



Mapping of research on Roma children in the European Union

2014-2017

Kevin Byrne and Judit Szira
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PROJECT TITLE

MAPPING OF RESEARCH ON ROMA
CHILDREN IN THE EU (2014-2017)

REPORT

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FOREWORD

This report is the culmination of nine month's work mapping research related to Roma children across seventeen European countries. While the authors were actively supported throughout the project by many Roma organisations and individuals, they were also constantly challenged as to the benefits of research to Roma generally and to Roma children in particular. Our response is that, while research alone cannot provide an answer to the problems faced by many Roma children, it has to be an essential part of any serious effort to improve the lives and status of Roma children and families.

Research is a tool to acquire knowledge and understanding and our aim throughout the mapping exercise has been to improve all stakeholders' access to research and data that affect Roma children in order to strengthen their capacity to make informed decisions; improve policy making and programme design; and challenge discriminatory systems, structures or practice that impede full realisation of children's rights as laid down in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. For this reason, we did not adopt a 'pure' research approach but rather tried to identify, access and map what kind of research is available in countries and communities rather than just that in academic, government and research institutions.

The project was, by its very nature, experimental. Although we mapped only publicly accessible research studies, we had no idea at the start of the project of the size, scale or scope of the research available so tools, techniques and systems had to be developed as we worked, evolving constantly in response to the situation on the ground. Inevitably, some research got overlooked and readers may disagree with what was included. However, we make no claim to be providing either a comprehensive or coherent picture of Roma child-related research in Europe and inclusion or omission of any particular study or research initiative implies no judgement of its relevance or quality by the authors.

Our hope is that this mapping exercise will provide an initial picture of the patterns and trends of Roma child-related research that helps Roma and child-rights actors across Europe to advocate with and on behalf of Roma children.

While the mapping exercise was actively supported by the European Commission through DG Justice and Consumer Affairs, the exercise was completed independently and the responsibility for any and all mistakes lies with the authors. Likewise, the conclusions and opinions expressed in this report are the authors' own and do not necessarily reflect official EC policies or thinking.

Kevin Byrne

Judit Szira

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*This designation is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence

We also extend our thanks to the European Commission for providing this opportunity to contribute to their efforts to improve the lives of Roma children across Europe, and particularly note our appreciation of the support and advice given by Valeria Setti, Marta Tarragona Fenosa, Marta Kuljon and Dora Husz of DG JUST who always went out of their way to help us. We would also like to say thanks to Josephine Draycott who guided us gently through the EC administrative and bureaucratic requirements and kept us on the right road. Finally, we would like to dedicate this report to Margaret Tuite, former Coordinator for the Rights of the Child who initiated and actualised this project and who has always been one of the Commission's strongest advocate for the rights of Roma children. We hope that this report will contribute to continuing her efforts on behalf of Europe's youngest citizens.

GLOSSARY

Balkans... usually refers to some or all of the countries of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, the Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia, but some studies also include Croatia and/or Greece in the Balkan region.

Bosnia... is sometimes used to refer to Bosnia and Herzegovina when quoting other sources.

Candidate and potential candidate countries... although Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Serbia are at different stages of the accession process, they are all referred to in this report as 'candidate and potential candidate countries'. The term is also used to refer to any other country that has applied for accession to the EU e.g. Montenegro, Turkey, the Republic of North Macedonia.

Central and Eastern Europe... usually refers to Hungary, Czech Republic and Slovakia but some of the researches quoted in this report include other countries e.g. Slovenia, Poland, Croatia.

Children on the Move... are defined as "*children moving for a variety of reasons, voluntarily or involuntarily, within or between countries, with or without their parents or other primary caregivers, and whose movement might place them at risk (or at an increased risk) of inadequate care, economic or sexual exploitation, abuse, neglect and violence*".[†]

Commission... refers to the European Commission unless otherwise stated.

Convention... in all cases refers to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Country... all 17 territories included in the mapping exercise's sample are referred to as 'countries' whatever their official or internationally recognised status. The report refers to all countries by their short name in English or EU designated abbreviation as defined in Section 7.1 of the Europa Institutional Style Guide available at <http://publications.europa.eu/code/en/en-370100.htm> rather than by their official name in English or the local language.

Child... in accordance with the definition enshrined in Article 1 of the [1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\)](#), the term 'child' in this report refers to every human being below the age of eighteen (18) years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier. Majority is not attained earlier in any of the sample countries so the words 'child' and 'children' in this report refers to all citizens below 18 years of age.

Duty bearers... Duty bearers are defined[‡] as "*those actors who have a particular obligation or responsibility to respect, promote and realize human rights and to abstain from human rights violations*". The term is most commonly used to refer to State actors, but non-State actors can also be considered duty bearers.

Kosovo... refers to the territory of Kosovo under UNSC 1244/99

[†] Terre des Hommes at <http://www.terredeshommes.org/causes/children-on-the-move/>

[‡] Defined in [Gender Equality, UN Coherence and You Glossary](https://www.unicef.org/gender/training/content/resources/Glossary.pdf) at <https://www.unicef.org/gender/training/content/resources/Glossary.pdf>

North Macedonia... refers to the country currently designated the Republic of North Macedonia. It is used only when drawing on reports or other source material that uses this designation

Relevance... in this report refers to studies' capacity to "... enable(e) the understanding of causalities, the monitoring and evaluation of programme implementation and achievements of results (that) will leverage and improve the collective knowledge on children and women..., support development partners to assist populations most likely to be excluded and respond to demands arising in that regard"[§].

Rights Holder... Rights-holders are defined** as individuals or social groups that have particular entitlements in relation to specific duty-bearers. In general terms, all human beings are rights-holders under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In particular contexts, there are often specific social groups whose human rights are not fully realized, respected or protected. More often than not, these groups tend to include women/girls, ethnic minorities, indigenous peoples, migrants and youth. A human rights-based approach not only recognizes that the entitlements of rights-holders needs to be respected, protected and fulfilled, it also considers rights-holders as active agents in the realization of human rights and development – both directly and through organizations representing their interests.

Roma.... the term "Roma" as used in this report accords with the Council of Europe definition^{††} and refers to Roma, Sinti, Kale and related groups in Europe, including Travellers and the Eastern groups (Dom and Lom), and covers the wide diversity of the groups concerned, including persons who identify themselves as Gypsies. Specific nominations such as 'gypsy' 'Egyptian' 'Ashkali' 'Gens du voyage' etc are used only when quoting directly from sources. For the candidate and potential candidate countries, in line with the terminology of European institutions, the umbrella term 'Roma' is used here to refer to a number of different groups (e.g. Roma, Sinti, Kale, Gypsies, Romanichels, Boyash, Ashkali, Egyptians, Yenish, Dom, Lom, Rom, Abdal..) without denying the specificities of these groups. Readers should note that the use of the generic term 'Roma' is not intended to deny the diversity that exists across and within these communities and groups. Their diversity, as well as their many commonalities, needs to be acknowledged and respected not just for practical programming purposes but also because respect for the child's own unique identity is a core element of the child rights-based approach. For readability purposes, the adjective 'Roma' is generally used in this report when referring to particular groups or individuals, e.g. Roma children, Roma families.

Romani... in this report refers to the Romani language but may also be used instead of 'Roma' when drawing directly from a report or document that utilises that term

Southeast Europe... usually refers to Albania, Greece and the Republic of North Macedonia but various studies also include Montenegro, Kosovo and even Bulgaria

Study... in this report is used as a generic term to apply to any and all pieces of research whatever their methodology or typology

[§] This definition was adapted from Kosovo Agency of Statistics *Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities in Kosovo - Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2013-2014* UNICEF/ Kosovo Agency of Statistics (2014 P5 Pristine available at https://www.unicef.org/kosovoprogramme/2013-2014_MICS_RAE_ENG.pdf

** Defined in *Gender Equality, UN Coherence and You Glossary* op cit p5

^{††} See *Council of Europe Descriptive Glossary of terms relating to Roma issues* Council of Europe (2012) Strasbourg available at <http://a.cs.coe.int/team20/cahrom/documents/Glossary%20Roma%20EN%20version%2018%20May%202012.pdf>

TransMonEE... refers to a database associated with the UNICEF MONEE project on the living conditions of children and adolescents in Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CEE/CIS). It measures national performance against recognised international indicators. It is available at <http://devinfo.org/data-dashboards/moneeinfo/TransMonEE2016>

Western Balkans... usually refers to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Kosovo and Montenegro but can also include the Republic of North Macedonia, Albania and even Croatia

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AL.....	Albania	ECHR.....	European Charter of Human Rights
ANEV.....	Abuse, neglect, exploitation, violence	ECMI.....	European Centre for Minority Issues
ASAV.....	Association pour l'accueil des voyageurs	EL.....	Greece
BE.....	Belgium	EMT.....	Electronic Mapping Tool
BG.....	Bulgaria	ENOC.....	European Network of Ombudsmen for Children
BIH.....	Bosnia and Herzegovina	ENS.....	European Network on Statelessness
CEE.....	Central and Eastern Europe	ERGN.....	European Roma and Gypsy Network
CEU.....	Central European University	ERRC.....	European Roma Rights Centre
CIS.....	Commonwealth of Independent States	ES.....	Spain
CNDLR.....	Collectif National Droits de l'Homme Romeurope	ESF.....	European Social Fund
COE.....	Council of Europe	EU.....	European Union
COM.....	Children on the Move	EU28.....	Member States of the EU
CRBA.....	Child Rights Based Approach	EUI.....	European University Institute
CRC.....	Committee on the Rights of the Child	FNASAT.....	Fédération nationale des associations solidaires d'action avec les Tsiganes et les Gens du voyage
CSO.....	Civil Society Organisation	FR.....	France
CWD.....	Child(ren) with disability	FRA.....	European Agency for Fundamental Rights
CZ.....	Czech Republic	GBV.....	Gender based violence
DCI.....	Defence for Children International	HU.....	Hungary
DE.....	Germany	ICT.....	Information communication technology
DG.....	Directorate-General	IDU.....	Injecting drug-user
DG EMPL.....	Directorate-General Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion	IE.....	Ireland
DG HOME.....	Directorate-General Migration and Home Affairs	IHRMS.....	Independent human rights monitoring system
DG JUST.....	Directorate-General Justice and Consumers	ILO.....	International Labour Organisation
DG NEAR.....	Directorate-General European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations	IMPREUNA.....	Agenzia IMPREUNA Community Development Association
DG SANTE.....	Directorate-General Health and Food Safety	IO.....	International Organisation
DRI.....	Decade of Roma Inclusion	IOM.....	International Organisation for Migration
EC.....	European Commission	IPA.....	Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance
ECA.....	Europe and Central Asia	IT.....	Italy
ECARO.....	Europe and Central Asia Regional Office (UNICEF)		
ECCD.....	Early Childhood Care and Development		
ECE.....	Early Childhood Education		

KAP.....Knowledge/Attitude/Practice
 KeKi.....Kenniscentrum Kinderrechten
 vzw (Children's Rights Knowledge
 Centre)

MCH.....Mother and child health
 MICS.....Multiple Indicator Cluster
 Survey
 MIDIS...Minorities and Discrimination
 Survey
 ME.....Montenegro
 MS.....Member State
 MTR.....Mid-term Review

NGO.....Non-governmental Organisation
 NL.....Netherlands
 NRIS.....National Roma Integration
 Strategy
 NRCP.....National Roma Contact
 Point
 NWB.....North West Balkans

ODIHR.....Office for Democratic
 Institutions and Human Rights
 OHCHR.....Office of the High
 Commissioner for Human Rights
 OSCE.....Organisation for Security and
 Cooperation in Europe
 OSF.....Open Society Foundation

PEER.....Participation and
 Empowerment
 Experiences for Roma youth
 PEARLS...Preventing Early School
 Leaving through Inclusive Strategies

QUB.....Queen's University Belfast

RCT.....Randomised Control Trial
 REF.....Roma Education Fund
 REYN.....Roma Early Years Network
 RO.....Romania
 RS.....Serbia
 RSP.....Romani Studies Program

SEE.....South East
 Europe
 SEN.....Special Educational Needs
 SK.....Republic of Slovakia

TdH.....Terre des Hommes
 TSA.....Trust for Social Achievement

UN.....United Nations
 UNCRC.....UN Convention on the
 Rights of the Child
 UNDP.....UN Development Programme

UNHCHR.....UN High Commissioner for
 Human Rights
 UNHCR.....UN High Commissioner for
 Refugees

WHO.....World Health Organisation
 WVI.....World Vision International

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

General Context

In December 2017, the European Commission (EC) contracted a joint partnership to –

- (i) **map relevant Roma child related research across 17 European countries;**
- (ii) **assess whether this research was child-rights based;**
- (iii) **explore research gaps; and**
- (iv) **recommend child rights-based research to be replicated and suggest the type and form of research that should be implemented.**

The purpose of this exercise was to address the acknowledged scarcity of quality, disaggregated, child focused data on Roma children which is widely seen to impede the development of positive policies and programmes promoting full realisation of their rights.

The countries that were selected for mapping on the basis of their estimated Roma population and their capacity to benefit from Roma related research included **Albania; Belgium; Bosnia and Herzegovina; Bulgaria; the Czech Republic; France; Germany; Greece; Hungary; Ireland; Italy; Kosovo; Netherlands; Romania; Serbia; Slovakia and Spain. Seventy-four research areas were identified, divided into nine thematic areas - child protection; civil registration; discrimination; education; employment; health; housing; migration; and social protection.** The wide spread scope of the exercise inevitably constrains the contractors' capacity to make statistical comparisons, so the results presented here are intended to indicate trends, patterns and potential opportunities for research and advocacy rather than facilitate comparative analysis.

It was not possible to support child participation in the mapping exercise, but the contractors did engage with students of the Romani Studies Program (RSP) in Central European University (CEU) and were supported in their task by a large number of young Roma graduates, students and agencies as well as individual child rights actors and agencies across the sample countries. This approach facilitated access to a wider range of research and strengthened and expanded interest in the rights of Roma children.

A total of 486 studies and research initiatives of various types were mapped between May and September 2018, 335 of which were country-specific and 151 were multi-country researches. The overall pattern of research distribution shows a positive correlation between research and need, with the largest number of research interventions undertaken in EU Member States with Roma communities of over 200,000 people, and the lowest number of studies undertaken in Member States with small to midsize Roma populations.

Mapping relevance and impact

The contractors assessed relevance on the basis of studies' potential to contribute positively to policy and practice development that benefits Roma children⁷. The mapping exercise found that there was a wide range of research addressing

⁷ More specifically the contractors defined relevance as research's capacity to "... enable(e) the understanding of causalities, the monitoring and evaluation of programme implementation and achievements of results (that) will leverage and improve the collective knowledge on children and women..., support development partners to assist

issues relevant to Roma children but a far smaller sample that focussed primarily on their needs, rights and perspectives. Although it is not strictly research, **most European countries provide a regular and highly relevant overview of the situation of Roma families, as well as evaluation of integration initiatives, through annual reviews⁸ of their National Roma Inclusion Strategy (NRIS). The series of surveys⁹ conducted regularly by the European Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) are also extremely relevant to Roma children although they are not specifically child focussed; and the Roma inclusive Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS)¹⁰ supported by UNICEF are also ranked as highly relevant** although their impact is limited by timing, geography and focus. These key data sources are supplemented on an ongoing basis by a body of smaller, independent studies on various related topics from local Roma and child rights organisations, INGOs, academia and other stakeholders, as well as regular evaluations of successful projects tested and piloted under EC calls that demonstrate realistic and cost-effective ways to improve Roma's situation.

Together, these studies provide a significant body of data and analysis that illustrates the unacceptable living conditions of Roma children in Europe; indicates the priority areas to be addressed; and identifies cost-effective and sustainable models of response by local duty-bearers. Unfortunately **the impact of Roma child related research is reduced by the absence of any coherent Europe wide framework that (i) synthesises and enhances individual research findings; (ii) facilitates links and comparisons within and between sectoral and country performances; (iii) defines success in terms of integration, mainstreaming and institutionalisation; and (iv) provides a multi-sectoral template of measurement of Roma children's vulnerability and resilience directly linked to general child indicators.** While it may be difficult to achieve such a comprehensive framework, the contractors believe that **including a specific focus on Roma children in UNICEF's TransMonEE database¹¹ and/or Report Card series¹² could bring significant benefits to Roma children by**

populations most likely to be excluded and respond to demands arising in that regard". This definition was adapted from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities in Kosovo - Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2013-2014 op cit P5 Pristine available at https://www.unicef.org/kosovoprogramme/2013-2014_MICS_RAE_ENG.pdf

⁸ Member States' annual reports on progress are available on the Commission website at https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/combating-discrimination/roma-and-eu/roma-integration-eu-country_en while potential candidate and candidate countries' NRIS can be accessed through the Regional Cooperation Council at https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/combating-discrimination/roma-and-eu/roma-integration-eu-country_en.

⁹ These include *Second European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey Roma – Selected finding* (2016) available at <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2016/eumidis-ii-roma-selected-findings>; *Discrimination against and living conditions of Roma women in 11 EU Member States* (2014) available at <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2014/discrimination-against-and-living-conditions-roma-women-11-eu-member-states>; *Poverty and employment: the situation of Roma in 11 EU Member States* (2014) available at <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2014/poverty-and-employment-situation-roma-11-eu-member-states>; and *Education: the situation of Roma in 11 EU Member States* (2014) available at <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2014/education-situation-roma-11-eu-member-states>

¹⁰ These include *Serbia Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2014 and Serbia Roma Settlements Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2014* Statistical Office of Republic of Serbia/UNICEF (2014) Belgrade available at <https://www.unicef.org/serbia/en/reports/multiple-indicator-cluster-survey-2014>; *2013-2014 Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities in Kosovo Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey* The Kosovo Agency of Statistics. 2014. Prishtinë/Priština available at https://www.unicef.org/kosovoprogramme/2013-2014_MICS_RAE_ENG.pdf; and Bernat A. et al *The Rights of Roma Children and Women in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of North Macedonia, and Serbia: A comparative review and further analysis of findings from MICS surveys in Roma settlements in the three countries* UNICEF ECARO (2015) Geneva available at https://www.unicef.org/eca/sites/unicef.org.eca/files/2017-10/Rights_Roma_Children_Woman.pdf

¹¹ TransMonEE is a database associated with the UNICEF MONEE project on the living conditions of children and adolescents in Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CEE/CIS). It measures national performance against recognised international indicators. It is available at <http://devinfo.org/data-dashboards/moneeinfo/TransMonEE2016>

¹² UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti produces an annual Report Card that focuses on the well-being of children in industrialized countries, in many cases identifying gaps and inequalities between the general child population and particularly vulnerable or excluded groups. Each Report Card includes a league table ranking the countries of the OECD according to their record on the subject under discussion. The series is available at <https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/series/report-card/>

highlighting gaps between Roma and non-Roma children in European countries measured against international criteria; and by identifying policy, programme, practice and research gaps within and between countries. The mapping exercise also recommends closer cooperation between child-rights and Roma rights researchers and advocates in order to maximise impact, particularly to develop suitable indicators for integration into the post 2020 Roma inclusion monitoring framework.

It is difficult to determine the relative research contributions of the various child rights duty-bearers as **most major research initiatives are implemented and managed through partnerships, but the mapping exercise confirms European institutions, and particularly the European Commission, as the primary supporter and funder of research related to Roma children.** Although universities, INGOs and civil society are all major actors in Roma child-related research, **there is a notable absence of any coherent database, library, or body of Roma child related research or research programme among the academic child-rights research centres of excellence, that could facilitate policy advocacy and development.** Government involvement in research is also significant but generally government is more a consumer than supplier of research.

The focus, relevance and impact of the studies varied considerably and was influenced by the nature of the research partnership. The mapping exercise identified a number of effective research-coalitions that could pilot a new child rights-based research model. The exercise's findings indicate that **local Roma NGOs' role in facilitating research on Roma children is not sufficiently recognised and investment in building their capacity to undertake child rights-based research could yield significant gains for children.**

Identifying gaps

In terms of themes the exercise found **an urgent need to explore Roma families' access to social welfare and assistance systems as well as other social protection mechanisms, and noted a relative fall-off in research related to Roma migrants and asylum-seekers since 2015 as well as low levels of Housing- and Employment-related research compared with other NRIS themes.** Gaps were also noted within high-research areas, as well as a disproportionate emphasis on access in both Health and Education, possibly reflecting the situation on the ground. **Mother and child health (MCH) seems to be a weak area within Health and further research is also needed on adolescent health,** mental health, HIV, asthma and other chronic diseases in Roma communities, which are related to environmental weaknesses.

Research **gaps were noted in relation to child labour; Roma children in detention; and Roma children in institutions but the most urgent child protection gap is the need to undertake a Europe-wide review of national child protection systems as they relate to Roma children, preferably supplemented by a comprehensive examination of grass-roots child protection mechanisms in Roma communities.** All stakeholders need to collaborate in order to develop a framework that allows child protection and social protection to be incorporated into national Roma inclusion monitoring frameworks, and facilitates greater integration of Roma children's protection rights into national social inclusion strategies. This should enable improved, ongoing identification of policy, service and research gaps as well as transfers of good models of practice. **It is particularly urgent that duty-bearers from both the child-rights and Roma inclusion sectors work together to develop an agreed set of indicators that enable national governments to report specifically on progress related to Roma children as part of the regular Roma inclusion monitoring process post-2020.**

This report also notes a need to realign research priorities within the Education sector, and particularly to **promote integrated education research that examines access,**

quality, inclusion and participation holistically. While the current focus is on access to ECE and compulsory education, there is a need for a much wider body of Roma-led research detailing Roma families' experiences of school systems; their analyses of the structural barriers to their children's full education; and their practical suggestions on how to address them.

Assessing child rights-based approach (CRBA)

Based on the significance attached to Roma children within individual studies, **the contractors broke down the universe of 486 studies into those which were (i) child focused/Roma inclusive; (ii) Roma focused/child inclusive; and (iii) Roma child specific i.e. research specifically on Roma children. Only 157 studies related substantially and specifically to the rights of Roma children and these were analysed in more depth and assessed in terms of their child rights-based approach.**

The Commission laid down four child rights-based criteria against which to assess research:

- (a) the research is informed by the UNCRC, including in respect to Article 12 on child participation;**
- (b) its procedures comply with CRC standards, also in regard to child participation;**
- (c) its outcomes benefit the child or children, for example by improving the enjoyment of rights and by developing their capacity to claim their rights,**
- (d) as well as the capacity of public authorities, as duty-bearers, to fulfil their obligations.**

The researchers adopted these criteria to place studies on a child-rights continuum. Analysis of the 157 Roma child specific studies found that only four (4) met all criteria while 71 met none at all; 31 met only one; 20 met only two; 11 met only three. In other words, **45% of Roma child-specific research studies mapped during this exercise demonstrated no CRBA characteristics at all.**

Empowering children is at the core of CRBA, but this was not the focus of the majority of studies mapped. **There was a greater emphasis on building (adult) duty-bearers' capacity than the children's; very few studies followed a life-cycle approach and most related to older children aged 16 - 18. In some cases, Roma children were unwittingly written out of the research, occasionally redefined as 'students', 'children in poverty', 'disadvantaged students', 'pupils' or 'Roma'. Researchers also frequently failed to present a balanced picture of Roma families and thus by omission contributed to continuing stereotypes of Roma communities. There was a noticeable lack of age and gender disaggregated data and a general absence of any reference to ethical issues, safeguarding or standards in the research.** The European Commission, UNICEF and others have produced protocols, procedures, guidelines and toolkits for child-related research, but these were seldom referenced by other agencies.

While it is positive that child participation was noted as an element of the approach adopted by about 15% of the total sample and by 20% of the smaller Roma child-specific sample, research generally offers Roma children few opportunities to make their voice heard. The age range of children involved is excessively narrow; the traditional methodologies used are often restrictive; and the choice of subject matter is adult-

controlled. However, the **PEER¹³** and **MARIO¹⁴** projects were noted as examples of good practice that supported children to actually define the parameters of the research and allowed them to choose their own innovative methodologies.

The bulk of research noted seemed to have been designed to support a gradualist model of social inclusion that is widely acknowledged to be achieving slow but sporadic progress. **There needs to be a shift in research perspective towards a stronger focus on structural, systemic and attitudinal barriers to full realisation of Roma children's rights and the findings of the mapping exercise indicate that giving children more voice through greater use of child-friendly methodologies could help to speed up the pace of change. The report therefore recommends strongly that donors, funders and research institutions promote a better balance of child-related, child-focussed and child rights-based research and expand child involvement in all three strands through integrated research that examines the child's situation holistically and promotes multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder responses.**

This report recognises that research is not always used to best effect for children and **to be effective, investment is needed not just in research but in advocacy.** It recommends that agencies move away from the current model of supporting one-off research initiatives towards one which builds research capacity in local and national Roma and child-rights agencies and institutionalises children's rights in national and European Roma NGOs.

¹³ See Larkin C. Bilson A. *The Magic 6. Participatory action and learning experiences with Roma youth* PEER (2016) available at <http://www.peeryouth.eu/ctrl/Home/UK/PEER%20Training%20Manual-%20English%20Language%20Version.pdf> ; Beremenyi BA. Larkins C. Roth M. *Policy Paper on supporting Roma children's participation* PEER (2017) available at <http://www.peeryouth.eu/ctrl/Home/romania/WS2A6b%20-%20Public%20Policy%20Brief%20-%20%202017.01.27.pdf>; and *PEER Action Guide – by young Roma for young Roma and ALL children* (2016) PEER available at <http://peeraction.eu/en/?id=20>

¹⁴ See <http://www.mario-project.eu/portal/>

1. THE MAPPING FRAMEWORK

1.1. Context

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)¹⁵ has been signed and ratified by all European States, and children's rights constitute an integral element of the human rights normative framework that the European Union (EU), its Member States (MS), and all candidate countries are legally bound to respect under international and European treaties. Realising children's rights in law and practice constitutes a core value and an explicit objective of the European Union (EU) and the EU's commitment and responsibility to promote, support and protect children's rights is explicitly acknowledged by Article 24 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union¹⁶. It is legally stipulated in Article 3(3) of the Treaty on European Union¹⁷, and confirmed by Article 2.5 of the Treaty of Lisbon¹⁸.

In practice, this commitment has translated into significant financial and technical support¹⁹ to strengthen the institutional capacity of Member States and candidate countries to deliver practical realisation of their responsibilities under the Convention, particularly in relation to vulnerable, marginalised and excluded children. Roma children, who make up a significant proportion of the estimated 10-12 million Roma²⁰ in Europe (around six million in the EU) are widely acknowledged to be one such particularly vulnerable group. Substantial funding, combined with development of European legal and policy frameworks, has undoubtedly led to improved conditions for many Roma families but a Council Recommendation²¹ of 2013 noted that *"The situation of Roma children in the Union is particularly worrying, due to a range of factors that may make them especially vulnerable and exposed, inter alia, to poor health, poor housing, poor nutrition, exclusion, discrimination, racism and violence. The social exclusion of Roma children is often linked to the lack of birth registration and identity documents, to low participation in early childhood education and care as well as higher education, and to elevated school drop-out rates. Segregation is a serious barrier preventing access to quality education. Some Roma children also fall victim to trafficking and labour exploitation"*.

The Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 (DRI) was the first initiative established to address Roma inequality. It covered twelve European countries²² and prioritised education, employment, health and housing with non-discrimination, poverty reduction and gender

¹⁵ For the full text see <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx>

¹⁶ See *Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union*, OJ C 364, 18.12.2000 at <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:12012P/TXT&from=EN>

¹⁷ See <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:C:2016:202:FULL&from=EN>

¹⁸ See <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:12007L/TXT&from=EN>

¹⁹ Between 2007 and 2013 the EU allocated at least €216 million to pre-accession countries through the IPA to support social inclusion initiatives., but the EC noted in 2014 that Roma in the enlargement countries still lived in deep poverty and lack sufficient access to healthcare, education, housing and employment. An evaluation of 80 Roma-related IPA-funded interventions during those seven years noted the need for meaningful participation of Roma communities at the design stage, and the decisive role that national government policies play in determining initiatives; impact and sustainability. As with other evaluations, it also noted the almost complete lack of the data necessary to demonstrate policy and programmes' effectiveness or impact. See Allen R et al *Thematic Evaluation on IPA Support to Roma Communities* EU/EPRD (June 2015) Brussels

²⁰ *Estimates and official numbers of Roma in Europe updated July 2012.xls.(01)* Council of Europe available at <https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTM> accessed 20 September 2018 .

²¹ See **Council Recommendation of 9 December 2013 on effective Roma integration measures in the Member States** available at [http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/ALL/?uri=CELEX:32013H1224\(01\)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/ALL/?uri=CELEX:32013H1224(01))

²² The original signatories were Albania, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, the Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia and Slovakia. Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Spain joined later.

equality as crosscutting priorities. Despite a significant, and successful, investment in education, the Decade did not generally adopt a child-focussed approach or attempt to address the significant child-protection risks facing many Roma children, although there were an estimated²³ 2,297,200 Roma children living within its catchment area. The final evaluation²⁴ noted that one of the most significant factors impeding effectiveness, was the continuing failure of national governments to "make available disaggregated data in accordance with international standards on data collection and data protection"²⁵ despite legislative, policy and practice frameworks put in place by the EC to support generation of ethnic data in ways that protect the privacy of individuals and groups while providing critical information to policymakers.

The EU has consistently stressed the need for full respect of the fundamental rights of all Roma²⁶ and, following the DRI, in 2011 the European Commission proposed a framework for the development of national strategies for Roma integration that would detail the concrete policies and measures to be taken by each State²⁷. Initially each Member State²⁸ produced a National Roma Integration Strategy (NRIS) or integrated set of measures within their broader social inclusion policies setting targets in relation to education, employment, health and housing that were then assessed by the European Commission in 2012²⁹. In December 2013 the Council adopted a Recommendation³⁰ extending the EU Framework to new areas and reinforcing focus on key areas, such as fighting discrimination, anti-gypsyism, multiple discriminations, and protecting Roma children and women³¹. NRIS are not specifically child-focused, but they are child inclusive. Education is one of their strongest elements and the area where progress has been most consistently sustained, and Roma children have undoubtedly benefitted from other measures adopted under NRIS.

However, an OSCE review³² in 2013 noted that, despite visible progress in some countries, the gaps between the situation of Roma and the general populations were deepening and the same pattern was identified during the review of NRIS implementation across Europe in 2014³³. In 2016, the Commission noted³⁴ that the situation of Roma children still remained worrying and as recently as April 2018, Michael O'Flaherty, Director of the European Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) noted³⁵ that, "although the number of Roma in Europe exceeds the population of some European countries, their social indicators are worse than those of Sierra Leone or Burundi, two of the poorest countries in the world.

²³ Based on an average of 40% of the total Roma population of the participating countries as estimated on the Council of Europe website at the time

²⁴ Friedmann E. *Decade of Roma Inclusion Progress Report UNDP* (2015)

²⁵ *Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 Terms of Reference* available at http://www.romadecade.org/cms/upload/file/9292_file1_terms-of-reference.pdf

²⁶ See for instance the 2010 *Communication on the economic and social integration of the Roma in Europe* available at <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52010DC0133&from=en>

²⁷ See *Communication on an EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies by 2020* at <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52011DC0173&from=EN>

²⁸ Most candidate and potential candidate countries already had Roma strategies due to their participation in the Roma Decade or their parallel efforts to support the agenda

²⁹ See *National Roma Integration Strategies: a first step in the implementation of the EU Framework* at <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52012DC0226&from=EN>

³⁰ See [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32013H1224\(01\)&from=en](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32013H1224(01)&from=en)

³¹ Member States' annual reports on progress are available on the Commission website at https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/combating-discrimination/roma-and-eu/roma-integration-eu-country_en while potential candidate and candidate countries' NRIS can be accessed through the Regional Cooperation Council at https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/combating-discrimination/roma-and-eu/roma-integration-eu-country_en.

³² *Renewed Commitments, Continued Challenges Implementation of the Action Plan on improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti Within the OSCE Area* Office for Democratic institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) (2013) Warsaw

³³ *Report on the Implementation of the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies* EC (2014) Brussels

³⁴ See http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/files/roma-report-2016_en.pdf

³⁵ See <http://fra.europa.eu/en/video/2018/video-blog-michael-oflaherty-roma>

The situation of Roma families and communities has undoubtedly improved over the past decade, but too many Roma children still live in unacceptable conditions and face extreme social exclusion. Despite significant investment, especially in education, the pace of change is slow and the gap between Roma and non-Roma children remains significant”.

UNICEF has pointed out the importance of quality disaggregated data at national level “to support advocacy and action on behalf of...children, provid(e) governments with facts on which to base decisions and actions to improve children’s lives”³⁶. Yet the Council of Europe website³⁷ on Roma numbers still records only average estimates of national Roma populations across Europe; a 2013 survey³⁸ found that data on Roma health was totally lacking in more than 50% of EU Member States and was fragmented in the remaining countries; and many national censuses do not actually gather data on ethnicity at all³⁹. Even in countries where Roma are recognised as a distinct ethnic group, Roma-specific data is not usually collected at national level⁴⁰. As a result, it is not possible to maintain a regular, consistent measure of the gap between Roma and non-Roma children over time or across countries⁴¹, using internationally agreed indicators.

This absence of quality, disaggregated, child focused data on Roma children impedes the development of positive policies and programmes promoting full realisation of Roma children’s rights in many countries. It is undoubtedly a significant factor contributing negatively to the quality and impact of research and analysis in this area across Europe, but it is not the only one. The impact and effect of much of the existing research on Roma children - by governments, civil society, international organisations, academics and practitioners - is further diluted by its approach and format. Much of it is not child rights-based. It often does not address relevant aspects of children’s lives; is not influenced or informed by relevant international human rights standards; and is not always well coordinated or communicated. This has a negative effect on programme and policy design and implementation at national and EU level, and thus contributes to societies’ failure to properly address the plight of Roma children across Europe. The EC therefore commissioned a consultancy⁴² in December 2017 to map the volume of existing research on the rights of Roma children, identify gaps and indicate what proportion of this research is child-rights-based.

³⁶ *State of the World’s children 2014 in numbers. EVERY CHILD COUNTS Revealing Disparities, Advancing Children’s Rights* UNICEF (2014) New York available at <https://www.unicef.org/sowc2014/numbers/>

³⁷ *Estimates and official numbers of Roma in Europe updated July 2012.xls.(01)* Council of Europe op cit . The figures provided are based on an average between highest and lowest estimates.

³⁸ *Matrix Report on the health status of the Roma population in the EU and the monitoring of data collection in the area of Roma health in the Member States* EC (August 2014)

³⁹ Key informants identified Bulgaria, Hungary, UK and Ireland as MS that sought specific data on Roma and Travellers in national censuses. There may however be others.

⁴⁰ The mapping exercise however noted several instances of successful Roma participation in various data collection exercises e.g. Gedeshi I Jorgoni E *Mapping Roma Children in Albania* op cit available at <http://www.sidalbania.org/romacom.html> provided a detailed mapping of the situation of Roma families across Albania identifying location and responsible local authority. There is a Google Map of Roma settlements on the Greek Ombudsman’s site available at <https://www.synigoros.gr/?i=maps.en.en-roma-maps> See also *Study Map on Roma Housing in Spain 2015* available at https://www.gitanos.org/upload/75/25/Study-Map_on_Roma_Housing_in_Spain_2016.pdf Key informants also identified other initiatives such as the Roma Atlas in Slovakia; the mapping of Roma communities for community-level monitoring in Romania; and the mapping of Roma settlements in municipalities with over 15,000 inhabitants in Italy but these were not noted in the mapping exercise.

⁴¹ For instance, this gap is not tracked in either the TransMONEE database or through UNICEF’s regular Report Card series both of which provide a measure of countries’ performance against agreed child-rights indicators.

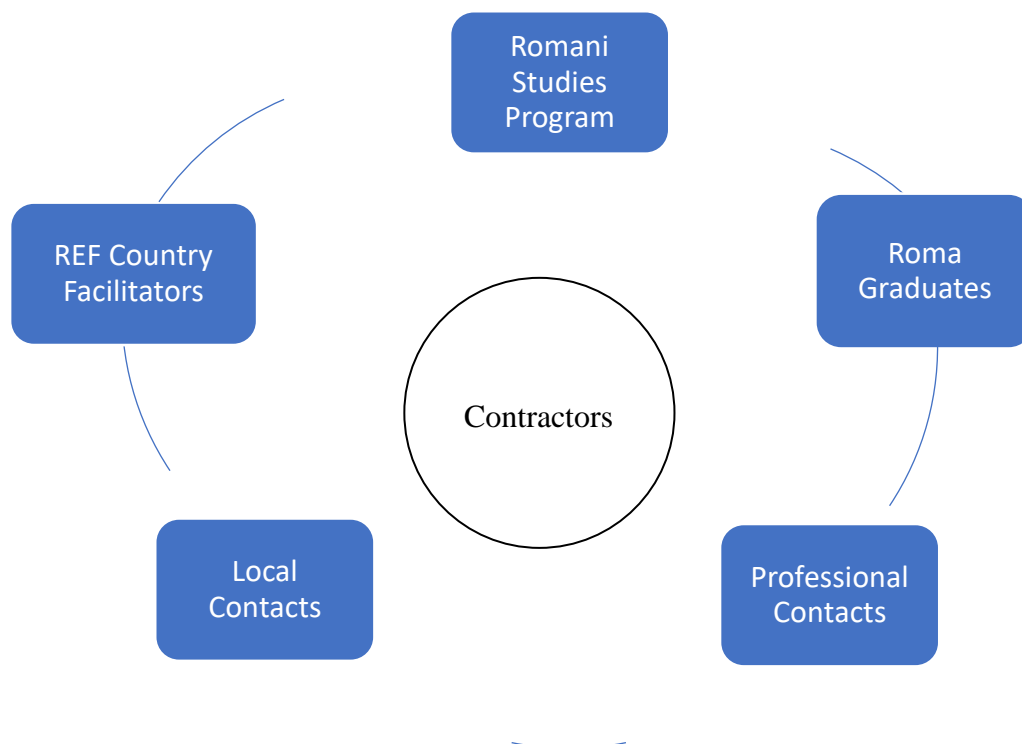
⁴² See http://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/just/item-detail.cfm?item_id=394482

1.2. The mapping team

The contract for the mapping exercise was awarded to a partnership comprising Kevin Byrne and Judit Szira (hereafter referred as the contractors or partners). Both partners are experienced child rights consultants familiar with EC values, ethos and approaches and with more than 40 years' practical experience of promoting the rights of vulnerable children.

The contractors drew on the resources of a number of supportive individuals, organisations and agencies in order to expand the reach of the mapping exercise, and numerous Roma young people assisted in the mapping exercise in many countries. Besides the students of the Romani Studies Program in CEU⁴³, the contractors were supported in nine countries by the Country Facilitators of the Roma Education Fund (REF), as well as by young Roma graduates of CEU and other local contacts, who provided mapping of local research on a voluntary basis. The partners devised research tools and guides to make mapping in the field as simple and easy as possible for non-researchers and provided support as needed. Fortunately, the professional capacity of the local volunteers was high but internal timelines had to be adjusted at every stage of the project to accommodate their schedules. The variety of their contexts and capacity also meant differences in interpretation, quality and timeliness of responses that had to be adjusted by the partners.

Chart 1. The Mapping Team



⁴³Although students' participation was actively encouraged and facilitated by RSP academic staff, it was inevitably constrained by course requirements.

This participative approach considerably broadened the scope, depth and range of the research available for mapping and helped to overcome language barriers; encouraged wider local ownership of the project; gave us more in-depth access to relevant research in the majority of countries; and provided insight into the type of research and data known to, and valued by, practitioners and policy makers at local level.

1.3. Aims, objectives and assumptions

The Tender Specifications⁴⁴ laid down four specific objectives –

- identify the most relevant research carried out between 1 January 2014 and 1 August 2017;
- assess whether this research has been child-rights based;
- explore research gaps; and
- recommend child rights-based research to be replicated or further used and suggest the type and form of research that should be implemented.

The Specifications do not stipulate an explicit purpose or aim but the partners' interpretation (as outlined in their bid) is that **the consultancy's overall goal was to improve the lives of Roma children and their families. Our priority throughout the consultancy has been to contribute to the Commission's continuing efforts to improve Roma children's rights** by (i) strengthening and extending the constituency of support for Roma children by linking actors in various fields and at various levels and (ii) providing them with a coherent body of evidence to influence policy and practice reform that benefits Roma children.

There was an inherent assumption in both the tender and bid that children's rights have not been sufficiently prioritised within Roma discourse; and that Roma children's rights have not been sufficiently championed within the child-rights field. For instance, despite genuine concern about the situation of Roma children in both the Roma-rights and child-rights sectors, there has never been either a Roma Summit or a Child Rights Forum dedicated solely to Roma children and their rights; and despite noting the discrimination and social isolation endured by Roma children in numerous European countries over many years, the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) has never held a day of general discussion on Roma children. In order to strengthen cross-over and cooperation between both sectors, the research partners have sought to make quality research from both fields accessible to a wider audience and to facilitate child rights and Roma rights actors and activists, separately and together, to make better use of it for children's benefits. This intention has underpinned design, implementation and management of all project activities aimed at achieving the specified objectives.

1.4. Working approach

a. Child rights-based approach

A child rights approach is one which furthers the realization of the rights of all children as set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child by developing the capacity of duty bearers to meet their obligations to respect, protect and

⁴⁴ See Call for Tenders N° JUST/2016/RCHI/PR/RIGH/0163 Mapping of research on Roma children in the European Union 2014-2017 TENDER SPECIFICATIONS (hereafter called Specifications)

fulfil rights (art. 4) and the capacity of rights holders to claim their rights, guided at all times by the rights to non-discrimination (art. 2), consideration of the best interests of the child (art. 3, para. 1), life, survival and development (art. 6), and respect for the views of the child (art. 12). Children also have the right to be directed and guided in the exercise of their rights by caregivers, parents and community members, in line with children’s evolving capacities (art. 5). This child rights approach is holistic and places emphasis on supporting the strengths and resources of the child him/herself and all social systems of which the child is a part: family, school, community, institutions, religious and cultural systems⁴⁵.

The partners tried to adopt this child rights perspective throughout the exercise. The mapping process was designed with a particular emphasis on Article 02 of the Convention which guarantees rights to all children irrespective of their race, colour, sex, language, religion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status; and on Article 30 which stipulates the child’s right to enjoy their own culture, to practice their own religion and to use their own language. This approach facilitated adoption of both child-rights and Roma inclusion perspectives.

The partners also actively sought identification of research on children of all ages by a range of duty-bearers including international organisations, European institutions, national and local governments, civil society, academia, community, family and children themselves. There was inevitably a strong emphasis on equity and the needs of the most vulnerable and marginalised children but the partners tried to balance this by seeking out research that emphasised children’s resilience and their contribution to society, and the positive aspects of Roma family and community life. A number of topics were added to the original Commission list to facilitate identification of these aspects and the partners extended the focus of the mapping exercise to cover as many articles of the UNCRC as possible.

Although the consultancy focus was on secondary data, the approach was as consultative and participative as possible and throughout the mapping exercise the contractors held discussions on design of the appropriate tools and the emerging findings with a number of young Roma and a range of child-rights and Roma activists and actors⁴⁶. Discussions with experienced Roma researchers and field workers in the design stage of the project raised doubts about the feasibility of dialogue with Roma children to explore their understanding and experience of research as it affected them, within the constraints of the project, as well as legitimate ethical issues around its value to the children involved, given the generic nature of the research. The partners did engage, from the earliest stages of the project, with the students of the Romani Studies Program (RSP) at Central European University (CEU) through workshops that enabled young Roma students to share their experiences of research and feed into design of the mapping tools. The insight provided through the workshops was extremely valuable, not just in relation to development of the mapping tool, but also to overall project design.

b. Ethics, standards and quality

⁴⁵ See United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, *General comment No.13: The right of the child to freedom from all forms of violence*, 18 April 2011, CRC/C/GC/13, para. 59 available at https://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/docs/CRC.C.GC.13_en.pdf

⁴⁶ These included Nadir Redzepi (REF); Lori Bell (UNICEF ECARO); Michaela Bauer (UNICEF Brussels); Bernard Rorke (ERRC); Elena Gaia (World Vision International); Martin Collins and Gabi Muntean (Pavee Point); Gabor Daroczi (former Director of the Romaversitas Foundation, Budapest); Ioannis Dimitrakopoulos (FRA); Lilla Farkas (EUI); Alyona Denyakina, Eugenia Volen (Trust for Social Achievement, Bulgaria); Alexandra Hosszu (IMPREUNA Community Development Association, Romania); Henrietta Dinok (Director of Romaversitas, Hungary); Gabrielle Berman (UNICEF Office of Research); Francesco Chezzi (Istituto degli Innocenti, Italy); László Ulicska (NRCP, Hungary); and Szilvia Nemeth (Tarki-Tudok, Hungary)

Both partners assumed full responsibility, jointly and severally, for satisfactory performance of the contract and worked collaboratively to contribute their respective knowledge, experience, contacts and expertise to all aspects of the research.

All students, interns and others participating in the in-country mapping had training and support made available to them and were provided with the tools necessary to complete the assigned tasks. Their work was supervised and checked, then adjusted and amended as needed to ensure that it met the required standards. Each partner's work was reviewed by the other at all stages of the exercise, and the partners submitted written progress reports monthly to the Commission's nominated representative.

The partners assessed the mapping exercise and its procedures and consulted with a number of Roma researchers and child-rights experts prior to drawing up a working protocol (Annex 1). No particular ethical issues were identified in the absence of any direct contact with children.

1.5. Scope

a. Geographic coverage

The countries identified for mapping purposes (hereafter referred to as the sample) were selected on the basis of their estimated populations of national and non-national Roma and their potential need for rapid, effective and targeted interventions for Roma children that require high quality, child focused research and analysis. They included –

- **Bulgaria** (BG); the **Czech Republic** (CZ); **Hungary** (HU); **Romania** (RO); and the **Slovak Republic**

(SK). These are all EU Member States with Roma communities of over 200,000 people based on

Council of Europe's estimates.

- **Germany** (DE); **Spain** (ES); **Greece** (EL); **France** (FR); and **Italy** (IT). These are Member States

with an estimated Roma population between 100,000 – 200,000 people, including Roma who are country

nationals and Roma from other States.

- **Belgium** (BE); the **Netherlands** (NL); and **Ireland** (IE) who have small to midsize Roma populations

including Roma and Travellers who are country nationals and Roma from other States.

- **Albania** (AL); **Bosnia and Herzegovina** (BIH); **Kosovo**; and **Serbia** (RS) who are all IPA

beneficiaries in the enlargement region with a Roma population estimated at between 37,500 to

600,000 people that includes domiciled Roma, Roma from other Western Balkan countries and Roma

who have migrated to, applied for asylum in, and been returned from EU Member States.

While the primary consideration for countries' inclusion in the mapping exercise was clearly the potential for concrete action to follow that benefits Roma children, the countries selected also provide opportunities for learning that can be applied in a range of other country contexts. The geographic spread is extremely wide, but the Commission made it clear that the project's focus should be on mapping availability of, and access to, Roma child related research and that there was no expectation of full coverage of all seventeen countries, or requirement for 'representativeness' within, across or between countries.

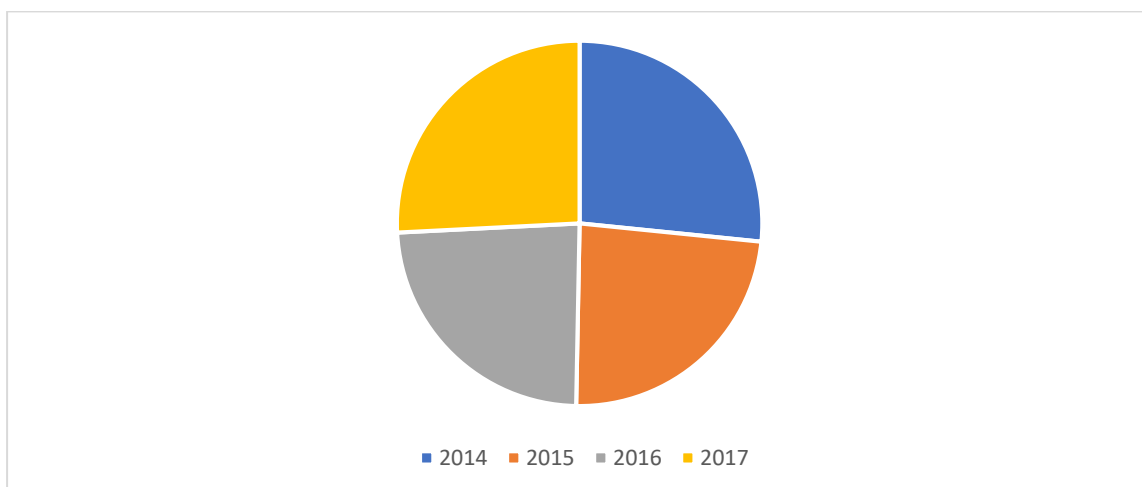
There are thirteen EU Member States and four non-MS in the selected sample and nine of the seventeen countries had participated in the Decade of Roma Inclusion - Albania; Bosnia and Herzegovina; Bulgaria; Czech Republic; Hungary; Romania; Serbia; Slovak Republic; and Spain. These differences undoubtedly impacted on the size, scope and nature of the research base at national level. The contractors also recognised the need to include transnational and regional, as well as European and country-specific, searches in each strand of work; to ensure that searches stretched beyond official country titles to include nebulous and shifting locations such as the Western Balkans, Eastern Europe or former Yugoslavia; and to trawl refugee/asylum literature and databases for data on stateless, displaced or refugee Roma children.

The Specifications did not explicitly address the issue of the impact of different governance and administrative systems on child and Roma related policy and action, but the research team tried as far as possible to access research and data available at sub-regional level. A large measure of responsibility for practical realisation of both Roma integration and child rights is delegated down to local authorities in most European countries, although the mode, model and level of responsibility delegated can vary considerably between countries. In some sample countries the regional authorities hold full or almost full autonomy in relation to both child protection and Roma integration, and so the most significant research and data may be archived at sub-national level. Although the contractors made every effort to access local and regional databases, budget and time constraints made it impossible for the contractors to systematically pursue searches at sub-national level across all 17 sample countries.

1.6. Timeframe

The Tender Specifications stipulated a nine-month timeframe for the exercise, which was extended by one month on 11 July 2018. The Specifications also stipulated that the material to be mapped should be research completed or published between 1 January 2014 and 1 August 2017. Since publication often follows some months after completion of the research, the partners set a timeframe of 1 January 2014 – 31 December 2017 to ensure that research completed up to and including 1 August 2017 was captured. Inevitably there were some border line cases where there was ambiguous and/or ambivalent evidence around completion/publication dates. In these cases, the partners generally adopted an inclusive approach. **The research mapped covered all four years fairly evenly – 2014 (26%); 2015 (24%); 2016 (24%); and 2017 (26%).**

Chart 2. Research by year 2014 - 2017



1. Topics and themes

The Specifications listed nineteen thematic areas to be mapped with a further fifteen sub-theme within them and a total of 54 topic subjects in all to be tagged. These were expanded to incorporate feedback from the Commission and from participants in the kick-off meeting⁴⁷. The topics were not originally ordered systematically, and, except for Education, they were not grouped consistently in any recognisable child-rights pattern. For instance, birth registration, Roma children in detention and deinstitutionalisation were all listed separately rather than linked under a Child Protection label as they would have been under a child rights framework. Important child rights areas such as nutrition and access to justice were not listed at all. The contractors addressed identified gaps and added some other topic areas that reflected a more active and positive portrayal of children and Roma e.g. Community self-support mechanisms; Successful housing models. Eventually **a list of 74 topics was agreed with the Commission and these were aggregated into nine main themes – Child Protection; Civil Documentation; Discrimination; Education; Employment; Health; Housing; Migration; and Social Protection.**

The scope of the topics is large and somewhat unwieldy for purposes of analysis, especially since the Specifications favoured identification of multiple topics rather than prioritising single-topic classification. This made classification of the sample studies somewhat fluid, and this was probably exacerbated further by the contractors' decision to be inclusive in terms of research identification.

2. Typology

The typology of the research to be mapped was quite wide and included transnational, national, regional or local; quantitative, qualitative and mixed. Since the focus of exercise was on research as a tool to influence policy and practice, contractors and the Commission agreed that only publicly accessible research should be mapped. The Commission also noted that a focus on the added value of integrated research, where different issues are jointly addressed or analysed, was particularly welcome. Although the objectives stipulate identification of child rights-based research, the Specifications also refer to child related research and permit (but not demand) the contractors to map research on the agreed topics that examines the situation of Roma children, but not exclusively (i.e. includes some children who are not Roma). The partners adapted this to develop a mapping framework that encompassed

- **child related research;** Research on any of the agreed relevant topics.
- **child focussed research;** Research on any of the agreed topics that specifically or substantially focusses on child-related aspects.
- **child rights-based research;** Child focussed research that adopts a child rights-based approach (CRBA) i.e that meets some or all of the criteria laid down Section 2.2 of the Specifications⁴⁸.

The research partners initially mapped a significant number of researches on issues pertinent to Roma children where Roma children did not feature prominently, as part of a scoping exercise to determine what comprised the field of Roma child related research. However, as the range of research available became clearer, the partners refined the research framework to focus efforts on identifying research with a stronger emphasis on Roma children. They prioritised research falling within the following parameters⁴⁹

⁴⁷ A kick-off meeting at the European Commission with relevant actors and representatives of IOs and NGOs took place on 27 February 2018 where the terms of the assignment, in particular the filters for the mapping were discussed and feedback was provided by participants.

⁴⁸ See Specifications op cit

⁴⁹ These drew on (i) the Commission's own categorisation of its IPA funding for social inclusion as outlined in Allen R et al *Thematic Evaluation on IPA Support to Roma Communities* EU/EPRD (June 2015) Brussels and (ii)

(i) **child focused/Roma inclusive** i.e. research on children or children's issues that includes substantial comment on Roma children e.g. *An analysis of preschool education in Bosnia and Herzegovina: Fairness and equal opportunities for all children* Journal of Contemporary Educational Studies Vol 68 (2017)⁵⁰

(ii) **Roma focused/child inclusive** i.e. research on Roma that includes substantial comment on children or children's issues e.g. *Study-map on Housing and the Roma Population* Fundación Secretariado Gitano and Daleph (2015)⁵¹

(iii) **Roma child specific** i.e. research specifically on Roma children e.g. *Roma Early Childhood Inclusion+ Czech Republic Report* OSF/REF/UNICEF (2015)⁵²

'Substantial Comment' means more than a few references to Roma children in the document under review. There should be at least **a discrete section or chapter on Roma children; or else Roma children should feature in a significant number of sections.** This of course was still open to interpretation.

The listed topics also included 'Training tools on the rights of Roma children, including for instance training tools on inclusive education, managing diversity in the classroom' and 'Integration strategies and action plans'. It was felt to be important to map the former as a discrete category in order to identify potential solutions for gaps, difficulties and/or issues impeding rights-based research. However, taking account of Commission comments on the draft inception report, non-research documents (e.g. legislation, case law and policy documents) were excluded from the scope of the mapping as the study focus is on mapping of research. Initial trawls confirmed that it would be too time consuming, and of limited practical value, to map the numerous Roma and child related strategies and/or action plans across 17 countries, so it was agreed to map only specific and relevant research or evaluations that added value

3. Production and ownership

The Specifications also stipulated that the contractor would examine research conducted or funded by a variety of entities ranging from the European Commission to local, regional and national government services and agencies, parliaments and specialist committees that engage with children, academia and research institutes, international organisations, NGOs, Ombudspersons' offices, courts, municipalities, schools and kindergartens, to child-led organisations and children's networks. In practice, the research partners examined both strands – production and funding – as they related to research and explored different models of cooperation and partnership between funders, researchers and end-users.

1.7. Tasks, methodology and process

a. Tasks

The Specifications mandated three tasks

Refugee children and minors in Europe: roles and responsibilities of local and regional authorities Council of Europe (March 2018) Strasbourg available at <https://rm.coe.int/unaccompanied-refugee-children-current-affairs-committee-rapporteur-na/1680791c99>

⁵⁰ See Camović D. Hodžić L. *An analysis of preschool education in Bosnia and Herzegovina: Fairness and equal opportunities for all children* Journal of Contemporary Educational Studies Vol 68 p154 (2017) available at http://www.sodobna-pedagogika.net/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/camovic_ang.pdf

⁵¹ *Study-map on Housing and the Roma Population* Fundación Secretariado Gitano and Daleph (2015) available at https://www.gitanos.org/upload/75/25/Study-Map_on_Roma_Housing_in_Spain_2016.pdf

⁵² See http://romaeducationfund.org/sites/default/files/publications/reci_czech_republic_report_eng-10-26-2015.pdf

- **map existing research on the rights of Roma children in 17 European countries and tag every entry by topic area, research type, country, etc;**
- **assess and tag the research identified based on the degree to which it is child rights-based;**
- **recommend how current or future research at EU and national level could be child rights-based, in particular by adopting a full life-cycle approach in order to promote the rights of the child.**

The key methodology employed was documentary review, collation and analysis, combined with semi-structured interviews with key informants including a wide range of child-rights and Roma activists and actors⁵³. The research process involved a number of connected strands of work, each one opening access to data sources, identifying gaps and shaping the flow and direction of the research. While work within each strand was inter-linked, iterative and ongoing throughout the entire mapping exercise, the bulk of work fell into three discrete stages, each with their own sub-set of tasks.

Stage 1. Develop the tools and templates required to map research on Roma children in 17 European countries (January– April 2018)

The contractors advertised the mapping exercise widely, to solicit support and build ownership of the process and results, drawing on their own personal and professional networks, and those identified at the kick-off meeting. DG JUST supplied a list of National Roma Contact Points (NRCs) in all 17 countries and these were requested to identify the key research sources in their respective countries as well as individual contacts in relevant agencies, in universities, local projects and research institutions. The partners undertook an initial trawl of the relevant Roma and child-rights databases held by international development, child rights, education, migration and asylum actors; academia; and Roma rights agencies e.g. World Bank, UNHCR; UNICEF; Council of Europe, FRA; ERRC; REF; European Roma Information Office (ERIO). This preliminary trawl identified more than 330 potential websites containing more than 6000 entries. It showed that most databases are extremely generic and tend to mix research, communication and advocacy material, duplicating entries from other websites. There is no consistency between websites in terms of triggers or format for filtering.

This initial trawl of websites established a clear need to determine the scope and extent of research related to Roma children, prior to any attempt to identify or map research specifically related to the rights of Roma children. It provided perspective on the perception of Roma children within the overall Roma and child rights literature; provide a realistic set of search avenues for Roma child rights related literature; and examined the various models used to address, acknowledge or avoid Roma children's issues in Roma and child rights discourse. Based on this preliminary mapping, the partners developed a Source Book, containing a list of websites accessed between January and March 2018; the results of that access; and instructions on how to filter in order to access relevant research relating to '**Roma children 2014 – 2017**' which was the project's key filter. Sites that

⁵³ These included Nadir Redzeqi (Roma Education Fund); Lori Bell (UNICEF ECARO); Michaela Bauer (UNICEF Brussels); Bernard Rorke (ERRC); Elena Gaia (World Vision International, Geneva); Martin Collins and Gabi Muntean (Pavee Point, Ireland); Gabor Daroczi (former Director of the Romaversitas Foundation, Budapest); Ioannis Dimitrakopoulos (FRA); Lilla Farkas (EUI); Alyona Denyakina, Eugenia Volen (Trust for Social Achievement, Bulgaria); Alexandra Hosszu (IMPREUNA Community Development Association, Romania); Henrietta Dinok (Director of Romaversitas, Hungary); Gabrielle Berman (UNICEF Office of Research); Francesco Chezzi (Istituto degli Innocenti, Italy); László Ulicska (NRC, Hungary) ;and Szilvia Nemeth (Tarki-Tudok, Hungary)

did not respond adequately after three attempts were eliminated. So were a number of sites who presented only 'second-hand' rather than original research⁵⁴

The second tool developed was an electronic mapping tool (EMT) to facilitate filtering and tagging⁵⁵. It was reviewed by a number of independent, experienced researchers⁵⁶ and was then tested by the RSP students and further amended accordingly. The mapping tool was built around the filters agreed with the Commission and noted in respect of each entry - (i) title of publication; (ii) year of publication, (iii) author(s) of publication; (iv) geographic scope (single country/multi-country); (v) research body; (vi) type of the research body (academic/NGO/INGO/EU institution/government etc.); (vii) link to publication; (viii) research type (article/report/thesis/situation analysis, etc); (ix) methodology (survey/self-assessment/observation, etc.); (x) approach (linked to CRC, child focus, Roma focus, etc.); (xi) number of pages; (xii) topic; (xiii) language of publication; (xiv) sponsor of research; (xv) short summary of publication. It should be noted that the EMT allowed multiple answers and therefore the scores given related to the number of answers ticked (or hits) rather than the number of researches mapped. This means that numbers and percentages can differ between answers.

Stage 2. Mapping (May-September 2018)

The partners delivered a training workshop to the RSP on the use of the electronic mapping tool in April and mapping began in early May after final agreement on the topics with the Commission, and refinement of the tool incorporating feedback from independent reviewers and the RSP students. REF staff and other local mappers could understandably devote only a limited amount of time to mapping and their work had to be spread irregularly over the allotted periods. Their results were mapped opportunistically and so the research partners had to record them in no particular order, country wise. Individual schedules also meant that local mappers other than the RSP students could not come together for training. Instead the partners adapted the Source Book into 17 country specific Research Guides, combining contact, website and database details with detailed instructions on how to use the mapping tool, interpret criteria and contact research partners for support as required.

The research partners focused on mapping those countries without a local contact (Belgium; France; Germany; Greece; Ireland; Italy; Netherlands; and Spain) but also concentrated on mapping the multi-country studies across all 17 countries, leaving local contacts to identify and map the lesser-known local and country specific researches. Besides providing technical advice and support, the partners also collated the individual country mappings to prevent duplication (as far as possible).

The mapping results were reviewed at the end of June. Low returns were identified in nine countries – Belgium; Czech Republic; France; Greece; Kosovo; Italy; Netherlands; Slovakia; and Spain. Further letters were sent to NRCPs and other contacts in all these countries seeking details of research and/or databases; extra support was made available to the Czech, Kosovar and Slovakian contacts; and others were brought on board, particularly to expand coverage in the Netherlands and the Francophone countries. These

⁵⁴These included. e.g. CRIN which notes new research as well as documentation relating to States' reporting to the CRC. While undoubtedly valuable, CRIN entries are available elsewhere. Some EC sites providing access to Council communications, press releases etc were also eliminated on the same basis.

⁵⁵ REF provided significant technical advice and support towards development of this tool, particularly Jozsef Petrovic (REF). Szilvia Nemeth (Tarki-Tudok, Hungary) also provided significant input and technical assistance. The Electronic Mapping Tool is available at https://docs.google.com/forms/d/17NkjuvYcQaDj9OaSPLhVv7YyQKX6D4Ve6wq2_rdEdps/edit)

⁵⁶ These are Gabor Daroczi former Director of the Romaversitas Foundation, Budapest; Stella Garaz, Researcher, Habitat, Bratislava; Szilvia Nemeth, Researcher, Tarki-Tudok, Budapest.

efforts resulted in significant gains in Kosovo, Netherlands, Slovakia and Spain, and increased coverage of Belgium, Czech Republic, France and Italy. Most of the mapping was completed by August, but the contractors continued to accept entries up to September, particularly from low-return countries.

Stage 3. Analysis (August – September 2018)

The partners summarised every research mapped on a Research Matrix and collated all entries using country specific matrices, divided into country-specific and multi-country entries. The Country Matrices facilitated further checking and quality control. Those entries which noted both a child focus and a Roma focus were identified and documented on a separate and discrete matrix. In line with our Article 02 perspective and recognising that acknowledgement of the child's ethnicity is an inherent element of a child rights-based approach, the research team based its CRBA assessment on analysis of this smaller sample of Roma child specific research, as stipulated in the Tender Specifications. This sample was assessed against child-rights criteria adapted⁵⁷ from those outlined in the Tender Specifications –

- (a) the research is informed by the UN CRC, including in respect to Article 12 on child participation;
- (b) its procedures comply with CRC standards, also in regard to child participation;
- (c) its outcomes benefit the child or children, for example by improving the enjoyment of rights
and by developing their capacity to claim their rights,
- (d) as well as the capacity of public authorities, as duty-bearers, to fulfil their obligations.

1.8. Risks, limitations and constraints

a. The ambitious spread and scope of the project, combined with the unknown scale of the work involved, presented a major risk to the successful production of quality deliverables. The research partners were clear throughout that they were engaged in a mapping rather than a research exercise and the Commission representatives stressed that there was no target number to be reached. The partners therefore did not attempt to either establish or achieve a statistically representative sample of research overall or at country level. However, the partners did ensure that they mapped a reasonable spread of as many different kinds of research as possible in every sample country.

b. The spread over 17 countries was particularly challenging in terms of logistics and language. The research partners drew on their own networks for support and assistance and were successful in accessing language support in all the sample languages. Although most research in the sample countries is either presented or summarised in English, the ability to search out research in the local languages significantly increased the size of the overall sample. The engagement and cooperation of the REF country facilitators, young Roma graduates, and other contacts proved extremely valuable in accessing local research.

⁵⁷ See Specifications Section 2.2 p6. The criteria also draw on *The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child: Taking Stock after 25 Years and Looking Ahead*. Edited by Prof. Ton Liefaard, Leiden University, the Netherlands and Prof. Julia Sloth-Nielsen, University of the Western Cape, South Africa. CHAPTER 23 CHILD RIGHTS RESEARCH FOR 2040: A EUROPEAN COMMISSION PERSPECTIVE *Margaret Tuite*

c. The size of the Roma population relative to the general population undoubtedly affects local demand for research but the sample countries also varied significantly in terms of socio-political and economic context, culture, history and familiarity with scientific research and evidence-based policy formulation. This meant significant differences in terms of the amount, nature, quality and focus of research available.

d. Although the research partners provided guidance on taxonomy, authorship, etc research pieces themselves did not stick rigidly to accepted definitions. The research team tried at all times to note and respect the authors' own taxonomical definitions, but these were not always defined or presented clearly. Indicators for other categories often proved equally ambiguous and authorship, ownership and funding were usually shared without any clear statement of roles or relative contributions. This obviously limits the partners' capacity to make statistical comparisons.

e. The local mappers and contacts differed significantly in terms of capacity, availability, research experience and local knowledge. The research partners were able to redress these imbalances to some extent through support, supervision and provision of tools but inevitably there were differences of interpretation, even of text and terminology.

f. While every effort was made to access a representative sample of child related research covering all agreed topics, countries, funding agencies, research bodies, typology, taxonomy etc the project's brief was mapping, not research, and the partners' priority was to access as many researches as possible, rather than achieve an even spread. Local mappers were encouraged to search widely and to move on if sources did not prove fruitful. Only research that was freely available to influence policy or practice was explored, and research whose access required payment, or was restricted to certain institutes or institutions was not mapped. The research partners themselves followed up as much as possible on 'barren' sources and put a number of initiatives in place to supplement weak areas but these were not always successful. This does impact somewhat on the potential for comparison between countries, topics, categories etc.

g. The research team applied a filter of 'Roma children 2014-2017' or variants thereof. Search using other terms e.g 'Roma students', 'Roma pupils' etc could have produced other results but it was important to provide some parameters, and 'Roma children 2014-2017' was judged to have the best chance of producing access to child rights-based research.

h. All of these factors impact on analysis and mean that the final mapping results should be viewed as indicative rather than definitive. However, the research partners are satisfied that the results of the mapping present a reasonable picture of the research available to European policy makers, activists and actors concerned to improve the lives of Roma children across Europe.

i. As indicated above, the researchers allowed mapping to continue for as long as possible in order to access as many studies as possible. The analysis presented below is based on research mapped between 21 May and 05 September 2018 but there has been additional research mapped since then. Also checking indicates that some studies previously mapped are no longer available on a website. There is therefore an inevitable anomaly between the current figures available on the EMT and those presented below, and between those presented in this report and in the mapping tool.

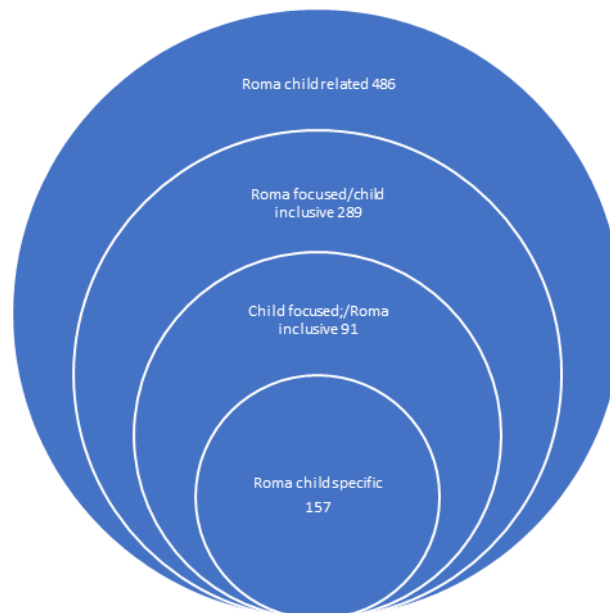
j. It should be noted that it was not possible to compare the size of the sample with a similar sample of research on other categories of vulnerable children, nor indeed to compare numbers of Roma child related studies with the research base for other vulnerable child populations. The absence of data related specifically to Roma children in child related databases such as TransMonEE was noted but Roma children may be included under other categories.

2. FINDINGS AND RESULTS

2.1. Overall results

Between 21 May and 05 September 2018, **486 entries were noted on the electronic mapping tool**. The number of country-specific researches noted is 335; 151 were multi-country researches. However, the figure of 486 represents the universe of research on the agreed topics identified and mapped by the contractors, rather than of Roma child rights-based research. It includes a significant body of Roma-focussed research with some child elements (238); and 91 child focussed studies with some Roma related elements as outlined in Section 1.5d. **When the filter of Roma focus + Child focus is applied, 157 researches were identified that relate substantially and specifically to Roma children.**

Chart 3. Breakdown of the sample



2.2. Country results

For each sample country, the partners noted the number of country-specific researches and the number of times the country participated in multi-country researches. The country-specific researches were relatively easy to categorise and collate as they applied to a single sample country only; the multi-country category was more complex. This latter category is quite mixed and ranges from inclusion in FRA surveys to comparative reviews between countries and transnational project evaluations.

Table 1. Research by sample countries

No.	Country	Multi-Country Research	Country Specific Research	Total
1	Albania	33	16	49
2	Belgium	30	10	40
3	Bosnia and Herzegovina	35	17	52
4	Bulgaria	70	13	83
5	Czech Republic	63	12	75
6	France	45	15	60
7	Germany	33	20	53
8	Greece	48	18	66
9	Hungary	79	38	117
10	Ireland	27	32	59
11	Italy	53	13	66
12	Kosovo	18	15	33
13	Netherlands	23	10	33
14	Romania	100	40	140
15	Serbia	42	34	76
16	Slovakia	59	19	78
17	Spain	56	13	69
Total		814	335	1149

Table 1 shows the breakdown between multi-country and country-specific researches in the sample countries. It shows **that the majority of research relating to Roma children in the sample countries between 2014 – 2017 was undertaken through multi-country studies**. Inclusion in multi-country studies outweighed in-country research initiatives in every sample country (except Ireland), significantly so in most cases. Country specific research is generally more internally focused and has greater local ownership, but there is no concrete evidence that one or the other type of study has more or less impact on policy development. Overall it appears that a balance of internal and external research may be optimal. While the number of country-specific researches mapped does give some indication of the scope and capacity of the national constituency of support for Roma children's rights in-country, strong local research capacity is also an essential requirement for participation in large multi-country surveys e.g. the FRA surveys or UNICEF multiple indicator cluster surveys (MICS). There are many factors shaping the research mix in any specific country, and the balance between country-specific and multi-country research cannot be taken as a simple indicator of local stakeholders' research capacity or commitment to change.

Table 2 gives a clearer and more accurate picture of the pattern of Roma child related research in Europe by grouping the data according to the country groupings specified by the Commission. The overall picture is a positive one with research obviously linked to population numbers and level of need. The largest number of research interventions identified in the period reviewed were undertaken in Category 01 countries (EU Member States with Roma communities of over 200,000 people). Overall, Romania (with the highest Roma population in Europe) had by far the largest number of research interventions during the four-year period mapped. The number of research interventions of all kinds then declined appropriately with the lowest number undertaken in Category 3 (EU Member States with small to midsize Roma populations including Roma and Travellers who are country nationals and Roma from other States).

Table 2. Research by country groupings

Group	Country	Multi-country	Country Specific	Total
01	Bulgaria	70	13	83
	Czech Republic	63	12	75
	Hungary	79	38	117
	Romania	100	40	140
	Slovakia	59	19	78
Total		371	122	493
02	France	45	15	60
	Germany	33	20	53
	Greece	48	18	66
	Italy	53	13	66
	Spain	56	13	69
Total		235	79	314
03	Belgium	30	10	40
	Ireland	27	32	59
	Netherlands	23	10	33
Total		80	52	132
04	Albania	33	16	49
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	35	17	52
	Kosovo	18	15	33
	Serbia	42	34	76
Total		128	82	210

It is interesting to note the large gap between Romania and the other countries in relation to research generally, particularly in comparison with other countries in its category. This may imply a need to invest in research in Bulgaria, Slovakia and the Czech Republic⁵⁸. The differences between Romania and Hungary in relation to participation in multi-country studies should also be noted. Despite significant differences in population (general and Roma), and the relative strengths of Roma civil society, both countries are close in relation to local studies (39/36). Yet Hungary (77) lags considerably behind Romania (99) in relation to multi-country studies. This is surprising given that academic links seem to be a major factor in Romania's success in this area, and that Hungary probably has an equivalent university scene. The comparatively lower number of studies mapped in the Czech Republic and Slovakia also raises questions about the role of academia in promoting and supporting Roma child-related research in this area, given that Charles University Prague⁵⁹, the University of South Bohemia⁶⁰ and the Institute for Labour and Family Research, Bratislava⁶¹ are noted as centres of excellence for child related research.

The range between countries is smaller in the other categories except that Ireland's high score seems disproportionate in comparison with Belgium and the Netherlands. This high score may be partly explained by the presence of a strong national Roma and Traveller NGO – Pavee Point – with a track record of quality research and advocacy but this

⁵⁸Differences in the size of the Roma population may be a factor. In Slovakia the percentage of Roma is 9%, in the Cz Rep 2%. See <https://rm.coe.int/1680088ea9>

⁵⁹ See <http://ksocp.ff.cuni.cz/en/contact/>

⁶⁰ See <http://www.universities.cz/czech-universities/public-universities/university-of-south-bohemia>

⁶¹ See <http://eiqe.europa.eu/men-and-gender-equality/methods-and-tools/slovakia/activity-institute-labour-and-family-research-ministry-labour-social-affairs-and-family-slovak-republic>

characteristic is shared with France, Germany, Romania and many other European countries. Local actors⁶² indicated that some of the factors contributing to the quality and scope of the Roma child-related research base in Ireland (which may be shared with other countries) are (i) active and inclusive ownership of Roma child issues by the child rights and minority sectors; (ii) a relatively open but structured policy/planning framework that formally prioritises evidence-based policy development; (iii) strong child rights focused academic environment; and (iv) tried and tested modalities of cooperation between government and NGOs. There may also be lessons to be learned from Pavee Point's experience of pulling together the various research strands produced by a range of social actors in Ireland and shaping them into advocacy tools.

Besides the 17 sample countries, 13 other EU Member States and 9 other European/Central Asian countries were referenced in the multi-country studies⁶³. Table 3 below provides an overview of the other countries noted in the multi-country research.

Table 3. Research noted in non-sample countries

No.	EU Member State		Non-EU country	
1	Austria	09	the Republic of North Macedonia	29
2	Croatia	24	Georgia	01
3	Cyprus	07	Iceland	01
4	Denmark	02	Kyrgyzstan	01
5	Estonia	03	Moldova	05
6	Finland	03	Montenegro	26
7	Latvia	01	Norway	01
8	Lithuania	03	Turkey	05
9	Poland	15	Ukraine	01
10	Portugal	11		
11	Slovenia	05		
12	Sweden	09		
13	United Kingdom	21		
Total		113		70

Tables 2 and 3 combined seem to indicate that **all EU Member States except Luxembourg and Malta have participated in Roma related research within the past four years, with a particularly strong involvement by Croatia and the UK. Montenegro's and the Republic of North Macedonia's extensive engagement in research is undoubtedly influenced and supported by the accession process. It reinforces the central importance of EU and EC commitment to developing and institutionalising the structures, systems and services required to achieve respect for Roma children's rights.**

2.3. Language

English appears to be the dominant language of research with 358 studies published in an English version and with most research in other languages providing an abstract in English. Although only 34 of the studies mapped were published in more than one

⁶² Thanks are due to Martin Connors and Gabi Muntean of Pavee Point for sharing these insights.

⁶³ There was also one reference to the USA included within a global study, which was discounted for the purposes of this report.

language, the mapping exercise does show that **research is available in the local languages of all the sample countries** with most in French, German, Hungarian and Romanian. Other languages noted included Swedish, Lithuanian, Cypriot, Croatian, Russian, Makedonski and Turkish. Only five (5) studies⁶⁴ were available in a Romani version⁶⁵ or with a Romani abstract although field research was carried out more often using Romani as the primary language. This may be understandable given the divergences between countries and diversity within the language but it does seem a pity that no attempt is made to produce research-abstracts in Romani. This could help to move research towards a child rights-based approach, by showing respect for the child's culture and language and also by facilitating feedback to participants, especially children, which is too often ignored in most research processes. **A Romani abstract might also go some way to mitigating the research fatigue felt in many Roma communities and encourage greater participation in the research process and ownership of the results by Roma parents and other duty-bearers.**

2.4. Research and sponsoring bodies

The contractors were interested in both management and funding of research and tried to distinguish between these⁶⁶ different functions during the mapping. However, in practice the distinction between the the two roles was often blurred and frequently overlapped. Although the EC for instance distinguishes between commissioned and grant-aided research, its support is often presented generically within the research literature, which can make it difficult to be definite about the level and nature of its involvement in a particular piece of research. Other international bodies can have even less defined procedures, especially if they have mixed advocacy/programming/support roles in country, so the contractors assessed agencies' involvement in terms of 'support' based on the balance between both columns in Table 4.

Table 4. Support modalities

	Management		Sponsorship		Total
1	European Institutions	58		92	150
2	University	124		15	139
3	International Organisation (IO)	53		46	99
4	Government	48		26	74
5	National Roma NGO	52		16	68

⁶⁴ See for instance *Promoting decent work opportunities for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian youth in Kosovo* ILO (2017) Pristina available at https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---europe/---ro-geneva/---sro-budapest/documents/publication/wcms_622640.pdf

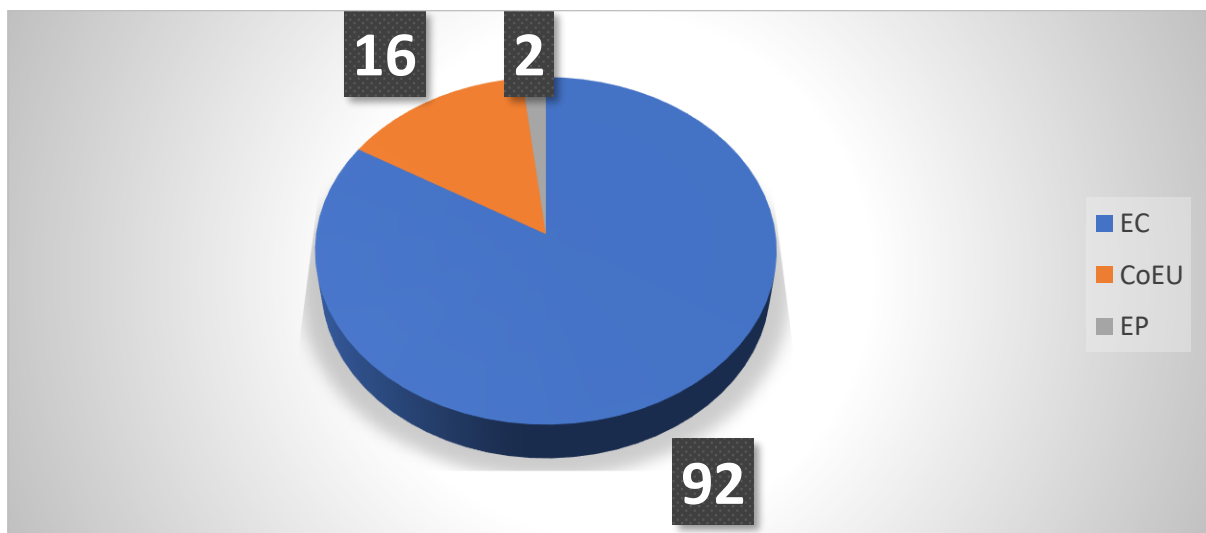
⁶⁵ These are *Preventing and addressing intimate partner violence against migrant and ethnic minority women: the role of the health sector* available at http://www.euro.who.int/_data/assets/pdf_file/0018/270180/21256-WHO-Intimate-Partner-Violence_low_V7.pdf?ua=1; *Measure, Plan, Act - How data collection can support racial equality* available at http://www.enar-eu.org/IMG/pdf/20084_equalitydatacollectionpublication-8-low.pdf; *Trying to Include but Supporting Exclusion Instead? Constructing the Roma in Slovak Educational Policies* available at <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10564934.2017.1280337> <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10564934.2017.1280337>; *ANNUAL REPORT ON THE EDUCATIONAL SITUATION OF FORCED RETURNEES AND ROMA, ASHKALI, AND EGYPTIANS* available at <https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=09000016806955fe>; and *STUDY ON THE IMPACT AND SUSTAINABILITY OF LEARNING CENTRES* available at https://www.coe.int/documents/3843514/13597853/Study_on_Impact_and_Sustainability_of_the_Learning_Centers-En.pdf/4a76eefe-21d0-432c-800c-ad234f77f4a2

⁶⁶ See Tuite M. *Child Rights Research for 2040: A European Commission Perspective* pp 262/263 in Liefwaard T & Sloth-Nielsen J (eds) *The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child Taking Stock after 25 Years and Looking Ahead* Leiden/Brill Nijhoff (2017) Boston

6	National NGO (Other)	56		06	62
7	Private Sector	21	Donors	32	53
8	Children's INGO	26		13	39
9	INGO (Other)	33		00	33
10	National Children's NGO	30		02	32
11	Roma INGO	16		05	21
12	Journals	06		02	08
Total		523		255	

Based on these balanced criteria, **European institutions are de facto leaders in terms of practical support to Roma child related research, particularly the European Commission.** The 58 entries in the 'managed' column includes the FRA surveys and reports⁶⁷ as well as key Roma-related research commissioned by the DG JUST⁶⁸, DG NEAR⁶⁹ and other Directorates, which are all funded from the EC budget. The Commission is also the primary European donor – 92 researches noted had received funds from the EC. The Council of Europe funded sixteen studies in the period reviewed; the European Parliament funded two.

Chart 4. Breakdown of funding by European institutions



The 92 EC funded studies included 45 reports from EC funded projects; 26 funded by the EC for another EU related agency or body; and 21 co-funded with another donor. Funds were sourced from DG JUST (17); DG HEALTH (7); DG HOME (2); DG NEAR (1); Horizon 2020 (2); Progress (1); EU Research Council (2); Erasmus+ (1).

It is extremely positive to note that **the largest portion of EU funding (31%) went to support civil society, 12% to the Roma NGO sector.** This would seem to indicate that investment in Roma education is paying off dividends in terms of Roma graduates facilitating increased Roma participation in research. The practical experience of the mapping exercise certainly supports this conclusion. While 19% of government support to Roma child related research goes to non-Roma NGOs, only 10% goes

⁶⁷ See e.g. *Second European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey Roma – Selected finding* at <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2016/eumidis-ii-roma-selected-findings>

⁶⁸ See e.g. *Effective Roma integration measures in the Member States – 2016* at https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/roma_report_2016_web_ok_en.pdf

⁶⁹ See e.g. *Thematic Evaluation on IPA Support to Roma Communities* op cit at http://publications.europa.eu/resource/cellar/d2cc11f8-e10a-11e5-8a50-01aa75ed71a1.0001.03/DOC_1

to Roma NGOs, which may imply greater faith in the capacity of pro-Roma organizations than in Roma-led NGOs but could also reflect higher levels of research activity by the pro-Roma civil sector. However, the findings from our sample of studies indicates that the non-profit sector is the main supporter of Roma civil society engagement in research at the national level; followed by the EU, and then national governments.

Judged solely on the basis of the number of studies managed, universities and academic institutions would appear to be a major source and support of Roma child related research. However, although universities were involved in management of 124 pieces of research between 2014-2017, they were not usually net financial contributors to research and only sponsored 15 studies, most of which were Masters or PhD theses where student costs were the main or only cost. The largest share (38%) of funding for universities' research in this area comes from the EU, with 7% from national governments.

While the academic interest evidenced by the number of Roma related studies is welcome, **it was somewhat surprising, given the acknowledged vulnerability of Roma children in Europe, to note the absence of any structured research response among European universities.** Although the mapping exercise identified numerous academic studies relating to Roma children, these were accessed (often with some difficulty) on a piece by piece basis. The contractors were unable to identify a discrete body of Roma child-related research or specific Roma child project or programme among fourteen European universities/research institutions in the sample countries identified by **the Childwatch International Research Network**⁷⁰ as part of their global network of institutions that collaborate in child research for the purpose of promoting child rights and improving children's well-being. **It could strengthen advocacy and impact to have a specific research database devoted to Roma child rights.** In terms of developing new models of partnership that prioritise Roma child rights, there are lessons to be learned from Spain⁷¹ particularly from the University of Alicante, which has formal agreement⁷² with Fundación Secretariado Gitano and hosts the Interuniversity Institute of Social Development and Peace and WHO Collaborating Centre on Social Inclusion and Health in collaboration with DG SANTE. Based on the contractors' experience during the mapping exercise, **there are questions to be addressed about the right of access to research undertaken by universities, as access is a major determinant of the value of research to the policy development process.**

The next largest contributors to Roma-child related research were inter-governmental organisations (IO) who managed 53 studies and sponsored 46. UNICEF was the principal investor in this category, managing 20 and sponsoring 24 researches. UNICEF's field base and practice orientation undoubtedly gives it a wide range of partnership modalities that may require a fluid, context-driven interpretation of 'research management' and 'research sponsorship'. UNICEF's lead over other IOs e.g. World Bank (8); UNDP (6); and IOM (4) in terms of supporting research on Roma children is quite clear. It also has a considerable lead over other child-centred international agencies although these also contribute significantly to supporting Roma child related research, especially Save the Children (12) and Defence for Children International (3). **UNICEF supports, directly and indirectly, a wide range of research studies in a variety of contexts and its national multiple indicator cluster surveys (MICS) are one of the key sources of data relating to Roma children and**

⁷⁰ See <http://www.childwatch.uio.no/key-institutions/europe/>

⁷¹ Models that may be relevant include the Catalan Interdisciplinary Research Network on Children's Rights and Children's Quality of Life (X.C.I.I.I.) at <http://www2.udg.edu/tabid/7342/Default.aspx/Presentacio/tabid/7342/language/en-US/Default.aspx> ; University of Seville at

<http://www.us.es/acerca/comunicacion/agenda/Jornada-De-Roma-a-las-provincias.-Las-elites-como-instrumento-de-proyeccion-de-Roma> and University of Barcelona at <http://www.uab.cat/web/-1267793302889.html>

⁷² See <https://web.ua.es/en/actualidad-universitaria/2016/enero16/7-17/la-universidad-de-alicante-y-la-fundacion-secretariado-gitano-firman-un-convenio-de-colaboracion.html>

the gap between them and non-Roma children in those countries where they are carried out.

The NGO sector is another significant contributor to Roma child related research, but as with universities, the picture here is complex, as it is difficult to establish if they are acting as donor or recipient or both. The relatively low score achieved by Roma NGOs within this sector is surprising given the relatively strong capacity of European and of national Roma organisations in many countries, as well as a high level of interest in child related issues, demonstrated during the exercise. The issue would seem to be how to move Roma-related NGOs towards a stronger child-rights focus and strengthen and extend their impact.

Undoubtedly capacity building is an important element of the current model but **this may be an opportune time for funders to move beyond support to one-off research interventions towards a stronger focus on institutionalising local organisations' research capacity, particularly their understanding of, and commitment to, child rights based research. Donor investment is needed to extend the capacity of European Roma NGOs to consistently undertake a wider range of child related research and to support, in turn, development of child related research functions within local Roma NGOs.** Investment in institutionalising child-focussed research functions in both Roma and child-related organisations may prove more effective than supporting a swathe of disparate one-off research initiatives. The recent study⁷³ by the World Bank in partnership with the Trust for Social Achievement (TSA) in Bulgaria demonstrates the value of having a committed and capable research function embedded in a local NGO.

Government was the next major source of support although, overall, government tended to be more a consumer than supplier of research. The range of government agencies involved in research partnerships at local, regional and national level and the variety of support modalities they employed makes it difficult to establish any coherent pattern or trend. There may also be a considerable amount of Government supported research that is not in the public domain or was not accessible for this exercise.

2.5. Research types

Table 5 below ranks the studies noted by research type, based as far as possible on the authors or publisher's definition. However, the wide scope and subject matter of the research being mapped meant that research papers and reports did not define themselves tightly or consistently, and very few slotted neatly into the agreed categories or even into standard taxonomical definitions.

Table 5. Research type

	Research type	No.	Comments
1	Academic research	146	Includes articles in academic journals; theses; books and chapters in books
2	Situation analysis	100	Examines the situation of a particular group or population e.g. Roma; children; people with disability

⁷³ Huillery E. de Jaat J. Gerbler P. *Supporting Disadvantaged Children to Enter Kindergarten: Experimental Evidence from Bulgaria*. World Bank. (2017) License: Creative Commons Attribution CC BY 3.0 IGO

3	Country report	86	Includes country assessments by agencies or monitoring bodies
4	Evaluation	69	Project/programme evaluations, reviews, MTRs, assessments
5	Working paper	54	Usually one of a series of papers sponsored by an agency, (not necessarily representing their official views) that explores a wide topic
6	Policy brief	49	Aimed specifically at developing/influencing a particular policy or strategy
7	Government report	47	Includes reports and analyses from national Statistics Offices
8	Integrated research	44	Researches a number of related issues together
9	Tools/guidelines	35	Includes toolkits, training materials, good practice guidelines and discussion papers on Roma/child related research
10	Thematic reports	18	Relates to a specific theme or topic e.g. health
11	Syntheses/Metanalyses	10	Includes syntheses of MICS, country reports etc
12	Factsheets	07	Includes maps, graphs, databases, summaries
Total			
		665	

The figure of 146 academic studies found in journals, books and papers includes 15 submitted theses (Masters and Doctorates) and research papers, but also several papers that draw on project evaluations, country/thematic reports and situation analyses undertaken (fully or partly) by academic research institutions. Situation analyses, country reports and evaluation were the next most common research types (in descending order). There was significant overlap between situation analyses, country reports and thematic reports and not all research bodies distinguished between them. There were very few self-identified policy briefs although there were a significant number of papers explicitly aimed at policy development or reform, especially in education.

The contractors were also encouraged to identify integrated research that addressed several issues. This type of research is considered an integral element of the child rights-based approach as it facilitates both holistic consideration of the child within its total environment and greater involvement by a range of duty bearers. The contractors noted 44 such studies, but this figure should be treated with some caution. The **NRIS parameters have clearly been firmly established with the result that most researchers acknowledge the need for a linked, cross-sectoral approach to whatever Roma-related issue they are addressing. However, this does not mean that the implications of the multi-faceted nature of discrimination against Roma is fully accepted or understood across the European research community.** While FRA, UNICEF, Save the Children and others offer genuinely integrated models of research, many of the smaller agencies do not build the necessary mechanisms into the research process to allow a genuinely integrated approach.

Most integrated research relates to the four key NRIS thematic areas – education; employment; health and housing – but can exclude other child focused thematic areas of interest, like child protection. Child focused agencies like UNICEF, Save the Children, Terre

des hommes, Defence for Children International as well as Roma Education Fund (REF) and European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC), operate separate but discrete integrated research models (mainly linking education and child protection). These help to fill the NRIS gap in relation to child protection and child rights. But **although they frequently aim to influence the same audiences, these two bodies of research tend to operate independently, in discrete and often unrelated cycles and without coordinated communication or advocacy strategies.**

Thirty-five (35) tools, guidelines and-or good practice guides were identified, including discussion papers, evaluations and project descriptions of Roma related research and child participation initiatives. These did not technically fall within the contractors' remit but were allowed under the Specifications. They were mapped to assist in identifying possible solutions to barriers to production and use of quality research that might be identified through the mapping exercise. They included twelve (12) technical papers on child participation. DG JUST in 2015 had already supported publication of a review of child participation across the EU28 which included a resource guide and toolkit⁷⁴ of models, tools and techniques. WHO has also produced a toolkit⁷⁵ of techniques to ensure participation by Roma and other marginalised groups in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes to improve their health.

The Council of Europe has also produced a guideline⁷⁶ on measuring child participation. It is not Roma specific or even Roma inclusive but it does provide a tool to support child participation across all Council of Europe countries. Mapping also identified a number of country-level tools and models⁷⁷ including some⁷⁸ developed by Roma children and youth that can act as a template to facilitate inclusion and involvement of Roma children in research. The other studies in this category included training manuals⁷⁹, technical details of research⁸⁰, strategies and plans, including several⁸¹ addressing ethical issues and practical concerns around involvement in research.

⁷⁴ Day L. Percy-Smith B. Ruxton S. McKenna K. Redgrave K. Young T. *Evaluation of legislation, policy and practice on child participation in the European Union (EU) Resource Catalogue* ECORYS/University of the West of England/Child-to-Child Trust/DG JUST (2015) Luxembourg available at <https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/3f3c50b2-6a24-465e-b8d1-74dcac7f8c42/language-en>

⁷⁵ *Toolkit on social participation. Methods and techniques for ensuring the social participation of Roma populations and other social groups in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes to improve their health* WHO (2016) available at http://www.euro.who.int/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/307452/Toolkit-social-participation.pdf?ua=1

⁷⁶ *CHILD PARTICIPATION ASSESSMENT TOOL* Council of Europe (2016) Strasbourg available at <https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=09000016806482d9>

⁷⁷ For example, see McEvoy O. *A practical guide to including seldom heard children and young people in decision making* Bernados/Government of Ireland (2015) Dublin available at www.childrensdatabase.ie/documents/playandrec/2015061.Seldom-heard-a-practical-guide.pdf

⁷⁸ See for instance *PEER Action Guide – by young Roma for young Roma and ALL children* PEER (2016) and *The Magic 6. Participatory action and learning experiences with Roma youth.* available at <http://www.peeryouth.eu/ctrl/Home/UK/PEER%20Training%20Manual-%20English%20Language%20Version.pdf>

These are participation tools developed by young Roma as part of a transnational project supported by the EC.

⁷⁹ For instance Wolff-Jontofsohn U. Zylfiu-Haziri H. *GUIDELINES FOR TEACHERS FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION OF ROMA, ASHKALI AND EGYPTIANS IN SCHOOLS* Council of Europe/European Commission (2014) available at <https://www.coe.int/documents/3843514/13597853/Guidelines-for-teachers-En.pdf/23d76fe4-66d2-4aae-8437-cfcec64d5b>

⁸⁰ For instance *Facing Facts: Mapping report on hate crime monitoring training* CEJI (2014) available at http://facingfacts.eu/sites/default/files/publications/Mapping_Report_2014.pdf ; *Roma Pilot Survey – Technical report: methodology, sampling and fieldwork* FRA (2014) available at <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2014/roma-pilot-survey-technical-report-methodology-sampling-and-fieldwork>

⁸¹ See *Collecting Ethnic Data. Good Practice Guidelines for SICAP Practice Implementers* SICAP (2015) available at http://www.paveepoint.ie/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Good-Practice-Guidelines-SICAP_20pp.pdf ; *Abdikееva A. Measure, Plan, Act. How data collection can help racial equality* ENAR (2014) Brussels available at <http://www.paveepoint.ie/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Enar-Report.pdf>

2.6. Research methodologies

Although a wide range of research methods and techniques were mapped including empirical testing, the Delphi method, media review, text analysis, inverse probability weighting, random graph modelling, critical race theory, multivariate logistic regression and reflection group meetings, most studies shared a fairly common menu of methods, as illustrated in Table 6 below.

Table 6. Methodology

No.	Methodology	Score	Comments
1	Literature review	251	
2	Interviews	167	Including interviews with children
3	Survey	147	
4	Statistical analysis	142	
5	Case studies	136	
6	Field observation	102	
7	Focus group discussions (FGD)	88	
8	Comparative analysis	77	Comparison between two different groups or the situation at different times
9	Self-assessment	22	When people are asked to rate or rank themselves e.g. as poor, excluded
10	Knowledge/attitude/practice survey (KAP)	12	A survey of people's understanding of a particular group and their attitude towards and acceptance of interaction with them
11	Randomised control trial	08	An experiment where one group receives an intervention and one does not
12.	Mixed methodology	149	Any combination of the above.
Total		1301	

Not surprisingly, the most frequent method by far was literary or desk review which is used by most serious researchers as an initial scoping tool as well as being frequently the sole research methodology, particularly for academic papers. Other common research methods - surveys, statistical analysis and interviews - likewise registered pretty close to each other. On the other hand, the number of **focus group discussions (FGD), which is a tool frequently used to elicit children's and parents' opinions, registered relatively low especially when compared with literature reviews which tend to draw on expert, academic and research-peers' opinions and judgements. The same gap is also noted in relation to self-assessment techniques which are used by FRA, UNICEF, UNDP and others to establish, and to some extent validate, Roma's own opinions,**

estimates and judgements. These two gaps raise some concerns that the balance between research on Roma and research with Roma may need to be adjusted.

The very small number of Knowledge/Attitude/Practice (KAP) surveys also raises some questions about the focus of Roma related research. KAP studies can examine social attitudes towards marginalised children and have been used successfully by UNICEF⁸² as part of wider campaigns to open access to education for children with disability (CWD). They can turn the research focus back on to the source and cause of the child's exclusion – prejudice, discrimination and negative social attitudes in the general population – so their relevance to Roma children and families seems obvious. Yet this mapping exercise indicates that KAP is the least used research tool and this raises the obvious question why? There needs to be a balance of research types and perspectives to effectively influence social change and support policy and programme development, but **the pronounced absence of any significant body of research that really challenges discriminatory attitudes in the general population towards Roma children is worrying.** In the current sample, few studies stand out that openly and explicitly target measurement of discriminatory practice against Roma. Watson and Downe's study⁸³ is a notable exception that directly addresses the issue of discriminatory practice by professionals. The paper draws on a systematic analysis of eight electronic databases and a broad search of the 'grey' literature including the websites of relevant agencies. Its findings raises real questions about the role, value and effectiveness of a huge number of Roma child-related research studies to achieving social change.

Randomised Control Trials (RCT) can be an expensive and logistically demanding evaluation method, and have limited applicability, so the small number noted should not be surprising. For instance, given the low rates of school attendance among Roma children, it can be difficult to find a suitable Roma control group to participate in an education-related RCT, and this is where the bulk of research lies. However, the costs and complications of an RCT needs to be assessed against its potential value in terms of targeted policy influencing. The previously noted RCT⁸⁴ for example, co-designed and implemented by Trust for Social Achievement (TSA) in Bulgaria, is recommended as an example of how quality research can challenge conventional practice and envision a more effective and equitable model that benefits all children.

2.7. Approach

As outlined in Section 1.5d. the mapping parameters encompassed research that was a. Roma-focused but child inclusive; b. child focused but Roma inclusive; or c. Roma child specific. The main function of Table 7 below is to provide some indication of where research interest in Roma children lies – in Roma or child rights discourse – and to determine the sample of Roma child specific research for further analysis. Table 7 below indicates that **the majority of studies mapped were considered to be Roma focused (392); 261 were child focused⁸⁵. A manual count shows that 157 were Roma child specific** (calculated by counting the numbers where both child focus and Roma focus were ticked).

⁸² See for instance Ipsos Study on the Obstacles to Education in Montenegro. Focus on Roma and Egyptian Children UNICEF (2013) Podgorica available at https://www.unicef.org/montenegro/Studija_UNICEF-za-web-en.pdf

⁸³ Watson HL. Downe S. *Discrimination against childbearing Romani women in maternity care in Europe: a mixed-methods systematic review* available at <https://reproductive-health-journal.biomedcentral.com/track/pdf/10.1186/s12978-016-0263-4>

⁸⁴ Huillery E. de Jaat J. Gerbler P. *Supporting Disadvantaged Children to Enter Kindergarten: Experimental Evidence from Bulgaria.* op cit

⁸⁵ These figures include the 157 later identified as Roma child specific i.e. marked both Roma focus and child focus

Table 7. Research ranked by approach

No.	Criteria	Score	No.	Criteria	Score
1	Roma focus	392	6	Holistic approach	87
2	Child focus	251	7	Child participation	71
3	Multi-stakeholder involvement	146	8	Gender sensitivity	69
4	Linked to the Convention on the Rights of the Child	95	9	Positive portrayal of Roma/children	46
5	Builds duty-bearers' capacity	91	10	Builds children's capacity	34
Total					1282

However, a review of Table 7 also enables identification of CRBA patterns within the general field of Roma child related research, especially if combined with a breakdown of the age cohorts studied to see how far a life-cycle approach was adopted. The figures in Table 7 would seem to indicate that overall a relatively low proportion of researchers adopted a child rights-based approach. Only 95 studies were linked to the UNCRC which is an integral element of the child rights-based approach. The significant imbalance between the number of studies aimed at building (adult) duty-bearers' capacity (91) and the number that aimed to increase children's capacity (34) gives some indication of the preponderance of adult-focussed over child-focused research. Building duty bearers' capacity is a legitimate and positive aspect of the child rights-based approach but **child focus was missing in most of the studies and reports aimed at adult audiences that we reviewed. Even in areas like education, the emphasis was more often on the topic (or rather on an adult interpretation of the topic) than on the child. In many cases, researchers failed to even acknowledge them as children, referring to them instead as e.g. students, pupils or even Roma.** This may not be either deliberate or ill-intentioned but it does de facto represent a partial, even blinkered, view of the research subject that must inevitably lead to skewed results.

Few researchers adopted a holistic approach that recognised the complexity and totality of children's lives; their rights, developmental needs, and entitlements; their capacity, resilience or ability to shape their own lives in partnership with adults. Most studies were on problems or difficulties experienced by Roma families and the contractors did not note any studies on the positive aspects of Roma life. Even when researchers were clearly sympathetic to the situation of Roma families, their focus on problems usually meant that they presented an unbalanced, mostly negative, picture of Roma families and communities. **This imbalance needs to be urgently redressed by studies of the totality of Roma family life that identifies their capacity and commitment to care for and protect their children, and the support they require to do so fully.** Some reports also presented children as future, rather than current citizens, or potential rather than actual contributors to family, community and society. This denial of their resilience and capacity is further reflected in the **low level of child participation across the sample, although the findings of the mapping exercise indicate that the tools, techniques and models to support such involvement are available and easily accessible. The scarcity of explicit and practical commitments to gender sensitive research is equally surprising and disappointing for the same reason.**

Most studies that specified an age cohort related to children aged 0-18 (89), and unfortunately in most cases this meant that the study referred generically to children and did not specify any particular age-group, rather than that it was following a structured life-cycle approach. The second largest age cohort noted was 0-18+ which covers the even more generic category - children and young people or children and youth. Again, these studies for the most part were not child specific or following a life cycle approach.

Given the predominance of education as a research topic, when age groups were specified, the majority of research related to school cycles, most of them starting with the age of compulsory attendance. There were 38 studies dealing with the 5 - 18 age range; 23 relating to 6 - 15-year olds (the primary school cycle); and 14 relating to 15 - 18-year olds (the secondary or upper school cycle). Eleven (11) related to children of pre-school age (3 - 7), which is surprisingly low given the current programme and research emphasis on ECE. The number of studies related to children aged between 0 - 5 years was likewise remarkably low (6) and probably indicates a relatively low research base on mother and child health (MCH). MICS was a notable exception that looked specifically at this cohort within its overall sample.

The partners mapped a number of studies that dealt specifically with what are generally referred to as women's issues⁸⁶ - maternal health; GBV; access to education; equal opportunities etc. FRA⁸⁷ and UNICEF⁸⁸ have undertaken multi-country studies of discrimination against Roma women and OSCE has documented the results of a roundtable discussion of experts on the contribution of Roma women to the development process across the OSCE region⁸⁹. The partners also mapped some national and local studies⁹⁰ that addressed wider issues around gender roles. **There is clearly a growing body of literature on gender by Roma women⁹¹, but these were not mapped unless they related clearly to children. As a result, there was no significant body of work on gender mapped nor was gender awareness or sensitivity noted explicitly in the majority of studies mapped (although they might have been gender sensitive in practice).**

⁷⁴ See Zahova S. *Research on the social norms that prevent Roma girls from access to Education* UNICEF (2016) Sofia available at https://www.unicef.bg/assets/PDFs/2016/Social_Norms_report_ENG.pdf ; *Violence against Roma Women* Pavee Point (2015) Dublin available at <http://www.paveepoint.ie/document/violence-against-roma-women-9-principles-to-human-rights-based-and-gender-responsive-approach-to-protection/>; Savic J. *Barriers that Roma women face with in using the affirmative measures in enrolment to higher education institutions* University of Belgrade (2016) Belgrade available at http://www.academia.edu/16505910/Barijere_pri_kori%C5%A1%C4%87enju_afirmativne_mere_upisa_pripadnica_romske_nacionalnosti_na_visoko%C5%A1kolske_institucije_u_Srbiji_; *Traveller Women Mental Health* Exchange House (2017) Dublin available at https://www.exchangehouse.ie/userfiles/file/reports/research/TravellerWomenMentalHealthStats_2017_1.pdf ; Vives Cases C. et al *Multiple struggles in fighting violence against women: implications among Romani women leaders in Spain* Global Health Action (2017) available at <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/16549716.2017.1317084?scroll=top&needAccess=true>

⁸⁷ See *Discrimination against and living conditions of Roma women in 11 EU Member States* FRA (2014)

⁸⁸ See *Rapid Review on Inclusion and Gender Equality* UNICEF ECARO available at https://www.unicef.org/eca/reports/rapid-review-inclusion-and-gender-equality_and_The_Rights_of_Roma_Children_and_Women UNICEF ECARO available at <https://www.unicef.org/eca/reports/rights-roma-children-and-women>

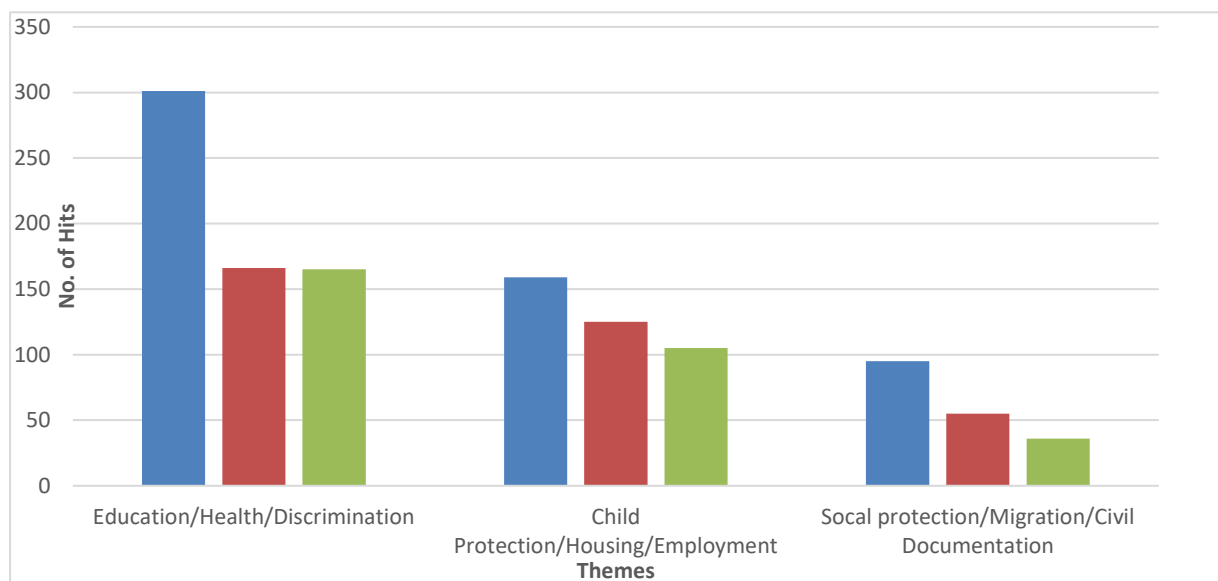
⁸⁹ *WOMEN AS AGENTS OF CHANGE IN MIGRANT, MINORITY AND ROMA AND SINTI COMMUNITIES IN THE OSCE REGION* OSCE (2014) Vienna available at <https://www.osce.org/gender/115941?download=true>

⁹⁰ See *Gender Dimensions of Roma Inclusion: Perspectives from Four Roma Communities in Bulgaria* World Bank (2014) Washington available at <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/17545/846930REVISED00lish0Roma0Gender0ENG.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

⁹¹ See Kocze A. *Romani women and the paradoxes of neoliberalism: Race, gender and class in the era of late capitalism in East-Central Europe* CSP/CEU at <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/budapest/12796.pdf>

2.8. Main themes

Chart 5. Thematic Analysis by number of 'hits'



To facilitate collation and analysis, the partners grouped the 74 topics into nine themes as presented above⁹². Although no topics were assigned specifically to Employment, it is included as a discrete category, as it is a key factor in the family's capacity to provide a protective environment for its children. It was also a core element of the Decade of Roma Inclusion (DRI) programme and has continued as a core NRIS theme.

The patterns noted confirm the dominance of the NRIS themes, but with significant internal differences. **Education, Employment, Health and Housing between them are noted as research subjects in 685 instances, more than 50% of the total.** However, Education (301) is by far the majority research subject while Health (166) scores in the mid-range and Housing (125) and Employment (105) score low. Discrimination, another NRIS theme, also scores in the mid-range (165). It was not possible to disaggregate themes by year, but the research partners noticed a fall-off in employment- and housing-related research after the end of the Decade of Roma Inclusion in 2015 which may be tied to funding, interest or simply to shifts in research trends.

Contrary to the partners' expectations, **child protection scored relatively high (159) although it is outside the NRIS framework. This score is probably due to the continuing interest in Roma children by child-related INGOs and IOs.** UNICEF and Save the Children have sponsored a significant body of high-quality research on Roma children across Europe over the last four years, but most other international child-related INGOs (Terre des homes, WVI, DCI, SOS, Eurochild, Lumos Foundation) have also supported one or more Roma child-related studies during the period reviewed. International Roma organisations have also contributed, although to a lesser extent, with partnerships between UNICEF, REF and ERRC. ERRC has been particularly strong in advocacy on child labour and Roma children in institutions, with studies in several countries.

Local child-related NGOs have also been prominent in implementing Roma child-related research at local level, often in partnership with peer Roma NGOs and

⁹² As presented in the Inception Report approved by the Commission 07 May 2018

funded by INGOs. These partnerships have not just delivered significant research results but have also fostered practical inclusion initiatives and programmes. Some of the results of these partnerships have significance beyond the local⁹³ and a transnational evaluation of the model could provide significant learning.

Given that poverty rates, and especially child poverty rates, are acknowledged to be high in Roma communities, the small number (95) of Social Protection studies noted (compared with education, health, housing and even child protection) is of some concern.

Prior to 2015, Roma, refugee and migrant children were linked in child rights discourse and featured prominently in programmes and research around 'Children on the Move'. Since 2015, refugee and migrant child related issues have merged somewhat and **Roma children do not feature as strongly⁹⁴ in migration discourse - only 55 'hits' were noted in total. Although statelessness remains a current⁹⁵ issue, research on returns and reintegration was low.** 'Civil documentation' which includes 'Birth registration'; 'ID documentation'; 'Citizenship and statelessness' scored lowest with only 36 hits in all. In most cases, civil documentation featured in other thematic studies and the contractors noted only one specific Serbian study on this issue⁹⁶.

2.9. Research Patterns

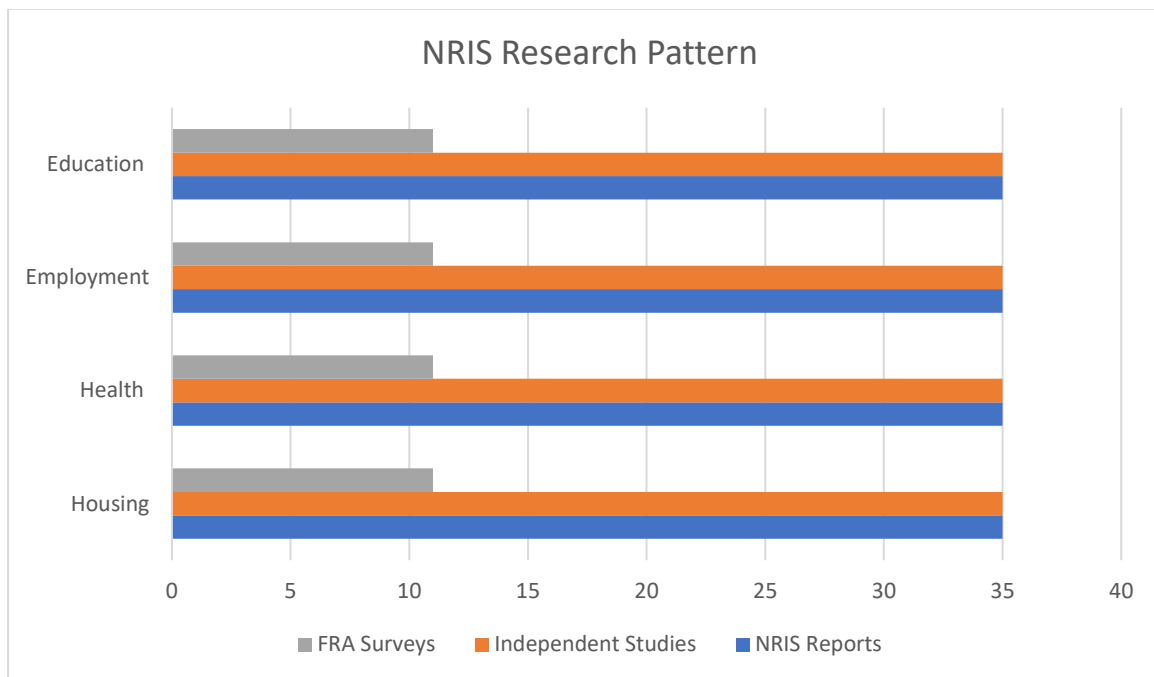
The NRIS framework ensures a solid body of research work across 34 European countries (EU28 plus Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of North Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro and Turkey). Although not technically research, the annual NRIS reviews provide a regular update on the situation of Roma families in relation to Education, Employment, Housing, Health and Discrimination and evaluate progress made towards social inclusion. These regular reviews are supplemented by periodic surveys undertaken across a number of European countries by FRA and a blanket of independent studies by other agencies at less regular intervals spread across all 28 Member States and the candidate and potential candidate countries. Although the amount of data and research produced varies between themes, years and countries, together these provide a solid consistent, regularly-updated body of evidence of the poor situation of Roma families across Europe and identify pathways to progress that are realistic, achievable and cost-effective. Unfortunately most of these research initiatives are not sufficiently child specific.

⁹³ See e.g. Gedeshi I Jorgoni E *Mapping Roma Children in Albania* UNICEF (2012) Tirana at <http://www.sidalbania.org/romacom.html> for a detailed description of a Roma child-related research model that could be adapted and used elsewhere.

⁹⁴ Compare for instance the series of research reports produced by MARIO I and MARIO II project e.g. there is no mention of Roma children at all in Ivan J *Research Report: Children on the Move in Hungary* TdH/Oak Foundation (2016) Budapest produced under MARIO II

⁹⁵ The European Network on Statelessness (ENS) is currently working on a partnership project with ERRC and the Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion, #RomaBelong, as part of which they published research on Roma statelessness and discrimination with partners in six EU enlargement and neighbourhood countries in October 2017. that is available [here](https://www.statelessness.eu/romabelong). For more information see: <https://www.statelessness.eu/romabelong>.

⁹⁶ See *Determining the Date and Place of Birth, Right to Citizenship and Permanent Residence Registration – Analysis of Remaining Obstacles* Praxis (2017) Belgrade available at https://www.praxis.org.rs/images/praxis_downloads/UNHCR_izvestaj_2017.pdf. The partners also noted one global report on statelessness with a Roma related case-study from the Republic of North Macedonia available at <http://www.unhcr.org/protection/statelessness/59f747404/home-stateless-minorities-search-citizenship.html?query=Roma%20children>

Chart 6. Pattern of research on NRIS themes across 34 countries

The pattern of research related to non-NRIS themes however is less solid. The incidence of research related to child protection topics, migration and civil registration is more scattered, sporadic and may therefore be less effective in terms of influencing policy. While the MICS surveys provide a thorough and comprehensive picture of the situation of Roma families in specific countries, they do not do so consistently. They are not always Roma inclusive and focus on different groupings of vulnerable children at different times. They are also very country specific and because they appear in different countries at different times, their findings are less transferable across boundaries⁹⁷.

MICS are also supplemented by a body of other research studies implemented by UNICEF, Save the Children, Defence for Children International (DCI), European Roma Rights Centre, universities, Roma NGOs and other stakeholders. However, these are likewise scattered over countries and time, so that the resulting body of research work is less solid and substantial and impact is harder to achieve. The effectiveness of both strands of research is probably undermined by the disconnect between them and Roma children would undoubtedly benefit from greater cohesion and coherence between these two research strands. **A research/analytical framework is needed that brings these two research strands together and draws on all data sources, including external independent sources, in order to measure annual progress against agreed Roma child-specific indicators in all EU Member States, candidate and potential candidate countries.**

⁹⁷ UNICEF has provided a synthesis of the MICS analyses in different countries to enhance learning and strengthen impact. See *The Rights of Roma Children and Women* at <https://www.unicef.org/eca/reports/rights-roma-children-and-women>

For many years now, UNICEF has produced an annual Report Card that focuses on the well-being of children in industrialized countries, in many cases identifying gaps and inequalities between the general child population and particularly vulnerable or excluded groups⁹⁸. Each Report Card includes a league table ranking the countries of the OECD according to their record on the subject under discussion. To date, the Report Card series has not examined the situation of Roma children but its concept, format and processes could contribute significantly to developing a suitable monitoring framework for national governments post-2020. Aligning production of a Report Card dedicated to Roma children with the regular FRA studies of the situation of children could provide a child-centred baseline against which to monitor performance by national governments in meeting their responsibilities to this particularly vulnerable group.

Other possible option might be to develop Roma child rights indicators to be measured in FRA EUMIDIS surveys, or to supplement these with a series of MICS studies undertaken over the same time scale.

The Report Card format adopted in Ireland could provide another template for such a framework. The Children's Rights Alliance in Ireland is an umbrella organisation uniting more than 100 NGOs, schools, universities and other civil society organisations. Between 2014 – 2017 it worked with Irish government departments and agencies to produce a Report Card⁹⁹ evaluating and grading government performance in relation to children's rights. The report is compiled by a panel of independent assessors who draw on Alliance members as well as published research to evaluate changes in law, policy and practice relating to children. The Report Card provides evaluations in thematic areas as well as changes in the situation of particularly vulnerable groups. A chapter is always devoted to Roma and Traveller children.

'Traveller and Roma Children' is awarded an 'E' grade in Report Card 2017 as the revised Strategy has still not been completed and Traveller and Roma children still experience consistent discrimination and disadvantage.

In 2016, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child made particular recommendations to Ireland in relation to Traveller and Roma children across a range of areas including discrimination, adequate standard of living and health. The Committee also highlighted the lack of a human rights basis for the implementation of the National Traveller and Roma Integration Strategy and inadequate consultations with the Traveller and Roma community in relation to the strategy.

The State must identify gaps and barriers and take positive measures, through legislation, resource allocation, policies and programmes, to address existing and potential discrimination against indigenous children.

Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures: The National Policy Framework for Children and Young People 2014-2020 recognises the particular challenges and obstacles faced by Traveller and Roma children and young people. In it, the Government commits to implement and monitor the National Traveller and Roma Integration Strategy, with a particular focus on Traveller accommodation and the engagement of Roma children in education. It also commits to tackle health inequalities, strengthen social inclusion measures, renew efforts towards improving educational and reduce discrimination and intolerance experienced by marginalised groups.

The 2011 census indicated that there were 15,450 Travellers aged up to 19 years living in Ireland. It is estimated that 42% of Traveller children are aged 14 years or under. There is limited data available on the Roma population in Ireland but in 2014 it was estimated to be around 5,000. The UN Committee has called on States to employ data collection mechanisms that can study the situation of specific groups, including ethnic and/or indigenous groups.

Quotes from *report card 2017. Is government keeping its promises to children?* Children's Rights Alliance (2017) Dublin pp 69-75

⁹⁸ See for instance Chzhen Y. et al 'An Unfair Start: Inequality in Children's Education in Rich Countries', *Innocenti Report Card 15*, UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti (2018) Florence available at <https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/series/report-card/>

⁹⁹ See *report card 2017. Is government keeping its promises to children?* Children's Rights Alliance (2017) Dublin at http://childrensrights.ie/sites/default/files/submissions_reports/files/Report%20Card%202017%20FULL.pdf

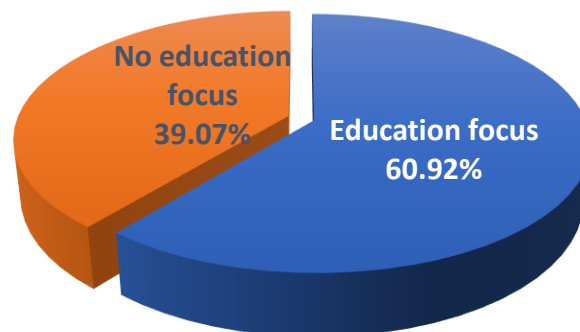
A similar exercise could be undertaken in every European country to ensure that Roma children's rights are not overlooked in generic social inclusion strategies and that there is a regular and consistent measure of progress in closing the gap between Roma and non-Roma children in country. Besides providing a specific child-rights monitoring framework to measure closure of gaps over time, it could also act as the basis for comparison against neighbouring countries and international standards. Another important function would be to act as a focal point for Roma and child-rights actors, and to identify priorities for action and further intensive research and advocacy around Roma children's rights.

2.10. Research topics

- **Education**

Education is by far the most common research subject and was noted in 60% of the studies mapped. 'Access to education' alone shows in 252 studies accounting for 47% of all topics noted. The scale of its dominance in research is sizeable - 'stigma and discrimination' (the second most common topic noted) scored only 158! This may reflect a common perception that education is the key to resolving all social problems but its dominance is undoubtedly driven also by education's prioritisation in most inclusion models and the existence of strong Roma-education advocates. Although agencies like REF and REYN are not research organisations or research funders per se, they do promote, facilitate and support quality research on education, and model, test and evaluate education projects and initiatives.

Chart 7. Education focus in the mapping sample



However, as Table 8a below demonstrates, **the scale of dominance of the 'access to education' topic within the education sector is equally significant. 'Quality education' scored only 117, 'inclusive education' only 112, although these are usually considered to be three equal and integral elements of national education strategies. 'Participation' in education scored only 113. This imbalance probably reflects the reality that there are still insufficient examples of quality educational integration, and that most countries are still struggling to achieve full access.**

It is equally significant to note that the second most common educational topic noted is 'School dropouts/Early school leaving' at 163¹⁰⁰. This may be explained by the fact, that in most of the countries surveyed, a significant proportion of Roma children do not continue studying beyond primary school and Roma students are over-represented among those repeating grades and leaving school early. 'Primary education' scored 138 hits. 'Secondary education' achieved only 109 hits; 'upper-secondary education' only 63. 'ECE' scored 86; **If research interest reflects policy priorities, then it would appear that access to education is still very much a 'work in progress'.**

Table 8a. Education topics ranked by score

No.	Topic	Score	No.	Topic	Score
1	Access to education	252	8	Early childhood education and care	86
2	School dropouts/ Early school leaving	163	9	Direct discrimination through class, school segregation/ placement in special needs schools	64
3	Primary education	138	10	Upper-secondary education	63
4	Quality education	117	11	Indirect discrimination through access/distance from schools	50
5	Participation (enrolment/ attendance/performance/ achievement)	113	12	Inclusion of Roma culture and language in the curriculum	23
6	Inclusive education	112	13	Second chance education	20
7	Secondary education	109	14	Special assistance in schools/SEN	20
Total					1330

Education outcomes are relatively easy to measure and the institutional frameworks are in place in most countries, and at European level, to facilitate such measurement. This is undoubtedly a factor in education's high score generally, but it may be that this leads to an overemphasis on researching 'what is happening' rather 'why is it not happening'? For instance, the number of researches on discrimination in education, 'direct' (64) and 'indirect' (50), is extremely low when compared with research on access. **Although the institutional framework underpinning education services are well suited to facilitate KAP studies around Roma children's experience of prejudice and**

¹⁰⁰ See UNESCO Thesaurus at <http://vocabularies.unesco.org/browser/thesaurus/en/page/concept1068> for explanations of these alternative terms, which both refer to the same phenomenon. The contractors mapped both terms to ensure full coverage. 'School dropouts' achieved 85 hits; 'Early school leaving' achieved 78.

discrimination in school settings¹⁰¹, few are noted and greater use of such studies is highly recommended. The extremely low score for 'inclusion of Roma culture and language in the curriculum' is even more disappointing .

Academic institutions (mainly universities) were most active (35%) in educational research, followed by Roma international or national organizations (13%) and other civil society actors (12%). This pattern may reflect strong academic and civil society interest in the education sector, which is certainly strongly represented in universities. However, it may also reflect donor interest or the hegemonic perception of education as the ultimate route to Roma inclusion. EU institutions, governments, intergovernmental organizations and others (business, private, church) researched approximately 10% each of the total education sample.

- **Health**

While Health scores considerably higher than Employment it falls very far behind Education. However, as with Education **the main health research focus is still on 'access'** (150) with 'Mother and Child Health' quite far behind on 59. General 'health research' and research on 'vaccinations' registered 52 hits but other topics scored very low - 'mental health care' (33); 'nutrition' (31); 'adolescent health care' (20); and 'drug use/misuse/abuse' (15). No specific research¹⁰² on Roma and HIV was mapped despite a 2012 study amongst injecting drug users (IDUs) that found the highest prevalence of HIV infection and tuberculosis was within the Roma population¹⁰³. As Table 8b. shows the **overall thrust of health research tends to be more Roma than child focused** – the two general research categories 'access to health care' and 'health related research' scored 202 between them, while the five, more child oriented, categories – 'mother and child health', 'mental health', 'adolescent health', 'nutrition' and 'drug use/misuse/abuse' – scored only 158. This lack of child focus was a significant factor in Health's low score in the mapping exercise, despite easy access to a large Roma health database¹⁰⁴.

Table 8b. Health topics ranked by score

No.	Topic	Score
1	Access to healthcare	150
2	Mother and child health	59
3	Health related research; vaccinations	52
4	Mental health care	33

¹⁰¹ Such studies need not necessarily adopt the KAP model. See Duminičă G. Ivasiuc A. *One School for All? Access to Quality Education for Roma Children - Research report* Agenzia Impreuna (2010) Bucharest for an excellent critique of how discrimination works in practice. It is available at <https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/view/27571321/one-school-for-all-unicef>

¹⁰² Note that MICS studies include adolescent questionnaires on sexual health, at-risk behaviour and knowledge of and attitudes towards HIV

¹⁰³ Roma Inclusion Working Papers UNDP Europe and the CIS, Bratislava Regional Centre, *The health situation of Roma communities: Analysis of the data from the UNDP/World Bank/EC Regional Roma Survey, 2012*

¹⁰⁴ WHO provides and maintains a very comprehensive database of health related research that can be accessed at <http://www.euro.who.int/en/publications/key-publications> It can be filtered for Roma related material by Country at <http://www.euro.who.int/en/countries> or by Topic at <http://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics> The same results can also be accessed through <http://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/health-determinants/roma-health> for publications, resources etc. or through <http://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/health-determinants/roma-health/resources/research>

5	Nutrition	31
6	Adolescent health	20
7	Drug use/misuse/abuse	15
Total		360

Although the number of health research studies logged is quite small, their quality is generally high and most are directly related to health, rather than incorporated into general research as in other sectors. The health sector is also quite fortunate in having comprehensive overview research¹⁰⁵ available that provides a baseline. Besides these Europe wide studies, national performance on Roma health has been regularly reviewed¹⁰⁶ against NRIS targets since 2014. For instance the partners mapped a series of country reviews¹⁰⁷ of health by IOM, funded by DG SANTE, in Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Romania, Slovakia and Spain that provide a more detailed picture of Roma's health situation at country level as well as a framework for further health related research at national and European level.

The research partners also identified a significant number of technical studies¹⁰⁸ related to Roma across a range of European countries. These include papers¹⁰⁹ on the health differences at birth between Roma and non-Roma children but the majority were medical rather than health related and were not mapped. They can all be found in the WHO database already noted.

While a considerable database of quality research on Roma health issues has been built up over the past few years, there has been insufficient focus on mother and child health and health care and this needs to be rectified rapidly. In particular, there needs to be a comprehensive and transnational evaluation of the Roma health mediator model, initiated first in Romania, that pulls together the various disparate national evaluations¹¹⁰ and provides an assessment of the obstacles

¹⁰⁵ These include *Matrix Roma Health Report Health status of the Roma population Data collection in the Member States of the European Union* European Union (2014) Luxembourg available at http://ec.europa.eu/chafea/documents/health/roma-health-report-executive-summary-2014_en.pdf and *Review of social determinants and the health divide in the WHO European Region. Final report* WHO Europe available at www.euro.who.int/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/251878/Review-of-social-determinants-and-the-health-divide-in-the-WHO-European-Region-FINAL-REPORT.pdf?ua=1

¹⁰⁶ See *Health in the 2014 National Roma Integration Strategies* available at <https://epha.org/epha-analysis-health-in-the-2014-national-roma-integration-strategies/>

¹⁰⁷ See for instance *Implementation of the National Roma Integration Strategy and other commitments in the field of Health. Romania a multi stakeholder perspective on developments 2005 – 2014* IOM (2015) Brussels available at https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/nris_romania.pdf

¹⁰⁸ See for instance Ivanov IS et al *Founder pArg 446* mutation in the PDHX gene explains over half of cases with congenital lactic acidosis in Roma children* in *Molecular Genetics and Metabolism* Volume 113, Issues 1-2, Pages 76–83 available at [https://www.mgmjournal.com/article/S1096-7192\(14\)00221-2/fulltext](https://www.mgmjournal.com/article/S1096-7192(14)00221-2/fulltext)

¹⁰⁹ See for instance Stankovic S. et al *Comparison of weight and length at birth of non-Roma and Roma new-born in Serbia* *International Journal of Public Health* (Jan 2016) available at <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/26342478> and Hajdu T. Kertesi G. Kézdi G. *Health Differences at Birth between Roma and Non-Roma Children in Hungary.* Hungarian Academy of Sciences (2017) available at <http://www.mtakti.hu/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/BWP1712.pdf>

¹¹⁰ For instance, see Bejenariu, S. Mitrut A. *Bridging the Gap for Roma Women: The Effects of a Health Mediation Program on Roma Prenatal Care and Child Health* University of Gothenburg (2014) available at <https://ideas.repec.org/p/hhs/gunwpe/0590.html> ; *MÉDIATEURS EN SANTÉ UNE APPROCHE RECONNUE, UN MÉTIER À PROMOUVOIR* ASAV (2016) Paris available at http://www.mediation-sanitaire.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/M%C3%A9diateurs-en-sant%C3%A9-une-approche-reconnue-un-m%C3%A9tier-%C3%A0-promouvoir_Colloque_12d%C3%A9c2016-2.pdf ; Belak A. et al *How Well Do Health-Mediation Programs Address the Determinants of the Poor Health Status of Roma? A Longitudinal Case Study* *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* (2015) available at <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5750987/pdf/ijerph-14-01569.pdf>

preventing its wide adoption and institutionalisation into national health systems across Europe. It is interesting to note that Watson and Downe's mixed-method systematic review¹¹¹ of the European literature found no published research studies examining the effectiveness of interventions to address discrimination against Roma women and their infants although it recognised the potential value of Roma Health Mediation Programmes as a promising intervention identified in the grey literature. The nature, level, extent and impact of discriminatory practice by health systems and personnel against Roma mothers and children still needs to be systematically reviewed and mapped, in order to facilitate a coherent, consistent response that will ensure full access to necessary health services for all children, wherever they live in Europe.

- **Discrimination**

Discrimination was extensively referred to in the research literature reviewed but not always addressed in the research itself. This skews the overall picture but 'integration', 'stigma and discrimination', and 'social attitudes' were explicit elements of the analytic framework in a considerable body of research (393). An increasing number of studies exploring anti-gypsyism¹¹² examine 'hate speech' (24) and 'hate crimes' (21) but **none of them seem to be child-focussed**¹¹³. Although the absolute number of studies is low (54), anti-gypsyism is the main research-subject of research in most of them, unlike integration and discrimination which tend to be examined mostly as elements of larger fields of study.

Table 8c. Discrimination topics ranked by score

No.	Topic	Score	No.	Topic	Score
1	Stigma and discrimination	158	6	Anti-gypsyism	54
2	Integration	133	7	Multiple discrimination	32
3	Social attitudes	102	8	Media	32
4	Overcoming barriers/ institutional discrimination	57	9	Hate speech	24
5	Social norms	56	10	Hate crimes	21
Total					669

- **Child protection**

It was disappointing to note the low result related to 'Community self-support practices' (21). This category was added in order to explore how much was known about Roma communities'

¹¹¹ Watson HL, Downe S. *Discrimination against childbearing Romani women in maternity care in Europe: a mixed-methods systematic review* available at <https://reproductive-health-journal.biomedcentral.com/track/pdf/10.1186/s12978-016-0263-4>

¹¹² "The term *antigypsyism* is increasingly used, but there is no common understanding of its scope, depth and implications. This hinders the formulation of effective answers to tackle it." Jamen Gabriela Hrabanova, Director of ERGO Network (European Roma Grassroots Organizations Network) in *Antigypsyism. A Reference Paper* Alliance Against Antigypsyism (2017) Brussels available at <http://antigypsyism.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Antigypsyism-reference-paper-16.06.2017.pdf>

¹¹³ See for instance *Antigypsyism. A Reference Paper* Alliance Against Antigypsyism (2017) Brussels *ibid*. The paper contains no reference at all to children.

internal child protection and support mechanisms, and to identify positive models of Roma-led protection and care. **Most work on strengthening child protection systems at local level builds on communities' own informal protection mechanisms but very little research appears to have been undertaken to establish what these are for Roma children.** This is changing and there has been recent research¹¹⁴ on the use of Roma foster parents but this was not yet evident in this mapping and most of the positive examples noted of Roma family and community support mechanisms related to education¹¹⁵, rather than protection (although the two are clearly linked).

More research is clearly needed in relation to Roma perspectives on, and experiences of, formal child protection systems. Recent highly-publicised inappropriate removals of children from their families in Greece and Ireland have led to much-needed reviews¹¹⁶ of national child protection systems by Roma and non-Roma actors alike, but a comprehensive evaluation is still required in all jurisdictions across Europe and at a pan-European level. Ideally this would be linked to development of Roma-sensitive practice and introduction of Roma perspective into child protection professional training.

Overall 'Early and child marriage' was the most extensive Child Protection topic noted in Table 8d below and there are a number of recent country reports noted¹¹⁷. Research on other child protection topics – violence; access to justice; child labour; and deinstitutionalisation – all achieved a mid-range score. Given the disproportionate number of Roma children in institutions, trafficked and engaged in criminal activities, **the very small number (5) of research references to 'Roma children in detention' is worrying and this is clearly an area that needs urgent investigation.**

The 'scattergun' pattern of child protection research noted earlier is offset somewhat by the sharper focus of most studies in this area on more explicit advocacy targets. However, their impact and effectiveness can still be reduced by the absence of a coherent, European framework for research and advocacy. For instance, although 'Child trafficking', 'Child labour' and 'Forced begging/forced criminal activity' are very much inter-linked in the research literature, the 2016 *Report on the progress made in the fight against trafficking in human beings*¹¹⁸, which provides an authoritative overview of trafficking in Europe, failed to note Roma children's particular vulnerability or their criminal victimisation within the system, despite the evidence¹¹⁹ available from Czech Republic, Ireland, Netherlands, UK¹²⁰, Bulgaria, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Romania, Slovakia¹²¹ and elsewhere¹²².

¹¹⁴ See Sweeny S. & Matthews Z. *Friends, Families and Travellers A guide for professionals working with Gypsies, Roma and Travellers in Children's Services* FFT (2017) UK

¹¹⁵ See for example Osmanaj E. & Kocollari Furxhiu N. *Roma Diversity, Dynamics of Family and Community as the Basic Elements of Social Support in the Educational Life of Roma Children in Albania* Romanian Economic and Business Review (2014) available at <https://ideas.repec.org/a/rau/journal/v10y2015i1p89-98.html>

¹¹⁶ See Logan E. (Special Inquiries relating to Garda Siochana) Order 2013 Department of Justice and Equality (2014) Dublin available at <http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Emily%20Logan%20report.pdf/Files/Emily%20Logan%20report.pdf>. This study was mapped after 05 September deadline and was not assessed for CRBA. See also *The Roma Community in Ireland and Child Protection Considerations* available at <http://www.paveepoint.ie/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Roma-Communities-in-Ireland-and-Child-Protection-Considerations-Final-Report.pdf> and *Child Care Law Reporting Project. Annual Report 2015* available at https://www.childlawproject.ie/wpcontent/uploads/2015/11/CCLRP-Full-final-report_FINAL2.pdf

¹¹⁷ These include three Serbian studies - *Early and child marriages in Roma population in Serbia* at <https://www.unicef.rs/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Deciji-brakovi-u-romskoj-populaciji-u-Srbiji.pdf> *Child marriages in Serbia: Situation analysis and recommendations* by NGO Attina available at <http://www.attina.org.rs/sites/default/files/Child%20Marriages%20in%20Serbia-1.pdf> and *Risk factors associated with the practice of child marriage among Roma girls in Serbia* available at <https://bmcinthealthumrights.biomedcentral.com/track/pdf/10.1186/s12914-016-0081-3>

¹¹⁸ REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL *Report on the progress made in the fight against trafficking in human beings (2016) as required under Article 20 of Directive 2011/36/EU on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims* {SWD(2016) 159 final}

¹¹⁹ For instance the report references the Commission's *Study on High Risk Groups* at https://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/sites/antitrafficking/files/study_on_children_as_high_risk_groups_of_trafficking_in_human_beings_0.pdf and Europol's 2016 report at <https://www.europol.europa.eu/publications-documents/trafficking-in-human-beings-in-eu>.

This inadvertent failure to highlight the solid evidence for targeted intervention to reduce the risk that Roma children face from traffickers is just one indicator of the need to invest, not just in research, but in better use of available research to influence policy and practice. It points to the necessity for a balanced thematic portfolio across all countries and a specific focal point – individual or agency - to draw all the available research into a coherent framework and ensure effective use for influencing, advocacy and programme development. While a ‘scattered’ research model may keep focus on the issue and facilitate project funding and development, a coherent and connected framework that links the various research initiatives, is more likely to strengthen validity, impact and capacity to shape wider policy processes.

Table 8d. Child protection topics ranked by score

No.	Topic	Score	No.	Topic	Score
1	Early and child marriage	46	7	Children in street situations	31
2	Abuse, neglect, violence against children (ANEV)	43	8	Forced begging/forced criminal activity	29
3	Removal from parental care; alternative care; guardianship, deinstitutionalisation	42	9	Bullying	22
4	Access to justice	41	10	Community self-support practices	21
5	Child labour	41	11	Criminal victimisation, including bias motivated	11
6	Child trafficking	36	12	Roma children in detention	05
Total					368

Both of these explicitly note the particular vulnerability of Roma children to trafficking but unfortunately this message did not translate into the final *REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL*

¹²⁰ *Trafficking for Forced Criminal Activities and Begging in Europe Exploratory Study and Good Practice Examples RACE* (2015) available at https://childhub.org/en/system/tdf/library/attachments/1781_race_europe_report_original.pdf?file=1&type=node&id=6184

¹²¹ Dimitrova K. Ivanova S. Alexandrova Y. *CHILD TRAFFICKING AMONG VULNERABLE ROMA COMMUNITIES Results of Country Studies in 7 EU Member States* Center for the Study of Democracy (2015) available at <https://childhub.org/en/child-protection-online-library/child-trafficking-among-vulnerable-roma-communities>

¹²² See Peyroux O. Icleanu R *Analysis of Child Victims of Trafficking Originating from Braila and Constanta* French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development/Terre des hommes (2015) available at <https://childhub.org/en/child-protection-online-library/analysis-child-victims-human-trafficking-originating-braila-and-constantina> ; *Improving & Monitoring Protection Systems Against Child Trafficking and Exploitation* KMOP/DCI - Italy available at https://childhub.org/en/system/tdf/library/attachments/1744_IMPACT_content_web_final_Jan_original.pdf?file=1&type=node&id=6227

- **Housing**

Research on housing has declined in comparison with the other NRIS themes and many of the entries mapped relate to its inclusion in wider documents. **The emphasis within the available research still tends to be on housing segregation, deprivation and lack of access to basic services**, which account for 338 of 434 hits between them. **The small number of studies on 'successful housing models' (14) is disappointing but may reflect the reality on the ground in this sector.**

Roma NGOs¹²³ in France maintain a strong focus on "bidonvilles", informal settlements, temporary accommodation and mobile families. Pavee Point also consistently highlights accommodation rather than housing¹²⁴ and **there may be a need to explicitly widen the scope of housing research in Europe to consider models other than standard housing.** A coalition of universities and civil society organisations (CSO) examined¹²⁵ the housing issue of Roma, Gypsies and Travellers as represented in the legal frameworks of Italy and Spain as well as Hungary and Romania but generally, beyond the models noted in France and Ireland, the bulk of direct housing research seems to relate to Eastern Europe.

Table 8e. Housing topics ranked by score

No.	Topic	Score	Comments
1	Residential and housing segregation	162	Combines 'segregation' (100) and 'residential and housing segregation' (62)
2	Access to basic services	100	
3	Residential and housing deprivation	76	
4	Slums/"bidonvilles"	36	
5	Pollution/environment/location	26	Relates to landfills, dumps, motorways, air quality etc. etc.
6	Forced evictions	20	
7	Successful housing models	14	
Total		434	

OSCE has been a major supporter of housing-related research and provided a key overview¹²⁶ in 2014 of the housing situation for Roma in Albania, Bosnia, Croatia, Kosovo, the Republic of

¹²³ For example see Taoussi L. *20 propositions pour le politique d'inclusion des personnes vivant en bidonvilles et squats* CNDLR (2017) at http://www.romeurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Rapport_2017_20-propositions-1.pdf ; Fantacci M. Schulman L. *Harcèlement et stigmatisation : politiques et paroles publiques aggravent la précarité des habitants des bidonvilles* (2014) CNDLR available at <http://romeurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/5.1-Harcèlement-et-stigmatisation-politiques-et-paroles-publiques-aggravent-la-précarité-des-habitants-des-bidonvilles-Rapport-2012-2013-publié-en-mars-2014.pdf> ; and *Ancrages et besoins des habitants permanents de résidence mobile* FNASAT (2017) available at <http://www.fnasat.asso.fr/FNASAT-Analysenationale-Ancragesetbesoinsenhabitat2017.pdf>

¹²⁴ Pavee Point representatives were keen to highlight their emphasis on 'accommodation' rather than 'housing' to facilitate a wider focus on caravan parks, halting sites and dwellings other than housing

¹²⁵ Piasere L. Solimano N. Tosi Cambini S. (eds) *THE HOUSING ISSUE OF ROMA, GYPSIES AND TRAVELLERS IN THE LANGUAGE OF THE ACTS AND THE ADMINISTRATIVE DOCUMENTS IN EUROPE* Wor(l)ds Which Exclude (2015) Fiesole available at https://www.academia.edu/10334370/Wor_l_ds_which_exclude_The_housing_issue_of_Roma_Gypsies_and_Travellers_in_the_language_of_the_acts_and_the_administrative_documents_in_Europe. Editorial coordination by Leonardo Piasere Nicola Solimano Sabrina Tosi Cambini. Fiesole Fondazione Michelucci Press

¹²⁶ See *Regional Report on Housing Legalization, Settlement Upgrading and Social Housing for Roma in the Western Balkans* OSCE/ODIHR (2014) Warsaw available at <file:///D:/Useful%20Dox.%200518/Regional%20Housing%20Report.%20OSCE.pdf>

North Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia. The report also provided interesting insight into the difficulties that the lack of consistent and accurate basic data on Roma presents when undertaking Roma related research generally, particularly in relation to housing which “requires an in-depth analysis of the different forces affecting the delivery of housing solutions” that is inevitably hampered by “the striking differences between... population counts... when defining the scale of the housing problem”¹²⁷. This over-view was followed up most actively in Serbia where the local OSCE office produced a baseline survey¹²⁸ of housing conditions in 21 municipalities in 2014, followed up with identification of housing models¹²⁹ and guidelines on their production¹³⁰. The Serbian literature in this area also includes a study¹³¹ on legalising tenure of informal settlements.

In other countries, housing research seemed less focused on the technicalities of producing housing solutions and more on the links between housing, education, employment and inclusion¹³². These ‘integrated’ studies constitute the majority of the housing studies mapped. **It is strongly recommended that OSCE’s 2014 overview is updated. More case-studies of successful initiatives are also needed, rather than continuing discussion of the role and value of housing within inclusion strategies. A stronger child focus is also needed that considers the full spectrum of the growing child’s needs beyond simply educational provision. Health and environment are not major areas of study in Roma housing discourse and play, safety and family cohesion receive scant attention.**

- **Employment**

Employment was noted as a main theme in 98 of the studies mapped and was ranked sixth out of nine topics. It was noted as the lowest scorer of the NRIS themes behind Education (289); Discrimination (165); Health (161); and Housing (120). It also scored lower than Child Protection (153) and was closest to Social Protection (91) with which it was closely linked, especially through poverty analyses. There were no specific topics identified under Employment¹³³ so the partners borrowed from Education, as it was common in both sectors to justify investment in education in terms of improved employment prospects and economic contribution to society¹³⁴. Despite this link, it is interesting to note that focus on

¹²⁷ Ibid p19

¹²⁸ Jovanovic S. Bu R. *Assessment of the situation in substandard Roma settlements in 21 Municipalities in Serbia* OSCE (2014) Belgrade available at <https://www.osce.org/serbia/162221?download=true>

¹²⁹ Vuksanović-Macura Z. Macura V. *Existing models of housing improvement for Roma Social and affordable housing solutions for Roma and vulnerable population in Serbia* OSCE (2014) Belgrade available at <https://www.osce.org/serbia/118794?download=true>

¹³⁰ Vuksanović-Macura Z. Macura V. *Housing Models for Substandard Roma Settlements Guidelines for Local Self-Governments, Civil Society Organizations and Roma Communities* OSCE (2015) Belgrade available at <https://www.osce.org/serbia/126315?download=true>

¹³¹ Davinic M. *The Legalization of Informal Roma Settlements in the Republic of Serbia – a necessary step prior to legitimization* University of Belgrade (2016) Belgrade available at <http://ojs.ius.bg.ac.rs/index.php/anali/article/viewFile/182/359>

¹³² See for instance Rusnakova J. Rochovska A *Segregation of the population of marginalized Roma communities, poverty and disadvantages related to spatial exclusion* (2014) at http://www.humannageografia.sk/clanky/Rusnakova_Rochovska_tlac1.pdf and *The Origins for the Integration of the Marginalized Romany Communities of the Košice Self-Governing Territory (2016-2020)* (hereinafter referred to as the *Origins*) provides a framework for future options for solving the problems of marginalized Roma communities (2016) available at https://web.vucke.sk/files/socialne_veci/vo4zast17bod15-4main.pdf Both of these discuss the impact of spatial segregation in Slovakia on education, employment and ultimately inclusion, and social cohesion. Piemontese S. *Leaving 'Roma' Behind. Notes on the Impact of Housing and (Forced) Mobility on Education* CPS/CEU (2015) Budapest does the same for Romania and Spain. It is available at <http://www.integrim.eu/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/PIEMONTESE-leaving-Roma-behind.pdf> and Virag T. *Spatial consequences of urban policies forming a Roma ghetto* Institute for Regional Studies Centre for Economic and Regional Studies, Hungarian Academy of Sciences (2016) Budapest does it for Hungary

¹³³ Originally Child Labour was categorised under Employment but this was transferred to Child Protection after final agreement on the filters

¹³⁴ See for instance Jansky P et al *Output of the project "System Support for Inclusive Education in the Czech Republic" Budgetary contexts of Roma education* (2015) European Social Fund Czech Republic - Operational Program Education for Competitiveness available at <http://inkluze.upol.cz/ebooks/analyza/analyza-19.pdf>

technical/vocational education and transition to employment was at the lower end of the Education scores¹³⁵.

Table 8f. Employment topics ranked by score

No.	Topic	Score
1	Transition to the labour market	73
2	Technical or vocational education	57
Total		130

The 2014 FRA survey¹³⁶ on poverty and employment provides the necessary baseline data across eleven (11) EU Member States and there were a number of direct studies on employment and labour force participation noted¹³⁷, as well as comments and evaluations related to employment creation initiatives¹³⁸. The partners were particularly pleased to note that, although there were not enough studies to actually constitute a body of research, some studies related specifically to Roma women and youth¹³⁹, who suffer even greater exclusion from the labour market than Roma men.

- **Social Protection**

Overall, Social Protection scored low (91) in comparison with the other themes. Only Migration and Civil Documentation scored lower. Yet 'poverty and social exclusion' was the sixth highest scoring topic (140) which implies at least a recognition of the topic's importance in any examination of the situation of Roma. As with Employment, the 2014 FRA survey¹⁴⁰ acts as a key document, providing baseline data across 11 countries and a rights-based analytical framework. This is supplemented by UNDP's discussion paper¹⁴¹ drawing on the same data set. Despite these two overview studies outlining a research approach and framework, the partners noted only three studies¹⁴² directly and primarily researching poverty among Roma families, only two of which focussed specifically on poverty and

¹³⁵ Gatti R. Karacsony S. Anan K. Ferré C. de Paz Nieves C. *Being Fair, Faring Better Promoting Equality of Opportunity for Marginalized Roma* World Bank (2016) Bucharest present a very strong employment/education linked analysis while maintaining a wider inclusion and child focus.

¹³⁶ *Poverty and employment: the situation of Roma in 11 EU Member States Roma survey – Data in focus* FRA (2014) Luxembourg available at <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2014/poverty-and-employment-situation-roma-11-eu-member-states>

¹³⁷ See for instance *Main determinants of labour force participation in the case of metropolitan Roma people* available at http://www.ipe.ro/rjef/rjef3_16/rjef3_2016p144-163.pdf and *The curse of low expectations. Remedial education and the perceived returns to education of Roma people* available at <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/ecot.12134>

¹³⁸ See for instance Toderita A. *Damian Roma Integration across the Danube. Best practices in administrative and social entrepreneurship models exchange between Romania and Bulgaria* CPRE (2017) available at <http://www.cpre.ro/en/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Roma-integration-across-the-Danube-final-report.pdf>

¹³⁹ See for instance Marjanovic D. *Assessment of the Structural Barriers that Hinder the Employment of Roma Women* UN Women (2015) Belgrade available at http://www.europeanprogres.org/dokumenti/48_646015_asesment-of-the-structural-barriers-for-roma-women-employment.pdf and *Promoting decent work opportunities for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian youth in Kosovo* ILO (2017) available in Romani at https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---europe/---ro-geneva/---sro-budapest/documents/publication/wcms_622640.pdf

¹⁴⁰ *Poverty and employment: the situation of Roma in 11 EU Member States Roma survey – Data in focus* FRA (2014) Luxembourg op cit

¹⁴¹ Ivanov A. Kagin, J. *Roma poverty from a human development perspective. Roma Inclusion Working Papers*. UNDP (2014) Istanbul available at <https://www.scribd.com/document/241060651/Roma-poverty-from-a-human-development-perspective>

¹⁴² See Lukács G. *Addressing Extreme Poverty in Hungary – How the Development Sector is working with, and for, Communities* Badur (2017) Budapest available at http://www.badurfoundation.org/images/badur/reports/Third_sector_mapping_EN_WEB_FINAL.pdf

children¹⁴³. Both studies adopt a multi-dimensional definition of poverty, utilising the NRIS framework to link together the various aspects of poverty as it impacts on children.

Table 8g. Social protection topics ranked by score

No.	Topic	Score
1	Poverty and social exclusion	140
2	Access to social assistance/welfare	74
3	Material deprivation	63
Total		277

The other 'hits' for 'poverty and social exclusion' and for 'multiple deprivation' too come from poverty analyses applied to other themes and topics. While the application of poverty analysis and a deprivation approach is welcome in any child-related research, **there is clearly still much work to be done in teasing out the practical implications of family poverty on Roma children at local and national level across Europe. Both Roma and child-focussed agencies should be encouraged to undertake child poverty analyses building on FRA's multi-country survey, in order to increase local ownership, promote local solutions and facilitate a genuinely holistic model of social inclusion that enables progress on a number of fronts simultaneously.**

Undoubtedly Roma family poverty is not just about inadequate financial resources, unemployment, sub-standard housing or poor access to social services, but rather a combination of all these factors operating within a context of extreme prejudice, discrimination and social exclusion. Researching (and addressing) poverty and deprivation as experienced by Roma children requires adopting a multidimensional poverty index that better reflects the reality of the challenges that Roma families are facing, rather than a narrow monetary income/expenditure definition. However, the mapping exercise seems to indicate a definite research preference for examining the non-monetary aspects of deprivation and how to address them, almost to the exclusion of the monetary aspects. This may be considered an effective inclusion strategy, but it represents a serious imbalance in the holistic approach demanded by a child rights-based approach. There is a risk that an imbalanced research portfolio based on a partial or skewed conceptual framework will promote a flawed policy and practice response. It also ignores the reality of Roma family life in the present and fails to address Roma children's needs now.

Although 'access to social welfare/assistance' scored 74 hits, the partners noted no direct studies in this area. **Fair and equal access to social welfare systems, structures and programmes is a fairly immediate issue for many Roma children and the many acknowledged barriers that Roma families face in accessing their welfare entitlements has a negative impact on the child's physical, mental and emotional development that cannot be mitigated, or compensated for, by increased engagement with other child support institutions e.g. school, clinic. This absence of research on 'access to social welfare/assistance' represents an imbalance that needs to be addressed urgently.**

¹⁴³ These were *Poverty and Traveller Children* Pavee Point (2016) Dublin available at http://www.paveepoint.ie/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Traveller-Children-and-Poverty_Briefing-Paper-2016.pdf ; and *National Multiple Overlapping Deprivation Analyses (N-MODA): Child Poverty and Deprivation in Bosnia and Herzegovina* UNICEF (2016) Sarajevo available at https://www.unicef.org/bih/media_28707.html

- **Migration**

Migration appeared as a main theme in only 55 studies and scored only 102 across five related topics. The highest score for 'EU Roma exercising free movement' was only 32 which is extremely low, followed in descending order by 'Migrant Roma children from third countries' (28); 'International protection' (18); 'Situation of Roma children who return or are returned to their country of origin' (17).

Table 8h. Migration topics ranked by score

No.	Topic	Score	Comments
1	EU Roma exercising free movement	32	
2	Migrant Roma children from third countries	28	
3	International protection	18	Includes asylum
4	Situation of Roma children who return or are returned to their country of origin	17	Includes integration measures or lack thereof
5	Roma children left behind	07	
Total		102	

The decline in research interest may be due to the change in asylum and migration patterns in 2015. Prior to 2015, the majority of migrants and asylum seekers came from within Europe, mainly Kosovo, Albania and Serbia, including a significant number of Roma. Roma children featured strongly in 'Children on the Move' initiatives like the Mario project, whose later research¹⁴⁴ was mapped as part of this exercise. The proportion of asylum applications from Serbian citizens alone to the top five EU destinations in 2014 was almost 44% although only 1.8% of these were accepted as well-founded¹⁴⁵. There was a strong policy and practice focus on return and reintegration, and this was reflected in research¹⁴⁶. However, research focus inevitably shifted in 2015 to reflect the fact that in the first nine months of 2015, the top nationalities claiming asylum in the EU were Syrian (25%), Afghani (11%) and Iraqi (8%)¹⁴⁷ and that in Germany, for instance, which received the largest percentage of asylum applications in the EEA (32%) in 2015, only one third of asylum applicants came from the Western Balkan countries¹⁴⁸. Perhaps as a result **very few post-2015 Roma-specific migration studies¹⁴⁹ were mapped, either national or transnational.**

¹⁴⁴ See Milligan C. Wagener T. *Transnational Research on Central and South-eastern European Migrant Children in Greece* Mario Project (2015) available at <https://childhub.org/en/child-protection-online-library/transnational-research-central-and-south-eastern-european-migrant> and *Transnational Research on Central and South Eastern European Children in Italy*, Mario project (2015)

¹⁴⁵ *Safe Countries Directive* EC (September 2015) Brussels

¹⁴⁶ This has continued, although to a lesser extent, in Serbia but not apparently in other Balkan countries after 2015. See footnote 146 below.

¹⁴⁷ *EMN Inform* European Migration Network (2015) Brussels

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid*

¹⁴⁹ These both relate to Serbia. See Jakobi T. Marković D. *Integration of Roma returnees through better educational and employment conditions* Roma Initiatives Office (2017) Belgrade available at <http://publicpolicy.rs/publikacije/06b850f5cd29de8fc4b9f118384944ceea2a1bd6.pdf> See also *UTVRĐIVANJE VREMENA I MESTA ROĐENJA, PRAVO NA DRŽAVLJANSTVO I PRIJAVA PREBIVALIŠTA - ANALIZA PREOSTALIH PREPREKA - Determining the Date and Place of Birth, Right to Citizenship and Permanent Residence Registration - Analysis of Remaining Obstacles* Praxis op cit available at https://www.praxis.org.rs/images/praxis_downloads/UNHCR_izvestaj_2017.pdf

The declining focus on Roma children in migration discourse, however, ignores the reality that significant numbers of Roma children continue to be adversely affected by migration. Anecdotal evidence indicates that repatriation of Roma children from Europe may have actually increased since 2015, but the mapping exercise indicates that (except in Serbia) research does not reflect or address this. No new research was noted post-2015 in Kosovo¹⁵⁰ where forced repatriation of Roma children from Germany¹⁵¹ has been an issue for decades. Likewise in Spain where a 2016 article¹⁵² on pay-to go schemes aimed at Romanian and Bulgarian Roma migrant families is based on field research in 2014-2015. **This research gap needs to be addressed urgently because the number of Roma children caught in the European asylum and migration system, although smaller, is still significant.** Even when children displaced from Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq accounted for 49% of child asylum claims in the EU in 2015, children from the Balkans continued to represent a sizeable minority of claims (27%)¹⁵³. If the patterns noted in all the pre-2015 research¹⁵⁴ previously noted still apply, then a significant proportion of the child asylum seekers are Roma.

- **Civil documentation**

Civil documentation scored lowest of all as a theme with only 36 hits in all, although this translated into 99 hits for its constituent topics - 'Birth registration' (30); 'ID documentation' (31); 'Citizenship and statelessness' (38). In most cases, civil documentation featured in other thematic studies and the contractors noted only two specific studies prioritising this theme. One is a Serbian study on determining birth registration, residence and citizenship¹⁵⁵ undertaken by a local NGO. The other is a study¹⁵⁶ on Roma statelessness and discrimination in six EU enlargement and neighbourhood countries undertaken by European Network on Statelessness (ENS) as part of an ongoing partnership project with ERRC and the Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion. Birth registration is often presented as a Child Protection issue as it acts as a gateway to other services. It continues to be examined in MICS and UNICEF situation analyses but its continuing appearance in the overall Roma child/child protection literature may indicate the need for a specific research in this area, if only to review and clarify the current situation.

¹⁵⁰ All the migrant related studies mapped for Kosovo were published pre-2015. For instance see *Annual Report on the Educational Situation of Forced Returnees and Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians* Council of Europe (2014) available at <https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=09000016806955fe>; *Lost in Transition: The Forced Migration Circle of Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptians from Kosovo* STP (2015) available at https://www.gfbv.ch/wp-content/uploads/kosovobericht_english.pdf; and *REINTEGRATION CHALLENGES IN ENJOYING THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION FOR ROMA, ASHKALI AND EGYPTIAN RETURNEE CHILDREN* KAAD (2015) Pristina available at <http://kaad-rks.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Reinegration-Challenges-in-Enjoying-the-Right-to-Education-for-the-Roma-Ashkali-and-Egyptian-Returnee-Children.pdf>

¹⁵¹ See for instance Petrova D. (ed) *Roma in the Kosovo Conflict* ERRC (2000) ERRC Budapest and Knaus V. Widdmann P. et al *Integration Subject to Conditions. A report on the situation of Kosovan Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children in Germany and after their repatriation to Kosovo* UNICEF (2010) Pristina. Research from Hildegard Lagrene Stiftung seems to indicate that this remains an issue continued post 2015. See Alexandropoulou M. Leucht C. Salimovska S. *Ensuring rights of the asylum seeking child with low retention perspective at reception and return facilities* Hildegard Lagrene Stiftung (2016) Berlin

¹⁵² Vrabiescu I *Roma migrant children in Catalonia: between the politics of benevolence and the normalization of violence* ETHNIC AND RACIAL STUDIES, 2017 VOL. 40, NO. 10, 1663-1680 available at <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/01419870.2016.1229491?needAccess=true>

¹⁵³ Figures from IOM and UNICEF quoted in UNHCR *Information portal for the Mediterranean* p2 accessed April 2018 at <http://data.unhcr.org/mediterranean/regional.php> <http://data.unhcr.org/mediterranean/regional.php>

¹⁵⁴ See Milligan C. Wagener T. *Transnational Research on Central and South-eastern European Migrant Children in Greece* Mario Project (2015) and *Transnational Research on Central and South Eastern European Children in Italy*, Mario project (2015) op cit (footnote 137)

¹⁵⁵ See *Determining the Date and Place of Birth, Right to Citizenship and Permanent Residence Registration – Analysis of Remaining Obstacles* Praxis (2017) Belgrade available at https://www.praxis.org.rs/images/praxis_downloads/UNHCR_izvestaj_2017.pdf.

¹⁵⁶ The European Network on Statelessness (ENS) is currently working on a partnership project with ERRC and the Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion, #RomaBelong, as part of which they published research on Roma statelessness and discrimination with partners in six EU enlargement and neighbourhood countries in October 2017. that is available [here](https://www.statelessness.eu/romabelong). For more information see: <https://www.statelessness.eu/romabelong>. The partners also noted one global report on statelessness with a Roma related case-study from the Republic of North Macedonia available at <http://www.unhcr.org/protection/statelessness/59f747404/home-stateless-minorities-search-citizenship.html?query=Roma%20children>

Table 8i. Civil documentation topics ranked by score

No.	Topic	Score
1	Citizenship and statelessness	38
2	ID documentation	31
3	Birth registration	30
Total		99

3. ASSESSING THE CHILD RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH

3.1. The value and benefits of CRBA research

There has been a shift over the past two decades towards involving children in research. This has no doubt been influenced by the UNCRC and the consequent need for child-related research to shape policy, programming and practice, combined with its core emphasis on children as social actors with the right and capacity to feed into decisions that affect them. However, the interest in including children directly in research arises as much from a shift in modern research thinking that recognises the added value of more participative approaches generally¹⁵⁷. This translates into a realisation that "**children are experts on children**"¹⁵⁸. They are the ones with the most direct experience of the situation of children and can help government policy makers understand their problems better. They can provide new and innovative perspectives, and they know things about the lives of children that adults may not.

However, the primary and sufficient reason for adopting CRBA research is that children have a right under the UNCRC to express their views freely in all matters that affect them. This is articulated in Article 12 and further elaborated by the Committee on the Rights of the Child in General Comment No. 12: The Right of the Child to be Heard¹⁵⁹. This right is considered a core principle underpinning all the articles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and is of fundamental importance to implementing all other aspects of the UNCRC. **CRBA research therefore involves children in research about them, not just as a means to produce better research results, but as a means to empower children. It helps to build democracy by promoting responsibility among children for their lives, communities and societies and promotes a shift from the view that children as passive recipients of adult intervention towards respect for them as 'rights holders' who are active participants in shaping their own future and that of their community. CRBA gives children the opportunity to practice responsible citizenship and shows adults the importance of listening to what children have to say. Because it also specifically aims to enhance the capacity of duty-bearers to realise the rights of the child, it tends to be more successful at strengthening capacity than research which does not integrate capacity building into its design.**

The EU's increasing commitment to children's rights has already been noted, from insertion of article 24 in the Charter of Fundamental Rights in 2000, through to its stipulation as an objective in Article 3.3 of the Treaty on European Union in December 2009. Commitment to children's rights is now an integral element of EU law, confirmed and affirmed by the European Commission's adoption of the EU Agenda for the rights of the child¹⁶⁰ in February 2011. The work programme outlined by the Commission in the Agenda highlighted the lack of reliable, comparable and official data to support child rights-oriented evidence-based policy-making. Tuite¹⁶¹ and others argue that the rights of the child should especially underpin research on children in the geographically diverse EU region, where the rights of the child can serve as a unifying standard in which to ground research.

3.2. The CRBA assessment framework

The core of the task assigned by the Commission was assessment of the relevant research

¹⁵⁷ See Backe-Hansen E *What the Children Thought: Some Methodological and Ethical Considerations in Comparative Child Research* in Liefgaard T Sloth Nielsen op cit for an interesting discussion of this aspect.

¹⁵⁸ See *Practice Standards in Children's Participation* Save the Children (2005) London

¹⁵⁹ UN Doc. CRC/C/GC/12 available at: <https://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/docs/AdvanceVersions/CRC-C-GC-12.pdf>

¹⁶⁰ See <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/ALL/?uri=CELEX:52011DC0060>

¹⁶¹ See Tuite M. *Child Rights Research for 2040: A European Commission Perspective* pp 262/263 op cit

to establish how much was child-rights based, in order to explore research gaps and recommend which type and form of research should be implemented. The research partners did not try to delineate research in absolute terms as either child rights-based or non-child rights-based, but instead tried to place research on a continuum based on how far it adopted a child rights-based approach. This was determined by measuring how many CRBA criteria a particular study met.

The Commission defined¹⁶² **child rights-based research as –**

- a. research which is informed by the UNCRC, including in respect to Article 12 on child participation;**
- b. research whose procedures comply with CRC standards, also in regard to child participation;**
- c. whose outcomes benefit the child or children, for example by improving the enjoyment of rights and by developing their capacity to claim their rights;**
- d. as well as the capacity of public authorities, as duty-bearers, to fulfil their obligations.**

There is an inherent assumption in development discourse that all research directly or indirectly benefits its subjects over time by contributing to the general store of knowledge available to devise improvements to their situation. This benefit was not always strongly evident, particularly in relation to the direct subjects of research, but it is not possible to discount possible future benefit, and so the partners eliminated it as a measurable criterion. The contractors therefore adapted and supplemented the remaining indicators to develop a scoring framework when assessing research method. The final list of CRBA criteria established were -

a. Roma Child focus – as explained previously the mapping exercise identified and documented 486 research studies that were child related to a greater or lesser extent. The exercise drew on both Roma-related and child-related research over a four-year period. However, in line with the Specifications, the research partners prioritised research that focused specifically and substantially on Roma children. 157 such studies were identified and these were assessed in more depth.

b. Linked to the UNCRC – is the research specifically linked to the Convention on the Rights of the Child or one of its articles, or to comments from the CRC as stipulated in Section 2.2 of the Specifications? This is a prerequisite for a CRBA as it ensures a rights-based analytical framework that keeps the focus on the rights of the individual child as defined by international treaties and conventions. Ideally such links should be direct and explicit but they can be implicit, although this made it more difficult to identify and map them.

c. Builds children's capacity – Does the research identify ways to build children's resilience and capacity and/or identify means and mechanisms for them to claim the full range of their entitlements? Much of the research mapped, particularly academic research, was 'extractive' in that it treated children solely as subjects of that particular research without giving much back to the child, its family or community either in terms of training, experience or practical, positive change in their lives. Roma informants indicated that many Roma communities feel 'over-researched' as the result of facilitating numerous studies without any noticeable benefit, either direct or indirect, and often without even the courtesy of feedback on the findings.

d. Builds duty bearers' capacity – Children need support from adults to access and realise their entitlements and CRBA research should support these duty-bearers to meet their responsibilities to children. A lot of Roma child-related research is aimed at adult professionals and practitioners who work with Roma children – teachers; health workers,

¹⁶² See Specifications op cit Section 2.2

parents etc – but this can diminish child focus if not properly handled. A CRBA research builds the capacity of duty bearers and rights holders and balances its contribution to each.

e. **Positive portrayal of Roma/children** - In a mapping exercise like this there was inevitably a strong emphasis on equity and the needs of the most vulnerable and marginalised children. However, a CRBA acknowledges the child as a unique individual, with the right and capacity to actively contribute to decisions around their own life and development, and to have their contribution to family, community and wider society recognised and respected. Research can tend to reduce research subjects to passive participants but this tendency can be magnified where children are concerned, particularly marginalised children. The partners tried to actively counter this by seeking out research that emphasised children's resilience and their contribution to society and a number of topics were added to the original Commission list to facilitate identification of these aspects, as well as positive achievement.

f. **Holistic approach** – One aspect of the holistic approach adopted under CRBA is the recognition that rights are indivisible and cannot be ranked. The best CRBA research does not examine the child's situation from a single-rights perspective only but recognises that rights and entitlements are inter-linked and that poverty, vulnerability and deprivation are multi-dimensional. The child's right to quality education for instance cannot be realised solely through provision of access to school but requires family stability, proper housing, nutrition and health care, protection from abuse and exploitation, and respect for the child's culture, language and religion. All children are entitled to full realisation of all rights outlined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and CRBA research tries to factor in the multi-faceted nature of their needs and entitlements and the linked nature of any rights-based response.

A second aspect of the holistic approach is consideration of the child within the context of its family and community, including respect for the child's language, culture and religion. The contractors therefore also sought out research that presented Roma families and communities in a positive way and that respected Roma culture and community.

g. **Gender sensitivity** - Although this should be an integral element of all research, it is a vital element of the CRBA which recognises the unique individuality of each child and examines both the commonalities and the differences between them. In every society girls and boys will experience life differently. For this reason too CRBA tries to adopt a life-cycle approach that recognises that the capacity and developmental needs of different age-cohorts varies considerably, and that research and programming has to adapt accordingly.

h. **Multi-stakeholder involvement** - While recognising the primary responsibility of national governments, the UNCRC stipulates a wide range of duty bearers tasked with promoting, protecting and realising children's rights. Adopting a holistic, rights-based approach to research necessarily involves a wide range of stakeholders and duty-bearers, including civil society, parents and children themselves.

i. **Child participation** - Although child participation is not essential for every piece of research, CRBA research actively seeks out children's opinions, experiences and perspectives, for both principled and practical reasons.

3.3. CRBA findings

The initial analysis of 'Approach' undertaken in Section 2.7 found that a relatively low proportion of researchers in the overall sample adopted a child rights-based approach. Only 95 of the 486 researches mapped were linked to the UNCRC and few researchers adopted a holistic approach that recognised the complexity and totality of children's lives; or their capacity, resilience, ability, or even right, to shape their own lives in partnership with adults. There was a low level of child participation across the total sample, although the

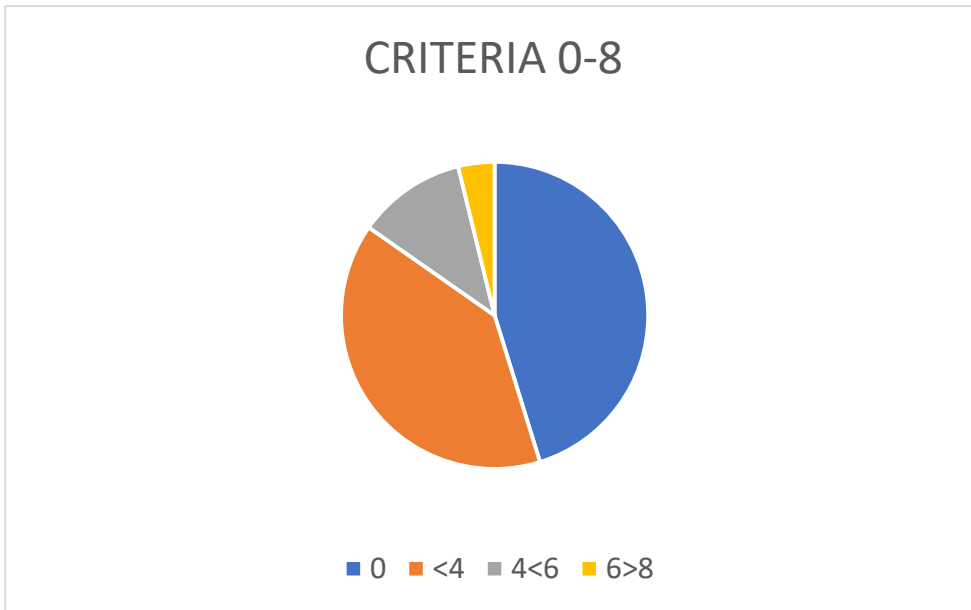
tools, techniques and models to support such involvement are available and easily accessible. The scarcity of explicit and practical commitments to gender sensitive research was also noted. The majority of studies mapped did not follow either a life-cycle or a child rights-based approach but this may be because most studies were focussed on Roma rather than on Roma children.

Table 9. Research ranked by CRBA criteria

Total Sample (486)			Roma-child specific sample (157)		
Rank	CRBA Criteria	Score	Rank	CRBA Criteria	Score
1	Multi-stakeholder involvement	146	1	Multi-stakeholder involvement	42
2	Linked to the Convention on the Rights of the Child	95	2	Linked to the Convention on the Rights of the Child	34
3	Builds duty-bearers' capacity	91	3	Holistic approach	32
4.	Holistic approach	87	4.	Child participation	32
5	Child participation	71	5	Builds duty-bearers' capacity	27
6	Gender sensitivity	69	6	Positive portrayal of Roma/children	25
7	Positive portrayal of Roma/children	46	7	Gender sensitivity	24
8	Builds children's capacity	34	8	Builds children's capacity	17

However, this should not be the case for the sample (157) of Roma child specific studies. Yet as Table 9 indicates, the Roma child specific studies followed much the same pattern as the wider sample. The most common characteristic displayed was 'multi-stakeholder involvement', which scored 42. This was followed by 'linked to the CRC' (34). 'Holistic approach' and 'child participation' both scored 32. 'Builds duty-bearers' capacity' scored 27 and 'positive portrayal of Roma children' scored 25. 'Gender sensitivity' achieved only 24, while 'builds children's capacity', a core CRBA function, scored lowest of all in both samples.

Chart 8. Compliance with CRBA criteria



A more detailed analysis of the Roma child specific studies shows that only four (4) out of 157 studies mapped met all eight CRBA criteria while 71 met none of the CRBA criteria at all. Between the extremes of this continuum, 31 studies met only one criterion; 20 met only 2; 11 met only three; and seven (7) met four criteria. Five studies (5) met five criteria; six (6) met six criteria. Only two (2) met seven criteria. In other words, **45% of Roma child-specific research mapped during this exercise demonstrated no CRBA characteristics at all and 85% met less than half the required criteria. Only 12 studies met three of the four specific criteria laid down by the Commission in the Tender Specifications.**

4. CHILD PARTICIPATION

4.1. Child participation in Roma child related research

Child participation is generally considered a core characteristic of CRBA and the two are often erroneously considered synonymous. But not all child-related research demands, requires or even enables child participation and, as indicated earlier, child participation can be part of a general 'child-friendly' research approach without being CRBA. This may account in part for the anomaly between the small proportion of CRBA studies noted and the scores for 'child participation'. Child participation was noted as an element of the approach adopted by 71 of 486 studies mapped. This represents about 15% of the total sample. In the smaller Roma child-specific sample (157) there were originally 40 studies noted that scored on 'child participation'. However, on the basis of a full reading, two (2) studies were eliminated for want of any evidence of child participation in the body of the report. Another six (6) were eliminated on the grounds that the models used did not actually constitute participation, reducing the sample to 32. The models excluded included measuring performance in standard written tests in school; observing children at play and in school; and collecting anecdotes and children's quotations passed on through teachers, parents and other adults. These may all be valid and valuable research methodologies but they do not seem to qualify as 'participation' since the children were not actually actively taking part in (or even aware of) the research initiatives involved.

When 'judging' research, it is important to keep the context of the research in mind. As indicated earlier, the highest number of studies mapped are education focused, and in many of the sample countries, especially those with a high Roma population, the school system does not always support active involvement by parents in school management or decision-making processes. Although legislation in almost all countries supports school democracy, in the newer EU Member States school democracy and children's participation in school life is still developing in practice and is not fully functioning in all schools. In many mainstream public schools, and in a growing number of private, non-State and religious schools, genuine participation by students is restricted. A culture of consultation with parents is particularly lacking in many of the schools that Roma children attend and this organisational and management culture inevitably influences researchers' approach. Changing this culture and thinking about parental and child involvement may require more time. Conditioning research funds with these approaches might support the change.

Several of the sample studies were undertaken as inter-agency collaboration and so the distinctions between leading, managing, implementing and supporting were not always explicit. This particularly hinders the visibility of local Roma NGOs whose role in research is not always credited sufficiently strongly or explicitly. However, subject to that caveat, the mapping exercise found that seventeen (17) of the studies reviewed were academic papers or involved universities. Six (6) were produced by UNICEF¹⁶³; two (2) by Roma INGOs¹⁶⁴; and another three (3) by child focussed INGOs¹⁶⁵. Local Roma NGOs were responsible for

¹⁶³ Besides MICS studies in Kosovo and Serbia, these included a number of multi-country syntheses and country- and theme-specific studies e.g. Zahova S. *Research on the Social Norms which Prevent Roma Girls from Access to Education* UNICEF Bulgaria (2016) Sofia available at https://www.unicef.bg/assets/PDFs/2016/Social_Norms_report_ENG.pdf; *The Rights of Roma Children and Women* UNICEF ECARO (2015) Geneva available at <https://www.unicef.org/eca/reports/rights-roma-children-and-women>; and *Early and child marriages in Roma population in Serbia* UNICEF Serbia (2017) Belgrade available at <https://www.unicef.rs/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Deciji-brakovi-u-romskoj-populaciji-u-Srbij.pdf>

¹⁶⁴ Ivan C. Rostas I. *Măsuri de succes în prevenirea părăsirii timpurii a școlii/ Success measures for preventing early school leaving* REF/CEU Romania available at http://romaeducationfund.ro/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Raport_POSDRU_132996_Complet-FINAL-1.pdf; *Dizdarevič SM POSITION OF ROMA WOMEN IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC – RESEARCH RESULTS* OSF/Charles University Prague (2016) available at <http://www.slovo21.cz/images/dokumenty/POSITION%20OF%20ROMA%20WOMEN%20IN%20THE%20CZECH%20REPUBLIC%20-%20RESEARCH%20RESULTS.pdf>

¹⁶⁵ Anila Vendresha A. Sinan I. *Learnings from Subsidised Micro-Lending Project for Promoting Child Care and Protection in Marginalised Communities* Terre des hommes Albania (2015) Tirana available at <http://childhub.org/child-protection-online-library/learnings-subsidized-micro-lending-project-promoting-child->

seven (7)¹⁶⁶ including three published as part of the PEER project¹⁶⁷. Government was involved in two (2) in partnership with UNICEF¹⁶⁸ and another one (1) study was produced by a local NGO¹⁶⁹.

The number of methodologies actually employed was usually quite limited. Most studies undertook a literature review and a combination of other methodologies. Twenty-one (21) studies used interviews; twelve (12) used Focus Group Discussions (FGD); eleven (11) used a combination of these two methods. Two studies¹⁷⁰ involved piloting a programme using RCT methodology, one in school and one in pre-school. Although children were involved as subjects of the research, their participation comes across as quite passive and it is not clear how much they were consulted or even informed about the research process. Most of the interviews conducted were semi-structured but both the MICS studies¹⁷¹ and the Save the Children research¹⁷² covering Albania, Kosovo, Romania, Serbia and the Republic of North Macedonia used structured questionnaires; and an academic study¹⁷³ on *Ethnic, Familial, and Religious Identity of Roma Adolescents in Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Kosovo, and Romania in Relation to Their Level of Well-Being* used survey techniques. PEER students videoed¹⁷⁴ participatory projects in nine (9) countries using various techniques. While the

[care-and; and A Research looking into Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Child Rights Save the Children. \(2016\) Prishtina available at](https://kosovo.savethechildren.net/sites/kosovo.savethechildren.net/files/library/Regional%20Research-Final.pdf)

<https://kosovo.savethechildren.net/sites/kosovo.savethechildren.net/files/library/Regional%20Research-Final.pdf>

¹⁶⁶ These include *Young Pavees: their mental health needs. A research project* Pavee Point (2016) Dublin available at <http://www.paveepoint.ie/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Young-Pavees-Their-Mental-Health-Needs.pdf>; di Giglio S. et al *Study on children in street situation in Albania* ARSIS/GFK/UNICEF/Save the Children (2014) Tirana available at https://www.unicef.org/albania/NationalStudy-children_in_street_situation-June2014.pdf; and *Ados en Bidonvilles et en Squats, L'école Impossible? Etude sur la scolarisation des jeunes âgés de 12 à 18* CDERE (2016) France available at <http://romeurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/2.-Ados-en-bidonvilles-et-en-squats-%C3%A9cole-impossible-Rapport-du-CDERE-publi%C3%A9-en-septembre-2016.pdf>; and Alexandropoulou M. Leucht C Salimovska S *Ensuring rights of the asylum seeking child with low retention perspective at reception and return facilities* Hildegard Laftene Stiftung (2016) Germany available at https://www.fluechtlingsrat-bayern.de/tl_files/2016_PDF-Dokumente/PILOT%20STUDIE%20Kinderrechte%20in%20ARE%20%20-%20final.pdf

¹⁶⁷ The PEER project (Participation and Empowerment Experiences for Roma youth) involved partners in nine countries working with Roma children and young people aged from 8-18 to build capacity and opportunities to engage in participatory action with them. It was funded through an EU Fundamental Rights and Citizenship grant JUST/2013/FRAC/AG/6230. PEER enabled Roma children and young people to co-lead and take part in participatory action and learning together. It led to nine participatory projects, as well as guidelines and policy papers on Roma child participation. The studies included in our sample are Larkin C. Bilson A. *The Magic 6. Participatory action and learning experiences with Roma youth* PEER (2016) available at <http://www.peeryouth.eu/ctrl/Home/UK/PEER%20Training%20Manual-%20English%20Language%20Version.pdf>; Beremenyi BA. Larkins C. Roth M. *Policy Paper on supporting Roma children's participation* PEER (2017) available at <http://www.peeryouth.eu/ctrl/Home/romania/WS2A6b%20-%20Public%20Policy%20Brief%20-%20%202017.01.27.pdf>; and *PEER Action Guide - by young Roma for young Roma and ALL children* (2016) PEER available at <http://peeraction.eu/en/?id=20>

¹⁶⁸ These were the MICS studies in Serbia and Kosovo Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities in Kosovo - *Monitoring the situation of children and women* UNICEF/Kosovo Agency of Statistics (2016) Prishtina available at <http://microdata.worldbank.org/index.php/catalog/2537>; and *Serbia Roma Settlements Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2014 Final Reports* Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia/UNICEF (2014) Belgrade available at https://www.unicef.org/serbia/sites/unicef.org.serbia/files/2018-08/MICS_2014.pdf

¹⁶⁹ *Stop dečjim brakovima! Stop to child marriages!* Praxis (2017) Belgrade available at https://www.praxis.org.rs/images/praxis_downloads/Stop_Decijim_Brakovima.pdf

¹⁷⁰ These were Kyucokov H. *Cultural-ecological Theory and the Language Education of Roma children* RUDN Journal of Psychology and Pedagogics 2017 Tom 14 No 3 290–300 available at <http://journals.rudn.ru/psychology-pedagogics/article/view/16589/14746> and *Comănescua R. Ciorbea I. Increasing Academic Performance in Roma Preschool Children* Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences 187 (2015) 324 – 32 available at <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1877042815018534?via%3Dihub>

¹⁷¹ *Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities in Kosovo - Monitoring the situation of children and women and Serbia Roma Settlements Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2014 Final Reports* op cit

¹⁷² *A Research looking into Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Child Rights* op cit

¹⁷³ Dimitrova R. van de Vivjer F. et al *Ethnic, Familial, and Religious Identity of Roma Adolescents in Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Kosovo, and Romania in Relation to Their Level of Well-Being* available at https://www.researchgate.net/publication/315462943_Ethnic_Familial_and_Religious_Identity_of_Roma_Adolescents_in_Bulgaria_Czech_Republic_Kosovo_and_Romania_in_Relation_to_Their_Level_of_Well-Being?enrichId=rgreq-1201edc966d0e2b1a96e9c9337d9c450-XXX&enrichSource=Y292ZXJQYWdiOzMxNTQ2Mjk0MzBUzo0TY0MzQyMTA0MDY0MDBAMTQ5NTM3MDU0Nzc1NQ%3D%3D&el=1_x_2&esc=publicationCoverPdf

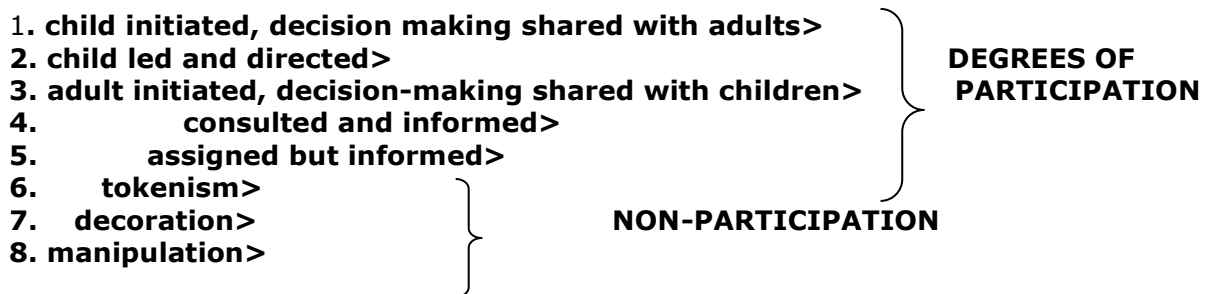
¹⁷⁴ See *PEER Action Guide - by young Roma for young Roma and ALL children* (2016) PEER op cit available at <http://peeraction.eu/en/?id=20>

Zentralrat Deutscher Sinti & Roma study¹⁷⁵ does not directly use child participation techniques, it consists of a review of a publicly-funded children's film that uses child actors to portray Roma life.

4.2. Child participation in Roma child specific research

As demonstrated above, child participation is just one element of a child rights-based approach and child participation on its own does not necessarily guarantee that the research is child rights-based. Yet eleven (11) of the 32 Roma child specific researches that ticked 'child participation' did not score on any other CRBA criteria, and 27 scored on less than three. This may demonstrate a need for a clearer definition and agreed understanding of what constitutes child participation in research, but it also shows a positive interest in children's issues and perspectives in Roma-related research, as well as a growing acceptance of 'child-friendly' research techniques generally. Both of these work to Roma children's advantage and provide a platform to expand researchers' understanding and acceptance of CRBA and thus improve the quality and impact of Roma child-related research.

Neither Article 12 nor the CRC General Comment No.12 provides any direct guidance on children in research but there are various models¹⁷⁶ available against which to assess the strengths, weaknesses, gaps and opportunities in this particular sample of studies. Lansdowne utilised a framework¹⁷⁷ that ranked participation as consultative, collaborative or child-led. Hart¹⁷⁸ proposed eight levels of child participation (in ascending order)¹⁷⁹ –



Unfortunately, there was usually not enough information supplied about the research process, and particularly about how children were engaged, to be able to place every study accurately on the ladder but **the majority of studies mapped seem to have operated at the lower levels of participation (levels 4 and 5). The PEER project stands out as an example of good practice. It was the only initiative mapped that started at level 6 (adult initiated, decision making shared with children) and then moved upwards to level 8 (child initiated, decision making shared with adults). The contractors note that the quality of results achieved by PEER national projects certainly indicate that greater levels of participation are possible in Roma child specific research, and that this can result in high quality advocacy materials. This higher level of engagement with children should be encouraged.**

¹⁷⁵ Pavel Brunßen *Summary Review of the children and youth film Nellys Abenteuer (Nelly's Adventure)* Zentralrat Deutscher Sinti & Roma (2017) Heidelberg available at <https://zentralrat.sintiundroma.de/en/download/481>

¹⁷⁶ These include: Tresder P. *Empowering children and young people* Save the Children (1997) London; Shier H. *Pathways to participation: Openings, opportunities and obligations. A new model for enhancing children's participation in decision-making in line with Article 12.1 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* Children and Society (2001) Vol. 15, pp. 107-17. Lundy L. *Voice is not enough: Conceptualizing Article 12 of the UNCRC*, British Educational Research Journal, Vol. 33, No. 6, pp. 927-42 >2007).

¹⁷⁷ See Lansdowne G. *Every child's right to be heard. A resource guide on the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child General Comment No.12* Save the Children/UNICEF (2012) London

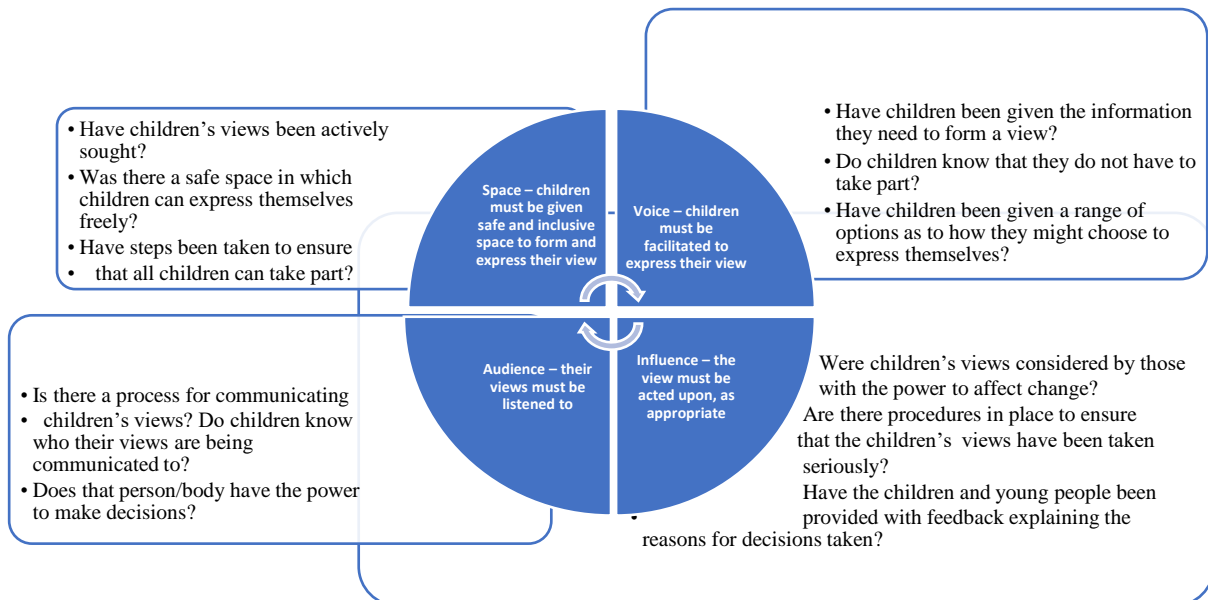
¹⁷⁸ Hart R. *Children's Participation: From Tokenism to Citizenship*. UNICEF Office of Research (1992) Florence

¹⁷⁹ This drew heavily on Arnstein S.R. *A Ladder of Citizen Participation* Journal of the American Institute of Planners, Vol. 35, No. 4, pp. 216-24. (1969)

4.3. Research on Roma children through a child rights lens

Article 12.1 of the UNCRC stipulates that - "*States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child*¹⁸⁰". Thus, **a child rights-based approach is not simply about affording the child or children the opportunity to express their view but also about giving their views due weight.** In order to assess the extent and impact of CRBA within the sample of identified Roma-child specific research (157) the contractors chose a model¹⁸¹ developed by Laura Lundy, Professor of international children's rights at the School of Education at the Queen's University of Belfast (QUB) as the framework best suited to facilitate evaluation against both these strands. This model conceptualises four elements of a child's right to participation as laid down in Article 12 - space, voice, audience and influence. Although the model is aimed primarily at decision-makers rather than researchers, a checklist¹⁸² developed from it has been adopted below as the framework for examining the CRBA focus of the Roma child-specific sample.

Chart 9. A CRBA analysis of Roma child-related research¹⁸³



a. Space – children must be given safe and inclusive space to form and express their view

There is clearly a significant policy and research interest in children's issues in Roma inclusion discourse and Roma children are more than ever acting as respondents in Roma related research. This comes about partly as a result of the child-friendly nature of the

¹⁸⁰ See COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD Fifty-first session Geneva, 25 May-12 June 2009 GENERAL COMMENT No. 12 (2009) *The right of the child to be heard* available at <https://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/docs/AdvanceVersions/CRC-C-GC-12.pdf>

¹⁸¹ Lundy L. *Voice is not enough: Conceptualizing Article 12 of the UNCRC*, British Educational Research Journal, Vol. 33, No. 6, pp. 927-42 >2007).

¹⁸² The checklist used below was originally developed as part of the process leading to the Irish Department of Children and Youth Affairs, *National Strategy on Children and Young People's Participation in Decision-Making 2015-2020* (17 June 2015), p. 21 available at <http://dcya.gov.ie/documents/playandrec/0150617NatStratParticipationReport.pdf>

¹⁸³ This schemata is based on a model for assessment of child participation developed by Lundy L. (2007) op cit for use in developing the *National Strategy on Children and Young People's Participation in Decision-Making 2015-2020* by the Irish Department of Children and Youth Affairs, (2015) available at <http://dcya.gov.ie/documents/playandrec/0150617NatStratParticipationReport.pdf>

NRIS framework and its strong education focus, and partly as a result of wider social acknowledgement of older children's capacity and capabilities. **NRIS has also promoted an increasingly integrated approach towards Roma inclusion which recognises the need for a multi-faceted approach that actively involves families and communities as well as social and political institutions.**

This does not necessarily mean that the views of Roma children are being actively sought in matters that concern them and child inclusion does not necessarily mean child participation. For instance, the inclusion of children aged 16-18 as respondents in the FRA surveys¹⁸⁴ undoubtedly adds value to the survey but, while these surveys are child inclusive, they are not child focused and do not claim to be. Their purpose is to present the overall situation of Roma in the EU and to gauge progress over time and identify successes and shortfalls in policy implementation. Those respondents aged between 16-18 years of age who participate do so as '*men and women age 15-49*'¹⁸⁵ rather than as children. While their involvement adds to the quality of the research and supports the concept of children as rights holders with an inherent entitlement to be consulted, these surveys do not aim to provide a safe space where children can express themselves freely and therefore they need to be supplemented by studies that specifically listen to Roma children. The results of the mapping exercise indicate that there is relatively little research that does so.

There is also a general absence within Roma child related literature generally of any reference to ethical issues, safeguarding or standards in the research. This does not mean that these standards were not applied but it makes it impossible to vouch for children having a safe space to express themselves. UNICEF, Save the Children and other child rights agencies have agreed protocols and produced comprehensive standards and guidelines¹⁸⁶ for conducting research with children that are easily accessible but these were not referenced in most of the research mapped. FRA has also mapped¹⁸⁷ the legal requirements and ethical codes of conduct of child participation in research in EU Member States in 2014 but none of these were referenced in the studies mapped either. Where ethical standards or protocols were referenced, they were usually generic rather than child-specific.

The age range involved in the sample research is mainly older children. **The majority of participative research studies, even if they embraced a 0-18 age cohort, tended to interview mainly the 15+ age group; only two specifically targeted a younger cohort**¹⁸⁸. This imbalance is common in many child related research areas, but it should be noted that Article 12 applies to all children regardless of age. The CRC in its 2009 comments¹⁸⁹ stipulates that the right of the child to be heard applies to all children "*capable of forming his or her own views*" should not be seen as a limitation, but rather as an obligation for duty-bearers to assess the capacity of the child and develop means and ways to support the child to be heard.

Focusing research solely on older children makes it easier to 'lose' child perspective. **The tendency, previously noted, of many studies to redefine child subjects as 'pupils', 'students', or even as 'Roma', reduces the child's identity and the study's child perspective. When older children are interviewed, they are frequently not interviewed as children at all, but rather as part of a wider 'adult' cohort** as in

¹⁸⁴ See for instance *Second European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey Roma – Selected finding* FRA (2016) Luxembourg available at <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2016/eumidis-ii-roma-selected-findings>

¹⁸⁵ See for instance *knol* Government of Kosovo/UNICEF (2014) Pristine p5

¹⁸⁶ *Practice Standards in Children's Participation* Save the Children (2005) London op cit

¹⁸⁷ FRA *Child participation in research* (2014) Brussels available at <http://fra.europa.eu/en/theme/rights-child/child-participation-in-research>

¹⁸⁸ *A Research looking into Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Child Rights* Save the Children. (2016) Pristine available at <https://kosovo.savethechildren.net/sites/kosovo.savethechildren.net/files/library/Regional%20Research-Final.pdf> surveyed a 07-14 age cohort; and *Comănescua R. Ciorbea I. Increasing Academic Performance in Roma Preschool Children* Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences 187 (2015) 324 – 32 available at <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1877042815018534?via%3Dihub> undertook RCT with 6-7 year olds. It should be noted that MICS studies specifically target children aged 0-5 through their carers.

¹⁸⁹ CRC GENERAL COMMENT No. 12 (2009) *The right of the child to be heard* (2009) op cit p6.20

MIDIS or MICS. This restricted form of child inclusion can and does result in valuable disaggregated data and child focused analyses in the two named studies, but this is not always the case with other studies and this particular form of 'child inclusion' has curtailed child perspective in some child inclusive studies.

There is also a particular lack of age/gender disaggregated data and where studies are gender sensitive, child perspective is sometimes lost. For instance, the OSF-supported study ¹⁹⁰*THE POSITION OF ROMA WOMEN IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC – RESEARCH RESULTS* provides a comprehensive analysis of the situation of Roma women but although it includes respondents as young as 15, it provides no disaggregated data for the 15-18 cohort so that children are de facto written out.

b. Voice – children must be facilitated to express their view

Although there is no evidence that standards were breached or that children were exploited or exposed to risk, the studies generally provided insufficient information on ethical standards and safeguarding procedures. **It is important that ethical and practice standards are not just maintained but seen to be maintained. Transparent and explicit adherence to standards is as much a quality issue as it is a safeguarding issue and the Commission should consider imposing a requirement on all EU supported child-related research to report on how ethical issues were addressed and practice standards maintained, in the same way that all child-related projects should have explicit and documented child safeguarding policies in place.**

Based on analysis of the Roma child specific sample, **child respondents were offered only a limited range of options as to how they might express themselves. The majority of the research methodologies used (interviews and questionnaires) constrain children's options for open discussion** or changing their mind. Within this limited sample, only the PEER projects supported children to actually define the parameters of the research, and to choose their own methodology. The quality of the children's presentations of their results within PEER certainly equal, and in some cases surpass, the reporting formats of many of the other studies and there is a lesson to be learned here. The demonstrated preference for research with older age groups may be linked, to some extent, to their ability to cooperate with more traditional research methods or perhaps with researchers' discomfort with less traditional methodologies better suited to younger children. **There is in fact a wide range¹⁹¹ of easily available resources detailing child participation methodologies for all age ranges, including younger children. These clearly need to be updated, collated and promoted.**

However, one of the lessons to be learned from the PEER project is the capacity of children to use ICT, social media and new technologies for research, and the potential of these media to expand the range of options open to children and researchers alike to facilitate children's participation in research and advocacy¹⁹². **New technologies provide both opportunities and risks for children and it may be that a review of child participation methodologies needs to go beyond simple collection and collation to a comprehensive and detailed reinterpretation of the implications of Article 12 for research design, practice and funding.**

¹⁹⁰ Dizdarevic SM *POSITION OF ROMA WOMEN IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC – RESEARCH RESULTS* op cit

¹⁹¹ For instance, the MARIO project established clear Methodological Guidelines to involve children in situation analysis within a wider participative framework of consultation boards, mainly composed of C/SEE migrant children or children at risk of unsafe migration, set up in five countries in order to regularly gather their views on their own situation and what could be done to improve it. See <http://ec.europa.eu/justice/grants/results/daphne-toolkit/en/content/mario-ii-protect-children-move-joint-action-protect-central-and-south-east-european-migrant>. See also *Child and youth participation resource guide* UNICEF (2012) available at <https://www.unicef.org/adolescence/cyppguide/resourceguide.html>

¹⁹² For example the Irish Ombudsman for Children hosts an electronic survey on its website every month that allows children to express their opinions, concerns and perspectives. It is available at <https://www.oco.ie/childrens-rights/have-your-say/>

c. Audience – their views must be listened to

The research studies in the sample presented very little evidence in relation to who their target audience was or how they hoped to communicate the results of the research and it was beyond the scope of our remit or resources to investigate them further. However, both researchers noted that, although very little information was shared about the specifics of their communication strategy, **most Roma- and child-related advocacy agencies, at national and international level, have the skills, knowledge and capacity to communicate the results of child related research to good effect, although there is always room for improvement.**

A wider significant question voiced by several key informants was - What difference does research make?? It is a question that extends beyond child-rights discourse but it is particularly relevant in the field of Roma child rights where lack of research and data is consistently presented as a significant impediment to social change, and frequently as the significant barrier. Promoting the positive concept of 'evidence-based policy' may have led to over-inflated expectations of research's potential as a tool for social change and downplayed other potential policy-influencing methods and mechanisms. This review of research across 17 countries seems to indicate that **the concept of evidence-based policy is not deeply rooted in many countries and that newer democracies in particular have not had the time to experience its value.** This is further illustrated by the lack of progress made by some national governments since their commitments to produce the necessary data in 2005¹⁹³. This is not to downgrade the importance of either data or research in policy development processes but rather to argue for a clearer and more realistic rationale for funding research based on a clear, explicit and realistic statement of its intended and potential contribution to wider national social-reform strategies. Both contractors emphasise that, even where research is not a key driver of social change, it does contribute significantly towards shaping the environment in which major policy decisions are made and note that its influence on this environment can be either positive or negative.

A major focus of the mapping exercise was to identify the research most relevant to Roma children i.e. research that '*serves the capacity for effective action and for achieving measurable results for children and women*'¹⁹⁴. Despite the patchwork nature of Roma child related research generally and a genuine scarcity of quality research in some areas, **there is a sufficient baseline of quality analyses to support a significantly faster process of national and local policy, practice and service development across Europe.**

The NRIS reviews and the multi-country FRA surveys regularly and consistently provide evidence of the poor situation of Roma families across Europe and identify pathways to progress that are realistic, achievable and cost-effective. The MICS surveys, although less regular and with less geographic spread, do the same for Roma children specifically. These three sources provide 'descriptive analyses' that identify problem areas and potential solutions. They are supplemented by a body of smaller, independent studies on various related topics from local Roma and child rights organisations, INGOs, academia and other stakeholders, as well as regular evaluations of successful projects tested and piloted under EC calls e.g. PEARL; PEER that demonstrate realistic and cost-effective ways to improve Roma families' situation. So, **despite the acknowledged inconsistencies and inadequacies of the research base, there is no research-related reason why any European policy maker should be ignorant of the situation of Roma families in his/her country or be ill-informed about how to redress that situation, and research institutions and bodies should state this clearly, openly and forcefully when designing, implementing or promoting research.**

¹⁹³ See *Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 Terms of Reference* op cit available at http://www.romadecade.org/cms/upload/file/9292_file1_terms-of-reference.pdf

¹⁹⁴ *Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities in Kosovo - Monitoring the situation of children and women* op cit P1 Pristine available at https://www.unicef.org/kosovoprogramme/2013-2014_MICS_RAE_ENG.pdf

Although Roma children, together with other marginalised populations of children are now often labelled 'invisible' or 'children under the radar' in child rights discourse¹⁹⁵, the reality is that **the poverty, discrimination, inequality and exclusion endured by many Roma children is in fact highly visible and adequately (if not sufficiently) documented. The issue is not that Roma children are 'under the radar' but that adult decision makers and influencers are ignoring the blips. A serious question that needs to be addressed by all research bodies and funders is whether research itself is contributing to this indifference and how this indifference can be prevented, mitigated and reversed.**

It may be for instance that research unwittingly contributes to this indifference by providing a smoke-screen for inaction. The findings of the mapping exercise indicate that a significant body of Roma child-related research is 'repeat' research that often ends up restating already well-documented findings. **Also a significant body of Roma child-related research seems to have no process at all in place for communicating children's views to a person or body with the power or authority to make relevant decisions** and in many cases, it appears that the researcher has no serious intention of doing so, and limited capacity to influence wider policy processes even if they wish to. However, the sheer volume of 'low-relevance'¹⁹⁶ research may unwittingly validate a perception that **every aspect of Roma related policy or programme development needs to be over-researched prior to taking any action.** This can act to **justify delays in mainstreaming proven good practice and confirm a public perception that Roma are a 'problematic' grouping to provide for, and that realisation of their children's rights is a particularly costly, complex and intractable process.**

Although most studies in the sample acknowledged the reality of discrimination in Roma lives, they did not generally adopt a strong or explicit anti-discrimination framework, and so ran the risk of unintentionally confirming popular prejudices and stereotypes. The passive language often used to describe discrimination – Roma are discriminated against; Roma are the most socially excluded group in Europe etc – and the tendency to rank discrimination and its consequences equally – Roma children are subject to poor housing, limited education, discrimination etc - can likewise, by default, reinforce the notion that discrimination is somehow an inherent element or consequence of Roma lifestyle.

This applies equally to Roma child related research. Probably the most relevant research on Roma children at this point in time is research that, "*By enabling the understanding of causalities, the monitoring and evaluation of programme implementation and achievements of results will leverage and improve the collective knowledge on children and women..., support development partners to assist populations most likely to be excluded and respond to demands arising in that regard*"¹⁹⁷. Yet **a significant proportion of child related research fails to name discrimination as a primary cause of Roma children's social exclusion and deprivation and to challenge its perpetrators.** Some descriptive analyses aimed at illustrating the gap between Roma and non-Roma families and identifying potential solutions do not sufficiently balance their mapping of gaps in e.g. education, employment, income or housing with an equivalent mapping of Roma women and children's negative experiences e.g. interviews rejections, name calling, refusal of social assistance or evictions. This can unintentionally contribute towards an impression that many Roma

¹⁹⁵ See for instance Vizard P. Burchardt T. Obolenskaya P. Shutes I. Battaglini M. *Child poverty and multidimensional disadvantage: Tackling "data exclusion" and extending the evidence base on "missing" and "invisible" children CASEreport 114* London School of Economics (February 2018) London

¹⁹⁶ The term is used here in a narrow way, solely on the authors' assessment of research's potential to influence policy. It is not intended to imply that any piece of research mapped lacks value or is irrelevant in the generally accepted meaning of the term.

¹⁹⁷ *Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities in Kosovo - Multiple Indicator Cluster Study 2013-2014* op cit P5 Pristine available at https://www.unicef.org/kosovoprogramme/2013-2014_MICS_RAE_ENG.pdf

families are dysfunctional. **Besides amending such analyses to bring a more balanced perspective, there needs to be increased investment in research that explicitly and sufficiently challenges the attitudes and practices of the non-Roma population, particularly those with a responsibility towards children; and that explores the positive aspects of Roma family and community patterns.**

In relation to Roma children specifically, it also has to be acknowledged that Roma- and child-related social research are not generally in a position to pass on children's views to those with power to act on them because very few research studies genuinely explore children's views or listen attentively to what children say. **The mapping exercise has demonstrated how the parameters of child related research are tightly controlled by adults; how research formats restrict real opportunities for Roma children to speak their mind; and how traditional research methodologies and approaches filter out children's perspectives even further.**

d. Influence – their view must be acted upon, as appropriate

In the context of this mapping exercise the question - 'what difference can research make?' - translates into the more pragmatic question of how the impact of research can be improved for children's benefit. The strength of children's influence is very much linked to how much their voice is heard in the debate. **This report has already noted the absence of any Europe wide forum over the last decade specifically devoted to Roma children's rights. Strengthening children's voices will inevitably require investment in a range of public advocacy opportunities, as well as amending wider public fora to allow Roma children the chance to be heard.**

But **extending influence will also involve increasing the incidence and quality of child participation in research, allowing and enabling a wider range of Roma children to speak out about their concerns on an ongoing basis.** However, child rights based research operates within a wider family of child focussed and child related research so strengthening and extending children's voices will also involve expanding the amount, consistency and coherence of data available on Roma children; improving the standard, quality and child focus of all Roma related research; extending the number, range and capacity of stakeholders undertaking and implementing research; and increasing commitment and capacity to include children in research and to adopt approaches and methodologies that facilitate active engagement with children of all ages.

The mapping exercise indicates that Roma children appear frequently in both child-related and Roma related research literature but are less frequently the actual focus of research. **There is a mass of Roma child related data but it is not consistent, is of varying relevance, and is scattered across countries, time periods and sectors. There are significant gaps in quality, credibility and availability. The impact of Roma child related research, in every European country, is reduced by the absence of a coherent Europe wide research framework that (i) synthesises and enhances individual research findings; (ii) facilitates links and comparisons within and between sectoral and country performances; (iii) defines success in terms of integration, mainstreaming and institutionalisation; and (iv) provides a multi-sectoral template of measurement of Roma children's vulnerability and resilience directly linked to general child indicators. Strengthening both voice and influence requires a Europe-wide child focused analytic framework that can make better use of existing data to identify gaps and opportunities at national and local level and hold governments to account. All stakeholders are urged to develop an agreed set of indicators that enable national governments to report specifically on progress related to Roma children as part of their regular NRIS reviews post-2020. This could be based on an initial Europe-wide Report-Card type assessment that encompassed the current NRIS themes plus child and social protection.**

At present, the FRA surveys are among the most relevant research underpinning European and national Roma-related policy development. Although these surveys are not particularly

child focused they are both child inclusive and child friendly and respondents include a 16-18 cohort. Their remit makes it difficult for them to widen the scope of their engagement with children, but they could be supplemented with child specific surveys in the sample countries, and beyond. The UNICEF supported MICS studies naturally have a much stronger child focus and outline in much more detail the gap between Roma and non-Roma children. However, they are single country studies only and do not necessarily have any follow-up, as MICS moves between countries and topics over time. Both MICS and the FRA surveys are costly, labour intensive and time consuming and their formats make it difficult to introduce amendments, but there may be scope to align them.

Both of these major research initiatives provide detailed data but only on a limited number of countries and only at long intervals. The NRIS reviews are another key data source across Europe and act as Governments' primary reporting mechanism on Roma inclusion. They are produced annually and so produce a regular snapshot of progress on Roma inclusion in every EU Member State. They are not child focused but are generally child inclusive to a greater or lesser degree.

Hopefully, the mapping exercise has clarified the need for a mix and range of research types to achieve results for children, particularly at country level. The Report Card format is expected to facilitate this mix by identifying research and programme gaps, but this will also require a wider range of research actors and different combinations and coalitions of research partners¹⁹⁸. Influence, however, extends beyond voice. It requires adults to listen – all adults, but particularly those with decision-making authority over children. Enabling – and to some extent, forcing – adults to listen requires action beyond the scope of the research process and outputs. **It requires building institutional capacity across Europe to systematically utilise child rights-based research for Roma children's benefit and to make better use of the international and national child-rights monitoring systems and bodies to hold national governments to account for Roma inclusion. The mapping exercise failed to identify any specific agency, institution or individual, in Europe or any of the sample countries, specifically and solely mandated to promote and protect the rights of Roma children.**

The findings of the mapping exercise seem to indicate a consistent interest in Roma children's welfare and education by Roma actors, and a strong (but variable) research capacity among national and international Roma NGOs. At present however, both capacity and commitment are already stretched and the primary research focus is on Roma inclusion. For instance, the mapping exercise noted only one independent submission¹⁹⁹ by a national Roma NGO to the CRC in Geneva, although others had contributed to the Shadow Report in their home country. **Both capacity and commitment need to be harnessed and directed towards full use of the UNCRC reporting system. This will require investment to institutionalise CRBA within Roma rights agencies' structures, systems and strategies but this investment will pay dividends in terms of both child rights and Roma families. International child-rights agencies should consider making the same investment.**

Universities have been one of the most prolific contributors to Roma child related research but the relevance and impact of the research noted has been very mixed. A significant amount of academic research came across as very extractive, with very little benefit, or feedback, to Roma communities or families. However, there were also a significant number of quality researches undertaken by universities in partnership with other actors.

¹⁹⁸ The mapping exercise identified a number of successful research partnerships between Roma and child rights actors including collaborations between REF, ERRC and UNICEF and partnership between the University of Alicante, La Fundacion Secretariado Gitano, WHO and DG SANTE.

¹⁹⁹ *Irish Traveller and Roma Children. Shadow Report to the CRC 2015* Pavee Point (2015) Dublin available at <http://www.paveepoint.ie/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Pavee-Point-Shadow-Report-for-UNCRC-on-Traveller-and-Roma-Children.pdf>

The research partners have already noted the surprisingly low number of Roma child-related studies available from the perceived academic centres of excellence in child related research, and the surprising absence of any easily accessible library or database of Roma child related research among them, that could act as a reference point and/or quality standard bearer for Roma child focussed research. A lot of the quality child related research came from north/south and east/west academic partnerships and/or collaboration between universities and other actors. **The research partners noted a growing number of Roma experts spread across a number of universities, but unfortunately not a particular interest in Roma children. This needs to be redressed urgently if universities are to meet their responsibilities as duty-bearers to Roma children, and the increasing amount of quality research published by young Roma graduates indicates one potential route to develop a cohort of Roma child rights expertise once the value of such expertise is acknowledged and institutionalised within academia.**

Another potential resource to be explored is the multitude of local Roma NGOs whose potential and capacity is frequently masked by participation in other's research. Small local Roma NGOs appear to have been essential to the success of many local studies. They seem to have played their part successfully, but they have seldom led on research design. **Tapping into the commitment and capacity of local Roma NGOs has to be an intrinsic element of any strategy or initiative aimed at institutionalising CRBA within Roma rights discourse.**

However, strengthening children's voice and influence requires more than extending the constituency of research actors. It also requires a recalibration of research focus. Research has a responsibility to support, but also to challenge and to innovate. This mapping exercise indicates that **the current hegemony of Roma child research is heavily weighted against challenge and innovation. While a debate needs to continue around the quality, consistency, spread and focus of existing and on-going research, and its contribution to gradual, incremental change, research questioning the slow pace of change or directly challenging its underlying causes seem almost entirely absent in this specific field, although they sometimes appear in mainstream Roma discourse. Only a few studies in the Roma-rights and child-rights sectors take a specific Roma-child rights focus and as a result most do not supply the kind of perspective, data or detail required to effectively champion the rights of Roma children and lead public policy development, professional discourse or national agendas. Increasing the range, pitch, tone and volume of children's voices in both Roma inclusion and child rights discourse is essential to achieve progress in both fields.**

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter draws together the main conclusions and recommendations previously identified by bold formatting throughout the report. The conclusions are grouped together around the first three objectives laid down in the Specifications; recommendations are then detailed under Objective 4, which stipulated²⁰⁰ that the contractors should '*Recommend child rights-based research to be replicated or further used and suggest the type and form of research that should be implemented*'. The specific section on recommendations (Section 5.4) is further broken down into an initial set of general recommendations and suggestions that apply to all duty bearers and a further series of practical suggestions aimed at specific stakeholder groups.

5.1. Objective 1. Identify the most relevant research carried out between 01 January 2014 and 01 August 2017

In order to assess relevance, the contractors adopted a definition of relevance as research's capacity to "... enable(e) the understanding of causalities, the monitoring and evaluation of programme implementation and achievements of results (that) will leverage and improve the collective knowledge on children and women..., support development partners to assist populations most likely to be excluded and respond to demands arising in that regard"²⁰¹. Using these criteria, the mapping exercise found that there was a wide range of research relating to Roma children but a far smaller sample that actually focused on them as children. Degrees of relevance varied considerably but, **although there is still a severe need to improve the quality, consistency and coherence of Roma-child related data, there is a sufficient body of relevant evidence available to support Roma inclusion initiatives in every European country.** Relevance is not necessarily tied to child focus and a balanced portfolio of child related and child focussed research is considered optimal for advocacy and influencing purposes.

The series of regular FRA studies and surveys and the annual reviews of countries' NRIS reports were considered to be highly relevant to Roma children although they are not specifically child focussed. The child-focussed MICS studies supported by UNICEF were also ranked as highly relevant. Although **their relevance and impact is limited by the parameters of their timing, geography and focus, these studies regularly provide an updated body of data and analysis that illustrates the unacceptable living conditions of Roma children in Europe; indicates the priority areas to be addressed; and identifies cost-effective and sustainable models of response by local duty-bearers. Greater coordination and cooperation between these various research-providers could significantly improve their impact, effectiveness and potential for improving children's situation.** These three major data-sources are supplemented by a body of smaller, independent studies on various related topics from local Roma and child rights organisations, INGOs, academia and other stakeholders, as well as regular evaluations of successful projects tested and piloted under EC calls e.g. PEARL, PEER, that demonstrate realistic and cost-effective ways to improve Roma's situation.

Many of the key findings of multi-country research are transferable across borders but local research capacity needs to be built in every country to enable these core research pieces to

²⁰⁰ See Call for Tenders N° JUST/2016/RCHI/PR/RIGH/0163 *Mapping of research on Roma children in the European Union 2014-2017 TENDER SPECIFICATION* op cit

²⁰¹ *Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities in Kosovo - Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2013-2014* op cit P5 Pristine available at https://www.unicef.org/kosovoprogramme/2013-2014_MICS_RAE_ENG.pdf

be supplemented by independent studies by a variety of stakeholders and to be used to best advantage for Roma children. The good news is that **there is considerable technical research capacity to be tapped among local and international Roma and child-rights agencies, although they require direction, support and resourcing.**

The impact of these major studies and other Roma child related research is reduced by the absence of a coherent Europe wide research framework that (i) synthesises and enhances individual research findings; (ii) facilitates links and comparisons within and between sectoral and country performances; (iii) defines success in terms of integration, mainstreaming and institutionalisation; and (iv) provides a multi-sectoral template of measurement of Roma children's vulnerability and resilience directly linked to general child indicators. **It may be possible to adapt UNICEF's Regular Report Card series²⁰² or integrate monitoring of Roma children's situation into the TransMonEE database²⁰³ or, alternatively, develop a Roma child focused analytic framework, linked to international standards, that can draw on existing research and data sources to strengthen child focus under a post 2020 EU Roma Framework.**

The mapping exercise indicates a real need to rebalance current research patterns in order to strengthen relevance and impact. This will involve giving Roma children of all ages greater voice through increased use of more child rights-based approaches to research design and implementation, encouraging wider use of child-friendly methodologies and providing active support to child-led research. This will have to be accompanied by a recalibration of the current research portfolio to facilitate a more even balance between (i) Roma-child inclusive and Roma child-specific research; (ii) between anti-discrimination and social inclusion research agendas; and (iii) research that supports incremental change and research that challenges structural, systemic and attitudinal barriers to Roma inclusion. The mapping exercise identified a number of effective research-coalitions that could pilot a new child rights-based research model.

Finally, research and advocacy for and with Roma children needs to be institutionalised across Europe to ensure that (i) quality standards are developed and maintained; (ii) research patterns are guided to eliminate costly gaps and duplications; and (iii) that research is used effectively to maximise impact and produce positive change for Roma children and families. Some of the models suggested by this exercise include (i) placement of Roma Child Rights Advocates, and development of Roma Child Rights programmes, within European Roma- and/or child rights agencies; (ii) development of specific Roma child rights/child protection training modules and courses; (iii) provision of CRBA training to national and local Roma NGOs; (iv) dedication of high-profile events to Roma children over the coming decade.

5.2. Objective 2. Assess whether this research has been child-rights base

Measured on a continuum comprising eight child rights-based indicators, only four of 157 Roma child rights specific studies met all eight criteria while 71 met none at all; 31 met only one; 20 met only 2; and 11 met only three. In other words, **45% of Roma child-specific research mapped during this exercise demonstrated no CRBA characteristics at all and 85% met less than half the required criteria. Assessed on the basis of the four criteria specified by the Commission, only 12 studies (7.6%) met three of the four criteria.**

Empowering children is at the core of CRBA, but this was not the case with the majority of studies mapped. The two most common CRBA characteristics adopted were

²⁰² See <https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/series/report-card/https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/series/report-card/> op cit

²⁰³ TransmMonEE is a database associated with the UNICEF MONEE project on the living conditions of children and adolescents in Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CEE/CIS). It measures national performance against recognised international indicators Available at <http://transmonee.org/>

acknowledgement of the UNCRC and multi-stakeholder involvement, and there was a greater emphasis on building the capacity of (adult) duty-bearers' than of children. Very few studies followed a life-cycle approach and most related only to older children aged 16 - 18. In some cases Roma children were unwittingly written out of the research, occasionally redefined as 'students', 'pupils' or 'Roma'. All too often researchers, by focusing too narrowly on a particular (usually problematic) area, failed to present a balanced picture of Roma families and thus inadvertently contributed to continuing stereotypes of Roma communities. There was a noticeable lack of age and gender disaggregated data and a general absence of any reference to ethical issues, safeguarding or standards in the research. UNICEF, Save the Children and others have produced protocols and procedures for child-related research, but these were seldom referenced by other agencies.

There is a growing interest in child participation as a research methodology and the mapping exercise found that most research actors – universities; international bodies; INGOs; local NGOs; and governments - were familiar with at least a limited range of child participation techniques. Child participation in research was often presented as proof of CRBA, but many studies used child participation techniques without adopting any other CRBA characteristic. While the increased involvement by children in research is welcome, it more often represents a general shift towards participatory research than a commitment to children's rights. However, the widespread acceptance of child participation as a valid research methodology should facilitate its extended use.

Child participation was noted as an element of the approach adopted by about 15% of the total sample (71/486) and by 20% of the smaller Roma child-specific sample (32/157). These percentages may be small but they have to be seen within the context of societies where children's right to participate in school life is still not fully accepted and there is no organisational culture of consultation with Roma parents or children.

The number of child participation methodologies employed was actually quite limited. Most studies used interviews, FGDs or a combination of these two methods. Most research drew on the 15-18+ age groups and these older children were often interviewed, not as children at all, but rather as part of a wider 'adult' cohort, so that child perspective was lost. The PEER project was noted as the best example of good practice available. It supported children to actually define the parameters of the research and allowed them to choose their own innovative methodologies. The quality of these children's presentations of their results certainly equal, and in some cases surpass, the reporting formats of many of the other studies and there is a lesson to be learned here about the capacity of children to use ICT, social media and new technologies for research, and the potential of these media to expand the range of options open to children and researchers alike to facilitate children's participation in research and advocacy.

The preference for research with older age groups demonstrated during the mapping exercise may be linked with researchers' discomfort with less traditional methodologies better suited to younger children. The mapping exercise noted that there is already a wide range of easily available resources detailing child participation methodologies for all age ranges, including younger children, that clearly need to be updated, collated and promoted. However, new technologies provide both opportunities and risks for children and it may be that a review of child participation methodologies needs to go beyond simple collection and collation to a comprehensive and detailed reinterpretation of the implications of Article 12 of the UNCRC for research design, practice and funding.

5.3. Objective 3. Explore research gaps

Although some countries proved more difficult to map than others, the mapping exercise methodology is not suited to rank countries according to the strength or weakness of their research base. This is a task more suited to local actors and it is hoped that this exercise will facilitate local identification of gaps, weaknesses and opportunities. While the mapping exercise identified a number of thematic gaps, the primary research gap relates to the

absence of child rights-based research within the overall research portfolio. This is a particular loss as it is the only research approach that can deliver the opinions, perspectives and experiences of the central research subject – the individual Roma girl or boy. The absence of age and gender perspectives even within CRBA research has already been noted above.

In terms of themes the exercise found an urgent need to explore Roma families' access to social welfare and assistance systems as well as other social protection mechanisms. The relative fall-off in research related to Roma migrants and asylum-seekers since 2015 was noted as well as the need to clarify the extent of Roma statelessness across Europe. The low levels of Housing- and Employment-related research were also noted when compared with other NRIS themes, and particularly the absence of child-related research in these areas.

Gaps were also noted within the high-research areas. The continuing emphasis on access in both Health and Education was noted but this probably reflects the situation on the ground. **Although Health is well researched, mother and child health seems to be a weak area within it and it is important for children that this gap is comprehensively and effectively closed as fast as possible. Further research is also needed on adolescent health, mental health, and HIV in Roma communities.**

Several significant gaps were noted in relation to Child Protection – child labour; Roma children in detention; Roma children in institutions – but child protection research generally (being outside the NRIS framework) is hampered more by geographical and time gaps that make it difficult to establish a coherent body of knowledge across a number of countries within an agreed timescale. The fact that most child protection related research is implemented by IOs and INGOs outside the NRIS framework also means that there is a research-bias in favour of Eastern Europe where most IOs operate. However, as studies in Ireland and Greece²⁰⁴ have evidenced, **there is an urgent need to undertake a Europe-wide review of national child protection systems as they relate to Roma children, preferably supplemented by a comprehensive examination of grass-roots child protection mechanisms in Roma communities. This might act as a springboard for a more general alignment of child protection research with the NRIS framework.**

This report has already noted the need to realign research priorities within the Education sector, and particularly to promote integrated research that examines access, quality, inclusion and participation holistically. While the current focus on access to ECE and primary education is understandable, more research is needed now to facilitate access and completion at secondary and third level, rather than waiting for a build-up in demand. There is a strong emphasis at present within education research on technical areas – assessment of models; exploration of teaching techniques etc. While all of these are valuable **there is also a need for a much wider body of Roma-led research²⁰⁵ detailing Roma families' experiences of school systems; their analyses of the structural barriers to their children's full education; and their practical suggestions on how to address them.**

In terms of research types, this report has already noted the scarcity of KAP studies among the methodologies, and the general absence of Roma child-led research. The MARIO and PEER projects provided useful templates for involving Roma children in research and the mapping exercise found more than enough guidelines, toolkits and training modules

²⁰⁴ See Logan E. (*Special Inquiries relating to Garda Síochána*) Order 2013 Department of Justice and Equality (2014) Dublin op cit at <http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Emily%20Logan%20report.pdf/Files/Emily%20Logan%20report.pdf>, and *The Roma Community in Ireland and Child Protection Considerations* op cit available at <http://www.paveepoint.ie/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Roma-Communities-in-Ireland-and-Child-Protection-Considerations-Final-Report.pdf>

²⁰⁵ Duminić G. Ivasiuc A. *One School for All? Access to Quality Education for Roma Children - Research report* Agenzia Impreuna (2010) op cit is an excellent example of a Roma-led critique of how discrimination works in practice. It is available at <https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/view/27571321/one-school-for-all-unicef>

available to support and sustain quality Roma-child led initiatives across Europe. Increasing the number, quality and scope of these research-types should be part of a general movement towards a more balanced European research portfolio that is both Roma-inclusive and child-inclusive and is characterised by a greatly expanded use of child rights-based approaches. Other research areas requiring greater coverage include non-Roma attitudes and practices and structural, systemic and institutional discrimination, but perhaps the greatest need is for open, positive and sympathetic explorations of Roma family life that moves policy-makers, professionals and the public towards a common understanding of Roma children and their families as active, equal and valued partners in their own development.

5.4. Objective 4. Recommend child rights-based research to be replicated or further used and suggest the type and form of research that should be implemented

5.4.1 General recommendations to all duty-bearers

1. Align NRIS and non-NRIS research cycles for greater impact.

There is a need to develop a more comprehensive and integrated portfolio of Roma child related research across Europe that facilitates a holistic response to addressing the acknowledged gap between Roma and non-Roma children in European states. All stakeholders are recommended to work together to develop a framework that aligns the current NRIS and non-NRIS strands of research and allows a more thorough, complete and regular examination of the situation of Roma children and of countries' progress towards improving their situation. **In particular all stakeholders are urged to work together to develop an agreed set of indicators that enable national governments to report specifically on progress related to Roma children as part of the regular Roma inclusion monitoring process post-2020.** This should enable improved, ongoing identification of policy, service and research gaps as well as transfers of good models of practice.

2. Promote a better balance of child-related, child-focussed and child rights-based research and expand child involvement in all three strands.

While there is a wide base of research relating to Roma children in Europe, its actual relevance to Roma children is mixed. Most studies on Roma child-related subjects are adult- rather than child-focused. There needs to be a stronger mix of child rights-based and child focussed research within the field of Roma child-related research, and funders, sponsors and donors are recommended to prioritise support to research that adopts an explicit child-focussed and rights-based approach.

In particular, there is a need to significantly expand the range and volume of children's voices in Roma child-rights discourse. At present Roma children are offered few opportunities to have their say in Roma child related research, and even less opportunity to be heard. The age range of children involved is excessively narrow; the traditional methodologies used are often restrictive; and the choice of subject matter is adult-controlled. Greater involvement by children of all ages is likely to improve quality, relevance and impact of all research - child-related, child-focussed and child-rights based - as well as empowering children and their families. Given the range of models, tool-kits and guidelines available to support child participation, there is no practical or technical reason why Roma children's participation in research that affects them should not be significantly and speedily expanded and it is strongly recommended that all agencies prioritise design and implementation of child-inclusive research.

3. Move towards a more balanced and holistic portfolio of integrated research.

This report recommends that agencies review their thematic portfolios to ensure that identified gaps between and within themes are addressed, and that 'repeat' research is minimised as much as possible. **Research agencies should promote integrated research that examines the child's situation holistically and promotes multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder responses. At the same time, there is an urgent need to redress the research gap in relation to Roma families' access to national social and child protection systems,** and it is strongly recommended that this is prioritised in all European countries.

4. Shift research perspective towards a stronger focus on structural, systemic and attitudinal barriers to full realisation of Roma children's rights

This report welcomes the significant body of research that promotes and supports incremental improvements in Roma children's lives but recognises the need to balance this with research challenging the pace and scope of such change. **It is recommended that agencies provide more support to research that adopts stronger anti-discrimination perspectives; that challenges non-Roma attitudes, practices and perspectives; and that actively seeks out and presents those strengths inherent in Roma families, communities and culture and thus can be built on to promote and protect children's rights.** This will involve encouraging and supporting new research actors, methodologies and techniques, and particularly facilitating Roma and child-led research initiatives. **Facilitating Roma-led research should be prioritised.**

5. Invest in building institutional research and advocacy capacity in the child-rights and Roma-rights sector in order to improve quality, relevance, cost-effectiveness and impact for children.

This report recognises that research is not always used to best effect for children and **to be effective, investment is needed not just in research but in advocacy.** It recommends that agencies move away from the current model of supporting one-off research initiatives towards one which builds research capacity in local and national Roma and child-rights agencies and institutionalises children's rights in national and European Roma NGOs.

5.4.2 Recommendations to the European Commission

1. General/Data collection

1.1 It is recommended that the EC promotes a **more inclusive, heterogeneous, rights-based and results oriented approach to research on Roma children,** not just within the Commission but amongst partners, contractors, governments and other duty-bearers.

1.2 The European Commission should consistently encourage **dialogue and cooperation between Roma-inclusion and child-rights actors and agencies** in order to promote a holistic, multi-sectoral response to Roma children's and families' needs.

1.3. European Commission funds and resources should be aimed at promoting a **more balanced portfolio of research** that encompasses an appropriate mix of Roma child focussed and Roma child rights-based research in every Member State.

1.4. EC funds and resources should be prioritised to encourage and **support research** that (i) strengthens **children's voices** in public discourse; (ii) examines and challenges the **structural, systemic and societal factors underlying the slow pace of Roma child-rights reform** in many countries; and (iii) **identifies the positive realities of Roma family and community life, and how to build on them to strengthen realisation of Roma children's rights.**

1.5 The EC should ensure a **specific section on children in the NRIS annual reporting framework and the post 2020 Roma inclusion monitoring framework, based on international child rights and development indicators.**

1.6 The EC should work with national governments, UNICEF and other relevant stakeholders to **outline potential frameworks for mapping the situation of Roma children**, consistent with the NRIS framework. The Report Card format used in Ireland may be one model.

1.7 The EC should promote and support **dialogue between NRCPs and their child-rights counterpart and civil society** in Member States to **develop and establish a national framework of data and analysis** that enables regular, consistent and coherent mapping of Roma children and facilitates measurement of progress against agreed indicators, under the new/reformed post-2020 framework, drawing on existing models.

1.8 The EC should consider issuing regular calls under the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme (and its equivalent under the new Multi-annual Financial Framework) related specifically to Roma children that requires dialogue and cooperation between government/civil society and Roma/child-rights sectors to develop models of good practice that reduces an acknowledged gap between Roma and non-Roma child indicators across a number of countries.

1.9 The EC should dedicate at least one **Child Rights Forum** and one **Roma Summit** to the issue of Roma children's rights or organise an event that brings together all relevant stakeholders from both sectors.

1.10 The EC should insist on **open access by all stakeholders** to any and all child-related research funded or otherwise supported by the Commission.

2. Countries and language

2.1 The European Commission should encourage publication of materials in Romani and local languages and should insist on production of abstracts in Romani and English/local language in all EC funded studies on Roma children.

3. Sponsorship, support and design

3.1 The European Commission should promote replication of successful models of research partnership that can clearly evidence practical benefits for Roma children.

3.2 The staff of all EU institutions working on child rights-related issues should be fully and actively engaged in the planning and development of all Roma-related research and programming activities.

4. Themes and topics

4.1 The European Commission should consider prioritising support to, and demand for, research to those thematic and topics areas with a limited research base at present. Consequently, the EC should invest more into research on social protection (especially access to social welfare and assistance systems), housing and employment, with a particular focus on child related aspects.

4.2 The European Commission should continue addressing the particular vulnerability of Roma children to trafficking and the gender specificity of the crime, including in the context of the reporting carried out by the Commission every two years on the progress made in the fight against trafficking in human beings.

4.3 A Europe wide mapping of statelessness among Roma communities and how it impacts on Roma children should be developed, in order to determine what action is required to eliminate statelessness among Roma.

4.4 The European Commission should support a comprehensive Europe wide analysis of national child protection systems as they relate to Roma children, based on the ten Principles of integrated child protection systems developed by the Commission²⁰⁶, and supplemented by mappings of grass-roots family support and child protection mechanisms in Roma communities and evaluations of Roma-led and Roma-inclusive models of alternative care.

4.5 It is recommended that the Commission aligns its research priorities within the education sector to support for integrated research that examines access, quality, inclusion, participation, and the links between them, holistically. The Commission is also urged to use its resources to support research across the full spectrum of education from Early Childhood Education and Care to higher education that examines common barriers, opportunities and threats to all Roma's children's right to quality education, rather than focus on particular stages of education.

4.6 In relation to Health, the Commission is invited to support a Europe wide study on Roma access to mother and child health services and a transnational review of the Roma Health Mediator model.

5. Child rights and child participation

5.1 The European Commission should establish a set of mandatory ethical and quality standards to be met by all research on children funded or supported by the EC. This should include at least a specific commitment by researchers to (i) involve children in the research process or to explain why this is not considered feasible; (ii) adopt an age and gender sensitive approach; (iii) adopt a child safeguarding policy; and (iv) provide formal feedback to all participants and contributors, including children, in an appropriate fashion.

5.2 The European Commission should use its funding base to encourage a child rights and life cycle approach to child related research and prioritise participatory research with currently under-represented groups – younger children; young women and girls; Roma children in detention; child labourers.

5.3 The European Commission should encourage child-rights based and Roma-led research.

5.4 The European Commission should ensure that Roma children and young people are consistently provided with an opportunity to reflect and comment on issues that affect them. The practice and policy guides developed as part of the PEER project should be included as part of the package provided to all applicants for funding under all Roma and child related calls.

5.4.3 Recommendations for other duty-bearers

1. National Governments

1.1. NRCs should establish a structured cooperation with their child rights counterparts and check that the interests of Roma children are adequately and fully represented in all national child-related strategies and action plans.

1.2. National governments should review the relevance and quality of the data that they have on Roma children and devise means to improve it if necessary. If inclusion in

²⁰⁶ Agreed at the 9th European Forum on the rights of the child (2016). Available at https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/10_principles_for_integrated_child_protection_systems_en.pdf

national censuses is not possible, national governments should meet with local and regional authorities and civil society to agree models and methods to acquire the data needed for policy, programme and service development. Governments should outline a clear strategy to acquire sufficient and appropriate Roma child-related data as part of their NRIS reporting, and report against it.

1.3. National governments should be able to determine the number and condition of Roma children in detention and /or institutional care; and of those engaged in hazardous or illegal work practices; and support a strategy to address and eliminate these situations.

1.4. National governments should also be able to establish the number of unaccompanied Roma child migrants and failed asylum seekers, as well as those subject to return or repatriation procedures across Europe, and develop full and adequate mechanisms to protect such children's rights.

1.5. National governments should formalise the practice of reporting on the situation of Roma children in their annual NRIS report and indicate progress or lack of it towards closing gaps with the general child population and plans to address them.

1.6. NRCs should have a formal meeting with Roma children at least annually as part of the preparations for NRIS reporting and note their concerns, opinions and feedback in the NRIS report.

17. All national governments should undertake a review of their national social welfare and child protection systems to ensure full, equal and easy access by Roma women, children and families.

1.8. National education authorities are recommended to promote, support and initiate research to determine best practices in integrating Roma language and culture into national curricula.

2. Child-rights actors and agencies

1. The CRC should consider holding a Day of General Discussion on Roma children in order to establish a baseline of international expectations of national governments in relation to Roma children and to place the struggle for realisation of European Roma children's rights within the wider context of denial of rights to children of ethnic minorities.

2. All child rights IOs and INGOs should work with local Roma NGOs to ensure that Roma children and young people input appropriately into the annual NRIS report or its equivalent; the government report to the CRC; and all other appropriate government accounts to the independent human rights monitoring system (IHRMS).

3. The European Network of Ombudsmen for Children (ENOC) is encouraged to undertake and publish a baseline study of Roma children across Europe; and provide an annual evaluation of all national governments' performance in realising Roma children's rights.

3. Roma led and Roma inclusive INGOs

1. Roma INGOs should assume a more explicit lead in relation to advocating for the rights of Roma children and should develop Roma child specific research and advocacy programmes.

2. Roma INGOs should ensure regular participation by Roma children of all ages in Roma Summits.

3. Roma INGOs should seek funding for appointment of a specific Roma Child Advocacy

Officer to work with a coalition of agencies to promote full realisation of all Roma children's rights across Europe.

4. Roma INGOs should provide training on CRBA to local Roma NGOs and ensure that Roma NGOs in every European country feed in to the international child rights monitoring system through provision of Supplementary Reports, contributions to the government report, and making full use of children's ombudspersons and the CRC's complaints mechanism.

4. Universities and academic institutions

4.1 University departments with acknowledged expertise or interest in Roma rights and/or children's rights should develop and promote specific research units or programmes dedicated to producing quality data and analysis relating specifically to Roma children; and maintain an open-access database of Roma child related research.

4.2 University departments with acknowledged expertise or interest in Roma rights and/or children's rights should develop a specific module or course on working with Roma children and families for inclusion in the core education of all teaching, social work and other relevant professions.

4.3 University departments with acknowledged expertise or interest in Roma rights and/or children's rights should adopt a wider portfolio of research practices and methodologies that enable greater involvement by a wider age-range of Roma children.

4.4 Universities and research institutions with acknowledged expertise or interest in Roma rights and/or children's rights should review their existing research protocols to determine their alignment with child rights-based principles and if necessary develop discrete and specific child-rights based protocols to support ethical research with children.

4.5 Universities and research institutions with acknowledged expertise or interest in Roma rights and/or children's rights should likewise review their standards, protocols and procedures for engagement with Roma communities and civil society and amend or, if necessary, develop discrete protocols and procedures that emphasise partnership and respect for Roma culture, tradition and lifestyle.

5. National and local civil society

5.1 National NGO Coalitions for Children's Rights should always include Roma NGOs and a baseline study of the situation of Roma children in country should be undertaken by such coalitions in every European country.

5.2 National and local NGOs should strengthen their understanding of the national and international child rights monitoring system and build their capacity to undertake CRBA research on all children, including Roma children.

5.3 National and local NGO coalitions and networks should support the development of child-led organisations and projects and to promote local opportunities for children and young people to participate appropriately in decision-making processes that affect them.

5.4 National child-rights NGOs and coalition should ensure that they contribute actively and positively to EC supported national Roma platforms.

6. Donors

6.1 All research donors should prioritise support to Roma led research and actively consider ways to encourage and support development of a body of young Roma men and women with specialist knowledge of, and interest in, Roma children's rights.

6.2 Donors should consider allocation of a specific proportion of its funds and resources to encourage implementation of a wider range of research methodologies and techniques, particularly those that facilitate greater involvement by Roma children, young people and families.

6.3 All research donors are encouraged to support research partnerships between child-related and Roma NGOs at local level, sometimes in partnership with IOs, INGOs and/or universities. Many such partnerships have not just delivered significant research results but also fostered practical inclusion initiatives and programmes.

Kevin Byrne
Judit Szira

20 October 2018

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ANNEX 1. WORKING PROTOCOL

Mapping of research on Roma children in the European Union 2014-2017

Negotiated Procedure N° JUST/2016/RCHI/PR/RIGH/0163

Mapping Protocol: Safeguards

Purpose, design and management:

1. This project is a mapping exercise rather than a research study. It has been commissioned by the European Commission and will operate within the framework of the ethos, values and principles of the European Union. It will meet all rules, regulations and requirements laid down by the Commission as detailed in the contract and tender specifications. The project is intended to contribute to the Commission's continuing efforts to improve Roma children's rights.

2. The contract for the mapping exercise was awarded to a research partnership comprising Kevin Byrne and Judit Szira. Both partners assume full responsibility, jointly and severally, for satisfactory performance of the contract and will work collaboratively to contribute their respective knowledge, experience, contacts and expertise to all aspects of the exercise.

3. The mapping partners may draw on the resources of supportive individuals, organisations and agencies in order to expand the reach of the mapping exercise and will endeavour to engage young Roma people in the mapping exercise as far as possible. The partners will devise and develop tools, guides and instruments to make mapping in the field as simple and easy as possible for non-researchers and will provide appropriate support and supervision as needed.

Working approach:

1. The contractors will, as far as possible, adopt a child rights approach as laid down by the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, *General comment No.13: The right of the child to freedom from all forms of violence*, 18 April 2011, CRC/C/GC/13, para. 59, and interpreted in Section 2.2 of the Tender Specifications.

2. The mapping process will be designed with a particular emphasis on Article 02 of the Convention which guarantees rights to all children irrespective of their race, colour, sex, language, religion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status; and on Article 30 which stipulates the child's right to enjoy their own culture, to practice their own religion and to use their own language. This approach is intended to facilitate adoption of both child-rights and Roma inclusion perspectives.

3. Although the consultancy focus is on secondary data, the approach will be as consultative and participative as possible and the contractors will hold discussions on design of the appropriate tools and the emerging findings with a range of child-rights and Roma activists and actors, including young people.

4. The project recognizes the high probability that child participants are likely to be vulnerable and/or subject to research fatigue. Following discussions with Roma researchers, educationalists and child-rights experts, it was agreed not to involve children under 18 years of age in the mapping exercise, given the secondary nature of the research; the budgetary, logistical and personnel constraints on the project's capacity

to take such vulnerability into account; and the limited direct benefit to child participants. The researchers will try to maximize children's input by actively searching out and reviewing existing research studies.

5. The contractors have committed to work with the Central European University to engage in dialogue with young Roma men and women aged between 18 – 24 participating in the Romani Studies Program, and to involve them in design of the mapping tools and techniques. Young people will be informed that their participation is voluntary and can be withdrawn at any time. Their contribution will be formally and appropriately acknowledged in the final report.

6. All potential contributors will be informed about the purpose of the research and their contributions will be appropriately acknowledged and their anonymity respected if requested.

7. The project will actively seek to present Roma children and families in a positive light that emphasises their resilience, rights and contribution to community and society. The contractors will at all times try to use rights-based language and terminology that is not offensive to or about Roma children and families. The initial bid recognised the reality that many Roma activists might legitimately object to the terminology used to define or describe Roma or families in child-rights research. It has been agreed that use of these disputed terms will be limited to accessing particular research only. Any use of such terms in project documentation does not imply approval of its generic application to Roma children.

8. The contractors undertake to provide appropriate feedback on the mapping exercise to all participants, contributors and supporters subject to approval by the European Commission.

Kevin Byrne

Judit Szira

