

Institution: University of Manchester
Unit of Assessment: 28 (Modern Languages and Linguistics)
Title of case study: Improving the lives of Romani migrants in Western Europe
<p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>This research by Professor Matras has had a substantial impact on European policies concerning Romani migration. It highlighted the unique vulnerability of Romani migrants and instigated special consideration of their issues by major European policy-making bodies. At a more local level in Greater Manchester Professor Matras' recommendations led to the employment of Romani outreach workers to act as mediators and interpreters for the community of Romanian Romani immigrants in east Manchester. In 2011 a training programme born out of his research led to ten young members of the Romani community taking up roles as interpreters, mediators and classroom assistants within Manchester's local services and schools.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>The impact is based on research carried out at The University of Manchester from 1996 to date by Professor Yaron Matras. He has been supported by a team of research assistants since 2005.</p> <p>Professor Matras has been investigating the impact of post 1990 Romani migration into western Europe and the responses to it by the authorities and media as well as within the Romani political movement. His original research was based on data and observations collected among immigrant Roma and their support groups.</p> <p>His work [3.1-3.4] emphasises the distinction between 'nomadism' and 'migration' and points to a cluster of features that characterise the migration of Roma:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The first is what he calls 'non-confidence and non-identification with their country of residence'. Roma regard themselves, and are perceived by the majority, as strangers who are not the owners of the territory in which they settle. They are more willing to consider the evasion of conflict and hardships through frequent re-location as viable options than members of the settled majority population. 2. Roma migration seldom involves just individuals or nuclear families, but rather extended families and even family networks. This provides Roma migrants with some form of confidence and a tool to endure economic and social hardships. However, Roma generally do not expect to be welcomed in their new country of residence. They are generally prepared to endure more stigmatisation and isolation and to take greater risks such as conflicts with local residents and the law in order to try to establish themselves in a new environment. 3. Finally, views about Roma in the host countries are negatively influenced by century-old stereotypes. This makes Roma especially conspicuous within the landscape of numerous migrant groups that populate Western Europe's urban centres. From this there results a vicious circle of exclusion, criminalisation and marginalisation followed by a greater willingness on the part of the Roma to take risks. However, they also show a greater vulnerability to exploitation. <p>Research into the motivations and aspirations of Romani immigrants in Manchester was carried out by Professor Matras and his research team in 2009. It remains one of very few attempts to collect first-hand data in Roma migrant communities. His survey [3.5] of some two thirds of all households of a 500-strong community of Roma from South Eastern Romania covered life experiences in Romania, skills, family size, ages, organisation, employment and access to services, motivation to work and relations with neighbours and authorities. As a result of this research an original assessment of the wave of Roma migration following the EU accession of Romania in 2007 was published as a peer-refereed article [3.4].</p>

Impact case study (REF3b)

3. References to the research (AOR - Available on Request)

The research outcomes were published in a peer-refereed collection and subsequently in a peer-refereed journal and presented as a keynote lecture at the very first academic conference devoted to Roma migrations in 2010.

Further evidence of the quality and standing of the research to date is the award under the European Commission Seventh Framework Programme, start date April 2013, EUR 2,487,900 for 'The immigration of Romanian Roma to Western Europe: Causes, effects, and future engagement strategies (MigRom12)'

- 3.1 Matras, Y. 1998. The development of the Romani civil rights movement in Germany 1945-1996. In: Tebbutt, Susan (ed.) *Sinti and Roma in German-speaking society and literature*. Oxford/Providence: Berghahn. 49-63. (AOR)
- 3.2 Matras, Y. 2000. Romani migrations in the post-communist era: their historical and political significance. *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 12-2, 32-50. DOI: 10.1080/09557570008400297
- 3.3 Matras, Y. 2010 Migrations and their impact on the Romani political movement in the early 1990s. Keynote address at the conference on Romani migrations and refugees. Oxford University. 14-15 January 2010. On line at: <<http://www.forcedmigration.org/podcasts-videos-photos/podcasts/romani-mobilities>>.
- 3.4 Matras, Y. 2012. Scholarship and the Politics of Romani Identity: Strategic and Conceptual Issues. *European Yearbook of Minority Issues* 10/2011(2012). 1-45. (AOR)
- 3.5 Matras, Y.; Fabeni, G. B.; Leggio, D. V. and Vranová, E. 2009. The Romani community in Gorton South, Manchester. <http://romani.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/downloads/2/report.pdf>

4. Details of the impact**Context**

Romani migration from Eastern European countries to the West triggered huge public debate in the early 1990s. Very little research has been carried out into the causes of and patterns of this migration. Professor Matras' work with Romani communities in Greater Manchester has made a direct contribution to policy making at local and European levels by underpinning a new approach to Romani migrants. This approach seeks dialogue and special consideration of their vulnerability as a marginalized minority that is quick to consider migration as a conflict-evasion strategy in the face of stigmatization and social exclusion.

Pathways to Impact

In 1996 Professor Matras was commissioned by the Council of Europe's Population and Migration Division to compile a report and offer policy recommendations arising from his ongoing research into Romani migrations. The report [5.1] was adopted by the European Committee on Migration (CDMG) at its meeting in April 1997 which invited the Secretary General of the Council of Europe to examine its conclusions. The key recommendations were subsequently adopted by the European Committee of Ministers. A further report was commissioned by the Council of Europe in 1998, focusing on the immigration of Czech and Slovak Roma to the UK [5.2].

Reach and Significance

The work has had an **impact on European policy**. The above reports led to a fundamental change in the discourse on European Romani migrations and provided a cornerstone for the consideration of Roma migrations in policy papers issued by the Council of Europe (for example, the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights report from February 2012 and the EU's Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) report from 2009). In June 2012, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe adopted a recommendation on 'Roma migrants in Europe' in which it directly took up the points first raised in Professor Matras's earlier research outcomes from 1996 and 1998 concerning the distinction between 'nomads' and 'migrants' and the 'de facto expulsion' of Roma. The desire to manage the migration of Roma led to an intense discussion process within

European institutions, which culminated in the European Commission's call in April 2011 for a European Framework of National Roma Integration Strategies. Professor Matras' reports on Roma migration formed the basis of his keynote speech at the first academic forum devoted to Roma Migrations at Oxford University in January 2008 [3.3]. It was there that the initiative was introduced to establish a new mode of providing academic research input into the policy debate on Roma at a European level. This was directly followed by the creation in 2010 of the European Academic Network on Romani Studies, of which Professor Matras is a founding member and presently an elected member of the Scientific Committee [5.3]. The Network is sponsored by the European Commission and the Council of Europe and its purpose is to advise policymakers on Roma-related research, to increase the visibility of the scientific knowledge available on the European Roma, and improve the planning and implementation of the policies related to Roma on European, national and local levels. Matras's work bridges these levels and is attested to by the Head of Policy Development Unit [5.4].

Impact on Romani in Manchester and on community cohesion

In 2009 Manchester City Council's Regeneration Team and other community services adopted Professor Matras' recommendations to facilitate targeted training for a group of young Romani immigrants to act as mediators and interpreters for the community of Romanian Romani immigrants in east Manchester [5.5, 5.6]. The report inspired the creation of two positions for Romani outreach workers, funded by Manchester City Council's successful bid to the government's Migrant Impact Fund. It also led to the part-time employment of Romani support workers by Greater Manchester Police, the International New Arrivals Team and two local schools. It provided the blueprint for an eight-month training programme for young members of the Romani community, sponsored by the Big Life Company and carried out in conjunction with the Government's Sure Start scheme and The University of Manchester. In the second half of 2011, as a direct outcome of this training programme, ten young members of the Romani community took up roles as interpreters, mediators and classroom assistants within Manchester services and schools.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact.

All claims are referenced in section 4.

- 5.1 Matras, Y. 1996. Problems arising in connection with the international mobility of the Roma (Gypsies) in Europe. Report submitted to the Council of Europe's Committee on Migration (CDMG).
http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/romatravellers/archive/documentation/migration/mgsrom%282000%299matras_EN.asp
- 5.2 Matras, Y. 1998. The recent emigration of Roma from the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republics. Report submitted to the Council of Europe's Population and Migration Division.
http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/romatravellers/archive/documentation/migration/mgsrom%282000%299matras_EN.asp
- 5.3 First Meeting of the Scientific Committee of the Academic Network on Romani Studies, Prepared by Lazslo Foszto. Brussels, June 2011. Network website at:
<http://romanistudies.eu/the-project/>. Evidencing Matras's participation.
- 5.4 Letter from the Head of Cultural Policy, Diversity & Dialogue Division, Council of Europe. Attesting to the scope of Matras's work.
- 5.5 Matras, Y. with Fabeni, G., Vránová, E. and Leggio, D. V. 2009. The Romani community of Gorton South. Report commissioned by the Manchester City Council Regeneration Team.
- 5.6 Letter from the Regeneration Manager, Manchester City Council. Attesting to Matras's input to Manchester City Council policy.