

# POTENTIAL FACTORS OF GENDER INEQUALITIES IN MIGRATION FLOWS. THE CASE OF ROMANIAN ROMA IN ITALY AND SPAIN<sup>1</sup>

IONELA VLASE

*R*omanian migration flows knew a tremendous increase after the fall of communism in 1989. However, Romanian citizens didn't participate to migration process to the same extent, irrespective of their age, gender or ethnicity. Important inequalities affect migrants' profiles. This paper will highlight inequalities particularly with respect to gender and ethnic dimensions of Romanians participating in the process of labour migration.

Main destination countries of Romanian migrants are Italy and Spain. These receive almost two thirds of Romanians abroad. Based on bivariate analyses carried out on data from EU-inclusive survey 2011, it is shown that Romanian Roma's access to resources enabling migration after 1990 was influenced by gender. A particular attention will be paid to the gender inequalities among Roma migrants pertaining to differences in education, access to jobs, and attribution of caretaking roles by virtue of their gender norms, further revealing the vulnerability of Roma women with respect to their access to global labour market and to social services in the destination countries. Furthermore, policies toward immigrants also affect differently these migrant groups across countries of destination.

**Keywords:** inequalities, gender, Roma, migration.

## INTRODUCTION

The links between migration and inequality have long been addressed by migration scholars (Adams, 1992; Black et al., 2006; King and Vullnetari, 2003). The relationship between inequality and migration is complex. It is commonly assumed that migration is driven by international and domestic inequalities, but

---

**Adresa de contact a autorului: Ionela Vlase**, Institutul de Cercetare a Calității Vieții al Academiei Române, Calea 13 Septembrie, nr. 13, sector 5, 050711, București, România, e-mail: vlase.ionela@gmail.com.

<sup>1</sup> This work was supported by a grant of the Romanian National Authority for Scientific Research, CNCS – UEFISCDI, project number PN-II-RU-TE-2011-3-0104. An earlier version of this paper was distributed within the ESA-RN35 midterm conference *Managing migration in a world of economic crisis with new profiles of migrants*, held in Paris, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> September 2012, CERI- CNRS. The author wishes to thank Iuliana Precupețu and journal's anonymous referee for their helpful comments and suggestions.

migration may sometimes lead to rising economic and gender inequalities within communities, as it was shown, for instance, in Albania (Mai, 2001). It is also widely held within the migration literature that those who participate in migration are usually people with relatively better socio-economic status (Black et al., 2006; Nyberg-Sorensen et al., 2002). However, the ethnic and gender dimensions have not received sufficient consideration in the migration/inequality nexus. In this paper I draw on a broader understanding of inequality, as it has been conceptualised by Black and his colleagues:

*... inequality needs to be defined in broader terms than simply income or wealth. Inequality, like poverty, is multi-dimensional, and can be measured at individual, household, regional and international levels. There are socio-cultural dimensions to inequality, as well as inequalities in access to power, whilst all aspects of inequality are highly gendered (Black et al., 2006: 2).*

In taking on this conceptualization, I will seek to highlight the gender and ethnic inequalities structuring the process of migration by Roma from Romania toward Western European countries. In line with Faist (2010), I consider that “of central importance for the production of inequalities are the intersectional patterns of heterogeneities along the hierarchies of markers such as ethnicity, gender, and class” (Faist, 2010: 308). From this point of view it becomes legitimate to ask whether Romanian Roma, men and women, belonging to a lower social layer, due to their poor educational stock and lack of jobs, face different opportunities and constraints throughout the migration process. These opportunities and constraints may however unevenly affect subgroups of Roma in the decision-making of migration, the propensity to migrate and the decision with respect to settlement in the destination country or the return. The present paper aims to examine some of the factors having a potential bearing on migration inequalities among Romanian Roma living in Italy and Spain.

Individuals/households or groups in highly precarious living conditions are usually considered less likely to participate in migration because of their lack of socio-economic capital needed in order to travel across borders. The migrant network in which one is embedded is also likely to lower the costs and risks of an irregular migration (Massey et al., 1993). Roma may be, therefore, disadvantaged in this selection process, since this ethnic group is characterized by poverty, social exclusion, and faces discrimination in relation to all the life domains (e.g., education, labour, housing, etc.). Roma in Romania constitute one of the most vulnerable and poor groups (Zamfir and Zamfir, 1993; Crowe, 2003). The poverty of this ethnic group is often compounded by the low education or lack of it, especially among Roma women (Ionescu and Cace, 2006), and by poorer migration experience compared with the mainstream population. However, migration of Roma from Romania has grown steadily, at the same pace as the migration of mainstream population. As shown by Pantea (2012) in a research she conducted in six different

communities from Transylvania, Roma seem most likely to rely on ethnic segregated networks, and the success of male and especially female migration depends on the establishment of these networks. The more developed these family or community networks across the borders, the lower are the risks of deceitful recruitment of Roma newcomers by migrant brokers. There are several cases when Roma migrants are recruited and sent abroad to work in agriculture without any pay (Pantea, 2012), or fall victim of human trafficking. In addition, Pantea's research also lends some support for the idea that for some Roma women in particular, migration may lead to a disconnection from the social network of support at home. With the onset of Roma migrant networks, the costs of the irregular migration decreases, enabling an increasing number of persons from Roma communities to migrate. Romania has one of the world's largest Romani populations, currently estimated between 1.4 million and 2.5 million (Crowe, 2003). This estimate of Roma population in Romania is not accurate. Another researcher ranges this population from 535 thousands individuals to 968 thousands (Sandu, 2005), while provisional data from latest National Population Census (2011) indicates that 619 thousands persons declared that they are Roma.

At present, about 2.8 million<sup>2</sup> Romanians are known to live outside their home country (approximately 14% percent of the country's population). Fleck and Rughiniş (2008) show that, although a larger share of Romanian Roma would like to migrate abroad, this ethnic group does not migrate at a greater extent than the mainstream population, in spite of their growing visibility in destination countries where it raises media and policy debates. Their migration in large families and their occupations as street musicians or beggars make them also more visible than other migrant ethnic groups.

The mechanism of selection seems to work in different ways for the Roma. We are, therefore, interested in these mechanisms and the other factors affecting both migrants' profiles and Roma migrants' integration in destination countries. Our main focus will be on Romanian Roma migrants living in Spain and Italy, special attention being paid to gender issues among the samples of Roma migrant groups from the destination countries. The research question is whether migration in Italy reinforces gender disadvantages for Roma women to a greater extent than in Spain. The article is structured as follows: it continues with a description of the sample and then provides the main results of the bivariate analyses, in order to highlight the major differences by gender among Roma in education, housing, occupations and so on. These differences are allegedly potential factors leading to inequalities, since education, housing, occupation are important stakes in allowing/denying access to material and symbolic resources that count for the betterment of migrants' quality of life. The paper ends up with some discussion of these findings, and calls for a more fine-grained understanding of Roma migrant sub-groups. These findings should

---

<sup>2</sup> According to *The migration and remittances factbook 2011* of the World Bank, available online at <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTLAC/Resources/Factbook2011-Ebook.pdf>.

further call into question the migration policies in order to adjust to a diverse migrant population and to accommodate the specific needs of these migrant groups.

### ABOUT THE SAMPLE

The analysis is performed on data stemming from EU-Inclusive survey carried out in 2011 by Soros Foundation Romania in partnership with Open Society Institute-Sofia (Bulgaria), Fundación Secretariado Gitano (Spain) and Fondazione Casa della Carità *Angelo Abriani* (Italy) through a POSDRU financial project POSDRU/98/6.4/S/63841. The survey was carried out in Romania, Bulgaria, Italy and Spain according to the following methodology:

*The subjects of the research were self-identified Roma, 16+ year old, citizens of previous mentioned countries, but also Roma migrants in Spain and Italy. In each of the four countries (Romania, Italy, Bulgaria, and Spain) a statistically representative sample of indigenous Roma (defined as Roma with the respective citizenship) was realized. In addition, in Spain and Italy were realized exploratory samples of Roma migrants (defined as Roma with different citizenship, but living in the respective country) (Tarnovski, 2012: 11).*

For the purpose of the present study I have selected from the aggregated sample only those persons who were Romanian Roma in Italy and Spain, and obtained a sub-sample of 645 individuals<sup>3</sup>. The probabilistic method of sampling was used, multi-stage and stratified, with stratification during its first stage (Tarnovski, 2012). In Spain, 260 Romanian Roma were interviewed face-to-face at the migrants' homes. Likewise, in Italy, there were another 388 Roma migrants from Romania who were also interviewed face-to-face at their homes.

### **Socio-demographic characteristics of Roma migrants in Italy and Spain**

Of the total sub-sample of Romanian Roma migrants, 60% were interviewed in Italy and the remaining 40% in Spain. In Italy, the biggest share of the interviews was conducted in Lazio (16%), because the largest Roma migrant population is there, followed by regions of Campania and Lombardy. In the Italian sub-sample there were 48% men and 52% women, while in the Spanish sub-sample there were 50% women and 50% men. In the pooled sample of Roma migrants in Spain and Italy, the minimum age is 16 years and the maximum is 70 years old, the mean age being 33 years old, 78% of Roma migrants being less than 40 years old. However, with

---

<sup>3</sup> Further details about the methodology of the EU-INCLUSIVE survey are available in Tarnovski (2012) *op. cit.*

regard to the distribution of migrants by age categories in each country under scrutiny, we may find some differences. In Italy, Roma migrants are relatively younger than in Spain, statistically significant differences being recorded in the categories of those aged between 16 and 29 years old, respectively 50 to 59 years old. For instance, about half of Roma migrants in Italy belong to the youngest age category, compared to 36% of Roma subsample in Spain. These age differences in migration selection may be linked to the unequal opportunity to entitlements of migrants to social benefits across countries of destination. According to ongoing qualitative research and interviews that have been conducted by the author among Roma migrants returned from Italy and Spain, it appears that some older Roma migrants in Spain receive financial support amounting to 400 euros, in the absence of other incomes.

Table 1

**Distribution of Roma migrants by age categories in Italy and Spain**

	<b>Italy</b>	<b>Spain</b>
16 to 29	<b>49%</b>	<b>36%</b>
30 to 39	34%	29%
40 to 49	12%	18%
50 to 59	<b>4%</b>	<b>14%</b>
60 and older	2%	2%
<i>N</i>	388	257

Source: EU-INCLUSIVE survey 2011. The author used chi-square test and adjusted residual values for testing the significance of differences within cells. The significant differences are in bold characters.

With regard to their marital status, most migrants in both countries of destination are married. The category of single persons comes on second place in Spain, while in Italy those living together constitute the second largest category among Romanian Roma migrants. The other categories (divorced, widow/er, or separated) are marginal, as we can see from the table below.

Table 2

**Roma migrants by marital status (in %)**

<b>Marital status</b>	<b>Italy</b>	<b>Spain</b>
Single	15	16
Married	59	57
Living together	20	14
Widow/-er	3	2
Divorced	1	3
Separated	2	7
<i>N</i>	388	257

Source: EU-INCLUSIVE survey 2011 The author used adjusted residuals values for testing the significance of differences within cells. The significant differences are in bold characters.

The majority of Roma migrants in the sample has an urban background, most of them living in suburbs of cities in Romania, regardless of their gender. In the host countries, migrants usually live with their spouses, as Roma migration has been characterized in the literature as a family migration. For instance, some authors, based on Gamella (2007)'s paper, stress that:

*Romani migration to Western Europe is characterised by being a family journey and [that] it is uncommon to find males or females who migrate by themselves. Thus, it is a migration flow more equally distributed between men and women than in other immigrant groups (Sordé et al., 2012: 1239).*

Although some researches may convey an image of Roma migrants as more homogenous with respect to the composition by gender, (Pantea, 2012), among others, raise doubts about this shared belief and calls for the consideration of many factors affecting Roma migrants' profiles even within categories like gender. Roma migrant women don't make up a homogenous group, and therefore it becomes necessary to deal with various categories that intersect with gender and result in various Roma migrants groups. On the grounds of intersectionality approach theorized by Kimberlé Crenshaw (2003), Pantea (2012) rightly argues that: 'There is always a complex interplay of various elements, besides gender, at work' and therefore an 'intersectional approach (is) capable of giving due value to the dynamics of ethnicity, gender, but also class, urban/ rural residency or marital status' (Pantea, 2012: 20).

### **Roma migration and gender differences**

With concern to the educational level by gender, Roma migrants in Italy and Spain seem to be unevenly distributed across the educational categories<sup>4</sup>. In Italy, the Roma migrants are more likely to be negatively selected with regard to the educational attainment, and the gender gap is relatively higher than in Spain. As shown in *Table 3*, about 30% of Roma migrants in Spain have reached at least a professional degree, compared with only 10% of Roma migrants in Italy. Moreover, for instance, in Italy 42% of women have no education at all, compared to 30.6% in Spain, the difference being statistically significant. Likewise, a greater share of male migrants in Italy has a professional degree, while only 2% of women do hold

---

<sup>4</sup> The author has recoded the educational level for Roma migrants in Spain into a narrower range of categories according to the Italian classes of education because it was not possible to obtain the information from the dataset for a larger number of categories of education included in the Spanish sample and also because for some initial categories of the Spanish dataset the number of cases was insignificant (less than five). Therefore the category *incomplete primary school* was recoded as *none* since the question referred to the highest level of education reached by the respondent. The categories of *completed highschool*, *postprofessional or technical speciality* and *University degree* were recoded into *at least highschool (reached)*.

a professional qualification. Female migrants are less educated than their male counterparts, with 70% of women having no education or only elementary education.

Table 3

**The differences in the highest level of education reached by migrants, according to gender**

	Italy			Spain		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
None	<b>30.6%</b>	<b>42.1%</b>	36.6%	32.6%	32.0%	32.3%
Elementary degree (reached)	19.9%	27.7%	24.0%	25.6%	32.0%	28.8%
Middle school degree (reached)	34.4%	25.7%	29.9%	<b>5.4%</b>	<b>12.5%</b>	8.9%
High school degree (not reached)	3.8%	1.5%	2.6%	24.0%	15.6%	19.8%
Professional degree	<b>9.1%</b>	<b>2.0%</b>	5.4%	<b>10.9%</b>	<b>3.1%</b>	7.0%
High school degree (reached)	2.2%	1.0%	1.5%	1.6%	3.9%	2.7%
<i>N</i>	186	202	388	129	128	257

Source: EU-INCLUSIVE survey 2011. The author used chi-square test and adjusted residual values for testing the significance of differences within cells. The significant differences are in bold characters.

In Spain, Roma migrants from Romania are more evenly distributed across educational categories. Migrants there are more educated than Romanian Roma in Italy, and the gender gap is less important within most educational categories.

A possible explanation of the better educational status of migrants in Spain could be linked to the residency of Roma migrants in their home country. In Italy, Roma are coming most often from suburban and extreme periphery (78% of migrants in Italy, compared to 49% in Spain), and we may infer that their access to school and local infrastructure might be difficult. As pointed out by Sandu (2005), people living in such peripheral areas are most likely to live in extreme poverty, further limiting the possibility of attending school for members of these communities.

Table 4

**Migrants houses location in the home country, by country of destination**

	Italy	Spain
Rural areas, in a small village	3,4	5,9
Rural areas, in the neighbours of a small village	<b>12,4</b>	<b>2,7</b>
Urban areas, right in the middle	<b>5,9</b>	<b>44,5</b>
Urban areas, in the suburbs	50,5	44,9
Urban areas, in the extreme periphery	<b>27,8</b>	<b>2,0</b>
<i>N</i>	388	257

Source: EU-INCLUSIVE survey 2011. The author used chi-square test and adjusted residual values for testing the significance of differences within cells. The significant differences are in bold characters.

One third of each gender in the sub-samples of migrants in Spain and Italy has lived in cities counting more than 250.000 inhabitants. With some exceptions,

Roma migrants have attended school in Romania. Only 25 men and 10 women among the Roma migrants in Italy stated they attended school in the host country. These are usually young migrants (most of them being aged between 16 and 20 years) and they do not have a steady work in Italy. As expected, these persons have entered Italy when they were very young, through family reunification, mostly before 2007. However, further results of the bivariate analysis show important gender inequalities in access to work, housing, use of social services in host countries, but the situation is not always similar between Italy and Spain.

### GENDER INEQUALITIES IN ROMA MIGRATION ACROSS DESTINATION COUNTRIES

One of the most discussed issue when dealing with labor migration, a category of migration where Roma migrants are likely to fall into, is the access to work in the host country. Data from the EU-inclusive survey enables us to compare the economic status of migrants by gender and across countries of destination. It appears that in Spain, Roma migrants, both men and women, seem to enjoy a relatively better economic integration, and women participate in the labour market almost to the same degree as their male counterparts. However, in Italy, statistically significant gender differences are revealed, as shown in the following table.

*Table 5*

**Economic performance of Roma migrants in Italy within the last two years**

In the last two years you have been working...	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
Steadily	<b>20.0%</b>	<b>10.4%</b>	15.0%
Periodically, for long periods of time	<b>20.0%</b>	<b>7.0%</b>	13.1%
Sporadically for short periods of time	25.6%	22.9%	24.1%
Never	<b>34.4%</b>	<b>59.7%</b>	47.8%
<i>N</i>	180	201	381

*Source: EU-INCLUSIVE survey 2011. The author used chi-square test and adjusted residuals values for testing the significance of differences within cells. The significant differences are in bold characters.*

From the above table we learn that in Italy one third of Roma men never worked during the last two years, while the share of women who never worked during the same period is much larger (60%). A similar gender gap seems to exist among those who had a steady job during the last two years, with men being twice more likely than women to hold a job. In Spain<sup>5</sup>, however, in spite of the fact that a relatively smaller share of the total sample (13%) had a steady job compared with

<sup>5</sup> The crosstab for Spain is not presented here since no statistically significant gender differences are found.



the sample of migrants in Italy, the gender differences are narrower. First, there are only smaller shares of migrants (men and women) who never worked during the last two years (20%, respectively 28%), and the gender gap in respect to each category of economic performance is less critical. Taking this question a step further, most of those migrants who do not work (that is 257 persons in Italy and 117 in Spain) said they tried to find work during the past four weeks (49% in Italy and 60% in Spain). About 12% in each country stated that they do not wish to work. The remaining shares of those who do not currently work said that they have not searched for jobs, even if they would like to work (39% in Italy and 28% in Spain). Therefore, Roma migrants in Spain seem more active in searching for jobs than their counterparts in Italy. This evidence led us to think about reasons that may discourage people to find work, despite their willingness to participate in the labour market. Thus, concerning those inactive migrants who didn't seek work during the last four weeks, even if they wanted to work (120 persons in Italy and 48 in Spain), there are also important differences with respect to their reasons to do so: among women in Italy, the most frequently mentioned reason is that of family/personal obligations that prevent them to seek work, followed by those women who previously tried to find work and were discouraged, thinking that they would not find work anyway. Men often cite this latter reason, followed by the reasons of studies or trainings preventing them to search for jobs. In Spain, among men not searching for jobs, the reason mentioned most often is also the belief that they wouldn't find work based on their personal experience in searching for jobs, that is, that their previous job searches yielded no results. The second reason mentioned by men is disability. Unlike women, no men in these subsamples mentioned the reason of the personal or family obligations hindering their searching for jobs, which confirms the prevalent caretaking role of women in the family, preventing them to actively search for employment opportunities. In migration, this is compounded by gender segregation operating in the labour market, and by ethnic hierarchies employers often conceal behind their logic of selecting their employees. Such hierarchies are discussed in the literature on labour migration, especially with reference to women domestic servants in Italy (Andal, 2003), but we may presume that in other sectors hierarchy is also present, since there are wide shared stereotypes (e.g., the Polish plumber) referring to ethnic or national belonging of migrants filling specific sectors of labor market in host countries.

Another explanation of the variation in the economic performance of Roma men and women in Spain and Italy may be grounded in the observation of the number of persons under age 16 sharing the house with the migrants. As shown in *Table 6*, migrants in Italy are living in larger domestic units, often comprising more than two persons under the age of 16. This situation may compell women to carry out domestic chores and caretaking activities, and limit their possibilities of searching for jobs.

Table 6

**Number of persons under age 16 living with the migrants, by country of destination**

<b>Number of persons</b>	<b>Italy</b>	<b>Spain</b>
None	<b>22.7%</b>	<b>31.5%</b>
One person	23.2%	26.1%
Two persons	24.7%	24.9%
More than two persons	<b>29.4%</b>	<b>17.5%</b>
<i>N</i>	388	257

*Source: EU-INCLUSIVE survey 2011. The author used chi-square test and adjusted residuals values for testing the significance of differences within cells. The significant differences are in bold characters.*

Only around 10% of the sample reported that they had left children behind in Romania, and these figures may lend support to the hypothesis often suggested by scholars that Roma migration is a family rather than an individual project.

Aside from these gender inequalities among Roma migrants pertaining to differences in education, access to jobs, and attribution of caretaking roles by virtue of their gender norms, there are also structural factors present in the host country that may enable or discourage these migrants to find work and try to integrate. One indication of the degree of inclusion/exclusion of migrants in the society of destination may be the perceived level of discrimination. If we take into account the subjective indicator of the perceived discrimination against Roma compared to 10 years ago, we can observe significant differences between Italy and Spain, as shown in *Table 7*.

Table 7

**Level of perceived discrimination against Roma in host countries**

	<b>Italy</b>	<b>Spain</b>
More	<b>49.8%</b>	<b>35.3%</b>
Equally	36.2%	39.2%
Less	<b>14.0%</b>	<b>25.4%</b>
<i>N</i>	329	232

*Source: EU-INCLUSIVE survey 2011. The author used adjusted residuals values for testing the significance of differences within cells. The significant differences are in bold characters.*

In Italy, about half of persons who perceived themselves as discriminated against compared with the past stated that the level of discrimination perceived by the individual against him/herself personally increased, while in Spain about two thirds of the people who perceive some discrimination feel that they are, however, equally or less discriminated compared with the past years. Furthermore, in Spain, unlike in Italy, some scholars (Sordé et al., 2012) have recently shown that Roma women, migrants and natives, develop social networks that improve the communication and

interpersonal support. These, in turn, help them share personal experiences, enhance their social capital, and overcome stereotypes:

*These encounters between Gitano native and Romani immigrant women have led to many transformations. They have helped to break down the stereotypes and prejudices that native Romani people hold about immigrant Roma, overcoming situations of exclusion and power relationships. Second, they promote equality; they aim to create social capital for both native and immigrant Roma, by interacting with civil society and finding services that promote access to basic rights. Third, they are spaces where gender relationships within the Roma community can be discussed based on their respect for the common cultural traits that are part of Romani identity. The importance of having women-only spaces was emphasised by many of the study participants, not for the purpose of excluding men, but to promote a process of mutual self-empowerment among Romani women in many different ways (Sordé et al., 2012: 1242).*

Based on data from the EU-Inclusive survey, we can lend some support for the relative better position of Roma migrant women in Spain compared with their counterparts in Italy, although the differences are not statistically significant. When asked about the perceived level of discrimination against Roma, a larger share of migrant women in Spain compared with women in Italy agreed that there is less discrimination than 10 years ago. Women in Italy felt more discriminated compared with men (55%, respectively 44%), and overall, half of the migrant sample in Italy perceives a higher discrimination in the present compared to the past.

Social ties and social mechanisms can therefore improve the situation of Roma migrants in countries of destination and the lack of such social ties is likely to worsen it. If we look at the composition of migrants' networks of friends across countries of destination, we also find interesting differences between men and women. Overall, Roma migrants in Italy have mostly or exclusively friends from their ethnic group (58%), compared with Roma migrants in Spain where only 32% said to have predominantly or exclusively Roma friends. Moreover, statistically significant differences between men and women appear among migrants in Spain who stated that they have predominantly friends from their ethnic group but also some friends from different ethnic groups. In Italy, a large share of women (29%) said that they have friends only from their ethnic group, compared to their male counterparts. Likewise, significant differences in Italy are recorded among migrants who say that the ethnicity it is not important for establishing friendship ties (almost half of men approved, compared to 35% of women). Women in Italy seem, therefore, to live in a situation of ethnic closure, with very limited contacts

outside their migrant group. The difference is important when compared with men of their migrant group, and even more striking when compared with the share of Roma migrant women from Spain.

Table 8

**Migrants' friends according to their belonging to the ethnic group,  
by gender and destination country**

	Spain		Italy	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
From my ethnic group only	16.4%	14.1%	<b>18.0%</b>	<b>29.0%</b>
Predominantly from my ethnic group, but also I have friends from other ethnic group	<b>23.4%</b>	<b>10.2%</b>	33.3%	35.5%
The ethnic group of my friends does not matter for me	59.4%	68.0%	<b>47.0%</b>	<b>35.0%</b>
I do not have close friends	<b>.8%</b>	<b>7.8%</b>	1.6%	.5%
<i>N</i>	128	128	183	200

*Source: EU-INCLUSIVE survey 2011. The author used chi-square test and adjusted residuals values for testing the significance of differences within cells. The significant differences are in bold characters.*

Another significant difference between countries of reception rests on the access of Romanian Roma migrants to social assistance or social services. Aside from the informal help received from networks of friends, an important indicator of migrants' integration is the assistance by local institutions and organizations in the host countries. In Spain, again, Roma migrants seem to be in a better position, compared to Roma migrants in Italy, where only 65% of migrants have received various kinds of help from organizations or institutions, compared to 87% in Spain.

Table 9

**Since you live in Italy/ Spain, have you ever received help  
from some institution or other organization?**

Received help	Italy	Spain
No	35.2%	13.2%
Yes	64.8%	86.8%
<i>N</i>	381	257

*Source: EU-INCLUSIVE survey 2011.*

In spite of a lower degree of inclusion into Italian society, as indicated by the poor connections migrants have with other people than the members of their ethnic group or by the lesser help received from Italian institutions/organizations, Romanian Roma migrants seem to project their plans of permanent settlement at least to the same extent as Romanian Roma in Spain, as we can see from the following table.

Table 10

**How long do you think of staying in the country of destination?**

	<b>Italy</b>	<b>Spain</b>
Less than one year	<b>6.7%</b>	<b>2.8%</b>
1–5 years	<b>13.1%</b>	<b>22.8%</b>
5–10 years	19.1%	17.9%
Forever	61.1%	56.5%
<i>N</i>	314	246

Source: EU-INCLUSIVE survey 2011. The author used chi-square test and adjusted residuals values for testing the significance of differences within cells. The significant differences are in bold characters.

The only significant differences between the host countries are found in the first two categories of the variable *how long do you think of staying in Italy/Spain*. In the long run, Roma migrants both in Spain and Italy envisage to settle down in the host country. This might be so because, as hard as their integration may be in host countries, Roma flee the more difficult economic and social situations in their origin country, as it was argued at the beginning of this paper.

As a final remark, in both countries of destination, language appears to be the most important perceived difficulty, with women being more than men aware about this difficulty, especially in Spain (67% of women stated that language is the first difficulty in Spain). Due to a more likely similarity between Romanian and Italian than between Romanian and Spanish, the differences in this respect across destination countries may not be imputed to education capital of Roma migrants in Italy and Spain.

The second perceived difficulty was to find a house. This difficulty is critical in Italy where about 40,000 of Roma are known to live in nomad camps, most of these residents being of Romanian origin (Sigona, 2005). In Spain, Roma migrants are likely to live in Romani neighborhoods, along with native Gypsy. Interviews conducted by the author with some Roma migrants returned from Spain indicate, however, that Roma migrants may be target of deceitful housing arrangements made by native Gypsy. One Roma woman witnessed that she was caught by the police and sent back because the building in which she has been living for two months was illegally connected to electricity by the Gypsy owner.

### CONCLUDING REMARKS

This paper sought to address the relationship between migration and inequality, by drawing on the case of Romanian Roma migrants in Spain and Italy. Data from the EU-Inclusive survey 2011 allowed the examination of this relationship, and the bivariate analyses revealed significant gender differences that are liable to lead to inequalities between different groups of Roma men/women/households with many children. Furthermore, the structural issues specific to each destination country intersect with the socio-demographic characteristics of migrant groups and result in

various patterns of exclusion. Based on these gender and cross country differences among Romanian Roma migrants, it seems that Roma women in Italy face a more critical situation with respect to the level of socio-economic exclusion. Contacts with members outside family and community ties are usually said to help migrants in finding jobs and in overcoming negative stereotypes. Therefore, as expected, Roma migrant women in Italy have also a low level of economic performance. In Spain, Roma migrants, both men and women seem to enjoy a relatively better economic integration, and women participate in the labour market almost to the same degree as their male counterparts. Another aspect of integration is the help received from institutions in the destination countries. Again, we have observed differences among Roma migrants across countries of reception, although gender differences are less important, there are still lower levels of intervention by Italian institutions in ameliorating the plight of Roma migrants. The state and local authorities usually react only when Italian population perceives the presence of Roma migrants as a threat to security, and then the intervention is focused on health measures to avoid some epidemic due to poor sanitary living conditions in Roma 'nomad camps' (Sigona, 2005).

These findings call for a more fine-grained policy in the field of migration that take into consideration differences between and within groups of Roma. To date, much of the debates within academic and outside academic fields are portraying Roma migrants from Central and European Countries much like a homogenous group of people. Some scholars (Pantea 2012, Vlase and Preoteasa 2012) have been attempting to challenge this view by shedding light on the importance played by gender in Roma migration. However, there is still room for further research, in order to understand how other categories, like age, class or religion, mediate the relation between migration and inequality. Some Roma are seriously threatened with exclusion and accumulate several disadvantages in mobility, as discussed earlier. Therefore, policy makers and scholars alike need to explore more closely and transnationally these issues, so as to raise awareness about the necessity to accommodate the needs of particularly vulnerable groups of Roma migrants.

## REFERENCES

1. Adams, R. H., *The impact of migration and remittances on income inequality in rural Pakistan*, in "Pakistan Development Review", vol. 31, no.1, 1992, pp. 189–203.
2. Andal, J., Hierarchy and interdependence: the emergence of a service cast in Europe, in Andall J. (ed.), *Gender and Ethnicity in contemporary Europe*, Oxford, New York: Berg, 2003, pp. 39–60.
3. Bancroft, A., *Closed spaces, restricted places: marginalisation of Roma in Europe*, in "Space and Polity", vol. 5, no. 2, 2001, pp. 145–157.
4. Black, R., Natali, C., Skinner, J., *Migration and inequality*, Background Papers World Development Report, London, World Development Report, 2006.
5. Crenshaw, K., Traffic at the Crossroads: Multiple Oppressions, in Morgan, R. (ed), *Sisterhood is Forever: The Women's Anthology for a New Millennium*, Washington DC, Washington Square Press, 2003.

6. Crowe, D. M., *The international and historical dimensions of Romani migration in Central and Eastern Europe*, in "Nationalities Papers", vol. 31, no. 1, 2003, pp. 81–94.
7. Ebaugh, H. R., Saltzman, J., *Agents for Cultural Reproduction and Structural Change: The Ironic Role of Women in Immigrant Religious Institutions*, in "Social Forces", vol. 78, no. 2, 1999, pp. 585–612.
8. Faist, T., *Cultural diversity and social inequalities*, in "Social Research", vol. 77, no. 1, 2010, pp. 297–324.
9. Fleck, G., Rughiniş, C. (eds), *Come Closer: Inclusion and Exclusion of Roma in Present-Day Romanian Society*, Bucharest, Human Dynamics, 2008, <http://books.google.com/> (accessed 14 September 2012).
10. Gamella, J., *La Inmigración Ignorada: Roma/Gitanos de Europa Oriental en España, 1991–2006*, in "Gazeta de Antropología", no. 23, 2007 pp. 1–26.
11. Giannetti, M., D. Federici, M. Raitano, *Migrant remittances and inequality in Central-Eastern Europe*, in "International Review of Applied Economics", vol. 23, no. 3, 2009, pp. 289–307.
12. Gorodzeisky, A., Semyonov, M., *Sources of inequality across the globe: Introduction*, in "Research in social stratification and mobility", vol. 30, no. 1, 2012, pp. 1–4.
13. Ionescu, M., Cace, S., *Politici de ocupare pentru romi*, Bucureşti, Editura Expert, 2006.
14. King, R., Vullnetari, J., *Migration and Development in Albania. Development Research Centre on Migration*, Brighton, Globalisation and Poverty, 2003.
15. Mai, N., Transforming traditions: a critical analysis of the trafficking and exploitation of young Albanian girls in Italy, in King, R., *The Mediterranean Passage: Migration and New Cultural Encounters in Southern Europe*, Liverpool, Liverpool University Press, 2001.
16. Massey, D., Arango, J., Hugo, G., Kouaouci, A., Pellegrino, A., *Theories of International Migration: A Review and Appraisal*, in "Population and Development Review", vol. 19, no. 3, 1993, pp. 431–466.
17. Matras, Y., *Romani migrations in the post-communist era: Their historical and political significance*, in "Cambridge Review of International Affairs", vol. 12, no. 2, 2000, pp. 32–50.
18. Nyberg-Sorensen, N., Hear, N. V., Engberg-Pedersen, P., *The Migration Development Nexus: Evidence and Policy Options*, in "International Migration", vol. 40, no. 5, 2002, pp. 49–73.
19. Pantea, M.-C., *From 'Making a Living' to 'Getting Ahead': Roma Women's Experiences of Migration*, in "Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies", vol. 38, no. 8, 2012, pp. 1251–1268.
20. Reyniers, A., *La mobilité des Tsiganes en Europe: Entre fantasmes et réalités*, in "Hermès", no. 51, 2008, pp. 107–111.
21. Ringold, D., Orenstein, M. A., Wilkens, E., *Roma in an expanding Europe. Breaking the poverty cycle*, Washington, The World Bank, 2005.
22. Ryan, L., *Migrants' social networks and weak ties: accessing resources and constructing relationships post-migration*, in "The Sociological Review", vol. 59, no. 4, 2011, pp. 707–724.
23. Sandu, D., *Roma Social Mapping. Targeting by a community poverty survey*, Bucharest, The World Bank, 2005.
24. Sigona, N., *Locating "the Gypsy problem". The Roma in Italy: Stereotyping, labelling and "nomad camps"*, in "Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies", vol. 31, no. 4, 2005, pp. 741–756.
25. Sordé, M. T., Munté, A., Contreras, A., Prieto-Flores, O., *Immigrant and Native Romani Women in Spain: Building Alliances and Developing Shared Strategies*, in "Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies", vol. 38, no. 8, 2012, pp. 1233–1249.
26. Tarnovski, D. (ed.), *Roma from Romania, Bulgaria, Italy and Spain between Social Inclusion and Migration*, Bucharest, Soros, 2012.
27. Vlase, I., Preoteasa, A. M., Roma migrants from Bulgaria and Romania. Migration patterns and integration in Italy and Spain 2011, in Tarnovski, D., (ed.), *Roma from Romania, Bulgaria, Italy and Spain between Social Inclusion and Migration*, Bucharest, Soros, 2012.
28. Zamfir, E., Zamfir, C., *Țigani: între ignorare și îngrijorare*, Bucureşti, Editura Alternative, 1993.

**F**luxurile de migrație din România au cunoscut o creștere considerabilă după căderea comunismului, în 1989. Cu toate acestea, cetățenii români nu au participat la procesul de migrație în aceeași măsură, indiferent de vârstă, sex sau etnie. Inegalități importante afectează profilurile migranților. Această lucrare își propune să scoată în evidență mai ales inegalitățile în ceea ce privește genul în rândul romilor români care participă la procesul migrației forței de muncă. Principalele țări de destinație pentru migranții români sunt Italia și Spania. Aceste țări primesc împreună aproape două treimi dintre românii din străinătate. Pe baza analizei bivariante efectuate cu ajutorul datelor EU-inclusive 2011, se arată că accesul romilor români la resurse care să permită migrația de după 1990 a fost influențată de gen. O atenție deosebită va fi acordată inegalităților de gen în rândul migranților romi referitoare la diferențele în educație, accesul la locuri de muncă, precum și atribuirea de roluri specifice, în virtutea normelor de gen, dezvăluind în continuare vulnerabilitatea femeilor romi în ceea ce privește accesul lor la piața forței de muncă și la serviciile sociale în țările de destinație. În plus, politicile față de imigranți, de asemenea, afectează în mod diferit aceste grupuri de migranți din țările de destinație.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** Romi, migrație, gen, inegalități.

Primit: 09.11.2012

Acceptat: 21.12.2012

Redactor: Ioan Mărginean, Raluca Popescu