

**CHAPTER – ROMA MIGRANTS FROM BULGARIA AND ROMANIA.  
MIGRATION PATTERNS AND INTEGRATION IN ITALY AND SPAIN 2012**

**COMPARATIVE REPORT**

**EU INCLUSIVE**

**SUMMARY**

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## Immigration trends in Italy and Spain – an overview

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Italy and Spain, traditionally known as countries of emigration, became by the end of the 1970s countries of immigration (Bonifazi 2000). During the recent decades, these countries have received growing immigrant flows, mostly originating from other European countries, especially from Central and Eastern European countries after the fall of communism. According to ISTAT (2011), Romanians constitute the largest immigrant community in Italy, with an estimated one million of persons. Romanians, followed by Albanians, make up one third of total immigrants in Italy. In Spain also Romanians are the most numerous immigrant populations, counting almost 800,000 persons (INE.es). Bulgarians also emigrate towards those two Southern Europe countries, but a larger share of Bulgarian citizens chooses Spain instead of Italy. By the end of the year 2010, 51.134 Bulgarians of both sexes were known to live in Italy (ISTAT), while they were at least three times more numerous in Spain by the end of 2008. Spain is by far the main receiving country of Bulgarians seeking work opportunities abroad (Eurostat, 2011). According to Holland et al. (2011), the main motivation of migration from Romania and Bulgaria is of economic nature (i.e. higher income potential and better working conditions). Indeed, large gaps persist in nominal and real income between Bulgaria and Romania, on the one hand, and EU15 countries and this would represent “important pull factors for both temporary migrants (in terms of sending remittances) and long term movers (in terms of better living and working conditions)” (Holland et al. 2011:17). Migrant flows from Romania and Bulgaria underwent significant changes over the past years in what concern the age, gender and ethnic composition. For instance, significant shares of women and Roma belonging to Romania and Bulgaria increasingly affected the structure of immigrant population in Italy and Spain. In what follows, a central focus would be placed on Roma migration and on the receiving countries’ attitudes towards this migrant ethnic group.

## Roma migration toward Italy and Spain

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There are few studies on Roma migration, in general, and there is a dearth of knowledge about Roma migrants in Italy and Spain, in particular. Little evidences are found in some conference papers by Butler and Cashman (2010), Rostaş (2010), Benedik (2010) and Slavkova (2010). These authors are dealing with Romani mobilities within Europe and are emphasizing the main difficulties in establishing estimates of Roma migrants in each of these countries, as well as main drivers of discrimination or prejudices against Roma migrants. Rough estimates by researchers and policy makers on Roma EU citizens are indicating that this group may comprise about 10 million persons, while other sources (DG Employment and Social Affairs 2004, Cahn and Guild, 2008) indicate a lower number between 4.5 and 7.5 million. Beyond this controversial issue of number of Roma living in Europe, it is usually acknowledged that the situation of Roma migrants is particularly affected by discrimination in the destination country aggravated by the lack of skills as a result of the legacy of structural discrimination and inequality in their home countries (EU-FRA, 2009).

Roma emigration from Romania, Bulgaria or other European country needs to be addressed in a twofold perspective. First, Romani migrants are a specific component of larger Eastern European migration flows and one has to take into account the Romanian or Bulgarian migrant flows when dealing with Romanian Roma migrants in Italy or with Bulgarian Roma in Spain (Reyniers, 2008). Marushiakova and Popov (2010) also pointed out that Eastern European Roma migrants in Western Europe are mainly a constitutive part of the overall migration waves of citizens from these countries, and Roma migrants repeat to a great extent the same basic strategies of labour mobility. Second, attention should be paid also to specific policy measures relative to housing, education, employment targeting Roma in the countries of origin (Rostaş, 2010). Furthermore, Matras (2007) warns against the interchangeable use of terms “migrants” and “travellers” when dealing with Romani mobilities:

In the context of East-West migrations, however, linking Roma/Gypsies with Travellers implies that migration is motivated by traditional nomadism rather than by external social and political

circumstances and internal community structures and attitudes. While it is argued here that Romani migration westwards, compared with that of other groups, does indeed show distinctive features, one must not confuse 'migration' with 'nomadism'. (Matras, 2007: 32)

Bearing this in mind, it is shown here that an important share of Roma from Eastern Europe is migrating toward countries like Spain and Italy in order to find jobs and to enhance the quality of life of their family. With concern to the specific patterns of migration by Roma from Eastern Europe, Matras (2007) shown that the migration is rather familial (networks of extended families), than individual. He also identified three main chronological phases during which migration took different forms: first, prior to the mid 1970s Roma migrants seeking job opportunities abroad succeeded in taking on jobs and acquiring legal residence; second, between late 1970s and early 1990s, migration by Roma from Eastern countries was possible by either applying for political asylum, or by entering and staying irregularly; third, since 1992-1993 Romani migrants, mostly from Romania, Bulgaria, or other Eastern European no longer meet the criteria of asylum seekers since their origin countries were considered 'safe countries', and therefore Romani migrants employed two strategies common to other migrant groups from Eastern Europe, that is, entering irregularly Western Europe or entering with a tourist visa and becoming visa overstayers. While, as a general rule, Western European countries treat them all as irregular migrants, some differences are found to characterize Spain's and Italy's policies toward this migrant ethnic group. In this respect, Marushiakova and Popov (2010) pointed out that while in Spain most Roma from Romania live in "normal" city conditions, in Italy, especially in some regions like Lazio (region surrounding Rome), after 2001, local authorities established camps for Roma. Clough Marinaro (2010) shows that, starting with February 18, 2009 a new set of rules was introduced for authorised camps in Lazio (i.e. twenty-four hour police guards on the perimeter and inside the camps; permission to enter only for authorised residents; a log recording all movements in and out; no guests after 10 p.m.; the introduction of video surveillance) seriously limiting the agency of Roma migrants over their environment. Rome is the city of Italy known to count the highest number of Roma inhabitants (estimates range between 7,200 and 15,000, according to Clough Marinaro) and it is the main destination of Roma from Romania, as well of Romanian migrants in general. Roma migrants in Europe are usually overestimated in policy makers' and media's discourses, due, in part, to their visibility in streets as musicians or beggars. Nonetheless, according to some scholars (cf. Olivera, 2010), for instance, since the 1990s, the share of Romanian Roma emigrants is comparable to the national rates of emigration of 10%, and Roma migrants display common labour migration pattern.

In what concerns the migration by Bulgarian Roma to Spain, Slavkova (2010), based on the official statistics of INE (2009) and other sources (i.e., declarations by Bulgarian ambassador to Madrid Mr. Ivan Hristov, Spanish ambassador in Bulgaria Mr. Jorge Fuentes) shows that out of an estimated number of 164,353 to 350,000 Bulgarians residing in Spain both regularly and irregularly, between one-third and one-fourth of the Bulgarians in Spain are Roma. Slavkova also highlights that Spain's migration policy treat migrants equally, irrespective of their ethnic origin, and Roma migrants enjoy equal rights and freedoms like the rest of the immigrants. Roma migrants from Bulgaria identify themselves as Bulgarians citizens and the Spaniards recognize them as such, ignoring the number of Roma living in Spain. Although some sources (cf. Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, 2011) emphasize that there is a gap in between Spanish Roma and Roma from other European Member States with respect to living conditions and marginalization, unlike Romanian Roma in Italy, Bulgarian Roma in Spain are mostly depicted as an ordinary labour migrant group, seeking employment, paying taxes and directing their savings towards the purchase of a home:

The savings earned in Spain were invested in the purchase of a flat or a house in Bulgaria. After several years leaving in Spain part of the families changed their migrant strategy. Gradually a number of families bought flats in Spain on credit, the majority of them working on contracts. In time the money they earned was used for paying off the housing credit, the education of the children, the coverage of the monthly expenses and the holidays in Bulgaria. A female interlocutor from the group of the Rudari described very precisely the changes in the migrants'

lives, 'We have already forgotten why we came to Spain in the first place, but the bad thing is we started to live a life, and we no longer save any money'. (Slavkova, 2010: 213)

## **Home country perspective: Roma migrants from Romania and Bulgaria**

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Since the flows and the patterns of Roma migration are still subjects of debates and controversies, we need to triangulate further different perspectives, of host and home societies, in order to have a more accurate picture of this migrant group. Much of the literature synthesized above is based on researches undertaken in the host countries. This section focuses therefore on intentions to migrate and migration experiences by Bulgarian and Romanian Roma in their countries of origin and aims to emphasize similarities and differences between these ethnic groups from both countries.

As shown in the Soros Foundation country report (Roma situation in Romania, 2011. Between social inclusion and migration), the chapter on migration of Roma from Romania (Șerban, 2012), Romanian Roma migration after 1990 was triggered by worsening living conditions in the origin country, as well as by the progressive changes in political barriers against mobility (i.e. lift of visa requirements for Romanian citizens travelling to Schengen area, after January 2002, Romania's adhesion to EU in 2007). These changes didn't result however in a massive Roma migration, in spite of Roma migrants' growing visibility in countries like Italy or Spain<sup>1</sup>. Based on several sources, Cahn and Guild (2008) provide the following estimates of Roma migrants: in Italy the Romani migrants may count between 60,000 and 80,000 persons, but the representation of Roma in the Italian population is miniscule (0,23%). The authors mention also that in other countries like Spain or France percentages of Roma are marginal in the country's population:

In recent years Romanian Roma have migrated especially, although not only, to those countries with Latin national languages similar to Romanian: namely Italy, Spain and France. In Spain and France they join Romani communities of several hundreds of thousands – over half a million in the case of Spain [...]. Roma make up around 0.64 per cent of the general population of France and 1.60 per cent of the population of Spain. (Cahn and Guild, 2008: 38)

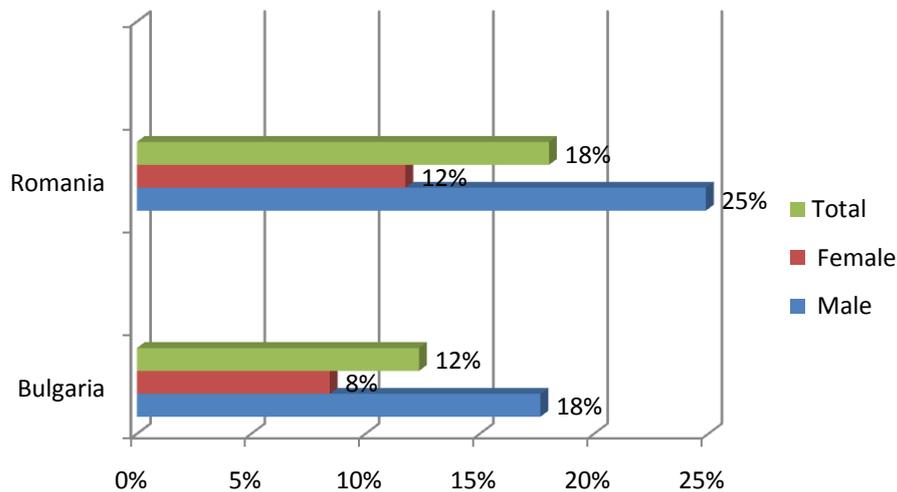
*The experience of migration* - Some differences seem to characterize Roma samples from Bulgaria and Romania with respect to the time spent abroad during their last migration. Although Roma migrant returnees from both countries have spent, overall, less than one year abroad during their last migration, a majority of Romanian Roma returnees (62%), compared to a lower share (48.7%) of Bulgarian Roma returnees have spent less than 3 months abroad when they last migrated. Bulgarian Roma are therefore more likely to migrate for longer periods of time, compared with Romanian Roma.

In what concerns the working experience during migration, noticeable differences are found between men and women.

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<sup>1</sup> This report is based on the analyses of the comparative databases without weighting. The authors decided not to use weighting values in order to have a common approach since not all country databases are weighted.

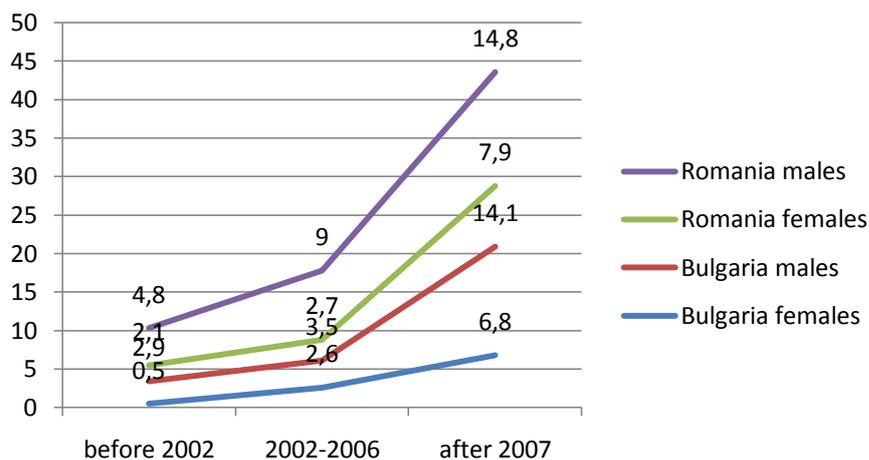
**Figure: Gender differences between Roma migrant workers from Romania and Bulgaria**



The data from the figure above show significant gender differences. Larger shares of men (more than twice) compared with women in the samples from both countries have work migration experience. The data confirm the Roma traditional labour model with men more active than women (Cace et al. 2010, Preoteasa 2011). However, in Italy Romanian and Bulgarian migrant women, for instance, outnumber men.

*Roma migrants within Romanian and Bulgarian migrants flows* - The share of male migrants from Romania decreased from 48.2% to 46.1% between 2006 and 2010, and from 42.9% to 38.7% for Bulgaria during the same period (Holland et al. 2011 based on ISTAT data). Sandu (2010), based on LTS (“Living abroad on a temporary basis”) survey carried out in 2006, pointed to the growing feminization of Romanian labour migration from 1990 onwards. The share of migrant women increased from 12% of Romanian labour migrants during 1990-1996 to 44% during 2002-2006. The data on Roma migration experience show also an ascendant trend, even if Roma migration is still lagging behind the tremendous feminization of labour migration from Central and Eastern European countries (Morokvasic 2004). If the proportion of women with labour migration experience was relatively low (2.7% in Romania and 2.6 in Bulgaria), after Bulgaria and Romania’s accession to EU the percentages are more than double.

**Figure: Evolution of share of Roma returnees with labour migration experience by gender (returnees average)**



Roma migrants from Romania are lagging behind in what concern this feminization trend of overall labour migration. As shown in the country report on Roma migration for Romania, only 16% of Roma women in the Romanian sample have intentions to migrate for work within the next 12 months (Şerban, 2012). A similar percentage of Roma women from Bulgarian sample stated that would intend to go abroad for work within the next 12 months.

*Linking migration experience and intention to migrate* - It is noticeable also that an important share of people (40% of Roma in Bulgaria and 44% Roma in Romania, see the next table) who intend to migrate within the next 12 months is situated among the category of migrant returnees, that is, those who already have a migration experience and were in their home countries by the time when the current survey was carried out. We could argue therefore that the intentions to migrate are intertwined with prior migration experiences at individual or household level in both countries.

**Table: Intentions to go abroad for work by groups with(out) prior migration experience**

Prior migration experience		During the next 12 months, do you intend to go abroad?... Yes, for work	
		yes	no
<b>Bulgaria</b>	%	40%	10%
<b>Romania</b>	%	44%	17%

However, Bulgarian Roma are more determined in their intentions to migrate within the next 12 months, compared with Romanian Roma in the samples. Sixty one percent of Bulgarian Roma are sure or very sure about the realization of their migration intentions, compared with respectively 49.7% of Romanian wishing to immigrate.

**Table: Intentions of Roma from Bulgaria and Romania to immigrate within the next 12 months, by reason of migration**

		Bulgaria	Romania	Total
<b>For work</b>	yes	19.9%	23.7%	21.8%
	no	80.1%	76.3%	78.2%
<b>For studying</b>	yes	0	4	4
	no	1093	1063	2156
<b>Other reasons (business, tourism etc.)</b>	yes	23	42	65
	no	1070	1025	2095

*Intention to migrate* -As we can see from the table above, only a relatively small share of Roma interviewed in Romania and Bulgaria does have intentions to immigrate, seeking job opportunities abroad being the main reason. Only four Roma from Bulgarian sample stated that they would choose to immigrate for studies. Immigration for other reasons (i.e. business, tourism) was mentioned by comparable insignificant shares of Roma from samples of both countries. Moving beyond the intentions of migration, and looking to prior experiences of international migration after 1989, we can see that in both origin countries even lower shares of Roma from Bulgaria and Romania have already migrated to find work abroad (12% and respectively 18% of the Roma samples).

*The destination choices* for Bulgarian and Romanian Roma are different. Spain is the main destination mentioned by Romanian Roma (35% of the people who have the intention to travel), followed by Italy (30%) and France (21%). The Bulgarians consider Greece (24%) at a first place as a possible destination, closely followed by Spain (20%) and Germany (22%).

## Selectivity of Roma migration

Based on data from samples<sup>2</sup> of Romanian and Bulgarian Roma immigrants in Italy and Spain, we can draw a picture of these immigrants groups according to main socio-demographic characteristics (i.e. gender, age, marital status). The pooled sample of Romanian and Bulgarian Roma immigrants in Italy and Spain counts 854 persons (493 Roma migrants in Italy, and 361 in Spain). In what concerns the distribution of this migrant population in host countries by their belonging to larger national groups of origin, the following table gives an overview of migrants in the sample.

**Table: Distribution of Roma migrants from Romania and Bulgaria in host countries Italy and Spain**

	<i>Migrants in Italy</i>			<i>Migrants in Spain</i>		
	counts	%	valid %	Counts	%	valid %
<b>Bulgarian Roma</b>	104	21.1	21.1	69	19.1	19.4
<b>Romanian Roma</b>	388	78.7	78.9	287	79.5	80.6
<b>Total</b>	492	99.8	100.0	357	98.7	100.0
<b>Total</b>	493	100.0		361	100.0	

*Age* - These migrants are unevenly distributed by classes of ages, the largest share of migrants being concentrated in the age group of 20 to 29 years old, followed by the category of ages between 30 to 39 years old. Together, these age groups reunite around two thirds of all Roma migrants from Romania and Bulgaria in the sample. This picture provides an image of Roma migrants in Spain and Italy as a rather young population, able to work. With regard to differences of average age of Roma migrants in Spain and Italy, we notice that, overall, the second group is slightly younger than the first (31 years old on average compared with the mean of 34 years old for Roma migrants in Spain).

**Table: Distribution of Roma migrants from Romania and Bulgaria in host countries Italy and Spain, by age groups**

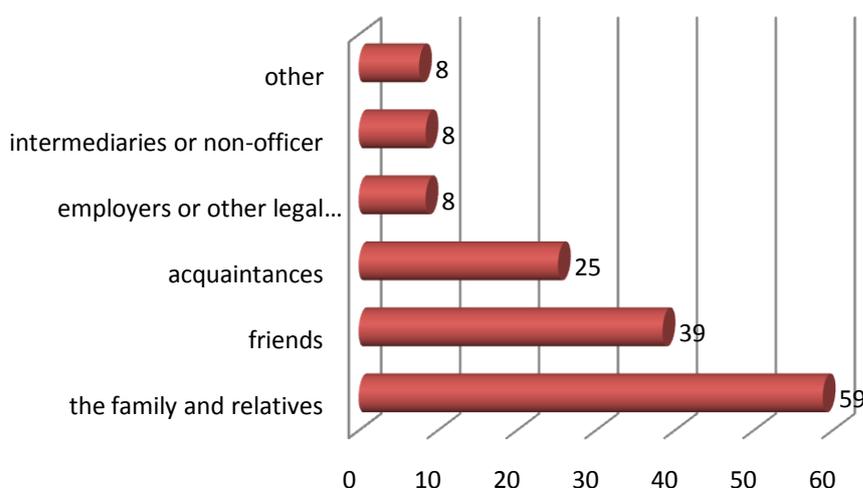
	<i>Italy</i>		<i>Spain</i>	
	counts	%	counts	%
<b>16 to 19 years old</b>	53	10.8	23	6.3
<b>20-29 years old</b>	189	38.3	129	35.8
<b>30 to 39 years old</b>	160	32.5	96	26.6
<b>40 to 49 years old</b>	59	12.0	67	18.5
<b>50 to 59 years old</b>	23	4.7	39	10.8
<b>older than 60 years</b>	9	1.8	7	2.0
<b>Total</b>	493	100.0	361	100.0

*Family networks and migration*- In what concerns the marital status of immigrants in the samples of Roma migrants from Romania and Bulgaria in the host countries under consideration here, the largest group is represented by married people (61% in Italy and 55% in Spain). Those living together represent also an important share in each country of destination (18% in Italy and 16% in Spain). The category of single migrants is relatively small: 15% in Italy and 18% in Spain, while the other categories of marital status (i.e. widow/er, divorced, separated) do not exceed 3% in each country, except for those separated migrants in Spain (around 7%). Although these categories of marital status are less represented, in both countries examined here (i.e. Italy and Spain), it is however more common to find women rather than men among them. Those Roma migrants who are married or have a partner are usually living with their spouses/partners in host countries, in the same dwelling. Therefore, Roma migration in Spain and Italy seems to be familial rather than individual. Likewise, Roma migrants rely mostly on family/ relatives upon arrival in the host country, and rarely on friends

<sup>2</sup> The description of sampling methodologies is provided in methodological chapter.

or acquaintances. The majority of Roma migrants in Spain and Italy said they had someone to turn to when they arrived in the host country (73% of Romanian, and respectively 84% Bulgarian Roma migrant respondents in Italy).

**Figure: Type of contacts migrants say can turn to upon arrival in Italy (%)**



Note: respondents were allowed to choose multiple answers.

**Table: Migrants' education in comparison with education level in origin countries**

	none	primary incomplete	primary	secondary	post secondary university or higher
<b>Roma in Bulgaria</b>	12,3%	28,1%	47,9%	11,2%	0,6%
<b>Roma in Romania</b>	23,3%	26,2%	46,3%	3,6%	0,5%
<b>Roma Bulgarians in Italy</b>	20,2%	20,2%	59,6%		
<b>Roma Romanians in Italy</b>	36,6%	24,0%	37,9%	1,5%	
<b>Roma Bulgarians in Spain</b>	12,0%	12,0%	34,0%	37,0%	5,0%
<b>Roma Romanians in Spain</b>	12,1%	20,3%	39,5%	27,3%	0,8%

The comparison among education levels in countries of destination and origin could bring few evidences:

- There are significant differences between education levels of Roma migrants in Italy and Spain. In Italy, Roma migrants from Romania and Bulgaria are less educated than their counterparts in Spain.
- The education level of Roma migrants in Spain is higher in comparison with origin countries level. They seem more positively selected in respect to education.

- The Romanian Roma in Italy have a very poor education level - more than 60% lack even primary education.

*Reasons of migration* - Job searching appears to be the main driver of Roma migration from both origin countries. Improving the quality of life is also very important motivation of Roma migration, especially for Romanian Roma. No major gender differences were observed in the samples of Roma migrants in Spain and Italy with respect to motivation of migration. Women seem equally motivated to migrate in order to find work and to improve their quality of life. The gender differences with regard to migrants' employment patterns will be however examined more in detail in the next section which deals with patterns of migration and aspects of socio-economic integration of Roma migrants from Romania and Bulgaria in Southern European host countries.

**Table: Reasons of migration of Romanian/Bulgarian Roma by destination country (in %)**

		Italy	Spain
<b>seeking for a job</b>	Bulgarian Roma	85,6	53
	Romanian Roma	67,6	50,6
<b>the quality of life</b>	Bulgarian Roma	3,8	31
	Romanian Roma	51,3	42,4
<b>family reasons</b>	Bulgarian Roma	13,5	10
	Romanian Roma	17,3	4,3
<b>the cost of living</b>	Bulgarian Roma	6,7	1
	Romanian Roma	10,6	0,8
<b>education or training</b>	Bulgarian Roma	0	0
	Romanian Roma	2,3	0,4
<b>political reasons</b>	Bulgarian Roma	1	1
	Romanian Roma	2,3	0,4
<b>religious reasons</b>	Bulgarian Roma	0,3	0
	Romanian Roma	0	0
<b>the climate</b>	Bulgarian Roma	1,3	0
	Romanian Roma	0	0
<b>transit to other destinations</b>	Bulgarian Roma	1	0
	Romanian Roma	0,3	0
<b>other reasons</b>	Bulgarian Roma	2,9	4
	Romanian Roma	0	1,2

Note: in Italy respondents were allowed to choose multiple answers

## Patterns of Roma migration

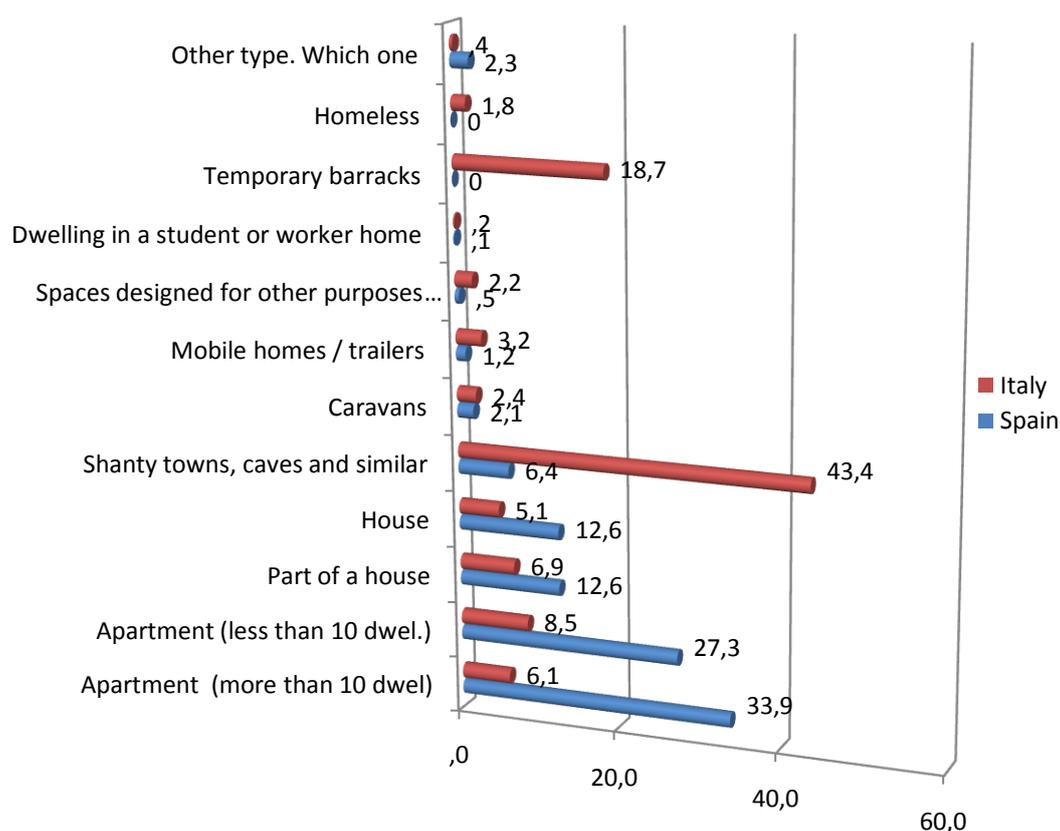
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Before arriving in the host country, the Roma from Romania and Bulgaria, with few exceptions, have lived in their origin country. Only five Romanian Roma migrants in Spain stated, for instance, that they lived in Italy before coming to Spain, and one Bulgarian Roma lived in Spain before choosing Italy as destination country. France, Germany, as well as neighbour countries (i.e. Turkey, Hungary) are also named by few dozens of Romanian Roma migrants in Italy as ancient destinations. Few persons of Bulgarian Roma migrant sample in Spain have previously lived longer in countries like Germany, Greece or Serbia (3 cases each), France (2 cases), and Portugal and Russia (1 case each). Roma migrants in Spain and Italy fit therefore in the prototype of economic migrants and not in that of nomads travelling across Europe. Most of migrants were in the same country of destinations one year earlier by the time of the survey and many of them have projects of permanent settlement in these host countries. Indeed, 87% of respondents Roma migrants in Italy and 95% of Roma migrants in Spain declared they were living in the same region of the host countries one year ago, while a small fraction was living in another country (usually, their place of origin). With regard to the chronological phase of migration, about a quarter of the sample of Roma Romanians in Italy arrived before 2002, and over 70% arrived before 2007, while the majority of Bulgarian Roma in Italy (80%) arrived after 2007, year when Romania and Bulgaria joined the EU. Unlike in Italy, in Spain, there are not large differences between the shares of Romanian and Bulgarian Roma with respect to the phase of arrival. Most Roma migrants (75% from Romania and 80% from Bulgaria) entered Spain after 2007. Very few migrants declared they arrived before 2002 (2 cases of Bulgarian Roma and 10 cases of Romanian Roma). Gender differences with regard to period of arrival in host countries are not very significant neither. Moreover, in each host country, approximately 53% of migrant respondents intend to stay forever, women being most likely than men to settle in host countries (or, at least, they intend to do so). However, 15% of Roma migrants in Italy intend to leave the country within a year, while only about 3% of Roma migrants in Spain have defined such projects of return. In what regards the patterns of migration it seems that Roma migrants in Spain and Italy follow relatively different trends. While 65.7% of Roma migrants interviewed in Spain stated they already lived in Spain for more than a month, except the present stay, only 18.5% of Roma migrants in Italy declared the same. Therefore, migrants in Spain may participate in a more circular migration pattern compared with migrants in Italy. This could be also related to the fact that an important share of migrants in Spain possesses a residence permit (64%), compared with a small share of Roma migrants in Italy (12%).

Patterns of Roma migration may be also intertwined with socio-economic inclusion of Roma migrants in host countries. Beyond migrants' socio-demographic characteristics (i.e. age, gender, marital status, etc), an important role is played by host country's policies towards migrants. Therefore, we need to consider different indicators of socio-economic integration (i.e. housing conditions, employment, children school attendance, ethnic origin of one's friends, access to social services in the host country, access to health care, discrimination, ).

**Housing conditions** for migrants are very different across host countries, as already noted in the first section. First, there are important differences between Roma migrant groups in Italy and Spain in what concerns the type of dwelling they inhabit (see figure bellow).

**Figure: Type of Roma migrants' dwellings by destination country**



Second, Roma migrants in Italy live in poor conditions, mostly in shanty towns or temporary barracks, while Roma migrants in Spain live most often in apartments in building with more than 10 dwellings. Regardless of the number of dwellings in the buildings, around 60% of Roma in Spain live in such places.

**Table: Type of dwellings inhabited by Roma migrants by destination country and Roma origin (%)**

	ITALY		SPAIN	
	Roma BG	Roma RO	Roma BG	Roma RO
House	4.9	5.2	14.5	12.3
Shanty towns, caves and similar	49.0	42.3	4.3	7.0
Part of a house	9.8	6.2	11.6	13.0
Temporary barracks	2.9	23.1		
Apartment in a building with less than 10 dwellings	12.7	7.5	24.6	28.9
Caravans	7.8	1.0	0.0	2.5
Apartment in a building with more than 10 dwellings	0.0	7.8	39.1	32.7
Spaces designed for purposes other than housing (factories, garages...)	2.9	2.1	0.0	0.7
Dwelling in a student or worker home	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Homeless	3.9	1.3	0.0	
Mobile homes / trailers	3.9	3.1		1.4
Other type	1.0	0.3	5.8	1.4

Note: Respondents were distributed as follows: 353 Roma in Spain and 487 Roma in Italy

It is important to notice that in Italy Romanian Roma are more likely than Bulgarian Roma to live in temporary barracks. In Spain, however, Romanian and Bulgarian Roma seem to share more similarities in what concerns the housing conditions (i.e. type of dwellings).

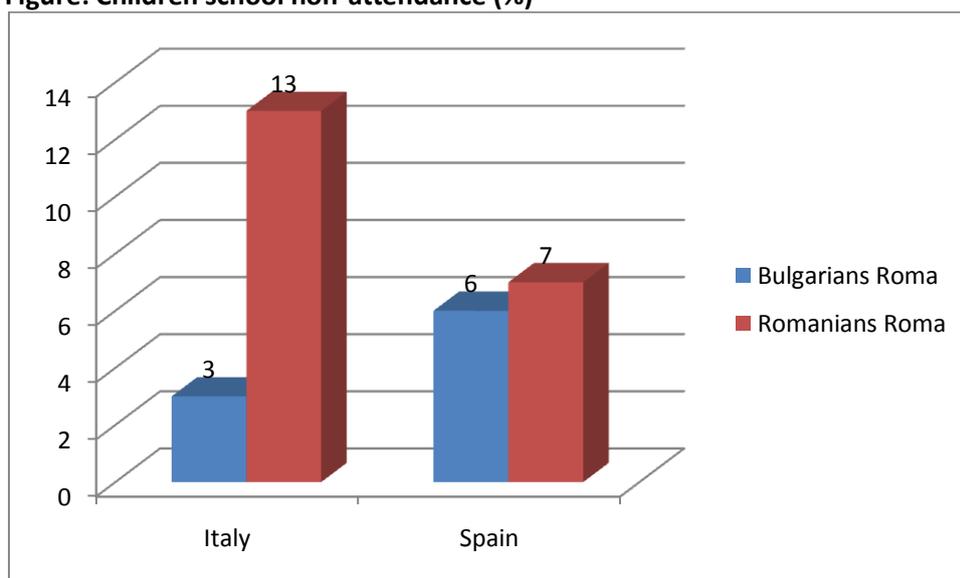
**Discrimination** felt in the host country - in Italy a larger share of Romanian Roma (more than half of these migrants - 53%), compared with Bulgarian Roma (one third) felt discriminated during the last year. In Spain, the situation is quite different. First of all, more than half Roma migrants never perceived discrimination in Spain during the last year. There are differences between Romanian Roma and Bulgarian Roma in terms that 75% of the first group felt no discrimination compared with 61% from the second group. Again, the differences between Romanians' and Bulgarians' statements with reference to discrimination are lower. Overall, 61% of Bulgarian Roma and 75% of Romanian Roma never perceived discrimination in Spain during the last year.

**Table: Discrimination felt by countries and national groups**

Large national groups	COUNTRY			Total
	Italy	Spain		
Bulgarian	34,8%	39,2%		37,1%
Romanian	53,5%	24,9%		42,2%

An important indicator of social integration is **children school attendance**. Children's exposure to host country's educational system it is not only a means of socialization, but it was found also a leading way of upward mobility especially for migrant groups occupying marginal positions as those often faced by Roma people. The majority of children attend school in Spain and in Italy. A special situation seems to be in Italy where Romanian Roma children (87%) are less integrated in educational system than Bulgarians Roma (94%).

**Figure: Children school non-attendance (%)**



It might be also important to recall that Romanian Roma in Italy are more likely to live in camps or barracks, usually situated on the outskirts, and therefore the access to infrastructure (bus stations, schools) may be more difficult. The Romanian Roma parents explained the non-attendance by economical difficulties and children unwillingness. In Spain, the situation is quite similar for Romanian and Bulgarian Roma children, that is, about 7% of migrant children are not attending school, according to parents' declarations.

The indicator “*ethnic origin of friends*” revealed a higher level of integration of Roma people in Spain than in Italy. The composition of friendship ties is considered to be of interest for migrants’ integration. Having inter-ethnic friendship ties may be one of the factors that ensure a smooth access to jobs, for instance, and through their better economic outcomes migrants may achieve a higher level of integration in the host society. It was shown that those who rely on weak ties (i.e. friends of different ethnic origin, acquaintances) and not solely on strong ties (family or community members) enjoy a wider range of labor-market opportunities (Pfeffer and Parra, 2009). In Spain, more than 60% of interviewed persons declared unimportant the ethnic group in choosing friends and 35% of Romanians Roma and 41% of Bulgarians Roma affirmed that they have inter-ethnic friendship ties Roma. In Italy the spatial isolation (see above the housing situation) could be an explanatory factor for this integration deficiency. It is commonly argued that migrants who are exclusively embedded in their ethnic group may have lower opportunities to find better jobs or adequate accommodation and may suffer from isolation. When comparing Romanian Roma and Bulgarian Roma in Italy, it appears that the former group is better connected to the society of arrival. About 41% of Romanian Roma, compared with 29,4 % of Bulgarian Roma in Italy say that the ethnic origin is not relevant in establishing friendship ties. Despite the fact that Romanian Roma are more isolated than Bulgarians in Italy, at least with respect to housing conditions, they tend to cross the ethnic borders and this may be an indication of their attempt to integrate in the host society.

**Table: Friends’ ethnic origins (% of countries total)**

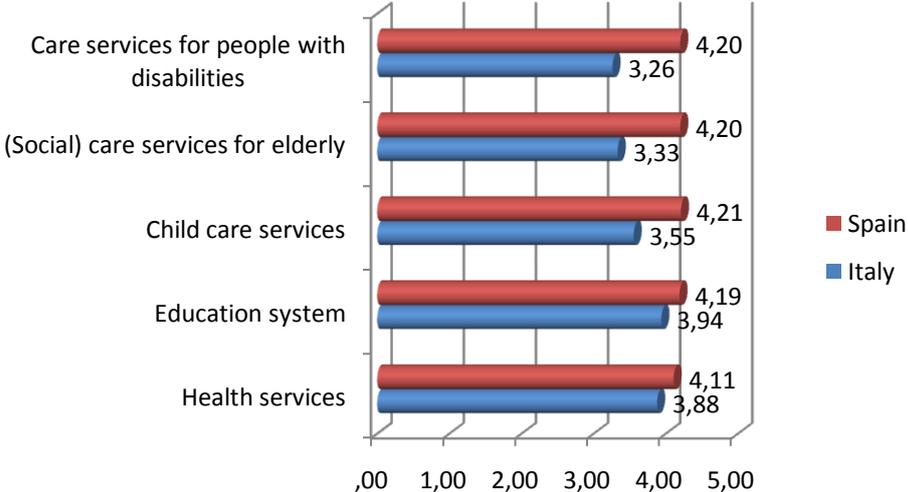
	Italy	Spain	Total
<b>Bulgarians</b> From my ethnic group only	28,4%	14,1%	21,4%
Predominantly from my ethnic group, but also I have friends	41,2%	14,1%	27,9%
The ethnic group of my friends does not matter for me	29,4%	67,7%	48,3%
I do not have close friends	1,0%	4,0%	2,5%
<b>Romanians</b> From my ethnic group only	23,8%	15,2%	20,3%
Predominantly from my ethnic group, but also I have friends	34,5%	16,8%	27,4%
The ethnic group of my friends does not matter for me	40,7%	63,7%	49,9%
I do not have close friends	1,0%	4,3%	2,3%

The types of **social services** provided to migrants vary by country and the comparison between them is quite difficult. We can present further just few highlights:

- The Romanians and Bulgarians Roma immigrants in Spain are better connected to public services than those in Italy.
- About 60% of Roma sample in Spain received job counseling while only 4% of Bulgarian Roma and 22% of Romanian Roma in Italy enjoyed this type of service.
- 50% of Romanian Roma and 7% of Bulgarian Roma in Italy are users of special social services for Roma.

The evaluation of public services demonstrates also a better appreciation by Roma migrants in Spain than in Italy (see the figure presented below).

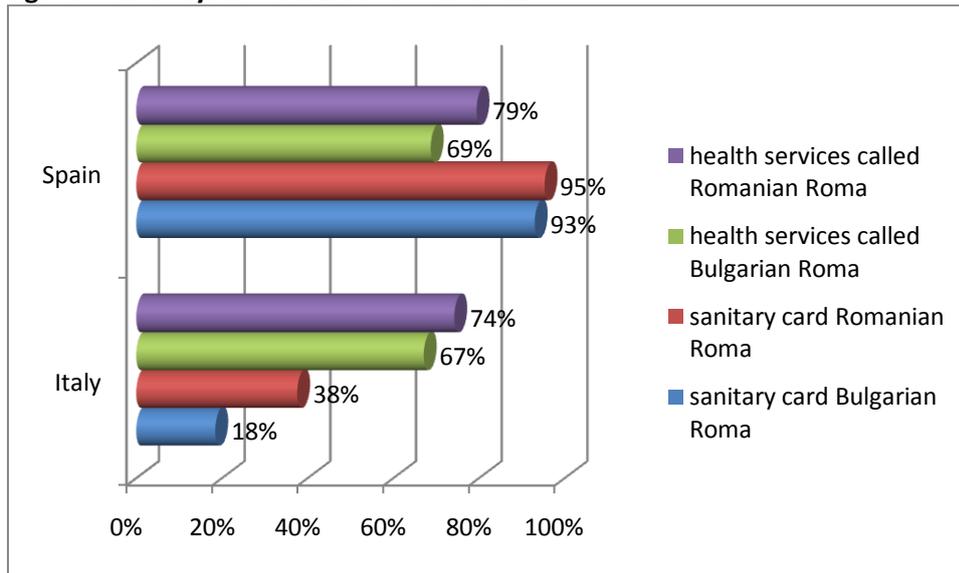
**Figure: Migrants’ assessments about the quality of public services in Spain and Italy**



**Health services** - The Roma migrants in Italy seem to be in a less extent included in the health insurance systems than Roma in Spain (95% in Spain and 34% in Italy). One possible explanation of this fact is that in Italy, according to a country report<sup>3</sup>, the health system is decentralised and the local institutions responsible for its management (Azienda di Sanità Locale) do not implement any specific programme for Roma, a group living often in environments with bad sanitation, threatening the health condition of these inhabitants. Furthermore, Roma migrants are excluded from most of health care services since people without Italian citizenship can receive only urgent or essential medical treatments. The subjects in both countries (around 70% of Roma migrants in each host country) declared that they called health services for them or other family member. These discrepancies may therefore be explained through the differences between the two health systems. In Spain, at least until recently, there was universal access to healthcare and Roma community, including Roma migrants, have also access to these services. However, as it is noted in a country report included in the same source (see note 3), access is poor in the areas not covered by the national health system.

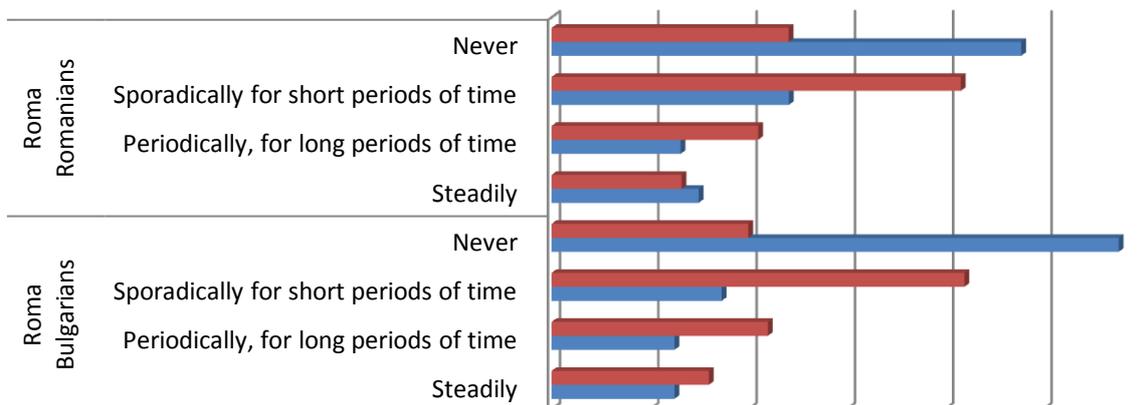
<sup>3</sup> The report is part of a larger document requested by the European Parliament's Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs, entitled: “Measures to promote the situation of Roma EU citizens in the European Union”, issued in 2011, available at <http://www2.lse.ac.uk/businessAndConsultancy/LSEConsulting/pdf/Roma.pdf>

**Figure: Health system access and insurance**



The Roma immigrants' **employment** followed a common pattern in both countries of destination: a precarious employment associated with temporary jobs and low social security. In Italy most of the interviewed persons did not work in the last two years or had just short periods of time of work. Roma women follow to a large extent the traditional model, working less than men. In Italy, the large majority of Roma women (71% of Bulgarians and 60% of Romanians Roma) did not worked at all in the last two years. In Spain, the situation is quite different: 24% of Romanian Roma and 20% of Bulgarian Roma declared themselves totally inactive in the last two years and 38% (Bulgarian Roma) and 34% (Romanian Roma) worked steadily or periodically for long period of time. The Roma women worked more often than in Italy, having temporary jobs (40% of Romanians Roma women and 47% of Bulgarians Roma) and the proportion of women who never worked is about a quarter of each women sample.

**Figure: Have you been working in the last 2 years**



	Roma Bulgarians				Roma Romanians			
	Steadily	Periodically, for long periods of time	Sporadically for short periods of time	Never	Steadily	Periodically, for long periods of time	Sporadically for short periods of time	Never
Spain	16%	22%	42%	20%	13%	21%	42%	24%
Italy	13%	13%	17%	58%	15%	13%	24%	48%

The occupational status and domains of activity analysis revealed a very poor employment, the majority of interviewed persons being involved in elementary occupations, agriculture (especially in Spain) and crafts. Comparing the two countries of destination, there are significant differences in Roma occupational status: in Spain, Roma migrants of both origins are involved in more qualified jobs than in Italy where the big majority take on elementary occupations.

**Table: Immigrant's occupation status by country**

Country	Occupation status	Italy	Spain
<b>BG</b>	Professionals		2%
	Service and sales workers		26%
	Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers		4%
	Plant and machine operators, and assemblers		11%
	Craft and related trades workers	4%	
	Roma traditional occupation	8%	
	Elementary occupations	88%	57%
<b>RO</b>	Professionals	5%	7%
	Technicians and associate professionals	0%	2%
	Service and sales workers	12%	13%
	Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers	2%	2%
	Craft and related trades workers	2%	7%
	Plant and machine operators, and assemblers	4%	2%
	Elementary occupations	58%	67%
	Roma traditional occupation	17%	

### **Migrant transnationalism of Romanian and Bulgarian Roma in Italy and Spain**

Migrants' transnationalism is one of the most researched topics in the field of migration. Transnationalism refers to different socio-economic, political and cultural activities (i.e. construct of identities that transcend national barriers, participation in the political and social, creation of businesses that contribute to the development of society of origin, sending of remittances) through which migrants keep an active feeling of belonging to their society of origin, while being abroad (Basch, Glick Schiller and Szanton-Blanc, 1994; Portes, 1996). It was shown that "being a transnational immigrant implies living and being part of two societies linked through the transnational social practices of the immigrants" (Itzigsohn and Giorguli, 2002: 770). Therefore, migrants' transnationalism and migrants' inclusion into the host society do not exclude each other, but may be differently intertwined. Itzigsohn and Giorguli (2002) examine the relationships between these two processes and establish the following typology concerning the involvement of migrants in transnational activities:

- *Linear transnationalism* results when immigrants smoothly achieve the rebuilding of social relations and the way of life from the country of origin through sending remittances, travelling home, and building of ethnic institutions in the country of reception.

- *Resource dependent transnationalism* refers to emergence of transnational activities in accordance to the slow process of accumulation of necessary means allowing the participation in these activities (i.e. time to participate in ethnic clubs, money to set up a business and contacts in both countries allowing the development of business).

- *Reactive transnationalism* is emerging when an immigrant perceives his or her experience in the country of reception in negative terms (i.e. frustration with occupational careers or the social status attained in the country of reception, discrimination or a negative perception of the reception).

society that leads migrants to identify rather with their country of origin) (Itzigsohn and Giorguli, 2002).

Based on this typology, this report further examines whether Romanian and Bulgarian Roma in Spain and Italy involve in transnational activities (i.e. sending money outside Italy/Spain; regularity of visits to and of contacts with household members in the country of origin) and how their transnationalism is linked to their inclusion in host countries.

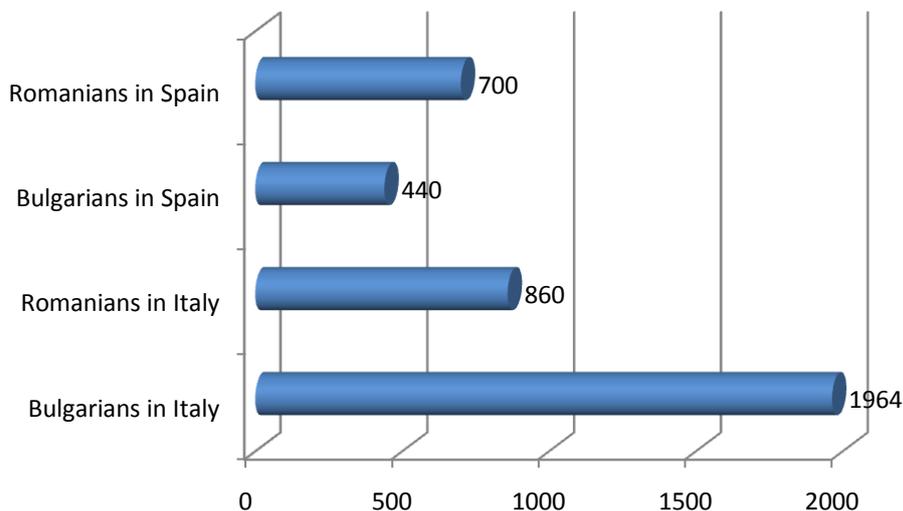
At a first sight, Romanian and Bulgarian Roma in Italy and Spain are equally engaged in relationships with their country of origin, as it stands from the analysis of the variable “are you in touch with your relatives and friends in your home country”. Indeed, 86% of Romanian Roma and 88% of Bulgarian Roma in Italy declared that they are in contact with their relatives and friends left behind. Similar shares of Roma national groups in Spain declared as well they are in contact with relatives or friends back home. Gender differences are not noticeable in any of host countries with regard to the same variable. Narrowing the focus to those **Roma migrants having contacts with relatives/friends**, we further address the question of the regularity of contacts. Bulgarian Roma in Italy are more likely to have daily and weekly contacts than their Romanian counterparts in Italy who tend to have less regular contacts with those left behind (monthly- approximately one quarter of each national sample) and some exceptional cases mentioned they contact friends or relatives once in a year or less. In Spain also, we observe large differences between Romanian and Bulgarian Roma especially within the first two categories of contacts’ regularity. While 30% of Bulgarian Roma keeping contacts with relatives say that these contacts are on a daily basis, only 4% of Romanian in Spain declare the same. However, 44% of Romanians in Spain have weekly contacts, while only 27% of Bulgarians Roma declared the same. Moreover, regardless of the time of arrival in the host country, 80% of Romanian Roma and 74% of Bulgarian Roma in Italy returned at least once to their home country, and also around 73% of Romanian as well as of Bulgarian Roma from Spain returned at least once. The last returns usually took place in 2011 (57% of returns from Italy, and 34% returns from Spain). Less than 10% of Roma migrants in each country (5.5% of Roma migrants in Italy, and 9% of Roma migrants in Spain) didn’t return in their country. Those who never returned have mainly arrived more recently (after 2007) and therefore they might not have accumulated enough resources in order to travel back to their country. There are not large differences across national groups with respect to the number of returns to country of origin neither in Italy, nor in Spain.

Beyond these variables regarding social transnationalism, it is also important to take into account other variables concerning economic transnationalism. The current survey data enable to examine the involvement in practices like sending remittances and regularity and amounts of remittances by Roma migrants. Economic transnationalism tends to be less developed than social transnationalism among both Roma national groups in Spain and Italy. More than half of Roma migrants never sent remittances outside Spain/Italy. If we look at **those who send remittances**, in what concerns the regularity of money sent outside the host countries, in Italy, Roma migrants tend to send more often (47% send weekly or at least once in a month), than in Spain (30% send remittances on monthly basis). In Italy, a lower share of Roma migrant women send remittances, compared to Spain where gender differences are not important in this respect.

Regarding the amounts remitted, in Italy, out of 164 Roma migrants who reported the amounts sent during the last year, 15% have remitted up to 100 Euros, and 17% of 117 Roma migrants in Spain declared amounts up to 100 Euros. There are however large differences when comparing the means of amounts sent by large national groups of Roma (see figure below) in each host country but also within the same national group across host countries. In Italy, for instance, the average of remittances sent by Bulgarian Roma is more than two times larger than the average of amounts sent by Romanian Roma (1964 Euros compared with respectively 860 Euros). In Spain the situation is opposite, Romanian Roma sending, on average more money than their Bulgarian counterparts. The differences between means of amounts sent may be partly explained through incomes/occupation. However, the shortcomings of data on income and occupation available for this report don’t allow

for a clear statement in this regard. For instance, Bulgarian Roma in Italy send much more money than Bulgarian Roma in Spain, although it is shown in the occupation section that the economic situation of migrants in Spain is relatively better than that in Italy. An alternative explanation could be the intention of most Bulgarian Roma who send money home from Italy to return home soon (within a year or so), and therefore they might send money for family or investments to support their family upon return. There are less significant differences between Romanian Roma in Spain and Italy. This group sends comparable amounts of money during the last year (700 Euros, respectively 860 Euros)

**Figure: The amount of money sent in the past year by Roma migrants from Italy and Spain (in €)**



Likewise, we can notice gender differences with respect to money sent during the last year: on average, Bulgarian Roma women from Italy sent larger amounts than their male counterparts, while, Romanian Roma women send lower amounts. In Spain, Roma men of both nationalities send more money, on average, than women, but this gender difference is larger for Bulgarian compared with Romanian Roma group. Finally, we can also address the question of remittances' recipients, that is, the persons who receive the money sent by migrants. Regardless of the national group of origin, the largest category of remittances' recipients is represented by migrants' parents, followed by the categories of children and spouses/partners.

### **Discussion: Roma inclusion and the challenges which lie ahead**

We consider this study as an exploratory research on Roma immigrants' topic, very useful for future research. There are very few studies on Roma migration, and being aware of the limits of the present survey (i.e. some questions are differently applied across countries, there are variables with too many missing values, the sampling methodology was not similar, the language the questionnaire was administrated), we can only address some observations based mostly on these preliminary results. Therefore, we caution against considering the following statements as conclusions and invite stakeholders to further explore and debate around specific questions briefly addressed here.

A first observation concerns the relatively uneven prospects of Roma migrants' integration in host countries considered here, namely Italy and Spain. It seems that, overall, Roma migrants in Spain enjoy better access to public services, live in better housing conditions, have less defined projects of return and their legal status in the host country is mostly regular.

A second observation refers to the differences across national groups of Roma in each host country. In Italy these differences between Romanian and Bulgarian Roma are striking in many

respects (i.e. type of dwellings, chronological stage of arrival in the host country, projects of return, children's school attendance, job counselling services), usually at the disadvantage of Romanian Roma. In Spain, at least in some respects (possession of a certificate of residence, of a health card) the differences are lower between Romanian and Bulgarian Roma samples and the first group seem to be in a relative better position: 85,6% of Romanian Roma hold a certificate of residence and 76,8 of Bulgarian Roma (similar percentages of Roma hold a Spanish health card).

A third observation would be that the immigrants' employment seems to closely replicate the origin countries pattern: high unemployment rate, non standard and unsecure jobs and elementary occupations. However, the employment situation in Spain is quite different than in Italy: more Roma people in Spain are employed in qualified and secure jobs. In Italy a large proportion of Roma are unemployed and the large majority have elementary occupations.

Finally, based on the results of these data it is difficult to estimate whether Roma migrants are transnational migrants and, if so, to what extent they fit in one of those three categories of transnationalism theorized by Itzigsohn and Giorguli (2002). Although Roma migrants contact regularly their family members and friends left behind and keep active ties with their community in the origin country, they lack resources in order to develop economic transnational activities. Except for sending limited amounts of money for family, any other economic transnational activity is unknown among Roma migrants, at least as it appears from the EU-INCLUSIVE survey.

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