



# The Representation of Roma in European Curricula and Textbooks

## Analytical Report



**Council of Europe, “The Representation of Roma in European Curricula and Textbooks”,  
a joint report commissioned by the Council of Europe  
to the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research in partnership with  
the Roma Education Fund 2020**

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The Council of Europe, Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research, and Roma Education Fund would also like to extend special thanks to the Roma Education Fund fellows who contributed to the data collection and analysis of 10 out of the 21 countries. This group of talented Roma academics and professionals provided invaluable efforts in collecting, organising, analysing, and other tasks critical to the completion of the following report. Therefore, we would like to acknowledge and thank the following Roma Education Fund fellows (in alphabetical order): Ram Hadroj, Benjamin Ignac, Andrea Ignacs, Atanas Ivanov Stoyanov, Ismail Kamberi, Jelena Savic, Tomas Scuka, and Simona Torotcoi. Finally, a special acknowledgment is due to Inga Niehaus for her contribution in designing the project methodology.

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To quote this publication, please use the following reference:

Council of Europe, "The Representation of Roma in European Curricula and Textbooks", a joint report commissioned by the Council of Europe to the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research in partnership with the Roma Education Fund 2020

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# I. Introduction

The overall aim of the joint project by the Council of Europe (CoE), the Roma Education Fund (REF) and the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research, Member of the Leibniz Association (GEI), is to analyse the representation of Roma<sup>1</sup> in curricula and textbooks currently in use in upper levels of primary and secondary schools across Europe<sup>2</sup>. The study includes the subjects of history, civic education<sup>3</sup> and geography from 21 member states of the Council of Europe : Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, the Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Serbia, the Slovak Republic, Spain, North Macedonia, the United Kingdom, and from Kosovo\*.<sup>4</sup> The focus of the study is on the 10-18 age group, covered in most countries by lower and upper secondary schooling (namely ISCED levels 2 and 3).<sup>5</sup>

The result is a comprehensive study on the portrayal of Roma in European curricula and textbooks upon which research-based recommendations by the GEI, Council of Europe and Roma Education Fund are based. These recommendations can serve as a foundation for future activities instigating curricula and textbook changes, as and when implemented by the respective national bodies. Involving early career Roma researchers allowed for capacity building in the research process and enabled cross-ethnic/cultural perspectives to be included in the analysis of the data and development of the findings.

In **Phase 1 (2016)** a research team composed of GEI researchers and Roma Education Fund fellowship holders developed a methodological approach for the curriculum analysis and reviewed the secondary school curricula of 21 Council of Europe member States and Kosovo\* for references to “Roma” and “(national) minority” - or equivalents in each language. Country reports included exact quotations of matches found in the original languages, their location in the curricula (meta-data) and their Eng-

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- 1 The term “Roma and Travellers” is used at the Council of Europe to encompass the wide diversity of the groups covered by the work of the Council of Europe in this field: on the one hand a) Roma, Sinti/Manush, Calé, Kaale, Romanichals, Boyash/Rudari; b) Balkan Egyptians (Egyptians and Ashkali); c) Eastern groups (Dom, Lom and Abdal); and, on the other hand, groups such as Travellers, Yenish, and the populations designated under the administrative term “Gens du voyage”, as well as persons who identify themselves as Gypsies. This study refers to ‘Roma’ as an overall term but includes in the curriculum and textbook analysis all related terminologies widely used in specific countries. See Council of Europe, “Descriptive Glossary of Terms Relating to Roma Issues”, 18 May 2012, <http://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/roma>.
  - 2 Given that in many countries teachers are free to choose the textbooks they use in the classroom, this study does not offer insights into what exactly is being taught in classrooms, but only into what constitutes official knowledge in state-approved educational material.
  - 3 Civic education and social studies are taught under different names across Europe and sometimes in cross-curricular fashion (together with history, for example). Depending on the particularities of each context, they can cover a variety of themes from citizenship, politics, broader social sciences, etc. For ease of comprehension, in this report we will refer to these disciplines under the umbrella term “Civics”.
  - 4 All references to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population, in this text shall be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.
  - 5 Although the focus was on ISCED 2 and 3, some ISCED 1 textbooks were included from countries where parts of the age group in focus (10-18 years of age) are taught in schools categorised as ISCED 1 (for example, Finland, Albania).

lish translations. Specific details regarding Roma or national minorities in education/curricula (for example, intended curricular reform, separate schools or subjects for Roma children) were also recorded. A thematic clustering was generated recording references to Roma in the curricula of all countries. Based on the findings of the curriculum analysis, gathered in an interim report in 2017, quantitative and qualitative textbook research was carried out in **Phase 2**, in two consecutive stages.

In the first of these stages - Phase 2.1 (2017), GEI researchers reviewed the textbooks of those **10 countries**, disciplines and levels of schooling where the curriculum analysis revealed references to “Roma” and/or “national minorities”. These were mostly in textbooks for history and civics at upper primary and/or lower secondary level (ISCED 2). Country reports were produced that contained full bibliographic lists of the textbooks sampled, exact quotations of matches, the context in which they appeared (chapter, sub-chapter), their English translations, as well as notes on the specific situation in the individual countries and locations where Roma could have been mentioned but were not. Findings were gathered in a second interim report in 2018.

In the second stage - Phase 2.2 (2018), **most of the remaining countries, levels, and disciplines were covered**, with the aim of rendering as comprehensive a sample of textbooks as possible across all countries included in the study, regardless of whether (and where) the curriculum mentioned references to “Roma” or “national minorities”.<sup>6</sup> This resulted in a sample of 869 textbooks from 21 countries. A team composed of Roma Education Fund fellowship holders and GEI researchers further developed the original methodology for textbook analysis, both ISCED 2 and 3, and all three subject areas: history, civics and geography.

The Roma Education Fund fellowship holders were early career Roma academics and junior professionals with research or policy interests related to Roma representation. They were involved not only in the quantitative and qualitative evaluation of textbooks from their respective countries, but also in learning and applying critical discourse analysis tools to the textbook content in which they found references to the word “Roma” or equivalents. **Phase 2.2** included the development of policy-advocacy plans by the Roma researchers, as well as capacity-building workshops, held in July 2018 in Braunschweig and in November 2018 in Budapest, adding a participatory research component to this study.

This report offers an overview of the methodological procedures and data collected in **Phases 1 and 2**, as well as the main results arising from the thematic analysis of the representation of Roma in European curricula and textbooks.

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6 For practical and technical reasons related to the existence of several official languages or systems of education, the textbooks of some countries included in the curriculum overview could not be analysed. These are Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro. For Germany, 10 out of 16 federal states were included in the textbook research.

## II. Methodological approach

### Phase 1: Curricula analysis

The curriculum research focused on history, civics, and geography. If curricula were not available for single subjects, the general curriculum for all subjects in secondary education was considered. Special curricula for Roma language classes/schools for Roma were not included because the study focused on mainstream education. Only curricula in current use were considered. The curricula were accessed via GEI's online research infrastructure "Curricula Workstation" (<http://curricula-workstation.edumeres.net/lehrplaene>).

### Phase 2: Textbook analysis

This phase comprised the following steps undertaken in both **Phase 2.1** and **Phase 2.2**:

- **A quantitative overview:** textbooks were reviewed for the frequency of references to Roma people or persons. The number of textbooks where Roma are mentioned was compared to the total number of textbooks sampled for the study<sup>7</sup> (see Figure 1 below).
- **A qualitative analysis:** the concrete portrayals of Roma in textbooks were investigated and the following questions posed: How are Roma people portrayed? Are any stereotypical representations visible? In which thematic contexts are Roma mentioned (for example, demography, Holocaust, national minorities, migration, human rights)? Where else (in which other thematic contexts) could Roma have been represented in the textbooks?

By collecting the paragraphs, tables and images that referenced or depicted Roma, researchers were able to generate a list, based on a "grounded theory" approach, of reoccurring thematic contexts in which Roma were represented. Identifying these themes inductively allowed for a quantitative comparison of representations, ordered according to theme, across countries and subjects (see Figures 2-3 below).

**Textbook sampling:** To find relevant textbooks, the GEI online-catalogue Textbook-Cat (<http://itbc.gei.de>) was used. This online tool facilitates criteria-based selection of textbooks from the GEI library collection, which comprises state-approved textbooks from each country.<sup>8</sup>

Only state-approved textbooks for use in state-school classrooms (for example, not teacher guides or teacher training textbooks) were considered. If several editions were available, the newest textbooks were chosen (that is published between 2010

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7 The number of textbooks from each country varies due to country particularities (federal or non-federal system of education), availability and access to textbooks. In some countries (for example, Albania, Croatia and in Kosovo\*), all textbooks available on the market were included, resulting in an exhaustive overview. In other countries (for example, the Slovak Republic), only those textbooks to which the researchers had access were included.

8 While the GEI collection is extensive, it does not include all textbooks currently in use in every state. The collection strategy is however systematic and subject to review at regular intervals. In most cases, the latest textbooks from the countries included in this study could be acquired. This was however not possible for Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro.



and 2018). All textbooks corresponded to the current curricula<sup>9</sup> applicable in the specific country for the subjects, types of school and educational levels included in the analysis. This means that textbooks intended for the majority of pupils were included in the study, whilst books intended for a minority of users were omitted.<sup>10</sup> The purpose of this approach was to obtain and review a sample of books that would be expected to reach the largest population of students. This sample aids the researchers in evaluating how Roma representation in school textbooks influences the students' and societies' ideology, perception, beliefs, knowledge, and overall discourse as related to Roma individuals and population.

**Textbook research:** The selected textbooks were viewed in their entirety. If references to Roma (in text or image) were found, the original textbook page was scanned and the quote documented. The exact quotations, as well as references to the specific textbook, type of reference (whether in a title, section, exercise, graph, map, etc.), chapter title and/or sub-title, were documented in a table in the original language with an English translation provided. Specificities of the textbook system, ongoing reforms as well as a general appraisal of the findings were noted down. A bibliographic list of all sampled textbooks can be accessed in Appendix 2.

Content/critical discourse analysis of representations of "Roma" (images and text) was undertaken for selected countries in **Phase 2.2**. The critical analysis included an in-depth look at the following dimensions, adapted from Abdou (2018), and developed collaboratively by GEI and REF researchers in a workshop held in Braunschweig: (1) characteristics and traits of Roma persons (for example, adjectives used, emphasis on homogeneity versus heterogeneity, on similarity versus difference); (2) the role of Roma in society (for example, agency, resistance, passivity; typifications and generalisations; stereotypisation); (3) voice (for example, quotes/sources from Roma persons); (4) recognition/contribution (for example, type of contribution, appropriation, significance, continuity). The analysis thus went beyond identifying thematic contexts in which Roma were represented, by highlighting stereotypical information, images, as well as portrayals of Roma individuals, the diversity within Roma communities and their contributions to European societies.

**Contextualisation:** Specific aspects that became apparent during the textbook analysis were documented, for example, discriminatory language/terms used for Roma or representations that could be regarded as innovative. Furthermore, with regard to the respective national educational setting, recommendations were made regarding other thematic context(s) in which Roma could/should have been portrayed in the textbooks.

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9 In some countries (for example, Croatia, Romania, Spain, France and in Kosovo\*), curricular reforms were either under way at the time of research or had recently been implemented. Where new textbooks had not yet been published or were otherwise not available, the latest available textbooks were used.

10 In some countries (for example, Hungary, Romania), state-approved textbooks for Roma pupils exist (for example, Romani language books and textbooks on the history and traditions of the Roma).

## III. Findings

### Phase 1: Curricula Analysis

#### *General*

The curriculum research revealed that, out of the 22 states included in the analysis, eight mention Roma in the curricula for history, social sciences or geography (see Table 1). Where matches were found, most countries address Roma in history education and only some German states and Hungary mention Roma in the curricula for civics. Spain refers to Roma in a curriculum for geography and history (a combined subject), for an optional subject on the cultural and artistic heritage of Andalusia and in cross-curricular sections focusing on the development of intercultural competence.

Among the countries that do not mention Roma in their curricula at all are Bulgaria, where Roma constitute approximately 9.9 per cent of the population; the Slovak Republic with a Roma community of approximately 9 per cent of the population; Serbia with a Roma population of approximately 8.2 per cent; and Albania, which has a considerable Roma minority of approximately 3.6 per cent of the population.<sup>11</sup> Out of the South Eastern European countries, only Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Kosovo\* refer to Roma in their history curricula. France and Germany are the only Western European countries that include Roma in their curricula, whilst Spain is the only Southern European country to mention Roma – several times, in fact, – in its curricula.<sup>12</sup>

German curricula had the most matches. 11 out of the 16 federal states mention Sinti and Roma in their curricula for history education and/or social science education. On the one hand, this is remarkable since Germany's Sinti and Roma community is smaller than that of a number of other European countries (0.13 per cent of the German population)<sup>13</sup> but is explained, on the other hand, by the persecution of Sinti and Roma during the *Third Reich*. Austria's Roma community, for example, makes up 0.42 per cent of the population, but the country's curricula do not mention Roma at all. In the United Kingdom, Roma constitute 0.36 per cent of the population but are not referenced in the curricula of England, where 95 per cent of its Roma population is based.<sup>14</sup>

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11 For estimates on Roma populations in European countries, see Council of Europe, "Estimates and Official Numbers of Roma in Europe", 2 July 2012, <http://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/roma>.

12 Due to the federal system in Spain, the curricula of Andalusia (where about 40% of Spanish Roma reside), Catalonia, Valencia and Madrid were included in the research. ([http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/files/roma\\_spain\\_strategy\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/files/roma_spain_strategy_en.pdf))

13 Council of Europe, "Estimates and Official Numbers of Roma" 2012.

14 For statistical data on Roma see Brown et al. 2013, p. 29. With regard to England, researchers searched for the terms "Roma", "Traveller" and "Gypsies" in the respective curricula.

State	"Roma"			"(National) Minority"			Total
	Geography	History	Civics	Geography	History	Civics	
Albania	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Austria	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Belgium	0	0	0	0	1	1	2
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0	2	0	1	1	0	4
Bulgaria	0	0	0	3	3	2	8
Croatia	0	1	0	1	3	0	5
Czech Republic	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Finland	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
France	0	1	0	0	0	1	2
Germany	0	14	4	0	2	1	21
Hungary	0	1	1	0	1	1	4
Italy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Republic of Moldova	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
Montenegro	0	0	0	0	1	3	4
Poland	0	0	0	3	2	3	8
Romania	0	1	0	0	3	1	5
Serbia	0	0	0	2	0	1	3
Slovak Republic	0	0	0	0	1	1	2
Spain	0	2	0	1	1	1	5
North Macedonia	0	0	0	1	3	1	5
United Kingdom	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kosovo*	0	1	0	2	1	1	5
	<b>0</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>86</b>

Table 1: Occurrences of "Roma" and "(National) Minority" in the curricula of European countries and Kosovo\* (2016)

### Thematic clusters

Most of the countries whose curricula mention Roma do so within the theme "Second World War/National Socialism", for example, in Germany, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Hungary (see Table 2). Related to this theme, the other context in which Roma are often mentioned is the Holocaust and genocide (for example, in Germany, France and Poland). This finding corresponds to a UNESCO study on the representation of the Holocaust in curricula and textbooks, which showed that Roma were named in many countries as victims of the Holocaust.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup> The study analysed countries worldwide with regard to the representation of the Holocaust in curricula and textbooks. It concluded that some curricula explicitly name only Jews as victims, while others include Sinti and Roma. See Carrier et al., 37.

	Geography	History	Civics
<b>Second World War, National Socialism</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bosnia and Herzegovina</li> <li>• Croatia</li> <li>• Germany</li> </ul>	
<b>Holocaust, genocide</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• France</li> <li>• Germany</li> <li>• Romania</li> </ul>	
<b>migration, minorities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spain</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Germany</li> <li>• Hungary</li> <li>• Kosovo*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Germany</li> <li>• Hungary</li> </ul>
<b>minority rights</b>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Germany</li> </ul>
<b>intercultural competencies/learning</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spain (cross-curricular)</li> </ul>	

**Table 2: Thematic clusters of references to Roma (and equivalent terms) in the curricula of European countries and Kosovo\***

The second most frequent thematic context in which Roma appear is in reference to migration and minorities. In these contexts, the curricula deal with the history and present-day situation of Roma as a minority within diverse societies. In certain curricula, this includes referring to discrimination against Roma and racist attitudes towards them.

One curriculum (from Germany) mentions Roma in the context of securing minority rights under constitutional law. Spain is the only country where a discussion of Roma is part of cross-curricular guidelines to promote intercultural competence, tolerance and respect for diversity.

To conclude, the results of the curriculum analysis show that Roma are primarily represented as victims without agency, especially in the thematic contexts of demography, the Second World War and the Holocaust, but in some cases they are also depicted as minorities faced with discrimination in today’s European societies. With regard to the Holocaust, Roma largely appear as just another minority group, aside from Jews, who were persecuted and murdered.

## Phase 2: Textbook analysis

### *General*

Whether Roma appear in the curricula or not seems to make no difference in terms of references in textbooks. A key finding of the textbook analysis is that there are multiple textbooks that mention Roma for all countries included in this study. There are, however, significant differences across countries, in both the extent and manner in which Roma are mentioned. The extent ranges from the simple use of the word “Roma” in reference to one of many ethnic groups in enumerations of minorities, statistics, or victims of the Holocaust, to independent sections within separate lessons and, in exceptional cases, full lessons or “study units” dedicated to Roma (for example, Austria, Hungary).

Among the countries which mention Roma in the curriculum, Germany and Hungary offer the widest and most varied coverage of Roma. In Germany, 11 of the 16 federal states<sup>16</sup> mention Roma in their curricula for history education and/or social sciences (civics/politics) education in a broad variety of thematic areas, whilst Hungary is the only country to explicitly prescribe in the curricula that “Roma” is to be defined in the dictionary of terms. Textbooks in Romania also mention Roma in more contexts than prescribed in the 2009 curriculum, which only refers to Roma in the Year 8 history curriculum, in relation to the Holocaust. Romanian geography and civics textbooks, however, also refer to Roma in presentations of the ethnic composition of different European countries. The abolition of Roma slavery in the nineteenth century is mentioned in some Romanian history textbooks in discussions of minority rights. After first being mentioned in textbooks despite there being no explicit curricular prescription, following curricular reform the topic was included in 2017 in the official curriculum for Year 8 history under the heading “The Roma - from slavery to emancipation”. Within the group of countries whose curricula do not explicitly reference the “Roma”, Finland and Albania stand out as a large number of their textbooks reference Roma.<sup>17</sup>

### *Where are Roma represented?*

The analysis of textbooks generated a list of themes reoccurring in textbooks, from which it was possible to conduct a quantitative comparison of representation according to theme, across countries and subjects (Figures 2-3). Roma appear significantly more often in chapters on demography in textbooks from the South Eastern European countries, where they are presented predominantly in numerical terms, as simply a percentage of the population. Another dominant theme in the representation of Roma is as victims of genocide, especially during the Nazi regime. Two other thematic areas that were mentioned less frequently, according to the analysis, were Roma culture and the position of Roma in contemporary society. In general, Roma are primarily referred to as a collective rather than as individual persons and their names or contributions to society and culture are rarely conveyed.

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<sup>16</sup> This study reports on 10 out of the 11 states referencing Roma in the curriculum. Saarland was not included because it does not have state-approved lists of textbooks and it was therefore not possible to conduct systematic analysis following the sampling criteria.

<sup>17</sup> This could be partially explained by the larger sample of books from these countries.

Curricula which mention Roma (Group 1)	Textbooks analysed	Textbooks with references to Roma	Percentage of textbooks with references to Roma from total of textbooks analysed
Bosnia and Herzegovina	--	--	--
Croatia	54	19	35,19
France	35	8	22,86
Germany*	82	42	51,22
Hungary	41	18	43,90
Romania	25	18	72,00
Spain**	12	5	41,67
Kosovo*	59	17	28,81
<b>Curricula which do not mention Roma (Group 2)</b>			
Albania	88	23	26,14
Austria	15	8	53,33
Belgium	24	4	16,67
Bulgaria	76	16	21,05
Czech Republic	36	11	30,56
Finland	77	28	36,36
Italy	33	8	24,24
Republic of Moldova	15	7	46,67
Poland	63	18	28,57
Serbia	61	19	31,15
Slovak Republic	12	5	41,67
North Macedonia	19	8	42,11
United Kingdom ***	42	7	16,67
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>869</b>	<b>289</b>	<b>33,26</b>

Table 3: Overview of sample of textbooks and references to Roma

\* 10 out of 16 federal states included: Baden-Württemberg, Bavaria, Brandenburg, Bremen, Hamburg, Hesse, Lower Saxony, North Rhine Westphalia, Rhineland-Pfalz, Saxony Anhalt.

\*\* The Spanish sample included books from Andalusia. Other textbooks from Spain were not included.

\*\*\* The United Kingdom (UK) sample included only books found in England. Other UK constituent countries were not included.

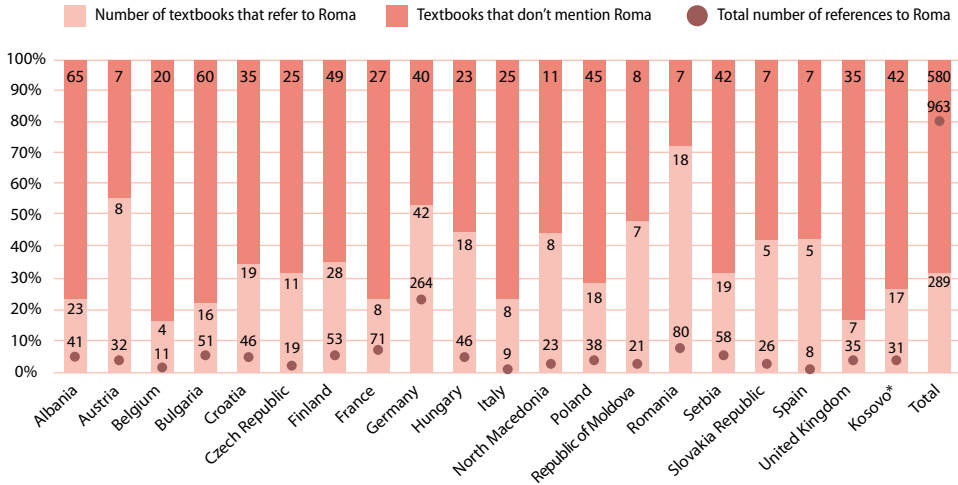


Figure 1: References to “Roma” in textbooks researched by country (Graphic by Benjamin Ignac)

Major themes	A Roma position and challenges in history	B Roma as a demographic minority	C Roma culture	D Roma in contemporary society
Sub-themes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roma challenges and persecution in European history: Nazi persecution and the Holocaust/ Porajmos</li> <li>• Roma position and challenges in national history: historic references to Roma in the country, local mass killings, ethnic cleansing, slavery, pogroms, oppression</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Percentage or total number of Roma living in a region/ country</li> <li>• Spatial distribution of Roma in a country (e.g. maps)</li> <li>• Roma as a minority in a multi-ethnic or multinational country</li> <li>• Ethnicity, nationality, nation, nation state, stateless nations (e.g. Kurds, Roma etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Origins in India</li> <li>• Romani languages</li> <li>• Religions of Roma</li> <li>• Roma sub-groups</li> <li>• Roma traditions and professions</li> <li>• Contributions to culture and society</li> <li>• Famous individuals</li> <li>• Anthropological and cultural observations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Racism, discrimination prejudice</li> <li>• Reflections on derogatory terms</li> <li>• Unemployment, poverty, begging</li> <li>• Segregation, settlements, ghettos</li> <li>• Low education</li> <li>• Poor healthcare</li> <li>• Issues of integration, inclusion, participation</li> <li>• Decade for Roma inclusion</li> <li>• Roma rights, equality</li> <li>• Minority rights, children's rights</li> <li>• Roma as political agents</li> </ul>

Figure 2: Overview of thematic areas/topics where Roma are mentioned ((Graphic by Benjamin Ignac)

### *How are Roma's Historical Positions and Challenges Represented?*

Numerous textbooks mention Roma as one of several ethnic minorities that were murdered during the Second World War. The following example is taken from a chapter entitled "Genocide of the Serbs, Jews and Roma" in a Croatian textbook: "By April 1941, race laws had been declared, modelled in accordance with Nazi laws. Under these laws, the Ustashe regime was exercising a reign of terror against Jews and Roma. They were excluded from citizenship, and marriages with "Aryans" were banned. (...) Mass killings of Serbs, Jews and Roma began in April and May 1941. (...) There were several concentration camps and death camps where people were subjected to mass executions, torture and forced labour (for example, in Jadovno, Pag, Stara Gradiška, etc.). The most infamous among them was the one in Jasenovac. It is estimated that between 80 000 and 100 000 people were killed or died of illness, hunger, cold and abuse. The majority were Serbs, Roma and Jews, and those who were persecuted by the regime for political reasons (...)", (Srježana 2018:168-169).

In some countries (most notably France) the emphasis is on procedural details related to the genocide of Roma: how many were killed, when, where, how, and by whom. The extermination of Roma during the Nazi regime is historically contextualised in only a few cases, such as a German textbook which references the Middle Ages when Roma were disenfranchised and outlawed, and which also mentions that this led to forced migration/nomadic lifestyles, as well as Roma being placed under "systematic surveillance by the police" since around 1900 (Freudenberg 2010:168).

Notable exceptions are textbooks from Germany and Hungary which present the stories of successful and active - not merely passive/victimised - Roma individuals. In three history textbooks from Germany (Brandenburg and North Rhine Westphalia), students can read about the 1933 national boxing champion, the Sinto Johann Trollmann. One textbook dedicates significant space to the story and students are told not only about the discriminatory policies of the German Boxing Association which stripped him of his title because of his allegedly "non-German" fighting style, but also - uniquely among the books - about Trollmann's creative act of defiance: he protested against the discrimination by refusing to defend himself and dyeing his hair blond in his last fight (Lendzian 2013:151-3).

The issue of social justice in relation to the extermination of the Roma as a group is one specifically taken up in German textbooks. Several history and civics books refer to present-day compensation to victims of the Holocaust, including Sinti and Roma. Memorial sites such as the Bergen-Belsen memorial in Lower Saxony are mentioned as well as financial compensation (in Eckhardt 2010:231 and Eckhardt 2017:148). Voices of Roma activists are also sometimes included, thus contributing to the promotion of Roma agency and empowerment, for example: Erich Schneeberger, Regional Chairman of the German Sinti and Roma in Bavaria, reporting on discrimination suffered while searching for a flat (Hecht et al 2017:248); Manfred Böhmer, Chairman of the Lower Saxony Association of German Sinti and Roma, (Eckhardt 2017:148); or Petra Rosenberg, Head of the Association of German Sinti and Roma Berlin-Brandenburg, speaking together with her sister (the well-known singer Marianne Rosenberg) about discrimination faced by Sinti and Roma in Germany (Müller & Wolf 2016: 217).



In rare cases, Roma voices are found in textbooks in the form of witness accounts. These accounts are from Roma Holocaust survivors and appear especially in German and French textbooks, where Roma and Sinti recount their deportation and life in the extermination camps (for example, Plaza & Vautier 2016:65 in France; and a similar quote in a Hungarian textbook, Balla 2012:162). The focus is usually on the past, but some German books include present-day pictures and/or detailed portraits of female Sinti survivors, such as Asta Fadler (Derichs 2012) and Christine Winterstein (Dickmann 2014). One witness account from a Romanian history textbook is significant in that it evokes political agency: a Roma man explains why, after returning from Transnistria where he had been deported during the Second World War, he became politically engaged as a member of the Communist party, hoping to make a difference to the life of the marginalised Roma community in which he lived (Adăscăliței & Lazăr 2007:68).

Textbooks in very few countries mention and/or define “Porajmos/Porrajmos” – a Romani word for “Holocaust” (for example, textbooks from Croatia, Germany, Hungary and Italy), thus shifting the perspective and giving a voice to the way Roma communities remember the genocide. A detailed account of the elimination of Roma was found in a Hungarian textbook: “Roma/Gypsy genocide: The Nazis declared the Roma (Gypsies) - similarly to the Jews - a group to be eliminated. During the Second World War, they formed “death columns” who, in the territories occupied by the Germans (mainly in Eastern Europe), shot, hung or killed Gypsies using the exhaust gases from lorries. Later, they forced them *en masse* into concentration camps. According to historians, of the two million Gypsies in Europe, approximately half a million died as victims of the Roma Genocide (in the Gypsy language: Porrajmos). The remembrance day for the Roma Genocide is 2 August, because on the evening of that day in 1944 the Gypsy camp within Auschwitz was liquidated (killing around 3 000 Roma)” (Horváth 2016:222).

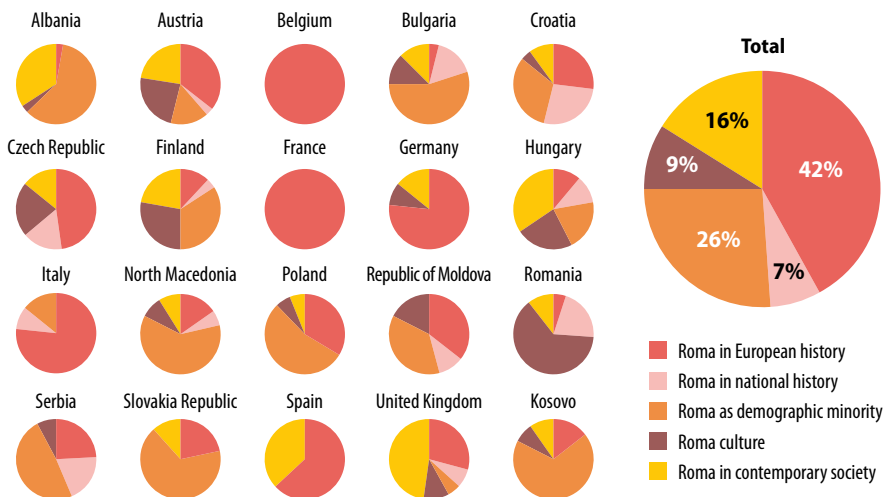


Figure 3: Distribution of thematic topics where Roma are mentioned (Graphic by Benjamin Ignac)

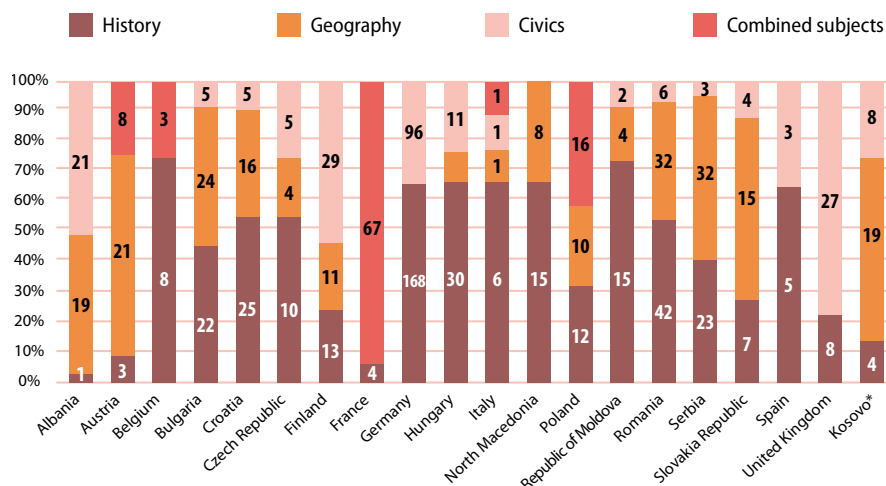


Figure 4: Distribution of Roma references by subject<sup>18</sup> (Graphic by Benjamin Ignac)

### How are Roma Represented in Terms of Demographics?

Particularly in countries where they are historically recognised as a minority (for example, Albania, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Croatia, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia) and in Kosovo\*, Roma are mentioned in sections dealing with demographics, national or ethnic minorities, or the ethnic composition of the country. Roma are occasionally mentioned within the context of migration to, and settlement in, various European countries from medieval times onwards which provides a historical dimension to the current situation (for example, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Romania, and Poland, but also, to a lesser extent, Croatia, North Macedonia and Italy). It is also notable that in Western and Northern European countries such as the UK and Finland, the Roma are explicitly represented as a “European people” rather than as national minorities. Finnish civics textbooks refer to Roma as “an international minority” (Ahonen et al. 2013:18) and “the most international people in Europe” (Arola et al. 2014:105).

### How is Roma Culture Represented?

A number of textbooks show stereotypical representations of Roma culture. This is the case in a Polish history and society textbook for instance (grades 4-6): “One of the ethnic minorities living in Poland is the Roma. Once called Gypsies, they do not have their own state. They love singing and dancing. Have you ever met the Roma? Could you describe their language, outfit and customs?” (Kalwat, Wojciech; Lis, Małgorzata 2016). Here the pupils are asked to think about “the Roma” almost as an exotic “curiosity” - a homogenous group to be described solely through externally visible traits. Students are also not expected to be Roma themselves. Similarly, stereotypical depictions are found in photos or artwork showing Roma dancing and singing (for example, Bentkowska-Sztonyk & Wach 2011; Małkowski 2015). In a Bulgarian textbook, a photograph captioned “Roma custom” depicts two women on the street, one

18 Textbooks for combined subjects bring together history/geography, history/civics or all three subjects.

of them holding a burning cloth. Roma emerge here as a mysterious people with strange customs (Prosveta et al. 2012:86).

Several Albanian textbooks appear to attempt to counter discrimination but uphold the stereotypical framing of Roma as musicians who are underachieving in school under a paragraph entitled “Discrimination”: “Berti is a pupil in our class. He is good at music. He plays the violin very well. His grandfather taught him. He is not good at other subjects. Berti’s family is from the Egyptian community. The teacher asked Erblin to sit next to Berti and help him after school. Erblin was ready to help. The next day, his mother came to school and asked the teacher to not let Erblin help Berti with his homework.” (Haxhiymeri and Ndrio 2015:51). Another example from Albania is given under the title “Rights and freedom of minorities in the community I live in”: “Minorities have all their rights like any other part of the population. Ana, a Roma Girl, likes dancing and singing in the Romani language. The teacher invites Ana to sing in the Romani language for her classmates.” (Ajdini et al. 2016:28).

In other instances, stereotypical images are used to associate Roma with old-fashioned lifestyles. This is prominent in several Romanian textbooks where photos of Roma women in traditional costume or of shabby-dwellings and caravans are used as illustrations of “the Roma way of life”. Such stereotypical visualisations are sometimes accompanied by explicit references to backwardness: “Roma have retained their traditional way of life, which is similar to the nineteenth century way of life.” (Scurtu, Dondorici & Ionescu, 2007:49).

### *How are Roma’s Contributions to Society Represented?*

Finally, contributions by Roma to European or national culture and society are very rarely mentioned. The following exceptions are from a Croatian and a Hungarian textbook. Under the title “The richness and diversity of the Croatian population”, the geography textbook mentions that some Roma have integrated into society, whilst also highlighting prejudices they are confronted with: “In Croatia there are Roma people who encounter many prejudices, just like in other parts of Europe. In this sense, Croatian society needs to be democratised. Some Roma families have integrated into Croatian society, and their members have become prominent citizens (doctors, cultural workers, politicians). Those who have not integrated perpetuate prejudices. The international Action Plan for Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 was launched as part of the EU’s policy on Roma inclusion in civil society. Local authorities are trying to help the Roma minority with education, by improving housing and with financial assistance.” (Lukić et al. 2017:102).

In the Hungarian textbook, students learn about famous Roma like the boxer László Papp, pictured well after resigning from his active career as an athlete while being honoured with flowers in public. Students find out that Papp Laci [referred to with an informal first name] brought worldwide fame to Hungary and an anecdote about him and his mother, evoking a loving mother-child relationship, is recounted (Horváth & Ispánovity 2016:174). Apart from Papp Laci, other well-known Roma are mentioned under the title “World-renowned Hungarian Roma” which states that: “The Roma mainly enriched and enrich the culture of our country as musicians. Just a few examples: the 100-member Gypsy band, the pianist György Cziffra, the composer and pianist Béla Szakcsi Lakatos, the violinist Zoltán Mága, the folk singer and

performer Palya Bea. In addition to musicians, we can list many other famous people of Roma origin. Here are just two examples: the poet Károly Bari and the boxer László Papp." (p. 174). The book includes a photograph of the boxer Papp Laci with the caption: "To whom does he owe his world fame?" (Horváth & Ispánovity 2016:174). However, these remain striking exceptions: in the majority of textbooks and curricula, Roma generally remain unnamed members of a collective, with no contributions to national or European culture explicitly mentioned.

### *How are Current Challenges, Prejudices, and the Overall Position in Contemporary Society Represented?*

Occasionally in the older books sampled and increasingly in newer books, Roma appear within the context of both past and present-day discrimination and marginalisation, including critical assessments of media coverage of Roma (for instance, in a Hungarian textbook, Horváth & Ispánovity 2016).

The regime that is, in some cases, shown as having been discriminatory against Roma in the past is represented as "alien" to the "national spirit". For instance, the Ustashe (fascist) regime in Croatia, which was responsible for the persecution of Serbs, Jews and Roma during the Second World War, is implicitly presented as alien to Croatian people. The Communist regime in Romania, generally depicted in textbooks as alien to the Romanian "spirit", is presented as being responsible for the difficulties faced by Roma in the post-war years, which still has repercussions to this day (see Băluțoiu & Grecu 2013:97-8). Another example can be found in a Finnish textbook which describes the discrimination of Roma today in societies still plagued by post-communist challenges, namely those in the faraway space of Eastern Europe: "Romani families live in dire conditions in the countries of Eastern Europe. Their position weakened significantly after the collapse of Communism. The Romani population faces continuous racism and alienation from society, as the state no longer provides subsistence security, work, or education as before. This family lives in Romania, where there are about three million Roma" (Aunesluoma et al. 2016:46).

In Germany, the state of Baden-Württemberg stands out in terms of the relationship between state involvement, anti-discrimination, and the Roma minority. Its civics textbooks present the Roma under the topic of "minorities" protection and give extensive details about Sinti and Roma in Germany, including instances of everyday discrimination, results of opinion polls documenting persistent prejudice against Roma among the general population, as well as extensive coverage of a treaty signed between the federal state of Baden-Württemberg and the Association of German Sinti and Roma in 2013, which officially recognises the Roma as a minority supported financially by the state and acknowledges that Roma are "a part of Baden-Württemberg. This federal state is our common home" (Hecht et al 2017:251; Müller & Wolf 2016: 218).

An example for narratives of empowerment, found in a considerably small number of textbooks, is the presentation of symbols related to the international Roma rights movement, like the Roma flag (Austria, Hungary), 8 April as International Roma Day (Finland) and the Roma anthem Gelem Gelem (Croatia, Finland, Hungary). Roma political organisations and local activism are also referred to. With the exception of Germany, these appear only in countries from the post-socialist bloc (for example,

Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Romania). A French civics book does, however, illustrate civic solidarity with Roma across ethnic groups with a photograph of people protesting in Paris against the French government's unfair immigration policy against Romanian and Bulgarian Roma in the opening of a chapter on discrimination (Brunold-Jouannet 2015:136). But this is less a narrative of Roma empowerment than a narrative of the majority getting involved in supporting the "disempowered other" making it part of the common cause.

A chapter entitled "Prejudices and Discrimination" in another Hungarian textbook pertains to the agency of Roma activists by showing a picture with the caption "Peaceful demonstrators in Budapest in 2009, on the United Nations' International Day for the Elimination of Discrimination (21 March)". The banners in the picture read: "THE FREEDOM OF MEDIA CANNOT MEAN CREATION OF HATE; I AM ROMA!, I AM HUNGARIAN!, I AM EUROPEAN!; ROMA=HUMAN, HUNGARIAN=HUMAN". The picture is accompanied by an assignment containing the questions: "To which social group do the demonstrators belong? What kind of identity can be seen from the banner?" (Boronkai et al. 2017:221).

Two Albanian textbooks (namely Sinani et al 2009: 74; Dragoti & Sota 2009: 76-77) connect the issue of minority rights protection to children's rights. The textbooks portray Roma children from socio-economically poor backgrounds as particularly vulnerable and in need of protection. While highlighting the desolate living conditions of some Roma, they are also upholding a stereotypical framing that conflates Roma with such conditions and offers no other examples of how Roma live, nor any reasons for their marginalisation.

Some textbooks, however, explicitly attempt to counteract stereotypes related to Roma. One example from a Hungarian history textbook tells students: "they are considered to be lazy, though they would work if they had jobs. It is claimed that there are many criminals among the Roma, but this is also an unjustified generalisation. When Roma people are involved in petty crime in order to survive (for example, by stealing wood or fruit), these instances echo louder in society than if the same crimes were committed by non-Roma" (Horváth & Ispánovity 2016:173).

A Czech textbook explains racial intolerance by saying: "Racial intolerance – where some people behave with hostility towards national minorities. It is caused by prejudices which are carried over from the past. Hatred towards a fellow human, which is based only on his/her nationality or ethnicity, is called racism. Each national group has its own history, its own cultural values and a model of behaviour. We should make an effort to understand this and accept others as equals. A range of national minorities live in the Czech Republic too, namely the Slovaks, Roma, Vietnamese and Ukrainians. Democratic society approves and supports the rights of national minorities in terms of life, education and its own culture" (Lunerova et al. 2017:29).

A few textbooks from Germany and Hungary critically reflect on the (in some cases derogatory) terms of "gypsy", "Zigeuner", "Tsigane" or "Cigány", and discuss the origin and use of the term "Roma". Only one of the 289 textbooks analysed that refer to Roma, defines the term "Antiziganism" (Dickmann 2014:149). This is especially striking, since language use plays a fundamental role in discrimination practices and thus certain terms, their linguistic origins and connotations are a relevant field of knowledge.

## IV. Conclusions

While only 8 out of 21 European countries and Kosovo\* refer to Roma in their curricula for the subjects “geography”, “history” and “civics”, Roma are mentioned in textbooks from all countries investigated here, even when the curriculum does not prescribe it. However, the representation of Roma mostly falls within a limited number of thematic contexts and can still be seen as largely insufficient, often stereotypical and in some cases inaccurate. Some textbooks, however, explicitly address issues of “diversity”, “interculturalism”, or “multiculturalism” and human rights when they mention Roma communities or individuals and the obstacles that they are facing in contemporary European societies. There are significant differences across the countries, in both the extent and manner in which Roma are mentioned. The extent ranges from the simple use of the word “Roma” in reference to one of many ethnic groups in enumerations of minorities, statistics, or victims of the Holocaust, to independent sections within separate lessons and, in exceptional cases, full lessons or “study units” dedicated to Roma (for example, Austria, Hungary).

The analysis of the themes and references demonstrate that Roma are represented mostly as a historical topic, or as victims, and frequently as both. Furthermore, the majority of references to Roma present them as a national minority or a separate group within the national society, while other references present Roma only as a numerical part of society or as a percentage. There is nearly no language representing Roma as an integral part of the respective national society. Textbooks rarely refer to Roma history, describe contemporary Roma communities or present remarkable individuals with names, biographical information or achievements.

### *Limited Representation in terms of range of topics*

In general, references to Roma draw on a limited number of topics. Roma are mostly mentioned as a single demographic unit and limited information is given on the community as a historical and contemporary member of national societies, which presents Roma as a group less significantly affiliated to the respective society than the dominant group. When Roma are mentioned in textbooks, the text is mainly placed in textboxes and margins or presented as case studies. Very few references can be found to the discrimination of Roma or to tools aimed at preventing anti-Roma sentiment. Roma are referred to as a group (often homogeneous), not as individuals, and little information is provided about culture or Roma in contemporary society.

### *Misrepresentation of Roma in textbooks*

Where the information concerning Roma in textbooks exceeds a mere description of national demographics, Roma are predominantly portrayed as victims or in a stereotypical way. The victimisation of Roma is especially dominant in narratives of the Holocaust and genocide but also references to poverty and social disadvantage overwhelmingly characterise Roma as victims, and only exceptionally describe the perpetration and the structural circumstances that lead to their situation.

In many cases, Roma representation within the analysed European textbooks matches the prejudice and stereotypes found in discourses within the respective societies.

Textbooks from a number of countries display a certain amount of stereotypical representations, although the amount of references that could reinforce stereotypes were found to be higher in countries where Roma are a relatively large proportion of the general population. The stereotypes include, but are not limited to, Roma being portrayed as uncivilised, dirty or poor. Even some of those references which attempt to present Roma culture tend to reinforce stereotypes of Roma as dancers and musicians wearing colourful and traditional clothing.

Many textbooks show a weak correlation between text and pictures, for instance, a stereotypical picture may be placed in a chapter without the relevance or content of the image being explained. Few textbooks, especially in South Eastern Europe, mention different Roma communities such as the Boyash, Vlachs or Egyptians, but otherwise Roma are largely uniformly represented as homogeneous and distinct from the national population. Rarely are they portrayed as lawyers, doctors, poets or athletes.

### *Role in Society*

When Roma are mentioned as members of society, it is mostly in lists of the respective country's demographics, with no description of the community's history, culture, or contribution to society. These short mentions without context provide little to no information and knowledge about Roma. Content which highlights similarities and aims to foster solidarity between Roma and the dominant society is rare, whereas references that create distance between Roma and the dominant society are more common. The placement, length, and content of these references to Roma thus implicitly defines the Roma population as located outside the national identity, by representing Roma as a "historical other" in history and civics books. Further, Roma emerge as a "contemporary other" by descriptions of Roma as a discriminated minority and "exotic" culture.

### *Recognition of contributions by Roma*

Very few textbooks portray prominent or otherwise remarkable Roma individuals. With rare exceptions, only fleeting references are made to historical initiatives resisting persecution in the past and to Roma activists fighting against contemporary discrimination and for equal rights today. This leads to an acknowledgeable absence of active Roma voices. Stereotypical depictions and misrepresentations portraying Roma as musicians and dancers or backward communities marked by poverty are prevalent in numerous textbooks. The frequent use of "Jews and Roma" as two groups lumped together in one terminological unit in the context of mass murder during the Second World War neglects the specific situation and history of Roma in European countries and can lead to a denial of their achievements, agency and contribution to European society and culture at large.

### *Challenging prejudice*

When taking up stereotypes in order to challenge them, some textbooks in fact perpetuate or even aggravate them. This is the case when textbooks mention the conditions under which many Roma live, without referencing the causes at the root of their situation. Very few books refer to slavery, maltreatment and discrimination as

possible causes for the marginalisation of minorities. When social structures such as institutional and structural racism are not mentioned, the blame can easily be placed on the victims. Exceptional representations documented in this report nevertheless show that different narratives giving voice to Roma individuals, to symbols of the Roma struggle for equal rights and recognition, to their accounts of the past and a critical assessment of (structural) discrimination today in textbooks are possible.

The conclusion of the research, that there is insufficient and inaccurate information about Roma in curricula and textbooks, may however stem from a lack of credible source material available on Roma. This can lead to ministries and textbook publishers excluding Roma from the curriculum and from textbooks, or only including material based on social values which might foster prejudice, misconceptions, and display ignorance of Roma citizens and residents.

### *Need for Revision of Curricula and Textbooks*

The findings indicate the necessity for European nations that aim to promote inclusion and antidiscrimination to address both the lack of representation of Roma and their misrepresentation in European curricula and textbooks as presented in the research findings. In most of the analysed textbooks, Roma voices are marginalised, if not ignored, and, as shown in this report, only a few textbooks include sources from Roma authors or stories from Roma witnesses. Roma are seldom portrayed within the context of a diverse society. Given that the textbooks and curricula of many countries do tackle the topic of diversity and multiculturalism (for example, the United Kingdom, France and Spain), this can be seen as a missed opportunity to include Roma individuals in the curriculum in a more inclusive way.



## V. Recommendations

The curricula and textbooks of the 21 countries analysed and Kosovo\* are characterised by their limited, in some cases insufficient and inaccurate, representation of Roma. Curricula representation was shown to be limited both in terms of the number of countries that mention Roma within their national curricula, as well as the topics and thematic fields that refer to Roma (predominantly the Second World War and the Holocaust). The textbook analysis revealed that Roma representation is wanting, resulting in students either not learning about Roma or acquiring inaccurate knowledge and perceptions of Roma people, their history, culture, and role in society. It is important in framing the recommendations to emphasise that the findings vary between countries, thus the recommendations must be applied according to country specific contexts, levels of representations and existing practices to ensure adequate representation.

The scarcity of access to sources that appropriately represent Roma people, their history, culture, and role in society limits the ability of authors and publishing houses to improve the representation of Roma in textbooks. Meanwhile, experts on minority representation, as well as Roma organisations and community members, can contribute fundamentally to the development and validation of the sources and their use in textbooks. Based on the research findings and conclusions, the three main strategies to improve the representation of Roma in textbooks are to:

- increase the amount and quality of sources, as well as the pedagogical tools, in order to reach a more adequate representation of Roma, counter discrimination and stereotypes and promote equality;
- establish or improve processes for approving, evaluating, and screening textbook content to ensure that Roma representation is firstly included and not misrepresented, and secondly will promote anti-discrimination and equality;
- provide teacher training on classroom practices to ensure that textbook representations of Roma promote anti-discrimination and equality in the classroom.

### *National ministries of education*

The main actors in ensuring the representation of minorities within national curricula and textbooks are the respective Ministries of Education. They can ensure that a topic is taken up in the textbook by including it in the curriculum and in the criteria for approving textbooks for use in national education systems.

National ministries of education should:

- ensure that Roma are included in the development of curricula for relevant subjects as follows:
  - ensure curricular working groups include experts in minority representation and representatives of Roma civil society;
  - include minority representatives in the process of curriculum development and approval processes for history, social science and geography textbooks;
  - identify diverse thematic fields within the curricula development process as relevant for the representation of Roma.

- develop criteria and an approval process for textbooks aimed at including the necessary stipulations for the scope and depth of content about Roma communities. The criteria needs to clearly state that more than a passing mention of Roma is required and ensure that the representation considers the following:
  - that textbook references do not perpetuate the exclusion of Roma from national and international societies;
  - that textbook references do not stipulate opportunities for stereotypes, prejudice, and anti-Roma sentiment to be created or reinforced;
  - that Roma are mentioned as part of the social construction and identity of the country;
  - when images or descriptions of stereotypes are used/displayed in textbooks, include and reference pedagogical tools which effectively combat prejudice, discrimination, and anti-Roma sentiment;
  - that textbooks provide knowledge of what an individual or group can do when they experience or witness discrimination.
- provide an institutional process for teachers, students and parents to report misrepresentation of Roma within textbooks and instigate revisions. To ensure claims are addressed, the institutionalised process must include details on how claims will be investigated and how decisions will be taken regarding the necessity of corrections. The process of investigation must include experts in the representation of minority groups in education, as well as representatives of the Roma community.

### *Textbook authors and publishing houses*

The analysis within this report presented that there is representation of Roma within textbooks regardless of if the national curricula directs textbook authors and publishing houses to do so. These two actors in the textbook development and publishing process hold an immense capability to incorporate accurate and purposeful representation of Roma. In addition, textbook authors and publishing houses hold a large responsibility to ensure the sufficient and accurate representation of Roma.

Textbook authors and publishing houses should:

- include Roma organisations and authors in their authorship groups and networks;
- increase the number of references to Roma across different subjects, chapters, and topics, leading to more diverse references to Roma within a broader range of thematic fields, textbooks and curricula;
- increase efforts to use sources from outside of the current catalogue, which are evaluated and approved by experts on Roma history and culture;
- refer to individuals of Roma background or identity, to Roma initiatives struggling for rights and against discrimination and to the history of Roma communities in Europe and their contribution to arts, culture, science and politics;
- use alternative methods to develop sources, and especially to obtain historical sources, for example with alternative approaches to retrieving historical sources

like “oral history”.<sup>19</sup>

- improve pedagogical tools and develop clear goals in terms of critical thinking about racism and discrimination in order to prevent pedagogical tools from providing an opportunity to build or reinforce stereotyping or discrimination.

### *Civil society organisations*

Roma and non-Roma civil society plays a critical role in improving the representation of Roma in curricula and textbooks. These organisations provide assistance through in-depth and critical analysis of the representation of Roma, built upon their experiences in the field. Furthermore, these organisations can provide additional support to authors through the development of content, sources, other teaching materials, and teacher training. Their input can improve the extent and effectiveness of Roma representation in the classroom.

Roma and non-Roma NGOs and experts within a specific country may have experience in addressing issues of Roma misrepresentation in the classroom, society, and media. Incorporating this experience and knowledge into any reform process is critical in ensuring the adequacy and accuracy of representation.

Roma and non-Roma civil society organisations should:

- develop partnerships in order to produce and disseminate sources of information that would increase the extent of representation of Roma and reduce misrepresentation. In addition, it would be advantageous to advocate for the use of these sources among publishing houses and authors. The following list suggests strategies of how this can be achieved:
  - provide a list of experts in Roma history, geography and demographics, culture, and other topics such as poverty, education, discrimination, public health and the current social position of Roma across Europe, to textbook authors and publishing houses;
  - establish a database of visuals, sources, experts, and materials which authors, publishing houses, ministries, and schools can use to improve the representation of Roma in the classroom;
  - establish a relationship with publishing houses and authors and make agreements to provide them with, and help them locate, sources and images which accurately represent Roma.
- develop non-formal teaching and information material to complement textbooks in addressing the representation of Roma within the classroom, for example:
  - thematic teachers’ manuals and handbooks to supplement textbook material and for in-depth learning experiences;
  - teacher training programmes, workshops, and manuals using innovative pedagogic methods.

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<sup>19</sup> The conducting of oral history interviews is a method that allows access to unrecorded data from the past by collecting and recording memories and personal commentaries of historical significance.

Co-operation with other Roma and non-Roma organisations relevant for this work should be considered, for example, with ERIAC<sup>20</sup>, REF or Roma Archive<sup>21</sup>.

### *Academia*

Beyond documenting the limited and in some cases inaccurate representation of Roma in textbooks and curricula, the breadth of material and the large amount of data generated in the research presented in this analytical report indicates a need for further in-depth analysis of the representation of Roma in European textbooks. Meanwhile, the findings of the curricula and textbook survey provide a resource to gain a deeper understanding of how knowledge on Roma history, culture, demographics, and contemporary topics is produced and shared. The collection of references can serve further research on the topic and promote curricula and textbook reform within individual countries.

Future research is needed to:

- address how relative space is used, analysing references using methodologies that can provide an in-depth evaluation of the level of accuracy in the representation of Roma;
- carry out in-depth country-specific analysis that considers national textbook production cycles, curricula and textbook development processes and knowledge of the local stakeholders;
- investigate representations of Roma in curricula and textbooks with a comparative approach concerning nation states and subjects;
- investigate how the dominant narratives influence textbooks and how textbooks influence the dominant narrative concerning Roma;
- identify thematic fields with a potential to mention Roma in curricula and textbooks;
- provide knowledge, sources and pedagogical tools that are currently lacking, and which would allow for a more diversified representation of Romani history, culture, and contemporary social issues;
- identify, generate and test content and pedagogical tools to effectively address discrimination and marginalisation;
- increase the presence of authors, historians, and other producers of knowledge with expertise in Roma history, culture and contemporary social topics in existing European and national researchers' networks and authors' associations.

### *The Council of Europe*

The Council of Europe has an important role in promoting the teaching of Roma history, culture, and language in the framework of the inclusive education approach.

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20 <https://eriac.org/about-eriac>

21 <https://www.romarchive.eu/en>

The Council of Europe should support member states to implement Recommendation [CM/Rec\(2009\)4](#) of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the education of Roma and Travellers in Europe, especially Section III of the Recommendation:

### III. Curriculum, teaching material and teacher training

16. Intercultural learning and combating racism and discrimination should be explicitly recognised as priorities of the education process and should be a key element of school ethos. Curriculum, textbooks and other support materials should promote intercultural dialogue and raise awareness on stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination in general including against Roma and Travellers.
17. Roma history and culture should be appropriately reflected in the general curriculum, including teaching about the Roma extermination as part of the Holocaust/genocide of Roma.
18. In accordance with the provisions of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (1995) (ETS No. 157) and of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (1992) (ETS No. 148), curriculum and teaching materials should be made available, where appropriate, for Roma and Traveller children (and other children by choice) to learn their language, history and culture.
19. Educational authorities should ensure that all teachers, and particularly those working in ethnically mixed classes, receive specialised training on intercultural education, with a special regard to Roma and Travellers. Such training should be included in officially recognised programmes and should be made available in various forms, including distance and online learning, summer schools, etc.
20. Teachers working directly with Roma and Traveller children should be adequately supported by Roma or Traveller mediators or assistants and should be made aware that they need to engage Roma and Traveller children more in all educational activities and not de-motivate them by placing lower demands upon them and encourage them to develop their full potential.
21. Good practices based on an integrated whole-school approach, including training for school managers, teachers, mediators or assistants, activities targeting parents, measures to stimulate school participation at all levels, to prevent and combat segregation and discrimination in general, and to promote effective intercultural dialogue in the local community, should be taken as references and expanded.

The Council of Europe should:

- advise and guide the member states for the revision and/or replacement of school-books that negatively portray Roma or that reinforce stereotypes, together with the parallel inclusion of progressive representation of Roma in textbooks and curricula.
- establish or facilitate the establishment of a European network for Roma history and culture in textbooks;
- reinforce the implementation of the relevant legal texts and their monitoring, focusing on aspects related to the representation of Roma in the education curricula and text books, as well as on the education system in general.

## VI. Bibliography

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## VII. Appendices

Appendix 1: List of References to Roma in European Textbooks

Appendix 2: List of School Textbooks included in the Study

<https://repository.gei.de/handle/11428/306>

This analytical report is the result of a joint project between the Council of Europe, the Roma Education Fund and the Georg Eckert Institute for international textbook research which was carried out between 2016 and 2019 in order to analyse the representation of and references to Roma in curricula and textbooks currently in use in schools across Europe.

The curriculum research focuses on history, civics and geography, whilst the textbook analysis comprises both a quantitative analysis showing the frequency of references to Roma, as well as a qualitative overview in terms of history, demographics, culture and contribution to society amongst others.

The result is a comprehensive study on the portrayal of Roma in European curricula and textbooks upon which research-based recommendations are based. These recommendations are aimed at Council of Europe member states and their respective national ministries of education, authors and publishing houses, civil society organisations and academia and can serve as a foundation for future activities in order to ensure that the shortcomings outlined in this report are addressed.

[www.coe.int/roma](http://www.coe.int/roma)

ENG

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