture needs to be informed by the cultural group and should be supported through collaboration among all stakeholders.

Cultural sustainability as a methodology is necessary to the development of policy as it creates an inclusive environment in which to discuss the necessary steps to a solution while taking into account the various cultural agendas. Additionally, the core beliefs of cultural sustainability create an environment focused on diversity and working together to solve issues that affect all groups. I recognize that the goals of cultural sustainability can seem lofty and largely

unattainable in a world that is influenced by ingrained biases, racism, and misconceptions²².

However, without bringing cultural groups together to solve issues, solutions will remain out of touch with the cultural realities. The current reality for Roma unfortunately means exclusion from the larger society.

Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used throughout the paper in an effort to remain consistent with the literature and research and to allow for better comprehension:

1. CEB: Council of Europe Development Bank
2. CoE: Council of Europe
3. CPRSI: Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues
4. CSF: Cultural Sustainability Framework
5. DAP: Decade Action Plan
6. Decade Secretariat: Decade of Roma Inclusion Secretariat Foundation
7. DORI: Decade of Roma Inclusion also referred to as the Decade.
8. DTF: Decade Trust Fund
9. ERIO: European Roma Information Office
- 10.ERTF: European Roma and Travelers Forum

²² For some of the possible goals of inclusion, and indicators of success within the cultural sustainability framework proposed see Chapter 6.

11. ERRC: European Roma Rights Centre
12. EU: European Union
13. HAP: Hungarian Action Plan
14. ISC: International Steering Committee
15. NGO: Nongovernmental Organizations
16. NRSNG: National Roma Self Government
17. ODIHR: Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
18. OSCE: Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
19. OSF: Open Society Foundation
20. OSI: Open Society Institute
21. PHARE: Poland and Hungary Assistance for Restructuring their Economies
22. REF: Roma Education Fund
23. UN: United Nations
24. UNDP: United Nations Development Program
25. UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization

Chapter 3: The Roma

Roma of Europe

Roma people, once commonly referred to as “Gypsies” (from the term “Egyptian” from where non-Roma assumed they originated) migrated across Europe starting in the 13th century A.D. (Hancock 2002; Vermeersch 2007). Experts have been able to determine the likely link between the Roma people and the languages of northern India, leading them to assert that Roma people migrated from that region and at one time were a cohesive group (Hancock 2002). While scholars have argued over the reasons for the migration from the region, the Roma left the region and started appearing in written accounts as early as 1068 A.D.(although some of these accounts could be referring to other groups and not the Roma) (Hancock 2002). Accounts of Roma people appeared throughout Europe and the Byzantine Empire. Many people began to call them “Egyptians” simply due to their non-western European skin tone and the association at that time with anyone non-European as being “Egyptian” or worse “heathens”; this might be due to the xenophobic ideologies of the time and the clash between the Ottoman Turks and European civilizations (Hancock 2002). With each migration Roma people slowly began to change both their language and culture as they divided, both due to influences from outside populations and attempts by non-Roma to exterminate and assimilate them. Through the presence of many non-Roma words in their language, scholars have been able to determine the likely path that they travelled from westward. With significant influences from Persian, Kurdish, and Balkan languages, it is likely that Roma spent time in those areas both as migrating travelers and as tradesman and craftsmen learning new skills, such as metalworking, from their host countries (Hancock 2002). The Roma managed to subsist on some of these skills; although they weren’t seen as equals, they managed to occupy a significant economic influence on feudal European

market life, existing as serfs for the various feudal lords and slaves valued for their skills in Wallachia from the 14-19th centuries (see below)(Hancock 2002). Roma were perhaps once a cohesive and distinct cultural group but today they are a diverse collection of subgroups; they still manage to occupy certain traditional employment niches and are noted throughout history as being skilled metalworkers, musicians, tradesman, horse trainers, and carpenters (Hancock 2002). Although many Roma no longer have the distinct darker skin tones that marked their ancestors, they still possess some of their cultural attributes—stories, traditions, norms, and beliefs—and while modern Roma are composed of subgroups that may not even call themselves Roma (such as the Sinti and the Romanichal), their common heritage and shared persecutions have led outsiders to group them together. Traditional Roma culture is something that differs from group to group, and while some common threads can be seen, the most common cultural attributes that set Roma apart are their language, adherence to certain cultural norms and codes of conduct and etiquette ²³(Hancock 2002).

The change from being nomadic to sedentary slave populations occurred in what is now known as Romania from the 1300s to the 1500s; the Church, the landholders, and the nobles created classes of slaves based on occupation (Hancock 2002). Slavery persisted in the Romanian provinces of Wallachia and Moldavia until 1864 when it was abolished by the leader Mihail Kogalniceanu (Hancock 2002). The memory of Romani slavery is still present: in the days of slavery “tigan” was literally translated as “Roma slave”. Roma were likewise enslaved and tortured throughout other European countries; harsh laws existed in England, Spain, Russia, and Portugal (to name but a few). In Spain, Roma were enslaved and shipped to the Americas; at least three Roma slaves are known to have sailed with Columbus to the Caribbean in 1498

²³Obviously, these attributes are generalizations and are not equally present among all Roma populations.

(Hancock 2002). Throughout the centuries Roma people were met with suspicion, discrimination, and outright genocide simply for the fact that they were not Europeans or lacked a homeland of their own. While many Roma people attempted to fit into society, they more often than not were cast off as social deviants devoid of full citizenship. Laws against Roma people began appearing as early as 1417 in Germany, with countless others passed soon afterward; punishments included banishment, torture and death for simply being Roma or speaking Romani (Hancock 2002). Many scholars have drawn similarities between the struggles of the Jewish people and the Roma people throughout the centuries. While the Jews and the Roma share common issues of being landless nations, being discriminated against, and ultimately being seen as European outsiders, the Jewish people have managed to wield power and unify politically, creating a sociopolitical agenda that ultimately helped create group agency, while Roma people have yet to attain widespread group agency²⁴.

Roma populations up to the present have largely remained divided bodies of people living among non-Roma throughout Europe, with large populations in Eastern Europe, including Romania, Hungary, Bulgaria, and the Czech Republic (Hancock 2002; Vermeersch 2007). These populations have become dispersed and integrated to some degree among the majority populations, yet Roma have remained outsiders to the sociopolitical mainstream, relegated to the fringes of society as if the dark ages were still upon them. Many Roma populations face discrimination, ethnic violence, and structural racism that hinders their ability to both act as productive members of the mainstream workforce and as agents of their own destiny. Instead,

²⁴ This is obviously a generalization but one that seems to hold some weight, as most Roma are not able to gain enough power and voice to create effective institutions and organization advocating for their group needs. This is partially due to historical discrimination, racism, identity politics, limited structural support, and a general lack of cultural understanding of Roma by non-Roma.

they remain walled off (both figuratively and literally in some areas) from the pathway to agency.

History in Europe: From 15th Century to Post WWII

Roma, upon their arrival in Europe, were met with fear, suspicion, harsh punishments, and policies intent on breaking the sociocultural bonds that served the Roma during their migration to Europe. Some of these policies served to actually destroy those bonds and institute a sedentary lifestyle among some groups. Roma were still seen as vagrant nomads who were not allowed to be part of the majority society. Particularly harsh laws were enacted throughout Europe in efforts to dismantle the culture of the Roma and dissuade them from living in their traditional ways; in particular laws enacted in German lands were extremely harsh. From 1417 A.D. with the first recorded law against “Gypsies” to 1721 when Emperor Karl VI called for the extermination of all “Gypsies” on his lands, Roma were targeted as enemies of the Germanic peoples (Hancock 2002). German policy however took a turn for the worse in the late 19th century and into the 20th century; with the rise of popular social “Darwinism” ideology “Gypsies”, Jews, and other non-ethnic Germans were seen as being inferior and thus undeserving of life (Hancock 2002; Kapralski 1997). With the emergence of such ideology, new methods of control were instituted; in 1899 the “Gypsy Information Agency” was set up under Alfred Dillman with the intent to catalogue the Roma populations throughout Germany. In 1905 Dillman’s crowning achievement was released; *Zigeuner-Buch* (“Gypsy Book”) was a manuscript that first and foremost deemed the “Gypsies” as a “plague” and warned against inter-marriage and acceptance of “Gypsies” into German society (Hancock 2002). Most importantly Dillman’s work had a complete genealogical registry of known “Gypsies” and included

photographs of entire Roma families. This work is seen as being central to the laws enacted a mere 30 years later known as the Nuremberg Race Laws (Hancock 2002; Kapralski 1997).

Throughout the early parts of the 20th century up until the National Socialist Party took control of Germany under Adolf Hitler in 1933, numerous policies were enacted targeting Roma people, laws that further alienated the Roma from German society and in the end helped to form the foundation for the racist genocidal policies of the Third Reich. Civil rights of all Roma were withdrawn in 1933 in Austria just days before the Nazis took control of Germany (Hancock 2002). By 1935 the Nuremberg Law for the Protection of German Blood and Honour further restricted the Roma populations of Germany, outlawing the intermarriage of all “non-Aryans”, including the Jews, “Gypsies”, and other minorities (Hancock 2002). The issue of genetic inferiority and inherent criminality was likewise seen as stemming from the “non-Aryan” Roma people who had in some cases resided in Germany for several hundred years and had become, to a certain extent, members of the German society; none the less, they were soon targets for outright extermination (Hancock 2002; Klimova 2002; Kapralski 1997). In 1937 Heinrich Himmler (the man who was to lead the SS and was in charge of the Nazi Extermination Camps) issued a decree that reiterated the inferiority of the “Gypsies” and further called for all information to be consolidated into the Reich Central Office (Hancock 2002). These actions marked the end of the Roma population in Germany and heralded in the Holocaust of both the Jewish peoples and the Roma peoples²⁵. Roma people were targeted in events throughout 1938 with the “Gypsy Clean-Up Week”—a week of terror and violence that further degraded the hopes for the Roma to survive the looming genocide to come (Hancock 2002). In 1938 the first

²⁵ This is not to say that other groups were not targeted but merely that Nazis specifically focused on the Roma and the Jews.

official mention of Himmler's "Final Solution of the Gypsy Question" was printed and again was decreed by Himmler in December 1938. As part of Himmler's plan a racial investigation into all Roma was undertaken to determine the "Gypsy-ness" of a family. This ensured that Roma, and people who were not Roma but were related or lived "vagrant" lifestyles, were placed in the same category and were slotted for extermination (Hancock 2002). Interestingly, the acceptable ratio of Jewish ancestry compared to German ancestry was less stringent than the acceptable ratio of Roma ancestry; in essence if a person had one Jewish grandparent under the policies they would not be (generally) affected, however if a person had even one eighth Roma blood they were targeted for extermination (Hancock 2002). This ensured that all people, who might not even know their own genealogical background, with "Gypsy" blood would be exterminated and thus the issues of "Gypsy inferiority" would not taint the German people (Hancock 2002). In 1940 the first mass genocide occurred when 250 Roma children were used as guinea pigs for the gas chambers to test the effectiveness of the Zyklon-B gas. From 1940 onwards the Roma were interned, tortured, and finally exterminated throughout the Nazi controlled territories, and although accurate numbers are largely impossible due to the lack of official documentation, it is estimated that between 200,000 to 1.5 million Roma were killed as part of the Holocaust, an episode that came to be called the *Baro Porrajmos* (great devouring) by Romani scholars (Hancock 2002).

After the fall of the Nazi regime in 1945, the decimated and fragmented Roma populations were subject to further injustice with the rise of the Communist era and the absence of official Holocaust recognition. With the fall of the Nazis, the Soviets instituted a takeover of the countries of Eastern Europe, with the emergence of Communist regimes throughout; Roma were to become citizens of countries that had previously seen them as worthy of extermination.

By some accounts, life under the Communist and Socialist regimes was a definite improvement, with Roma being allowed to work, given cheap housing and allotted the same (in theory at least) rights and privileges as any other citizen; however the Roma were still seen by many as being largely untrustworthy and viewed as social outcasts who performed the hardest and often most dangerous jobs in society (Koulis 2005; Klimova 2002). Roma people were allowed a certain degree of freedom in some countries but were often the subjects of assimilative efforts by regimes to fully integrate them into the society and in turn create a sense of national identity for all of the citizens (Klimova 2002). However, Roma themselves were often left out of the decision making processes and often were not allowed to create formalized institutions (Klimova 2002). All in all, the time frame encompassing the end of World War II and up until the fall of Communism and the Eastern European regimes, the Roma were marginally integrated into society but were largely treated as outsiders who needed the state's governing hand.

History of Roma Organizing

Like many people, Roma have always organized in order to gain more collective bargaining power or group agency²⁶, although much of the initial organizing was done on a small scale. The most successful efforts (if gauged upon the global scale) have only occurred over the last century and have cumulated in the increased awareness of Roma by non-Roma.

One of the first successful²⁷ organizations was the General Union of Roma in Romania (The Union) in the 1930s, along with the General Association of Gypsies of Romania. The Union established branches across Romania and even produced its own publications. Similarly, the

²⁶ I use this term in relation to interactions among the Roma and non-Roma where Roma were often at a disadvantage based on their outsider status.

²⁷ I define success as at least attempting to organize across national and international boundaries and working on efforts to create a national identity or shared ethnic identity.

General Association of Gypsies of Romania organized the first international conference for Roma where issues of ethnic solidarity and cooperation among groups were addressed and a national flag was created (Hancock 2002; Klimova 2002). Whilst both of these organizations were largely unsuccessful in the long run (often blamed on the rise of Nazism and the outbreak of World War II), their example helped influence a new generation of Romani leaders. The onset of World War II and the targeting of Roma for extermination under the Third Reich meant that many of their institutions and organizations were largely dissolved, and new organizations were slow to emerge from the terrible losses inflicted upon the Roma by the Nazi genocide (Hancock 2002).

When such organizations did emerge out of the bloodshed of the war, it was the World Romani Community established by Vaida Voivod, a Romanian Roma, that initially achieved marginal success (Hancock 2002). Some of the efforts by the World Romani Community included creating a cultural center in Brussels, schooling for Romani youth, a push for the repeal of anti-Romani laws, and for war reparations from the German government (Hancock 2002). However, within a few years of its existence the World Romani Community was made illegal by the French government and its members created a new break-away organization called the International Gypsy Committee (Hancock 2002). Unlike the World Romani Community, the International Gypsy Committee pushed for inclusionary methods instead of the nationalistic efforts of the World Romani Community, who under Voivod's leadership created Romani passports and pushed for the creation of a Romani homeland in Somalia (Hancock 2002). The International Gypsy Committee managed to establish a vast network of member organizations in over 20 countries and successfully organized the first World Romani Congress in 1971 (Hancock 2002; Klimova 2002). The first World Romani Congress is seen by many as being the first

successful transnational Romani meeting. At the Congress key decisions on issues of identity and nationality were discussed, including the decision to use the umbrella term “Roma” and the recognition of the Indian origins of the Roma people. The International Gypsy Committee eventually transformed into the International Romani Union, which is still active today but is seen by some as politically ineffective (David 2014). From 1971 onwards, the number of Romani organizations increased, with many working on similar and parallel missions and goals but lacking in coordinating efforts. In particular, little effort has been directed toward options for representation among Roma and, more specifically, identity issues related to the heterogeneity of Roma people (Hancock 2002; McGarry 2008; Rövid 2012).

Approach One: Nationalism and Self-Determination

The first attempt at coalition and advocacy stems from the 1970s; Romani organizations advocated for self-determination approaches, focused on either territorial or personal and ethnic autonomy (Rövid 2012). Territorial autonomy refers to the attempts by Roma to create their own homeland or territory in which they would be subject to special rights granted to them under law. While this effort initially had some backing, the shortage of feasible territory caused supporters to dwindle. Furthermore, this effort was picked up by extreme right wing political parties with racial agendas aimed at ridding countries of Roma and resettling them in their “own” countries²⁸ (Rövid 2012). Personal autonomy is based on the idea civil rights are allotted as part of an ethnic background not physical location. This means that while the Roma are widely dispersed, all would be granted special rights aimed at creating a more level and equitable role in society. However, these two approaches do not take into account the reality of the globalized world

²⁸ Clearly this is a predicament as there is no such thing as a “Roma” country, being that they are a transnational nation.

where territory would be hard to find and minority rights are already protected under law (albeit, some would say not adequately enough) (Kostadinova 2011; Rövid 2012).

Approach Two: Anti-Discrimination and Human Rights

During the 1990s and into the new millennium, the approach that seemed to gain most favor among Romani organizations was focused on human rights violations and legal frameworks for rights protections. This approach blames the majority population for excluding Roma purely on the basis of race and ethnicity and violating their human rights, which are to be protected under international law (Rövid 2012). While this effort can be seen as practical in terms of its initial focus on discrimination and structural issues in society, it does not take into account the complex social and economic relationships, the nonexistence of a clear heterogeneous Romani identity, and the unintentional consequences of blaming the perceived majority populations, such as backlash. Furthermore, this approach creates a society in which the non-Roma feel pressured into granting special rights to Roma. This guilt then creates the perception of Roma *needing* protections, which in turn allows the blaming of the majority and further dilutes the Romani organizations' responsibilities to their communities (Rövid 2012; Dunn 2014). "'Difference' is used to explain Roma impoverishment, social tension and conflicts, migration, and the failure of 'integration' initiatives. It conserves the political isolation of 'Roma' people and supports the ideology of segregation" (Rövid 2012, 10). The lack of responsibility on the part of those in power thus allows local-level discrimination and racism to exist and the feeling of societal guilt becomes an inherent part of non-Roma people's justification for said discrimination. This approach also creates rifts within the Romani communities themselves as it frames the exclusion as an ethnic problem and degrades the ability of the Roma to create a positive ethnic identity (Rövid 2012).

Third Approach: Social Inclusion

The third approach for Romani empowerment is inclusionary efforts on the part of organizations that work for and with Roma; the DORI falls here. This approach was seen by many policy makers and scholars as the natural alternative to the first two approaches, which were too narrow in focus (Rövid 2012). The social inclusion approach attempts to combat both the efforts of discrimination and racism by maintaining the idea that Roma deserve to be included in socioeconomic processes and in turn civic culture. Social inclusion is key to the efforts of the DORI and other transnational efforts, culminating in the EU Framework in 2011 (Rövid 2011; Rövid 2012). The understanding that racism could not entirely explain the lack of progress on the part of Roma led many organizations and governments to the idea that socioeconomic changes in post socialism that essentially dissolved employment opportunities for Roma actually hindered their ability to achieve group agency and influence. Thus, a need for socioeconomic inclusionary efforts (such as allotting employment opportunities to Roma, creating schools and trade programs, etc.) aimed at not only protecting human rights but also creating platforms for agency building was deemed necessary (Rövid 2012; David 2014).

The options for Romani agency building in the present era remain wrought with problems exacerbated by the rise of extreme racial political agendas, identity conflicts among Roma, and the lack of progress on the ground at the local levels (Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015 2012; Biro, Gheorghe and Kovats 2013; Rövid 2011; Rövid 2012; Vermeersch 2007; Stewart 2012). Options are further hampered by the deficiency of representation on the national level in politics, the lack of representation in NGOs working for Roma, and the special interests of the Romani elite who have not managed to advocate for change successfully and who do not speak for all Roma (Biro, Gheorghe and Kovats 2013; Rövid 2012). With only a few Romani

politicians holding power, and without a unified group of traditional and community leaders, the agency building options for Roma remain bleak. While some countries, such as Hungary, have granted special minority rights for Roma, the options still remain limited. Even the Hungarian model is seen as illegitimate and corrupt by some who claim that special interests and lack of capabilities have led to stagnation and cronyism among Hungarian Romani politicians (David 2014; Dunn 2014; Biro, Gheorghe and Kovats 2013). The options thus remain underdeveloped. Lacking in group agency building capabilities, either due to political and social duress or the absence of sociopolitical will, Roma will remain citizens of another Europe; citizens on the edge lacking the tools to engage the future.

20th Century Struggles to 21st Century Initiatives

With the fall of Communism and the rise of new democratic nations in Europe, the world began to learn about the Roma people, often through NGOs working in the former Communist countries (Kimora 2002; Rövid 2011). Within a decade, Roma became more than just “travelers” or “nomads” and instead were recognized as a European minority whose populations were being underserved and blatantly ignored by the governments and institutions meant to serve them (Rövid 2011). Largely attributed to the enlargement processes of the EU, the Roma were seen as needing to be better served as part of the requirements for admittance into the EU. Many countries began to set up institutions and seek outside funds for improving the lives of the Roma in response to the EU enlargement (Rövid 2011; Rövid 2012; Vermeersch 2011). Needless to say, the increased awareness of both the history of the Roma and also the situation in which they found themselves after the regime changes in Central and Eastern Europe ideally *should* have given the Roma the much-needed leverage to create sociocultural institutions; however, the unfortunate reality is far from that.

With large-scale institutional restructuring and funds being allocated to help improve the lives of the European Roma, many saw a chance for the Roma to begin to be included in the processes that for too long had kept them out; however, the reality of discrimination, ethnic hatred, and the rise of extremism soon showed the struggles of a newly invigorated system intent on at least working on efforts to help Roma (Klimova 2002; Rövid 2011). Increased violence against Roma began to appear shortly after the newly formed governments began to institute programs and policies intent on helping Roma. Along with violence against Roma, structural discrimination began to hamper efforts by Roma to gain sociopolitical leverage. With only a small portion of Roma holding public office and with many governments relying on outside NGOs to work on Roma issues, many of the disadvantages once addressed by the policies of the past regimes (including providing employment and housing) started to worsen (Koulis 2005; Klimova 2002; Rövid 2012).

“The fact that NGOs have intervened to provide advocacy and support for Roma educational and social institutions has in some cases allowed country governments to 'drop the ball' on true reforms in these areas. In some cases, Roma who attempt to protest certain policies or file complaints have been sent to NGO offices by government officials eager to send them elsewhere” (Stroschein 2002, 17).

Without adequate representation in the decision-making processes, Roma are left to use the tools available through the NGOs and advocacy networks, many of which are not necessarily beholden to the Roma and are often controlled by outside interests (Biro, Gheorghe and Kovats 2013).

Currently there is a shortage of Romani policy relating to culture (at least holistically). Culture is fluid and often is something that cannot be quantified or measured as easily as mortality rates or housing data, and thus it has been relegated to measuring things like the

number of Roma festivals, or Roma art scholarships. This is not to say that these articulations of culture aren't valuable, merely that it seems as cultural performances are the easiest to measure and address; policy makers have less responsibility for larger cultural issues that are not being addressed²⁹.

While Roma are being underserved across the world, the most obvious areas experts tend to rely on are the areas of housing, employment, education, and health care. In terms of housing, it is estimated that Roma across Europe are largely segregated, living in appalling conditions, sometimes without access to public utilities or sanitation and often Roma populations are at risk of expulsion from their housing (Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 2012). Although data vary by country, and there is a deficiency of desegregated data, it has been estimated that in some areas Roma have up to a 90 percent unemployment rate with official estimates from the European Commission at 50–80 percent unemployment (McGarry 2012). Educational shortcomings again differ based on the country and since official data on most of the economic or social areas of interest are largely missing or outdated, generally speaking most Roma do not finish their primary education and an even smaller number finish secondary education. Some estimates put the number of Roma finishing secondary school and attending college at around 0.2 percent of the population (Curcic and Plaut 2013). To further exacerbate the situation, many Roma are sent to “special schools” (designed for students with disabilities or special needs) at an astounding rate, and with further examination it seems to be an example of structural discrimination at play, since most of the students upon examination are not mentally challenged. With an estimated 75 percent of all Roma students in these special schools, many experts have

²⁹ This is further addressed in Chapter 6.

attributed the lack of educational progress of Roma on the lack of institutional support (Curcic and Plaut 2013).

In terms of health care, the Roma across Europe are underserved and lack the widespread public education on the importance of annual checkups and non-critical doctor visits as well as access to preventative care. The widespread misconceptions and discrimination against Roma has also created a stigma around the non-Roma doctors, and with the memories of historical mistreatment, the Roma are understandably hesitant in building a relationship with doctors necessary for primary care. In many cases Roma are forced to bribe doctors to even receive health care, and often the lack of health insurance coupled with fear has harmed the general health conditions of the entire Roma populations across Europe (Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 2012). Overall the mortality rate for Roma is generally much higher than non-Roma, and the life expectancy across Europe for Roma is drastically lower (Hancock 2002; Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015 2012).

Perhaps most striking, aside from the obvious lack of progress being made in the areas of education, housing, employment, and health care, is the rise of violence and institutional racism being directed at the Roma since the fall of Communism (Hancock 2002; Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015 2012; Stewart 2012). With significant clashes between Roma and non-Roma being reported in almost all countries where Roma populations are large, many of the clashes include violence and in some cases death. To make matters worse, the political situation in Europe has largely changed from some of the more liberalized and progressive political movements to some of the more extreme right political movements gaining sociopolitical clout (Stewart 2012; Citizenship in Southeast Europe 2012). With this rise in nationalist and sometimes outright racist ideologies, the Roma populations are forced to again be subjected to

the historical stereotypical scrutiny and more recent ideas of dependence upon the state (Stewart 2012). To put it mildly, many Roma believe that life under Communism, indeed life without the (supposed) freedom to practice one's ethnic culture, was more bearable than present conditions (Koulish 2005).

With reports of fire bombings, settlement destruction, ethnic violence, and even forced deportations, life for the Roma across Europe is desperate; and with the recent elections finding more and more conservative and extremist political movements in power, the prospect of an inclusive future is uncertain for the Roma (Stewart 2012; Citizenship in Southeast Europe 2012; Dunn 2014; European Roma Rights Centre 2012). Roma are fragmented and spread across Europe and are subjected to conditions one would not expect to find in modern Europe. While some efforts focus on redistributing material goods and services toward Roma, other efforts are working toward empowering Romani communities with trainings and tools. Having the tools and knowledge is just the first step however and the opportunity for more research into the role of structural and historical discrimination in barring Roma from group agency is presently underutilized. Roma are positioned to gain sociocultural group agency; they have the attention (albeit sometimes negative) of the world media, they are likewise gaining the attention of transnational organizations such as the EU and DORI, and some populations are granted special minority and ethnic rights (at least in theory). What is missing is the ability for Roma on the local level to interact with the policies and programs created; while Roma elite seem to focus more on personal politicking than group advocacy (Dunn 2014; Biro, Gheorghe and Kovats 2013). The absence of group agency has in turn created an environment where Roma people are forced into feeling a sense of cultural inadequacy; this is exacerbated by the recent trend in racist in

mainstream politics and has led to many Roma not self-identifying as Roma out of fear (David 2014; Dunn 2014).

Chapter 4: The Decade of Roma Inclusion

DORI Background and Transnational Motivations:

The Decade of Roma Inclusion is the accumulation of many diverse approaches and programs aimed at improving the lives of Roma people across its participating European member nations. Its foundation is the outcome of a 2003 conference entitled, “*Roma in an Expanding Europe: Challenges for the Future*,” where eight governments agreed to launch a “*Decade of Roma Inclusion*” (Nicolae 2005; Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015 2012). This conference, which brought together the government officials from Hungary, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Macedonia, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, and Slovakia, was seen as the catalyst for a new era of Roma inclusion on a scale that had not been attempted before.

“The Decade is an international initiative, which brings together Governments, intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations, as well as Romani civil society to (i) launch initiatives to strengthen Roma inclusion as a high priority on the regional and European political agendas; (ii) learn and exchange experiences; (iii) involve Roma meaningfully in all policy making on matters concerning them; (iv) bring in international experience and expertise to help make progress on challenging issues; and (v) raise public awareness of the situation of Roma through active communications” (Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015 2010).

The Decade of Roma Inclusion officially began on February 2, 2005 in Sofia, Bulgaria (Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 2012).

The DORI was seen as an innovative step in transnational organizing by many outsiders, and while the structure of the DORI is indeed unique, the “priority areas” focused on by the DORI are not. These priority areas, as decided upon by the DORI founders, are: education,

housing, health care and employment with special considerations given to the issues of poverty, discrimination and gender mainstreaming within each priority area. The priority areas chosen by the DORI are similar to many of the areas in which nongovernmental organization (NGOS) and national governments were already working in relation to the Roma; particularly after the early 1990s when many of the issues that plagued them were brought into the international spotlight. In fact, if one were to look at some of the policies enacted in countries such as Hungary in the early 1990s, they would find similar policies to that of the DORI priority areas, with as part of the effort to address the issues surrounding the Roma population after Communism. In fact, the lack of recognition of discrimination and segregation among Roma populations as a whole is, seen as an attempt to mask the more complex issues of racism by providing incentives for nations to address the economic and social issues as an alternative to the structural issues associated with cultural discrimination (McGarry 2012). Actually, in 1990 the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe put forth a document that came to be known as the “Copenhagen Document,” in which participating states condemned “racial and ethnic hatred, anti-Semitism, xenophobia...they also recognize the particular problems of Roma (gypsies)” (Pogany 1999). In doing so, one would assume that the underlying cultural and ethnic hatred would be addressed through education, cultural awareness campaigns, and structural reforms in relation to the institutions meant to work with Roma. Instead, many of the policies and programs established during that period went on to address issues of employment, education, and housing (McGarry 2012; Pogany 1999).

In that same mindset, the European Union failed to pay attention to Roma until the enlargement processes and policies began to expand eastward where many of the Roma people resided. Thus EU citizenship, along with all of its rights, would be granted to Roma. This created

a problem for the western member nations because each nation was mandated to protect the fundamental human rights of its citizens, including the Roma in the eastern nations (McGarry 2012). As such, the EU gave PHARE³⁰ funds to several members' states to address the discriminatory practices, which barred many Roma access to housing, health care, and employment (McGarry 2012).

Thus the standard in international and transnational policies on Roma people have been primarily aimed at either addressing the socioeconomic disadvantages that Roma people face or the human rights and minority rights violations that occur (which often are linked to the socioeconomic disadvantages). The DORI finds itself aligning with the organizations and advocacy networks that work on granting greater access to the socioeconomic opportunities for Roma people and attempts to do so through its transnational platform for monitoring, funding and implementing programs aimed at achieving more inclusion for Roma. DORI's creation was partially spurred by the events and pressures that were mounting during the early 2000s in relation to Roma. Partially, the DORI was created due to the enlargement of the European Union, in addition to the widespread support by NGOs working on separate Roma issues. Additionally, the DORI was largely influenced by the Open Society Institute, which, under the leadership of George Soros, funded many programs aimed at addressing the issues Roma faced in Europe.

Overall, the DORI can be seen as a relatively ambitious undertaking that attempted to bind national governments to a common goal of organizing transnationally to impact the lives of Roma people in a positive and inclusionary way. While the initial influence for the DORI was largely impacted by the common goals of the various organizations, which served as funders for

³⁰ PHARE: Poland and Hungary Assistance for Restructuring their Economies. Originally started in 1989 as a fund to help post-communist countries transition into the European Union, but expanded to include more than 10 countries.

the initiative, the significance of the goals of the initiative and structure of the DORI should not be overlooked. Indeed the DORI plan was something new in relation to transnational organizing, and while Roma organizations and NGOs had jumped on the transnational bandwagon starting in the late 1990s, the significance of having eight national governments commit to common goals can be seen as historic. While the 1990s and the emergence of an educated and well-organized group of NGOs and advocacy networks can be said to have influenced the direction of the field of Roma rights, the impact of the EU enlargement and the large influence of the Open Society Foundation cannot be understated in the initial push for the DORI's creation.

DORI Structure and Governance:

The DORI, due to its unique structure, is difficult to classify as an organization, a program or a loosely affiliated band of governments working together on common goals. While the official terminology for the DORI structure is classified as an "initiative," one can also see it as a platform for Roma inclusion where many diverse interests are working together on a common goal (Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 2010). The DORI is made up of:

- Participating European Governments, including: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia and Spain (Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 2010).
- Nongovernmental Organizations including: World Bank, Open Society Institute (OSI), United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Council of Europe (CoE), Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB), the Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues (CPRSI) of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the European Roma

Information Office (ERIO), European Roma and Travelers Forum (ERTF), European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC) and the Roma Education Fund³¹(REF) (Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 2010).

- Romani civil society organizations (Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 2010).

Roma civil society (which is undefined in the DORI terms of reference) is ideally made up of nongovernmental actors who are Roma and act on behalf of their communities. The World Bank defines “civil society” as: “nongovernmental and not-for-profit organizations that have a presence in public life, expressing the interests and values of their members or others, based on ethical, cultural, political, scientific, religious or philanthropic considerations” (The World Bank Group 2013). In the DORI structure, Roma civil society members are to be key partners and aside from holding a considerable stake in the success of the Decade, are the representatives of the millions of Roma across Europe who the Decade proposes to serve. In terms of Roma civil society’s role in the Decade structure, they are to be key facilitators between the local communities, governments and the national action plan programs and policies. This also means that the civil society representatives are to be included in the International Steering Committee where they ultimately serve to guide the direction of the DORI.

The main international partners that have been the major funders and backers of the Decade include the Open Society Foundation and the World Bank. The Open Society Foundation and in turn the Open Society Institute have been involved with Roma issues for many years and while they have largely funded their own programs the initial idea behind the DORI was to have

³¹ Roma Education Fund was created as part of the Decade for Roma Inclusion in 2005 and is a non-profit organization largely funded through several national governments including Canada, Greece, Ireland, Netherlands, Slovenia, Switzerland, Sweden and the UK and several NGOs, including the Open Society Foundation, World Bank, and Council of Europe Development Bank (Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015 2010).

the OSI be the catalyst for many of the programs since they had existing programs in many of the member nations. The World Bank also was seen as a potential main partner with access to the funding sorely needed to boost the National Action Plans. While the World Bank provided portions of the funds for some projects and indeed helped boost the participation of other funders, the participating governments were charged with providing some of the funds along with coordinating their own fund raising efforts for their proposals.

The participating partners that initially joined the Decade are seen by some as having joined to appease their national images of being anti-Roma; while some joined in anticipation of their official entrance into the European Union (Nicolae 2005). Hungary, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic all joined the European Union in 2004, and as part of the EU enlargement process, minority and cultural group rights were to be upheld and placed in high regard. Thus while all of the aforementioned countries had some minority protections and programs, the Decade was seen to be a way for the national parties to show their support of Roma and minority programs and protections (Nicolae 2005). While most of the pressure to join the DORI is not evident it seems as if the DORI was a good way for many of the countries to collaborate and organize best practices across national borders without giving up their own policies and procedures.

The structures that serve as the organizational body of the DORI act as both venues for facilitation and cooperation and as monitoring agencies, which ensure commitments are met by all participants. The structures are broken down into the following:

- International Steering Committee (ISC): highest decision making and coordinating body of the DORI, made up of all of the participating government representatives, members of the Roma civil society organizations, and participating nongovernmental organizations.

The ISC serves as the democratic decision making body of DORI and is charged with approving budgets, allocating funding, and amending DORI policies. Each participating organization or government is allowed one representative from each country to serve as representatives to the ISC (Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 2010).

- Decade Presidency: each year a government shall serve as the president of the DORI, whose tasks include creating budgets, performing workshops and events, acting as the main liaison between the DORI and other European governments, and finally proposing priority areas for the year (Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 2010).
- Decade of Roma Inclusion Secretariat Foundation (Decade Secretariat): a private foundation that serves as the main facilitator between the Presidencies³² additionally working as the repository of all work being done as part of DORI. The Decade Secretariat acts an administrator for the DORI and is the main point of contact for the press (Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015 2010).
- Decade Trust Fund is supported by the participating governments and the World Bank and acts a fund for international cooperation, information sharing, monitoring and evaluation, and awareness raising efforts. Each participating government pays into the Trust Fund yearly with the initial amount being €20,000 (about \$27,000) (Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 2010).

The ISC serves as the democratic center of the DORI and is the arena in which most of the policy and priority decisions are made for the organization and the member nations (Decade of

³² Due to the one year term of the Presidency the Decade Secretariat serves as a transitional actor by ensuring that unfinished business implemented in the outgoing Presidency is undertaken by the incoming Presidency (Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015 2010).

Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 2010). Specifically the ISC is charged with hosting an annual meeting where the national delegations from each country (the national coordinator of the Decade, and the Roma civil society representative), and a representative from each international nongovernmental organization meet. These meetings are meant to coordinate the priorities of the President for the year and to share best practices and successes in the priority areas of each country. Additionally the ISC meeting serves to approve the budget for the Decade Trust Fund and decide on yearly allocation of funds for international projects (Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 2010).

The Presidency of the Decade is a position the national coordinator from each participating country holds for a year, representing the priorities of their nation on an international scale. The Presidency also manages the relationships between the relevant stakeholders and acts as the main representative for the Decade before international institutions and governments. The Presidency can also invite other nations to join the initiative as partners and organizes meetings with donors to ensure country specific priorities are granted funds. All in all, the Presidency serves to act as a prime minister of sorts with some degree of power and influence, but mainly as an organizer and mediator between the member nations (Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 2010).

The Decade Secretariat office serves as the official facilitator for Decade participants and acts as a go-between for the Presidencies. Ideally, the Decade Secretariat serves as a foundational cornerstone in an organization that changes its structure annually; this ensures that priorities are met and addressed and that continuity is maintained to enable successful programming. Because the Decade Secretariat is a private organization funded through the OSI and is independent of the DORI funding scheme it can operate without threats from budgetary constrictions. Likewise it

maintains a semi-autonomous structure within the DORI. The Decade Secretariat also holds a seat on the ISC and ensures the Presidency is transitioned from one member nation to another without incident. This structure ensures that priority areas are addressed year to year with consideration for the Presidency's yearly goals (Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 2010).

The Decade Trust Fund is a joint venture of the DORI and the World Bank and is technically a contracted partnership between the World Bank and the participating governments of the DORI. The World Bank holds the funds garnered from each national government (in 2006 that was € 20,000 or about \$27,000 US dollars for each country, so in totality about € 180,000 or \$243,000) as part of the agreements between the participating governments and the World Bank and DORI. The Decade Trust Fund (DTF) can be used to fund international activities, such as cross country information sharing, monitoring and evaluation processes, and technical assistance to participating countries (Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 2010). The DTF can support country specific programs as long as they are open to all participating Decade countries and fall under the "technical assistance" area of funding. The DTF takes proposals for funding and judges them based upon their adherence to the funding criteria, their effectiveness, the targeted audience and the feasibility of the project to both meet the approved budget and reach the goals of the project. Each proposal must first pass the initial committee made up of World Bank staff and Decade Secretariat staff. Once approved by them, the proposal is turned over to the second committee composed of government representatives, Roma civil society organizations and the ISC. If a proposal is approved, the funding is allocated by the World Bank staff and is monitored by the ISC, World Bank and Decade Secretariat (Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 2012).

While each one of the preceding structures serves as the backbone for the DORI, the major power behind the DORI lies with each participating member nation. This was done

purposefully, and while the lack of a centralized structure serves to leave the member nations holding the power, the ISC serves as a democratic middle man in which transnational decisions can be forged. The DORI relies on the political will of the member nations in order to address the complexities found within each member nation's Roma populations. While one governance structure may serve to allow for less dispersion of control, the diversity in community needs throughout the member nations makes a centralized power structure largely unfeasible. The Decade Action Plans were created to ensure that each nation had a plan to address the broader priority areas of education, housing, health care and employment. Each Action Plan is unique to each country, and while some have a more ambitious plan, some countries rely on adapting current policies and legislation to fit into the DORI guidelines. Each Action Plan outlines the specifics of the programs and policies focused on the priority areas; for instance if the goal of a member nation is to achieve more integration in the educational system with more Roma being placed in mainstream schools, a possible action plan would be to eliminate segregated schools, or achieve a higher retention rate among Roma. The Action Plans are all country-specific and while some overlap seems to occur among the member nations, in terms of their goals, the actions and programs are largely different. For instance, while Hungary's National Action Plan relies on the National Roma Minority Self-Government to act as the officially recognized Roma civil society partner, Albania relies on a variety of Roma and non-Roma NGOs in addition to a government sanctioned "Technical Group for Roma Issues" (Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015 2012). Another example can be found in stated goals of the Slovakian Action Plan, where a goal of decreasing the occurrence of disease along with access to drinking water is stated, whereas in the Hungarian plan specific goals related to water and diseases are not found (Government of Slovakia 2011; Government of Hungary 2007).

The DORI structure emphasizes the need for monitoring the programs and policies of the participating member nations and relies solely on a mix of Decade staff and Roma civil society organizations to do so. The first monitoring effort coalesced in the formation of the “Decade Watch” program, which relied on Roma civil society organizations trained and supported by the World Bank and the Open Society Institute (Decade Watch 2007). The Decade Watch program was to monitor the actions taken by the participating governments from 2005 to 2006, but does not cover the effect of the programs on the Roma. The Decade Watch’s methodology was simply to gauge the actions of the governments on a point scale from 1 to 4 based on their actions in the priority areas as outlined by the DORI. The initial findings by the Decade Watch conclude that while some effort has been made, most countries do not have a long term plan for their Decade action plans and most are not thinking of Roma inclusion in terms of integrated programs and policies and instead focus on “sporadic” programs and measures (Decade Watch 2007). The Decade Watch program issued an update report in 2007 and also a survey in 2009, both of which served to update the initial findings by the Decade Watch team in 2005-2006. The 2009 report changed its efforts from measuring the actions taken by the participating governments and instead focused on the insights by 300 experts who subjectively assessed and commented on the progress made in the participating countries over the first few years of the DORI (Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 2012).

The DORI’s second method of monitoring took shape in 2013 with the *Civil Society Monitoring Report*, which analyzed the efforts on the part of the participating governments to address the priority areas. The difference in the Decade Watch versus the Civil Society Monitoring Reports is that the Civil Society reports included organizations that were not included in the DORI structure or that had minor roles in the DORI, and thus could be viewed as

more independent (Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 2012). The Civil Society Monitoring Report, which was issued in 2013 under the guidance of the Decade of Roma Inclusion Secretariat Foundation, in cooperation with the OSF Roma Initiatives Office and the Making the Most of EU Funds for Roma Program, were similar to the Decade Watch reports except they focused more on the effects of the programs and policies of the participating governments on the Roma and the Action Plans timetables as outlined by the governments. The distinctions between the two reports largely is found in the template and scope of the report, while the Decade Watch Report team was handpicked, trained, and given a reporting and monitoring template, the Civil Society Monitoring Report relied on NGOs with large Roma representatives or Roma-led organizations that designed and implemented their own template for monitoring.

DORI Successes and Failures:

With less than one year left of the original Decade of Roma Inclusion, many of the participating governments and nongovernmental organizations, along with the Decade Secretariat and the Roma civil society have focused on the outcomes of the Decade and the successes and failures as monitored by the various Decade Watch reports and Civil Society monitoring reports. Like any organization or initiative, there will always be some degree of failure associated with the huge effort to create an inclusionary environment for the Roma, as there will always be some degree of success. When factoring in the monumental undertaking of the DORI and the complex and new transnational structures that formed the DORI, the outcomes of the DORI are relatively expected and somewhat mundane. However, in some areas the DORI managed to create a more inclusionary arena for Roma to begin the process of becoming more closely integrated and included in the sociopolitical and economic life of the participating governments. As such, the successes of the DORI are not necessarily found in the hard numbers

or facts addressed in the Decade Watch reports or Civil Society reports, but are found on the ground in the participating governments. Although this research cannot address all of the successes witnessed on the ground by the monitoring efforts and independent critics of the DORI, the general successes and failures will be analyzed by priority area and intended effects as outlined by the DORI structure. Thus the term “success” is used sparingly as is the term “failure” as most of the efforts by the DORI cannot be analyzed completely from the documents and interviews utilized in this research. However, “success” in terms of this research is to be understood as simply meeting the intended outcomes as outlined by the Action Plans and “failures” are to be the priority areas and actions not achieved as part of the Action Plans.

Successes:

In the most generalized and basic interpretation of success, the DORI accomplished its goal to work as a transnational initiative focused on addressing the priority areas outlined by its member nations and partners. As much as this can be seen as a marginal success in some ways, it is important to note that the organizations and member nations that make up the DORI worked together on an unprecedented scale and furthermore took steps toward including Roma into the development and decision making processes on a scale never before seen (Presidency of Republic of Croatia 2013). Furthermore the DORI is seen by many as having helped leverage the formation of the European Union’s Framework for Roma Integration in 2011 and is currently being used by many of the participating nations as the outline for their newly required National Roma Integration Strategies (Dosa, Reszketo and Varadi 2011). Since the beginning of the DORI in 2005, there have been three more countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Spain) that have joined the Decade. Many see this as a positive sign of interest by other European nations, which has given a much-needed boost of support to the NGOs working on Roma issues in

Europe. Based on the reports commissioned by the Decade and outside NGOs, and my own personal analysis, the successes can be summed up as follows³³:

1. The DORI has sparked interest in both the European Union and individual European countries to address the issues that Roma people face across Europe
2. The DORI has instituted a new form of policy development by including the Roma civil society in the decision-making processes as never before seen (at least in terms of scale)
3. The DORI has created new institutions that are meant to address the inclusion of Roma through Europe and are to remain relevant even if the DORI ends in 2015 (mainly the DTF, the REF, and the Decade Secretariat).
4. The DORI has managed to work on some priority areas with relative success, including the priority area of education, with several nations largely de-segregating their classrooms and including Roma children in pre-school educational programs, to name a few.
5. The DORI has created a system in which the participating member nations have democratic control over the funds being issued and have the flexibility to operate with a decentralized power structure.

The DORI has managed to achieve a portion of its mission and many of the member nations have managed to meet some of their deadlines and goals set out in their Action Plans. While some have fallen short, many have managed to at least start the process of addressing the issues of Roma inclusion in the priority areas.

³³ All of the successes outlined are derived from a collective perspective of successes outlined by the following authors: (Presidency of Republic of Croatia 2013; Dosa, Reszketo and Varadi 2011; Decade of Roma Inclusion Secretariat Foundation 2013; Presidency of Republic of Croatia 2013; Curcic and Plaut 2013; Decade Watch 2007; Citizenship in Southeast Europe 2012; Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015 2012).).

Failures:

While some success has been found in the structure of the DORI and to a degree in some of the actions of the individual member nations overall much of the DORI is seen as being a failed attempt at inclusion for Roma. It is important to note that these “failures” are the outcomes of a decade of work and perhaps the timetable and underlying sociocultural issues have impacted the effects of the policies and programs in unforeseen ways. Nonetheless, these “failures” need to be addressed in a way that turns them into learning opportunities for future inclusionary work with Roma, whether that be through the Decade or not.

Perhaps the most striking failure that has plagued the DORI is the absence of institutional support from some of the most powerful stakeholders in the DORI structure. The European Union, which was supposed to be one of the key stakeholders of the DORI and is seen by many as one of the founding “fathers” of the DORI, has remained fairly uninvolved with the Decade (Dosa, Reszketo and Varadi 2011). Furthermore, it was not until the latter half of 2008 that the EU attempted to start working on Roma inclusion, and even with that being said, it was not through the existing DORI structure but instead as part of a specific EU initiative, which excludes the participation of some of the Decade countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Macedonia, and Montenegro) that are not EU members. This paired with the lack of initial momentum after the 2003 conference, which attempted to drum up support for the Decade, hampered the ability for the DORI to create a truly supportive base, especially paired with the massive changes that Europe underwent between 2003 and the Decade start in 2005, including the loss of some of the most influential politicians who supported the DORI (Nicolae 2005). The failures of the Decade are surmised by many critics and even Decade members themselves as being largely due to the structure of the DORI, the large and somewhat ambiguous

undertaking of the DORI, and the shortage of political will from some of the participating countries. The failures of the DORI are underscored by the failures of the European member nations that have done little aside from economic fixes in addressing the Roma in their nations.

“Without a discussion on the options for and costs of integration, without investment in the capacity building of the Roma, and without systematized support from the local authorities, no inclusion programme, whatever its nature, can possibly be successful. If the top-down process from Europe to the towns and villages does not encounter a bottom-up process propagating in opposite direction, the funds will have been spent in vain, and in some cases have done more harm than good” (Biro, Gheorghe and Kovats 2013).

Thus while some of the failures of the DORI are a result of the DORI structure most are related to the individual member nations and the political and social will to discuss Roma rights and problems. The DORI and several reports underscore the failures of the DORI as being resolvable and indeed I too, believe that the DORI could work but first the following failures must be addressed:

1. While the DORI does include Roma in the operations and decision making processes of the DORI, some Roma and in particular local-level participation by Roma is largely absent (Nicolae 2005). Furthermore with only one Roma organization purporting to speak for the largely heterogeneous groups some Roma may be excluded (for specifics see Hungary Case Study)³⁴.

³⁴ Decade Terms of Reference: “The Romani civil society of each Member [nation] shall be represented independently by one (1) delegate at ISC.” (Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 2010, 7)

2. The DORI uses ambiguous and often generalized terminology for its structure and its priority areas. A prime example can be found in the DORI's use of often broad and open-ended terms such as: "raise public awareness of the situation of Roma through *active communications*³⁵" and "Ensure the participation of *Roma*" (Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 2010). Furthermore the DORI fails to even define the Roma being served as part of their initiative and falls into the ongoing tendency to classify all peoples possibly related to Roma as Roma.
3. The DORI does not address the need for specific desegregated national data from the participating nations, many of which do not have said data readily available, and thus the numbers being used as part of the National Action Plans and monitoring attempts are largely from third parties (Roma Initiatives 2010).
4. The DORI funding structure relies on member nations to fund many of the national and international projects, and while some nations have contributed each year, others have not or have not been active in seeking outside funds or support. Furthermore, some of the funds being allocated are not being used effectively and have largely been used for programs that have not necessarily met the desired outcomes or timetables (Presidency of Republic of Croatia 2013).
5. One of the most fundamental and foundational aspects of the DORI was its commitment to monitoring and evaluating the effect of the DORI on Roma inclusion, something that has remained largely sporadic and inconsistent. With several different monitoring reports and updates, the DORI has only managed to

³⁵ Emphasis added by author.

report on the progress of the DORI every few years and the country progress reports are either vague or missing completely (Presidency of Republic of Croatia 2013; Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015 2012).

6. One of the most striking failures that plagues the possibility of success on the part of the Decade is the lack of an enforcement mechanism in which to hold the member nations responsible. While some member nations have managed to live up to some of their commitments as outlined in the Decade Terms of Reference, others have not. While peer pressure and public scrutiny from monitoring groups can be leveraged against the member nations, the deficiency of a strong enforcement mechanism deters from the ability for the DORI and in particular the Decade Secretariat and Decade Presidency from holding members compliant (Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015 2012; Presidency of Republic of Croatia 2013; Citizenship in Southeast Europe 2012).
7. The DORI does little to address the structural discrimination found within both its own structure and the structure of the member nations National Action Plans and designated coordinating offices. While discrimination is addressed as one of the priority themes, it doesn't address the negative effects of affirmative action policies or policies that serve to further the discrimination against Roma (Presidency of Republic of Croatia 2013).
8. The DORI's structure is lacking in power and is overly complex or broad in some senses. The representatives from the national governments are often seen as merely being public relations fronts with little actual oversight or mandate in

decision making on the national level. The Roma representatives often do not speak for the entire Roma community and their roles are often not understood (Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015 2012; Presidency of Republic of Croatia 2013).

All in all the failures of the DORI can be seen as relating to the ambitious undertakings of a somewhat unprepared and overly complex group of NGOs and government officials who, desiring to address a transnational problem, resolved themselves to under-address some of the complex sociocultural underpinnings, which in the end served to unravel some of the successes of the DORI. Those problems, which the DORI does try to address in a somewhat ambiguous way, are those relating to issues of identity and culture, which are not inherently related to the priority areas addressed by the DORI and can be seen as independent factors that can result in the education, housing, health care, and employment opportunities afforded to Roma, but are not readily explained by them. The failures of the Decade are thus largely failures of overreach and under-addressing and are solvable if the will of the member nations are tried, and the issues of the aforementioned culture and identity are discussed on a scale not seen before.

The Future of the Decade:

With the original end of the DORI in sight and with much of the DORI work yet to be completed, the ISC and Decade partners are faced with a choice: end the DORI or continue it in some new way taking into account the failures and successes that the original Decade brought about. In 2013, under the leadership of the Decade Presidency of Croatia a study was done on the potential impacts of the DORI and the possible actions after 2015 (Presidency of Republic of Croatia 2013). This document was an accumulation of opinions and options discussed as part of

various working groups of the Decade participants and were complimented by a variety of studies and monitoring reports that emphasized the need for reform. The major findings of the working groups are summarized as such:

- The Decade has failed to make a substantial impact upon the lives of Roma in a meaningful way. That being said, much of the progress made during the Decade involves the recognition of the transnational nature of Roma inclusion and the various ways in which national and international governments and organizations can band together to create inclusionary environments.
- The Decade, while not successful, has created a new precedence in transnational organizing and has documented the best practices and lessons learned through the years.
- The Decade has created a new form of governance with direct insight and inclusion of Roma people in the decision making processes, and while some aspects of the structure remain problematic the Decade has managed to involve Roma in discussion with decision makers on all levels of policy creation.
- The Decade has created an environment for the EU and other international organizations to address the situation of the Roma in Europe and has helped spur the creation of the EU Framework for Roma Integration and National Roma Integration Strategies (Dosa, Reszketo and Varadi 2011).

After considerable deliberation and discussion, the general consensus among DORI participants and partners are summarized in the “Decade Reform Proposal,” which essentially attempts to reshape the DORI into a complementary organization for the EU Framework and seeks to reorganize the various power structures of the Decade to streamline the processes (Decade of

Roma Inclusion Secretariat Foundation 2013). The majority of the reforms that make up the proposal deal with the actual structures of the DORI with some considerations placed upon the actual mission and goals of the original DORI. The reforms addressed in the proposal are broken down as such:

- The Decade Action Plans are to be replaced by the National Roma Integration Strategies as mandated by the EU Framework, and additionally the designated representative for the Decade structure should also be the same as the EU Framework representative (Decade of Roma Inclusion Secretariat Foundation 2013).
- Reporting mechanisms for the Decade shall be the same as the mandated reporting under the EU framework with technical assistance given to member nations by the Decade Secretariat (Decade of Roma Inclusion Secretariat Foundation 2013).
- The DORI abandons the requirement of maintaining two mandatory ISC meetings per year and instead has two EU level meetings on Roma issues with non-EU nations and EU nations alike. Additionally the Decade Presidency can be abandoned or maintained with the understanding that the Presidency is to organize the EU level meetings or alternatively the Decade Secretariat could gather all the participants together for the meetings ensuring democratic control is maintained (Decade of Roma Inclusion Secretariat Foundation 2013).
- The DORI participants should commit to contributing €20,000 (\$27,000 US) per year to the Decade Trust Fund with the understanding that the DTF will reorganize its management and become more efficient and transparent (Decade of Roma Inclusion Secretariat Foundation 2013).

- The DORI will create more effective and specific priorities that successfully address the goals of the participants and set reasonable and priority specific goals (Decade of Roma Inclusion Secretariat Foundation 2013).
- Lastly the DORI will create more effective and mutually beneficial relationships with Roma civil society organizations and seeks to integrate them into the EU Framework and EU level discussions on Roma issues (Decade of Roma Inclusion Secretariat Foundation 2013).

Overall, the DORI is most likely going to continue past its original time frame and will be integrated more closely into the EU Framework structure, which overlaps the DORI in terms of its mission and priority areas. In the end, the DORI has been seen by many as initiating the discussion on Roma related issues in Europe but remains to be of only marginal success and impact with far too few of the priority areas being successfully addressed and little progress being made in certain areas. It is important to note that the critics, and the DORI participants themselves, share common critiques of the DORI, and thus while the DORI is not succeeding in European-wide inclusion for Roma; it is changing its approach to (hopefully) better serve the Roma populations.

Chapter 5: Hungary and the Roma: A Case Study

In Hungary, the term *Tsigani*, or *Cigány*, is used for Roma people. This expression derives from the Greek word *atsinganoi*, and while it is not preferred by Roma scholars, it has become the term used by many Hungarians (Petrova 2004).

“But at present, the political construction of the Roma identity has reached a stage at which the outsider identifications, such as Gypsy and Tsigane, terms still preferred in much of the historical, anthropological, and ethnographic literature, are considered undesirable due to the huge baggage of prejudice they carry” (Petrova 2004).

The Romani movement has largely condoned the use of the term *Tsigani* or *Cigány*, and while many people still use it, its negative and pejorative undertones have led many to use the term Roma in an attempt to create a more positive identity (Vermeersch 2007). In keeping with this desire, I have chosen to use the term Roma for much of the literature, which may or may not use the term *Cigány* or *Tsigani* in reference to Hungarian Roma.

I have included Hungary as a case study in this work due to its initial work with the DORI, its current sociopolitical environment related to Roma, and its usage of minority self-governments (MSGs) as avenues for representation. I additionally focus on Hungary due to the availability of literature on its work with Roma people and from the urgings of my interviewees and advisors.

Brief history of Roma in Hungary

Historical Hungarian accounts first mention the Roma around 1378 A.D. (Crowe 2007). Their initial migration into the Hungarian lands, which at that time included much of what is

now Croatia, Austria, Romania, Slovakia, and Serbia, was met with varying degrees of acceptance (Crowe 2007). The Roma mostly settled in the Slovak region around castles and were believed to be Egyptian religious exiles (Crowe 2007). Initially, they were granted permits to travel through the country, partially because King Sigismund (1387–1437) believed they held vital military information about the Ottoman Turks since they had spent time in the empire (Crowe 2007).

Several mentions of the Roma in the labor market are found during the same time period, being employed as iron workers, general laborers, rifle and cannon makers, and even gold washers. Additionally, records show that the Roma were still subjected to taxes in some regions, with records indicating a tax of 1 forint (the Hungarian currency at the time) per Roma and various other taxes upon their encampments (Kemény 2005). During this time period, many of the Roma became more sedentary due to employment opportunities, which allowed them to live near their work. In some cases, employers created settlements for the Roma (Kemény 2005; Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2004). Also during this time period, the first references to musicians are found in connection with the Roma, something that would eventually become synonymous with Roma culture (Crowe 2007). However, the Hungarian views on Roma began to change with the defeat of the Hungarians by the Ottomans in 1526 (Crowe 2007). Roma began to be viewed as “incendiaries, soldiers, and spies” after the Ottomans defeated the ethnic *Magyar*³⁶ Hungarians who occupied the central portions of Hungary (Crowe 2007, 71). Hungary was divided into three portions after the Ottomans invaded: the Slovak portion (which had a large Roma population) was under Royal Habsburg control, the central portion (mainly *Magyar*

³⁶ *Magyar* is the term for ethnic Hungarians, and it is used today to distinguish between the Hungarians and the non-*Magyar* Hungarians. The Jobbik and other extremist groups have capitalized on the ethnic differences in Hungary to call for a more nationalistic and *Magyar*-centric state (Balogh 2012).

population) was controlled by the Ottomans, and the third portion became the Principality of Transylvania (Crowe 2007). Since much of the Roma populations lived within the Habsburg lands, much of the surviving documentation focuses on their experiences there, and it is within the Habsburg lands that anti-Roma legislation began anew.

Under the Habsburg rulers, Maria Theresa (1740–1780) and her son Joseph II (1780–1790), Roma people were subjected to forced assimilation and strict anti-immigration policies (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2004; Kemény 2005). The anti-immigration/migration policies during the period essentially forced Roma to be sedentary by prohibiting authorities from granting them passports and restricting their movements.

“The decree [1753] prohibited Roma from moving from one place to another and from traveling; and it prohibited the authorities from issuing passports to Roma. Roma were also prohibited from begging. The decree placed the Roma voivodes and the general Roma population under the jurisdiction of the village magistrates. It prohibited Roma from keeping horses. It ordered Roma to wear normal clothing wherever they were living. The decree of 1761 prescribed that Roma were in the future to be called ‘new Hungarians’ or ‘new peasants’” (Kemény 2005, 16).

This forced assimilation, the anti-immigration policies, and the measures to outlaw the Romani language, dress, and culture reinforced outsider status (Kemény 2005). Even when they were seen as contributing members of society in times of war, their perceived “inferiority” was reinforced by these decrees. The assimilative efforts by Maria Theresa may be viewed as trying to create a “new” Hungarian society through assimilation into a national identity. She also decreed that Roma were not allowed to intermarry and instead children were to be taken into non-Roma families to further assimilate and eventually marry into the “new” Hungarian society

(Kemény 2005; Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2004; Crowe 2007). These decrees were largely impossible to enforce, especially since most landowners and municipal governments did not want to grant assimilated Roma land or equal status, which was a key portion of the decree. Thus, much of what both Maria Theresa and her successor Joseph II attempted did not serve to assimilate Roma. However, it is important to note that during this period, some Roma did assimilate into Hungarian society. While the decrees were marginally ineffective, they served as a turning point in Hungarian and Roma relations. During this time period, the first censuses attempted to quantify the number of Roma present in the country with the eventual hope for data unsegregated by ethnicity, since the goals of the rulers were to create a society of all “new” Hungarians (Kemény 2005). From 1772 to 1782, several censuses were conducted throughout the territories of Hungary with the approximate number of Roma being estimated at 90,000, about 1 percent of the region’s total population (Kemény 2005). Interestingly, in 1783 when a new census was taken, roughly 13,000 less Roma were counted. This large drop in number is primarily due to the assimilative efforts of the Habsburgs and similarly the self-identification of the Roma, who saw the benefits in being counted as non-Roma (i.e. access to land, guaranteed work, etc.) (Kemény 2005; Crowe 2007). With the surge in Roma immigration after the reign of the Habsburgs, the Hungarian Roma population rose almost 50 percent from 1782 to 1857, and by 1893, the official census of Roma stood at about 280,000 (Kemény 2005; Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2004).

Like any cultural group, Roma people possessed a musical tradition from the beginning of their migration into Europe. As István Kemény notes in his work, Roma had often been associated with music, and although it was not until later that they gained notoriety for their musical work, Roma and music were associated together as early as the 17th century. “In 1683

the *Ungarischer Simplicissimus* reported on the growth of the Roma population. ‘Roma are by nature inclined towards music; almost every Hungarian noble has a Roma violinist or locksmith’ ” (Kemény 2005, 12). However, it was not until after the Habsburg rulers that music became an integral part of their identity as Hungarian Roma (Kemény 2005). While both of the Habsburg rulers had prohibited the cultural expressions of the Roma in an effort to quell their “Roma-ness” and create a nationalized identity, the recognition of their talents had already started to be recognized by Hungarian land owners (Kemény 2005; Crowe 2007).

“The decrees of Maria Theresa and Joseph II prohibited the Roma from making music, thereby acknowledging the significance of the change in the Roma lifestyle that began to take place as the decrees were being drafted. The census of 1782 recorded 1582 Roma musicians and 5886 Roma blacksmiths, but in subsequent years the number of Roma musicians rose rapidly” (Kemény 2005, 17).

David Crowe and Kemény partially ascribe the rise in “Gypsy” music to the demand of land owners such as János Lányi, who is credited with creating the first “Gypsy Orchestra” (Kemény 2005). By the time the Revolution of 1848 occurred, the “Gypsy Orchestras” and Roma musicians had gained a positive reputation and impacted the Hungarian musical tradition forever (Crowe 2007). The influence of the Roma musical tradition is attributed to the work of several prominent Roma musicians, including the most influential of the period, János Bihari (Crowe 2007). Bihari (1764–1827) was considered by Ferenc Liszt (the well-known Hungarian musician) to be one of the nation’s “most celebrated violinists” and was sought after to play for European courts and the Council of Vienna in 1814–1815 (Crowe 2007, 78). Liszt, who was to be known as “Hungary’s greatest son,” was fascinated with Roma musicians, and his piece “Hungarian Rhapsodies” was inspired by Roma musical work during the period (Crowe 2007,

78-79). Liszt attributed the Roma musicians' influence on Hungarian music as being the driving force behind all musical styles during the period, and his book *Bohemiens et le leur musique en Hongrie* ("Gypsies and their Music in Hungary") placed the credit for Hungarian national music in the hands of the Roma musicians (Crowe 2007, 79; Silverman 1999). The surge in national pride and eventual revolution of 1848–1849 led many Roma to be swept into the conflict as either musicians or fighters. However, with the defeat of the Hungarians by the Austrians and the hope of nationhood shattered, the Roma were relegated back into their unofficial minority status (Kemény 2005).

“The musicians were not a homogenous group. Alongside a small but celebrated group of first violinists and others who earned well and lived in security and comfort, there were many musicians who earned money by playing music at local weddings, balls or other occasional events, and who therefore had no choice but to work as laborers at other times” (Kemény 2005, 40).

During the interim period, from the failed war for independence to about 1900, the records on Roma musicians are scarce. However, at the census of 1893, Roma musicians numbered at about 17,000, approximately 16 percent of the total Roma population surveyed (Kemény 2005; Crowe 2007).

The Roma are not a cohesive group, and indeed by the 19th century, distinctions among them were made by both the Hungarians and the different Roma groups themselves (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2004; Kemény 2005; Szuhay 2005). The largest group, the Hungarian

“Gypsies,”³⁷ also known as *Romungro* (in reference to their dialect), is the most assimilated and has been present in the country for the longest period of time (about 600–650 years)(Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2004; Kemény 2005; Szuhay 2005; Dunn 2014). Romungro are primarily sedentary, speak Hungarian, and have lost some distinguishing traditions of Roma culture. However, they still face the hardships and violence that other Roma do (ibid). Romungro are credited with much of the musical traditions in Hungary, and because of their music’s popularity, many people believe that Romungro music is the only Romani musical style (Silverman 1999).

The second Roma population is the Vlach Roma, who speak a form of Romani influenced by Romanian language and most likely immigrated to Hungary during the 19th century migration (from Romania after slavery was outlawed³⁸). The Vlach Roma still retain portions of their cultural heritage and are seen as being more “Roma” than the *Rumungro* (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2004; Kemény 2005; Szuhay 2005). Lastly, the smallest population of Roma are the Beás, who speak an archaic form of Romanian and also retain portions of their older traditions (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2004; Kemény 2005; Szuhay 2005). While the different Roma groups of Hungary remain largely divided in terms of language and culture, they often still are perceived as being the same by non-Roma Hungarians, in terms of their “inferiority” and inherent culture of “criminality” (Dunn 2014; Stewart 2012). Overall, the population estimates for the pre-war Roma in Hungary range from about 142,000 to 280,000 (Kemény 2005).

Between 1893 and the rise of the Nazis in the late 1930s, the various Roma groups occupied distinct trade niches in Hungarian society. Of these niches, the Vlach Roma occupied the

³⁷ Although this term is seen as pejorative by many other Roma groups, the Romungro self-identify as Hungarian Gypsies (Dunn 2014; Kemény 2005; Szuhay 2005).

³⁸ For a brief background on Roma slavery, see Chapter 3: The Roma.

agricultural, animal husbandry, and trade niches of horse dealing and carpet selling (Kemény 2005). The Beás Roma, who according to Kemény were known for their carpentry and agricultural skills, occupied similar niches during the pre-war period (Kemény 2005). Romungro were forced into agricultural positions with the loss of steady work from the once wealthy landowners and feudal lords who had sponsored their musical concerts and other activities (Kemény 2005).

20th Century Struggles

Since the turn of the 20th century, many Roma became more itinerant due to the lack of reliable long-term work. This gave rise to legislation aimed at controlling the movements of the Roma and culminated in the use of internment tactics (Kemény 2005; Bársony and Daróczi 2008). In 1928, the Hungarian government decreed that officials were to undertake biannual “Gypsy raids” on settlements to enforce legislation against nomadic or traveling Roma (Bársony and Daróczi 2008). These “Gypsy raids” essentially involved using force to destroy settlements, often by burning down encampments and injuring or killing the inhabitants to instill fear (Kemény 2005; Bársony and Daróczi 2008). By the start of World War II, legislation had driven many Roma populations into a forced sedentary lifestyle. And, while the sedentary Roma were not targeted by previous laws, in 1938 a decree was made to treat all Roma populations with suspicion, essentially making all Hungarian Roma second-class citizens stripped of most rights (Bársony and Daróczi 2008).

However, with the start of World War II and the eventual occupation of Hungary in 1944, the Roma became outright targets of genocide (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2004; Kemény 2005). The Nazis occupied Hungary on March 19, 1944, and soon afterward, the “final solution” was

implemented, first against Hungarian Jews with the genocide of roughly 200,000 from Budapest alone by the end of February 1945 (Kemény 2005). By November and December 1944, the Nazis and allied Hungarian Arrow Cross Party officials had begun deporting and killing Hungarian Roma. Official estimates on the number killed and deported are difficult to determine due to the amount of undocumented killings, which were often done in settlements by Hungarian police and Arrow Cross Party officials (Kemény 2005). In December 1944, with the advance of the Russian army, women and children were set free from the Csillageröd internment camp. However, by the end of the war, hundreds of Roma victims (mostly children and elderly people) were found buried on site (Bársony and Daróczi 2008). With the approaching end of the war and advance of the Russian army, many Roma internment camps were liquidated, the occupants either killed outright or transferred into the concentration camps of Germany (Bársony and Daróczi 2008). Perhaps most disturbing was the announcement by Arrow Cross Minister of the Interior Gábor Vajna on February 23, 1945: “I have commenced the total and, if need be, Draconian resolution of the Jewish and Gypsy questions” (Bársony and Daróczi 2008, 20). Estimates of the number of Hungarian Roma killed during the Roma Holocaust³⁹ range from 5,000 to about 28,000. However, others believe the total to be much higher due to the likelihood that many reports on Roma killings were never filed (Kemény 2005; Bársony and Daróczi 2008).

Overall, the war and the aftermath of the Roma Holocaust affected the Hungarian Roma in terrible ways; it essentially left the horror and death of the Holocaust unanswered, with many Roma fearful of self-identifying and for the most part left with no avenues of reparation. The suffering of the Roma during the Holocaust was met with little sympathy from the local populace, who more often than not simply ignored the Roma around them (Bársony and Daróczi

³⁹ Referred to as the *Pharrajimos* or *Porrajimos* by Roma scholars (see Chapter 3).

2008). Reports of Roma living in fear among the forests persisted for months after their release from the camps and, while official recognition of the Holocaust only came decades later, the shortage of immediate and widespread information left the Roma in the dark (Bársony and Daróczi 2008). As Bársony and Daróczi put it:

“Magnifying the Roma’s fears were the isolated nature of most of their communities, their lack of information, and the fact that law enforcement officers—policemen, criminal investigators, gendarmes—very frequently managed to keep their positions after the war. In the eyes of the Roma, these officers, who had participated in the deportations, represented the continuity of the ‘criminal, persecuting, foreign power’” (Bársony and Daróczi 2008, 44).

Authorities soon reinstated many of the pre-war laws after the democratic Hungarian government fell to the Communists in 1947. These policies further isolated the Roma population and degraded their chances of becoming more integrated into Hungarian society, fanning the flames of discrimination and ethnic hatred. In 1952, the Hungarian Interior Ministry proposed registering all Roma in order to facilitate their internment in state labor camps and place all Roma children in state orphanages. A year later, the police began gathering data on thousands of Roma settlements (Bársony and Daróczi 2008). In 1953, the national police created a national ID card for Roma people that was a different color from other work cards and designated them as Roma (Bársony and Daróczi 2008). Policies such as the aforementioned stayed in effect for several years, and while some, like the identification cards, were repealed, many were simply made more covert, with the intent to hinder the inclusion of Roma into Hungarian society (Bársony and Daróczi 2008). The Communist system categorized the Roma upon their adaptation into the Communist system rather than their actual ethnicity, with categories such as “integrated, under integration, and unintegrated” (Kende 2000, 193). This form of identification

was a change from earlier policies, which attempted to differentiate the Roma based on their ethnicity alone and resulted in many not wanting to self-identify for fear of repercussions. The Hungarian Socialist Worker Party further degraded the Roma populations' legitimate claim of being a separate culture from the non-Roma Hungarians by claiming the Roma do not meet the criteria for being a unique nation: a homeland, common language, and history (Kende 2000).

From the 1950s on, the Hungarian government began industrializing the country, a process that took more than twenty years but facilitated the end of many traditional Roma employment opportunities (Kemény 2005). With the loss of traditional labor niches, the Roma were pushed into the new industrial economy, and while they gained employment at levels never seen before, the push toward industrialization also served to create a more assimilated Roma population (Kemény 2005).

“The 1950s and 1960s saw Roma turn away from agriculture towards industry. Seasonal (mostly summer) work in agriculture never provided the levels of income needed in order to live decently throughout the year. Industrialization offered Roma the possibility of regular and constant income and an opportunity to secure a respected position in modern industrial society” (Kemény 2005, 56).

With the increased opportunity for employment came the possibility of moving out of segregated areas into reclaimed peasant housing or similarly devalued residences not available to them before the Communist takeover (Kemény 2005). The policies that served to integrate the Roma also created jealousy among non-Roma Hungarians, who saw the Roma as “coddled but unworthy citizens” (Kende 2000, 193). Ágnes Kende further explains the paradoxical outcome of the Communist agenda with the imagery of a “needy” Roma population where “the stereotype of the pampered but unworthy Gypsy took root in the best days of socialism and has recurred ever

since. By connecting the ideas of coddled and criminal Gypsies, the majority in society turned prejudices against Gypsies into strong anti-Roma attitudes” (Kende 2000, 194). Martin Kovats refers to the dilemma Kende describes as the “assimilationist’s dilemma,” whereby specific group targeting is necessary to differentiate the group from the majority and to then break down the group’s identity to assure assimilation into the majority (Kovats 2001, 5). In order to achieve assimilation, Roma would need access to the economic prosperity of the majority.

At the time of the 1971 census, three-quarters of the identified Roma populations were actively employed, and 10 percent more had seasonal or temporary income. This dramatic increase is attributed to the opportunities afforded to the Roma in industry and to a lesser degree in agricultural endeavors (Kemény 2005). Overall, the Roma managed to gain some of the employment opportunities they had sought prior to the war and were even able to gain admission into the Communist Party (although most attained low-level positions) (Kemény 2005). This period of forced assimilation and economic development served as a painful reminder of prosperity for many Roma after the fall of the Communist regime and the subsequent surge in discrimination and loss of labor opportunities (Koulis 2005).

With the fall of the Communist Party in 1989 and a newly restructured and re-envisioned Hungary taking shape, the Roma were again thrown into upheaval. Loss of industrial jobs and rising unemployment in the 1980s (due to economic pressures from the worldwide recession) caused the Roma to begin falling back into the cracks of the economic system (Kemény 2005). With more than 49 percent of Roma unemployed by 1993 and dramatic shifts in economic priorities, the Roma were essentially left without a significant economic opportunity. The loss of traditional employment and the failure of the Communist state meant that the forced

industrialization under Communism gave rise to many Roma not having opportunities in the new labor market, which largely valued skilled workers (Kemény 2005).

“Roma with livelihoods based on the horse or pig trade were pushed out, because on the one hand we slaughtered our horses and, on the other, such trade was prohibited. In recent years, horse-breeding and horse-trading has recovered, but only a negligible number of Vlach Roma now make a living from these activities. Two smaller groups of horse dealers had switched to trading in automobile spare parts and to fattening cows, while a slightly larger group had become carriers (or were involved in the carrier trade as secondary work). Most of them, however, had found work in industry. The few horse-trading Roma families who continued to work in the trade (that is, those who traded horses legally for the state livestock company or who carried on the craft in wagons as raga-and-bone men) gradually became detached from the rest of the Roma population and began to consider themselves as the only real ‘Roma’” (Kemény 2005, 58).

The Roma population was also considered, on average, to be less educated, which Kemény argues is partially due to the lack of a need in the Communist economic system (basic primary school skills were sufficient to obtain an industrial position). Paired with the shifting economic opportunities, this meant Roma were unable to transition fully into the new economic and social system⁴⁰ (Kemény 2005; McGarry 2012). Among the changes taking place in the early years of the new Republic of Hungary was the revitalization of and focus on ethnic and minority rights, a process that helped create the Minority Self-Government (MSG) systems.

⁴⁰ Although this is a standard argument for the Roma people’s lack of ability to gain a foothold in the newly formed free market economy, I propose that several factors play into the Hungarian Roma’s lack of economic and social agency (see Chapter 6 for more).

Roma Organizing and the Minority Self-Governments

One of the most significant Hungarian policies implemented after the fall of Communism was the 1993 Act on the Rights of National and Ethnic Minorities (herein referred to as the Minority Act), which essentially created a legal avenue of limited self-governance for those minorities present in Hungary for more than 100 years (Schafft and Brown 2000). These self-governments were, in theory, meant to act as both local and national representatives of the minorities. They had limited say in legislation but acted as cultural liaisons with sway over matters of cultural legislation. (Schafft and Brown 2000). The law states:

“Within the sphere of its authority, the minority local government...may establish and maintain institutions, especially in such fields as local public education, local printed or electronic media, cultivating traditions (and) culture and general education. Within the limits of the available resources, it is (also) authorized to establish and run enterprises and other economic organizations; to announce competitions and raise foundations” (Schafft and Brown 2000, 203).

Schafft and Brown argue that this law, while lacking in its ability to influence much of the national policy, does allow the minorities to veto legislation if it impacts “local public education, local mass media, cultivation of local traditions, culture, and the collective use of language” (Schafft and Brown 2000, 203). In theory, this puts the MSG system in control of the local-level policymaking, at least when it impacts the minority in question. The MSG system is split

between the local-level MSGs and the national-level MSGs, with the local-level MSGs being responsible for the local-level politics, including issues of education, human rights, health, and media. Kovats asserts that the MSGs have two main functions: “to represent Roma interests and to establish Roma cultural autonomy” (Koulis 2005, 317). Essentially, the MSGs work on similar issues and act as mediators between the governments and the Roma minority with any local decision⁴¹ having to have approval by the local MSG and larger national decisions needing national MSG approval (Koulis 2005, 317).

The MSG system was influenced by several factors, which determined the scope of the MSGs and timing of their creation. During the Kádár regime (János Kádár served as prime minister from 1961–1988), the efforts to include Roma in the new Hungarian society helped break the centuries-old exclusion and made cohabitation between non-Roma and Roma a reality (Kovats 2001). This spurred growth in the Roma populations due to a better standard of living and the guarantee for work in the regime. Thus, the population grew from pre-war numbers to more than an estimated half million in just over fifty years (Kovats 2001). With the fall of the Communist era, rising unemployment, and possibility of having access to European Union funds, Hungarian politicians realized the need for rights protections that would serve the Roma. The economic crisis of the 1980s forced the Hungarian political regime to change its stance on the ethnicity of the Roma and, likewise, on the assimilation process that had been in place for more than twenty years. It changed to a representative system based on ethnicity. As Kovats puts it: “In other words, the aim of the policy was shifted away from equalizing the circumstances of Roma people with those of other citizens and towards the less ambitious (and cheaper) one of

⁴¹ Only decisions relating to “education, media, language, and culture” are included under the Minority Act (Koulis 2005, 317).

creating a formal relationship with (representatives of) an ‘ethnic group’ ” (Kovats 2001). As a solution to this issue, in 1985 the Hungarian government created the National Gypsy Council (NGC) to control the budget and scope of the organization, with representatives hand-chosen by the National Secretariat of the People’s Patriotic Front (Kovats 2001).

“The great irony of the situation of Roma politics is that the policy of encouraging its formal, organizational manifestation, constructed to help reduce public expenditure and to emphasize the ‘difference’ of the Roma (as part of the ‘new consensus’ and the introduction of the anti-assimilation minorities policy), has come at a time when the effects of the change of system have created a greater than ever need for policies to be developed to support the living standards and equality of Roma people as citizens” (Kovats 2001,7).

The MSG influence on local-level political life is seen by many Roma as merely a charade and an avenue for Roma political elite to gain access to the major political parties. In fact, in the Robert Koulisch study, many respondents found that life under the Kádár regime was preferable to their present situation (Koulisch 2005). The nostalgia for conditions under the Communist regime is partially due to the economic opportunities available to Roma under the forced industrialization and also due to the creation of a “national” identity, which attempted to suppress the strong ethnic divide among Hungarians (Koulisch 2005).

“Some Romani individuals and groups, especially those from long-settled communities, took the avenue of social mobility opened to them by communist ideology and social policies. Assimilation proved to be an attractive way to improve their social status, or at least to escape the stigma associated with ‘Gypsy’ and the ‘Gypsy-like’ way of life. There also developed a thin strata of Romani intellectuals, party activists, and a middle-

class, a by-product of the state's coercive educational measure” (Gheorghe and Mirga 1997).

As Nicolae Gheorghe and Andrzej Mirga allude to in the previous quote, the Communist system was able to garner some tacit support from the Roma, who saw the opportunities as means to a better quality of life.

This lack of success is due to the Minority Act being ambiguous and short of the necessary funding mechanisms to operate a truly independent self-government. Together with the predominantly inexperienced and undereducated pool of potential representatives, the MSGs are seen as puppet governments without the ability to enact change (Schafft and Brown 2000; Koulisch 2005; Dunn 2014). Richard David, a Hungarian NGO Roma researcher intimately familiar with the DORI, points to the absence of sufficient funding in the MSG system, funding that inadequately addresses the issues MSGs face in terms of the push for inclusion.

“It’s a complex problem, because on paper we have a local system of cultural autonomy for all minorities and they have an elected local self-government...and actually, it’s the local self-governments who elect the national self-governments. What is a very tricky issue is that this institution is supposed to promote or maintain cultural autonomy and they have the right to do so, but they do not have the funding. I mean, typically, a local Roma self-government has enough money to organize one or two Roma days...I mean, they get a band, they can cook...but then they have used up all their budget. But these bodies were never set up to deal with the questions of economic and political exclusion... but this is the burning question for most of the Roma” (David 2014, 56:21).

The MSG system, while catering to the symbolic cultural needs of the Roma, lacks the ability to effectively address the broader issues of exclusion. As the David quote emphasizes, the MSGs' focus needs to be shifted to the issues Roma face in the socioeconomic realm while still maintaining their mandate for cultural issues, recognizing that socioeconomic considerations are also cultural. Due to deficiency of funding, broad-based Roma mistrust of MSGs, and possible corruption issues, the MSGs are seemingly to remain ineffective institutions. However, instead of addressing the issues with the MSGs on a national scale, the Orbán government has recently stripped them of more power⁴² and made the alliance between the MSGs and FIDESZ stronger (Dunn 2014). Thus, the national government is able to save face by appeasing the international community in regard to Roma issues by pointing to the national MSG system (Kovats 2001; Dunn 2014).

“The central government's exclusive Roma partner is the National Roma Self-Government (NRSG) (strongly supported by the current government, heavily based on Lungo Drom⁴³ representatives, an ally of FIDESZ), which is highly problematic because this arrangement excludes a large range of (non-Lungo Drom) Roma interest groups from meaningful participation, thus limiting critical feedback” (Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015 2012, 9).

The endemic problem with the MSGs is not in its intended democratic structure of representation but in its scope of power. As David and the Civil Society report illustrate in the above quotes, if the policies of inclusion rely on the MSGs to act as true representatives of the Roma populations,

⁴² According the 2012 Hungarian Constitution, the MSGs no longer are consulted on legislation dealing with cultural issues (Dunn 2014; Government of Hungary 2011).

⁴³ Lungo Drom is the largest Roma political party in Hungary and is allied with the FIDEZ party (Dunn 2014).

then they need to have a broader scope and more funding. Corruption among the MSGs is another sticking point in creating effective representation. As critics have pointed out, the MSGs are often aligned with the national parties, and due to the current power of the FIDESZ party, the decisions made by the MSGs often align themselves with FIDESZ decisions (Dunn 2014). Without local-level assurances, the national-level MSGs will find it hard to act in the interests of local Roma.

The Rise of the Right and Endemic Violence

Starting in the mid-1990s and steadily gathering support and traction since, the rise of the far right and emergence of racially motivated political forces have plagued Hungary (Balogh 2012). Partially attributed to the widespread discrimination and long-held prejudices that permeated Hungarian society, the far right and nationalist support began to gain a wider following in the early 2000s with the rise of the Jobbik party and the emergence of the Hungarian Guard (Balogh 2012). As the popularity of the Jobbik increased, so too did the idea of “Gypsy criminality” fueled by prejudices of the past and the rhetoric of the far right (Balogh 2012). “According to a survey in 2006, almost two-thirds (62 percent) of the adult population of Hungary agreed fully or to some degree with the following statement: ‘The tendency to commit crime is in the blood of the Roma’ ” (Balogh 2012, 242). The case many Hungarians point to as proof of “Gypsy criminality” occurred in October 2006, when a Hungarian school teacher was killed by local Roma in front of his young daughters⁴⁴. Although the Roma were tried and received harsh penalties, a rash of violent retaliations occurred and have continued for the past ten years.

⁴⁴ The victim Lajos Szögi had struck a Roma child with his car (the child had minor injuries), and the local Roma proceeded to lynch Lajos in retaliation. Lajos Szögi became a symbolic figure used by the Jobbik and other extremist groups to incite fear and hatred for the Roma (Balogh 2012).

The rise in Roma hate crimes came to a head between 2008–2009 with nine unprecedented attacks targeting Roma and many more inconclusively targeting Roma (Balogh 2012). These attacks included the use of hand guns, explosives, and firebombs on Roma settlements throughout Hungary. One of the most grievous attacks involved the killing of a forty-three-year-old Roma man and a forty-year-old Roma woman in their home on November 3, 2008; the home was firebombed, and they were subsequently shot. In another attack, on February 23, 2009, a twenty-seven-year-old Roma father and his five-year-old son were shot while fleeing their burning home (Balogh 2012). Despite the witness accounts and the remnants of the firebomb, the cause of death was originally claimed to be smoke inhalation resulting from an electric fire (Balogh 2012). The attacks largely subsided after August 2009, but ongoing clashes and violence have led to the rise of civil guard units, which are made up of non-Roma Hungarians focused on combating the local “Gypsy criminality” (Balogh 2012).

The Jobbik party, which had been until this point a relatively new political party, began to campaign on the issue of “Gypsy criminality” using strong rhetoric to incite the base of Hungarians who had historically seen the Roma as outsiders and had become more radicalized as the ethnic violence rose (Balogh 2012). The Jobbik party not only utilized anti-Gypsy and anti-Semitic views but also played to the strong nationalistic tendencies of the Hungarians. It campaigned using slogans such as “Hungary belongs to Hungarians” (Balogh 2012, 245). The party managed to gain 15 percent of the votes in 2009 and proceeded to secure three European Parliamentary seats, further solidifying their political and social agenda (Balogh 2012). Some scholars attribute the success of the Jobbik party to a successful campaign of turning local issues (the Lajos Szögi case being a prime example) into nationalistic issues (Balogh 2012).

With the rise of the Jobbik party came the creation of the Hungarian Guard, which emerged in 2007. The Hungarian Guard, registered as a cultural organization, began to organize marches in rural communities with large Roma populations (Balogh 2012). The group focused on intimidating the local Roma populations through show of force, public speeches, and rallies, along with utilizing the “Gypsy criminality” stance the Jobbik had popularized. In 2008, with the support of several organizations such as the National Gypsy Council, the Hungarian Guard was ordered to disband by the courts on the grounds that it “aimed to create a climate of fear, while its activities—the marching of its members in Roma-populated settlements and the speeches of its leaders—constitute a breach of the rights of other citizens” (Balogh 2012, 246). However, the decision was appealed by the Hungarian Guard’s official association, the Hungarian Guard Tradition Protection and Cultural Association, on the grounds that the more radicalized and militant Hungarian Guard technically was nonexistent. Thus, the group remained active (Balogh 2012). The estimated number of active Hungarian Guard members ranged from 1,300 to 6,000 as of 2009, with Balogh citing the possibility of many more currently. While the official connection between the Jobbik and the Hungarian Guard was technically nonexistent, the Jobbik and the Guard used the unofficial alliance to garner more supporters, and the Guard would often attend Jobbik rallies (Balogh 2012). Again, in 2009, the Hungarian Guard was ordered to disband, but the group was re-launched in July 2009 as the “Hungarian Guard Movement,” supported by prominent politicians, including the president of the Jobbik party, Gábor Vona (Balogh 2012). The Hungarian Guard Movement members donned uniforms and waved flags while marching through the streets of Budapest in celebration of their re-launch on July 12, 2009 (Balogh 2012). Similar attempts at Roma Guards or Roma political unification have failed to date, and while some grassroots movements have strived to revitalize the call for a Roma Guard, the political

will has shifted from the militant stance to that of coalition with the FIDESZ political party (Balogh 2012).

The current prime minister, Viktor Orbán (who is also the leader of the FIDESZ party), has fanned the nationalistic flames and done little to defuse racial tensions. Orbán first become active in politics in 1988 when he helped found the *Fiatal Demokraták Szövetsége* (Federation of Young Democrats), which became commonly known as the FIDESZ party (FIDESZ 2010). Orbán made a well-documented speech at a ceremony in 1989, in which he called for all Soviet troops to leave the country and for free and democratic elections to be held (FIDESZ 2010). After taking part in the transitional talks of 1989, Orbán was elected into parliament in 1990 under the FIDESZ party (FIDESZ 2010). In 1993, he was elected to be the FIDESZ party chair and was responsible for changing the politics of the party from being “a radical youth movement” to a “moderate center-right” party (FIDESZ 2010). Following a successful coalition with the Hungarian Civic Party (MPP), Orbán was elected as prime minister in 1998 (FIDESZ 2010; Vermeersch 2007). In his first term, he mainly left Roma issues to be addressed as part of his predecessors⁴⁵ policies and programs, which focused on creating “medium and long-term programs” for reducing the gap between Roma and non-Roma (Vermeersch 2007, 76). Orbán’s approach to Roma issues was to deal with them as a matter of cultural diversity and place them under the Office for National and Ethnic Minorities (Vermeersch 2007). Ironically, the Roma were not included under ethnic minorities in the government programs and were mentioned by name under “those who need help” (Vermeersch 2007, 78). Orbán’s political opponents scrutinized his policies as being ineffectual and focusing on the immediate issues instead of

⁴⁵ Horn Government 1994–1998 (MSzP and SzDSz coalition, which stand for respectively: The Hungarian Socialist Party “MSzP” and the Alliance of Free Democrats “SzDSz”)

supporting long-term programs (Vermeersch 2007). Additionally, opponents claimed that funds supposed to be used for the programs were never directed to them, which led to a worsening of Roma conditions during Orbán's leadership (Vermeersch 2007). Also under Orbán, Hungary joined NATO (1999) and prepared for accession into the European Union (2004) (FIDESZ 2010). However, Orbán failed to implement significant or effective changes to Roma policy during his reign, and his opponents claimed that most of the work done was "superfluous" (Vermeersch 2007, 78). In the 2002 elections, the former party coalition between the Socialists and the Democrats beat out the FIDESZ-MPP rule and replaced Orbán with Prime Minister Péter Medgyessy (Vermeersch 2007). Medgyessy went on to be an integral part of the DORI foundation and appointed a well-known Roma activist to head the newly formed Council for Romani Issues (Vermeersch 2007).

Orbán's second rise to power came in 2006 when he was again elected as president of the FIDESZ party, which took control of the parliament in 2007 and gained majority seats in European Parliamentary elections (FIDESZ 2010). In 2009, the alliance between FIDESZ-MPP and the larger European People's Party again swept the EU elections with a large majority and then did the same in the Hungarian Parliament in 2010 (FIDESZ 2010). On May 29, 2010, Viktor Orbán was sworn in as the prime minister of Hungary for his second term (FIDESZ 2010). While in office, Orbán instituted several controversial policy changes, including granting dual citizenship to all ethnic Hungarians around the world (Thorpe 2013; "Slovaks..." 2010). This was seen by some critics as an attempt to revisit the past⁴⁶ and gain more political power by drawing in new ethnic Hungarian voters (Thorpe 2013; "Slovaks..." 2010). The prime minister

⁴⁶ The Treaty of Trianon 1920 split up the Austro-Hungarian Empire and created the modern borders of Hungary, which essentially left many ethnic Hungarians living in other lands (McCartney 1937).

was also criticized by the European Commission for not meeting its budgetary goals in 2010–2011 (Kocsis 2010). Orbán’s government continued to create constitutional changes, many of which became controversial and incited scrutiny from the EU and US (Kocsis 2010). According to Kim Scheppelle, professor of sociology and international affairs at Princeton University:

“Twelve times in its first year in office, it [Orbán’s government] amended the constitution it inherited. Those amendments removed most of the institutional checks that could have stopped what the government did next—which was to install a new constitution. The new Fidesz constitution was drafted in secret, presented to the Parliament with only one month for debate, passed by the votes of only the Fidesz parliamentary bloc, and signed by a president that Fidesz had named. Neither the opposition parties nor civil society organizations nor the general public had any influence in the constitutional process. There was no popular ratification. The Fidesz constitution went into effect on January 1, 2012” (Scheppelle 2013).

The new constitution was considerably influenced by the Orbán government’s attempt to create a more unified and nationalized Hungary, and provisions of the constitution favor more government control over independent institutions, such as higher education and the courts (Scheppelle 2013). Although Orbán’s government does not publicly condone the rise in extremism and violence, its shift from a democratic state to that of a nationalist, one-party system has influenced the Jobbik and Hungarian Guard (*Magyar Garda*) and allowed them to operate. While Orbán continues to dominate the political system in Hungary, he has also made clear his feelings on having more of an “illiberal state,” using Russia, China, and Turkey as examples (Simon 2014). With the tensions between the Roma and Hungarians on the rise,

examples of endemic and structurally acceptable racism are found among members of Orbán's own party.

“The mayor of Edelény, another small town in north-east Hungary, stated at a full council meeting, in front of local television cameras, that ‘pregnant Roma women in the neighbouring villages intentionally poison themselves and hit their abdomen to as to give birth to mentally retarded babies in the hope of a higher family allowance’ (Zolnay 2012).

The mayor quoted above is a FIDESZ parliament member, and when Orbán was later asked in an interview about the mayor's comments, he avoided the question and reiterated that all people are allowed their own opinions (Scheppelle 2009). János Zolnay argues that the political system of Hungary is responsible for the “permissive” environment where racial hatred and discrimination occur (Zolnay 2012). Orbán's government has done little to quell the rise in violence and has allowed local politicians to speak publicly about the “Gypsy problem” (Scheppelle 2009; Zolnay 2012). This lack of accountability has pervaded the Hungarian political and social environments and damaged effects of past policies of social integration, along with the hope for inclusion in the present.

The Decade work in Hungary

The 2013 Hungarian Progress Report starts with data on the current populations of Roma in the country (based for the most part on inconclusive and third-party data) and then goes through some vague descriptions of the progress in the priority areas outlined by the DAP.

“There is an estimation that it is more than half a million Roma in Hungary, and actually I was reading the census and it's very, very detailed, and I understand the reason why

anyone feels very uncomfortable with giving their ethnic background...not only because of the memory of the Holocaust” (David 2014, 44:24).

David is referring to the 2011 census, which was conducted on a large scale by using surveys of citizen’s self-identified ethnic background. It is important to note that the usage of *self-identification* was used in complying with the Minority Act, and thus, the census does not necessarily show an accurate picture of the Roma. However, the progress report bases its progress on this data in terms of the overall inclusion of Roma (Government of Hungary 2014).

At the 2003 conference that spurred the creation of the DORI (see Chapter 3), Hungarian Prime Minister Péter Medgyessy served as “arguably the most instrumental politician in the Decade,” and therefore Hungary was seen as one of the founding and most advanced Decade members regarding their work on Roma issues (Nicolae 2005). Since Hungary already had a system of representation for the Roma in the MSG system, it seemed logical that they would utilize the existing MSGs as the main representation for Roma in the DORI framework. However, as can be seen in the critical review of the MSG system, equal representation is contentious and disputed (Kovats 2001; Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015 2012; Dunn 2014). The Hungarian government’s National Action Plan (DAP), as dictated by the DORI framework, focuses heavily on the four priority areas: employment, education, housing, and health.

The first priority area the DAP focuses on is education. The comparative statistics between non-Roma and Roma educational rates are shocking. For instance, the Roma kindergarten attendance rate is only 42 percent, while the national average sits at 88 percent (Government of Hungary 2007). Likewise, the chances for Roma youth to be transferred to a school for mentally disabled children is about double the national average of non-Roma youth. In similar surveys and

studies between 2002 and 2003, only 5 percent of Roma completed secondary education, with just 1.2 percent attending universities or institutes of higher education (Government of Hungary 2007). Other scholars put the numbers even lower, with only 0.2 percent of Roma entering universities and higher education and only 2 percent finishing secondary education (Curcic and Plaut 2013). Overall, the state of Roma education in Hungary is seen as one of the most pressing problems.

The second priority area of the DAP is employment. Perhaps this focus is due to the high level of Roma employment prior to the transition to democracy, or maybe it's merely because the ratio of young Roma to elderly Roma is relatively high, making the potential workforce a large one (Government of Hungary 2007). Less than one-third of working-age Roma men hold a regular job or have steady income, and it is estimated that one-sixth of Roma women hold a regular job. Many Roma overall rely on undeclared and temporary work (Government of Hungary 2007).

In terms of health care, Roma are largely underserved. As a result of poor health care coupled with inadequate housing, Roma on average live ten years less than non-Roma (Government of Hungary 2007). Housing varies by region government, but generally Roma live in insufficient and largely segregated houses or apartments often lacking basic services and/or without "comfort facilities" (Government of Hungary 2007, 2).

Overall, the DAP focuses on extending access to services and facilities for the Roma through the priority areas of education and employment. In terms of education, the DAP has several goals: ending segregation in public schools, increasing early childhood education, reviewing the

“ghetto schools”⁴⁷, eliminating special schools and subsequent reevaluation of criteria for transfer to schools, increasing awareness of anti-discrimination in schools, creating scholarship opportunities, and increasing the number of Roma teachers (Government of Hungary 2007). The indicators for these tasks’ level of success are as follows:

- “Level of school qualification of Roma people”⁴⁸
- The number of students who attend segregated schools
- The number of students who don’t attend kindergarten
- The number of students falsely diagnosed as “mentally disabled”
- The number of students out of the formal education system
- The number of schools teaching Roma “folk studies”
- The number of Roma students receiving scholarships (Government of Hungary 2007)

Regarding employment, the DAP outlines the following indicators of success in programming:

- The number of employed Roma men and women who were formerly unemployed
- Level of professional qualification of Roma people
- The number of publicly employed Roma people
- The number of businesses operated in disadvantaged areas

⁴⁷ According to the DAP, “ghetto schools” are where the “proportion of Roma children is over 80 percent” (Government of Hungary 2007, 5).

⁴⁸ This is never fully defined by the DAP, and its inclusion in this section emphasizes the ambiguity of the DAP (Government of Hungary 2007, 8).

In terms of housing, the DAP focuses on issues of segregation, lack of adequate structures and access to basic services, the expansion of public assistance in obtaining housing, and access to rental homes (Government of Hungary 2007). The indicators of success in this area are as follows:

- The number of people living in settlements
- The degree of development in public utilities and access to utilities
- The number of rental houses and the demand for them

Concerning health care, the DAP focuses on improving the overall health conditions of the Roma, including increasing life expectancy at birth, providing access to health care in rural areas, increasing the number of Roma professionals in health care fields, and incentivizing the health care field in regard to Roma people (Government of Hungary 2007). The following is a list of indicators of success in health care:

- The number of physicians and health care workers in the field who service areas with a large Roma population
- The number of preventative exams being given in areas with a large Roma population
- The level of satisfaction among Roma in terms of health care treatment

The other focus areas the DAP touches on are discrimination and culture⁴⁹. The DORI sees these as being crosscutting areas that are to be addressed in all aspects of the programming. Regarding the area of discrimination, the DAP is vague and lacks much more than verbiage

⁴⁹ The DAP terms this priority area as: “culture, media, and sports” (Government of Hungary 2007, 19).

relating to discrimination cases in the court system. However, the DAP does address the ideas of structural or hidden discrimination within court systems and identifies the need for additional cooperation among government entities to address said discrimination (Government of Hungary 2007). Chiefly, the DAP focuses on competency in the system for addressing discrimination cases; establishing a warning system for discrimination in the areas of employment, education, health care, and social services; and establishing routine surveys of Roma populations in regard to discrimination (Government of Hungary 2007). The indicators of success in terms of anti-discrimination efforts aimed at Roma populations are as follows:

- The number of identified and “successfully handled” discrimination cases
- The levels of social inclusion and tolerance, and social attitudes toward Roma people

In terms of culture, media, and sports, the DAP focuses on using public education campaigns, performances, and scholarships for Roma athletes and artists to create a more inclusive environment for Roma people. Specifically, the DAP focuses on material- and performance-based culture while largely not addressing the more endemic cultural misconceptions and discrimination that plague the Roma. Furthermore, the DAP does not address the issue of culture in terms of the government’s role in protecting or maintaining the rights or access to cultural expression, and it instead relies on outside institutions and incentive-based scholarships for Roma in the arts or sports to address culture on a large scale. This absence of recognition and acknowledgment of culture makes the DAP a plan that only addresses the “easy” parts of inclusion⁵⁰, that is, the areas most visible and that have already had outside

⁵⁰ The priority areas that garner the most attention are education and employment, two areas that already had been the focus (to a certain extent) of several leaders throughout the 1990s and up to the present with the “Making Things Better” Initiative (Government of Hungary 2007).

institutional support for inclusion. My intent is not to completely discredit the work done through the DORI work in relation to the cultural area but merely to point out the inconsistencies, the lack of data, and the subsequent absence of cultural understanding among non-Roma and Romani Hungarians as is observed through recent violence and racial clashes. Largely, the DAP focuses on education in regards to combating cultural defamations and misconceptions but has no subsequent progress shown in any of the progress reports from 2005-2014. Furthermore, the programs and indicators developed often re-enforce the idea that education for Roma will solve the issues of cultural misconceptions by tacitly making Roma more “Hungarified” (Dunn 2014).

The indicators of success in the areas of culture, media, and sports are likewise the *surface* indicators and do not address the underlying issues related to culture for Roma people. By surface, I mean the areas where resolution of an issue can be accomplished through solving the most evident problems while not addressing the issues of identity, discrimination, and representation. This means that while some efforts have been successful in terms of achieving things, like higher kindergarten rates or the closing of segregated schools, the issues of discrimination and cultural misconceptions leading to ingrained structural discrimination are not addressed. As one of my interviewees stated in our correspondence: “cultural issues on a whole have been largely ignored by the Decade” (David 2014). Sadly, this is what the DAP focuses on in terms of actual indicators and goals; it is a clear indication that the DAP cannot be effective without a substantive policy addressing cultural discrimination. The current list of DAP indicators of success in the areas of culture, media, and sports is as follows:

- The number of programs representing Roma culture
- The number of scholarships given to Roma artists and athletes

- The number of Roma cultural institutions
- The number of news reports that stereotype Roma people
- The number of young Roma participating in sports

In regard to the priority areas outlined by the DORI, Hungary has established several national programs (some of which were established prior to the DORI), which focus on areas of education, employment, and housing (Government of Hungary 2007). The following are several examples of the programs related to education:

- “Making Things Better for Our Children” Program: part of the national programs through the New Hungary Development Plan. Making Things Better for Our Children attempted to eliminate child poverty through early education and increased social services. This program was closed in 2011 and integrated into a National Social Inclusion Strategy focusing on poverty, children, and Roma people (Association for Children's Chance (*Gyerekesély Közhasznú Egyesület*) 2013).
- Ferencváros After-School Program: an after-school program focused on helping children and adults with school work, community building, and parenting skills. Several affiliated programs located in other parts of the country are associated with the Ferencváros After-School Program (Franz Tanoda Association 2010; Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015, Decade Good Practices 2012).
- Student Mentor Program: Like the Ferencváros After-School Program, the Student Mentor Program (located in Szeged and Hódmezővásárhely) works to strengthen the educational achievement of Roma students. Through student mentoring (by another Roma

person), the Student Mentor Program attempts to create opportunities for achievement and improvement for Roma students (Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015, Decade Good Practices 2012).

Although numerous other programs exist that are associated with the tasks outlined in the priority areas, it is important to note that many of these programs are funded through the Roma Education Fund (REF) and/or affiliated Decade NGOs, and many lack significant government support. For instance, the National Social Inclusion Strategy is funded largely by the EU. The DORI critics have claimed that the absence of national governmental support allows for a system in which the government is not accountable to the programs and their subsequent success or failure (Association for Children's Chance (*Gyerekesély Közhasznú Egyesület*) 2013; Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015, Civil Society Monitoring 2013). This critique is largely borne out of the absence of substantive changes in the Hungarian Roma situation over the past 20 years since the NGOs have been working on Roma issues. I believe that the national government has a bigger role to play simply because of its potential access to funding and ability to garner more support than NGOs have in Hungary. Furthermore, many of the specific DORI programs remain localized in small areas, and most of them seem to have limited effects. For example, the Student Mentor Program, which was given 20,000 € (about \$26,000) by the REF, had just more than 200 participants, but only 89 of them were Roma (Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015, Decade Good Practices 2012). While further information about the funds being allocated to this program could not be found, it is safe to assume that having only 89 Roma participants with a budget of \$26,000 is largely not what one would call a success, at least in terms of broad impacts on a local level where Roma sometimes make up a large portion of the population. This is not to say the program is not valuable to the local community, but without targeting Roma specifically, the

success of the educational programming is to a great extent up to the strength of the projects themselves.

As part of the DORI structure, the national governments are required to annually submit a progress report on the DAP. While this seems fairly reasonable in terms of its general expectations, the problematic portion of the report lies in that the governments themselves, along with DORI-contracted and affiliated researchers, are gathering the data. Therefore, the results could be skewed intentionally to facilitate more access to funds, show more or less progress, etc. This is not to say that this has happened or will happen merely that the potential avenue for corruption lies in the lack of independently verified reports. This is especially troubling due to the alleged widespread corruption in the national and local MSGs which has led to many Roma not participating in the representative governments or mistrusting them (David 2014; Koulish 2005).

The 2013 Hungarian progress report goes on to illustrate the low levels of education (less than 1 percent graduating from secondary school), low employment levels (16 percent employed), and segregated housing conditions (about 300,000 people) (Government of Hungary 2014). It also discusses the different initiatives created during the year, including the Roma Affairs Council and the Anti-Segregation Roundtable. Both of these structures are supported by the government, and although both have ambiguous and vague descriptions of their intended goals, both speak of monitoring inclusionary efforts. Interestingly, both of these structures do not mention representation of the Roma aside from the MSGs. The Roma Affairs Council lists the following members: “The Council is chaired by the Prime Minister and co-chaired by the President of the National Roma Self-Government. Other members include the Minister of Human Resources, the Minister for Internal Affairs, the Minister for National Economy and the

Minister of State leading the Prime Minister's Office" (Government of Hungary 2014). Again, the lack of Roma civil society members and community-based organizations is apparent, and the results of the Council and Roundtable are not included in the report.

The next portion of the progress report deals with the rationale for funds being allocated to specific programs. This section is again largely unclear in terms of specific funding sources, and even the supposed targets of the programs are vague:

"The National Social Inclusion Strategy that is concerned with the social inclusion of the Roma does not look upon the Roma as the sole target group but focuses on those living in child poverty and extreme poverty as well, and therefore the programmes featured in the action plan of the National Social Inclusion Strategy for the years 2012–2014 also extend to these target groups" (Government of Hungary 2014, 6).

This means that while the DORI is targeting Roma for programs, the Hungarian DAP is not *specifically* reporting on them, and therefore the actual number of Roma who have been helped by the DORI programs is not available. It is hard to imagine a successful conclusion to a program without meeting the intended goals and indicators of the DAP, something that is clearly impossible if the data is not available.

Concerning the priority areas, the progress report starts with education and lists the various programs that have been started and/or continued throughout 2013. These vary from early childhood development programs to scholarships for "disadvantaged" youth pursuing post-secondary education (Government of Hungary 2014). Again, the majority of the programs list financial contributions by the national government, but most do not include data on how many Roma youth benefited from the programs. In terms of financial contributions, the only program

specifically targeted for Hungarian government funds is the “Sure Start Program,” which was given about 293 million forints, or approximately \$1.2 million in US dollars, over the course of 2012–2013. Joint funding sources or outside forces fund the rest of the programs, and the national government does not supply any specific financial contribution to them. Arguably the most important piece of information in the education section of the progress report deals with the increased “level of qualification” by Roma (which, again, is not defined, but is likely the educational-achievement level).

“It is important, nonetheless (even if not in the context of the assessment of the impact of the measures), that the figures of the 2013 large-sample Roma survey show a rise in the level of qualifications. However, this increase falls short of the educational expansion that may be observed in the entire country. For instance, in the last nine years (2003–12), while the percentage of degree-holders increased by 6 percentage points in the entire population, the percentage of degree-holders within the Roma population only increased by 0.6%. We may observe the most significant improvement in the educational qualifications of the Roma population in the field of the completion of the 8 grades of elementary education and vocational training” (Government of Hungary 2014, 10).

Again, while the DAP indicates a need for a rise in “qualification” among Roma youth, the increase of less than 1 percent over nine years is very minimal, especially since the DORI started in 2005 and thus the first two years of data cannot be included as part of the DORI progress.

The section of the progress report discussing the priority area of employment starts with an overview of public works programs that attempt to target Roma with low levels of education and give them access to short-term employment. Of the 77,000 estimated Roma participants, about 27.6 percent found employment after the program was finished (about 20,000 self-

identified Roma) (Government of Hungary 2014, 11). Other programs listed include vocational training programs, social cooperative programs, and land-based employment programs (land scholarships/cooperative funding). However, most of the programs do not show significant increases in employment, and most were established during 2013 or were to be established in the coming year (Government of Hungary 2014)⁵¹.

The priority area of housing is only allotted one page of the progress report and is vague in its results. The main programs include aid for the 3 percent of the entire Hungarian population living in segregated housing situations and involve the rehabilitation of settlements, increased access to services, and the training of people to work on improving the settlements (Government of Hungary 2014). Once again, the shortage of ethnic data and the small number of proposed projects being funded (a total of 99 across programs) means the success of the programs is largely unknown (Government of Hungary 2014).

In terms of the health priority area, the progress report shows a lack of progress in most areas, with many programs either being implemented in 2013 or not having any discernible advancement because of absence of data.

“It is not possible to determine impacts on health over such a short term. The agreement concluded by the Government and the National Roma Self-Government in 2011 targets the health screening of 150,000 individuals in the field of health care. At the same time, the question of measuring emerges as a methodological problem: in Hungary we use territorial estimates for demonstrating the number of Roma participants” (Government of Hungary 2014, 21).

⁵¹ According to Hungarian law under the Minority Rights Act and previous legislation, data is not desegregated by ethnicity to protect ethnic minorities from discrimination (Government of Hungary 2014).

The last priority area the progress report addresses is that of anti-discrimination and gender equality. In terms of the anti-discrimination measures outlined by the DAP, the report includes only one indicator, which has been met (at least according to the progress report) in the form of a national school curriculum with Roma history included. “Hungary was the first country to incorporate lessons in Roma culture and history in its National Curriculum. As a result, no member of future generations will complete his/her studies without having acquired some basic knowledge of Roma culture and traditions, and the Roma Holocaust” (Government of Hungary 2014, 21). Other programs included in this priority area provide aid to local Roma cultural institutions and civil organizations (about \$1.1 million in US dollars) and to Roma seeking employment in law enforcement and the army (Government of Hungary 2014). Gender issues receive little attention in the progress report, with statements pointing to the employment and health care priority area programs focusing on women's health initiatives and education opportunities.

This lack of progress in the priority areas shown through the 2013 progress report has drawn criticism from many scholars and activists. First and foremost, calls for more integrated governmental support and funding of programs and initiatives are advocated by both Decade partners and outside activists (Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015, Civil Society Monitoring 2013; Citizenship in Southeast Europe 2012; Nicolae 2005; Curcic, Miskovic, et al. 2013). This issue of who is to pay for the programs again leads to many politicians in Hungary attempting to show the Roma as a “European issue,” therefore validating the need for outside funds. “It is very pretentious of people of the Roma Inclusion or the [EU] strategies because...much of the population doesn't have the motivation or the values to mix children or anything like that or even to live together actually” (David 2014, 54:07). This mindset David speaks of endangers the

possibility of national financial and moral responsibility and further pushes the extremist agenda of framing Roma as non-Hungarian and even non-European, degrading the possibility of inclusion. For when the population at large does not feel a moral or national responsibility, or in some cases even a shared sense of humanity, toward the Roma, trying to get politicians to support a larger budget for programs becomes difficult. This dilemma combined with the rise of Jobbik support and inaction by the Orbán government means that programs have to access EU funding, which often doesn't allow for specific Roma targeting (David 2014). This issue comes back to a lack of cultural understanding and the desire for an empowered base of representatives pushing for more access to funds. These issues detract from the DAP and endanger the gains Roma are attempting to make in social and economic inclusion.

Secondly, the exclusivity of the partnership between the government and the Roma National MSG means that Roma participation is limited and some Roma groups are ignored (Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015, Civil Society Monitoring 2013).

“And of course everyone is looking for the so-called elected Roma representatives...to see what they can do...and even the local governments are looking for them because they are elected...so there is this internal tension because although they have the rights of cultural autonomy but everybody expects them to do many other things...to fight for other things...this is the internal inconsistency” (David 2014, 57:46).

The heterogeneous nature of the Roma populations in Hungary and the disadvantages associated with being identified as Roma have partially led to the deficiency in strong representation. These issues combined with the rise in violence and discrimination have limited Roma leaders in their ability to speak for their communities, and those who do are often seen by their communities as being affiliated with the political parties to which they belong (Koulish 2005).

Third, the lack of progress in terms of anti-discrimination has resulted in many cases of Roma discrimination and violence never being resolved in the courts (Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015, Civil Society Monitoring 2013). This is further exacerbated by the emergence of the more extreme political parties and also political changes, including the adaptation of the MSG system that resulted in weaker local MSGs and a national MSG aligned with FIDESZ (the national conservative party) and the current prime minister (ibid).

“The right-wing people, in private conversations or even anonymously, they just cannot stop making racist statements, and they do not believe in this Roma inclusion. To give you an example, someone who worked with us...she became a member of parliament in the new party and she is of Roma origin, and every day she receives from the right and the extreme-right racist statements...but they have the official discourse on school catch-up and school integration...and they make a nice speech, but when they are in the halls of the parliament, then they say, ‘Why do you dream that I would send my child and your child to the same class’ ” (David 2014, 52:58).

As David’s experience shows, Roma prejudice is not only found on the streets and in the communities where they reside but also in the government offices that run the country. I believe Hungary needs cultural policies that address this discrimination and focus on what Roma have contributed to Hungary. Without confronting this obvious want for anti-discrimination measures, the situation remains dire.

Overall, the DAP neglects all of the priority areas in one way or another, mainly due to vagueness and unspecified goals and indicators of success. The Hungarian DAP, while attempting to create a policy of inclusion, has only truly been successful in further eliminating the possibility of systemic changes. Without addressing the identified issues of anti-

discrimination, the absence of cultural policy, and true local representation head on, the DAP will remain an ineffectual document resulting in degradation of the possibility of Roma inclusion and the increasing likelihood of violence, discrimination, and stagnation.

Chapter 6: Cultural Sustainability and the Lessons from the DORI

The “Decade” after the Decade

With the financial turmoil of the Great Recession and the rise in xenophobia, hate crimes, discrimination, and violence, one could assume that all hope for the DORI would be lost. However, as is evident in Chapter 4, the DORI wishes to continue its role as a transnational initiative beyond its original term and plans to work to align itself more closely with the EU Framework structure. This structure parallels the DORI’s priorities and goals, but it leaves out significant Roma populations: those who are not EU members and those undergoing the accession process. This is particularly troubling when estimates of Roma populations in those countries that are part of the DORI but not EU members range from around 300,000 to upward of 500,000. In effect, an EU frame only ensures the EU Roma are protected by its Charter on Fundamental Human Rights while leaving large numbers of Roma unprotected (European Commission 2011; Roma Initiatives 2010). By leaving some of the Romani communities unprotected, it further fragments their ability to create a comprehensive Romani identity (as explored by Rövid in the Literature Review) in regards to the sociopolitical and even cultural aspirations of the multiple communities (Rövid 2011; Rövid 2012). This essentially creates a tenuous situation where some Romani communities may feel unsupported and devalued based on their geographical location. This could further impede the ability for a grassroots movement to work with the multiple Romani cultures and could hinder their ability to use their rights as ethnic minorities, something that is central to the tenets of cultural sustainability (cultural communities *should* be allowed the ability to practice their culture free from discrimination).

The DORI has accomplished some of its goals. In particular, it has set a new precedent of Roma involvement with transnational policy development and likewise has attracted new

funding partnerships and economic opportunities for Roma and non-Roma in certain communities (Presidency of Republic of Croatia 2013). However, the DORI has also been wrought with failures that are due both to its structure and derived from the participating partners' political will. By far, the most poignant outcome of the DORI will be its participating countries' shortage of political and social will power to move beyond the age-old hatred and discrimination of the Roma. DORI members and governments should address the structural and sociocultural influences that have debased the relations between Roma and their non-Roma counterparts if inclusion is to be achieved (Citizenship in Southeast Europe 2012; Stewart 2012).

While the DORI may have started as an initiative focused on providing socioeconomic tools and services to the Roma, its absence of progress in empowering Romani communities has led to stagnation and lack of inclusion. Thus, as the "Decade" draws to a close, the impacts of the DORI and potential for further work with Roma remain.

Lessons from the Decade

The DORI to date has achieved a certain level of success in terms of working toward inclusion of Roma in the European socioeconomic life. However, it seems as though the practices that led to the gains in Romani inclusion are not necessarily derived from individual actions of the participating nations but are more products of the time and place in which the DORI began its work. This is evident in the pressure from the EU and various European NGOs that enabled the creation of the EU Framework and like policies. In terms of the best practices learned from the actual DORI work, the impact remains to be seen, as most of the projects and programs are ongoing and have mixed results in terms of Romani inclusion. However, it seems as if the lessons learned point out the direction the DORI and European governments could take

in order to be effective. That direction, apparent in most of the literature surrounding the topic, involves building up grassroots support for the idea of Romani inclusion. With much of the European audience mired in viewpoints stemming from a xenophobic paradigm, as is evidenced in the deportations of Roma in Italy and elsewhere and the rise of neo-Nazis in Hungary, the DORI seems to be fighting an uphill battle. Nonetheless, the lessons learned from the DORI, although not necessarily revolutionary, will enable a new generation of Roma and non-Roma to look beyond national boundaries to for a sense of cultural, political, and socioeconomic agency stemming from a local level and built on a sustainable cultural model.

Lesson One: Lack of In-Depth Understanding of who Roma are

The first lesson learned from the DORI doesn't necessarily come from the DORI directly but is more of a critique of the field of international aid and transnational organizing—that is, know your intended constituency and audience. While the governments and NGOs that are members of the DORI know the Roma on paper, they do not *know* them. NGOs and the DORI in particular view the Roma in a way that places them in quantifiable areas of culture. However, measuring the successes of education, the failures of housing, and the ineffective health care system does little to address the actual culture of the Roma. Without an ethnographic approach that takes into account the stereotyped Romani culture and ingrained biases that formed the inclusionary work itself, Roma and non-Roma alike will remain without the tools necessary to create impactful change. One of the tools, which is underutilized by the DORI, is the use of education—not necessarily formalized education or even education recognized as being such, but education through cultural sharing, dialogue, and performance. A prime example of this would be creating a space for children to share their cultural expressions in a safe environment. This can be achieved through merely allowing Roma and non-Roma children to interact (something

segregated schools do not allow) and focus on activities that are not overtly cultural but aimed at engaging them in conversation about shared culture. An example of this is cited by Kathy Dunn, who witnessed the impact of integrated youth soccer matches where Roma and non-Roma youth were able to work together as a team without fear of cultural misconceptions that would have deemed integrated play as taboo (Dunn 2014). This is particularly poignant as children are the most accessible and have not had time to create ingrained biases, a fact that has been underutilized by the current DORI programs but could be addressed if the CSF was implemented.

In particular, the NGOs and DORI need to recognize the impact of non-Romani culture on Romani culture, which essentially has stereotyped the Roma as being less valuable and has complicated the issue of identity. Again this is due to the prejudicial paradigm in which Europeans (and even the rest of the world) operate. Non-Roma people's misconceptions have caused the exclusion of Roma from everyday life and driven the lack of progress on issues important to their involvement in society. This mindset includes the misconception that all "Gypsies" are Roma, and the terms Gypsies, Tsigani, and even Roma have been used as derogatory and racially charged labels. This leads many Roma to not self-identify and further complicates the desire for ethnic baseline data. While many of the perceived Romani groups may indeed identify as such, the lack of ethnic and segregated data identifying the intended audiences for the DORI programs has not only hampered the goals of the projects, but has also enabled the participating governments to vaguely defend their success through the shortage of data. Therefore, while the DORI has managed to gather hard data and some manner of impact, the need for established baseline population and census data prior to such an undertaking can be seen as one of the most basic and hard-learned lessons of the DORI (Roma Initiatives 2010). Overall,

the first lesson from the DORI is the necessity for a more thorough and community-oriented understanding of the Roma with consideration of the implications of perceived identity and of identity's role in policies.

Lesson Two: The Need for Community-Based Sustained Support

The DORI has shown the need for support on the local level of agency-building inclusionary efforts, as is evidenced in the Hungary case study in Chapter 5. Local-level support lead by multiple community members has more impact than top-down approaches. When ordinary people have a voice, they usually advocate for measures that directly benefit them. While the DORI utilizes Romani civil society, civil society itself may not be made up of local-level community leaders. Since many have critiqued the DORI for lacking in such local-level support, the reformation of the DORI after 2015 needs to include reevaluation of tactics (Nicolae 2005; David 2014). Many of the local avenues for funding are hampered by both the competitiveness of local NGOs in getting funds and also the lack of funds specifically targeting Roma people. Part of the issue with receiving funds on the local level is also the lack of local level institutionalized support. In essence, the local Roma are not supported by the state or the NGOs in terms of their cultural programs or aspirations. Thus the lesson learned from the DORI experience is the need for more localized funding specifically targeting Romani projects and programs that have local support.

As is evidenced in the Hungarian case study, some of the local projects do have the support of the local Romani communities and some have been successful. However, more integrated and widespread community driven and supported projects would further the progress of the DORI and could lead to a more sustained future where funding and participation were

constants. Overall, the second lesson points to an opportunity for further growth in trust and collaboration with local leaders and communities and the establishment of ethnographic research to truly get a better sense of the local culture in order to work together for cultural sustainability⁵².

Lesson Three: The Lack of Enforcement of Commitments

The DORI has either intentionally or unknowingly created a system in which the participating governments are free from enforcement measures and consequently not accountable to the very people they supposedly serve. Without a true enforcement mechanism, the governments are merely reprimanded in monitoring reports, which seem to hold little weight, even with international pressure and funding threats (Citizenship in Southeast Europe 2012; Nicolae 2005). This absence of enforcement has bred a culture of nations enrolled on paper but not invested on the groundwork. It also has severely diluted the progress that *could* have been made within the original time frame of the Decade and shifts even further from a model of cultural sustainability. Perhaps the most striking example of this can be found in the continuation of funding for nations that have yet to file sufficient reports on their programming and have lacked the structures necessary for implementation of DORI projects. Enforcement mechanisms and monitoring are needed to ensure not only that nations are being held to their original commitment, but also that they are held responsible by Roma they serve. Furthermore, if enforcement efforts were expanded in a new Decade or like initiative, potential investors and participants would be assured that the funds and programs have appropriate impacts upon the intended audience and thus would be worthy of investment and commitment.

⁵² This is addressed in the CSF tenets where communities are best equipped to address their own cultural needs. See section entitled: “Cultural Sustainability: A New Paradigm in Working *with* Roma”.

Paradigm Shift: From Inclusion to Empowerment

As its original DORI endpoint arrives, so too does the need for a paradigm shift in thinking of Roma inclusion. Roma people's situation today has largely not qualitatively improved since 2005, and while some can argue the world recession, the rise in the right wing extremists in politics and the lack of institutional oversight are to blame, in reality, it is the absence of an effectual paradigm in which we collectively view inclusion and agency building. While the social inclusion paradigm which the DORI is based on has its role in creating policy on a local or even national scale, the complexities involved with transnational work requires a paradigm shift away from the solely socioeconomic considerations and to a paradigm informed by the complexities related to cultures *and* socioeconomic issues. As McGarry indicates:

“The EU has begun to devote more attention to the socioeconomic integration of Roma, particularly in the fields of employment and education, which fits with its preferred politics of redistribution approach. However, this ignores the prejudice which Roma endure because of their ethnic identity, the fact that they are seen and treated in categorical terms” (McGarry 2012, 133).

This shift to move beyond viewing the Roma in purely economic terms will not come easily by any means. However, I believe this shift toward a cultural sustainability paradigm is necessary for the long term cultural sustainability of Roma in Europe and the continuation of the DORI/EU Framework. While some authors (Kostadinova, Pogany) have suggested the usage of a minority rights framework that relies on the existing human rights outlined by international and national governments and organizations, a minority rights framework alone cannot create a

culture of inclusion⁵³. While both a minority rights framework and the DORI framework have succeeded in some of their objectives, the largest problem is the lack of a cohesive and inclusive policy direction that deals holistically with culture *and* Roma group agency building. “The main focus of the social inclusion approach or the developmental approach...is to tackle the gap in social circumstances like employment, education, etc. It has always ignored the cultural component or what to do with the Roma cultural identity” (David 2014, 22:50). David points to one of the most fundamental yet complex issues with the current DORI policies: without emphasizing Romani culture, it becomes a mundane part of policy, misunderstood and devalued by the non-Roma participants. In keeping with my definition of culture, Romani traditions, beliefs, and values should be central to any policy work. Without addressing the substantive? lack of cultural focus—and, specifically, cultural sustainability—Romani cultural agency will remain underdeveloped, and Romani diversity will be devalued, further degrading the sense of community well-being essential to a sustainable culture (Hawkes 2001).

While the DORI has included some manner of Roma input, the largest source of such input comes in part from national institutions and organizations that are often not made up of local representatives and/or, as is the case in Hungary, are politically and personally affiliated with national governments, essentially creating a puppet system of representation (David 2014; Dunn 2014). As previously mentioned, this lack of representation, and especially representation on the local level, is widely seen as the main downfall of the transnational movement overall, and is one of the main critiques of the DORI. Likewise, the lack of a DORI cultural agenda, as highlighted by the Richard David quote, means that the repetitive nature of stereotypes and

⁵³ See Kostadinova’s “Minority Rights as a Normative Framework for Addressing the Situation of the Roma in Europe.”

cultural ignorance on the parts of the majority and the policy makers continues to subliminally invade the societal worldview, further harming the chances of inclusion. It is essential that local-level empowerment should occur as the first step in creating agency. Instead of formulating transnational policies and relying on EU funds, local-level organizations and the Roma civil society need to be empowered to create partnerships that benefit the local Roma people. “The ties are so limited [between Roma and the DORI] and you know the majority of the Roma who are living in these marginalized and excluded environments have very little knowledge of these organization and most of them have not heard of the Decade of Roma Inclusion Program”(Dunn 2014, 8:27). Local-level agency building cannot rely solely on outside partners; Roma themselves need to create the momentum for change. While many young Roma activists are working for positive change within their communities, they remain largely unsupported and without access to partners who have the capital to fund projects and programs. This lack of specific and targeted funding is the main barrier for Roma agency building and therefore the necessary paradigm shift, as the DORI report points out, targeted and specific funding is needed to measure the impact of the programs.

“Most Decade programs are financed by EU Structural Funds and, in line with EU policy, target disadvantaged social groups rather than Roma explicitly. The target group of Decade programs is also disadvantaged social groups in the four priority areas, so the measurement of impact on Roma specifically is limited” (Roma Initiatives 2010, 41).

I believe without *specific* funding for Romani programs, the DORI and other like transnational organizations will remain ineffectual. While the absence of specific targeting does attempt to dissuade negative cultural misconceptions (i.e. Roma *need* help, Roma *are* needy, etc.), without

targeted funding and programs, successful and sustainable partnerships will remain elusive and largely symbolic.

The DORI does not define culture in any of its documents to date. By not defining culture, the DORI suggests that Romani culture is known to the participating members and partners. I believe that this assumption is not correct and has helped create a framework that is uninformed about various Roma cultures and their specific needs. For instance, in the Hungarian Decade Action Plan (DAP) the term “culture” appears only 14 times, while the terms education, employment, housing, settlements, and health care appear over 25 times each⁵⁴. Furthermore, the term culture in relation to the Hungarian DAP appears often as referring to media and sports, thereby relegating it to a lesser priority area instead of acknowledging its presence as the driving force behind human interactions and ultimately the group’s worldview. This lack of attention to culture, especially in relation to the priority areas, limits the ability of the DAP to truly engage with the Roma communities in a culturally appropriate way. For example, while the DAP addresses the need for more emphasis on women’s health, it does not take into account the traditional cultural beliefs around purity and gender relations (Hancock 2002). This deficiency of cultural awareness means the initiatives are not addressing the needs of the Roma in a way that is consistent with their beliefs and traditions and instead forces the ideology of the non-Roma upon them, an example of the symbolic violence endemic within the DAP. Just as culture is largely not addressed fully, the diverse identities and various Romani cultures are not addressed by the DORI in a way that would facilitate outsiders and Roma to work together as partners.

⁵⁴ See Hungarian Decade Action Plan citation and find it at:
http://www.romadecade.org/cms/upload/file/9296_file17_hungarian-nap_en.pdf

For instance, the term “Roma” appears over 100 times but makes no clear distinction between the various Roma groups. In fact, the Hungarian DAP mentions Beás only *two* times and the Rumungro and Vlach are not mentioned at all. This is most troubling due to the reality of the “Roma” being a diverse assemblage of cultures that are often grouped together by non-Roma (who do not comprehend their diversity and complexity).

“You know that there is not such a thing as Roma because once you talk to them they will say, ‘It’s the dirty Vlachs.’... You know, ‘It’s the Rumungro; they’re not even real gypsies. They are assimilated, they Hungarified.... They are not pure.’... Or among Beas, let’s say, you know it’s such a divided community, which is why some of these projects are so problematic because they are not grouped into this very nuanced and diverse context of what is liked to be a Gypsy or Roma” (Dunn 2014, 17:35).

The preceding quote sums up the nuances the DORI fails to address both in Hungary and in its very process and ingrained paradigm. The Roma are a people who have been created, in part, by the policy makers, the elites, and the international community who molded them into a unified and cohesive group. Unfortunately, the reality on the ground in many communities is that Roma are made up of diverse peoples who have not historically worked together or even seen one another as equals in some senses. Thus, to instill a sense of identity from above further alienates them from one another and in the end does little to empower the local communities

“Acknowledging the dangers of developing a homogenizing and reactive national identity, the struggle for the recognition of the Roma nation should not be dismissed altogether; rather, a dynamic and open conception of the Roma nation should be embraced, one that allows for multiple identities, experimentation and voluntary assimilation” (Rövid 2012, 16).

Rövid does not mean the Roma need to be seen as a collective people unified by life experiences or shared culture, but rather by shared aspirations and historical stigmatization. If a broad identity can be created that adequately addresses historical stigmatization while also taking into account the differences among Roma populations, then perhaps policies would result in positive changes. A prime example of this is the usage of the term Roma itself, which was done consciously to separate the negative imagery of the term “Gypsy” and create a more unified image of the Roma. Perhaps a new articulation or reimagining of this term is again needed, as it seems to have been appropriated by policy makers to form a vague and ambiguous identity that does not address the concerns of the various Romani groups. While it is central to the tenets of cultural sustainability for cultural communities to construct multiple identities, which has allowed the Romani culture to adapt, a sociopolitical identity infused with the Romani culture could perhaps further sustain the push for Romani inclusion. Essentially, if the umbrella identity of Roma could also emphasize more of the cultural articulations of the various subgroups, then a stronger sense of group agency could be fostered through the policies of the DORI.

I believe the DORI will not work without creating an informed and empowered base (as can be seen by past attempts); simply giving people something doesn't empower them to use the tools needed to sustain themselves throughout time. Furthermore, the redistribution of resources and/or tools does not address the cultural stereotypes enforced by allocating those resources and services. That is, the stereotype of Romani cultural deficiency plays into the mindset that Roma need help and are not able to sufficiently care for themselves. This stereotype is only dissolved through allowing multiple Romani communities to be part of the process of creating the services and programs. I believe that if Roma are allowed to take a more central role in the process, then the stereotypes of Romani cultural deficiency can be addressed by Roma through direct action.

“Most effective interactions and the best interactions [between Roma and non-Roma] that I think that we should be really capitalizing on, building on, were small-scale, bottom-up, non-identity-focused projects” (Dunn 2014, 14:33). One of the aspects of inclusion programs Dunn refers to in the preceding quote involves Romani communities being involved directly with deciding the projects and implementing them in a culturally appropriate way. Secondly, Dunn refers to the importance of non-identity-based projects in combating negative stereotypes. Projects such as community education, team sports events, and interactive and community performances could allow for diffusion of the Romani culture in an effort to dissolve the stereotyped Roma. While these efforts may not directly involve Romani culture and identity, they could work to level the playing field for Roma and allow for similarities to be shown between Roma and non-Roma. Furthermore, grassroots efforts are the most accessible and perhaps most culturally appropriate forms of agency building available to Roma. This is especially significant as most Romani communities have had to rely on grassroots organizing throughout time as most mainstream methods of organizing were not accessible due to the constraints placed on them (Hancock 2002; Rövid 2011; Rövid 2012). Thus, while this critique is of the top-down approach, it also is a cultural critique of the DORI policies, which do not allow Romani communities to organize in the (currently) most culturally appropriate ways.

To address this need, a cultural sustainability paradigm could be implemented in the form of a theoretical policy framework that addresses all of the components of inclusion and draws upon multiple fields and disciplines, along with *direct* Roma representation in decision making and empowerment through action. Before such a framework can be explored, first the field and proposed paradigm of cultural sustainability need to be defined in relation to this paper.

Cultural Sustainability: A New Paradigm in Working *with* Roma

Cultural sustainability is both an academic discipline and a set of moral and ethical values in the ever changing world. It is derived from the understanding that while cultures and people change, the world also changes with them and as such, the tools and paradigms that once ruled both academia and policy work must be fluid and responsive to the ongoing changes in the cultures of the world. Cultural sustainability draws upon a diverse array of perspectives from multiple fields of study including social sciences, community development, linguistics, business, anthropology, folklore, and communications. This diverse and rich background lends itself well to the task of attempting to include Roma groups into mainstream society, not only because of the diverse perspectives but because of the foremost ideals that govern the field of cultural sustainability: action, partnership, and collaboration.

I suggest that culture be defined more comprehensively by the new “Decade”, informed by Roma themselves and placed within the forefront of the priority areas. This means that while the same priority areas may be used, the cultural considerations of each would be addressed. For instance, if traditional employment opportunities for Roma are deemed desirable and necessary by Roma, then they should be included in the employment policies. As part of these community discussions, more focus on which traditions are sustainable for Roma need to take place in relation to the priority areas. Thus a working definition of culture should address the traditional lifestyles, occupations, health care, norms, and values of Roma while taking into account the modern realities of multiple Roma identities. Additionally the cultural definition used by the new “Decade” should account for the multiple identities that Romani cultures maintain and use those cultural identities to inform the cultural paradigm and further the inclusionary policy work.

Therefore, the cultural sustainability paradigm and subsequent framework addresses the issues related to culture head on and proposes the solutions not through a top down approach but through community engagement and empowerment from within the Romani communities themselves.

“Communities have a right, as well as a responsibility, to engage with the values that determine the nature of the society of which they are a part. While some communities enjoy considerable influence, the ways for many others are clearly insufficient. Once again, this is a cultural problem, and one that requires cultural solutions” (Hawkes 2001, 16).

The cultural sustainability framework (CSF) would take into account the role of discrimination and structural biases in creating and reaffirming the ingrained views of Roma by non-Roma and would focus on cultural education for both. This new approach creates a framework that *does not* blame the racism and discrimination upon the majority but uses (in part) similarities and differences between the populations to create a dialogue, a space for reconciliation and empowerment through community partnership and cultural sharing.

“It is a societal problem that we are witnessing that no one should be blamed for...and maybe that is another thing that we should start doing is not blaming anybody because that again will create a very defensive environment, like, you know, people will feel attacked....And we can acknowledge that there is racism....And you might not see it as racism if its banal, and we need to work with that....We need to understand that this is normal in the society, and how do we combat normal?...How do we challenge these ingrained and deeply seeded societal biases without having them reject those or perform

your Europeanism?...And I do think its performed in so many instances....That's why it needs to be bottom-up" (Dunn 2014, 40:41).

Indeed, the deeply seeded racism, which is present in many societies and continues to influence the policies of nations and organizations even if it is banal, needs to be met on all fronts with a new theoretical approach in the form of cultural sustainability. As Plaut and Curcic discuss in their article concerning Roma education, ingrained biases can create a sense of cultural insufficiency and further complicate the role of inclusionary policy work. The CSF must essentially combat the sense of Romani cultural insufficiency, through new methods of education, cultural dialogue, and cultural rights protections that what is now considered "normal" can be replaced with a sense of cultural understanding (Curcic and Plaut 2013; Dunn 2014).

While enforcement of commitments by the DORI members is hard to do, it seems to be necessary as is shown by the lack of commitment or progress by several partners in the DORI (David 2014). While the term "enforcement" sounds slightly foreboding, it is the intent of the proposed CSF to not engage in some type of archaic punishment but instead to hold stakeholders, participants, and advisors to their commitments through objective monitoring, active discussions with all stakeholders, and constant reevaluation of goals and objectives. The proposed paradigm would nonetheless have the group decision making authority to curtail member's funding commitments upon their non-compliance with the CSF and their lack of involvement with the partners and the process.

The CSF would also address the restructuring of civil engagement among the populations and changing a cultural arts-based policy to a cultural policy intertwined with all aspects of socioeconomic policies. As David Mencken via Hawkes says, "Cultural policy is often confused with arts policy," a statement that is largely true, especially in relation to the DORI's lack of

“cultural policy” aside from educational programs, arts scholarships, performances, and exhibition funding (Hawkes 2001, 7).

“Understandably, this has meant that, while the rhetoric of cultural policy proponents has used the language of cultural theory (for example, ‘culture is the way we live and the way we express ourselves’), when practical action is proposed, the main focus has been on the role the arts can play in the fulfillment of a wide range of public functions” (Hawkes 2001, 7).

This lack of a sustainable cultural policy means that the Roma are relegated to arts policy and thus are kept from a broader policy with socioeconomic, cultural and sustainable considerations. A culturally sustainable framework would thus take into account the role of culture in all aspects of society and would, in the end, allow the Roma to decide the role their culture plays into policy work and the broader society. Roma input on a local and communal level is limited and thus certain “cultural” considerations may be deemed less of a priority than others. This means that the voice of the Roma in terms of policy engagement has been muted, not necessarily due to lack of trying but due to the system. The DORI and the resulting EU Framework are thus not new methods of inclusionary politics, but are products of an already existing paradigm.

In terms of civil engagement between the populations, the Roma need a greater say in what is appropriate in their inclusion overall. Due to the heterogeneous nature of the various Roma groups and the various places they call home, the level and type of engagement between the populations may differ; however, the need for this discussion is paramount for a sustained cultural inclusion policy. This means that bi-annual and annual meetings are insufficient to inform the CSF, as culture is ever changing and the Roma people’s needs and desires change. The possibilities of changing the programs and reevaluating the objectives need to be left open;

local-level meetings, discussions, and roundtables should be built into the CSF on a much more regular basis. The CSF would base these proposed meetings on the needs of each community; although at the start, meetings would most likely occur more frequently (possibly monthly or quarterly) after projects and programs have been established and monitored, meetings could occur less often. Roma communities would play a key role in creating and maintaining the meetings and monitoring efforts. Representatives from the Romani communities, on both a local level and on a national level, will be able to speak for communities and thus contribute to more inclusive politics.

The Vision for a New “Decade”

The vision for this new “Decade” is influenced by the lessons learned from the DORI and the EU Framework along with an understanding of the cultural sustainability paradigm. The vision for this work is a vision of a future with Roma as cultural agents of change for themselves. Since culture influences everything people experience and plays into the interactions and reactions between societies, creating cultural agency begets socioeconomic, political, and personal agency. Obviously, the Roma being different from place to place and having different cultural articulations and understandings means the proposed CSF must also differ as the Roma do. However, the central tenets of the CSF must remain intact—that is, the paradigm that values understanding, evaluation, partnership, democratic representation, and agency building. Obviously, this CSF framework would actually target Roma, unlike the DORI and the EU Framework, which shy away from identification. Again, since identity issues among Roma are a complex issue, this portion of the CSF is not easy. However, allowing Roma to decide their identities and giving them the space to determine their cultural aspirations are key tenets of my cultural sustainability paradigm. Cultural communities are best equipped and best served by their

own beliefs, values, and traditions, and it is the right of the Roma to determine their own level of inclusion and identification with what it is to be Roma and also European.

The first step is to encourage Roma to self-identify without fear of reprisal. To accomplish this, Roma civil society along with traditional leaders must work together with international partners and funders to create community dialogues that are open and free from political agendas. Work within each Romani community must occur if the CSF is to succeed. Since leaders in Romani communities are sometimes seen as corrupt or not representative by the Roma themselves, corruption needs to be dealt with directly (David 2014; Nicolae 2005). I do not propose or claim to know how the Romani communities should structure their cultural leadership, nor do I believe it is the role of the outside NGOs and governments to play a large part in establishing the leadership. Instead, I believe that if NGOs and governments give Romani communities the opportunity to establish their own leaders and hold them accountable, leadership will emerge over time. This is not an easy task. Once a more receptive Roma level of engagement and willingness to self-identify is created, then the work of ensuring that local Roma have democratic representatives starts. Again, this process will differ from country to country and will be harder in the countries where right wing political parties hold sway and where extreme prejudices exist (See Chapter 5 for information related to Orbán's government and the rise of Jobbik).

Democratic and representative Roma leadership also brings into play issues surrounding identity and cultural authority. Leaders can effectively ask, "Who speaks for the Roma?" While this seems to be an issue that scholars, politicians, and Roma across the world have been attempting to answer for many years, it is also an issue that can be resolved on a community basis instead of creating a singular unified articulation of Roma representation. Since the Roma

may be represented differently from community to community, and each nation may have different Roma identities, a system of representation that takes these complexities into account should be established in the form of a round table, forum, or parliamentary system in which all of the Roma representatives have a voice. It is essential that it also addresses the issue of multiple identities among Roma, as identity can influence culture and culture can likewise influence identity. Because of the Roma's multiple identities and wide diaspora, an umbrella identity that both serves to preserve cultural traditions and address the issue of representation among subgroups may be needed. I do not propose that a new sense of identity is needed for Roma, but I merely suggest that the existing Romani identity may be used to create group agency through multiple identities under the umbrella of what it is to be Roma.

Multiple identities suggests multiple perspectives, which may aid in drawing upon the Romani culture to find diverse solutions. If the DORI relied on a sparse representation of Romani identity and culture, then perhaps the necessary step in the new CSF is to include these multiple cultural perspectives. This would involve a conscious effort by Roma and non-Roma alike to include the various subgroups in the decision-making and planning processes. Multiple perspectives infused within the CSF would also create a holistic view of what culture, identity, and inclusion mean for Roma—a view that could influence policies that address Romani culture and representation and could be used to dissolve the misconceptions about Romani culture and people.

With Roma representatives and a system of democratic representation supported by Roma, the next priority would be in establishing long term partnerships with NGOs, civil organizations, and governmental entities that would be willing to help support and guide the process of creating cultural agency and in the end, inclusion. Again, partnerships would be

mutually beneficial and have the interests of the local Roma in the forefront of their agendas. This may mean that the partners are not necessarily the largest or most powerful NGOs and government entities. Once the partnerships and representatives are established and the various organizational roles are discussed, the need for a larger meeting between all the parties should be undertaken in order to discuss the various objectives and indicators for creating sustainable Roma cultural agency and eventual inclusion.

Indicators of Success and the Way Forward in a New Europe

Successful Romani agency and inclusion will not come overnight, and may not come for several decades and, as such, the indicators and objectives for sustainable inclusion should be constantly reevaluated, redefined and reimagined as deemed necessary. I believe key objectives need to be based not only upon the experiences of the DORI, but also influenced by the understanding that cultural agency can ultimately lead to the social and economic inclusion. Thus, the new decade would involve the use of both socioeconomic objectives informed and cultural objectives. A proposed set of initial objectives are as follows:

1. Roma people will have sustained access to the same services afforded to non-Roma (public services, water, sanitation, culturally appropriate education, electricity, etc.).
Romani culture will also be seen as being a necessary component in community well-being and socioeconomic inclusion and will inform the appropriate services being offered.
2. Roma people will be seen as valued members of local and national communities and Roma peoples' contributions will be recognized in the same manner as non-Roma.

Additionally Romani culture will be recognized as essential to diversity and will be valued as such⁵⁵.

3. Roma people will be free from discrimination, racism, hate speech, and violence, and if such violence and discrimination occurs it will be dealt with in the same manner as non-Roma issues.⁵⁶

Obviously, this list doesn't not include many specific country objectives. Additionally, since some communities and countries may have different forms of anti-discrimination measures/ protections, the initial objectives may differ slightly. This is all to say that many other objectives could be included on a country and community basis.

The main difference between the objectives of the DORI and the objectives of the new Decade are in the scope of the objectives, and the ability to include community specific objectives. This puts the objectives in the hands of the community first and the nation second, thereby holding communities responsible first and foremost; this was not present in the DORI. This difference also means the Roma representatives who had been largely silenced in the DORI would be vocal advocates. Reshaping this power relationship creates an intrinsic form of cultural agency; also, funding for the objectives needs to be done transparently and directed to the community's needs.

The proposed indicators for successfully meeting the initial objectives will differ from community to community additionally, since the DORI runs until 2015 all data in the new

⁵⁵ See UNESCO quote and refer to role of diversity in maintaining a sustainable future on page 140

⁵⁶ Refer to Kostadinova and minority rights framework for more information about possible avenues for rights protections (page 24).

“Decade” will be based on numbers from 2015 onwards⁵⁷. A sample of indicators and how they will be measured is⁵⁸:

1. Roma people will have sustained access to the same services afforded to non-Roma.
 - The number of Roma who have access to culturally appropriate services as compared to those who do not.
 - The number of Roma who have access to culturally appropriate services post 2015 compared to those in 2015.
 - The number of Roma who feel as though services adequately fit their needs and are afforded to them without prejudice.
 - The number of Roma who have access to services within 5 miles (8.04 km) of their residence.
 - The amount of funds directed to public health initiatives with a particular emphasis on Roma health, and health education for *both* Roma and the non-Roma.
 - The number of Roma who feel safe⁵⁹ in their residences and who have had value added to their residences since 2015.
 - The number of Roma who feel as though they have adequate representation and have venues for directing their opinions and complaints.

⁵⁷ Included in the list of indicators is the assumption that baseline desegregated data will be available prior to the new “Decade”.

⁵⁸ It is important to remember that these are sample indicators and by no means do they conceptualize the vast number of possible indicators and objectives.

⁵⁹ “Safe” will be defined by the Roma respondents themselves or through a community forum etc.

- The number of Roma who feel as though they are culturally discriminated against in access to social services as compared to those who do not feel discriminated against.
2. Roma people will be seen as valued members of local and national communities and Roma peoples' socioeconomic and cultural contributions will be recognized in the same manner as non-Roma⁶⁰.
- The number of Roma who are involved in local-level majority politics.
 - The number of Roma artists, musicians, and scholars who feel as though they have access to a wider audience and funding as compared to those who do not⁶¹.
 - The number of Roma youth who have access to affordable (and culturally appropriate) secondary education and those who have access to merit-based scholarships targeting Roma youth.
 - The number of Roma who have served on local boards and organizations in advisory roles and/or leadership roles based on both their ethnicity and their experience.
 - The number of Roma who feel appreciated as members of their local communities.

⁶⁰ This is determined by the Romani communities themselves and may be gauged by the general acceptance of Romani culture in the society.

⁶¹ This could mean that while traditionally Roma musicians play at local events and performances (weddings etc.) they would also be afforded the chance to depart from their traditional roles and play at non-traditional venues or events. Furthermore this could serve to dissolve the notion that Romani music is only meant to be played at the traditional venues and could open opportunities for traditional musicians to educate the non-Roma people about Romani culture.

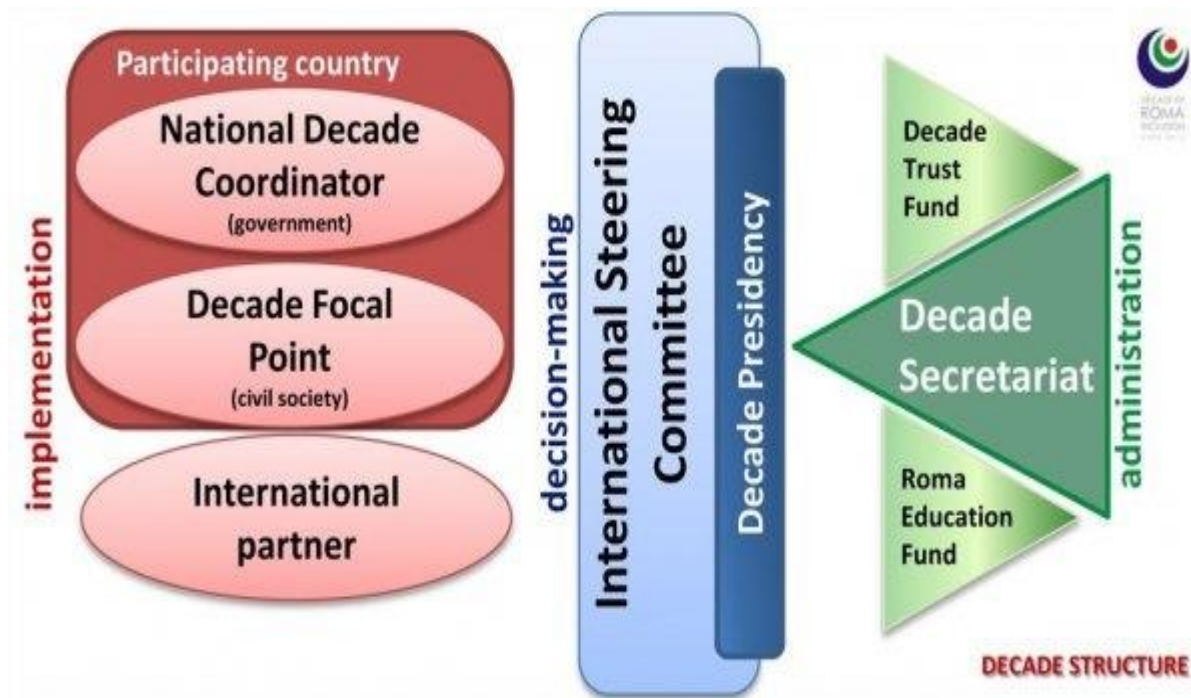
- The number of Roma who feel that their culture is adequately and appropriately understood by non-Roma.
 - The number of Roma who feel that the media displays accurate information about Romani culture.
 - The number of Roma who feel as if their issues are resolved in the same manner as non-Roma peoples' issues are resolved and are done so in an efficient and appropriate manner.
 - The number of Roma who are participating in local events and organizations as active members not based on ethnicity.
 - The amount of Roma who feel free to self-identify and are encouraged to actively display their culture in a manner they see fit.
 - The willingness of non-Roma to share information about Roma in an accurate and culturally sensitive way.
 - The public opinion about Roma culture as compared to the opinions in 2015.
3. Roma people will be free from discrimination, racism, hate speech, and violence, and if such violence and discrimination occurs it will be dealt with in the same manner as non-Roma issues are dealt with.
- The amount of hate crimes both reported to authorities and resolved by authorities as compared to hate crimes reported by non-Roma.

- The amount of political influence of extremist parties with negative views of Roma post 2015.
- The number of Roma who feel as though they are largely free from discrimination, hate crimes, and harassment post 2015.
- The number of Roma who feel safe in their communities and are content with the overall situation of the Roma post 2015.
- The number of Roma who feel free to express their culture in a public setting without fear of harassment and discrimination.
- The number of Roma who feel as if they could run and hold public office without fear of harassment and discrimination.
- The number of Roma who feel as though the cultural agency of the Roma has steadily increased over time and feel as though they have the same opportunities and freedoms afforded to non-Roma.

These indicators of the CSF are not set in stone. To be successful, the CSF would need to be responsive to the needs of the diverse Romani communities. Unlike the DORI structure, the CSF structure would employ the existing base of Romani cultural knowledge and support group agency building through initiatives focused on utilizing the Romani cultures to create a more empowered base of Romani communities. These communities would be the most appropriate representatives of their own aspirations and thus could begin the process of presenting an accurate and culturally appropriate representation of Romani culture to non-Roma in an effort to break down ingrained biases. To visualize the difference between the two approaches to

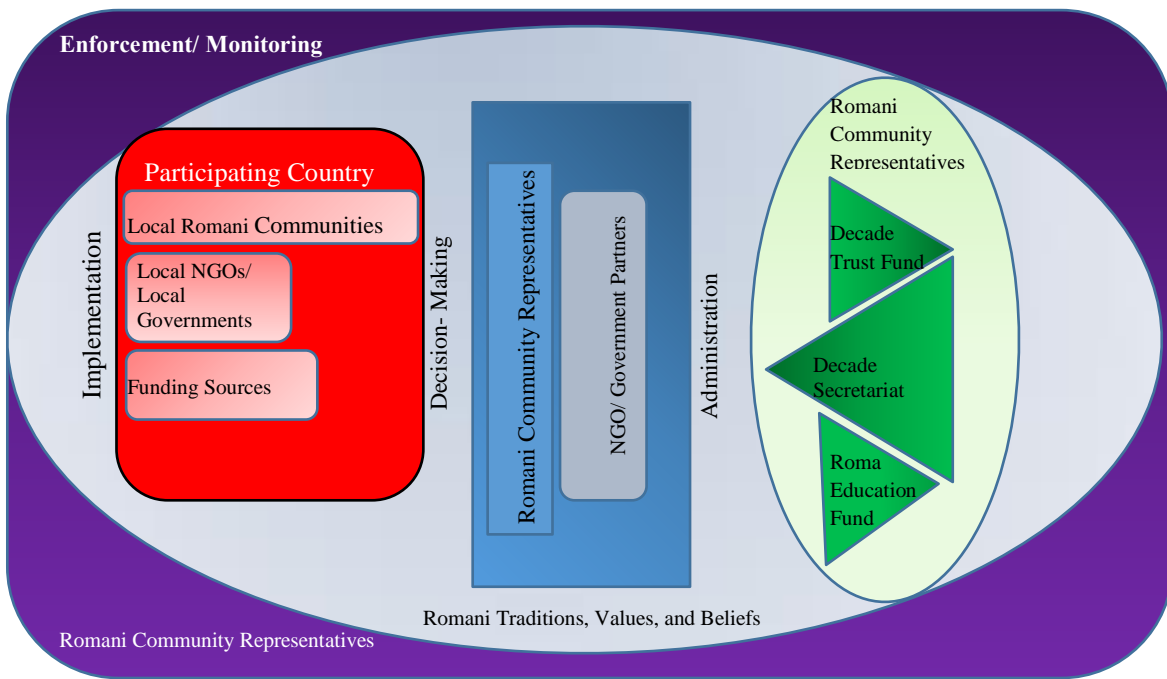
inclusion—that is, the DORI approach and CSF approach—please refer to the following illustrations of the structures:

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⁶² Source: <http://www.romadecade.org>

The DORI structure (see above) uses a disconnected system that does not include direct Roma involvement, underemphasizes Romani culture, and largely separates funding partners from actual grassroots projects. In contrast, the CSF structure (see below) utilizes a more culturally appropriate grassroots structure that places the power in Romani communities, emphasizes Romani cultural traditions, beliefs, and values in relation to the priority areas, and establishes enforcement measures. Furthermore, the CSF relies on Romani communities to constantly reevaluate priorities and establish indicators that are culturally appropriate and attainable.



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⁶³ This diagram was produced by the author to illustrate the shift in the CSF. The diagram highlights enforcement/ monitoring directly overseen by Roma, focuses on Romani culture throughout, and uses a grassroots approach to implement the programs/ initiatives. Furthermore the CSF structure enforces the tenets of cultural sustainability *through* its structure itself (i.e. cultures best suited to solve issues, diversity equates to diverse solutions etc.).

Since the Great Recession of 2008, Europe as a whole has undergone massive changes, some of which have served to help empower Roma, but the majority of which have served to stir up the fears and hatred of the past. With the fear of total economic collapse, many countries have witnessed the rise in xenophobic and racist tendencies, which have served to empower hate-driven political parties. The rise of the Jobbik party and the existence of the Hungarian Guard are prime articulations of the highly racialized environment that countries like Hungary find themselves in. This environment has led to a critical situation for Roma today; although the organizations and governments of the DORI have attempted to fight against this trend, the conclusive evidence has shown the ineffectual nature of the social inclusion paradigm. Thus, the way forward in the new Europe of tomorrow is toward a restructuring of priorities, and a revitalization of community. This way forward is the way of sustainable and effectual growth and development, both for the Roma and in the end for all of humanity, as it is only through our shared triumphs that we can truly survive on this planet.

“Cultural diversity mirrors biological diversity. It is the concern of many people and biodiversity must be appreciated in terms of human diversity, since different cultures and people from different walks of life perceive and apprehend biodiversity in different ways due to their distinct heritage and experiences” (UNESCO 12).

As the UNESCO states, without valuing Romani culture, future biodiversity and in the end survival of the environment is at stake. Thus, I believe the new Europe needs to take the lessons learned from the past and reshape the future with the tenets of cultural sustainability.

Concluding Thoughts

The DORI and EU Framework have shown us several things when it comes to Roma inclusion, transnational policy development and implementation, and identity politics. First, they point out the need for a comprehensive definition of Roma that takes into account the various Romani identities present throughout Europe. Second, a discussion of cultural sustainability is needed, because Romani culture is largely misunderstood by non-Roma. Third, the attempt must be made to actually *know* the Roma by those aiming to serve them. This means Roma should be directly involved in all aspects of work; after all, they know what is best for their culture. This is why a new approach to Roma inclusion is needed. The CSF approach would serve to create a system in which Romani cultural communities would be embedded within the decision-making process, would be focused on the role of Romani culture in fostering inclusion, and would recognize the importance of diversity and well-being essential to sustained inclusion and, by extension, socioeconomic and cultural growth. Furthermore, by placing the power of the CSF in the hands of Romani communities, the Romani culture can empower both the communities and participating nations to work toward dissolving misconceptions, biases, and racism through the objectives of the CSF and by encouraging a sense of Romani group agency.

Roma inclusion and Romani cultural agency are likewise social justice issues. This is evident throughout the resources used in my work. I believe that while Roma feel the effects of exclusion most poignantly, the whole world is allowing for the exclusion to endure. For if we do not begin to recognize the effects of exclusion upon *our* societal well-being and, in turn, cultural well-being, we will lose the cultural knowledge that may determine our fate as humans living on a finite world. Romani culture is an essential part of our societal well-being, and although we may not recognize it as such, it reminds us of where we have been and what we are to become. If

we allow whole cultures to be devalued, whole groups to be ghettoized, and entire communities to be forgotten, then we have truly created cultural injustice, injustice we can avoid by recognizing and valuing the Romani culture for its ability to adapt, endure, and foster a sense of community. I believe that if cultural diversity is nurtured and cultural traditions, beliefs, and values are allowed to be expressed, then social justice and, in turn, inclusion for Roma will also occur.

Roma can produce the solutions to issues of inclusion if they are supported at the grassroots level and treated as equal partners in creating community-driven, culturally informed solutions. Without such a shift, Roma across Europe will be subjected to the same ineffectual policy and ill-fated inclusion as in the past. By utilizing my proposed CSF approach, I believe a new path for Roma inclusion may be possible. While recognizing diversity as a strength instead of a weakness and breaking down the walls of racism are not easy tasks, they are necessary ones. Furthermore, the Roma experience expresses the greater need for emphasis on culture in policy work and, indeed, all socioeconomic interactions. If humanity cannot employ the lessons embedded within cultural traditions, beliefs, and values, which can inform the path to a sustainable world, then we are, in truth, without a future. However, we have the time, we have the tools, and we have the diverse cultural paradigms that can create a sustainable world—we just need the willpower to do so. The answers to this broader question of Roma inclusion cannot be found in one bit of research, and ultimately it will be the resolve of Roma that will impart lasting change. However, it first must be recognized by those with power that simply relying on the same redistribution policies does not equate to sustained group agency building; in the end, inclusion cannot be forced through bribery or coercion, it must be created one community at a time until a great tide of change sweeps over the whole of Europe. While some communities and

nations may be slower to change, the push for Roma cultural inclusion and in turn cultural sustainability must be persistent and relentless.

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Appendix A:

Interview Questionnaire

The following interview questions were used in an attempt to gain insight into the situation for Romani people in Hungary as well as getting more in-depth information about the DORI.

1. As part of this project, I am attempting to get a variety of perspectives from professionals like yourself about the Decade of Roma Inclusion, The Hungarian government's interaction with the Decade (referred to as DORI in this work), and the role of transnational organizations in the DORI and in the lives of Roma. Can you tell me what you would consider to be your position in terms of Roma policy: i.e. an advocate for Roma, an academic researcher or an activist invested in Roma people's betterment?
2. How long have you been working with the Roma, and in what capacity?
3. How do you see transnational organizations working with Roma on the local level?
4. Can I ask you some questions about the Decade of Roma Inclusion's structure?
5. What is your role and what knowledge to you have of the DORI?
6. What do you understand to be the relationship between national governments and the governing body of DORI?
7. What is the role of NGOs in the governing body?
8. If you had the opportunity, how would you structure the DORI governing body?
9. What do you see as the EU's role in the Decade?

10. In what ways are Roma represented in the governing structure of DORI?
11. How does the DORI reach Roma people in each member nation?
12. In 2011 The EU mandated that each member state have a national inclusion plan for Roma. What effect did this have on the direction of the DORI?
13. What was the rationale for making the DORI a transnational organization?
14. Can I ask you some questions about the priority areas and implementation of the Decade?
15. What is your knowledge of the four priority areas chosen by the Decade?
16. Why do you think these were chosen?
17. Which of the priority areas chosen by the DORI do you see as being the most pertinent and important to Romani people on the ground?
18. In your opinion what priority areas should have been included that are not covered by the DORI's chosen ones?
19. Why do you believe the areas of discrimination, racism, and hate crimes were not chosen as priorities?

What do you see as the major drawback(s) to the DORI implementation overall?
20. What do you see as the success stories of the implementation process?
21. Up until now the DORI structure doesn't have an enforcing aspect, what do you think of adding enforcement to the Decade's mission?

22. What aspects of the Decade policy do you see as being focused on Roma culture specifically?
23. How might the Decade better address cultural issues for Roma?
24. Some people have observed a resurgence in the attitude that equates Roma culture with criminality. Is the Decade combating this negative cultural stereotype in some way? How? If not, what should it be doing?
25. In what ways is public education about Roma and their culture being developed by the Decade?
26. Can I ask you some questions particular to Hungary now?
27. What's the current situation of Roma in Hungary?
28. How are relations between Roma people and the government?
29. How are the relations between Roma and non-Roma people?
30. Where are the areas for improvement in social conditions?
31. How does the information about the Decade get conveyed to local governments and communities in Hungary?
32. How does Hungary acquire an accurate count or census of Roma if ethnicity is protected under the Rights of National and Ethnic Minorities Act of 1993?
33. Why do you believe there was there no progress report filed for Hungary for 2010?

34. How do you think the replacement of Prime Minister Medgyessy, arguably the driving force behind the creation of the DORI, affected the momentum of the Decade?
35. What do you think has been the impact of the Hungarian government's decision to divide the tasks of the DORI into multiple agencies and departments?
36. Why do you think that most of the funding for Hungarian programs comes from the EU structural funds, which does not explicitly target Roma?
37. Some people see the Hungarian government as relying solely on the Roma Self Government and furthermore see the Self Government as not being representative of Roma nationally, what is your opinion on these matters?
38. Why do you think The Hungarian National Action Plan does not include Roma representation in health care decisions? What are your thoughts about this decision by the Government?
39. Which organization working in Europe today do you see as especially effective at creating positive change for Roma? What is it doing that seems so effective?
40. What would be the most significant changes to the overall European policy concerning Roma that would better the situation for the Roma and the DORI?

Appendix B:

Log of Key Topics Covered

Due to the nature of the information covered in the interviews and because anonymity was requested to protect the sensitive information shared a complete transcription of the interviews is not included in this work. Both interviewees provided sensitive and sometimes conflicting views and opinions about the DORI and the Hungarian political landscape and as such I have chosen to ensure their anonymity by only including quotes that would not reveal their true identities. The interviewees provided answers to the majority of the interview questions, which can be found in Appendix A. However, since each interview had unique perspectives in working with the Roma and since neither interviewee was an identified Roma person it should be noted that their main value is in their critical analysis of the Decade, their work with Roma populations, and their experiences in Hungary. Each interview is cited using the time stamp on the recording, which was destroyed after transcription, in keeping with the mutually accepted consent form with direction from the Goucher College Institutional Review Board.

Richard David

15:17: ...The Decade, the Open Society Foundation, World Bank but also other NGOS were pushing for more active involvement from the European Union for several reasons...it was the Hungarian Presidency which took up this cause in 2011...and this was when the launch of the EU Framework which is very similar to the Decade in a sense, it has the same four priority areas...it also works on the basis of these national strategies....

16:53: ...So the European Union has this very complicated structure of commissions and councils and but difference is that people are there they sit down regularly there are

mechanisms...and...so this was the hope that this would yield something...but of course two or three years passed and it doesn't seem so efficient either...so there are concerns about this EU Framework...

18:36: ...after many of these Eastern European countries entered the European Union the leverage of the EU actually decreased so because if you are outside the EU has more pressure on you to do let's say Roma Inclusion Programs...but once you are inside the EU structure they decrease this leverage...that was a lot of the reason for the Decade...it is voluntary...that's the big difference with the EU Framework, which is mandatory...The Decade is on a voluntary basis and it is supposedly more coordinated than just individual strategies or actions by states or governments...so that is the idea behind it...

21:07: One of the lessons that was learned throughout the Decade is that you cannot separate the priority areas so actually there have been many inclusion measures and programs that have focused on let's say very much focus on education, housing, or employment but for various reasons you can see that by themselves they are not very sustainable or efficient so I think that was one of the lessons that we learned through this process that you need complex answers and approaches...

22:50: The main focus as the social inclusion approach or the developmental approach so the focus is to tackle to gap in social circumstances like employment education etc. it has been always been ignored the cultural component or what to do with the Roma cultural identity etc....

26:06: There is no binding publication or rules so actually it is very much up to the governments what they do and there is to what kind of monitoring they introduce and how serious that they want to take what they are doing and whether they are doing it for the international organizations

or public or they really invest resources for let's say reducing the gap between the Roma and the non Roma.... And there have been serious concerns how serious these inclusion strategies are...

27:20: ...it was for the first time that the international governments had to sit down with Roma to discuss even it was an international forum but I think it was a small step towards recognizing that you cannot do everything without Roma....

28:29: ... The European Commission is very cautious to not to even influence or criticize governments because basically inside the European Union the main actors are the member states so it's a tricky issue because it can be counterproductive...if you force governments they say that they give up even this small voluntary commitment and there is a the bigger danger that if you push there is the danger of pushing it to the international level to the EU and it can undermine solidarity in local communities and on the national level.

30:20: Yeah so it [Roma Cultural Identity/ Issues] hasn't been a priority as far as I know but it doesn't mean that some of the governments participating in the Decade don't have such activities or projects but it's also a tricky issue because the cultural and identity politics need to be done by the Rom and they are not in the governments so much or have very symbolic positions usually....

32:38: If you focus so much on social inclusion and you are focusing let's say poverty and inclusion and then you yourself or these international organizations including the decade are reproducing the stereotype...that Roma are poor and are excluded...and now it is very slowly they are slowly starting to recognize that there are Roma who are not in poverty who have a culture, who have a language....

44:24: There is an estimation that it is more than half a million Roma in Hungary and actually I was reading the census and it's very detailed and I understand the reason why anyone feels very uncomfortable with giving their ethnic background...not only because of the memory of the Holocaust...

47:47: In Hungary...in 2010 was a pretty rough year and it was the first year of the super right wing government...basically in one year they changed the constitution and all the rules...so yeah...they weren't caring so much about the Decade of Roma Inclusion.

51:09: What it means in reality of course is...it can also mean that active discrimination...let's say active segregation...is not as important then you can even have separate classrooms.

52:58: The right wing people in private conversations or even anonymously they just cannot stop making racist statements and they do not believe in this Roma Inclusion. To give you an example someone who worked with us...she became a member of parliament in the new party and she is of Roma origin and every day she receives from the right and the extreme right racist statements...but they have the official discourse on school catch up and school integration...and they make a nice speech but when they are in the halls of the parliament then they say, 'why do you dream that I would send my child and your child to the same class'....

54:07: It is very pretentious of people of the Roma Inclusion or the [EU] strategies because the people... much of the population doesn't have the motivation or the values to mix children or anything like that or even to live together actually...

55:12: Definitely there is the danger of 'Europeanizing' the program that it is not a national issue...or national solidarity but that the German...the Spanish tax payers should be paying for the Hungarian Roma.

56:21: It's a complex problem because on paper we have a local system of cultural autonomy for all minorities and they have an elected local self-governments and actually it's the local self-government who elect the national self-governments. What is a very tricky issue is that this institution is supposed to promote or maintain cultural autonomy and they have the right to do so but they do not have the funding. I mean typically a local Roma self-government has enough money to organize one or two Roma days... I mean they get a band, they can cook... but then they have used up all their budget. But these bodies were never set up to deal with the questions of economic and political exclusion... but this is the burning question for most of the Roma....

57:46: And of course everyone is looking for the so called elected Roma representatives... to see what they can do... and even the local government are looking for them because they are elected... so there is this internal tension because although they have the rights of cultural autonomy but everybody expects them to do many other things... to fight for other things... this is the internal inconsistency...

58:25: The way that the local governments elect the national representatives... this process is completely at risk... it is dominated by the major parties of the national governments....

Kathy Dunn

6:10: I think there needs to be more work done on the local level...especially communal level or community level. I think the ties as of right now are not well developed...and that's a generalization that is true I think for many especially bigger philanthropies and organizations and NGOs that are trying to empower Roma in various aspects and obviously that's very hard since marginalization is very difficult. You know like you can't reach many of the Roma groups and you so I think...or my observations would suggest that many of these organization especially on the higher level are concerned with creating a Roma elite that will then relate to their kin so then relation to communities maybe secondary or should be through mediators that is empowered through these organization and I would say that has its pros and cons.

8:27: Kathy: the ties are so limited and you know the majority of the Roma who are living in these marginalized and excluded environments have very little knowledge of these organization and most of them have not heard of the Decade of Roma inclusion program...

9:21: I think the EU could have potentially have a very big role in including the Roma into something broader than the national level but you know super national...by creating this umbrella identity being European...you know the problem I would argue especially in Eastern Europe is you know the context that the European institutions or projects are existing right now is very exclusionary...you know so Hungary is a great example in that the political discourse today is shifting towards Russia more and more so Russia as a whole is not very democratic country...Hungary has also made very explicit it's not very democratic shift...you know political speaking so we are really dealing with a nation that is reimagining its self in very exclusionary terms....very ethnically based terms...so while the European Union stands for very interesting innovative values of civic nationalism or civic citizenship and you know...Roma being included

into that would be very very beneficial for their inclusion into the national societies except national societies don't think about citizenship in civic terms but very ethnic terms.

11:19: If we are supposed to be Europeans and there is solidarity how come France does not want the Gypsies? Would be a response ...so obviously referring to France expelling the Romanian Gypsies or other western countries that all talk about equality...and Hungarians feel judged for their racist beliefs but yet have Canada not allow Gypsies....I think because some things exist in discourse but in practice don't translate necessarily to the same value system it does create this anti-western discourse, which is then coupled with Orban's anti-western discourse in which he sees Hungary rising as this new great power and that culminates into something that is very negative when it comes to empowering the Roma.... So this is something that the EU and especially institutions that are acting in the name of the European Union need to figure out.

14:33: Most effective interactions and the best interaction that I think that we should be capitalizing on building on were small scale bottom up nonidentity focused projects...and I can give you an example specific you know in Hungary sports are huge especially among Roma so it's not...its creating an arena or field or environment in which people can interact especially children and we all know you know that a lot of our identity is forming in those years....and that provided the opportunity for non Roma and Roma to come play soccer together and that was great that interaction by itself without it being an anti-discrimination something I think destroyed many of the stereotypes because you know play together you had fun together you look at each other as human....

17:35: you know there are existing stereotypes among the Roma themselves, which is why it is so difficult to answer this question because you know that there is not such a thing as Roma

because once you talk to them they will say it's the dirty Vlachs....you know it's the Rumungro there not even real gypsies they are assimilated they Hungarified...they are not pure....or among Beas let's say you know it's such a divided community, which is why some of these projects are so problematic because they are not grouped into in this very nuanced and diverse context of what is liked to be a Gypsy or Roma...

30:58: all these projects even if it's an EU project has to take into consideration the national context, and within the national context the local context and even the cultural context....

39:36: Because the school closed let's say five other schools that had the same segregated practices are afraid so they will change their numbers or speak up for Roma or include Roma classes but nothing changes...it's all on the surface to satisfy certain expectations that were brought into the society from the top down.

40:41: It is a societal problem that we are witnessing that no one should be blamed for...and maybe that is another thing that we should start doing is not blaming anybody because that again will create a very defensive environment like you know people will feel attacked...and we can acknowledge that there is racism...and you might not see it as racism if its banal and we need to work with that...we need to understand that this is normal in the society and how do we combat normal...how do we challenge these ingrained and deeply seeded societal biases without having them reject those or perform your Europeanism...and I do think its performed in so many instances...and then in your private sphere or in the actual behavioral patterns you see the exactly the same and that's why it needs to be bottom up.