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**OSCE Conference on Combating Discrimination and Promoting Mutual Respect
and Understanding - Follow-up to the Cordoba Conference on Anti-Semitism and
Other Forms of Intolerance
Romania, Bucharest, 7 - 8 June 2007
General Contribution**

Diplomatic and political anti-Gypsyism

“[Roma] are antisocial, mentally backward, inassimilable and socially unacceptable.¹”
Vladimir Meciar, Prime Minister of Slovakia

On 19 May, 2007, the day the Romanian President Traian Basescu was voted back to his position by an overwhelming majority(74%), he was recorded talking to his wife about a Romanian journalist from a TV station owned by a political opponent, saying: “...how aggressive this stinky gypsy woman was...”²

Ten days later president Basescu refused to apologise to the Roma communities, attacked the decision against him of the independent Romanian watchdog the National Council Against Discrimination and didn't refrain to attack the institution itself. According to Mediafax he also pressured the cancellation of an educational campaign against racism and violence on stadiums which could have been seen as embarrassing for him.

A few days before the latest incident, on 12 May, 2007, the former Romanian King Mihai, speaking on Romanian TV about his disgust with the political crisis in Romania, described the situation as “gypsy-like.”³

Ironically in 2006, the European Commission Report published on 25 October asked that: “**The Romanian authorities should demonstrate, at all levels, that the country applies a zero-tolerance policy on racism against Roma or against any other minority or group and that this policy is effectively implemented.**”

It is exceptional nowadays to hear government representatives, politicians, or diplomats

¹ As reported by the Media Wise (2004, p. 26).

² http://www.antena3.ro/Basescu-despre-o-jurnalista--tiganca-imputita_act_32833_ext.html,

³ <http://www.romanalibera.ro/a94974/regele-mihai-ingrijorat-de-criza-politica-actuala.html>

in Europe expressing racism openly. The smallest “slips of tongue” or diplomatic blunders once reported attract a strong reaction, not only from human rights activists, but from the large majority of mainstream politicians in Europe. Anti-Semitic and lately Islamophobic politicians are rarely accepted as members of mainstream parties. Racial innuendos about blacks, despite some popular support, sometimes surface in the national and international mainstream political arena, but are condemned quickly by governments and diplomats. Racism is generally seen as shameful and since February 1998, the Charter of European Parties for a Non-Racist Society⁴ has prevented racism in political spheres. In its introduction, the Charter states:

Being convinced furthermore that representation of ethnic minority groups in the political process is properly an integral part of the democratic process, since political parties are or should strive to be a reflection of society . . . [we] strive for the fair representation of the above mentioned groups at all levels of the parties with a special responsibility for the party leadership to stimulate and support the recruitment of candidates from these groups for political functions as well as membership . . . [and] to reject all forms of racist violence, incitement to racial hatred and harassment and any form of racial discrimination.

Such positive developments seem to have bypassed Romani people. At this moment, none of the over 80 national parties⁵ who signed the Charter have any Roma representing them at the national level despite the fact that Roma are the largest ethnic minority in Europe.

Hate speech against Roma is so pervasive and blatant that many fail to perceive it as racism. Anti-Gypsyism has strong public support and is often used by political leaders and sometimes by diplomats. Anti-Gypsyism is seen as part of mainstream discourse and rarely triggers a reaction from the political and diplomatic elites. Anti-Gypsyism is rarely fought against and most often justified by the perpetrators and the institutions or parties for which they work. Failing to include or deleting incidents of blatant racism against Roma from the reports and speeches of European politicians and diplomats adds another dimension to European political and diplomatic anti-Gypsyism.

As a Roma, I have encountered diplomatic anti-Gypsyism on several occasions. In 1999, I attended a reception given by a consulate in Strasbourg for Romanian interns within the Council of Europe and the European Court of Justice; in fact, the young Romanian political elite. At the reception, one young diplomat made a joke: “What are 32 Gypsies good for? You can make 8X4 soap from them.”⁶ Most of the people present laughed. A few months later, the young diplomat received promotion to a cabinet director position within the Romanian national government. This incident shows not only the ingrained

⁴As posted on the EUMC website at http://www.eumc.europa.eu/eumc/index.php?fuseaction=content.dsp_cat_content&catid=3ef0500f9e0c5&contentid=3ef0568924fa5

⁵As posted on the EUMC website at http://www.eumc.europa.eu/eumc/material/doc/3ef05750d60f4_doc_EN.pdf

⁶ 8x4 was a well known German brand of soap in Romania at the time.

and therefore acceptable anti-Gypsyism in the Romanian society but also the extent of it within the Romanian diplomatic services.

In 2003, I was invited to an official dinner with academics working in the field of diplomacy research. When I mentioned that I was Roma, the Bulgarian man sitting across from me, holding a Ph.D. in political sciences, told me, "You know, the problem with Gypsies is that they have far too many children."

On 19 January 2005, the European Commission organised the conference, "Human Rights and EU Migration Policy," in Brussels. During his speech, the newly appointed Slovak Ambassador to the EU Mr. Maros Sefcovic expressed his view that his Roma compatriots were "exploiters of the Slovak welfare system" (ERIO, 2005). A similar declaration targeting any other ethnic group in Europe would have started a diplomatic row and most likely would have ended the conference focused on human rights. In this case, both during and after the conference in Brussels, no reaction took place.

In an interview broadcast on Dutch TV on 1 May, 2004, European Commission Ambassador to Slovakia, Eric Van der Linden, proposed to remove Romani children from their parents and place them in boarding schools.

It may sound simplistic,--he said--but it is, I think in the root of the cause that we need to strengthen education and organise the educational system in a way that we may have to start to, I'll say it in quotation marks, force Romani children to stay in a kind of boarding schools from Monday morning until Friday afternoon, where they will continuously be subjected to a system of values which is dominant ("vigerend") in our society. (ERIO, 2004)

When the interviewer objected that Roma might be opposed to such a measure, Van der Linden proposed the use of financial incentives to counter initial resistance. He agreed that, "we do live here in a democracy, so you cannot force it, but you can of course try to let it develop more smoothly through giving financial incentives." He expected that families would, as a result, send their children to school and that "the generation that will be educated then and at the same time raised, will fit better in the dominant society, they will be able to cooperate in a productive way to the growth of the economy."

Van der Linden seemed oblivious to the racism inherent in his argument that Romani values are different than those of the majority populations and that Roma youth should assimilate to the dominant society. In fact, during his mandate in Slovakia he often accused the Slovak government of less subtle forms of racism against Roma.

Based on pressure from journalists, the European Commission held a press conference to address Van der Linden's statements during the interview. The Commission spokesperson saw Van der Linden's statements as "an unfortunate choice of words in an interview which was otherwise quite good and talked about important things." He also said that Van der Linden had been requested not to give interviews "on this topic" again, and that Van der Linden "thinks that he regrets" his statement. The ambiguous "think that

he regrets,” stops far short of an official apology, or statement of institutional regret. Although European Commission country reports on Slovakia have repeatedly underlined the discrimination, violence, and racism faced by Roma in Slovakia, the Commission instructed its Head of Delegation for Slovakia to avoid this topic in interviews for the future. The entire reaction of the Commission was an unfortunate blow to efforts towards curbing pervasive anti-Gypsyism in Slovakia. Many right-wing extremists in Slovakia gained the impression that the European Commission is on their side.

Another case related to the political class in Slovakia began on August 28, 2005, when the extremist Slovak nationalist party, the *Slovak Pospolitost*, organized a one-hundred-man march in the honor of Josef Tiso, the first fascist president of the Nazi Slovak Republic, created in 1939 by Adolf Hitler. In his opening speech, Marian Kotebla, leader of *Pospolitost*, urged Slovaks to stop paying taxes used for “gypsy parasites that keep breeding on like hungry and desperate pythons.” Asked to comment on the racist statements against Roma, the spokesperson for the President of the Slovak Republic, Ivan Gasparovic, said: “everyone is free to celebrate the defeat of fascism by the allied forces in the manner they want.” No reaction was reported from Prime Minister Miklulas Dzurinda or from members of his cabinet (ERIO, 2005).

Similar speeches targeting the Hungarian minority in Slovakia have been drastically condemned not only by the mainstream Slovak political scene but also by the EU and international organisations (European Parliament, 2006). However, in this case, the European Commission refrained from commenting.

In another instance, on May 10, 2004, the chairwoman of the Monitoring Committee of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Josette Durrieu, stated that usury within Roma communities is the greatest problem faced by Roma. Focusing on the criminality within Roma communities, rather than on the fact that Roma are the most discriminated and socially excluded minority in the Czech Republic, seems a strange approach from the representative of a body which deals with human rights. No reaction was reported from the Council of Europe.

Making Roma issues invisible, and deleting important facts or words are other ways that anti-Gypsyism is manifested on the international political and diplomatic scene. In its report of March 12, 2004, the UN Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination found that gypsies in Spain encounter difficulties in the fields of employment, housing, and education and that a number of cases report discrimination in daily life. By using the pejorative term, gypsy, in its document rather than the correct term, Roma, the Committee shows a disregard for the strong stigma associated with the term gypsy.

In addition, the different language versions of the texts are not identical. The strongest wording is found in the French version⁷, which talks about “les difficultés auxquelles nombre de ces derniers [Gitans] continuent d’être confrontés dans les domaines de

⁷ As posted on the UN website
[http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/\(Symbol\)/CERD.C.64.CO.6.Fr?Opendocument](http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/(Symbol)/CERD.C.64.CO.6.Fr?Opendocument).

l'emploi, du logement et de l'éducation, ainsi que par les cas de discrimination qui se produiraient dans la vie quotidienne” and the recommendation to the Spanish government “et recommande à l'État partie de prendre toutes les mesures nécessaires en vue de promouvoir la tolérance et d'éliminer les préjugés et stéréotypes négatifs, afin de prévenir toute forme de discrimination à l'encontre des membres de la communauté rom (gitane).” This part of the text is not found in the English version.⁸ The English version of the text is the most read version of the UN documents and this type of discrepancy between translations is a known technique in the diplomatic world to dilute an initially strong message (Kurbalija and Slavik, 2001). This is a case of diplomatic anti-Gypsyism through the erasure of facts or diplomatic ambiguity (Pehar, 2001).

The European Parliament is another institution that is supposed to advance human rights issues, but which has failed to address anti-Gypsyism among its members. Leading intellectuals and opinion makers within the European Parliament are known to have openly promoted anti-Gypsyism. For example, at the end of September 2003, I met a German MEP from the Christian Democrat party, Ms. Doris Pack. She is currently the President of the parliamentary committee that deals with South Europe and Western Balkans, and has a reputation for being open-minded and friendly towards minorities. Our meeting was arranged by one of the directors within the European Commission. My goal was to pursue and schedule a hearing on Roma matters with different players in the EU institutions. She started the meeting by listing the problems with “you Gypsies,” most of them related to our vagrant way of living. Too many children, disrespect for Western culture, and begging were the next items she mentioned before I could say anything more than my name. During the Holocaust over 250,000 Roma and Sinti were killed in Germany. A similar reaction of a German politician with an Israeli delegate is simply unconceivable.

Another example of political anti-Gypsyism concerns one of the best known intellectuals and liberal politicians in Romania, Adrian Cioroianu. Cioroianu is a Euro-observer (a future Member of the European Parliament) in Brussels and he writes regularly for the Romanian intellectual magazine *Dilema*. In his article for 3-9 February 2006, Cioroianu implies that Roma in one of Bucharest's neighbourhoods, Chitila, smell bad and are criminals. His article, which defends an illegal eviction of Roma, accuses Romani women of starting a fight which triggered the police action, as the police “tried to protect the children from their own irresponsible parents.” He also accuses the Romanian police of being too soft on the Roma. In the same article, Cioroianu uses the strong pejorative “pirande” for Romani women, a word with similar connotations and strength as “nigger.”

Anti-Gypsyism at the Highest Political Level

In 2002, British tabloids reacted hysterically to what they termed a Czech Roma “invasion” of hundreds of thousands. Interesting figures, considering that the official census in the Czech Republic in 2001 indicated a total of 11,716 Roma, while the most generous social estimate suggest there may be around 90,000 Roma in the Czech

⁸ As posted on the UN website
[http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/\(Symbol\)/CERD.C.64.CO.6.En?Opendocument](http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/(Symbol)/CERD.C.64.CO.6.En?Opendocument).

Republic. British Prime Minister Tony Blair wrote a letter to his then Czech counterpart Vladimir Spidla (currently serving as Commissioner in charge of Roma issues) concerning the “problem.” The letter, which cannot be described as diplomatic in any way, provides surprising examples of anti-Gypsyism within the political class in the UK.

Mr Blair wrote in the letter:

There are no grounds for Czech citizens to seek protection abroad. We need to take action. At our end, we are introducing legislation that will give us further powers to combat asylum abuse. This includes to remove claimants before their appeals are heard, when their claims are manifestly unfounded.⁹

However, during the same year, an EU accession report (2002b) highlighted cases of police abuse and racially motivated violence against Roma, segregation of Romani children in schools, and discrimination against Roma with regards to access to employment and social services in the Czech Republic. The European Roma Rights Center also reported forced sterilization of Romani women in the Czech Republic.

The letter employs what is often referred to as “coded” racism, in this case, the assertion that Roma claims for asylum are unfounded: “In addition the Roma community needs to know that unfounded asylum seekers will be returned immediately. We will of course be happy to work with you to ensure that this message is communicated rapidly and clearly.” No diplomatic reactions occurred at the European and international level to protest the racist border policy set up by the UK government.

In another example of anti-Gypsyism, Anca Boianciu, Romanian European Integration Minister, declared on March 28, 2006, for *La Libre Belgique*, that “Roma are used as negative examples but that is not significant for our country” as in fact the majority of ethnic “Romanians are intelligent and honest.” It is unlikely that the minister would have kept her job if she had suggested that the Hungarian or any other minority in Romania was stupid and criminal. There was no reaction or apology from the minister or the Romanian government aside from a personal and ambiguous letter received by the author after protests were made.

National Politicians

This part looks at a recurring anti-Gypsyism theme: burning the Gypsy Criminals.

In 1992, German Chancellor Helmut Kohl was severely criticized for the formulation of his apology for the burning of a house in Molln where two teenagers and a 51-year-old were burned alive by skinheads. He said “To the Turks in *our country*, who have lived here for many years, whom we asked to come here . . . and without whose assistance we would not have been able to achieve the level of prosperity attained in *our republic* over the decades.” This phrase was seen as unacceptable because it clearly separated ethnic German citizens from Germans of Turkish background and was seen as implying that Germany is only for the ethnic Germans.

⁹ See complete transcript in the annex.

Unfortunately, apologies of any kind are unheard of in cases of violence against Roma. In the best cases, incidents are ignored, and in the worst cases, insults are added to injury, often by leading political figures.

Since 1992, hundreds of Roma have been killed in Central and Eastern Europe in racially-related violence. Incidents involving the burning of Romani households and sometimes burning people alive have been reported in Romania, Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Slovakia, Italy, France, Spain, the UK, Russia, and Hungary. One victim of the pogrom in Hadareni, Romania, in 1993, had 83 distinct wounds on his body (at least 30 of them deadly) and another one was burned alive (Pro Europa). However, in Romania the political class and diplomacy have avoided discussion of these pogroms against Roma and no apology has ever appeared in the media.

The European Roma Rights Center¹⁰ writes about Romania:

Following the changes in 1989 Romania was the site of approximately 30 anti-Romani pogroms in which non-Roma killed Roma, burned many Romani houses, and forced several hundred Roma to flee. These past abuses have remained unsanctioned and the pogroms have been replaced with police raids. Many of the victims of the pogroms have ended up on the outskirts of Bucharest living in inhumane conditions and unable to secure residency permits.

In Slovakia, on July 21, 1995, 17-year-old Mario Goral was beaten and then burned alive at the site of a Gypsy pogrom of World War II. On August 23 of the same year, Jan Slota of the Slovak National Party stated on *Slovak National Radio* "I love roast meat Gypsy-style very much, but I'd prefer more meat and less Gypsies."¹¹ Slota is also known for calling Roma a "threat" to the Slovaks (Haughton 2001)

In 2000 the chairman of the Slovak National Party Vitazloslav Moric argued that Roma are "idiots" and should be sent to special reservations. Alojz Englis attacked then prime minister Dzurinda labelling him as "an ordinary Gypsy"(Haughton 2001).

Russian municipal legislator Sergei Krivnyuk declared for *Volgainform*, on November 17, 2004 "Residents are ready to start setting the gypsies' houses on fire, and I want to head this process."

Miroslav Sladek from the Czech Republican Party is known for saying:" for Gypsies the age of criminal responsibility should be the moment of birth because being born is, in

¹¹ As reported by Nevipte Foundation, "Press Rom News Agency Report", Slovakia in a interview with director Eva Godlova.

fact, their biggest crime”(Fawn 2001).

Not only is no political or significant diplomatic stand taken against these practices, which in itself is a factor in anti-Gypsyism, but calls from national and local politicians encouraged such practices.

Anti-Gypsyism from the Ministers of Interior

The Ministers of Interior of EU member states are not just political leaders but also public opinion makers, especially in Eastern and Central Europe. Their opinions about the way Roma issues should be addressed is of utmost importance in designing national policies focused on Roma.

On February 27, 2004, *Radio Prague* broadcast a program focused on measures needed in “stopping the exodus of Roma” into the Czech Republic. The Minister of the Interior, Stanislav Gross, was interviewed and affirmed his strong stand against Roma migrants from Slovakia. The minister focused on the “violent riots and looting” of Eastern Slovakian Roma during social unrest in Slovakia and restrictive measures against a “possible Roma invasion.” Despite these allegations against Slovak citizens, the Slovak government did not react, nor did anyone else.

In 2003, the Romanian newspaper *Adevarul* published the following excerpt

The coordinator doctor of the [fertilisation] bank, A.M., says that all men between 18 to 40 who have an athletic body, have never had syphilis, diabetes, obesity, AIDS or genetically transmittable illnesses and have at least a high school diploma can donate sperm. We are also giving a financial bonus, but I do not want to say the amount because we will have here a huge crowd tomorrow. The gypsies will come to donate, and when they are refused and told that we look only for the Caucasians, they will just tell us they have no idea what we are talking about.

In fact, Roma are also Caucasians and it is impossible to distinguish Roma from Romanians based on physical characteristics. The above article would seem to have no link with political or diplomatic anti-Gypsyism if, unfortunately, similar racist statements wouldn't have come from Ioan Rus, Romanian Minister of Administration and Interior. In a document published on the Romanian government website in January 2004 he is quoted saying:

The armed gangs of Gypsies or Romanians, criminals, rapists or thieves that arm themselves and keep entire towns under terror, have to disappear. I know that this is not strategic, that is not a politically correct language, but, I agree with positive discrimination only when a social category is in difficulty. I understand that we have to do whatever we can in favour of equal opportunities and to create decent living conditions for all disadvantaged categories. But when Roma or Romanian criminals are

grouping with a clearly criminal purpose, we have to say it straight.

Because this is not as blunt as the article published in the mainstream Romanian media, the official speech on the government website provides a good example of “hidden” or “coded” anti-Gypsyism. The minister makes a distinction between Roma and Romanian citizens on the basis of imagined racial characteristics and stereotypes, as no genetic tests can distinguish pure ethnic Romanians from Romanians belonging to the Roma minority.

Further examination of the text shows that the Romanian governmental representative more often uses the pejorative “tigani” (gypsy) than the politically correct “Roma.” The use of linguistic tricks, such as referring to “Gypsies or Romanians” rather than simply “Gypsies” is widely used in diplomacy (Kurbalija and Slavik, 2002) and, in this case, has the effect of making racist statements appear acceptable and publishable on the government website. However, without doubt, Mr. Rus refers exclusively to Roma when he talks about criminal activities, because in Romania, no discussion of “positive discrimination” in favour of ethnic Romanians has occurred. Mr. Rus could have more clearly included reference to Romanian criminals other than Roma by using the formulation “Gypsies and Romanians.” His sentence clearly associates and, indeed, almost equates Roma with criminals, rapists, and thieves.

Dehumanisation of Roma: The Case of Mayors

Roma are often seen as a subhuman group closer to the animal realm than the human realm. Even those rare cases of seemingly sympathetic portrayals of Roma seem to depict Roma as somehow not fully human, at best childlike. Roma are in the best cases described as free-spirited, carefree, happy, and naturally graceful. All these characteristics are frequently used to describe animals.

In 2000, a case evolved around a group of Roma from the central Hungarian village of Zámoly who sought asylum in France in response to forced evictions and the threat of serious violence (ERRC, 2000). On April 27, 2000, Dezső Csete, mayor of the town of Csór, commented “I believe that the Roma of Zámoly have no place among human beings. Just as in the animal world, parasites must be expelled.” This is one of the bluntest examples of anti-Gypsyism focused on dehumanisation of Roma. In relation to the same case, Hungarian Social and Family Affairs Minister Péter Harrach said, on August 5, 2000, that “some were going abroad to discredit Hungary, not only demanding compensation but making groundless allegations against the state and government.” Despite the fact that asylum was eventually granted to the Roma, the Hungarian government never offered an apology.

Dehumanisation of Roma and comparison with animals by politicians and the public is frequent in the EU and mainly unpunished. For example, Italian Councilman Pierpaolo Fanton commented on Roma for TV news in Treviso in 2005: “Nomads, they are animals.” He went on to suggest a vaccine for Roma children who, with their saliva and spit, might “infect” Italian children attending the same schools. The mayor of Treviso

was known to have implied that Roma should be used as rabbits for training the local hunters. Pietro Zocconali, President of the National Association of Sociologists of Italy, said in February 2005 “Roma steal children and then sell them, sometimes in parts.” (ENAR, 2005)

In 2001, Ion Bulucea, then mayor of Craiova, the largest city in southwest Romania, said “those stinky Gypsies should be exterminated” as reported by *Medicine sans Frontieres* (2003). This statement followed the scandal and strong reaction from the Council of Europe to a plan proposed by the mayor of Piatra Neamt, Romania, Ion Rotaru. Mayor Rotaru wanted to create a concentration camp for Roma. Gheorghe Funar, then mayor of Cluj (the largest city in Transylvania), has frequently and publicly declared his adversity to Roma. In 1999, Mircea Bot, at that time Chief of the Bucharest Police and a strong candidate for a ministerial position within the Romanian government, said “Those scum Gypsies are responsible for all the wrong-doing in Romania” (ERIO, 2004).

On May 4, 2005, the present Mayor of Craiova said for the newspaper *Gardianul*, “I pee on them, those mother f... Gypsy jerks and hooligans.” The local politician elected on the list of the ruling Social Democrat Party made it clear in less than four hundred words what he thinks of Roma: “stinky ugly gypsies,” “shits,” “jerks,” “dirty,” “hooligans.” He described a “war” against gypsies and expressed his wish to deport them from his city. In 2005, the Mayor was fined twice for racist speech against Roma and blacks. In 2006, he joined the main Romanian party and received the highest distinction offered by the Romanian Orthodox church.

In 2003, Traian Basescu, mayor of Bucharest (currently the Romanian President), declared in Strasbourg during a meeting of the Council of Europe that Gypsies “are nomads and nobody can do anything about them . . . they will bring their horses into the flats and there any try to civilize them would end . . . we should build special camps and keep them outside our cities” (Adevarul, 2003).

The mayor of Ostrava, Czech Republic together with senator Zdenek Klausner proposed relocating Roma, the first by using municipal funds to buy Roma one way tickets to Canada and the second just by removing them from Prague. (Fawn 2001)

Due to its effect in the mass media and public conscience, diplomatic and political anti-Gypsyism is the main and most dangerous way to legitimise and enforce discrimination and racial abuses against Roma. Even in Poland, where the Roma population is well integrated and politically irrelevant as it consists of less than 0.01% of the population, an opinion poll of racial prejudice conducted by the Demoskop Research Agency and published in April 1991 discovered that 48% of Poles interviewed declared they would be against accepting Roma in the Sejm (Polish parliament) (OSCE, 2005).

Incidents of anti-Gypsyism at the political and diplomatic level have been reported in most European states in 2005 and 2006. Here, I have presented some extreme cases focusing on countries with a significant Roma population. At this moment, in Western Europe we usually witness political and diplomatic silence in regard to violence and

discrimination against Roma within the EU member states before 1 May 2004. I argue here that a link exists between the widespread popular support against Roma and the political and diplomatic anti-Gypsyism. European elites are quiet and seem concerned to resonate with, rather than stand against, the nationalistic and sometimes extremist feelings of the majorities. This type of anti-Gypsyism is particularly dangerous as it legitimises racism against Roma. Government and state representatives deploying racist discourse against Roma encourage, whether consciously or not, both the dehumanisation and exclusion of Roma and institutional racism.

The European obsession when it comes to Roma has been to educate us. It seems, that a far more efficient strategy would be first to educate the European elites about anti-Gypsyism and tolerance. Considering that the worst exclusion when it comes to employment of Roma is to be witnessed within the European Union Institutions and the United Nation Organisation despite great rhetoric about the inclusion of Roma of both institutions it looks like a general wake-up call is needed not just at the level of national governments.