

“IT’S IN THEIR BLOOD”. THE SECURITIZATION OF ROMA WESTWARD MIGRATION IN EUROPE

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“In Europe, Gypsies either have to stop being Gypsies (spatial control) or go and be Gypsies somewhere else (spatial exclusion)” (Bancroft, 2005: 122)

If recent debates have centered around the irregularization and border securitization against non-EU migrants in the EU (Jansen et al., 2015), especially in the context of the “refugee crisis”, less attention is paid to the irregularization of migration of EU citizens, such as Europe’s Roma minorities (van Baar, 2014a; van Baar, 2015). The paper aims to critically interrogate the processes of securitization, irregularization, criminalization and nomadization of recent Roma westward migration in Europe. By discussing the cases of France and Italy’s “securitization packages”, I will show that the “excessive mobility” of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) Roma is not the result of their alleged nomadic lifestyle but rather the outcome of policies of expulsion and “voluntary return schemes” put in place by Western governments. These policies reinforce the status of “third-country nationals” for the CEE Roma (although they are citizens of EU member states) and deepens the socio-political exclusion at a time when the European Commission (EC) and member states have put in place social inclusion policies that should have enhanced their European citizenship.

Keywords: securitization; Roma; migration; European Union; irregularization.

EUROPEAN UNION’S ROMANI GOVERNANCE: THE DOUBLE BIND

Since the fall of the Berlin Wall, the plight of Roma from CEE has been subjected to two rather ambivalent discourses and practices. On the one hand, numerous intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), such as the World Bank, United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the European Union, national governments and international human rights organizations have developed programs and policies dedicated to their societal participation, social inclusion, empowerment, and development of human and social capital.

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This involvement, triggered by a pan-European effort in order to “turn the tide” in favor of the Roma, is largely due to the post-socialist economic, social and political transformations that took shape in the region and which disproportionately affected the Roma minority compared to the majority populations or even the other co-minorities in the nation states that were to become members of the European Union (EU). The dire conditions they have faced during the first years of the transition to the market economy – mass unemployment, extreme poverty, discrimination in access to public services and xenophobic attacks – have drawn the attention of IGOs and non-governmental human rights organizations which took over the plight of the Roma by declaring it a “humanitarian emergency”. The Council of Europe (CoE), in its well-known resolution from 1993 has framed the Roma a “truly European minority” (Council of Europe, 1993) and the protection of human and minority rights became a key cornerstone of the Copenhagen criteria for EU membership (Council of European Union, 1993). Furthermore, the European Commission (EC) has devised policy instruments that will govern Roma’s social inclusion in CEE and since 2011, in all EU member states (*e.g.* European Commission, 2003; European Commission, 2010; European Commission, 2011; Open Society Institute, 2011).

On the other hand, after the EU accession of Romania and Bulgaria in 2007, the Roma were framed as a “European problem”. In particular, the mobility of Roma from CEE has been repeatedly labeled as “irregular” by Western political actors. This is because their migration pattern, pursuing fluctuating economic opportunities emerging in different member states (*e.g.* Voiculescu, 2014) is faster and rather short-termed, compared to that of non-Roma. The latter are much closer to the experiences of immigrants living in a certain region/ area, taking up formal jobs and forming lasting transnational communities (Sandu, 2010). The problematization of Roma migration in terms of “welfare scroungers” who do not want to work but prefer to live from illegal activities or as ‘nomads’ unable to integrate into European societies have prompted some Western governments to frame their migration as a problem of “national security” (Nacu, 2011; Parker, 2012; Parker and Toke, 2013; Pusca, 2012). Several decrees have been issued, for example, in Italy in 2008 and France in 2010, where by municipal authorities could expel migrants who posed problems of national security, prompting an ambiguous implementation of EU’s free movement directive (Directive 2004/38/EC). The cases of France and Italy are not singular, similar measures were taken in other EU Member States, such as Great Britain, Germany, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, and have attracted the attention of the mass media and caused reactions from EU institutions (Clark and Rice, 2012, van Baar, 2010).

The problematization of Roma mobility in terms of “excess mobility” or irregularity has allowed public authorities from several Western states to create a “state of exception” (Agamben, 2005) and to legitimize interventions and policies that contradict European regulations. As some authors argued (*e.g.* Kóczé, 2018;

Sardelić, 2017) the processes of irregularization and racialization (through the process of nomadization, meaning the permanent labeling of Roma mobility in terms of nomads referring to the stereotype of permanent Roma mobility, contrary to the norms of European populations) of Roma migration have the role of turning Roma into “unwanted migrants” and to limit the rights they are entitled to in the EU’s free movement directive.

The paper aims to critically interrogate these processes of securitization, irregularization, criminalization and nomadization of recent mobility of Roma to Western Europe. I discuss these processes of “izations” to show that their use by policy actors and politicians are not neutral but they refer to active processes of rendering the Roma in a given way in order to subject them to various practices. In doing so, I engage with an area of growing academic interest on “security studies” which embraced the concept of securitization in the 1990s to “study insecurities as the product of discourses which articulate phenomena (*e.g.* migration) as existential threats to a society, state, community, individual or systemic entity” (van Baar *et al.*, 2019: vi). Thus, the goal behind security studies is to show how a security interpretation of an issue (through discourses and practices) changes the way it is understood and addressed (Ceccorulli, 2010: 492). Further more, as Nicholas de Genova (2013) convincingly argued, discursive formations should not be seen as neutral instruments, but rather as “complexes of both language and image, of rhetoric [...] accusation and insinuation as well as the visual grammar that upholds and enhances the iconicity of particular fetishized figures of <illegal immigration>” (: 1181), which perpetuates the rhetoric of the need for stricter border control, the securitization of the borders and more draconian immigration laws (De Genova, 2013).

Thus, I will analyze the discourses, practices and policy measures through which Roma migration is permanently irregularized and securitized. It is more appropriate to discuss these processes in terms of irregularization of migration and not in those of irregular migration. The former can show how the discourses and policies of host countries redefine Roma migration from regular to irregular, thus producing the so-called “illegality” of the process and keeps the subjects (Roma in this case) in a permanent “state of deportability” (De Genova Nicholas, 2002, Sardelić, 2017).

This article is divided in four parts. In the first section, I present a short history of migration policies since the Schengen agreement in 1985 which re-articulated the EU as a space of freedom, security and justice. However, the Europeanization of migration and border policies did not lead to a “vanishing” of borders, but rather to a proliferation of border zones and practices of surveillance of particular suspicious groups from poor or marginalized neighborhoods (van Baar, 2014a). In the second section, I discuss the cases of France and Italy’s “securitization packages”, and I will show that the “excessive mobility” of CEE Roma is not the result of their alleged nomadic lifestyle but rather to the policies of expulsion and

“voluntary return schemes” put in place by Western governments, which reiterates the third-country nationals status of CEE Roma (although they are citizens of EU member states) and deepens the socio-political exclusion at a time when EC and member states have put in place social inclusion policies that would have enhanced their European citizenship. In the third section, I explore a specific construction of Roma mobility by security experts, which is the result of an alleged “nomadic culture”. Mobility is associated with criminality and justifies the creation of databases on ethnic criteria. Finally, in the conclusions, I suggest that the processes of irregularization (and other – “izations” discussed in this paper) have ultimately legitimized the placement of Roma in substandard, segregated housing and normalizes the development of a “reasonable anti-Gypsism” (van Baar, 2014b).

THE EUROPEAN UNION AS AN AREA OF FREEDOM, SECURITY AND JUSTICE: CRITICAL INTERPRETATIONS

There are mainly two sets of policies that have triggered EU’s migration policies and ultimately led to a re-articulation of the EU as an area of freedom, security and justice (Ceccorulli, 2010; Huysmans, 2006): a) the incorporation in the EU system of the Schengen agreement starting from 1985, as a first step in removing the national barriers, and ensure free movement within the EU (European Community at that time) and b) the establishment of the “Justice and Home Affairs policy” in 1992, which led to a further Europeanization of security, migration and border policies. Since then, the EU was re-conceptualized as an easy traversable space and the EU citizenship was based on the right of free movement (van Baar, 2014a).

Soon after initiating the Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) package through which migration became an explicit policy field of intergovernmental regulation, the EU policy makers and political actors became aware of the possible massive East-West migration and with the Treaty of Amsterdam (1999) moved migration policy from the third pillar to the first, and thus communitarised this process (Ceccorulli, 2010, Huysmans, 2000). As Huysmans argues (2000: 758), the securitization of migration during the 1990s was a spillover effect of the deeper Europeanization of the internal market which assumed that after the abolition of internal border controls, the transnational flows of goods, services, capital and people will challenge public order and the rule of law. Migration was securitized not only by political actors but also by a loose network of security professionals, mostly from intelligence services, police and customs, which acted as a bureaucratic field without being directly subordinated to a European institution (Bigo, 2008). This network produced the knowledge (identification of threats in the EU), which led to the Europeanization of JHA and the institutionalization of an internal security field in Europe.

Despite the fact that the EU has internally imagined itself as a “borderless” space, critical migration scholars (Bigo, 2008; Vaughan-Williams, 2008) have revealed how the vanquishing of physical borders has led to numerous and heterogeneous practices and techniques through which control at a distance is realized: *e.g.* the Schengen Information System (SIS), or through airline companies and airports, private security companies. The securitization of EU’s internal borders went hand in hand with the securitization of its external borders through the creation of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex). Even since its foundation, Frontex has many tasks related to the coordination of joint operations at the external borders of the Member States of the EU; trains and establishes standards for national border guards and provides risk analysis with possible impact on the security of the EU’s external borders (Léonard, 2010).

However, if recent debates have centered around the irregularization and border securitization of non-EU migrants in the EU (Jansen *et al.*, 2015), especially in the context of the “refugee crisis”, less attention is paid to the irregularization of EU citizens, such as Europe’s Roma minorities (van Baar, 2014a; van Baar, 2015). According to scholars such as van Baar and Mezzadra and Neilson, the Europeanization of migration and border policies did not lead to a “vanishing” of borders, but rather to a proliferation of border zones and “practices of controlling particularly suspicious population groups [from] ghettos, *banlieues* or poor neighborhoods” (van Baar, 2014a: 90; but also Mezzadra and Neilson, 2012), where many Roma migrants actually end up. As will be discussed in the next section, the migration of Eastern European Roma towards France and Italy has led to practices of securitization (fingerprinting, creation of databases, unfavorable regulations and laws) that shed light on the limits of EU migration policies, especially the application of the EU free movement directive.

THE SECURITIZATION AND IRREGULARIZATION OF ROMA MOBILITY IN ITALY AND FRANCE

Although after 2007, mass media was flooded with reports and images of Eastern European Roma (especially from Bulgaria and Romania) returning back to their home countries through the well-known “voluntary return schemes”, leading to an open conflict between the European Commissioner on Justice and some western governments, the postsocialist mobility of Eastern European Roma towards Western Europe started immediately after the fall of socialism. In the face of rising nationalism, xenophobic attacks and decreasing standards of living, many Roma fled to Western Europe in search of political asylum or better economic opportunities (Crowe, 2003; Matras, 2000). Then, governments and IGOs have examined the human rights and socio-economic situation of Roma in Eastern Europe and pressured national governments to increase their responsibilities towards Roma communities. As Guglielmo and Waters (2005) show, the Eastern

European Roma reached the agenda of IGOs “from an open concern with the potentially destabilizing effects of western migration” (: 763). However, their policies were rather Janus-faced, pushing the future EU candidate countries to implement laws protecting minority rights, while in the old member states, the policies addressed to the Roma minority retained their *status quo*.

In Italy, the irregularization of Roma mobility went hand in hand with their ghettoization and segregation. Since the 1990s, several regions in Italy have passed laws that were supposed to protect Roma’s “nomadic culture”. According to these laws, the Romani culture can be protected by building segregated camps at the outskirts of urban centers – the so-called *campi nomadi* – that allowed the Italian authorities to dismantle them at any time, making it difficult for Roma to become full-fledged members of the Italian society (Sigona, 2005). By building special places for nomads and travelers, these policies have spatially restricted mobility and maintained a ghettoization and segregation policy. Only in Rome, there were 18 institutional camps (in 2017) run by the municipality, inhabited by approximately 7000 Roma, one third of them Italian and the rest with other EU citizenship (Maestri, 2017). Although the Italian authorities acknowledge their dire conditions, they present the encampment as a temporary solution, but one that persisted over many years, making it difficult for the dwellers to access their rights and impeding their political participation.

The complex processes of inferiorization and even dehumanization of Roma in Italy have naturalized permanent violations of human rights by offering substandard housing, permanent surveillance and harassment of the nomad camps and even fingerprinting of Roma children. In the meantime, the original purpose of the Italian authorities’ policies to preserve the nomadic culture of the Roma was replaced by the isolation, repression, and political control of the *campi nomadi* (Kóczé, 2018; Picker, 2017). Angela Kocze critically argues that the permanent containment of Roma (Italian Roma but also Eastern European Roma) in the *campi nomadi*, or as she calls it in a state of “campzenship” and their permanent criminalization are meant to reiterate the state of insecurity and state of exception, that would ultimately legitimize and normalize precariousness and deprivation of the Roma (Kóczé, 2018: 470), who are often seen as an “abject citizens” (Hepworth, 2012), a personification of their Otherness.

The situation of Eastern European Roma has even worsened after 2008. In May 2008, the Berlusconi government passed a Decree declaring the “Nomads State of Emergency”, granting the prefects of Rome, Milan and Naples extensive powers, including fingerprinting of Roma minors and the removal (expulsion) of people with irregular status (Aradau *et al.*, 2010: 7; Hepworth, 2012). The security package proposed by the Berlusconi government was framed in terms of national security, acknowledging that EU citizens could reside freely in Italy only for three months, after which they would have to prove that they have sufficient financial resources, a health insurance and adequate housing, otherwise they could be expelled

on public security grounds (Aradau *et al.*, 2010). Although these conditions were in accordance with the EU free movement directive (European Commission, 2004: paragraph 22), the latter forbids the expulsion of EU citizens solely on economic grounds (burden to social assistance system) (European Commission, 2004: paragraph 16). This latter circumstance required the framing in terms of “public security” or “public health”.

In France, even as early as 2004, Interior Minister Nikolas Sarkozy has reached an agreement with the governments of Romania and Bulgaria by which Roma migrants could be repatriated to be integrated into the countries of origin (McGarry and Drake, 2013; Nacu, 2011). Furthermore, since 2007, Sarkozy has called for an annual quota of 25,000 expulsions of undeclared migrants, setting local quotas for each prefecture (Nacu, 2012: 1326). Following his famous speech in Grenoble in July 2010, in which Sarkozy (then president of France) promised tough measures to fight crime, delinquency and illegal immigration, a series of administrative and legislative measures were taken to dismantle and expel migrant camps and shacks on the outskirts of municipalities, inhabited by Roma from Eastern Europe. This was followed by their sending back to their home countries.

In only one year (2010–2011), more than 6,700 Romanian Roma from France were sent back in Romania through “voluntary return schemes”, while some media sources have reported 8,000 only in 2010 (Pantea, 2013: 35). Their mobility has been framed in cultural terms and the causes were placed on what has been interpreted as “Roma nomadic culture”. A member of the French Parliament, Jacques Myard, stated that the main “problem” of the European Roma is their practice of travelling freely in the EU and that their “excessive mobility” and “related medieval [life]style” cause serious security problems (in van Baar, 2011: 206). Only in 2010, the French government announced the dismantling of 300 Roma camps and sending back the Romanian and Bulgarian Roma (Kovats, 2012). In this context, the “voluntary return schemes” of Roma in Bulgaria and Romania in 2010 alarmed the EC Commissioner on Justice, Viviane Reding who accused France of violating the European directives on racial equality and the EU directive on free movement. Although the French government denied that the dismantling of the illegal camps was based on ethnic profiling, a leaked circular, issued by the Ministry of the Interior, revealed that Roma were the main targets of expulsion measures, the circular recommending prefects to take the necessary measures for dismantling illegal camps, especially those inhabited by Roma (McGarry and Drake, 2013; Nacu, 2012). And while the French authorities continued to violate European and national regulations by expelling European citizens from its territory, the EU announced the suspension of the investigation in October 2010 and President Sarkozy announced that the EU and the new member states should increase the efforts for domestic Roma integration.

These policies continued during left-wing president François Hollande. In September 2013, the Ministry of Interior, Manuel Valls declared that the Roma

“do not want to integrate” and that their lifestyle is in contradiction with the French’s. Strategies of criminalization and blaming the marginalized for their own problems (in this case, the Roma) are not novel, such strategies being applied to the poor more generally (Wacquant, 2009). Last but not least, in 2014, the French Senate drafted an anti-terror law which could ban EU nationals if their presence posed a serious threat to public order or security, because of their personal behavior (in van Baar, 2014a: 91).

The permanent criminalization and nomadization of Roma migration to Western Europe was also fueled by political leaders from Eastern Europe. During a working visit in Slovenia in 2010, following the expulsions of the Bulgarian and Romanian Roma from France, Romanian president Traian Băsescu voiced concern about Romania’s access to the Schengen Area due to the growing concern over Roma migration. According to him, Roma migration is due to their “nomadic culture” and their integration is difficult because “traditionally, many of them live from what they steal” (Mediafax, 2010). During the same speech delivered by President Traian Băsescu in 2010, he remarks (Mediafax, 2014) (*my translation*):

I have to say an essential thing – many important politicians make a confusion about the Roma. We cannot talk about all Roma. Those we see walking through Europe are nomadic Roma coming from Romania and other EU countries. Their cultural objective is to move from place to place. Romania has over one million integrated Roma, they are part of the Romanian society. What we have not succeeded in is the integration of nomadic Roma. Here we have to put ourselves, not only philosophically, but also practically the question: are we talking about integration or assimilation? To forbid them is to destroy one of the cultural pillars of the nomadic Roma.

In the same year, in a meeting with French Secretary of State Pierre Lellouche, Romanian Foreign Minister Theodor Baconschi expressed concern about the “biological” predisposition of Roma to criminal activities. The discourse from the Bulgarian political counterparts was not different. Bulgarian Prime Minister Boyko Borisov promised to send police forces to France to bring Bulgarian Roma back in handcuffs while Interior Minister Tsvetan Tsvetanov characterized the Roma community as an “incubator for crime” (Alexe and Zhelev, 2010).

A report from the European Roma Rights Centre (2012) has monitored the number of expulsions and camps dismantled by municipalities in France: 75% of the 741 illegal camps recorded in France in 2011 were dismantled. In the first nine months of 2010, 13,241 of the 21,384 foreign nationals expelled from France were Romanians and Bulgarians, of whom 6,562 Romanian citizens and 910 Bulgarian citizens were expelled by force. In 2011, more than 7400 Romanian citizens and 1,250 Bulgarian citizens received an expulsion order, while 2,700 Romanian citizens and 340 Bulgarian citizens had received expulsion orders in the first 3 months of 2012 (: 17–18).

Other research has highlighted the disciplinary character of the measures taken by Italian municipalities, focused on control and surveillance. In an ethnographic research conducted by Ana Ivasiuc (2015) in two reception centers in Milan and Rome (which replaced the camps dismantled by the Italian authorities), she pinpoints the mechanisms by which the Roma are politically contrived as “the paradigmatic other, <abject citizens> in opposition to everything which constitutes, in the public opinion, the modern, civilized world of Europe” (2015: 64). According to Ivasiuc (2015: 66):

Through processes of ethnicisation of crime and criminalization of Roma ethnicity, the construction of the Roma as the threatening Other is sustained and reinforced by an entire apparatus of securitization, comprising spaces (authorized or unauthorized camps), instruments (technologies of surveillance, profiling, as well as legal instruments used to legitimize certain undertakings of the authorities), acts (evictions, legislations, political mobilization, speech acts, visual and media representations) and routines of state bureaucrats, humanitarian organizations and security professionals involved in managing the “nomad” issues.

These mechanisms not only maintain an image of a nomadic identity in opposition to “civilized” Europe, but legitimize public authorities in providing low quality access to public services. For example, Ivasiuc (2015) notes that, in the two centers, housing conditions are offered by municipalities through overcrowded containers that do not comply with the housing legislation. Moreover, the centre in Rome is supervised by video but also by police cars, while the contact with the outside world is demarcated by a fence.

Thus, the irregularization of Roma migration, through the processes of nomadization, orientalization, securitization, by which the Roma are constructed as inferior, dangerous, prone to criminality has become an integral part of the legitimization strategies that treats Roma differently from the non-Roma and places the former in substandard, segregated housing, impedes their access to public services and normalizes their evacuations from homes or countries (see also van Baar, 2015; van Baar, 2017).

If Western political actors reiterate stereotyped and discriminatory images of the Roma by associating their migration with practices of exotic nomadism and illegal and criminal activities, most of the studies on Roma migration from CEE to Western and Northern Europe, reveal that the motivations of their migration is linked – as in the case of non-Roma as well – to the lack of better socio-economic conditions in the countries of origin and to the attempt to build a better future in the West. The research conducted by UNDP in 2013 pinpoints the push factors that determine the choice for emigration. Along with the higher share of inactivity (34%) among the Roma, they are overrepresented among the working poor. Almost half of the employed Roma (47%) earn less than \$ 4.3 per day/ PPC and 16% earn

even less than \$ 2.15 per day/PPC (Cherkezova and Tomova, 2013: 44). However, their socio-economic situation does not improve once migrating to countries like Italy or France. According to the study “Roma in Romania, Bulgaria, Italy and Spain, between Social Inclusion and Migration”, almost two-thirds of Roma migrating from Romania live in ghettos, shelters or temporary shacks in the countries of destination (Tarnovschi *et al.*, 2012: 83). Most of the Roma from Romania (73%) who migrated to Italy tried to apply for a work permit, for a social dwelling or to register children in kindergarten, but only 12% were helped by public authorities (Cherkezova and Tomova, 2013: 77). In France, most of the Roma from Romania (72%) did not try to access the services mentioned above, and 67% of those who tried did not receive assistance from the French public authorities (: 76). Roma migrants from the Paris camps live in extreme poverty without access to drinking water (98%), no indoor (98%) and outdoor (38%) without kitchen (78%) or shower / bathroom (100%), more than half without access to electricity (59%) or heating (69%) (: 91–92). Lack or small incomes and lack of employment opportunities lead them to practice dehumanizing activities, such as begging (71%) or waste collection and recycling (72%) (: 90). The relocation of the Roma in the so-called “*villages d’insertion*” did not facilitate their integration, as the name suggests, but rather “made social segregation more acceptable in the eyes of public opinion” (Bessone *et al.*, 2013: 188).

The aim of these descriptive data is not only to show that in most cases, migration does not improve Roma’s socio-economic status and access to public services, but also to pinpoint the complex relationship between mobility and security practices in some Western European member states. The permanent criminalization and resettlement/expulsion of Roma, as well as poor access to (quality) public services reveal that, despite the rhetoric of a “true European minority”, the Roma have to put in additional efforts in order for their European citizenship to be fully recognized.

THE RACIALIZATION AND CRIMINALIZATION OF WESTWARD ROMA MIGRATION BY SECURITY EXPERTS

A particular case that I want to discuss further is the relatively new interest shown by security experts from EU’s law enforcement agency, Europol, and also from government bodies or local municipality offices towards illegal activities undertaken by so called “itinerant criminal groups”. These are often equated with Roma migrants. Since 2010, Europol has set up a working task group dedicated to “the fight against criminal offenses committed by mobile itinerant criminal groups” (Council of European Union, 2012: 3). In the same year, during Belgium’s EU Presidency of the European Union’s Council, the issue of itinerant criminal groups was Europeanized through a report entitled “Tackling Itinerant Criminal Groups:

new challenges” (Commissioner General of the Belgian Federal Police, 2010). In the report, “itinerant criminal groups” were identified as BIRDs (*‘Bandes Itinérantes Rondtrekkende Dadergroepen’*), whose members “mainly originate from the former Eastern bloc countries” (Commissioner General of the Belgian Federal Police, 2010: 3). Furthermore they are “understood to be nomads from the former Yugoslavian Republic, Romania, France or Belgium. These people are actually people without homeland. In historic terms, this population came to Western Europe in large migration waves” (Commissioner General of the Belgian Federal Police, 2010: 10–11). Although, the Roma are not mentioned in the report, stating that they are “people without homeland”, who came to Western Europe in “large migration waves” makes reference to some well-known Roma stereotypes such as their nomadic culture and arrival in Europe from a supposed homeland in India (Matras, 2000).

Linking criminal activities with Roma became more evident in a report by Europol analyzing the EU’s internal security. According to the report, “Roma organized crime groups are extremely mobile, making the most of their *historically itinerant nature* [...] Given the size of the Roma communities in Bulgaria and Romania, the proposed accession of these countries to the Schengen Zone may prompt a further increase in trafficking of human beings by Roma organized crime groups” (Europol, 2011: 26). In this case, the EU has not only breached its own racial/ ethnic equality directive but has legitimized more or less legal practices of eviction, deportation, relocation or even fingerprinting of Roma groups, cases that I have discussed above.

Going down to the national level, many governments are reported to have used the new technologies to create databases regarding criminal activities on ethnic criteria. The French Gendarmerie had set up in 2010 a Central Office for the Fight Against Itinerant Delinquency that was proved to have targeted Roma and had developed a secret database entitled Minorities Ethnicities Non-Sedentary (MENS) – in which they had ethnically profiled Roma (van Baar, 2015: 76). The police from the Netherlands and Sweden are reported to have enforced the same practices (Kott, 2014; van Baar, 2014b).

CONCLUSIONS

With the EU accession of Romania and Bulgaria in 2007, the Roma Westward migration started being framed as a “European problem”. Several Western states have implemented security measures through which municipalities could expel migrant Roma from Bulgaria and Romania back to their countries of origin. Even though the migration of Roma from Bulgaria and Romania to countries such as Italy, France or Spain has accelerated since 2002 – with the elimination of the Schengen visa –, the governance of their mobility has been addressed differently before and after countries’ accession to the EU. If, prior to 2007, the migration

policy of Western states was based on “controlling at distance”, transferring responsibility for managing the migration flow to countries of origin that could control and filter migrants who moved Westwards (by punishing those which exceeded the three months of residence), after the EU accession of the two countries which granted freedom to travel within the EU, the focus has shifted to national governments and especially to local governments in the countries of destination.

Thus, since 2007, the migration of Roma from former CEE states has been permanently labeled as irregular and problematized in terms of “profiteers” and welfare scroungers and whose nomadic lifestyle is simply incompatible with the norms of Western European societies. Emphasizing the differences between “outsiders” Roma and the “normal” Europeans reiterates prejudices and low expectations and, as Martin Kovats argues, the alterity argument is used to explain Roma poverty, social tension and conflicts, migration and the failure of integration initiatives (2003: 2).

Nomadization and the criminalization of Roma mobility from CEE have legitimated the measures for the dismantling of Roma-inhabited camps (many of them having a long period existence) and the expulsion of Roma from the territory of the national states. The containment of Roma migrants in ghettos, *village d’insertion* or *campi nomadi* and the constant criminalization of their economic activities maintains the state of exception and insecurity that impedes the political recognition of most of the Roma migrants.

The processes of irregularization (and other – “izations” discussed in this paper) have ultimately legitimized the placement of Roma in substandard, segregated housing, and providing precarious access to health services and education. Recent studies on the Westward migration of Romanian and Bulgarian Roma reveal that their socio-economic situation is far from improving. Much of this dire situation is due to local authorities who refuse to facilitate access to basic public services. The problematization of Roma’s weak/poor social inclusion in behavioral terms – unable to integrate, having a nomadic, medieval lifestyle, and a preference to live from illegal activities – tends to depoliticize the complex histories of inequality, segregation, socio-economic and political marginalization, which have historically characterized Roma communities. The permanent reproduction of these stereotypes and prejudices through the media as well as through official state policies reinforces the emergence of a “reasonable anti-gypsism”. This mainly refers to (van Baar, 2014b: 30):

A widely supported movement among non-Roma [which] seeks retaliation under the pretext that the Roma frequently exhibit undesirable behavior. The argument goes that you are rightfully entitled to act against the Roma and treat them differently, because they cause inconvenience, indulge in criminal activity and can generally be expected to cause trouble. It is not ‘we’, but ‘they’ who violate rights and fail in their duties.

Last but not least, we should critically interrogate the new practices, mechanisms and discourses of securitization and bordering that have proliferated with the elimination of physical borders (through the Schengen Treaty) and their ambiguous effects on the mobility of intra-European migrants, such as the Roma. The Europeanization of migration policies and border securitization went hand in hand with a re-territorialization of borders, from the physical lines that demarcated the nation-states to border zones, ghettos, semi-segregated areas, neighborhoods inhabited by poor individuals and people racialized along ethnic or religious lines (see van Baar, 2014a).

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Deși cele mai recente dezbateri discută procesele de iregularizare și securitzare a granițelor îndreptate spre migrații din afara UE (Jansen et al., 2015), mai ales în contextul „crizei refugiaților”, mai puține studii discută procesele de iregularizare a migrației cetățenilor europeni, așa cum sunt minoritățile rome din Europa (van Baar, 2014a, van Baar, 2015). Studiul discută critic procesele de securitzare, iregularizare, criminalizare și nomadizare a migrației recente a romilor spre Vestul Europei. Prin analiza „pachetelor de securitate” puse în aplicare în Italia și Franța, voi arăta că ‘mobilitatea excesivă’ a romilor din Centrul și Sud-Estul Europei nu se datorează unui așa zis stil de viață nomad, ci sunt mai degrabă rezultatul politicilor de expulzare și a „schemelor de repatriere voluntară”, implementate de guvernele din Vestul Europei, care reiterează statutul de cetățeni de rang trei al romilor (deși sunt cetățeni ai țărilor state membre) și adâncește exclusiunea socio-politică în același timp în care Comisia Europeană și statele membre au dezvoltat politici de incluziune socială care ar trebui să le potențeze cetățenia europeană.

Cuvinte-cheie: securitzare; Roma; migrație; Uniunea Europeană; iregularizare.

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