

# The power of invisibility

## Reconstructing mobility: Roma in an expanding Europe

A láthatalanság ereje

Roma mobilitás feltérképezése a bővülő Európában

(magyar nyelvű összefoglalóval)

De kracht van onzichtbaarheid

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(met een samenvatting in het Nederlands)

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**a doktori értekezés nyilvánosságra hozatalához**

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## Abstract

‘There are things known and there are things unknown, and in between are the doors of perception.’

- Aldous Huxley

After the last EU enlargement, state borders have been partially replaced by internal border controls of state bureaucracies to regulate westward migration. Existing ideas of threat associated with non-EU migrants are accompanied by a 'new menace' referring to criminal 'insiders' who might profit from the freedom of mobility within the EU. Accordingly, social security and immigration policies are increasingly intertwined within surveillance practices of member states, blurring the line between welfare and crime control measures. Therefore, new geopolitical measures and local risk management strategies are introduced for tracing and screening mobile groups. These monitoring practices, such as spidergrams, are taking new forms in technocratic bureaucracies and changing the means of interaction between newcomers and administrative bodies in host societies. In order to understand how these welfare service based financial monitoring structures facilitate spatial population control, we need to understand how selective incentives are invented in order to make undesired groups voluntarily leave the executive territory of host societies. This targeted social sorting is a dynamic process, shaped by narratives of politicians, academics and the civil society, in which economic and ethnic connotations of migrants are regularly intertwined. As full EU citizens, large Roma populations now enjoy freedom of movement throughout Europe. The long-standing prejudiced perception of Roma as profiteers living on welfare, involved in illegal activities and unwilling to integrate has become a basis for Western concerns about a “threatening flood” of westward-bound benefit tourists. This has been used to justify new control measures in several Western member states.

Based on empirical case studies, this study will analyse these asymmetries of surveillance within the virtual walls of Fortress Europe, and uncover coping of Central European Roma migrants in daily bureaucratic welfare procedures in London.

## Summary (English)

After the fifth enlargement of the EU in 2007, intra-European mobility became a particular challenge for many Western governments. As full EU citizens, many Roma migrants have taken advantage of the freedom of movement in Europe. Existing ideas of threat associated with non-EU migrants have been applied to them, accompanied by a fear of a “new menace” that includes criminal “insiders” and “benefit tourists” who might profit from the welfare provisions of wealthier member states. Accordingly, social security and immigration policies have become increasingly entangled with member states’ surveillance practices, blurring the line between welfare and crime control measures. This has led to several restrictive local policies intended to select and limit newcomers’ access to social services. Welfare provisions have turned into the new geopolitical incentives of social sorting applied to guard against mobile groups by using digitalised management techniques.

This ethnographic research explores the growing challenge of surveillance states that are governed by mechanisms of social sorting as a technique of population control, described here as the ‘Welfare Banopticon’. This study presents the financial incentives of risk management strategies in digitalised bureaucracies, and how organisations screen and trace unattractive migrant groups associated with economic threat. As a central objective of this study, tactics of securitized individuals are analysed, in particular how they challenge social sorting mechanisms through identity management in interaction with social services. Although surveillance subjects’ counteractions are receiving increasing attention in qualitative studies, there is still limited research on the *asymmetries of surveillance* and the resulting displacement effects on transnational mobile groups.

This study provides an extended analysis of coping strategies invented by one of the targeted populations: Central European Roma. As an interdisciplinary, multi/sited analysis of welfare surveillance, this research addresses geopolitical incentives in the EU and how Roma migrants use calculative coping strategies to prevent exclusion from social services.

The central research question is: How the interplay between digitalised bureaucracies of welfare providers and the coping strategies of EU newcomers shapes the dynamics of mobility control in the United Kingdom?

Following the cultural criminological tradition of qualitative data analyses, this research methodology is founded on a critical ethnographic approach. Multi-sited ethnography was performed with various Roma communities to clarify their strategies for coping with control measures, such as contesting the digital monitoring techniques and trying to gain access to

social services. These research methods contain three pragmatic approaches (i.e. multi-sited ethnography, institutional ethnography and virtual ethnography) based on the three main contextual aspects of the research subject. Research techniques involve classical ethnographic tools of data collection such as participant observation, interviews and shadowing. As a researcher, interpreter, housemate and “advocacy worker”, As an ethnographer, different roles were adopted that are often in conflict with each other, leading to specific information about the participants’ legal considerations.

In addition, the study will discuss methods of data analysis with a critical reflection on the triangulation and ethical dilemmas related to this research project. Ethnographic data was collected and revised within several Roma families in host and home countries to gain insight into daily practices. I analysed several narratives about the way Roma newcomers contest the surveillance techniques and attempt to access social services.

This dissertation provides an extended overview of Roma history, based on the Roma policies in different Central European countries. Due to their shared experiences, the research population was restricted to the Visegrad Group (in short, Roma from Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovakia). I analysed various ethnic Roma groups and their interrelations with the national majority to clarify the growing inclinations of Roma to move. The dissertation also includes detailed analyses of the social policies of the host country, the United Kingdom. Welfare provision changes are interpreted in the framework of increasing managerialism in the social service sector and critical reflections about the business-like structures of social provisions and the side effects of digitalisation in welfare services are summarised.

As a key argument, this study includes reflections on the roles of professionals, academics and NGOs, and discusses how these stakeholders contribute to the securitisation of Roma in Europe. It is argued that framing the Roma ethnicity with reference to its marginal position and welfare dependency might contribute to existing constructions of the “benefit tourist” ethnic minority. Regarding the displacement of ethnic stigma, it is suggested that interpreters who are from the same sending countries might spread their prejudices to professionals in the host society, who are “learning” and adopting the existing ethnic framing of Roma.

In conclusion, the study reveals that digitalised surveillance practices are overestimated regarding their objectivity and effectivity and that calculative effects of surveillance awareness are underestimated in the field of welfare provisions in the UK. Due to conflicting values in welfare provisions, managerialist neoliberal service providers are unable to act according to

the norms of a welfare state and adopt competitive market oriented principles. These production oriented notions ‘from welfare to work’ are shifting the role and strategies of contracted service providers that control and sanction the unemployed. Unattractive migrant groups, often seen as “benefit tourists” and associated with benefit shopping, are meant to be targeted and excluded from the welfare system and forced toward the labour market. However, in place of leaving or avoiding service providers, many applicants stay.

As it is illustrated, their knowledge about the data collection methods of bureaucratic organs increases, excluded groups who are aware of the preconditions of service providers’ digital selection methods learn and invent tactics to circumvent legal restrictions. Although these newcomers are often framed as a dependent, uneducated, traditional minority, they successfully develop their knowledge about the weaknesses and advantages of digitalised bureaucracies and adapt to the parameters of the desired applicant. Coping strategies are differentiated on a broad scale in which identity management has a central role. By providing the “perfect data” to become entitled for service provisions, these applicants structurally manipulate data surveillance methods and challenge the profiling algorithms. As the vicious circle continues, welfare systems invent more data control mechanisms that further increase the reality gaps between the individual and his or her digitalized identity, the “dividual”. Through this process, the most successful migrants stay outside the gaze of social services and invisible to the ‘Welfare Banopticon’.

## Summary (Dutch)

Intra-Europese mobiliteit is een uitdaging gebleken voor vele overheden in West-Europa sinds de vijfde uitbreidingsgolf van de Europese Unie in 2007. Als volwaardige burgers van de EU, hebben Roma migranten hun voordeel gehaald uit het Vrij Verkeer van Personen in Europa. Bestaande denkbeelden over de bedreiging die wordt geassocieerd met non-EU migratie, worden nu aangesterkt met een ‘nieuwe dreiging’, hierbij doelend op de criminele ‘insiders’ of de ‘benefit tourists’ die zouden kunnen profiteren van de sociale voorziening van de oorspronkelijke lidstaten. Als gevolg hiervan is het beleid omtrent sociale voorziening en migratie steeds meer verweven met toezichtspraktijken van lidstaten, wat de scheidslijn tussen maatregelen omtrent sociale voorzieningen en misdaadcontrole doet vervagen. Dit heeft geleid tot verscheidene maatregelen die een selectief en beperkend beleid mogelijk maken wat betreft de toegang tot sociale diensten voor nieuwkomers. Sociale dienstverlening werd een nieuwe geopolitieke aanzet tot het gebruik van *social sorting* (sociale selectie) waar door middel van digitale management technieken toezicht kan worden gehouden over mobiele groepen.

Dit etnografische onderzoek bekijkt de groeiende uitdagingen van ‘surveillance states’ die een beleid van social sorting toepassen, wat we hier zullen omschrijven als ‘Welfare Banopticon’. Deze studie behandelt de financiële drijfveren voor risico management strategieën in gedigitaliseerde bureaucratieën. Besproken wordt hoe deze strategieën onaantrekkelijke migrantengroepen, die worden geassocieerd met een bedreiging voor de economische status quo, beoordelen en traceren. De centrale doelstelling van deze studie is het analyseren van de tactieken van individuen onder toezicht. In het bijzonder wordt geanalyseerd hoe deze individuen tegen-strategieën voor *social sorting* mechanismes ontwikkelen, door middel van identiteitsmanagement in hun omgang met sociale diensten. Hoewel kwalitatieve studies steeds meer aandacht besteden aan deze tegenreacties, blijkt er nog beperkt onderzoek te zijn uitgevoerd naar de *asymmetrieën van toezicht* en de effecten die dit heeft op de verplaatsing van transnationale mobiele groepen. Deze studie biedt een uitgebreide analyse van de tegenreacties die zijn bedacht door de bedoelde populaties, de Centraal Europese Roma. Als een interdisciplinaire, multi-sited analyse van *welfare surveillance* bespreekt dit onderzoek het geopolitieke aansporingsbeleid in de Europese Unie, en hoe berekende omgangsstrategieën gebruikt worden om selectie in sociale diensten te vermijden.



De centrale onderzoeksvraag is als volgt: Hoe bepaalt de wisselwerking tussen gedigitaliseerde bureaucratieën van het sociale dienst en de coping-strategieën van de EU-nieuwkomers de dynamiek van mobiliteit controle in the Verenigde Koninkrijk?

In lijn met de cultureel criminologische traditie van kwalitatieve data analyse, is de toegepaste methodologie gebaseerd op een kritische etnografische benadering. Multi-sited etnografie is verricht onder verschillende Roma gemeenschappen om zo hun omgangsstrategieën met controlemaatregelen te verklaren. De methode omvatte drie praktijktoepassingen: multi-sited etnografie, institutionele etnografie en virtuele etnografie – elk gebaseerd op de drie contextuele kernaspecten van het onderzoeksonderwerp. De onderzoekstechnieken zijn klassieke etnografiemethodes voor dataverzameling zoals participerende observatie, interviewen en ‘schaduw’. Als onderzoeker, tolk, huisgenoot en ‘advocacy worker’ heeft de onderzoeker zich verschillende rollen aangemeten, welke vaak in conflict stonden met elkaar hetgeen leidde tot specifieke details over juridische overwegingen van de participanten. De analysemethodes worden toegelicht, waarbij enerzijds kritische reflectie van triangulatie en anderzijds ethische dilemma’s van het onderzoeksproject centraal staan. Etnografische data zijn verzameld en herzien binnen verschillende Roma families, zowel in ontvangende als zendende landen, om zo inzicht te krijgen in de dagelijkse praktijk. Verschillende narratives voor de manier waarop Roma-nieuwkomers omgaan met surveillance technieken zijn geanalyseerd, alsook hun pogingen om toegang te krijgen tot sociale diensten.

Dit proefschrift biedt een uitgebreid overzicht van de geschiedenis van de Roma, gebaseerd op het Roma beleid dat wordt toegepast in verschillende Centraal Europese landen. Vanwege de gedeelde ervaringen is de onderzoekspopulatie beperkt tot de Visegrad Group, oftewel Hongarije, Polen, Tsjechië en Slowakije. Verschillende etnische Roma groeperingen en hun verhoudingen met de nationale meerderheid worden geanalyseerd, om zo inzicht te bieden in de toenemende aspiratie van Roma om te migreren.

Aanvullend wordt een gedetailleerde analyse geboden van het sociale beleid in het ontvangende land, het Verenigd Koninkrijk. De wijzigingen die zijn aangebracht in sociale dienstverlening worden geïnterpreteerd in het kader van een toenemende vorm van ‘managerialism’ in de sociale dienstverleningssector. Ook zal de bestuurlijke structuur van sociale diensten en de bijwerkingen van digitalisering van sociale dienstverlening, kritisch worden beschouwd. Als kernargument biedt deze studie een beschouwing van de rol van professionals, academici en non-profit organisaties, en wordt de rol van deze stakeholders in

de ‘securitisation’ van Roma in Europa besproken. In de literatuur wordt gesteld dat framing van Roma-etniciteit in relatie tot hun gemarginaliseerde positie en afhankelijkheid van uitkeringen, bijdraagt aan het behoud van bestaande beelden van de Roma als ‘benefit tourist’ en etnische minderheid. Verder wordt gesuggereerd dat tolken van dezelfde zedende landen vooroordelen over Roma verspreiden onder ‘professionals’ in het ontvangende land dat de etnische framing van Roma vervolgens overneemt.

Kortom, de studie blijkt dat gedigitaliseerde surveillance praktijken worden overschat met betrekking tot hun objectiviteit en effectiviteit en dat het berekende effect van bewustzijn van surveillance praktijken, onderschat wordt in het veld van sociale dienstverlening in het Verenigd Koninkrijk. Als gevolg van conflicterende waarden in sociale voorzieningen, sociale dienstverlening is niet geschikt voor ondersteuning volgens de normen van een verzorgingsstaat, maar er worden managerialistische, markt georiënteerde principes geadopteerd. Deze productie-georiënteerde begrippen 'van bijstand naar werk' verschuiven de rol en de strategieën van de gecontracteerde dienstverleners naar controle en sectionering van de werklozen. Het is het doel om onaantrekkelijke migrantengroeperingen, die gezien worden als ‘benefit tourists’ en die zouden profiteren van sociale voorzieningen, uit te sluiten van sociale dienstverlening en te dwingen de arbeidsmarkt op te gaan. Echter, in plaats van vertrekken of vermijden van uitkeringsinstanties, veel aanvragers blijven.

Door toenemende kennis van de werkwijze van bureaucratische organen, is de doelgroep steeds meer bewust van de voorwaarden van digitale selectiemethodes van dienstverleners. Op deze wijze leren en bedenken ze tactieken om belemmeringen te omzeilen. Hoewel deze nieuwkomers vaak omschreven worden als afhankelijke, ongeschoolde, traditionele minderheden, zijn ze in staat geweest om kennis van de zwakke en sterke punten van de digitale bureaucratie te ontwikkelen en weten ze zich aan te passen aan de parameters van de betreffende dienstverlener. Er wordt een breed spectrum aan coping strategieën onderscheiden, waarvan identiteitsmanagement de voornaamste is. Doelgroepen manipuleren structureel sociale diensten, door ‘perfecte data’ voor toegang aan sociale diensten te leveren. Als reactie hierop worden nieuwe datacontrole mechanismes ontwikkeld die ervoor zorgen dat nog een groter gat ontstaat tussen het werkelijke individu en van zijn of haar digitale identiteit, oftewel het “dividu” In dit proces weten de meest succesvolle Roma migranten buiten het blikveld van de dienstverleners te blijven om zo onopgemerkt te blijven voor de Welfare Ban-opticon.

## Summary (Hungarian)

### Összefoglalás

Az Európai Unió ötödik, 2007-es bővítése után az Európán belüli mobilitás egyre jelentősebb kihívássá vált számos nyugat-európai kormány számára. Teljes jogú uniós polgárként, megannyi Roma migráns élt az Európán belüli szabad mozgás lehetőségével. A nem uniós migránsokkal összekapcsolt, már meglévő fenyegető elgondolások társultak az „új fenyegetéssel” a „bűnöző bennfentesekre” vagy a „segélyturistákra” vonatkozóan, akik profitálhatnak a régi tagállamok jóléti gondoskodásából. Következésképpen a szociális biztonság és a migrációs politikák egyre inkább összerosódtak a tagállamok ellenőrző gyakorlataival, ezzel elhomályosítva a határt a szociális és a bűnözési kontroll szabályozásai között. Mindez, különféle korlátozó helyi szabályozásokhoz vezetett, annak érdekében, hogy megválogassa, s határt szabjon az újonnan érkezők szociális ellátásokhoz való hozzáférésehez. A jóléti ellátórendszer – a társadalmi osztályozás digitalizált menedzsment-technikák alkalmazásával – új geopolitikai módszerré alakult át, annak érdekében, hogy felmérje és irányítsa a mozgó csoportokat.

Jelen etnográfiai kutatás az ellenőrző államok növekvő kihívásait vizsgálja, melyet a társadalmi kontroll egyik módszere, a *'Welfare Banopticon'* kifejezéssel jellemezhető társadalmi osztályozás mechanizmusa irányít. Jelen tanulmány a kockázatkezelési stratégiák pénzügyi ösztönzőit mutatja be a digitalizált bürokráciában, illetve, hogy a közigazgatás hogyan szűri ki és követi nyomon a nemkívánatos, gazdaságilag fenyegetésnek tartott csoportokat. A kutatás alapvető célja – a *biztonságiasított* személyek taktikáit megvizsgálva – különösen az, hogy a jogosultságkezelésen keresztül, összefüggésben a szociális szolgáltatásokkal, miképpen találnak ki ellenstratégiákat a társadalmi megkülönböztetés folyamata ellen. Annak ellenére, hogy a megfigyelés közömbösítésének kérdése egyre nagyobb hangsúlyt kap a kvalitatív kutatásokban, még mindig korlátozott azon vizsgálatok száma, amelyek a megfigyelés aszimmetriáit és a transznacionális migráns csoportok mozgásából szükségszerűen következő hatásokat vizsgálja. Jelen tanulmány széleskörű elemzést nyújt az egyik kutatási csoport – közép-európai romák – által kitalált közömbösítési stratégiákról. A jóléti felügyelet interdiszciplináris és többoldalú vizsgálataként jelen kutatás az Európai Unión belüli geopolitikai törekvésekről szól, s tárgyalja, hogy mely kalkulatív megküzdési stratégiák vannak használatban annak érdekében, hogy megelőzzék a szociális hálóból való kiszorulást.

A fő kutatási kérdés: Hogyan alakítják a jóléti szolgáltatók digitalizált bürokráciájára adaptált megoldási stratégiák az Európai Unión belüli mobilitás kontrollt, mint geopolitikai szelekciós intézkedést?

A kulturális kriminológia kvalitatív adatelemzési hagyományait követve, a kutatás módszertana a kritikai etnográfiai megközelítésen alapszik. A többhelyszínű etnográfia különböző Roma közösségekben készült, annak érdekében, hogy kiderüljenek a megküzdési stratégiáik olyan kontroll szabályozásokkal, mint például a kezelési technikák megtámadása vagy a szociális szolgáltatásokhoz való hozzáférési kísérletek. Ezek a módszerek három pragmatikus megközelítést tartalmaznak: a többhelyszínű-, az intézményi- és a virtuális etnográfiát, melyek a kutatási téma három összefüggő aspektusára épülnek. A kutatási módszerek a hagyományos etnográfiai adatgyűjtési eszközöket ölelik fel, mint például a résztvevő megfigyelés, interjúk készítése és a nyomon követés. A kutató felvett szerepei – úgymint kutató, tolmács, lakótárs és pártfogó –, melyek többször összetűzésbe keveredtek egymással, a résztvevőkről szóló speciális információk jogi megfontolásához vezettek. A kutatási projekt adatelemzési módszerei megvitatásra kerültek triangulációs módszerekkel és az etikai dilemmákkal kapcsolatosan is. Az etnográfiai adatok gyűjtése és vizsgálata különböző Roma családoknál zajlott mind a fogadó, mind a kiinduló országokban, annak érdekében, hogy a mindennapi gyakorlatokba betekintést nyerjünk. A különféle narratívák elemzése egyrészt arról szól, hogy a romák miként küzdenek meg az ellenőrzési technikákkal, másrészt azon próbálkozásaikról, hogy hozzáférjenek a szociális ellátásokhoz.

A disszertáció a Roma történelem széles áttekintését nyújtja, a különböző közép-európai országok Roma politikáinak alapján. A közös tapasztalatok miatt a kutatási csoport a Visegrádi országokra – Magyarország, Lengyelország, Csehország és Szlovákia - korlátozódik. A különböző Roma csoportok és a többségi társadalommal való kapcsolatuk elemzése és vizsgálata lehetővé teszi, hogy jobban érthetővé váljon a romák növekvő kivándorlási törekvése.

Ezenkívül, a kutatás egyfajta részletes elemzést is nyújt a befogadó ország, az Egyesült Királyság szociális politikáiról. A jóléti gondoskodás változásai a szociális szektorban tapasztalható egyre növekvő menedzserszemlélet keretében értelmezendő, míg a kritikai megjegyzések összefoglalják a jóléti gondoskodás üzletszerű felépítését és az említett ellátásban a digitalizáció mellékhatásait. A tanulmány fő érveként tartalmaz észrevételeket a szakértők, az akadémiai szféra és a nem-kormányzati szervezetek szerepéről, s megvitatja az érintettek rendeltetését a romák európai *biztonságiasításában*. Vitatott, hogy a Roma etnikum

szociális konstrukciója –a marginalizált helyzetükre és a jóléti függőségükre vonatkozóan – hozzájárulhatott –e a „segélyturista” etnikai kisebbség konstrukció létehez. A kisebbségi stigma vándorlását illetően feltételezhető, hogy azon tolmácsok, akik azonos küldő országból származnak, elterjesztik előítéleteiket a befogadó társadalom szakértői között, akik pedig megtanulják és elfogadják a létező Roma etnikai vonatkozásokat.

Összefoglalva, a tanulmány feltárja, hogy a digitalizált felügyeleti gyakorlat objektivitását és hatékonyságát tekintve túlbecsült, valamint hogy a felügyelet tudatosságának kalkulatív hatásai alábecsültek a jóléti gondoskodás területén az Egyesült Királyságban. Ellentmondásos értékelvek hatására, a jóléti rendelkezések gyakorlatában a managerialista neoliberális szolgáltatók nem képesek cselekedni a jóléti állam normái szerint, és átveszik a versenyképes piacorientált értékeket, mechanizmusokat. Ezek a termelés orientált fogalmak a szociális rendszer szolgáltatói stratégiáit “a segélyből munkába” elv szerint a ellenőrzés és szankcionálás felé terelik.

A nemkívánatos migráns csoportok, akikre „segélyturistaként” tekintenek, a jóléti rendszerből való kizárásra, s a munkaerőpiac felé való taszításra ítéltetnek. Azonban ez nem feltétlen kényszeríti a megcélzott nemkívánt migránsokat lakóhelyük elhagyására vagy visszatelepülésre.

A bürokratikus szervezetek adatgyűjtési módszereiről való megnövekedett ismereteikkel a célba vett csoportok – akik tudatában vannak a szolgáltatók digitális szelekciójának előfeltételeivel – megtanulnak és kitalálnak olyan taktikákat, amellyel megkerülhetik a jogi korlátozásokat. Habár az újonnan érkezőket gyakran eltartott, tanulatlan, tradicionális kisebbségnek tartják, a Londoban élő Romák mégis sikeresen fejlesztik tudásukat a digitalizált bürokrácia gyengeségeiről, illetve előnyeiről, és alkalmazkodnak a megfelelő jelentkező változóihoz. A megoldások módszerei egy széles skálán kerültek megkülönböztetésre, melyben a jogosultságkezelőnek van központi szerepe. Biztosítva a tökéletes, a szolgáltatások előfeltételeinek megfelelő adat kombinációt, a kérelmő az adatellenőrzési módszereket is manipulálja. Akár egy ördögi kör, ezek a stratégiák egyre több adatellenőrző rendszert generálnak, amelyek még inkább növelik a valódi távolságot a személy és annak digitális identitása között. Ezen folyamatban a legsikeresebb Roma migránsok kint maradnak a szociális szolgáltatók látóköréből, hogy láthatatlanok maradjanak a *Welfare Ban-opticon* számára.

## Acronyms

CAB	Citizens Advice Bureau
CEE	Central Eastern Europe/European
DLA	Disability Living Allowance
DWP	Department of Work and Pension
HB	Housing Benefit
HMRC	Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IS	Income Support
JCP	JobCentre Plus
JSA	Jobseeker's Allowance
JSA(IB)	Jobseeker's Allowance (Income-Based)
JSAPS	Jobseeker's Allowance Payment System
ERI	European Roma Institute
NHR	National Habitual Residence
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PIP	Personal Independence Payment

## Chapter 1 Introduction

‘YOU pay for Roma Gypsy palaces’, screamed the headline of an article in the British *Sunday Express* newspaper (Sheldrick, 2016). It quoted Ukip member of the European parliament Mike Hookem, who complained that the welfare state was being used to bankroll ‘Gypsy Kings’, who were ‘building lavish palaces funded by people in the UK working on the minimum wage’. With a reference to Roma, this article called for restrictive measures against the flood of opportunist EU migrants.

After 2006, populist discourse on Roma mobility and welfare fraud began feeding anti-immigration policies (Galita et al., 2013). The UK Department for Work and Pensions produced a targeted advertising campaign, one aim of which was ‘to maintain public perception that benefit fraud is a crime and is taken seriously’ (National Audit Office, 2008, p. 44). The state department promoted welfare fraud hotlines on billboards that accused migrants of exporting UK social benefits to their home countries (Figure 1).



Figure 1. DWP Billboards. Retrieved 11-10-2013.

As these governmental advertisements illustrate, not only newcomers were publicly associated with suspicion of crime, but also civilians were encouraged to participate in such control practices. By linking crime such as benefit fraud to intra-European mobility, political debates raised concerns and scepticism about newcomers from Central Eastern Europe (CEE), in particular Roma (for a detailed explanation, see Duwell & Wollmer, 2009; O'Reilly, 2007; Ringold, 2000).

The long-standing prejudiced perception of Roma as profiteers involved in illegal activities who are unwilling to integrate became a basis for national concerns about the free mobility of

Roma. These concerns were used to justify new restrictive measures ‘for profiling the bad foreign opportunist versus the good citizen who deserves state support and protection’ (Erjavec, 2001, p. 670). Although the securitisation of Roma migrants is not a new phenomenon, the methods of targeting and selecting undesired citizens got a new lease on life. As Huysmans describes (2000), as the consequence of the Acquis, “European integration process is implicated in the development of a restrictive migration policy and the social construction of migration into a security question.” As a political process of connecting migration to criminal and terrorist abuses of the international market this securitisation is related to “a wider politicisation in which immigrants are portrayed as a challenge to the protection of national identity and welfare provisions” (p. 751).

As a result, *communautarization* - defined in the third Pillar of the Treaty of the EU -, “offers the Member States the opportunity to reinforce their restrictive and law-enforcement approach to migration flows, and to construct new forms of power which do not only increase their regulatory capacity within a geographically contained structure, but also enable them to impose their security agenda beyond the confines of the Union” (Kostakopoulou, 2000 p. 497). Under this agenda, national control mechanisms in the late modern context of the European Union are not only shifting towards risk prevention and predictability, but due to the technological advancement it also relies on an assemblage of surveillance, gaining individual transparency by digitalised data communication.

As this study explores, population control of EU member states is a dynamic process in which mobility is shaped by a dialectic relationship between controlling agencies, such as service providers and the controlled citizen. However, recent convergence of once discrete control measures might result unexpected outcomes. Data resources, such as social media are facilitating new surveillance practices that are used to classify, predict and prevent individual behaviour. In this panoptic virtual society governmental and business activities are intertwined in bureaucratic technologies, pushing state dependent marginal groups from ‘welfare to workfare’ by neoliberal principles. Shortly, population control and selection is thus shifting from traditional migration selection methods to internal financial monitoring as a geopolitical incentive, in order to force the financially less promising to leave its territory.

By revealing social surveillance and selection mechanisms based on financial surveillance it is claimed that crime politics infiltrate several legislative areas such as welfare provisions by employing new governance technologies in digitalised bureaucracies. This research aims to provide empirical data on the mechanisms of surveillance strategies that



promote efficiency and objectivity while justifies privatised practices of control and sanction outside the field of crime control. In order to understand the effects of business like values in welfare provisions, empirical data enables to identify the risk profiles of screening instruments as the tools of social sorting and how service dependent migrants adapt their coping strategies according to the constantly changing selection methods.

Virtual control measures are not only reflecting the values and categories of the host society, but also how individual parameters are translated into risk categories. As it will be illustrated by welfare application systems, these parameters are shaped by the narratives of political and academic stakeholders transferring ethnic connotations linked to economic power. Although institutional discrimination is often described in terms of ethnicity and race, based on the selected case studies of Central European Roma, this study will explore how EU migrants become subjected to discrimination based on financial parameters in place of ethnic stigma. In order to understand these selective surveillance mechanisms several actors shall be included such as professionals, and activists who might contribute to these mechanisms by linking poverty to ethnicity shifting the discriminative notions based on visible parameters of skin colour and culture towards less visible selection methods as credit checks.

Unlike studies defining transnational mobility in terms of migration categories, by framing this study in the liquidity of late modern social changes, this analysis reveals the dynamics and constantly shifting nature of population flows and explore how newcomers, stigmatised by financial inefficacy as an ethnic construct, adapt to rapidly changing circumstances by inventive coping strategies in the bureaucratic labyrinth of host societies. This study challenges the underlying assumptions behind this efficiency oriented governance technologies and by selected empirical data it provides a critical analysis on the limitations of surveillance and control practices and its implications on institutional distrust. By showing the dynamic relationship between central European migrants and bureaucratic service providers in London it will be presented how neoliberal market values adapted in social provisions lead to discriminative welfare services.

## 1.1 Roma mobility in late modernity

Since the last EU enlargement, many CEE Roma families have been trying to use their European citizenship to find a better life in Western Europe. However, the majority find themselves excluded and marginalised by new administrative rules in their host countries. Interestingly, the cause of the “Roma flood” is frequently linked to the “promising” welfare

services of host countries, which has led local authorities to increase control strategies and limit access to social benefits. The key argument for welfare restrictions is framed in a neoliberal approach of eligibility based on labour market participation. According to the underlying assumptions, these migrants are responsible for their marginal position and can consequently be legitimately excluded from any entitlement to governmental support (Goddard, 2012). These exclusionary policies are forcing migrants to find individual solutions.

Current debates in policy making and theory surrounding the westward migration of Roma in the EU are polarised between calls for control of mobility on the one hand, and increasing chances for social inclusion on the other. After the latest EU enlargement, Roma mobility has been shifting the attempts at governing these populations from nation states toward an intra-European minority governing. These European policies urge individual member states to submit a National Roma Integration Strategy (2011) and to invest in the socioeconomic position of the Roma. However, some member states pass their responsibilities back to the EU and have invented different control measures on national level. As a consequence, the Roma minority find themselves between a rock and a hard place and seeking individual solutions.

European citizenship has opened the doors to Western states for many Roma who have been excluded, marginalised and discriminated against. Based on the Fifth EU Treaty, the coordination of social security systems, which was also revamped in 2004, was also made more generous for those who are moving around the EU. The rules on non-discrimination were tightened up and the right to use aggregate contributions made in different member states to calculate entitlements was strengthened, including the right to export benefits to one's country of residence.

Since then, some member states have questioned why they have to export "their" social benefits to EU citizens who have acquired rights in their state, in particular those who are defined as a security threat. Recently, neoliberal state recognition has been based on legal economic activity and social citizenship rather than legal citizenship. In the context of European integration, there has been vigorous contestation about the meaning and extension of "social rights", how much they should be contingent on people's productive behaviour and who should be covered by the state. Within the contemporary hierarchies of work, the functioning of borders has less to do with the geopolitical delineation of sovereign prerogatives (i.e. the power to exclude non-citizens from access to a state's territory) and more to do with the attempt to control, select and govern specific categories of people at a distance (De Giorgi, 2012, p. 152). A key element of this selection is that citizenship is presented and wrapped up

as a form of contract between the state and the responsible citizen who accepts the preconditions. Using the technique of a contract is often recognised as part of a neoliberal strategy, all the more in cases where the state also involves the (local) community or private parties in terms of sharing the responsibility for this process (Rose, 1999, p. 165; Yeatman, 1998).

Recently, responsabilisation has been a key principle of this neoliberal welfare approach dominating Western European state incentives (Goddard, 2012). It aims to identify particular groups who are seen as unwilling to integrate and participate in their society. This participation is generally measured in labour market participation and by the level of dependency on state funding, such as social benefits. To combat the perceived economic threat to the national welfare, new security measures are initiated to differentiate the good or productive citizens from the undesired, “passive” citizens. Social and spatial exclusion is based on financial determinants that serve as a functional realm that precludes inclusion of the unproductive others (Halfmann, 1998). In order to explore how these welfare-service-based financial monitoring structures facilitate spatial population control, we need to understand how governing bodies in the EU are able to invent incentives that pressure undesired groups to voluntarily leave their territory.

Roma who are EU citizens cannot be ignored or sanctioned based on their migration status, but they might be dependent on government aid that enables them to settle down in a host country. When they are subjected to constant financial monitoring and benefit cuts, they can be forced to leave by restricting their entitlement to local welfare support. Therefore, connotations on the welfare magnet resulted new monitoring-based restrictions and securitisation of benefit claimants by social service providers as the new strategy for enforcing the mobility of unwanted migrants.

## 1.2. Social Sorting as modality of power

Social sorting and population control are shaped by the intersubjective construction of security (Burke, 2007). This securitisation ‘enables, produces and constrains individuals within larger systems of power and institutional action’ (Burke, 2007, p. 20) defined under different modalities of surveillance (Bigo & Walker, 2007; Jones & Newburn, 1998). Based on the Foucauldian concept of disciplinary power (1986), this panoptic modality in governing initiatives includes simultaneous control and behaviour modifying mechanisms. As the collected empirical data illustrates below, enforcing mobility by financial restrictions is one of

the most common goal deployed by authorities to channel and regulate their population and to control unwieldy flows of people. As Hyndman (2012) explains such securitisation processes:

‘The idea of migrants as a vector of insecurity prevailed, creating potent fear that could be used for draconian measures. The idea of migrants as a vector of insecurity prevailed, creating potent fear that could be used for draconian measures. The biometric management of “insiders” and “outsiders” with its assemblage of new laws, policies and control practices render geopolitics and biopolitics inseparable of “insiders” and “outsiders” with its assemblage of new laws, policies and control practices render geopolitics and biopolitics inseparable.’ (p. 245)

State incentives are coded in different panoptic modalities to guide people on the move. These include mapping, valuation, codification, enclosures and boundaries. Since these incentives are proactively trying to channel individual conduct, financial planning is one of the key means of managing (im)mobilities and access. This apparatus of control and surveillance, used as spatial disciplinary technology in the EU, might be even more central in the de- and re-territorialisation of people, since no visa regulations are in force for European citizens (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). As a neoliberal incentive border control is thus drawn-out by the gaze of a social economic surveillance.

Accordingly, social security and immigration policies are increasingly intertwined within the surveillance practices of member states, blurring the line between welfare and crime control measures. They introduce new geopolitical measures and local risk management strategies for tracing and screening mobile groups, such as Roma migrants. These monitoring practices, such as data analysis software, are taking new forms in technocratic bureaucracies and changing the means of interaction between newcomers and administrative bodies in host societies.

In order to understand how these welfare-service-based financial monitoring structures facilitate spatial population control, we need to understand how governing bodies are able to invent incentives that try to make undesired groups voluntarily leave their executive territory. Based on a multi-sited ethnography, this study will explore these asymmetries of surveillance within the virtual walls of Fortress Europe, and uncover coping strategies of targeted populations as well as how these reshape existing profiling strategies.

## 1.2 Research question and hypotheses

This study aims to critically analyse the growing challenge of expanding digitalised bureaucracies as internal borders of EU member states, by introducing the concept of “Welfare Banopticon” referring to Bigo’ social sorting mechanism (2008b) through digitalised social provisions.

By illustrating the dynamics of intraeuropean mobility control and the social construction of threat associated with foreign EU ethnic minorities this research critically reflect on the use of digitalised surveillance methods and gains attention to the shifting parameters of bureaucratic selection measures, in particular regarding the financial capabilities of newcomers. By following the dialectic relationship between welfare providers and migrants, this study critically reflects on the dynamics of criminal and migration politics defined in terms of social and financial threat that might be revealed in the expansion of selective control measures in other bureaucratic fields, such as social welfare.

The central research question of this study is:

How the interplay between digitalised bureaucracies of welfare providers and the coping strategies of EU newcomers shapes the dynamics of mobility control in the United Kingdom?

In order to provide an answer for this research question the following subquestions are defined:

- How securitisation strategies of internal migration control are merging social security and immigration policies in UK surveillance practices.
- How selective incentives of risk management have been introduced in the digitalised bureaucratic strategies of welfare services
- How the narrative framing of stakeholders contribute to the social sorting of Ethnic Roma?
- How Central European Roma newcomers who are subjected to the monitoring and control practices of social services invent coping strategies as a response to social sorting in London?

This study is based on mobile ethnographic data collected in Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and the UK. The general aim of this pre-conceptualised research process was to follow and study Roma migrants in real time by means of multi-sited, virtual and institutional research methods. By documenting their interaction with local authorities and

social networks, I explored how stigmatised ethnic Roma develop coping strategies to access welfare services.

The selected cases of Roma migrants are not serving to evaluate the label of ‘the benefit cheats’ or to what extent Roma are involved in benefit fraud, but to illustrate the dynamics of targeted policing through digitalised bureaucratic welfare provisions, and how financial parameters serve as a new migration selection measure.

The aim of the methodology underpinning this study was threefold: to generate data about 1) how criminal politics and security measures are changing the role of welfare services; 2) how stakeholders such as academics and NGOs are framing the migration management principles; and 3) how Roma migrants labelled as ‘benefit tourists’ experience and anticipate in interactions with social services in the UK. I collected data through observation and participation in private conversations, and through activities with civil servants, interpreters and advocacy workers. Additionally, I later analysed many of these interactions via in-depth, semi-structured interviews with migrants, advocacy workers and civil servants.

### 1.3 Theoretical relevance

Critical geopolitical studies are increasingly focusing on the relationship between space and identity in the context of the EU (Tuathail et al, 1998). Most of them conceptualise the biopolitical developments in Western societies, progressive technologies or the securitisation and exclusion of irregular migrants. However, two particular aspects are often avoided in these studies: the securitisation of minorities who are European citizens and the extent to which these surveillance subjects reshape governmental incentives that are manifested in bureaucratic registration procedures.

By following the concept of Deleuze and Guattari (1987), this study develops a new understanding of participatory surveillance to intra-European mobility. As suggested above, Europe is in the midst of an experiment in post-national citizenship, raising concerns about insidership and eligibility that prompts control and surveillance measures. However, there has been little discussion about the effects of surveillance measures and the extent to which awareness of monitoring changes mobility patterns.

This study is framed as an interdisciplinary theoretical approach that interweaves recent critical studies in geopolitics, criminology, critical surveillance and minority studies. Theoretical objectives will be used to provide a reflection on digital surveillance mechanisms and to develop an interactive approach to the role of virtual identity management in the context

of social service provision. Dataveillance and control of identification processes have created the illusions of objectivity and traceability. Following the Deleuzeian notion of the surveillance assemblage, this study explains how governance of mobility control turns into virtual social sorting of the poor in an intra-European mobility context. In short, this study will contribute to better understanding of *virtual dialogues* and how service providers can be misled by targeted groups.

#### 1.4 Policy relevance

As Espenshade, Fix, Zimmerman, and Corbett (1997) noted: ‘In immigration policy making, perception is often more compelling than reality, and dispassionate analysis is all the more critical’ (p. 2). Affective aspects and perception-based policies dominate social service provisions as a result of neoliberal values and market oriented principles adopted in the post-welfare service strategies in many western countries. Beside new forms of interactions with applicants, these policies serve new purposes in the field of population control of nation states (MacDonald, 2014).

Although rapid changes in policymaking are targeting “benefit shoppers”, there is limited scholarly literature that explores the role of welfare policies in migration control within the EU. In the United Kingdom, social policies have been rapidly changing since 2006, causing confusion for service providers about entitlement changes and control measures. With increasing digitalisation and managerialist values in social service provision, the discretionary power of civil servants has decreased, raising concerns about efficiency-oriented normative approaches. By adapting surveillance techniques like profiling algorithms from corporate software producers, the UK government deemed the professionalism of civil servants to be unnecessary. Although these measures were invented to support the efficiency of service providers, according to recent conditions, they are only expected to decrease welfare costs based on annual targets (Harlow, 2003). The social and professional impacts of such changes in policy adaptations can only be evaluated by qualitative research methods. Therefore, practical implications will be assessed and, in particular, the extent to which restrictive policies are ignored by professionals and service providers.

The key objective of this study is to explore the shift in the purpose of welfare legislation concerning profiling practices, especially how restrictive social policy is used for migration control of newcomers in London. Contradictory objectives regarding intra-European migration and welfare restrictions between EU policy and local welfare measures will be explored. In

short, this study will explore how selective social policies trigger welfare claimants to modify their behaviour according to restricted welfare incentives.

### 1.5 Methodological relevance

Although migration, ethnicity and surveillance are frequently discussed subjects in many disciplines, hardly any empirical study has examined the counterstrategies of *legal migrants*. Unattractive mobile groups are increasingly subjected to social sorting through surveillance in host societies within the virtual walls of Fortress Europe. Existing studies have generally focused on legal matters of citizenship (Broeders et al, 2013), but there is a lack of attention paid to how transnational ethnic minorities, who are full EU citizens, react to monitoring practices, in particular by local authorities. These monitoring practices are also taking new forms in technocratic bureaucracies, which leads to changes in interactions between newcomers and host authorities (Browning & McDonald, 2013). These modifications can be traced by mobile ethnographic studies that are able to interpret the situational understanding of ethnicity and control in daily practices of migrants in different localities.

By implementing the mobility paradigm in criminological studies, this research included methodological techniques in which online and offline interactions are intertwined to fully trace spatial, social and financial aspects of participants' decision-making. Essentialist dichotomist approaches to insider-outsider research statuses are frequently challenged in empirical research that stresses the situational nature of interactions between researchers and participants (Nagy, 2015). This thesis aims to critically analyse the dynamics between different realms of insiderness in multi-sited research with transnational ethnic minorities. By illustrating the shifting nature of positioning through moments of proximity and distance, I will analyse how multiple positions on the axes of nationality and ethnicity enable the exploration of the experience of otherness.

### 1.6 Social relevance

Previous surveillance studies have stressed the risks and possible social implications of governmental data collection regarding privacy protection (Lyon, 2013) but there is hardly any attention paid on the geopolitical connotations of extensive surveillance practices. By focusing on historically persecuted groups that are defined as social economic threats, local majorities approve more restrictive measures without critically considering the consequences of these



selection processes and its implications on social trust. This study aims to critically reflect on the relative efficiency of digitalisation and the extent to which it might impact the everyday lives of people in targeted groups. Securitisation processes increase the role of surveillance techniques in state bureaucracies to select and expose targeted groups, such as the Roma. As will be illustrated in this dissertation, growing awareness of monitoring practices leads to social distrust, increasing fear and anxiety, and turning surveillance cities into ghost societies. By reflecting on social sorting mechanisms in the welfare system, I will argue that targeted surveillance experiences lead to the amplification of self-identification mechanisms, creating a sphere of confusion and unpredictability that leads to a spiral of securitisation and intensified surveillance practices.

## 1.7 Overview of chapters

This dissertation is divided into ten chapters. Chapter 1 is this introduction. Next, I will present a theoretical framework that places this research in a late modern context.

Chapter 2 integrates two main theoretical objectives. The first objective explains the post-modern effect of globalisation and how ontological anxieties contribute to securitisation and social sorting in Western societies. It is dedicated to redefine recent forms of exceptionalism in European citizenship rights, causing a latent securitisation of Roma minorities in the European legislation.

The second objective is based on the concepts of Aas and Bosworth (2013), which relies on the critical surveillance paradigm. I will discuss the changes in control societies and how targeted surveillance as a geopolitical tool leads to new digitalised mechanisms of population selection.

In addition, this chapter introduces the concept of a “Ban- opticon” (Bigo, 2008b), which refers to contemporary exclusionary monitoring practices in which surveillance subjects are directed into the funnel of expulsion. This theory enables a critical analysis of practical implications of these selective policies, in particular those in the bureaucratic field of financial surveillance that target people on the move. Both approaches are concerned with encompassing practices of European population control elaborated in power relations.

Chapter 3 contains the epistemological framework of research methods and the selected research techniques for data analyses. Based on a critical ethnographic objective, this chapter clarifies the relevance of multi-sited ethnographic fieldwork. In addition, it evaluates the relevance of digital ethnography as research site in combination with institutional ethnography.

Chapter 4 broadly discusses the situational construction of Roma identity and the historical background of Roma minorities. The coping mechanisms of Central European Roma minorities can only be understood with an in-depth knowledge of historically constructed prejudices and through a recognition of Roma ethnic diversity in different countries. The chapter provides background information about the different positions of Roma and non-Roma in sending countries. Since different Roma groups might use different coping strategies, this chapter includes a description of the situation in post-transitional home countries and its migration implications.

Chapter 5 provides an extended analysis of recent social policy objectives in the UK welfare system as the new platform of social sorting. To enable understanding and differentiation between several coping mechanisms applied by Roma in the UK, I will present current restrictions and control mechanisms that result from the technocratisation of local bureaucracies and how neoliberal market values in the post-welfare period shape the targeted monitoring of migrants. The chapter explains the shift in surveillance from borders to social services and the possible side effects of selective welfare measures in the context of the EU. It further discusses how managerialist shifts in government services and increasing institutional suspicion are changing the attitudes of service providers and service users.

By linking macro structures to everyday social practices, we can better understand how contemporary mobilities are shaped in a transnational context through contestation in the field of welfare (Tully, 1999, p. 168). This chapter provides an overview of changes in benefit systems that shape the self-representation and self-identification of ethnic migrants, resulting a discrepancy between surveillance data and real practices.

Chapter 6 explores the roles of professionals, Romani scholars, NGOs and interpreters who actively contribute to the framing of the Roma as a marginal ethnicity in Western countries. Although they are often excluded from policy studies, many stakeholders can affect the interaction between Roma newcomers and the bureaucratic system. As it will be presented, the poverty narrative in association with Roma strongly interrelated with the perception of discrimination in the case of Roma benefit applicants. The last three analytic chapter of the dissertation (Chapter 7, 8, 9) will analyse different coping mechanisms used by Roma newcomers in their interaction (or lack thereof) with welfare services. The analysis is divided over the following three chapters in order to provide a better understanding of the fluid, situational, adaptive interactive nature of these bureaucratic relationships.

Chapter 7 describes the basic bureaucratic steps taken by newcomers and how different brokers and intermediaries anticipate the needs of new arrivals. These analyses give an

overview of the different barriers migrants face in contacts with Jobcentre Plus officers. Since these contacts are still partly face to face, they demand different tactics to ensure eligibility for basic benefit provisions than migrants use with the tax office.

Chapter 8 contains the central element of this study: it describes interactions between newcomers and case managers through a fully digitalised service provision system. This Orwellian insider view provides a critical reflection on the side effects of digitalisation as the central argument of this thesis. As it will be concluded, no individual parameters can determine the coping mechanisms of migrants, since these strategies in face to face relations or online, are in a constantly shifting dynamic with the constantly changing eligibility provisions.

Chapter 9 focuses on those who invisible for service providers, ethnic Roma who are willingly avoid contact with the bureaucratic system in the UK. This chapter contains the cases of students, office managers and entrepreneurs who hiding from the all-seeing eye of the social service system in order to prevent stigmatisation and discrimination. In addition, this chapter analyses different strategies in the grey and black market economies used as alternative coping strategies outside the legal migration framework.

Chapter 10 evaluates the hypotheses presented above and brings the central arguments together in a final analysis. This chapter critically evaluates the limitations of digitalised bureaucratic systems and the dangers of reliance on virtual data and selection methods. Regarding the selected case studies it is suggested that ethnic Roma migrants are searching for existential safety but they are facing new forms of discrimination based on the labour history. Even though they have difficulties in accessing benefits, they take high risks and stay innovative in their coping strategies in order to stay in a country that has a limited knowledge about their identity. These strategies are not culturally defined, but their innovative aspects illustrate the growing awareness of surveillance mechanisms and the interactions of different minority groups in a foreign context. Finally, this chapter will evaluate how the digitalisation of service provisions creates a hypocritical system in which documented data are trusted more than the individuals they describe.

## Chapter 2 Critical Theories – Social Sorting and Surveillance in a Digital Welfare Labyrinth

### 2.1 Introduction

‘Anxiety is the dizziness of freedom’ states the famous quote of Kierkegaard (1844), referring to personal responsibilities, the discomfort of choices which become the driving force of the late modern western Society. Anxiety, as a conscious reflexivity raise the need of predictability in late modern Western societies in order to reduce potential risks and increase ontological security. This anxiety about the potentialities creates ‘the urge to tame the uncertain at all cost’ and by any means which relegate ‘the other’ to the category of cultural inferiority based on estimates and prejudices. ‘This unease constitutes the basis for securitization’. As it has been illustrated in the introduction, Roma are presented as a security threat by political leaders ‘in order to push a social issues into the realm of security legitimising this way urgent policy response’ that otherwise are not possible (Lazaridis & Wadia, 2015,p. 211). However, this study intends to provide a more critical notion on the results of such securitisation processes. Based on the security narratives associated with particular migrant groups, it will be analysed how surveillance of individuals based on their financial capabilities expands the categories of threat, indicating new selection measures. Based on the case of Roma migrants in London, this chapter discuss such securitization processes as late modern geopolitical control strategies.

Although theories about migration, exclusion and securitisation are regularly applied to conceptualise the situation of Roma migrants (Grill, 2011; Van Baar, 2014), little theoretical work has addressed the dynamics of intrastate exclusionary processes and the coping strategies of Roma with European citizenship. Securitisation of mobility has become a popular subject of different criminological theories, especially concerning correlations between ethnicity, crime and mobility.

In the following section, I will give an overview of the theoretical background of this mobile ethnographic study. First, the context of intrastate movement within the European Union will be framed within the late modern neoliberal context based on Young’s ‘bulimia’ concept (2003). Secondly, the concepts of critical security studies will be introduced that reflect on the policy implications of its anti-migration narratives. Thirdly considering the growing critical concerns about transnational mobility, new approaches of surveillance studies will be discussed. One key paradigm in this area is the recently growing field of financial surveillance, which provides the theoretical outline of this research.

To understand the securitisation of Roma migrants, we first need to understand the correlations between mobility, surveillance and the new geopolitical incentives of host societies. I will first suggest that late modern European societies are developing a new understanding of control as a form of *social sorting* (Lyon, 2013) that leads to blurred lines between safety and social security in particular after 2004.

The securitisation of Roma migrants must be understood within the larger context of neoliberal market tendencies that characterise the political landscape in contemporary Europe (Van Baar, 2011a). Neoliberalism is understood both as ‘a set of policy programmes that deregulate political government’ and as ‘a conservative liberal political movement’ that bases its ideas on neoclassical economics (Van Baar, 2012b, p. 9212). Based on Foucault’s notion of governmentality, many scholars have evaluated neoliberalism in recent decades (Lemke, 2001; O’Malley, 1997; Rose & Miller, 1992; Van Baar, 2012b). It can be understood as ‘a way of explaining the establishment and exercise of political power, one in which the concept of government is broader than management by the state; it also involves the regulation of populations through multiple institutions and technologies in society’ (Mitchell, 2006, p. 390). This governmentality concept has become the core of several securitisation theories that explain expulsion and selection of migrants in the European context. I will introduce a critical adaption of the Foucauldian notion of governmentality, and its relevance in exploring transnational Roma mobility.

## 2.2 Essentialising the other: A bulimia society

Young (2003) describes the dynamics of late modernity as the consequence of the neoliberal market forces of production. He sees these dynamics as a transformation process from a more socially inclusive period of modernity to an exclusive late modernity of ‘ontological insecurity’. By describing the economic and social transformations — similar to Bauman (1995) — Young compares these two periods: the post-war period of modernity that is seen as a steady social construction of a ‘society with certainty’; and the period when it turns into a liquid, constantly changing late modernity. As Young describes, fluid values in late modernity causes feelings of uncertainty as a result of continuous reflectivity making individuals feeling that they are getting lost in the ‘chaos of reward’ (Ibid., p. 399). This trend appears in both host societies and in European sending countries that results new securitisation mechanisms.

Young describes a controversial social process in this context. He explains the ‘uncertainty of identity’ as a result of globalisation, community disintegration and increasing individualism and he claims that late modern communities become commercially driven and sceptical about traditional values (1999b; 2003b; 2007). As Young (2003b) summarises:

‘Globalization has a paradoxical effect; it presents pluralism starkly in the face of the individual while at the same time through hybridism and the global dissemination of ideas, narrows the degree of difference. Cultures become less and less divided by gulfs and determined by locality and birth, and more and more a matter of choice.’ (p. 457)

As a result, social differentiation in late modernity is changed through the loss of meritocratic values, solidarity and people become more distrustful of each other, so tolerance structures and social control are transformed into calculative predictions. Consequently, there is less interest in assimilation, social integration and inclusion of deviants, but more acceptance of diversity, especially in consumerism. In short, intolerance of problematic marginal groups leads the rehabilitative attitude to devolve into risk-based thinking and harm reduction. Thus, there is a ‘change in tolerance in a society which abhors difference and attempts to reform difficulty to the one which celebrates difference and attempts to exclude the difficult’ (Young, 1999a, p. 387). Likewise, neoliberal late Western states are changing the primary political assignment by implementing market values. In opposition to Keynesian welfare imperatives, their duty is to ‘facilitate the smooth working of the market economy, to attend to the needs and interests of investors, finance capital, multinational corporations, and other economic entities and interests’ (Zizek, 1999, p. 199). The state’s role is reduced to ‘a mere police-agent serving the (consensually established) needs of the market forces...’ (Zizek, 2008, p. 997). This facilitative role of state anticipates into the classification of the market by adapting financial parameters as indications for inclusion that determine social and political inclusion by financial capability.

In short, when the ‘chaos of reward’ is allied with ontological insecurity, social resentment and actuarialism, it shapes a new form of ‘othering’ and a more punitive attitude in Western societies. Although these processes involve changes in attitudes toward migrants, the question is how they clarify the recent dynamics of Roma exclusion.

Young’s (1998) theory about social ‘othering’ helps us better understand the correlation between insecurity and social sorting. He argues that the neoliberal market forms the basis for comparisons that lead to a new form of exclusion: a universal citizenship of consumption that structurally excludes poor minorities. It encourages an ideal of diversity within the marketplace

of self-discovery, but provides a narrow, unrewarding individualism for the majority. In this process, exclusion and inclusion coexist and generate — as Young conceptualised — a ‘bulimia society’ (1999a). Based on the terms introduced by Lévi-Strauss(1992), Young combines the metaphor of anthropophagic societies — social cannibals that absorb certain individuals ‘possessing dangerous powers’ — with anthropoemetic societies (Young, 1999a, pp. 287-288) that vomit deviants out and keep them temporarily or permanently in isolation (Young, 1999a, p. 388). Applying Merton’s deprivation theory, Young argues that, in late modernity, the paradigm case for a dissatisfied society both devours and ejects people.

Likewise, transgressive behaviour is the result of cultural inclusion and structural exclusion. It is not a product of a lack of culture but of the acceptance of a culture of success — celebrity culture — and individualism (Young, 1999b, p. 82).

Young (2007) suggests that most theories discussing the exclusion of groups in late modern society universalise instead of localise and contextualise exclusionary processes and therefore miss the essential dynamic of the process of ‘othering’ (p. 4). He locates the roots of ‘othering’ in the ‘disembeddedness’ of late modern society, linked to a sense of insecurity of insubstantiality, and to the fear of loss of status and downward mobility that generates the ‘vertigo’ of insecurity (Young, 2007, p. 141). As he describes, growing inequalities and economic insecurity might lead to a widespread feeling of resentment both in those looking up the class structure and those peering down. However, this fear is particularly apparent among those whose status and economic position are interconnected. As it will be analysed in Chapter 9, these insecurities are not only feeding exclusionary selection measures but also create a risk for exploitation and financial dependency.

As Young (2007) describes, in search of a firm identity, ‘new barriers are erected in the false hope of creating rigidity and secure difference’ (p. 5) in many spheres of human activity. Most clearly it is seen as a cultural essentialism, where the essentialising of the self is accompanied by ‘essentialising the other’ (Young, 1999b, pp. 96-97). The irony of cultural ‘othering’ is that as migrant groups become more like the majority culture, they experience a higher level of deprivation and discontent (Young, 2007, p. 143). Thus discontent and crime are not instantaneously produced as a reaction to exclusion, but rather by the bulimic combination of cultural inclusion and structural exclusion (Van Marle, 2008, p. 349).

As it will be described in Chapter 5, this structural exclusion goes hand in hand with legal exclusion, such as presented in the case of welfare provisions. As Garland also described (2003), due to the acknowledgement of the limitations of crime control social expectations are justifying new crime control measures, resulting a risk-assessment-based harm reduction

machine. In this actuarial justice system, ‘there is a concern less with justice than with harm minimisation and where causes of crime and deviance are not seen as the vital clue to the solution to the problem of crime’ (p. 66). With technological developments such risk and danger have become precursors to the exclusion (Hardy, 2000, p. 74) based on algorithms that are implemented in surveillance practices. This process, also described in Chapter 7 leads the public to demand harsh punishments and aggression from those protecting their status and, subsequently, increases resistance by individuals who already feel deprived. These counter actions might appear as alternate cultures or illegal activities (Carlen, 2008, p. 528) in order to prevent such a selection.

Although similarities between the minority and majority are increasing according to Young (2003a), incivilities and crime are seen as symptoms of deficient assimilation to the values of the host society. Nonetheless, he makes a distinction between a conservative form of ‘othering’ that attributes negative characteristics to the others and a liberal ‘othering’ in which the other is deemed to lack the qualities, values and virtues that we hold. In this form of ‘othering’, deficits are often viewed as a consequence of material and cultural factors that prevent the other from becoming just like us (Mooney, 2008, p. 109; Mooney & Young, 2000). Roma migrants are subjected to both forms, depending on the host societies. On a macro level, it seems that the Western exclusionary attitude toward Roma migrants can be framed by Young’s (1999b) theory: through the processes of punitiveness, risk thinking and the loss of meritocratic values and solidarity that trigger transgression as reaction.

As will be discussed further, host societies define welfare dependent migrants as a security threat and describe them as a financial burden or parasite on their welfare system. These risk narratives are leaving the political terrain of border control and initiating new incentives in social policies that are constructing the internal borders of population control by providing selective access to social provisions. Critical security studies pay increasing attention to these securitisation policies and consequently this paradigm constitutes the central theoretical core of this empirical study.

In the following section, I will introduce the post-Panopticon concept from a critical security approach. I will use it to discuss recent theoretical developments related to the securitisation of migration and surveillance as a selective disciplinary measure in host societies.



## 2.3 Securitisation and population control

In the late modern European arena, globalisation and EU citizenship are increasing the securitisation of migrants (Huysmans, 2000). Anti-immigration narratives are increasingly associating mobility with national threat and claiming extended control measures, which results in unconventional security policies and state-corporate cooperation beyond national borders (Broeders et al, 2013). The following analyses will investigate three separate aspects from a theoretical view:

1. I will analyse how the definition of threat is linked to particular groups and leads to security measures.
2. I will relate the political use of securitisation to the concept of governmentality (Foucault, 1977). Population control, legitimised by references to security, takes form through selected governmental incentives that are constructed by selecting surveillance data. The securitisation of migrants and surveillance of mobility are shaped by a dialogue between the observer and the observed. In this dynamic process, there is a Panopticon effect on the observed (Foucault, 1977), who might be disciplined by this surveillance process. However, the subject of monitoring might also manipulate this data collection and therefore change those exclusionary incentives that construct 'the funnel of expulsion' (Aas & Bosworth, 2013, p. 258). Surveillance awareness and the social construction of threat are central dynamics in this process of population control. This selection process of governmental bodies was predominantly theorised in the field of critical security studies.
3. I will introduce the manifestation of social sorting in welfare services adjusting neoliberal managerialism.

### 2.3.1 Governmentality and population control

Foucault (2007) introduced the notion of governmentality to explain how states govern their populations through biopolitical regulation. The concept of biopower as a power based on knowledge production played an important role in developing his concept of governmentality (Lemke, 2001). Foucault emphasised its importance in regulating modern societies at the level of populations rather than nationalised territories. Governmentality is conceived as a form of power that intensively governs and manipulates people on different scales (Foucault, 1982, 1997a). Governmentality can generally be considered to be 'the mode of power concerned with

the maintenance and control of bodies and persons, the production and regulation of persons and populations, and the circulation of goods insofar as they maintain and restrict the life of the population' (Butler, 2004, p. 52). Furthermore, this concept highlights the importance of a simultaneous analysis of micro and macro physical elements of the phenomena and clarifies that these scales are the outcomes of various governmental processes (Van Baar, 2011a, p. 36).

Since Roma have recently been defined as a European minority, their governance becomes an interstate issue. As a result, their socioeconomic position has become a matter of European population regulation and ethnic problematisation.

Foucault wanted to de-centre the state as the central power-arranging institution and apply a more general framework of government. In this sense, the state is considered to be a symptom of government, or to be a historically specific way in which the problem of government has been discursively and spatially articulated (Stenson, 2005). Thus, governmentality can be understood as:

1. a way of explaining the establishment, and
2. Exercising political power, a new perspective in which the concept of government is broader than management by the state. Foucault's concept is based on the hypothesis of the 'reciprocal constitution of power techniques and forms of knowledge' (Lemke, 2001, p. 190).

Governmentality's methodological principle involves the regulation of populations through multiple institutions and technologies in society, from the governing of others to the governing of the self. (Foucault, 1997b; Mitchell, 2006, p. 389). As these governing processes are mutually constitutive (Lemke, 2001, p. 192), I have chosen the latter one, the governing of self as the central focus in the case of the Roma minority.

As Lemke (2001) explains, 'the semantic linking of governing ("gouverner") and modes of thought ("mentalité") indicates that it is not possible to study the technologies of power without an analysis of the political rationality underpinning them' (p. 191). As he describes, Foucault used government in a comprehensive sense, indicating the link between power relations and processes of subjectification (Van Baar 2011a, p. 192). Foucault's theory blurs the boundaries between the discursive and the technical by stressing that translation processes are materially embedded in the performance of government, which is how they make the 'activity of governing' possible (Van Baar, 2011a, pp. 37-41).

Foucault (1982) translates the activity of government as ‘the conduct of conduct’: ‘leading, directing, or guiding the conduct of oneself, something or others in a particular way and on the basis of...a specific form of rationality’ (p. 220). Here, rationality means:

‘everything that could be considered as the know-how, that enables the performance of government comprising theories and expertise from risk management to community work and demarcate something as a particular problem space that needs to be addressed in term of different kinds of governmental interventions’. (Van Baar, 2011a, p. 38)

The problematisation of Roma migration in this context evolved in an integration-security nexus, subjecting and selecting individuals by an extended surveillance system.

### 2.3.2 Critical security studies

According to the Copenhagen School security and threat shall be theorised based on speech acts, Wæver et al. (1993) based on a social constructivist epistemology. Whereas realists argue that insecurity can be calculated by measuring military strength, social constructivists claim that threats to security are constructed through intersubjective interaction in a context-specific dialogue or discourse. Suspicion is a prominent feature that is strongly interconnected with Schmitt’s notion of exceptionalism (Aradau, 2004; Williams, 2003). Suspicion critically reflects on the political effects of representations of security, and discusses how different contextual representations of threat have significant performative effects in population control (McDonald, 2013).

According to this vision, threats do not exist independently of our knowledge, but are brought into being by processes such as political speeches (Vaughan-Williams, 2010, p. 5). Weaver et al. (1993) suggests that securitisation refers to a linguistic representation that defines a certain concern as an existential threat. Later, he emphasised the importance of constituencies or audiences in ‘backing up’ speech acts (Buzan et al., 1998, pp. 26-33). Securitisation is thus also intersubjective in that the “audience” must accept or tolerate it for the act to be effective. ‘The emphasis in the framework therefore arguably shifted from speech acts as product of security to speech act as one component of the inter-subjective construction of security’ (McDonald, 2008, p. 3). This construction indicates a liquid mechanism of social sorting, which is the central theoretical approach of this study. Targeting undesired migrants, who are seen as a financial or security threat, leads to new selective mechanisms in the social policies of Western governments, who use this security narrative to justify their measures. This process

results in a legitimised selection in accessing welfare, triggering inventive responses from newcomers.

Speech acts are applied to justify more elusive exclusionary measures that facilitate the sophisticated exclusion of unwanted groups. As recent securitisation of Roma migrants illustrates, the new movement of unwanted groups is securitised when it is ‘presented as an existential threat, (...) not necessarily because a real existential threat exists but because the issue is presented as such a threat’ (Buzan et al., 1998, p. 24). The process of securitisation usually conforms to the particular rhetorical structure in which the problem is equated with state survival and then given priority of action, ‘because if the problem is not handled now it will be too late, and we will not exist to remedy our failure’ (Buzan et al., 1998, p. 26). However, the real challenge of these processes begins when they become normalised in daily security politics, such as the threat of benefit tourism illustrated in the introduction.

This notion of exceptionalism, discussed by Agamben (1998) and Schmitt (1996), enables forms of extraordinary politics ‘that would otherwise be stymied by normal liberal democratic checks and balances on coercive and authoritarian regimes’ (Peoples & Vaughan-Williams, 2010, p. 71). When it becomes an everyday political practice, this exceptionalism enables governments to make it the ‘paradigm of government’ (Agamben, 2005). As Neocleous (2008) argues: ‘security has become the master narrative through which the state shapes our lives and imaginations...producing and organizing subjects in a way that is always already predisposed towards the exercise of violence in defence of the established order’ (Browning & McDonald, 2013, p. 241). Maltman (2013) defines several problematic aspects and limitations of these securitisation processes, such as their serious indirect impacts and the fact that they affect marginalised groups rather than the wider population.

Additionally, there is a gap between the threat defined by these constructions and the daily concerns of the majority. So, while global fears are continually being materialised in an attempt ‘to ingrain them into everyday lives, everyday lives are often immersed in more pressing matters. There is also a concern that these securitisation theories inadvertently reproduce the very state metanarratives about fear they oppose, in failing to question who feels what’ (Pain, 2007). Most importantly, this geopolitical analysis uses representations as a kind of proxy for people’s feelings and actions, as if they are lacking any agency or power. Hence more attention should be paid to the dynamic aspects such as the source of threat, a ‘multiplicity of securitizing actors’ (Hammerstad, 2012), ‘the complexity of various audiences being convinced of the securitizing move (Bright, 2012; Salter & Nutlu, 2013) and the measures taken as ameliorative action’ (Collins, 2013, p. 137).

To understand the theoretical relevance of securitisation in the case of Roma migrants, three particular aspects of control shall be differentiated:

1. The institutionalised performance of control on a transnational level. How does it reshape contemporary European mobility and how does it include surveillance as a data resource and as population management? Moreover, how do disciplining measures increase surveillance awareness and trigger new strategies as a reaction or anticipation in monitoring practices by the targeted population? Although the relationship between securitisation and surveillance is often ignored (McDonald, 2008), there are many contemporary analyses of securitisation that include critical surveillance studies (e.g. Bigo & Walker, 2002; Sasse, 2005; Huysmans, 2006). In particular, a growing theoretical field is problematising the links between globalisation, sovereignty and governance of security, with a focus on policing and public institutions driven by risk-related surveillance methods (Erikson & Haggerty, 1997). The key question is how security ties individuals to the authorities through the demands of citizenship, which in turn entails different possibilities and limitations for how we think about security and relate “our” security to that of others.
2. Discourses of security serve to sustain existing hierarchies of power and the gendered and ethnic identities associated with them. Anticipation of Roma migrants in control and selection mechanisms of routinised bureaucratic practices can only be understood by the concept of post-national citizenship (Sassen, 2002). Social sorting and population control takes form through the intersubjective construction of security as a political technology (Burke, 2002) that ‘enables, produces and constrains individuals within larger systems of power and institutional action’ (McDonald, 2013, p. 270). It is mutually constituted through elite knowledge, bureaucrats and individuals who conduct themselves concerning other groups (Bigo, 2008; Huysmans, 2006).
3. Social sorting and population control should be defined under different modalities of surveillance that serve a new ‘managerialism’ to control mobility (Newburn, 1998).

In the next pages, I will briefly summarise Foucault’s key control concepts that ground critical surveillance theories related to social sorting and power.

## 2.4 Panopticon and population control

Foucault's *Surveiller et Punir* (1975; translated as *Discipline and Punish*) is the touchstone of the transdisciplinary field of surveillance studies. In his analyses, Foucault represents Bentham's 'Panopticon' as a key spatial symbol in the creation of modern subjectivity and control, because its architecture symbolises the power relations of the modern disciplinary society. In short, the Panopticon figure's annular building is divided into different cells and a huge tower with windows in the middle that allows the supervisors in the tower to observe all the individuals in the cells without being seen themselves. Although not every inmate is observed continuously, the general assumption is that observation is possible anytime. Since the observed ones cannot see when they are monitored, all of them act as if they are under surveillance and therefore discipline themselves out of fear (Allmer, 2015, p. 77).

As Wood (2003) states, this Panopticism, as the driving force of modernity or as a social trajectory, represents the motivation for self-monitoring 'through the belief that one is under constant scrutiny' (p. 239). The Panopticon creates a consciousness of permanent visibility as a form of power that resembles the same reflective self-disciplinary attitude in different settings of the modern society (Foucault, 1995, p. 228). Green (1999, p. 210) adds that the disciplinary gaze forces the objectified inmates to watch and control themselves, creating a preventive character of self-control. Consequently, the subject of surveillance becomes 'the principle of his own subjugation' (Foucault, 1991, p. 203).

In short, social control is created by the experience of uncertainty among the observed, who cannot view the observer. This asymmetrical power relationship creates an automatic functioning of power through the self-discipline of observed individuals. As Foucault (1979) steps beyond the physical Panopticon design, he elaborates this scheme into a new social order: the rise of 'disciplinary society' based on self-controlling mechanisms and assured by permanent visibility and an unverifiable gaze, which is characterised by its demand for rationalisation.

Although this self-reflexive, conscious behaviour-modifying aspect of surveillance is acknowledged in the literature, there are several limitations of this interpretation of its disciplinary power. In particular, this analysis is focused on the participatory component missing from the original concept, as later discussed by Lyon (2006). Another important physical aspect of the architectural notion of the Panopticon is the isolation of the observed ones from each other, who are in principle unable to communicate or move. In addition, there is an unverifiable aspect of visibility, since the observed ones do not know when they are seen.

Although, in Foucault's (1991) interpretation, the major effect of Bentham's Panopticon is to 'induce a state of awareness and permanent visibility of the prisoners that assures the automatic functioning of power' (1977, p. 201), there is a lack of attention paid to the interactive aspect between the observed individuals and their changing attitude toward the observer. In short, there is a clear control transition from an overt, external reactive toward a covert, internal and preventive system (Boersma et al., 2014). As Lyon (2003) stresses, this notion of the Panopticon is more than an architectural form:

'It is also the social, political, and technical infrastructure that renders visualization meaningful for the basis of disciplinary social control. At the heart of the panoptic project is the collection of individualized codified information, and this provides the rationale for classification and subsequent authoritative intervention.' (p. 251)

This data collection and selection based on classification and profiling is the key aspect of this analysis of power relations.

## 2.5 Surveillance society

Lyon elaborates on Foucault's concept of a 'disciplinary society' transforming into a mainly technology-based 'surveillance society' where governmental and privatised security services cooperate to 'discipline the mass' (Green, 1999, p. 29-30). In neoliberal democracies, these sophisticated technical tools extend existing surveillance practices with electronic databases, enabling a new digital "bureaucracy" in favour of "national security" and "commercial competition" (Bauman, 2013; Lyon, 2003). The power in surveillance is thus far more than observation. By individualising pathology through bureaucratic codification, risk is defined by individual characteristics and classified into risk categories of decision-makers (Lyon, 2003, p. 250). In short, power relations can be traced through the identification and classification of individuals into specific databases. Recently, data collection has been extended to different levels of everyday life. Used across national borders and by privatised security agencies, it is technologically enabled to trace mundane activities of individuals for several purposes, in particular for risk assessments. As Lyon (2003) notes:

'Abstract data, now including video, biometric, and genetic as well as computerized administrative files, are manipulated to produce profiles and risk categories in a liquid, networked system. The point is to plan, predict, and prevent by classifying and assessing those profiles and risks.' (p. 13)

Many technocratic administrative procedures have used panoptic sorting to invent “internal borders” against unwanted mobile groups. Risk management and profiling individuals defined as threats are increasingly becoming an economic type of classification, assessing the financial activities of individuals in neoliberal societies (Gandy, 1993).

The growing importance of transparency as collection of individual data is a tool of social sorting in managerialist bureaucratic surveillance practices. In Gandys’ ‘panoptic sort’ concept, panoptic stands for *‘the consideration of all information about an individual that may be useful in a production of intelligence of personal economic value...It is a discriminatory technology because it is used to sort people into categories based upon these estimates’* (Gandy, 1996, p. 133). As will be analysed later regarding profiling and the exclusion of welfare claimants, sorting personal information and using classified data enables exclusion and “targeting” of particular groups defined as a financial “threat”. This late modern, economic-value-based risk management is a central analytical factor of this study.

### 2.5.1 Social sorting

Although social and personal categorisation is a common feature of every society, recent surveillance societies intend to influence and manage populations by social sorting along economic categories established by computer codes for personal data. Administrative surveillance not only rationalises but also automates this selection process. Lyon (2003) notes that ‘codes, usually processed by computers, sort out transactions, interactions, visits, calls, and other activities; they are the invisible doors that permit access to or exclude from participation in a multitude of events, experiences, and processes’ (p. 13). This selection process has several phases, including identification by collection of personal information, sorting or classification of data, and assessment of personal information (Lyon, 2003, p. 135). These are constantly redefined to manage the surveyed individuals and to indicate or preselect the choices of surveillance subjects.

This proactive channelling and selection of individuals is based on ‘allocating their worth’ in ways that have ‘real effects on their life chances’, such as accessing basic resources. ‘In this discriminative process, individuals are sorted into categories based on estimates. These sorting practices are based on selected personal information like someone’s economic value, which is defined by targeting guidelines such as those in commercial marketing practices’ (Gandy, 1996, p. 133). When the registered identity of an individual and his or her classification has guided decisions about what kind of person he or she is, ‘it is the process of assessment



that determines whether this individual should be included in or excluded' (Gandy, 1996, p. 15).

In contrast to the classical notion of the Panopticon, the surveillant knows more than the subject in digital data surveillance systems (Marx, 2002, p. 29). One particular strategy, facilitated by electronic data collection methods, is a less expensive, increasingly popular automated system of "dataveillance". In this monitoring system, it is not the subject who is under control, but rather the data about him or her. It is 'the systematic use of personal data systems in the investigation or monitoring of the actions or communications of one or more persons' (Clarke, 2006, p. 34). However, these databases become dated and do not always reflect the personal situations of the individuals they are indexing. Furthermore, the data is not always verifiable by those they are identifying, and individuals are therefore unsure about the content of the data collected about them. It is understandable that 'service users are suspicious: they never know if they are under the scope of an "inspector" and, if so, who it could be and how much access the inspector has to personal data. This invisible monitoring system is also called a "nonopticon", which refers to this unequal process of surveillance (Vaidhyathan, 2008, p. 8). In these digital processes, the interactions of "virtual subjects" are tracked and controlled within the digital environment. As these dataveillance methods produce information about particular groups in the transnational context and enables to classify and profile them in order to develop geopolitical incentives of social sorting from a distance. These selection processes focus on particular groups defined as threats, so there are new theoretical challenges concerning the control of mobile populations.

In recent critical surveillance theories, the Foucauldian concept of disciplinary power refers to a panoptic modality that includes simultaneous control and behaviour-modifying mechanisms. These studies on surveillance and exclusion mostly focus on local populations from a static, normative approach, and dynamic aspects like securitisation of mobility have just recently been introduced in this field. Social sorting of mobile groups and migrants has become a popular subject of security studies, but an interactionist approach is required to better understand social sorting by dataveillance. This analysis therefore includes the geopolitics of mobility. Population control is mainly associated with control of spaces and places by employing surveillance activities on several scales. With increasing transnational mobility, new methods are adapted to control and manage people on the move. Therefore, the social, material and emotional dynamics of these tracing and selecting strategies should be understood by analysing local and virtual power structures along diverse contextual (ethno) "scapes" (Appadurai, 1990).

### 2.5.2 Planning and governing by mobility control

As the collected empirical data illustrates, when migrant groups are defined in terms of financial threat, governing incentives are trying to define their resistance by disciplining them and control their unwieldy flows. Hyndman (2012) notes:

‘The idea of migrants as a vector of insecurity prevailed, creating potent fear that could be used for draconian measures. The biometric management of “insiders” and “outsiders” with its assemblage of new laws, policies and border practices render geopolitics and biopolitics inseparable.’ (p. 245)

State incentives are coded in different panoptic modalities to manipulate people on the move. These include mapping, valuation, codification, enclosures and boundaries. Since these incentives’ are proactively trying to channel individual conduct, planning is a key means of managing (im)mobilities and access. This is a spatial disciplinary technology: an apparatus of control and surveillance of territories, flows and people, money, goods, and information. In these processes, space is constituted via the interplay of forces as a product of continuous de- and re-territorialisation’ with the purpose of population selection (Teshfahuney & Ek, 2014, p. 172). Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) notions of de- and re-territorialisation processes offer creative possibilities for analysing these regions of flow of people.

Mobility as a paradigm draws on this geodemographic phenomenology that embodies practices and ‘the production of being in motion as a relational affordance between the senses, objects and kinesthetic accomplishments. It draws on ‘Political economy theories to rethink the performative politics of social and ethnic differences, secured borders’ and the governance of migration (Sheller, 2011, p. 2). However, it does not suggest that all the world is mobile now (Sheller& Urry, 2006).

In this research, critical mobility approach is used to study who and what is demobilised and remobilised and in what situations mobility might be a desired option or ‘coerced with the purpose of expulsion’ (Adey, 2010). As it will be explained in Chapter 3 this paradigm can highlight the changing relationship between local and global ‘power-geometries’ (Massey, 1993), thus bringing into view ‘the political projects inherent in the power relations informing processes of globalization and exclusion’ (Adey et al., 2014, p. 48). In short the new mobilities paradigm:

‘...legitimizes new objects of study and new methods of sociological enquiry. These methods include ethnographies of micro-interactions of co-presence, participant observation and interviewing of people on the move such as “mobile ethnographies”, “time-space diaries”, tracing the circulation of objects (‘follow the thing’) physically or through tracking technologies, methods to research the spatial and temporal dynamics of transfer points such as airports and train stations.’(Caletrió, 2012a, p. 2).

This new paradigm breaks with the basic assumption of twentieth-century social science that “the social” is ‘constituted by a set of intense relationships between individuals in close physical proximity. The new mobilities paradigm argues that travel and communication technologies have enabled the proliferation of connections at a distance and that such distant and intermittent connections are crucial’ to holding social life together (Sheller & Urry, 2006).

As it will be illustrated by the UK’s welfare surveillance strategies, these disciplinary technologies that prevail in planning arise from the logic of the ‘security dispositive’ (Foucault, 2007, p. 20). Controlling territory and access to space and regulating flows echo the tactics and strategies used in military operations, defining threats and managing safety (Metzger et al., 2014, p. 171). Since mobility is a prominent security concern for states, planning become a ‘central apparatus of de- and re-territorialisation’ that sorts these flows to specific ends. As such, planning shapes the control, discipline and surveillance of various mobilities at different geographical scales (Sheller, 2011; Tesfahuney & Dahlstedt, 2008).

This study does not focus on the direction of mobility flows, but rather traces ‘the power of discourses, practices and infrastructures of mobility in creating the effects’ (Scheller, 2011, p.1).

### 2.5.3 Securitisation of mobility as migration management

Managing mobility by special in- and exclusion has recently been extended to the financial surveillance of people on the move. Virilio and Lotringer (1997) confirm this idea, arguing that recent global mobility has resulted in a transition from exo-colonialisation to endo-colonialisation (i.e. the domestic control of populations by internal borders). It is embodied by surveillance and selection on one hand and segregation or assimilation on the other. This ideology of planning of internal strategies compared with the colonial period resonates similar stages of domination, reformation and integration of territories, with economies and cultures.

Post-national citizenship plays a key role in these internal sorting selection processes. The creation of cross-border entities such as the European Union may thus be conceived of as a transnational process of endo-colonisation, implemented by supranational spatial planning and striating apparatuses.

Manderscheid (2009) defines this postcolonial power structure by combining perspectives of mobilities and space in the study of social inequalities. She notes that linking space and social inequality shows how mobilities are essential to spatial means of creating, maintaining and deepening social inequalities.

Most importantly, despite the constant monitoring and guiding of these processes, there are irregular flows and unexpected movements that, with or without intention, escape the grids of planning, even in the most striated spaces. Mobility therefore poses a threat to the order of space: ‘a matter of organizing circulation, eliminating its dangerous elements, making a division between good and bad circulation, and maximizing the good circulation by diminishing the bad’ (Foucault, 2007b, p. 55). These unexpected movements or efforts to avoid replacement are the central analytical focus of this study.

Mobility and the securitisation of migration is not a new subject in surveillance studies. However, this critical analysis aims to show the dynamics of population selection and exclusion in the European context of domination, asymmetrical power relations, resource control and exploitation. This empirical study will critically analyse surveillance, in particular financial surveillance of mobile entities, and ‘its role in guaranteeing neoliberal market efficiency by sacrificing social solidarity’ in Europe (Fuchs, 2008, pp. 268-270). To understand the mutual effects of mobility and surveillance, we need to step over the Foucauldian interpretation of Panopticism and identify the new functions and security mechanism of surveillance.

Recent integration of security and immigration issues is a result of the blurring between internal and external security in the European space, as part of the development of new surveillance processes in the European Union.

The Single European Act (1986) guaranteed the free movement of people and set the One Market objective, but it simultaneously made governments more concerned about the risks associated with the breakdown of internal borders (Ucellini, 2010). It is this ‘blurring between clandestine immigration and international crime prevention’ that leads to a new risk management with proactive selection in the European territory (Ucellini, 2010, p. 73-74). After the Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism, governments felt increasingly uneasy about the protection of national security. This resulted in control and crime

prevention practices that expanded their geographical scope, de facto deterritorialising European border control, justified by the perceived threats of crime and mobility (Aas, 2011).

As it will be presented in Chapter 8 by the cases of foreign HMRC applicants, this general securitisation tendency includes shifting borders and a selective, profiling security technology that tends to disregard the counteractions of the securitised individuals. In these geopolitical changes, states are usually the main agents of criminalisation. However, since their interests depend on their geopolitical decisions, they are adapting surveillance measures unequally (Peter & Nadelmann, 2006); ‘some states are more sovereign than others’ in practice (Dauvergne, 2008, p. 172). This research involves an empirical analysis of the increasing multiplicity and asymmetry of the forms and sites of surveillance in local contexts along with security discourses about its surveillance effects. If we were to locate this question within the relationship between surveillance and governmentality, one way of addressing it would be a multisited analysis of the functions of financial surveillance and how the political conditions in the EU are allowing transnational securitisation to take place.

#### 2.5.4 Geopolitics of surveillance

Control of populations by spatialisation and social sorting is the central aspect of securitisation because the most powerful states determine and export the priorities of control to the international system, as in the case of securitisation and policing migration (Coutin, 2005, p. 6). Governments strategically seek to shift legal responsibilities, so empirical data about these shifts enables us to explore the geographical and political situatedness of law and the legal sorting of undesired groups. The objectives of mobility control ‘form novel contours of criminalisation, punitiveness and the state, which is crucially defined by its geopolitical position’ (Coutin, 2005, p. 6). The northern European states have been creating an elaborate legal regime that criminalises certain forms of movement, effectively rendering large proportions of the worlds’ population “illegal” (Dauvergne, 2008).

As a source of governmental incentives for population control, spatial planning requires that ‘territories be laid over by finely meshed grids and follows strategic elements for territorial order, classification, normalisation and surveillance. These classifications enclose divisions of space and the management of space for different purposes’ (Teschfahuney & Ek, 2014, p. 173). As Richard Ek suggests, ‘striated space is not absolute (static) space since the state and capitalist world-economy have to deal with flows of any kind, like time-geography...such as time-budgets’(2014, p. 134).

Surveillance involves the control and management of the ‘production, consumption and circulation of goods, capital, information and people by this time geography. The apparatus of capture filters the circulation and infiltration capacity of the masses’ (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 481). In this sense, planning is about the management of various movements and flows; it involves optimal ordering of (im)mobilities, de- and re-territorialisation by enabling flows and hindering movements (Phillips et al, 2003). As Lyon concludes.

‘Born through the merging of public data with private computing resources, the premise of geodemographics is that the landscape can be profitably divided into discrete spaces occupied by homogeneous groups of households and individuals. The developers of the systems have abjured the use of related academic work and appealed to the widely accepted pragmatic principle that “you are where you live”. In the end, it has been asserted, we simply need a system that will describe individuals, households, and neighbourhoods in terms of the categories to which we know they certainly belong. Although they have continued to assert that you are where you live, users of geodemographic systems have gradually reinvented systems in concern with changes in the availability of different kinds of data, in computing power and in the practitioners’ understandings of society. Less noticeable has been that these changes have implications for the changing face of the lived interaction with the landscape and for the sorts of social opportunities that people in the landscape have’ (Lyon, 2013, p. 137).

According to the theoretical concept of Lyon it will be presented how seemingly trivial changes in systems might lead to dramatic changes in how individuals are conceptualised and defined who they are and what they can do. This process of geopolitical monitoring enables a new type of governing mobility that aims to channel individuals toward spaces where they are seen as harmless. According to the self-disciplining assumption of the postmodern surveillance effect, these choices of spaces need to be made voluntarily. But how can individuals be made to choose where they should move on to!?

## 2.6 The funnel of expulsion

Governmentality is commonly summarised as indirect control or the conduct of conduct. However, the control and selection of groups or individuals defined as a threat is also theorised by “governing through choice”. Similar to Young, and Aas and Bosworth (2013) also describes

the exclusion of migrants by invisible governmental incentives. They call a different aspect of collective coercion and control “the funnel of expulsion”.

This concept refers to an additional dynamic of control that forces migrants to make a seemingly free decision to leave. This dynamic covers those blurring boundaries I described above between the different forms of control and access (Aas & Bosworth, 2013, p. 264). They argue that the ‘distinction between internal and external sovereignty becomes contested’ and, instead of being deported, unwanted migrants are placed in a situation where they are expected to make the choice to leave themselves. Their actions are governed by establishing a life situation in which the only rational choice seems to be to leave. However, this assumption about the obedient individual may fail.

State organisations constitute the framework for the designed structure of exclusionary incentives. Interaction between these incentives and the selected group displays the dynamics of transnational mobility (Aas & Bosworth, 2013, p. 266). These are implemented in bureaucratic procedures that select and assess individuals, then classify them based on their personal data and, recently, their digital identities.

Recently, a participation-based neoliberal labour market approach has dominated Western European state incentives, targeting groups who are seen as unwilling to integrate and participate in their societies. This participation is generally measured in labour market participation and by the level of dependency on state funding such as social benefits (Woolford et al, 2013). New security measures have been initiated to sort the good or productive citizens from the undesired, “passive” citizens, who are seen as an economic threat to national welfare. Social and special exclusion thus result from financial exclusion, as the major incentive against unattractive mobility of the poor (Halfmann, 1998). In practice, one can be structurally excluded from various systems, such as the labour market, the health system, the political system, the economy or the educational system. As O’Reilly (2007) summarises:

‘Those who cannot afford to pay social security contributions are unlikely to pay income tax, and tend neither to register with the town hall. Those who are not on the town hall register cannot vote in local elections; those who do not have a residence card cannot obtain a resident’s bank account or a mobile phone with a contract. Those who are paying no national insurance contributions have no access to sick pay, pensions, or unemployment benefit. People living on small savings and/or irregular incomes are unlikely to have health insurance, while only those who are retired or paying national insurance contributions have the right to use the national health service.’ (p. 291)

Exclusion from one part of the system can have a snowball effect. Migrants who do not register at the council cannot obtain a legal certificate of roadworthiness for their cars, so they continue to drive with foreign registration plates. Migrants who know they are working informally are unwilling to become socially integrated in the host society, while those who are working in the marginal economy have no opportunity to integrate (O'Reilly, 2007).

Many of these people on the move (ab)use the ambiguities of surveillance practice and enclosure by 'occupying a liminal space in flows', avoiding borders and challenging cultural and language differences (O'Reilly, 2007, p. 292).

As it will be presented in Chapter 7 and chapter 8 these actors, who anticipate the exclusionary incentive, by challenging the underlying assumptions of state incentives, challenge the intersection of security and surveillance approaches.

Surveillance technologies, as well as attitudes toward constant monitoring of activities, have shifted and greatly expanded to become routines of everyday life rather than exceptional security practices. The idea of an Orwellian society in the making, through a "liberal" agenda, has been tested and contested by people on the move. Host societies view the unseen or inventively anticipate newcomers as a financial and national threat and are thus willing to develop monitoring and selection methods as a response to these individuals (Broeders et al, 2013). Therefore, sophisticated selection processes are invented in a digital environment where face-to-face interactions are eluded and governmental transparency decreases.

Authorities use monitoring processes to 'individuate or differentiate one person from another, according to the criteria of the organisation in question. This information is used in analyses of their transactions, communication, behaviour or activities. Thus some kind of surveillance knowledge is produced and then used to mark the individual, to locate him or her in a particular niche or category of risk-proneness' (Lyon, 2010b, p. 29).

In recent securitisation processes, these categories have assigned social places and opportunities to a person according to the organisation's ruling criteria. However, these individuals learn the criteria through experience and can manipulate them when needed. According to the mobility paradigm, people on the move are not simply subjected to a monitoring that aims to discipline their behaviour and, in some cases, to make them relocate "by choice", but there is a new aspect in the Foucauldian Panopticism that introduces the "ban" of security threat. This interaction between these individualised selection procedures and those who are defined as a security threat became the central subject for analysing mobility management strategies.



## 2.7 Surveillance and selection Ban-opticon

Following the securitisation based social sorting analyses of Lyon, Didier Bigo (2006) introduced the concept of a Ban-opticon in critical securities studies to analyse structural governance of exclusion by ‘the management of unease’ (p. 6). Similar to Aas and Bosworth, he defines those routines and technologies of professionals and politicians, the police and judges who restructure the legal state. Ban refers to the normalisation of exclusion which includes the predictable management of the future by control measures introduced in advance. This concept of a ban relies on the technical advantages of databases to define who might replace themselves to where and who should be immobile. A whole range of “risk management systems” should also be also recognised. These include building special architectural features and structures (e.g. asylum centres and detention areas in airports) and introducing emergency laws or administrative measures (e.g. the regulation of “sans papiers” and agreements among governments about transportation in expulsion). They also play a role in the public discourse. Risk management attempts to define in advance who is a possible threat in the local context and why. Security no longer depends on immobilising authorities or on the permanent gaze of the guard. In Bigo’s (2008) words, ‘This chart is not a panopticon projected on a global scale, it is what we — by combining the term “Ban”, borrowed from Jean Luc Nancy and reworked by Giorgio Agamben, with Foucault’s “optics” — called a Ban-opticon’ (p. 10).

According to Agamben (1998), the term “Ban” refers both to exclusion from the community and to the power of the sovereign to eliminate the law. Labelling some people as “illegal”, “criminal” or “terrorist” enables preventive measures in the post-September 11 context that normalised the permanent state of emergency in Western societies. As Bigo and Tsoukala (2008) suggest, ‘this governmentality of unease is characterized by practices of exceptionalism, acts of profiling containing foreigners, and a normative imperative of mobility’ (p. 10).

‘The ban attempts to show how the role of routines and acceptance of everyday life protects some over others, or how the protection of these others against themselves is a profound structure that explains the “moment” of the declaration of exception’ (Lyon, 2006, p. 47). It also attempts to reveal the judicial illusion that a ‘specific moment declares the sovereign borders of the political. This view needs to be amended by a sociological stance that considers long-term social processes and public acceptance of the routines of surveillance’ (Bigo, 2005, pp. 12). As previously suggested, profiling is the key institutionalised risk management task of this system.

## 2.8 Profiling and the liquid surveillance

Zygmunt Bauman described ‘the looseness and frailty of social bonds, seen in surveillance terms as the transformation of ordinary citizens into suspects and their relegation to consumer status across a range of life-spheres’ (Lyon, 2010a, p. 325). As it will be analysed, due to the digital use of personal data, especially in welfare services, everyone living in “advanced societies” is routinely targeted and sorted by numerous organisations on a daily basis, whether they are applying for a tax credit, a new phone account or a language school. Bauman’s liquid surveillance concept thus reflects ‘the reduction of the body to data and the creation of data-doubles on which life chances and choices hang more significantly than on real lives’ (Lyon, 2010). As previously mentioned, this detached data flows and changes, and also ‘includes a “time-sensitivity” of surveillance “truths” that mutate as more data come in, producing sometimes Kafkaesque consequences. The old, relatively solid institutions of crime control have softened, becoming malleable and rapidly adaptive in a world of software and networks’ (Ibid., p. 325). As Deleuze (1992) described, ‘controls are a modulation, like a self-deforming cast that will change continuously from one moment to the other like a sieve whose mesh will transmute from point to point’ (p. 5). These selective data based mechanism are challenged by those who are able learn the loopholes created by data-doubles.

Due to the complexity of new surveillance mechanisms, the Panopticon concept must be extended to analyse these self-deforming systems, including face-to-face, document-based and electronic interface relations such as biometrics, face recognition or GPS. As Lyon (2010) suggests, “surveillance is multifaceted” and also includes civilians’ actions. Such a monitoring ‘with its security-related reliance on citizen tip-offs and anti-terror hotlines, also helps to shape its own counterpoints: everything from identity theft to no-fly lists are seen by data-handling organisations as problems of individual biography rather than as institutional responsibilities’ (p. 327). Thus, the surveillant subject’s participation plays an important role in surveillance and how it shapes relations between surveillance processes and the surveyed. The self-surveilling process increased after the latest terrorist attacks were used to justify profiling certain people, especially people who are “on the move”. The political reaction to these events was used to justify a proactive strategy that aims to know and monitor the future. The call for preventive actions creates uncertainty and extends data gathering from solid information about the past, which is then collected in large transnational databases. These databases are used to classify and create profiles by using the social sciences and psychological bodies of knowledge.

‘Contemporary surveillance and monitoring of individuals’ movements are growing, but effective controls and coercive restrictions of freedom are concentrated on specific targets. The normalisation of emergency and targeting have become the techniques of governing by unease, based on differentiation between a normalised population that is pleased to be monitored “against danger” and an “alienation” of some groups of people who are considered to be dangerous “others”’(Bigo, 2006)

As part of the securitisation process, using the narratives of technical neutrality, selection seems reasonable and free of discrimination. The underlying assumption is that, ‘compared to bureaucrats, computers are not subjective or biased and are better able to use tracing and screening methods to classify individuals. This process of “desingularisation” and the construction of an imagined collective body of a “threat” group with specific features created by academic “knowledge” are the base of assessing each suspect (Frois, 2013). However, this “economy” is both inefficient and illegitimate because the underlying assumptions of digital profiling assessments are programmed according to governmental biases about threat characteristics. As it will be presented in Chapter 8, it is also selective, since only some people are put under surveillance, identified, categorised and checked.

While this dataveillance process can potentially and sometimes actually lead to social sorting and discrimination, it is ambiguous and not without counter reactions. Surveillant subjects do not just accept their assigned roles in surveillance systems; instead, they reconfigure their identities using numerous categories to which they are allocated (Lyon, 2006). This dynamic interaction between targeted groups and surveillance practices as well as the profiling and sorting mechanisms are the central object of this study.

## 2.9 Managerialism and new borders in the bureaucratic field of surveillance

Giddens (1985) wrote that ‘surveillance as the mobilizing of administrative power — through the storage and control of information — is the primary means of the concentration of authoritative resources involved in the formation of the nation-state’ (p. 181). From a functionalist interpretation, surveillance is seen as a ‘documentary activity of the state, as information gathering and processing, collection, collation and coding of information, and as records, reports and routine data collection for the administrative and bureaucratic purposes of organisations’ (Allmer, 2011, p. 569). This interpretation avoids those power relations which are the central subject of surveillance studies, instead focusing on the use of information

technologies and its infrastructure in administrative bureaucracies created by information societies.

In this analysis, surveillance is used as an interactive social process, as ‘symbolic material that can be stored by an agency or collective’ and as ‘the supervision of the activities of ordinates’ (Giddens, 1995, p. 169). The disciplinary role of dataveillance reflects the means and strategies of authorities, managing citizen identity information in public service environments. Due to the digitalisation of these administrative practices, fundamental changes are taking place in the informational foundations of citizenship, government relationships in particular regarding the “social contract” between the citizen and the state.

Many studies have explored the management of citizen identity information from the perspective of government agencies in their public service relationships with citizens, while very few have explored citizens’ attitudes toward the management of personal information with and across governments in the course of electronic public service provision. This contribution further explores scholarly thinking around the impact and implications of the use of new digital forms of citizen identity management in public service environments. In particular, it covers how the shift from face-to-face interactions to an anonymised digital arena has reshaped personal interaction in the European transnational context.

Increasing mobility and digitalisation have turned many aspects of the bureaucratic system upside down. Lipsky’s (2010) ‘Street-Level Bureaucracy’ has changed into online applications and monitoring processes and interactions in which the distance between bureaucrats and individuals is driven by the functionalist principles of the neoliberal market. As a result, a managerialist paradigm is overruling recent governmental practices, resulting in local bureaucrats with decreasing autonomy, limited face-to-face contacts with their clients, reduced discretionary space in decision making and decreasing governmental transparency. These aspects of new bureaucratic systems are driven by target bases, cost-efficient systems with privatised governmental services and production targets in social policies. Service qualities are changing priorities of the welfare system with an increased focus on labour participation by citizens who depend on state aid. The lack of interpersonal communication is interpreted as an objective, fast and efficient processing, resulting in mutual transparency and selective risk management by digital data screening. Privatising social services, commodifying individual data and decreasing the transparency of authorities’ bureaucratic procedures are socially accepted results of these digitalised processes.

This anonymity of service provision leads to new forms of interaction and social selection as part of a risk assessment. Individuals’ detachment from their personal data and the selection

of characteristics according to screening systems is resulting in a reality gap that increases governmental unease and suspicion of individuals and back-office bureaucrats. State transparency becomes vital because surveillance can negatively affect people's life chances via discrimination and sorting.

The role of criminal law has been to preserve internal security and society's moral order to create a well-ordered, disciplined society (Simon, 2007). With growing transnational mobility, selection based on individual data has 'destabilised the boundaries between external and internal domains of sovereignty, dissolving the national penal domain and mixing elements of immigration and criminal law' (Aas & Bosworth, 2013, p. 23). This intertwining securitisation extends internal control of non-citizens and, with the arguments of privacy rights, results in reducing state transparency about data collection and preconditions of social sorting. These mobile practices lead to novel assemblages of territory authority and rights (Aas & Bosworth, 2013, p. 23). Surveillance has the potential to combine different systems, practices and technologies together into a larger whole and consider surveillance as an assemblage. Following Deleuze and Guattaris framework this surveillance approach can be understood through a critical examination of welfare regimes that contains interactions of individuals and bureaucrats.

Individuals' financial positions have come to play a central organising and disciplinary role for governments and societies, although their social sorting power is still not fully acknowledged. Financial relations facilitate the reproduction of social order and selection of access in the context of inequalities, both within and across national spaces and along the overlapping lines of class, gender, race and nationality. Individual economic position, which means an inherently unequal and conflictual social position in society, mediates the social tensions of neoliberalism through both structural and direct power (Gill & Law, 1989; Strange, 1988) as a key aspect of social sorting. Dominant discourses of personal responsibility and morality have helped to further naturalise and depoliticise the growing indebtedness of population control, underpinned by a discourse on moralising, responsibility and securitisation of the poor that normalises social insecurity and the exclusion of "undeserving ones" based on economic performance. States are acting in this process as collective commodifying agents or market actors who are increasingly 'caught up in and constrained by crosscutting global/transnational/domestic structural and conjunctural conditions' (Cerny, 2000, p. 305).

The model neoliberal citizen strategizes for her, or himself, among various social, political and economic options, instead of striving with others to alter or organise these options.

A fully realised neoliberal citizenry would be the opposite of public-minded; indeed, it would barely exist as a public. In this surveillance system, a good neoliberal citizen is active and responsible, is capable of self-management, self-governance and making reasonable choices, and is not reliant on government or social services for survival; instead, she or he is autonomous and empowered agent (Clarke, 2005; Ican et al., 2007; Schild, 2007). An entrepreneurial spirit is thus embraced alongside self-presentations of autonomy and active work to communicate a sense of self that is largely consistent with the neoliberal citizen. In short, successful economic participation is the key to social and legal acceptance, as well as to accessing legal services.

Legal borders for population selection are thus intertwined with an internal selection based on labour participation, and with avoiding and expelling the unemployed, welfare-dependent newcomer. The coercion of mobility flow is therefore steered by economic priorities in the global context. This process presupposes financial surveillance of people on the move as a central aspect of welfare-dependent groups. Surveillance with the purpose of eliminating potential threats has resulted in restricted control and discipline of transnational movement of the poor in Europe. In such a harsh policy context, those who experience poverty are conceived of 'as "culpable actors" at risk of "moral hazard" (Mead, 1997, p. 19). The increasing stigmatisation and criminalisation of welfare claimants invokes the exclusionary process of "adiaphorisation". This stripping away of moral criteria proceeds to such an extent that the concept of "welfare" becomes loaded; not with compassion, but with fear and loathing of a criminally indolent welfare-dependent class for whom punishment and the withdrawal of benefits becomes a 'firm but fair' course of policy action' (Bauman, 1998, p. 80) to protect the goodly virtues of the "deserving" poor' (Dee, 2013 p. 275).

By analysing the bureaucratic field of welfare services, we can trace interactions in social service programmes that enable us to take a closer look into the operative logics of the monitoring processes that determine the contemporary politics of population control. The main hypothesis behind this analysis is that in place of accepting expulsive governing incentives, performances of mobile ethnic Roma 'are shaped to the symbolic conditions of the bureaucratic field and therefore are used to emulate the desired characteristics of neoliberal citizenship' (Woolford, Nelund 2013, p. 316). The question is what kind of strategies are invented to imitate those characteristics that ensure legal eligibility for government support.

The general claim of neoliberal welfare policies is that the adoption of production ideologies will force everyone into productive market relations through 'measurable technocratic procedures, managerial risk management, investigation strategies and intrusive surveillance practices' (Dee, 2013). These changes are distinguishable in the rolling back of

social services and the rolling out of increased punitive controls that mix criminal and migration law.

Several shifts have converged to reorient selection and disciplinary practice in poverty governance today. An overt and muscular approach to welfare provision by surveillance uses penalties as therapeutic tools for transforming the subjectivities of the poor (Mead, 1997). Welfare programmes have also been restructured to ‘serve as arenas of labour commodification that are continuous with local markets’ (Pykett, 2013, p. 125). Furthermore, ‘administration and management systems have been redesigned to enhance the scope of lower-level discretion and, as a corollary, to ensure that social-service personnel (embedded in new contractual and performance-based systems) will be self-disciplined in their uses of discretion’ (Pykett, 2013, p. 125).

In his comparative research, Marx (2013) describes how different forms of interactions with bureaucrats in cases of ethnic groups act to coerce aid from specific parties. However, since the forms and priorities of interaction in the bureaucratic field have increasingly changed, there are some problematic assumptions regarding these concepts. With the digitalisation of governmental services, online screening instruments have changed the nature of communication and transparency between civilians and civil servants. We therefore need to stress the differences and flows between the responses and strategies of migrants to managerial, selective measures, not just from an interactional but also from a situational approach. Local circumstances and the contextually changing limits of individuals and their economic opportunities play a key role in response to host societies.

Roberts and Soedeberg (2014) differentiate between several disciplinary strategies based on economic dependency relations. They define the parallels between increasing individualised and privatised social risks under neoliberalism, and financial risks of lower-income borrowers who are compelled to rely on loans for health care and higher education. These loans are commodified and sold to investors on the global market, thereby reducing the risk to loan originators. They introduce the concept of the ‘debtfare state’ to describe one vector of neoliberal governance (other features include the ‘workfare’ and ‘prisonfare’ states) that has taken on the task of ‘mediating and depoliticizing the tensions and struggles emerge from dispossessive capitalism’ (Roberts & Soederberg, 2014, p.7). This debtfare state is a central field of interaction in the bureaucratic realm of people on the move.

The following analyses will challenge and analyse this top-down approach to determine the extent to which claimants’ strategies reshape incentives at the top. The analysis will explore the sources and operations of disciplinary practice under contemporary welfare reform by

investigating the systems that structure practice for frontline workers and welfare clients. It will challenge assumptions about the power and limits of new administrative systems and the limitations of managerialist strategies that should operate on the edge of normative guidelines.

As illustrated in the symbolism of *Matrix, the Revolution* (2003) film trilogy, the individual awareness and anticipation of monitoring mechanisms is increasingly important, as they are key dynamics of digitalised postmodern societies, in particular of mobility control. As a symbol of individual anticipation in surveillance, the movies' main character, Neo, represents the unpredictable innovative nature of humans, who embody resistance and the individual ability to anticipate incentives created by digitalised power structures that are supposed to determine individuals' behaviour. By observing the European surveillance strategies on local and transnational levels, we can discover similar interactions between mobile groups and governmental monitoring systems that employ profiling. The question is how these interactions shape the mobility of those who are circumventing these risk-assessment-based profiling mechanisms.

## 2.10 Conclusion

In short, ontological anxiety leads to new dynamics in the late modern Western world. Individualisation and risk management objectives enable the 'surveillance of the threatening other by digitalised control measures. In this liquid database-oriented surveillance process, control and discipline go hand in hand, targeting the perceived threat projected on individuals with selected characteristics (Lyon 2006). The implementation of profiling is based on selected data collected in a new digitalised interactive bureaucratic field. Due to technical changes, not only has the nature of transparency changed, but also the level of interaction between civil servants and citizens. These changes are implemented according to neoliberal principles creating a new Social Sorting mechanism through a Welfare Ban-opticon. The following chapter will address the methodological challenges implicated by such a digital managerialism in the field of welfare surveillance.



## Chapter 3 Critical Ethnography of a Surveillance Society

Following the cultural criminological tradition of qualitative data analysis, the research methodology is founded on a critical ethnographic approach (Ferrel, 2009). This chapter is divided into four layers. First, the epistemological position and the relevance of the selected research methods will be debated. Second, three pragmatic approaches — multi-sited ethnography, institutional ethnography and virtual ethnography — will be described based on the three main contextual aspects of the research subject. Third, the selection of methodological tools for data collection will be justified, such as participation and shadowing. Finally, methods of data analysis will be discussed with a critical reflection of triangulation and ethical dilemmas of the research project.

### 3.1 Epistemology

This study sets itself at a distance from positivist normative traditions and adopts a situational approach to provide reflexive insights into transgression concerning the responses to the monitoring of welfare services in the case of Roma mobility. This critical methodology is developed at the interface between interactionalism and post-structuralism to pursue boundaries between Roma migrants and stakeholders of local authorities, their interaction and their decision-making processes. Although welfare policies are extensively analysed within social studies, they fail to capture the subjective experiences of individuals, or explore how migrants' responses shape digitalised law enforcement practices. Due to a lack of reliable datasets about CEE ethnic migrants and their use of welfare services, mobility control and selection practices remain invisible from the statistics. Furthermore, most data collected in relation to ethnicity within the UK is collected either on the basis of the country of birth, which cannot provide specific information about those who are EU nationals. Therefore, interrelations between mobility, ethnicity and surveillance can only be understood by observing the local power relations in different settings and analysing their interrelation. In order to understand residence strategies of particular migrant groups, we need to participate in their daily interaction with the constantly changing welfare system, which calls for the use of ethnographic methods. Although the situational approach is generally accepted in criminology, the validity of data collected from an insider research position is still subjected to critical enquiry (Brotherton, 2015).

In the following introduction, I will summarise ethnographic developments in criminology and discuss the role of research positioning to clarify why this study, which is embedded in cultural criminology, should include a new reflexive ethnography.

### 3.1.1 Critical ethnography of a surveillance society

Classical ethnography was a single-sited long-term observation method with the purpose of producing a thick description of particular communities. Later, this method became more theoretical and a comparative interpretation of social organisation and culture was intended (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). From the naturalist descriptivism, it turned into a more reflexive approach and by combining different methodological tools and sophisticated case selection, it became more sensitive to underlying mechanisms of global power relations. Although ethnography was often criticised for its case selections, cultural generalisation, limitations of theory forming and a lack of understanding of a socio-cultural totality, its mixed methods, such as participant observation combined with in-depth interviews and documentary analysis, have turned it into a popular research method in qualitative studies. As Noaks and Wincup (2004) explain:

‘By utilizing different approaches ethnographers are not naïvely suggesting that this will increase the validity of their data or that data gathered from different sources can be used to produce a single unitary picture of the “truth”. Instead it helps to uncover multiple versions of reality.’ (p. 91)

In this ethnographic tradition, researchers tried to stay distant and emotionally detached from their participants, claiming that true ethnographic knowledge is only possible if the subjectivity of the observer is erased as much as possible from the process of knowledge production. The “objective” ethics of the absence of the observer — the fact that the ethnographer should ideally try “not to be noticed” — is still mentioned in recent popular textbooks (Eriksen, 1995, p. 26).

As a response to this epistemological objectivism, cultural criminology developed a new position of the ethnographer who is participating in a phenomenon studied in the interest of progressive social change. In this interactionist approach, the subject matter is a cultural process itself by which reality is constructed and made meaningful. As Ferrell (2009) suggests, research should focus on the legal practices and limitations of the justice system, its biases and

internal workings as well as its social effects on deviance and transgressive behaviour. Therefore, cultural criminology introduced an ethnography that operates most usefully as:

‘a sensibility about the external world and a sensitivity to its nuanced ambiguities. This ethnographic sensibility orients the criminologist to the ongoing, symbolic construction of meaning, and to the shared emotional environments in which such meaning is made — all while promoting a research sensitivity of openness, attentiveness, and epistemic humility.’ (Ferrell, 2009, p. 16)

By changing the research position of the ethnographer, this concept of “liquid research” is interpreted as a way of living, as an ontological orientation, in place of a naked methodological technique. This revitalised situational ethnographic research has two particular aspects within cultural criminology referring to liquid modernity (Bauman, 2013). On the one hand, instant ethnography is introduced as the ethnography of moments that confront the ‘conventional assumption underlying the sense of ethnographic method as a totalizing enterprise: the notion that durable social groups and situations are to be studied through enduring ethnographic research’ (Young, Hayward, & Ferrell, 2008). On the other hand, liquid ethnography is cut loose from the stabilities of time and space through global immigration, short-term employment and virtual communications; it is ethnography attuned to transitory allegiances (Ferrell, 2009, p. 15). Besides its progressive aspect that invites researchers to engage the politics of transgressive possibility, this approach flows with the shifting interplay of images in media-saturated environments, meanings and representations (Ferrell, 2009). Hayward and Presdee (2010) note that: ‘for cultural criminologists this methodological sensitivity to ambiguity and uncertainty offers a further benefit: the ability to engage with illicit communities on their terms and so to explore transgression as a source of dangerous knowledge and progressive possibility’ (p. 182).

### 3.1.2 Research encounters of insiders

Epistemological clashes about the validity of ethnographic data are based on the conceptual difference of research positioning. Normative ideas about the distance between participants and ethnographers and the methodological nationalism of positivist disciplines are facing pragmatic challenges with the increasing mobility and diversity of people, objects and ideas. Existing perceptions about decontextualized, static, dichotomist relations between actors in the research

field proved their shortcomings in explaining several social phenomena on the margins. As this study shows, it is essential to incorporate researchers' experience in the construction of academic knowledge since it is based on a situational configuration of a distinction between "self" and "other" in a dialectic process. Research positions are not a granted, but due to the multiplicity of identification they merge in the course of the dynamics of the research encounter. Therefore, we need to adopt new ways to understand this dialectic process and challenge notions of fixed ahistorical markers of belonging (Voloder, 2014).

Intersubjectivity and situational analyses are being given increased recognition in empirical studies in which 'insiderness' plays a central role in the data collection process. As McNess et al. (2015) explain, a researcher's identity can shift:

'depending on the situation and the status of a researcher as an insider or outsider responding to the social, political and cultural values of a given context or moment. While this recent attention has highlighted theoretical developments in thinking about insider-outsider perspectives, less focus has been given to the methodological processes that contribute to such shifting positioning while conducting cross-cultural research.' (p. 7).

Madison (2005) notes that 'more and more ethnographers are heralding the unavoidable and complex factor of subjective inquiry and the vital importance of the researcher's positionality' (p. 8) in dialogue with the Other. Dialogue as performance, a felt-sensing, embodied interplay, aims 'to bring Self and Other together so they may question, debate, and challenge one another' (Madison, 2005, p. 8). It is a 'reciprocal giving and receiving' rather than a timeless resolve. Without conclusions, this dialogue 'is committed to keep the meanings between and the conversations with the researcher and the Other ongoing' (Madison, 2005, p. 8). In the following methodological description, I will discuss critical aspects of research positioning that enable knowledge production without a reproduction of existing stigmatising narratives attached to the group we study.

### 3.1.3 Commitment of ethnography

As suggested above, the reality is never objective or self-evident, but always in the process of being constructed, interpreted and contested (Carspecken, 1996). Critical ethnographers reject the notion of "objective" science in favour of understanding claims of objectivity, neutrality and impartiality. Drawing on Marxist traditions, they redefine ethnography in terms of

the critical assessment of reading and writing practices with an obligation of empowerment in the context of social injustice. According to Brotherton (2015):

‘if traditional, modernist ethnography is about studying the “folkways” of a community, painstakingly describing its everyday rhythms, its complex systems of social interaction, its relationship with the broader society and the different meaning systems that cultures and subcultures develop, then this extended critical approach should problematize each of these notions situating them within the asymmetrical power relations of a globalized capitalism within which we are all situated.’ (p. 94)

Thus, by extending conventional ethnography in its reflexivity and research capacity, we can describe and analyse otherwise hidden agendas, power centres and questioning common-sense assumptions, to get into the emancipatory knowledge that motivates ethnic migrants to participate in foreign welfare procedures by retaining or hiding their ethnic identity.

Therefore, we apply a “new ethnography” (Goodall, 2000) that is ‘not only a critique of the notion of objectivity, but also a critique of the notion of subjectivity as well’ (Madison 2005, p. 6). The goal is to rethink subjectivity itself as a permanently unclosed, always partial narrative engagement with the text and context. The ethnographer is not separate from the object of the investigation, but is still viewed as a unified subject of knowledge that can make hermeneutic efforts to establish an identification between the observer and the observed. To put it succinctly, ethnographic positionality is not identical to subjectivity, but it requires attention beyond our individual or subjective selves. Our attention to ethnographic positionality should remain ‘grounded in the empirical world of the Other and reflect how our subjectivity in relation to the Other informs and is informed by our engagement and representation of the Other’ (Madison, 2005, p. 10).

Reflexive narration will illustrate our considerations in the field, our relation to the Other and our professional, theoretical and analytic skills (Foley, 2002, p. 470). This approach enables us to re-examine cultural hegemony and the nature of cultural conflict revealed by a reflection on historical factors of ethnic and racial legitimacy, and a reproduction of the social order (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2001, p. 303).

## 3.2 Contextuality and the liquid research field

The most important purpose of ethnographic work is the representation, contextualisation and in-depth analysis of individual perspectives of research participants. Contextualisation refers here to the research field, linking geographical, social and virtual spaces of participants' everyday realities. Traditional ethnographic methods are building on single-site research of particular groups that are unsuited to trace mobility online and offline in order to understand the relation between mobility and surveillance. Since Roma migration is a dynamic movement of people across social and spatial borders, we need to identify research sites that do not accept the rigid limitations of one specific geographic space, but go with the flow of migration. In order to complete empirical research with this dynamic construction of space, a methodological guideline is provided along the social interaction.

Therefore, three methodological subfields of ethnographic research are defined for data collection. Based on transnational networks of Roma migrants, the first empirical context defined is a multi-sited approach, borrowing the strategy from Marcus (1995) and Falzon (2012), who advocate multiple localities for observation and participation. Second, institutional ethnography will be adapted for observations of welfare surveillance and the interaction between autocrats, NGO workers and migrants. This institutional setting is one of the key platforms for analysing stigmatisation processes and the institutional framing of ethnic differentiation, selection and exclusion. Third, the experiences of migrants with authorities, gaining access to public information and their reaction to local bureaucrats also involve online interactions. This virtual space become the third major research context where information exchange and observations are completed. In addition, the combination of these ethnographic sites enables an assessment of interrelations of space, ethnicity and marginalisation in different settings and the role of different interactions in these fields.

### 3.2.1 Multi-sited ethnography

The interrelations of Roma ethnicity, culture and space are frequently conceptualised by romanticising ideas of nomadism, in association with a traditional mobile lifestyle. These assumptions, referring to Roma as Nomads, include ideas of spacelessness and intangibility that might lead to misconceptions about place and mobility. In order to justify the selected ethnographic methods, we have to clarify the concept of migration in the case of Roma.

Central East European Roma migrants are sedentary European citizens who are moving westward due to economic pressure and socio-political exclusionary processes in their home countries. Although many studies have dealt with the 'relation between Roma and space' (Kabachnik, 2010, p. 200) or the territorial monopolisation of certain economic activities in the niche markets that Roma occupy (Mirga, 1992; Piasere, 1992), most of these studies refer to one specific location or community. Although Roma do not have the same nationality or ethnic subgroup and do not speak the same languages, they share the same locations in host societies. In this transnational context, their common daily experiences are shaped by local and international control measures and social policies. However, their narratives about their experiences and how they cope with legal restrictions change according to the place, time and social context, and in particular according to the audience's social position (Grill, 2005). By conducting multi-sited ethnographic fieldwork involving cross-cultural inquiry, we can avoid place-culture isomorphism (Dalakoglou & Harvey, 2012, p. 462) and analyse the mechanisms that shape the decision-making processes of Roma in different countries (Clifford, 1997).

Roma mobility presumes a field definition that replaces a static cultural area with a field that is a mobile cultural formation. As Falzon (2012) suggested, the field does not need to correspond to a place or space in order to find its boundaries. Based on his methodological approach, the research field should be seen as discontinuities in the networks within which we are collecting information, including the boundaries (p. 64). Ethnographic sites are not static and their uniqueness lies not in some essential identity but in the particular intersection of social relations, so history should be a part of global ethnography (Massey, 1994). Thus, we are penning up the possibilities of an 'unsited' field where fieldwork must not study the chosen sites but account for changes in the relations between them (Massey, 1994). In short, combining holism and particularities is the key aspect to contextualise the meaning to particular groups by demonstrating their social integration (y Blasco & Wardle, 2007, p. 43).

Including a mobility approach in this paradigm enables one to study how social life is organised across distance and how mobility reflects underlying infrastructures of social networks (Urry, 2007). Mobility no longer simply means a physical form of displacement, but also an imaginative, virtual, communicative and corporal travel, which includes all forms of social and spatial interrelations (Urry, 2007, pp. 101-102). By tracing the movements of our participants in different settings, we can emphasise how decisions about movement are made and how these reflect individual priorities and considerations. Therefore, we need a research method 'on the move'. Multi-sited analyses as a model for mobile ethnography move ethnographic research methods from a single-site location to 'multiple sites of observation and

participation that crosscut dichotomies such as the “local” and the “global”, the “life world” and the “system” (Marcus, 1995, p. 95). This enables the tracking of people’s movement, images, information and objects in various ways and allows us to be moved by, and to move with, research participants (Sheller & Urry, 2006).

Following Roma families in different settings, detecting how they affect different places and observing their face-to-face interactions at different events involves overt methods such as “shadowing” or covert methods such as sociological “stalking” (Bærenholdt et al., 2004). If research participants are mobile and/or spatially dispersed, the method turns into ‘fieldwork as traveling in dwelling (Clifford, 1992, p. 108) or what Maurice Bloch (1991) calls ‘cognitive non-linguistic ethnographic understandings’ that cannot be generated by contrived linguistic techniques, like interviews. In this lived empirical performance, every move participants make is an account of how they orient themselves toward the situation at hand. By applying the right techniques in these daily interactions with Roma migrants, we can collect empirical data in different settings (Buscher & Urry, 2009, p. 104) with several cultural geographic research tools.

### 3.2.2 Institutional ethnography

Interpersonal connections are manifested on a scale between a private informal and a formal institutional sphere. From an interactionist view, it is vital to understand several aspects of this scale for the reconstruction of individual considerations behind decision-making processes. From a methodological aspect, interaction with bureaucrats has a particularly important role in the daily interaction of migrants and their experience with surveillance mechanisms. Roma’s experiences in formal settings and the social imagination of civil servants about Roma as an ethnic minority has a mutual influence on their situational approach with real effects in processes of accessing social services.

These micro-dynamics between local authorities and ethnic migrants can be traced by institutional ethnography that was introduced by Dorothy E. Smith (2006). Although she linked professional practice and policy making with a ‘textually-mediated social organization’, in this research project social coordination will be traced by shadowing and participant observation.

There are two major access points where migrants try to gain access and are monitored in relation to welfare services. The first access point includes governmental service providers, which coordinate, screen, select and monitor the social coordinates of citizens. They decide



about their eligibility, entitlements and administrative and financial obligations, such as HMRC, JobCentres and local councils. The second access point is the non-governmental sector where self-funded organisations aim to contribute to the full participation of ethnic migrants and support them with information, self-representation and access to governmental services. These organisations, like local charities, often adopt the role of mediators and collect case studies to raise more attention for particular problems that migrants are faced with. By following the interactions between these actors and how they become involved in the processes of claimants, we can trace bureaucratic dysfunctions and selectivity regarding the entitlement of ethnic migrants to welfare services.

This method was initially theorised by Smith (2006) in a feminist context that led to a wide application of institutional ethnography, including the organisation of education and social work practice, police and judicial processing, employment, economic and social restructuring, international development regimes, planning and various kinds of activism. The key advantage of this method is that it is 'more concerned with political-economic contexts than most qualitative approaches; it is sensitive to textual and discursive dimensions of social life, but grounded more firmly in fieldwork study of texts-in-use than most forms of discourse analysis' (Eastwood & Devault, 2001, p. 400).

Compared to other organisation studies, this approach does not simply look at the structure and efficiency of an institution. Such an approach would be unable to detect the social activities of the institution and to link local connections visible as the engine of society. Institutional ethnographers are 'hooking on to activities and relations both horizontal and vertical, it is never confined to the very institution under investigation' (Widerberg, 2014, p. 480).

This empirical method was adopted in different countries in a long-term shadowing process completed in London. Institutional ethnography was applied from three different angles. First, from the client's point of view, who is interacting with bureaucrats of the host country? As an interpreter and advocacy worker, I attended the personal appointments of Roma migrants, interpreted in their telephone interviews, and took part in many follow-up conversations after applications. The second angle was the personal experience of civil servants. I interviewed civil servants in different councils, some of whom are specifically working with Roma and others who work with different groups, but also with Roma. I followed some of the cases where they approached Roma families. The last and most important approach was my experience with NGOs where I worked as a volunteer advocacy worker. Over an eight-month period, I had the opportunity to see the attitudes of charity workers toward Roma clients,

their interactions with social services and their support to empower Roma migrants to raise their self-advocacy. These diverse perspectives show the role of international connections in welfare bureaucracies, the level of surveillance and data exchange between the different parties, and how Roma migrants try to find their way in a foreign bureaucratic system. These daily interactions on a case study level demonstrate the changes during a longer period following the dynamics of strengthening policies and migrants who develop their bureaucratic knowledge.

Ferguson (2001) describes the embeddedness of these images, such as those of the ‘benefit thief’ in the routinised practices of state bureaucracies. The social practices of state bureaucrats create an image of the state through metaphors in discursive representations that shape the ideas in the host society. Many of these presentations are implicit, unmarked, signifying practices (Ferguson, 2001p. 983). Institutional ethnography helps to discover those local social relations, their reflections in lived experiences and organisational aspects from different angles. From a critical ethnographic point of view, this method helps to observe micro-level relations that permeate and control local reality. As Walby (2005) argues, this method is ‘a critique and a method of sociological inquiry however much it differs from the systematic (and objectifying) techniques of traditional sociology’ (p. 158).

Mobile ethnographic methods enable one to detect differentiations in bureaucratic practices and welfare services (Ferguson, 2001 p. 984). Although bureaucratic interactions and structures are often assumed to be merely static, there is a growing interest in the mobility aspect of border-crossing bureaucratic practices, which Benedict Anderson (1991) has called ‘bureaucratic pilgrimages’.

### 3.2.3 Virtual ethnography

Research sites are also linked by cultural practices on computer-mediated spaces. Dekker and Engbersen (2014) argue that social media plays a particular role in the transformation and facilitation of migration paths. With the generalisation of internet access and the common use of social media platforms, there are increasing possibilities to maintain strong ties with one’s family, friends and peers with similar interests. These so-called virtual fields not only support existing relationships at a distance, but provide information on and the organisation of migration processes, such as bureaucratic requirements, practical knowledge about resources and cultural translation for newcomers. As Dekker and Engbersen (2014) note, ‘this can be viewed as a democratization of knowledge for migrants and also as a form of silent resistance

against restrictive immigration regimes' (p. 16). Ethnographic knowledge of the development of virtual infrastructures and how they facilitate insider information for potential migrants and alter the relationship between migrants and non-migrants in a cost-efficient and convenient way should include virtual ethnographic methods.

The role of media technologies on mobility, exclusion and social formations is a debated subject in empirical studies (Hjorth, 2007). Virtual ethnography is included in this research project for three main reasons. First, it enables us to gain access to migrant networks and follow their traces online and offline, and it enables the recruitment of research participants. These routes mirror the changing patterns in the decision-making of participants and how it shapes their international social relations. However, it is also a mutual observation. Although virtual ethnography is often criticised for its weaknesses and ethical problems, research participants might claim the digital transparency of researchers as well, in order to keep ethnographers traceable and available for daily interactions during any period of the fieldwork. Second, not only participants, but also the social movements of migrant groups, NGO activities, ethnic activism and anti-immigrant public discourses can be mapped in virtual environments. Third, academic projects working on Roma mobility, welfare policies and transnational crime that operate on social media have an impact on these mobility tendencies too.

Essentially, we cannot conceptualise sites with boundaries between online and offline communications, not just because these lines are vague and changing with the situations (Carter, 2004; Haythornthwaite & Kazmer, 2002; Montagut, 2011, p. 717; Salaff, 2002), but also because people communicate simultaneously on different levels using multiple channels. These channels — face-to-face, material or media channels — are the key aspects in response to methodological critiques of online ethnographies (Piacenti, 2014, p. 722). An interpretation and translation of these multiple online and offline interactions refer to 'collective (cultural) understandings that are continually negotiated through linguistic and other symbolic practices' (Rabinow & Sullivan, 1979, p. 31). This hermeneutical approach to cultural understanding reflects not only the physical reality, but implicitly also transfers meanings and norms embodied in practices of mutual actions and social relations (Taylor, 1977, p. 119). Social media such as Facebook serves as a key ethnographic site to trace these actions and the meanings through these actions via multiple channels.

Furthermore, it allows one to avoid traditional structuralist dualities of researcher-researched, observer-observed, object-subject, rational-irrational, or formal-informal contradictions by multiple presences in a multi-textured arena of experience that temporarily transcends typical constraints of space and time in transnational research. Facebook can also

place the researcher in a multiplicity of roles and identities while also eliminating at least some of the aforementioned structural barriers faced by ethnographers researching transnational (im)migration.

Conducting ethnographic research with a mobile ethnic group reveals their practices in the visualised or written online context as a part of their culture, with a ‘system of conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate and develop their knowledge about attitudes towards life’ (Geertz, 1973, p. 89). This online participation requires accuracy and social sensitivity, as well as reflexivity regarding the role of the researcher and the context in which the research is being completed (Piacenti, 2014, p. 718). The collected data should be analysed and deconstructed in a linear narrative that still represents those norms and values that were selected from these intervened social practices. This move to modular research texts accelerates the epistemological decentring of inquiry, challenging the old critical notions of objectivist ethnography (Ruby, 1982).

Not only researchers are collecting data about the participants online. Online surveillance strategies by governmental organs such as the police might lead to manipulation techniques by participants. Differences in self-representation between the virtual space and reality can be clarified by the narratives of participants who explain mutation online. This will be further explained in the section about lurking. The main concern for Neely (2011) is the way online spaces that offer opportunities for explicit self-representation provide new modes of visibility and presumed participation that do not always ensure the ideals of democratic involvement and equality, but often recode and legitimate the legacy systems of exploitation. The obvious challenge, as Petleys’ analysis suggests (cited in Lindlof & Shatzer, 1998), is to shed light on new approaches justifying surveillance and adjudicating resulting in the transgressive” criminalising practices of those institutions that were tasked with upholding the law (Lindlof & Shatzer, 1998).

In short, virtual ethnography is not independent from offline ethnography but as a subfield it is conducted on the internet. Lurking and observation are often seen as virtual ethnographic methods. According to this fluid field concept, social interaction that intrinsically takes place online and offline should be seen, as Beneito-Montagut (2011) stated, as an ‘expanded ethnography’ in which virtual experiences are expanded enhancements of real relationships. That is to say, just like transnational (im)migrants or transnational towns themselves, the field becomes multi-sited.

### 3.3 Data collection tools

#### 3.3.1 Literature review

As preliminary research and preparation for this interdisciplinary research project, I completed a literature review to develop a firm foundation for advancing knowledge in the fields of ethnic mobility, surveillance and social policy. By highlighting areas where a plethora of research exists and by uncovering areas where research is needed, we can identify and synthesise the key themes in the national and international literature that address the mobility and exclusion of ethnic minorities and control approaches by local authorities in monitoring Roma. The completed literature review is a concept-centric model that is like a roadmap, determining the structure of the theoretical framework. Extending current theories or developing new theories will create directions for future research.

The review focuses primarily on the literature that deals with the assessment of EU and national welfare legislation, and the stigmatisation of ethnic minorities, where there is a surveillance and monitoring role by governmental organs that are not primarily responsible for migration control. Searches were made of databases containing scientific peer-reviewed articles, including EBSCO, ProQuest, JSTOR and Google Scholar. These searches were concluded at the end of 2013; however, some additional material was incorporated during later revision. General terms used to search the databases included surveillance, legal exclusion, ethnicity and mobility, benefit fraud, criminalisation, CEE migration, EU benefit law, transnational mobility, and Roma migrants. Additional searches were conducted based on tools identified through a more general search, such as UK federal, local and NGO reports on Roma migrants, web searches and conference papers. Literature review has been presented in every subtopic according to the thematic aspects of the chapter. Based on the preliminary findings, theoretical guidelines are defined and operationalisation is scheduled.

#### 3.3.2 Case studies

Due to the specifics of Roma mobility, this study requires explanatory case study methods in both sending and receiving countries. Conducting case studies with Roma migrants offers more in-depth information about the social processes of marginalisation and highlights the subjective experience of excluded individuals and how they give meaning to their existence and social position (Becker et al., 2004, p. 269-270). Mobility, ethnicity and criminalisation must be examined by a multilevel mobile ethnographic paradigm to overcome essentialisation and to

grasp the unintended effects of law enforcement in the European context (Buscher & Urry, 2010). In opposition to grand theory, this method emphasises a broader understanding of the social world instead of highly abstract theorising from empirical data. This research strategy takes on a longitudinal empirical inquiry that investigates a social phenomenon within its real-life context by multiple sources of evidence (Flyvbjerg, 2006).

According to George and Benett (2005), case studies have ‘high conceptual validity’ and ‘strong procedures for fostering new hypotheses’. They enable ‘detailed consideration of contextual factors’, ‘closely examine the role of casual mechanisms in the context of individual cases; and their capacity for addressing casual complexity’ is great (George & Benett, 2005, p. 19). Even with one case, new variables and hypotheses can be discovered and several aspects can be inductively analysed at the same time. In particular, we can also identify specific conditions which activate casual mechanisms (George & Benett, 2005). The preliminary selection is based on the four sending countries of the Visegrad group and their transnational networks in the United Kingdom.

Through this ethnographic method, empirical findings can be linked to larger patterns of macro-structures or external forces such as migration control in a transnational context (Tavory & Timmermans, 2009, p. 256). The selected cases are conceptualised by an a priori theoretical outline to verify how their dependency relation with social services affect daily interactions by tracing those mechanisms (Tavory & Timmermans, 2009, p. 256). Consequently, this method can clarify ontological questions wherein macro-theoretical concepts give meaning to the empirical narrative (Tavory & Timmermans, 2009, p. 4).

Furthermore, empirical data case studies can modify existing theories. Thus, this pre-theorisation leads to a more reflexive approach:

‘Research moves from an interview or set of observations to an analysis of social processes, then onto social structures, and back into one’s theory. It is the third step towards the discovery of underlying structures as modified by broader social forces that requires a theory that privileges macro-structure.’ (Tavory & Timmermans, 2009, p. 255)

However, the real quality of an ethnographic study lies in the individual capacities and situational decisions of the researcher.

### 3.3.3.1 Sampling

Due to the sensitivity of this topic sampling of participants was with the ethical consideration of confidentiality regarding the chance of traceability. The participants are selected into four main groups, based on their profession and role of involvement in Roma mobility. According the tables in the appendix academics, professionals, non-governmental organisations and Roma migrants has been selected. During the first research phase information was collected from professionals, academics and activists working with Roma, and sampling frames were created for all the Visegrad countries in order to reflect the diversity of the Roma groups in terms of mobility patters. The criteria used for the selection of localities were developed on the basis of information collected during the background research. Using all available information from existing studies on Roma migration such as primary sampling units composed of municipalities, neighbourhoods and localities, fieldwork sited were identified. Importantly, in most of the sending localities NGOs or activists were needed to assist as interpreters or gatekeepers. Considering the limitations of the sample, regarding the community size and geographic distribution of the sample, this low scale ethnographic fieldwork is unable to provide results that would be representative for the situation of Roma migrants. Also, the selected urban localities indicated by activists and NGOs as high concentration sending area, might indicate different mobility issues then smaller isolated localities. The relevance of the localities defined by professionals were in some cases already outdated since many migrants were involved in guest working mobility and were not interested in migration.

After selecting the primary sampling units where observations would take place, the sampling process involved selecting household members to be interviewed. In most of the short term contacts women were more available for interviews then men, but in the case of London men were more open to share their experiences in a household. The sampling was narrowed down from Roma migrants who had experience in the UK to CEE Roma in London.

Due to the lack of census data on the geographic distribution of the Roma population, informal networks via social media provided contacts for sampling. Prior to the fieldwork research, efforts were made to update this information through contacts with municipal offices and/or local non-governmental organisations (NGOs). In the last sampling phase returnees and Roma residents were selected for long term contacts in order to follow their decision-making processes. These cases are presented in Chapter 7 and Chapter 8 under case studies.

In the first year all participants were classified based on sociological variables, but the areas inside the selected primary sampling units with a higher density of Roma populations didn't

show any correlation with age, labour participation, and marital status or with the mobility patterns so this data is eliminated in order to secure the anonymity of participants. Approximately 300 Roma migrants have been approached online or offline based on snowballing methods of Roma networks.

As it is listed in Appendix A, eligible persons for the Roma sample were persons aged 16 and older who self-identified as Roma and who were residing in one of the selected countries and were willing to participate in the study stratified by gender and nationality.

Following the criteria of previous reports as FRA (2012), the focus points of the samples were:

- Main problems and needs defined at local level
- Access to utilities and infrastructure
- Access to income sources
- Identity and property papers
- relation to the institutions and authorities
- Working experience, experience of inequalities (school, labour market etc.)
- Aspirations
- Coping strategies
- Migration potential and migration experiences
- Geographical mobility inside the countries
- Social relations inside the community
- Ethnic affiliation and self-definition

Sampling method for academics listed in Appendix C represent 40 academics from different disciplines were based on their publications collected for the literature review in the first phase of the research. As it is coded in the Appendix, it is indicated where are they affiliated recently, which discipline they represent, and if they are male or female. However, after the transcription anonymization it was necessary to anonymise them in order to guarantee confidentiality to other participants and NGOs who working with them. Professionals listed in Appendix D are from several fields working with Roma, such as civil servants, foundations, education, or service providers. In addition Solicitors, who are working on cases of Roma in London, Slovak, Czech, Hungarian and Polish interpreters from the National Registry and Civil servants at municipalities have been included, based on their responsibilities for Roma migrants.

The most informative participants were listed in Appendix A, working for Non-governmental organisations. These participants have intense contact with Roma migrants. The



samples for the last two groups were defined by their involvement in cases of Roma migrants who live or lived in the UK and who were willing to share their experiences in their localities. Their experiences are not representative for all similar NGOs, but their view on and access to data was essential for a better understanding of surveillance dynamics in London. In addition NGOs in sending countries were providing access to returnees and additional information on the historical and political background of some localities. Samples for NGOs lead to the first snowballing interviews with Roma in different localities. The central aim was to arrive at a random sample that provides reasonably good coverage of the target population given the time and resources available. This sample was not selecting Roma people who are benefit claimants or involved in welfare fraud, but who were willing to share their experiences and describe their coping strategies abroad, as a CEE Roma. Therefore this sample is not relevant for any generalisation regarding the correlations of ethnicity and illegal activities. This study is not focusing on Roma as ethnic minority abroad, but Roma case studies are selected in order to analyse the effects of surveillance targets in which these cases provide better understanding of the social sorting dynamics. Shortly, cases of welfare fraud should not be correlated to ethnicity, since not all Roma are involved in criminal activities.

#### 3.3.3.2 Interviews

Experiences of migrants and their reflections about their interactions with local authorities in a foreign setting can only be understood by an analysis of their migration narratives. Therefore, we have to employ mixed methods established around qualitative interview data. As it is presented in the Appendix A, B, C, D, in this research project, interviews took place online and offline in four different countries between May 2013 and February 2014. In a 14-month fieldwork, 98 interviews were completed. Of those 56 were audio recorded, transcribed and analysed using Nvivo data analysing software. More than 50 interviews were completed with Roma migrants and returnees in different countries, 12 with social workers and advocacy workers, 4 with police officers, 6 with interpreters, 2 with lawyers, and 24 with civil servants such as integration officers, education officers and counsellors. More than 30 Roma participants were women and 12 were men with an average age of 41.2 years (range=21-62 years). Some were related to each other or living in the same household: they included 7 people born in Poland, 20 in Hungary and 6 in the Czech Republic or Slovakia.

In the first period, I interviewed Hungarian, Czech and Slovak returnees or the relatives of migrants in their home settings in order to understand the aspirations, expectations, dependency relations and reflections about living abroad. Most of these participants were traced by social workers in Roma settlements or via Roma activists, NGO workers, politicians or friends and was followed in online conversations via Facebook. The extended overview of research participants and the method of anonymization is added in the tables as an Appendix. Participants residing in London, Manchester, Leeds and other host cities in the UK, who were interviewed face-to-face or via Skype, were engaged by a snowballing recruitment strategy. One of the already included participant introduced me via email or social media. If the person responded an appointment has been planned for an online or offline conversation. Interviews were planned after a few conversations. Trust of participants and their awareness of the content of the research was a central reason to build up such relationships.

Most of the respondents provided information about their employment status, marital status, mobility background and migration status. Most of the completed interviews took place in the private sphere of the participant or in a coffee shop, and were expanded with observations in their households. I collected addresses and nicknames from the participant's networks or from local representatives familiar with the participants.

I conducted semi-structured interviews both face-to-face and online in one- to three-hour sessions. Most of them were customised to the participant and additionally tried to cover information about participants' interpersonal relationships. Structured interviews were conducted with advocacy workers (Mann & Stewart, 2000). The first 20 interviews were conducted in Hungary. Most of them provided enough information to rewrite the topic list of interviews and narrow down the interview subjects. I completed 15 interviews in Slovakia and the Czech Republic, but many were impacted by the presence of social workers. In the meantime, I completed several interviews online via Skype or Facebook. Some of those were repeated a year afterwards face-to-face in the UK.

Differences between interview data in different locations and time-slots provided "thick" accounts of participants' different perceptions and understandings of self-representation. They also enabled me to understand some contradictions between what participants said in private and how they behaved in the presence of others.

The interviews were based on a thematic guide with prompts and invitations to expand on issues raised (Fielding, 1988). The thematic guide was informed largely by questions raised from my observations and my preliminary studies of Roma ethnic migrants. Many interviews were first conducted without recording and then, after a more in-depth relationship was

established, repeated with recording. During the second interviews that I audio recorded, many participants attempted to extract information from me about how others had responded to my enquiries and about where my sympathies laid (Newby, 1977, p. 118). It was extremely difficult to guarantee total confidentiality, because most of the participants knew each other, attended the same church, lived in or came from the same area and kept comparing themselves to others they thought I might know. Local NGOs and some civil servants were also frightened that I might know their clients or that they would divulge confidential information that would make them recognisable. These challenges are later described as limitations of the research methods.

Some interviews were conducted in informal settings where data were recorded by means of notes written after the interviews. Some of those were destroyed after the participants withdrew their consent because a family member was concerned about the data they shared or to prevent stigmatisation of other Roma. Unfortunately, the recordings of three interviews were too noisy to be transcribed. Most of the conversations were in English and Hungarian and some switched into Romany and German, which caused several coding difficulties in the data analyses. It is important to remember that some of the participants' capacities to verbalise and reflect on their actions, perceptions and motives were limited due to English being their second language or because of the presence of family members. Additionally, some interactions where there had been drug use by participants affected the interviewing, making the data unreliable.

As a tool for extended ethnography, these interviews were combined with secondary resources, media reports, public events, concerts and exhibitions focusing on various themes. These include experiences with bureaucratic control mechanisms, experiences with bureaucratic obligations and the role and impact of surveillance methods recognised by Roma migrants. Since most of these migrants were not familiar with the term "surveillance", they were not explicitly asked about their experiences with surveillance methods. Rather, their narratives were led to chronological descriptions of their bureaucratic procedures after arrival, and those barriers they experienced in accessing welfare services such as Employment and Support Allowance, Income Support, JSA, PIP, Housing Benefit, tax credits or council tax support. Most of these descriptions referred to control procedures, particularly about their identity, marital status, housing and employment background, which are associated with their migration status and, in the case of employment procedures, with their ethnicity.

Besides revealing important aspects of individual experiences with a foreign bureaucratic system, narrative in-depth interviews with Roma migrants were explored as primary sources concerning the complexity of identity formation in ethnically mixed boroughs. This will be

further discussed in Paragraph 5.7. Furthermore, informal interviews were conducted with Roma to shed light on the overt and/or covert ethnic divisions and conflicts between different Roma migrant communities. The online behaviour of participants was an important aspect of the interviews. I was observing and participating in online Romani networks and in the face-to-face interviews I also elicited reflections about internet use compared with my observations, such as the modes of connection and what kinds of relationships participants maintain on the internet: work or study mates, friends, family, acquaintances and people known by face (Chen & Hinton, 1999; Kazmer & Xie, 2008).

The approaches of NGO leaders also revealed the deeper rationale of the prevailing local policies of integration and exclusion, as it is extensively discussed in Chapter 6. Additionally, semi-structured, face-to-face and in-depth Skype, phone and Viber interviews were completed with professionals like advocacy workers, lawyers, police officers and education officers to obtain a better understanding of their knowledge about Roma migrants, their attitudes toward Roma, and their insights, experiences, opinions, values and aspirations with regard to special support for Roma migrants. As it will be described in Chapter 7, self-organised focus groups were avoided because participants were clearly inhibited in sharing their personal experiences and networks in a group context due to suspicion and intergroup dependence relations. Cultural and historical subjects, as well as policy-related issues such as housing, benefits and education, were discussed in group meetings that I regularly attended at different NGOs.

There was clear competition between different organisations, which tried to expropriate specific funding and projects on behalf of Roma migrant groups. This resulted in tensions between organisations. I wanted to be able to explore these tensions and differences of opinion, which emphasises the appropriateness of individual interviews.

Some professional participants were extremely worried about their expressions, their eventual stigmatising notions about Roma or the possible consequences of my research. The police and council social workers who interact with a high concentration of Roma migrants were extremely suspicious and were reluctant to give their real opinions in an office setting and to evaluate different perspectives of stakeholders. To sum up, in order to capture the complexity of interpersonal relationships in particular settings, I used different techniques that each generated a particular set of data. This also cross-validates the study and triangulates the results.

### 3.3.4 Observations

An initial observation during an extended period of time offered knowledge about the interactions that take place in public spaces, in family settings and on the internet. In this phase, I visited different Facebook pages, read blogs and used instant messaging systems or email to make contact with people. It is important to point out that as a migrant from Central Europe myself and due to my engagement with the research population, I have partly become an insider in the Romani network (Adler & Adler, 1987). However, it is important to add that I was introducing myself as a researcher and the purpose of my presence was a common knowledge in the Roma networks, NGOs and also in the church communities.

After a short initial phase in the sending countries, I conducted several short-term participant observations during which I followed migrant families. I was visiting my Facebook contacts in settlements, I followed instructions of local NGOs and social workers and visited settlements, while referred to some relatives abroad. In most cases one gatekeeper of the locality introduced me to the returnees or to their relatives. Also some families called their family members on skype for me while I visited them. By visiting the same extended family networks in different countries I collected extensive amount of data about the contextual strategies of participants. All of them were informed and gave their consent. After an initial online contact, I visited the families several times, invested in social contacts and after a few conversations I also conducted face-to-face interviews. Later I made contact online with the participants via applications, websites and services that they use; so I had become a friend, a cultural mediator and a reader of their posts. Moreover, while moving around I interacted with them through email and Facebook Messenger during the data-gathering period. My private interactions (emails and chat conversations) with participants were not registered due to ethical issues; however, they generated field notes.

My first strategy was to follow and observe the user on social media and then offline in order to follow up on rapidly moving processes with the necessary reflexivity. This required signing in to the social networks that users belong to, selecting and approaching them through personal messages, emailing, chatting, reading their posts and sharing their photos. But it also meant paying attention to and locating the places from which the users connect. The internet has to be seen as a field of enquiry and is the social realm of participants where decision-making is being shaped. This implies a careful reflection about the research field and its accessibility. Consequently, methodology had to be designed, re-designed and derived as the research process unfolds, informing the data iteratively and generating a constant reflection on

the research process. Following users in an expanded ethnographic approach requires flexibility.

The main features of this expanded ethnography mean that the real-virtual division is no longer sustainable. People use all the media at hand to communicate with others (Beneito-Montagut, 2011, p. 731), so links between online and offline modes of interaction have to be taken into account. In addition, as ethnography does not generate a predetermined setting for fieldwork, it is considered “expanded”. It is individuals who compose the sample and determine the place where the ethnography takes place, thus the setting is flexible and potentially concerns all social communication and information systems on the internet, including a variety of multimedia data. As last, as a result of this fluid and dynamic field, the expanded ethnography approach requires a theoretical sample (Beneito-Montagut, 2011, p. 732).

For this I would like to use the individual narratives to replace the role of ethnicity with the local inter-ethnic power relationships from a diversity prospective (Barrett & Sigona, 2014). Since most of the cases I have collected are not particular strategies of the Romani migrant group(s), this project can give a better understanding of the local social strategies involving the positions of advocacy workers, local entrepreneurs and those who are using these newcomers for exploitation. It might reflect on the interracial interaction of migrants and how they learn these strategies from each other. It can offer a critical reflection about the role of EU citizenship and its similarities to illicit migrants who are experiencing a secondary citizenship. Observations of council employers in different boroughs, Roma events and court meetings, as well as suggestions from police officers, school assistants and interpreters for future observations were all subsequently included in the data collection process.

#### *3.3.4.1 Participation*

As a core methodological practice of ethnographic research methods, participant observation is the most efficient technique for understanding the vagaries of the cultural life of the Roma community and intercultural interaction by synthesising inductive and deductive theoretical insights (Wilson & Chaddha, 2009). Observing interactions between participants and their social network, or attending appointments with service providers as an interpreter or an advocacy worker enabled me to understand the experiences of participants.

In this study, participation took place continuously at different levels. From birthday parties to protests, festivals to formal meetings at council houses, I observed (and in some cases, assisted in) daily considerations of Roma life. Participation in the academic and activist

networks working on Roma migration issues raised the key hypothesis of this research, reshaping the setting of the mobile fieldwork to East London and the sending countries for the UK migration to Central Eastern Europe. Online research participation facilitated contacts with migrants in different countries, who provided local connections in sending countries. Being an interpreter at several formal meetings and appointments with migrants at councils, JobCentres, hospitals, banks, schools and other government settings gave me the opportunity to collect data on interactions between these newcomers and civil servants. As a tenant in a Roma household, I had the opportunity to participate in the daily life of different Roma ethnic groups and to understand their relationships with their environments, both at home and abroad. At one point, the line between the role of the researcher and the advocacy worker was so blurred that I was forced to stop assisting the families I was working with. In 14 months of fieldwork, I carried out participant observations in Hungary, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Poland and the UK, including participating in a volunteer programme of one of the NGOs in London where advocacy work was being carried out at least one day per week with Roma migrants.

Additionally, as an informal interpreter, I had access to several interactions between civil servants and Roma clients at schools and JobCentres. These interactions concerned benefit and health-care applications, payment agreements, HMRC applications or housing issues. Reciprocity was a central element of the data collection: I was expected to help with several bureaucratic issues and to interpret letters, phone calls and visits to local authorities. In addition to spending time with other advocacy workers, activists and artists in interviews and cultural events, I spent most of each interview day with different Roma families or with their relatives. I also spent much time on personal reflection and writing.

In addition to the data described above, I visited scholars who are working on ethnicity or migration-related subjects and attended workshops and evening courses. After developing contacts with Roma families in Walthamstow, Ilford and Newham in England, I continuously followed my participants at their appointments at the Town Hall, JobCentre, Citizen's Advice Bureau, schools, banks and general practitioners. I continued my interviews with Roma migrants from different countries who have various roles in the host countries in their network. I met traffickers, recruiters, subletting exploiters, taxi drivers, managers and those who are reliant on them.

Besides my fieldwork in London, I visited other cities with larger Roma migrant Diasporas and approached local organisations. Hungarian families were visited there and some prearranged meetings with Romany scholars took place. I conducted fieldwork in Leeds, Manchester and Bradford, and attended the Annual Youth Offender Team meetings. During

my fieldwork, I was present at several meetings and conferences as well as at Annual General Meetings organised by NGOs.

I developed regular contacts with civil servants on behalf of Roma families, to bridge their contact by providing support with school applications. My church attendance in London radically changed my position in the Roma network too. One of the pastors introduced me to a Hungarian family who invited me to live with them. I accepted their offer and spent the last eight months of my fieldwork in their household in London. They regularly reflected on my role as an academic and asked for my support. In the same time they also blocked my access to some of their brokers who I was able to contact through other participants. After a few weeks many families started to approach me with their dilemmas, which gave me the opportunity to understand and compare their decision-making processes. By supporting local training courses for teachers and interpreters about Roma, I had an opportunity to hear their knowledge and ideas about Roma migrants.

#### *3.3.4.2 Shadowing*

Shadowing is an institutional research method that involves a researcher closely following a member of an organisation over an extended period of time. Shadowing does not actually ‘interrupt the normal work activities of managers and take up their time’ (McDonald 2005, p. 457). In organisations where confidentiality is an issue, workers may feel uncomfortable with someone observing them, their workplace and their relationships with colleagues in a detailed way. Police officers and municipalities were extremely conscious about their role and most of them were only willing to talk informally. However, these conversations didn’t provided much data either.

Daily participation at the office of the biggest NGO working with Roma in the UK not only provided me with contacts and a better understanding of bureaucratic procedures, but also with information about the relations between different local actors working with Roma migrants. I shadowed for eight months on a regular basis in the office and also in outdoor activities with advocacy workers and trainers focused on different functions of the NGO. It was also a great opportunity to gain access for interviews with clients, since I had obtained entry to the organisation and the agreement of trustees.

The biggest challenge of this technique was the selection of data. A transcript of a day’s shadowing might be between 8,000 and 10,000 words. This has implications for both the time and cost of the study (McDonald, 2005).



Most of the data collected by this technique will be evaluated in Chapter 6, where I will discuss information about the internal relations of civil society. Shadowing NGOs and appointments in JobCentre Plus offices gave me a better understanding of self-management as a tactic used by ethnic migrants in a foreign setting. These practices were combined with shadowing online activities, often called lurking. Due to the mentally and emotionally demanding technique of immersion, it is clearly an exhausting and overwhelming experience both in the data-gathering and data-analysis stages. Reflections about the challenges of insiderness will be presented at the end of this chapter.

#### *3.3.4.3 Lurking*

Internet and social media networks are defined as important elements of data collection in a mobility study, not only for accessing participants and following their activities, but also for understanding the role of social media in their decision-making processes. Due to their intensive but limited use of social media, Roma migrants are often unaware of the security and privacy risks related to internet use. However, social media helps to keep them in touch with core family members and their home environment. To put it succinctly, they are not consuming online information or advertising, but merely using the internet to keep their personal social connections alive. As it is described in Chapter 7, this facilitates a social world where it is not that important where they are living while they can rebuild the same micro-environment and are able to access their basic needs.

To be able to understand the additional value of virtual ethnographic fieldwork, we have to clarify the relationship between online and offline fieldwork. As it is presented in Chapter 8 about online service use, research fields are intersecting and constantly changing along with the daily interaction of participants. In transnational mobile networks, the real and the virtual are so strongly intertwined that we are unable to complete empirical research without paying attention to these intersections (Matei & Ball-Rokeach, 2001).

While anthropology's emphasis on ethnographic research has increasingly been adopted by cultural criminologists, critics have raised challenges and risks (Noak & Wincup, 2004, p. 101) to which I will respond in the next section. In the final section, I will introduce some critical aspects that have to be part of the ethical considerations of ethnographic methods.

Multi-sited ethnography means not only doing fieldwork in different countries, but also conducting simultaneous investigations in an online environment. Online and offline research areas, like as flying bird flocks, are crossing and constantly changing in daily contact with

participants. Following my participant observation in different households, I did various forms of virtual fieldwork.

I included virtual fieldwork on social media in my research for three main reasons. First, it enables access to migrant networks, allowing me to monitor them online and offline and find new remote participants. Linking online and offline networking of participants creates an environment in which researchers and participants are constantly in touch regardless of their physical locations. It ensures transparency and provides a form of guarantee about the accessibility and location of the researcher. During my fieldwork, Roma activists passed my name to their friends on Facebook. They verified my background on Facebook page before the first contact and approached our common friends. However, Facebook page research involves the risk that participants will not trust ethnographer due to a lack of a verifiable background.

Second, not only migrants and their family networks, but also activists, NGOs and anti-immigrant groups are mapped on social media. Professional networks are often in contact with NGOs and activists as participants take part in the study. Interactions within various networks also offer many insights into the flow of information and perceptions of professionals that influence the individual decisions of migrants. Social media contacts with academic networks and project groups working on similar research are also a major source of online data. Observations online or, as it is often called, “suck” is a virtual research method that raises many ethical questions about the invisibility of researchers.

Third, social media is also a cost-effective platform for intimate conversations with relatives. Although internet literacy is not a common skill in the older members of immigrant communities, the minimal technical knowledge is quickly transferred as long as the family is not united in one geographic area. As it will be explained as identity-management strategies of Chapter 7, through observing conversations through Facebook chat and live simultaneously with Roma migrants, I had more of an opportunity to better understand the relationship between internal social relations and online self-presentations.

### 3.4 Research design

This section will provide an account of the research process to defend the use of selected methods in particular contexts. In the preliminary phase of the research period, I collected secondary data to develop the right methodological and theoretical foundations for the operationalisation of the research project. First, I completed a literature review. Media analyses were included in the fieldwork process, related to different minority-targeting issues in the

selected sending and receiving countries. The main goal of the pre-conceptualised research process was to follow and study Roma migrants in real time by means of a mobile ethnographic process and to document the formation and operation of their interaction with local authorities and social networks online and offline, as well as how they develop coping strategies to access welfare services. In the second phase, I completed fieldwork in three Central European countries and in one host country of CEE migrants.

Besides doing interviews, observations and participative advocacy work, I also collected other textual artefacts, such as the email correspondence of local councils and NGOs or my interactions online with participants and colleagues about specific subjects, such as legislative changes or local statistics. These collected raw data were clarified by supplementary field notes and daily reflections were produced in a research diary.

Different data generated through different methods was combined in the form of case studies to give a broader chronological picture of different individuals and place them in a broader social and geographical context. Participants were selected based on their willingness to participate in the long term and in correlation with their migration history and experience with welfare services in the UK. Since many of the selected methods complement each other in significant ways, they enable us to discover the controversies and discrepancies in decision-making processes that reflect the role of emotional and rational considerations in different environments. Therefore, the concept of context and space are central aspects of the research project. After 14 months of data collection, the transcription of interviews and data analyses were completed and combined with existing academic resources. The following section will present particular methods and tools of data selection and discuss the limitation of each.

Generated data was analysed based on cleaned-up transcripts of the interviews and field notes with transcription software (Express Scribe), and based on my observations at different meetings and analysed with qualitative data analysis software (Nvivo). The software was used to store and code the data with the help of three coding frames: one for emergent coding based on my perceptions, one based on literature and one based on a coding framework devised per location. However, coding systems are not analytically neutral. Text-based qualitative data analysis is a process of interpretation (Mason, 2002). In choosing or devising a particular system of coding data, certain assumptions are being made about the kinds of phenomena being coded and those that are not (Mason, 2002).

First, I screened for word repetitions in the transcribed interviews to look for commonly used words. These may indicate terms used by respondents with a particular meaning and significance in their setting, such as eligibility, discrimination or home (Ryan & Bernard,

2003). After selecting key terms, I put together a new interpretation of reselected data in themes by cutting up and sorting transcripts and collecting all those transcripts coded the same way into piles. After re-reading them, a new interpretation of the reselected data in themes and ideas emerged (Bryman & Burgess, 1994).

In order to ensure confidentiality of research participants and organisations, different cases are mixed together and presented per coping strategy. Since many participants know each other, participants' names also have been changed to prevent their identification and removed from the publication version. The resulting transcripts were as accurate as possible, but did not document grammatical or phonetic mistakes or intonation and speech habits. When using quotations from the transcripts in this thesis, I have to some extent "cleaned up" the text and removed such features to make the content easier to read and to reduce the word count (unless I deemed the features important for the meaning being constructed).

### 3.5 Research process

I completed my fieldwork in the selected sending countries of the Visegrad group — the four Central East European EU member states — between January 2013 and September 2014. That is where I first collected data from returnees and extended my network in the academic and NGO fields. The selection of countries will be further explored as part of the overview of Roma ethnicity in the following chapter. Observations and interviews mainly took place in Hungarian-speaking settlements, in particular in Presov, Kocise, Moldava, Bratislava, Prague and Brno. I conducted several interviews in Slovakia and the Czech Republic (e.g. people in need, MECEM, IOM, social workers, political leaders who are responsible for Roma Integration Projects) and observed the living circumstances of returnees. I developed new contacts with social workers and Roma integration project leaders which resulted in contacts with their clients who had returned from the UK. Several academics from different fields such as security studies, Romani studies and anthropology were involved in the theoretical development of my research and we shared experiences and dilemmas about our research with Roma.

From November 2014 onwards, I moved into a Romani household in East London and followed the mobility traces of their extended network. The family was willing to convince me that it is 'an exceptional chance for my research'. Moreover, by shadowing NGO workers who were supporting Roma with different issues, I gained more insight into the institutional barriers that Roma migrants face and how they respond to them in different circumstances. This NGO

provided me with many opportunities to learn about the local bureaucratic structure and I was introduced to several partners of the organisation with whom it was beneficial to network. Roma clients regularly asked me for clarification regarding the contents of some correspondence, which gave me several opportunities to assess their knowledge about their local obligations toward councils, employees and landlords.

Furthermore, I attended several Roma activist meetings as an interpreter, where I could participate in the interaction between Roma migrants and local authorities. These meetings gave me the opportunity to explore the power relations and cultural differences between Roma migrants and the host society. In addition, I developed contacts with several migrant families and built up a long-term relationship with Roma women who were organising financial issues in their households.

### 3.5.1 Validity

As Lecompte and Goetz (1982) wrote, establishing validity:

‘requires determining the extent to which conclusions effectively represent empirical reality and assessing whether constructs devised by researchers represent the categories of human experience that occur. Internal validity refers to the extent to which scientific observations and measurements are authentic representations of some reality.’ (p. 32)

This study has focused on selected mobility cases between Central Eastern Europe and the UK and has produced rich data from this setting and its Roma participants. All selected V4 countries were visited and I sustained long-term connections with NGOs, academics and returnees. Living with participants in different settings ensured the rich amount of data not only on the coping strategies of Roma participants, but also on the role of different stakeholders as it will be presented in Chapter 6. I spent long periods of time with participants in order to become familiar with their experiences, and by directly getting involved in their everyday choices I was able to verify the information provided by participants. Extensive data resources collected during this fieldwork have enabled me to make sense of the social reality of Roma migrants and professionals working with them (Denzin, 1978). However, it is important to consider how this might inform the understanding of the dynamic nature presented in the last three analytic chapters.

External validity addresses the degree to which such ‘representations may be compared legitimately across groups’ (Coelho, 2011, p. 1). Appropriate criteria for assessing qualitative

research can be thought of in terms of ‘credibility’, ‘transferability’ and ‘confirmability’ (Lecompte & Goetz, 1982). The amount of data collected with NGOs and participants will enable to specify recent issues for future research on bureaucratic interactions and how changing internet literacy will shape the bureaucratic incentives of welfare provision online, such as studies regarding the role of interpreters, the side effects of data surveillance and how identity management is changing through digitalisation in bureaucracies.

This complicated ethnographic study represents the key dynamics between migrants and surveillance techniques adopted by welfare services. Although there are some contextually-specific aspects and alternatives that are exclusively practised by Roma migrants, similar coping strategies might be used by other newcomer migrant groups in their interactions with local authorities. These strategies will be analysed in detail in Chapter 5.

Lecompte and Goetz (1982) also note that ‘reliability in ethnographic research is dependent on the resolution of both external and internal design problems. External reliability addresses the issue of whether independent researchers would discover the same phenomena or generate the same constructs in similar settings’ (p. 32). Since most of the data was collected simultaneously online and offline, there is a higher possibility of the participants being traced in the long term and also their geographic mobility. Most of the settlements visited in the sending countries make use of some social work by local NGOs or have outreach social workers who are familiar with those who have migrated or returned from the UK. Additionally, there are several social media groups where Roma are members due to common interests in the UK.

Lecompte and Goetz (1982) further note that ‘internal reliability refers to the degree to which other researchers, given a set of previously generated constructs, would match them with data in the same way as the original researcher had done’ (p. 32). Since this research is based on a situational approach, most of the data collected can be verified from a retrospect of participants or by an evaluation from secondary literature resources. Although most of the recorded interviews and transcripts are preserved, the same participants might not provide the same interview due to their personal relationship with me. The best evaluation method for reliability would be the collection of documents from participants or the dossiers of NGOs, which have a long-term overview of the administrative traces of their clients participating in this study.

The triangulation and testing of data was predominantly carried out using mixed methods. Peer group meetings were used to evaluate the findings, monthly supervision guided the research process and several research tools were combined, such as interviews,

observations and secondary data. Temporary findings were regularly discussed with other academics who are working in the field of mobility, Roma migration and surveillance studies. Interview findings were discussed with Roma activists and intellectuals, and then evaluated with research participants. In addition, my personal prior fieldwork experiences were taken into account to reflect on the accuracy of the assertions given in interviews and to evaluate whether certain information was in accordance with my understanding of the situation. Based on Denzins' data triangulation principles (1970), the evaluation of data was completed by selected cases of welfare applicants and their interactions with service providers. These evaluations resulted the cases that are presented in Chapter 7, 8, and 9.

### 3.6 Ethical issues

There are several ethical issues related to conducting mobile ethnography with stigmatised ethnic groups. Considerations about the protection of research participants from future criminalisation and their anonymity were continuous concerns in my fieldwork process. Based on the general Code of Ethics and the policies and procedures of the American Anthropological Association, this research fulfilled the major ethical principles of informed consent, protection of participants, confidentiality of data and anonymity of participants in the data analyses.

Due to the mobile nature of this study and the different language skills of the participants, I did not develop a formal consent form that would be approved by an ethics review board. However, a constant monitoring of data collection by two supervisors guided the research process and the ethical dilemmas raised in the fieldwork and data analysis periods. The research diary was discussed monthly and became the core data of the research analyses.

Ethnographic methods face ambiguous ethical dilemmas in disseminating rich data in particular because of recent technical inventions that are changing the participants' circumstances. With increasing digital data resources come increasing ethical dilemmas about the use of online data and about data ownership issues in digital spaces. Digital data-sharing methods are reconfiguring the landscape of research by redrawing boundaries and relationships between participants and blurring boundaries between private and public spheres. This online communication and open data resource raised new dilemmas about ensuring the confidentiality and anonymity of participants. This digital level of interaction involved new dilemmas about balance when conveying detailed, accurate accounts of the social world while simultaneously protecting the identities of the individuals. In the following sections, I will describe how I ensured ethical principles during this study.

### 3.6.1 Informed consent

The official consent of participant who are involved in such a research has been considered as problematic in Criminology.” In such studies, researchers maintain considerable, potentially dangerous, influence over participants due to their knowledge and perceived authority. This paradigm was presented in Milgram’s classic obedience experiments which affirmed the power of situational forces on human behaviour.” (Jones, 2012, p. 1). However, in this research all participants were informed about their role in the research conducted. First of all, I asked for informed consent in advance from every participant who was approached for an interview. Depending on the person’s background, it was translated. In most cases, the first contact was made online via email or social media, where participants were informed about the research goals and their informed consent was requested. I then discussed with each participant how the interview was to be recorded, transcribed and stored, and who might have access to it in the future. I stressed the use of anonymised data protection, as well as their right to refuse to answer any questions and to withdraw from the interview if they wished.

The first interviews with respondents were mostly conducted face-to-face and continued with online updates or telephone conversations. In some cases, interviews were repeated with the same subtopics, but with recording that changed the original narratives of the interviewees. During the time between the first and second interviews, I kept in regular contact with the participants in order to gain their confidence and to become familiar with their activities and attitudes toward local authorities. After a few interviews, I realised that the letter about the purpose of this research had to be simplified and shortened to make the reader understand the aims of this research. Professionals and academics working on similar studies were approached via email and Skype, but regarding Roma migration hardly any information has been shared. As their personal involvement has indirectly serious implication on this phenomena, I present their involvement in a separate chapter.

Research consent varied between observations and participation in online groups. Many participants or friends who were informed about my project were forwarding invitations to events and information about local events that were visible to everyone in my online network. Despite all the practical and technical security measures I took to address ethical issues, such as limiting the visibility of my network, it is essential to recognise that not all the subjects that were observed could be informed. There are many individuals who, while interacting with active research participants, were co-observed. Yet, as their activity is not the focus of the



analysis and are not presented as the cases of research participant, ethical concerns are relatively minor in that respect. Further, given the openness of many participants about their individual data on social networks, online participant observation theoretically allows a covert position (Fielding et al., 2008; Mann & Stewart, 2000). This was seen as problematic due to ethical concerns associated with the potentially unnoticed consequences of users' privacy, but it became clear that participants were conscious about their self-presentation and aware of the risks and possibilities of monitoring online data. Participants do not share personal data on their Facebook pages and they modify their location and affiliation presented on Internet. For instance, most of the Roma participants are registered as an employee of Dolce and Gabbana or Armani and they register as a student of Oxford University. These online characteristics are also confirmed offline as fake in order to protect their real digital identity. In order to prevent any risk of confidentiality, this thesis contains no data that has been collected without consent. Also deductive consent was asked regarding the selected information or data from private conversations.

### 3.6.2 Engagement with participants

The constant negotiation in the research position and the roles adopted to gain trust and retain a professional distance raised the biggest long-term ethical challenge. As it is presented in the epistemological paragraph in the beginning of this chapter, the critical question is whether scientific objectivity requires us to be personally aloof from the people we study (Hughes, 1995, p. 426). First, the most methodologically questionable aspect was the level of involvement in the participants' activities. Criminologists have to decide the extent to which they want to become involved in the illegal activities of the participants. It is often a situational consideration based on a conscious choice by the researcher. On the one hand, if I, the researcher, choose to take a step back, I might lose my privileged position in the field. On the other hand, if I do not want to miss the experience and the narratives of such an event, which may be an essential part of the data collection, I may take personal and sometimes legal risks. In that case, I might also be abused, manipulated or flooded with false information. Danahay (1993) states that in such a situation, 'we learn not just with our minds, but also with our bodies and through our actions. Therefore, the participant role of the ethnographer is equally vital to the acquisition of ethnographic knowledge as is that of observer' (pp. 221-222). Respecting a dress code associated with gender roles or the family traditions are essential in a successful fieldwork process.

Roma migrants are often suspicious about the goal of ethnographers because of many prior negative experiences. The real challenge is to find the right position with a distance to build stable contact with people who have negative experiences with scholars and social workers in their daily lives. Language use, as a limited knowledge of Lovari and transparency on personal affiliations or on marital status, might have an important influence in this process (Noak & Wincup, 2004, pp. 41-42). Clear explanations about the research dilemmas, an informal approach, patience and openness to the participants' use of language can open more doors than a formal approach. By visiting families in cases when research is not on the foreground might result a long term social contact too. As researchers, we are expected to have 'an open, non-judgmental attitude, being interested in learning more about others, being aware of the propensity for feeling culture shock and for making mistakes, the majority of which can be overcome' (De Walt & De Walt, 1998, p. 260). However by being transparent about prejudices and concerns regarding interactions with participants might also open doors in order to bridge cultural differences and to prevent misinterpretations.

### 3.6.3 Confidentiality

As mentioned above, in order to guarantee confidentiality, I removed any identifiers of participants to prevent using any information from the dataset that could identify them such as their address or Romani name (most of which were replaced with pseudonyms). However, in particular with digital data traces and online profiles or interactions on social media, many combinations of traits can be used to identify respondents. In order to avoid these traces, I kept contact details on paper, invented new email addresses and tried to scrub digital data traces. Although quotations and examples would not make participants easily traceable in a conference paper or a publication, I changed some details about non-essential information such as the number of children, or I mutated their narratives to render them unrecognisable to others. Considering how data is disseminated as an illustration of some strategies, modifications were invented regarding the particular purpose of case descriptions. It was harmonised on the online and offline levels since these multiple layers of data are connected. Participants chose their own pseudonyms and the fantasy name of their context, and sometimes they decided which identity aspect they wanted to have changed when their cases were described.

Considerations about the traceability of my data collected from social media raised interesting discussions with participants and peers. This data collection was treated with

confidentiality; just like multimedia data and audio-visual data, screen captures obtained from the internet or from Facebook were anonymised with a graphics editing programme and saved on secured hard drives. Even where the avatars were not the images of the users, they were distorted so that they cannot be matched to a particular identity.

Critical ethnography claims that we need to step further than the principle of “do no harm”; with our research results and research practice, we should change the social position of the people we study. Working with strongly stigmatised Roma in foreign settings was not only challenging in cases when they seek invisibility after migration, but in discovering intended or unintended criminal activities by these migrants there was a high risk that this study might reframe their existing stigma or increase the criminalisation of the research participants. Therefore, complete confidentiality for every research participant is upheld as a means to protect research participants from harm and to ensure anonymity. The biggest challenge was to avoid the attention of authorities that might be interested in my contact and findings, or that can map the participants via my online networks. In practice, legal authorities were not interested, but television channels and local newspapers regularly approached me for information. Police services were more interested in the cultural traits of Roma migrants and tried to link their experiences with the clients of the NGOs mentioned above.

In comparison, participants were most interested in each other’s strategies and wanted to gain contacts or information through me. These types of connections and links were avoided by referring to the confidentiality of my data. No identities of participants who wanted to remain anonymous can be unravelled from my data. To avoid any chance of identification and the legislative consequences of the collected confessions, the narratives were mixed and the locations renamed. Links between the relevance of Roma ethnicity and illegal activities might result in the future stigmatisation of Roma migrants. Therefore, this connotation will be analysed in the following chapters.

To protect the privacy of participants, prevent future dangers and ensure comfort in developing contacts, I needed to guarantee that the given information would not be divulged to others without permission. Some professionals refused interviews and formal meetings because they were wary of the possible consequences of the information they might share or they worried I might recognise the clients they were talking about. However, many were open to informal conversations in which they shared their “personal opinions” about their work experiences with Roma migrants.

Given that qualitative studies often contain rich descriptions of participants, confidentiality breaches via deductive disclosures are of particular concern to qualitative

researchers. After the interviews or shared events, several participants reselected the data to which they had consented. Internal confidentiality (Tolich, 2004) is extremely important in Roma networks, since traits of individuals make them identifiable in their own community (Sieber, 1992).

Although the confidential nature of this study was made clear to all participants in advance, I also considered what kind of implication it might have on our future relationships. Many participants saw me as a friend, advocacy worker or interpreter and were frightened that this relationship might be disturbed by some confidential information. Although many participants worried about the possible consequences, most of them gave their consent and some explicitly stressed that they wanted to be named in the study. Those who were guaranteed confidentiality have been cleaned in the data set by anonymity or have received a new identity. Still, those who are relatives of research participants or clients of interpreters or NGOs shadowed in the fieldwork period, were unaware of the research purposes. These relatives were sharing information with their network and it was shared by participants who were willing to ask advice for them or willing to compare their possibilities regarding the application procedure. These individuals are not included into the dataset, but their case description confirmed several practices and experiences observed.

There has been no covered observations or interview done for this study. Those who were provided assistance in the fieldwork period in interpreting or advocacy work, were all aware of the implications and regularly asked what should not be included into this study from those conversations. Participants were aware of the possible implications of the data they provide when asking for support and some even stressed that they do not want to be presented as poor victims. Others were even making jokes about the possible implications of the data they share, and after phone calls of while filling in forms reflected on their awareness of their role as participants. The most difficult aspect of such networks is the fact that participants are also willing to use ethnographers for information about others. In order to keep all participants satisfied, it is important that ethnographers are also safeguarding their own confidentiality by stressing the anonymity of their participants. Since the original research aim was to develop the knowledge on coping strategies of Roma migrants, welfare surveillance and online application related fraud become a focus in a later phase of the fieldwork process when legislations has drastically changed and eligibility criteria become restricted for EU citizens. Therefore illegal activities were not the main concern of the data collection, but an outcome of this study.

However, as it is discussed in chapter 6, regarding criminalisation and stigmatisation, ethical concerns raised several difficulties regarding the possible implications of this study for NGOs, interpreters and professionals, in particular those that provide advocacy work and mediate in interactions between service providers and applicants. Although many of these stakeholders are committed to help Roma with the intention to change the marginal position of them, their activities might lead to their criminalisation regarding assistance in illegal activities and stigmatising narratives. By anonymization of these stakeholders it is ensured that this study cannot provide evidence for any legal procedure against any of the participants. Although some of the activities described in chapter 6 and 7 may raise concern about the right of their existence, this study was impossible without the assistance of local and international NGOs, and activists who were regularly provided contacts, facilitated interviews. As it is summarised in Chapter 6, these actors face already many types of pressures that limit and influence their activities, so the confidentiality of their names was a central ethical concern of the analyses in order to prevent their stigmatisation.

### 3.7 Limitations

This ethnographic study covers several locations in sending countries and many social networks in the United Kingdom, but it still has its limitations. Data on cases where the Roma ethnicity was in the foreground, such as data on police operations at NCA, solicitor files regarding housing evictions and discrimination cases were not available for this research. Therefore, I did not include the amount of legal cases where ethnicity is in the foreground in these analyses. Local councils in different London boroughs were unequally transparent about their ethnic policies and many were concerned about providing any information regarding the situation of Roma. Although personal data about participants was available, I found no structural information about variables of participants such as their marital status or educational backgrounds.

I made limited voice recordings of conversations with returnees, since recording short-term contacts raised distrust in participants. Recorder are associated with journalists, who are particularly disfavoured in settlements. There were many advantages to sharing a background with participants, such as providing an insider position in the ethnographic fieldwork, but the results might cause biased notions regarding the migration experiences of women.

## Chapter 4 Roma, a Global Ethnic Minority

Participant observation in different localities provides a critical understanding of situational coping strategies in the context of Intra-European mobility and intercultural relations. This chapter provides a detailed analysis of the historical background of Roma migrants from the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia (known as the V4 countries). Roma ethnic minorities were selected as case studies for this thesis for a number of reasons. Firstly, studying the securitisation of Roma migrants in the Intra-European context can be seen as a litmus test of the European Union's (EU's) free mobility principle challenging the notions of equal EU citizenship. Secondly, these cases also reflect the dynamics of the sophisticated security measures used by EU member states and how these shape the mobility patterns of "unwanted" groups on European territory. Thirdly, these cases are not only illustrative of geographic population control mechanisms, but also of the unforeseen effects that are hidden from the current surveillance mechanisms. Roma minorities have decades of experience with bureaucratic strategies, including structural harassment and spatial control strategies (Van Baar 2014).

As will be presented in the next chapter, the intra-European securitisation of mobility arose as a result of contradictory policy developments of control and integration (Kocze & Rövid, 2015). After 2006, by decreasing the role of intra-European borders, the EU's top-down policies have indirectly motivated nation states to increase their internal security directives, establishing a schizophrenic condition with ambiguous social sorting practices. In Central and Eastern Europe, national identity has become the cause of post-Soviet political transitions, creating bipolar societies in which Roma, as the biggest ethnic minority without a nation state, have been increasingly marginalised. On the other hand, in the security narrative of Northern and Western European states, state sovereignty has been replaced by societal insecurity, justifying restrictive measures against the inflow of poor migrants. Both processes are redefining the risk associated with the "other" and pushing mobility to the top of the political agenda (Waeber et al., 1993, p. 221). European member states are increasingly extending their security approaches in order to protect their ethno-national identity from "threats" associated with newcomers. By erasing the national borders between EU member states, security measures have turned transnational mobility into a national risk, in which Roma migrants, who are defined as a criminal, cultural and economic threat, are the main focus of prevention strategies (Cahn & Guild, 2010; Vidra, 2011; Grill, 2012).

In order to understand the geopolitical effects of these measures, this chapter looks at how the interplays between societal insecurity and increasing ethno-nationalism, which are manifested in the neoliberal management of security measures, determine which groups are defined as a “threat”. However, first of all, it is necessary to discuss the definitional difficulties with Roma ethnicity. Based on a historical description of different Roma groups moving towards Western EU member states, I will attempt to clarify some contextual difference between the different Roma groups and nationalities. Then, in order to understand the commonalities and differences between the selected groups, I will reflect on their recent socio-economic situation in their home countries and their motivations and expectations from their host society (the UK). Finally, I will provide a brief introduction to Roma life in London and explain the local conditions in order to shed light on the diversity of mobility patterns among Roma ethnic subgroups. This overview will facilitate an understanding of national and ethnic differences in migration patterns and expectations, also among different generations.

#### 4.1 The pariah of Europe – The hidden dynamics of ethnic identities

The first concern regarding the securitisation of Roma mobility is how to define ethnicity and, following on from this, what might be the implications of Roma ethnic identity in the migration context. Ethnic classification is a frequent topic in the social sciences and there are several reasons why it is extremely problematic in the case of Roma. First of all, there is no reliable statistical data on who can be considered an ethnic Roma. Although ethnic registration is a sensitive subject for Roma minorities, it is often claimed that ethnic statistics are needed in order to develop targeted support for Roma on local and national levels. Consequently, local authorities try to collect data via social services and multiple choice surveys based on self-identification – but most Roma refuse to be formally identified due to fear of misinterpretation and that such identification would feed detrimental approaches such as stereotyping. Although there is common agreement among academics that observer-derived measures of race and ethnicity should be eliminated, how to identify Roma and represent their diversity in different contexts is an ongoing discussion.

This debate has often been framed in dichotomous terms in the past: scholars of primordialism underline that ethnic membership is acquired at birth and, thus, represent ethnicity as a “given” characteristic of the social world. This is in contrast to others who interpret ethnicity from an instrumentalist approach, maintaining that individuals choose between various identities according to self-interest. Others, like essentialists, focus on the

transcontextual stability provided by ethnic cultures, while situationalists point to how individuals identify with different ethnic categories depending on the logic of the situation.

‘Modernists attributed the salience of ethnicity to the rise of the modern nation state, while perennialists insisted that ethnicity represents one of the most stable principles of social organisation in human history. Scholars who insist on the subjectively-felt reality and the deeply-rooted character of ethnic “identity” argue against those for whom ethnic distinctions are primarily driven by the changing interests of individual or collective actors’ (Wimmer, 2008b, p. 971). Many contemporary scholars use linguistic approaches, other cultural or historical explanations, or define Romani ethnicity along kinship networks (Matras, 2010; Acton, 2005; Hancock, 2002; Okely, 1996). Young Romani scholars define ethnicity as a social construct (Brooks, 2012; Rostas, 2012; Koczé, 2009) and deconstruct those assumptions about ethnicity, which are created by top-down multilateral political entities, such as the United Nations and World Bank.

Besides the difficulties in defining ethnicity, completing research based on the selection of ethnicity is a challenge, as there are no geographical limits on the scope of such research on Roma. Michael Stewart argues that, in the case of Roma, ethnicity as a research subject of ethnographic inquiry is particularly difficult to explain, because of their incompatibility with the Radcliffe-Brownian notion that ‘anthropologists studied “societies” as naturally existing entities or bounded sociocultural systems with a quasi-organic unity in a particular territory (and not one arbitrarily imposed by the observer)’ (Stewart, 2013, p. 417). Therefore we need to take a different approach, one that steps over this static territorial connotation, as suggested by Urry (2012), who introduced a new understanding of mobility.

#### 4.1.1 Roma as a social construct - Ethnic borders or social fringes?

The uniqueness of the Roma lies in their transnational, non-territorially-based nature, which means that they have no state to provide a haven or extend protection to them. Although there are other minorities with similar attributes, like the Kurds, most of them have distinct territorial affiliations. ‘Roma disparity and marginalisation can be explained by their geographic distribution across many nation states and cultural and religious diversity. This has resulted in the condition of being subordinated to or excluded by others’ (Bárány, 2002, p. 2), which is the central aspect of shared Roma experience. Although the collective name “Roma” is being increasingly used in European politics, this name does not represent many of those who claim to have the same identity. On the other hand, several subgroups that the majority consider as



Roma, like Sinti, Beash, Kale and many others, distinguish themselves from this Roma identity. Nonetheless, most of these groups, regardless of their ethnic, religious or linguistic identity, share the same exclusionary experiences with the majority.

From the arrival of the Roma in Europe, the magnitude of Roma exclusion has ‘varied at different times and in different states. Although political systems and their policies towards the Roma have changed, these variations have had little apparent effect’ on the social construction of Roma (ibid., p. 2). In policy framing, as will be presented in the sixth chapter, this ethnic group is presented as homogenous, poor and welfare dependent, ignoring the social, economic and cultural diversity of different Roma subgroups. ‘As a vicious cycle, this seemingly interminable nature of the Roma identity is also used as an explanation of the continual marginal status devoted to CEE [Central Eastern European] Roma populations’ (Marushiakova Popov, 2005, p. 19). At the same time, however, some Roma groups are resisting recurrent attempts at homogenisation and assimilation by dominant groups. These attempts are deconstructing the general ideas about Roma ethnicity and challenge cultural notions of the disadvantages associated with Roma ethnicity. Nonetheless, even in academic circles, Roma ethnicity is generally associated with groups without a homeland, with a proportionally small population in different states and who have no significant resources or political power (Bárány, 2002, p. 2). The diversity of Roma ethnic groups is mostly missing from the discourse, as is the role of internal dynamics between the different groups, as well as how they reshape the ethnic connotations around Roma.

Taking into account the different approaches mentioned above, in this study ethnic identity is understood as situational and socially and politically constructed, with constantly changing identity markers along different interactions. These attributes also play an important role in interethnic relations, which have significant implications for the mobility mechanisms and their interchangeability in different contexts. As will be illustrated in the fifth chapter, when different Roma groups interact in a foreign setting, it has structural implications for their self-representation and coping strategies with the local authorities. These inner-relationships between Roma groups are also fundamentally affected by their direct interactions with non-Roma and affect their knowledge on how to assert their own interests in these relations. These relations are also influenced by those Roma images created by the majority in a host society, by political power holders and academics, and, last but not least, stimulated by the groups’ internal value system (Szuhay, 2002, p. 10).

As Barth argues, ‘ethnic relations are maintained in the boundaries between different groups even though their cultures might be indistinguishable and even though individuals and

groups might switch from one side of the boundary to the other' (Barth, 1969, in Wimmer, 2008b, p. 971) . Ethnicity is, thus, 'the product of a social process rather than a cultural given, made and remade rather than taken for granted, chosen depending on circumstances rather than ascribed through birth' (Wimmer, 2008b, p. 971). Although this constructivist approach offers more flexibility than previous ethnic definitions, it gives rise to even more disagreements over the role of ethnicity in the securitisation of Roma mobility. If so, which contextual attributes would add or challenge existing control policies?

Regardless of the real impact of their ethnicity, the situational coping strategies of Roma families in the last century have been defined based on two controversial and contradictory approaches. The first approach argues that the Roma way of life is the cause of their marginal position, while, at the same time, those coping are associated with the ethnic success of Roma and their persistence. 'Arguments for ethnic success suggest that Roma are remarkably flexible in adjusting their economic strategies and activities to changing circumstances and due to their attributes of promptness and dynamism with which they adapt to the changes in their environment' (Kováts, 2002, p. 47). According to these cultural explanations Roma groups employ very efficient methods of conforming to the transformations occurring in the local economy, and they do the same when their own community changes when moving to a place with new circumstances (ibid.).

Even though Roma live in a semi-isolated fashion among majority populations who generally look down on them, in the Central European context Roma groups who are familiar with the cultural world around them, even in segregation, seem to be able to 'reproduce their communities with apparent ease; and they do so without shared religion, without any form of ritual or political leadership, and without overarching or underpinning political organization' of a host society (Stewart, 2013, p. 418). Several explanations have been offered for these persistence techniques. Firstly, there are historical explanations, which focus on the distinct origins of Roma groups and treat them as an unassimilated foreign ethnic group with a distinct ethos. Secondly, there are structural explanations, which are based on the division of labour and which locate the persistence of Gypsy populations in the way they have occupied particular niches within the changing European market. A subset of these are the structuralist approaches, which adopt the Foucault-inspired position that stresses the effects of labelling strategies used by state institutions. Thirdly, there are culturalist explanations, which consider the internal coherence of Roma value systems in a self-declared holistic approach. Each of these explanations comes up against the limits of the notion of ethnicity drawn from a model of autonomous and quasi-autonomous nation states (Stewart, 2013, p. 418) and claim that Roma

do everything possible under the given circumstances to engage in economic activities independent of the given environment (Okely, 1983, p. 53–56). Many of these ethnic connotations are associated in relation or in opposition with non-Roma economic strategies and as an explanation for Roma exclusion.

The importance of this paradox between the Roma's dependency on the world of the non-Roma and their simultaneous efforts to preserve the integrity and self-sufficiency of their own community is emphasised in most modern studies of Roma culture. 'It is in this connection that the issue of Roma groups' attitude to wage-earning labour is raised. Wage-earning labour belongs to the non-Roma, non-gypsy world, and efforts at repudiating it are seen by many as an integral part of the Roma identity' (Kováts, 2002, p. 47). Similar to Michael Stewart (2002), the attitude of the community I examined towards work and earning money was characterised by largely the same peculiarities as in the host countries. Roma are engaged in economic activities, with varying degrees of success, which has a limited effect on the community's integrity and the independence of the families in that community from their environment. Although illegal coping strategies are not accepted by many families who have found regular jobs, those I met were often involved in dealing in scrap metal, cars, watches, works of art, antiques, electronics, clothing, perfumes, and indeed almost anything that promises profit and a quick turnover. Hajnal explains that 'These commercial activities were but seldom conducted in the framework of a registered firm or on the permanent premises of a shop or at a stand, which greatly facilitated the instant reorientation of these operations. Further inhibited by the lack of vocational skills, seeking regular employment was uncharacteristic, but occasional employment was more frequent' (Hajnal, 1999, pp. 92–99, in Hajnal 2002).

#### 4.1.2 How to define Roma ethnicity – Ethnic boundary making as a multilevel process

Regarding the mobility of Roma ethnic groups, the controversial tendencies of marginalisation mentioned above and economic adaptation ascribed to Roma can only be understood from a situational perspective that sheds light on the institutional and social interactions of individual actors in different geographic contexts. Therefore, we have to adopt a pragmatic approach in order to analyse ethnic boundary making in a transnational context. Wimmer introduces a multilevel process theory:

'to understand how these characteristics are generated and transformed over time. The theory assumes that ethnic boundaries are the outcome of the classificatory struggles and negotiations between actors situated in a social field. Three characteristics of a field

– the institutional order, distribution of power, and political networks – determine which actors will adopt which strategy of ethnic boundary making. The author then discusses the conditions under which these negotiations will lead to a shared understanding of the location and meaning of boundaries’ (2008b, p. 970).

Borrowing from Wimmer’s theoretical concept, this section analyses three characteristics of social fields to explain which actors pursue which strategies. Firstly, on a macrostructural level, the institutional framework is considered as a determinant of different types of boundaries – such as ethnic, social class and gender – that can be drawn in a meaningful way in a particular social field. Secondly, the actor’s position in the hierarchy of power will be included as this defines the interests of actors, according to which they choose between different possible levels of ethnic differentiation. Thirdly, I will analyse who exactly is included in the actor’s own ethnic category, depending on the structure of their political alliances. In the final step, I explain how the ‘ensuing classificatory and political struggles between actors advocating different ethnic categories may lead to a more or less encompassing consensus over the topography, character, and rightful consequences of boundaries at agency level’ (ibid., p. 972).

By analysing the recent managerialist welfare structures in the UK and the daily practices of welfare claimant Roma in London, we can identify the intended and unintended implications of the local construction of Roma identity in surveillance practices. As mentioned above, these ethnic connotations are historically developed and constantly changing according to politics and actual power relations. In this description, I avoid referring to the complete Romani history or giving a complete ethnographic description of the differences between the many Roma subgroups. I will, however, use differentiations between nationalities and subgroups of Roma participants who distinguish themselves from other Roma coming from the same area (Wimmer, 2008b, p. 970).

Speaking of Roma in Central Europe, we need to distinguish three major approaches: everyday classifications, administrative and scientific classifications, and the internal classifications of Roma groups. If these approaches were visualised on a horizontal axis, we would see the two extreme points – that is, the everyday perception and the perception of Roma groups themselves. These are the most contradictory classification types. While the common perception could be considered as undifferentiated or merging, Roma themselves separate the different subgroups in which direct and actively functioning inter-group relations are at the forefront. Administrative approaches are mainly characterised by more selective and

judgemental attitudes (Szuhay, 2002, p. 11). Considering these differences in classification approaches, in order to explain the complexity of the situational aspects of ethnicity and nationality in the lives of different Roma groups, I will briefly describe the recent historical changes that have shaped Roma mobility in Europe.

#### 4.2 Babel of the ‘Romani chib’ – Challenges in ethnic classification

Debates about the efficiency of Roma integration strategies and the role of international institutions illustrate the complexity of the ethnic framing of Roma in the European context. Through paradoxical integration and security policies, Roma mobility has received increasing attention in EU politics. While there is an ongoing discussion about the legitimacy of the recently established European Roma Institute, the role of the Roma Decade and other transnational top-down initiatives, there has been a growing number of reports published by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), World Bank and Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) problematizing the situation of Roma communities in the EU. According to the OSCE report on Roma mobility, more than 10 million Roma live in Europe, a large proportion of them in the EU (OSCE, 2000).

Definitional challenges are also represented in the linguistic approach, which differentiates Roma by their Romani language dialects. Some Roma speak a Romani dialect and their national language, while others, such as the Hungarian Romungro Roma, speak the national language of their parents. Some Roma, such as Hungarian Roma in Slovakia, speak only their national language and others speak their national language together with second languages, such as English. According to the OSCE, ‘common unifying features – to the extent that they may exist – include common identification as members of the “communities of fate” regarded as “Gypsies” in Europe’ (ibid. p.13). Likewise, ‘the occasional or frequent experience of being “outed” as a “Gypsy” often results in negative treatment, or at least in suspicion. For the latter reason, many Roma and others identified as “Gypsies” choose to conceal their ethnic identity – particularly when asked by a public authority’ (ibid., p. 13). This is not the only difficulty, however. The term Roma cannot be linked to a particular area. Several subgroups may live in the same city or country, but their identity is not defined by their geographic or linguistic location. Hungarian Roma are living in Slovakia, Slovak Roma are living in the Czech Republic and Russian Roma groups are living in Poland. For a brief clarification, in the following sections I will give a short overview of Central European Roma, as the selected

population group researched in this study, and their historical self-definition in ethnic and national terms.

#### 4.2.1 Historical heritage – Differentiation in the sending countries

Although there are Roma communities everywhere in the world, the selection of Roma from Central European countries for the purpose of this study is based primarily on their similar political and economic background and migration patterns towards the West. In addition, Roma communities in these countries are sufficiently diverse in terms of their proportion of the overall population, number of distinct subgroups, and differences in socio-economic position to provide a broad cross section of their experiences in the region. Referring to the historical selection by Bárány, we can conclude that all of the selected sending countries were occupied by the Ottoman Empire, were authoritarian states between 1918 and 1945, and socialist states from 1945 to 1989, and recently share similar disadvantages related to the post-democratic transition period (Bárány, 2002, p. 9). These countries are also unified under the umbrella of the so-called Visegrad Group, or V4, consisting of Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia.

Based on the different histories of the various Roma subgroups, I will differentiate between three major contemporary Roma migration flows in the European Union. The first flow, which originated from each of the V4 countries, was when Roma claimed asylum before the political transition to democracy. These Roma networks that settled in other countries (e.g., Germany, the Netherlands and UK) and their asylum process provide the key transnational links to the later mobility flows by the same ethnic subgroups. After the transition period finished in 1989, a second flow can be identified: those claiming EU citizenship rights in host countries based on the law of free movement. Most of these Roma already had networks in the host countries or had tried to claim asylum there before. The third flow took place in the 2000s mainly following the mobility traces of the majority from their home countries. These Roma migrants have tried different EU countries before and have weak ties with the host societies in these EU countries.

Movements from CEE countries, following the democratic transition, took the form of asylum seeking in other EU countries and in Canada. Examples include: attempts by Roma from Poland and the Baltic states to settle in Great Britain during the second half of the 1990s; the emigration of Roma from the Czech Republic and Slovakia to Canada, which increased after 1997 (Vidra 2013a; see also Tóth, 2013; Vasecka, 2003; Matras, 2003, Grill, 2010;

Kováts, 2002; Humphris, 2013); the arrival of Gypsies from the Czech Republic and Slovakia in Great Britain in 1997 and later; the wave of Gypsy refugees from Slovakia to Belgium and Finland from 1999–2000 (Sobotka, 2003); and the arrival of Roma from the Czech Republic and Hungary in Canada in 2009. All of these movements triggered different policy restrictions regarding asylum claims targeting Roma.

#### 4.2.2 The Visegrad Group

It is relevant here to introduce the Visegrad Group of countries. The Visegrad Group is a cooperation scheme in the Central European region between the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia, which to work together in fields of common interest in all-European integration (Visegrad.info, 2010). These countries have always shared ‘cultural and intellectual values and common roots in diverse religious traditions, which they wish to preserve and further strengthen’ (Bárány, 2002, p. 7). All of the V4 countries aspired to become members of the European Union, perceiving their integration in the EU as a step forward in the process of overcoming artificial dividing lines in Europe through mutual support. They attained this aim on 1 May 2004 when they all became members of the EU (Visegrad Group, nd). As the initiative suggests, this the Visegrad Group was not created as an alternative to the all-European integration efforts, nor does it try to compete with existing Central European structures. Instead, it encourages optimum collaboration with all countries in the region, in particular with V4 neighbours. The ultimate interest of the group is in democratic development in all parts of Europe. Referring to the security narrative of the region, the Visegrad Group wishes to contribute to building the European security architecture based on complementary and mutually-reinforcing cooperation and coordination within existing European and transatlantic institutions.

The Visegrad Group became the most important region of Roma out-migration/asylum seeking in the 1990s and 2000s, due to attempts to join the EU acquis. Vidra (2013a) analysed different trends of Roma migration – both asylum seekers and labour/economic migration – before and after EU accession. In the pre-accession period, emigration into EU countries primarily took the form of asylum seeking, but most of the claims were refused. According to the Migration Policy Institute ‘between 1997 and 2005, approximately 12,000 to 15,000 Roma left Central Eastern Europe. The first post-transition flow was mainly related to asylum claims and guest workers trying to retain the social economic position that they had established in their home countries’ (Tanner, 2005, p. 3). The first post-accession Roma to file asylum claims

in EU countries were Slovakian and Czech Roma, followed by Polish, Bulgarian and Romanian Roma. Besides EU states (particularly the UK), Roma applied for asylum in Switzerland, Norway and Canada.’ Most Roma arrived in Canada from the Czech Republic and Hungary, and fewer from Slovakia. CEE state governments saw Roma asylum seeking as an impediment to their EU accession’ (Vidra, 2013a, p.530).

In the post-democratic transition period in the V4 countries unemployment rates soared. Roma became the most disadvantaged population group in the region, driving them to seek a better life abroad. ‘After the transition, urban, but especially rural, rationalisation programmes targeting unemployment and segregation problems (in preparation for the EU acquis) took their toll’. (Staniewicz, 2011, p. 261)

Social reforms such as privatization and the restructuring of industries resulted in many previously family-managed small agricultural holdings being no longer economically viable’ (Džambazovič–Jurásková, 2003). Since the transition, the Roma population in Hungary and Slovakia is over-represented in the unemployment rates in peripheral regions, primarily in the northeast and southwest of Hungary and Eastern Slovakia where industrial activities were taking place (Kertesi, 2000). Due to this process, ethnicisation of the poverty rate is rising (Kligman, 2001).and there are increasing stereotypes of ethnic “othering” (Kligman, 2001). As Vidra summarised, the ‘official public and political discourses of immigrant countries following the “asylum crisis” of the 1980s and 1990s’ were dominated by ‘right-wing politicians and conjured up images of welfare states being “swamped” and national identities being undermined by mass movements of impoverished people from East to West and South to North. As she stated, the main argument was that ‘emigrating Roma were “bogus” refugees and in fact ‘merely economic immigrants attempting to take advantage of the welfare systems in their host countries’ (Vidra, 2013b, p. 530).

#### *4.2.2.1 Roma in Poland*

The mobility of Polish Roma is one of the few exceptional developments in this region. The Roma community in Poland consists of approximately 20,000 people, divided into several groups: Polish Roma, Bergitka, Lovara, Kelderara, Sinti, and Chaladytka Roma. Bergitka Roma, or Carpathian Roma, are one of the first group of Roma and settled in Poland, mostly from the territories of historical Hungary and the Principality of Transylvania, through the Carpathian Mountains, during the 15th century. The name Bergitka is actually the term for the group used by other Roma groups, originating from the German term "berg". Their dialect of



the Roma language, which is part of the North Central Romani group, contains many words borrowed from Slovakian and Hungarian. Bergitka Roma are non-nomadic and have lived a settled existence since at least the 18th century. For this reason, and because of their interpretation of traditional Roma laws and customs, the *Romanipen* are regarded as lax by other groups of Roma. Traditional occupations of Bergitka Roma are iron work and music (Gerlich et al., 1995, p. 71).

Between the 16th and 18th centuries, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, like other European states, passed anti-Roma legislation. However, unlike in most European countries, these laws were rarely enforced, in large measure because the Roma found powerful protectors among the *szlachta* (Polish nobility) but also due to simple neglect. Polska Roma were also exempt from the feudal restrictions that tied Polish peasants to the land. They were free to continue their nomadic lifestyle for most of the year, as long as they arrived in the "home town" of their lord on pre-specified market days. In that respect, Polska Roma occupied a social strata above that of Polish peasants and other Roma populations, such as the Carpathian Roma (whose mobility was restricted).

In Poland, the King chosen by the Roma networks is still an important actor, who also has interests in the migration networks abroad. Other Roma groups, such as Lovari and Kelderari, arrived in Poland later. Most of these internal stratifications are also represented in foreign settings, however, there is an increasing openness to more exogamic relationships. As the Polish Roma network has a long migration history in Europe and extended trade networks, their recent mobility traces are strongly dependent on business and family ties. Cultural traditions, dress codes and the Romani law are also highly respected, in particular regarding gender relations (Kaminski, 1987).

Over the last 30 years, two great Romani emigrations from Poland took place. The first wave was between 1983 and 1995 and involved 60% (30,000) of the 50,000 then Romani population. Some 90% of them returned to Poland after several months or years. Their main destinations were Germany, the Netherlands, Scandinavia and, in some cases, the USA. The Second Romani emigration wave from Poland started in 2000 and reached its peak in 2004 and after, and is still continuing. This study looks at the Polish Roma networks in London, who have contacts with the local non-profit organisations (Marushiakova & Popov, nd).

#### 4.2.2.2 Hungary, Slovakia and the Czech Republic

Roma groups shared similar experiences in these territories under the rule of historical regimes. Due to the territorial changes after the Treaty of Trianon, which cut through the borders of Hungarian counties and districts, there were also subsequent changes made to Hungary's administrative boundaries. These two factors mean that only an approximate estimate can be made of the size of the Roma population in the late 19th century in areas that today belong to Hungary and the former Czechoslovakia (Kemény, 2005, p. 21). 'After the Second World War, there was significant internal migration (both forced and voluntary) from the Slovak part of Czechoslovakia to the Czech half, particularly (although not only) to industrial border areas from which three million ethnic Germans were expelled after World War II. As a result, today's Czech Romani community has extensive family links to Slovakia. Czech legislators made efforts to force these people to go to Slovakia after the breakup of the state, but these efforts largely failed' (OSCE, 2010). For example the Czech citizenship law, which came into force on 1 January 1993, 'makes citizenship conditional upon a prior two-year residency and five years without a criminal conviction. An amendment passed in June 1993 requires evidence of economic means and of stable accommodation. Although these measures are not in violation of international law, they were criticized as being discriminatory by the 1994 Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe meeting on Romany Issues' (Minority Rights Group International, nd). Due to these restrictive practices in allocating Czech citizenship after 1993, only approximately one-third of Roma in the Czech Republic today are citizens (Minority Rights Group International, nd).

The Roma community in the Czech Republic mainly comprises three subgroups: Slovak and Hungarian Roma, who entered the territory after the Second World War, and the Servika Roma, which represent the largest minority of Roma in the former Czechoslovakia. 'Estimates suggest that there are 250,000 Roma in the Czech Republic and 500,000 in Slovakia, with an 80% proportion of Servika Roma among them and an additional approximately 10% Ungrika and Vlax. Apart from this, Roma closely related to those living in Slovakia inhabit southern Poland and Carpathian Ruthenia in Ukraine (Muzeum Romské Kultury, 1999, in <http://romafacts.uni-graz.at/index>).

Wagner and Wagnerová explain that:

'Today most Roma live in northern and north-western Bohemia, southern Moravia and Silesia, but, generally, the situation is much more homogeneous than in Slovakia. Speaking of a certain location, the Roma in Bohemia are spread all over the area of a certain municipality,

while in Slovakia compact settlements (*osada*) exist. The concentration of Roma within one location (newly called “ghettos”) is a phenomenon that is new to Bohemia, caused by social exclusion over the last decade. The vast majority of Slovakia Roma live in the eastern part of Slovakia, mainly in the north. Ungrika Roma settled in the southern part of eastern Slovakia a long time ago. Over many generations the transition between these two groups has become fluent. Ungrika Roma additionally live in the whole of southern Slovakia, along the border with Hungary, apart from those who migrated to Bohemia’ (Wagner & Wagnerová, nd).

Nomadic Czech and Moravian Roma communities were almost entirely destroyed during the Nazi occupation. Romani migration to the Czech Republic – in particular from Slovakia, but also from elsewhere – has continued to the present day (OSCE, 2010, p. 39).

Compared to Slovak, Czech and Polish Roma, Roma subgroups in Hungary are the most assimilated and the least mobile minorities with limited networks abroad. Ethnographers refer to three main Roma subgroups in Hungary: ‘Vlach Roma [oláh cigányok], the so-called Hungarian Roma [magyar cigányok], who tend to call themselves “musicians” [muzsikusok], and the Romanian Roma [román cigányok] who usually call themselves Beás [beások]. Of course, one should not assume that these three groups must always constitute the basis for any classification, but there is no denying that the various groups do usually place themselves in one of these three main groups. At the same time, Roma placing themselves in one of the main groups do not necessarily accept all other Roma placing themselves in the same main group. In other words, some Roma who declare their membership of a group are not regarded as belonging to the group by others in that same group’ (Szuhay, 2005, p. 237).

Hungarian Roma mobility started much later than in the other V4 countries. Few Roma left with the intention to settle down somewhere else. Most of those who left a decade ago are working in temporary jobs in Germany or Austria, but due to the recent political and social climate, an increasing number of Roma are leaving the country. As it was concluded in the research on Roma migration in 2002, the dynamics of mobility in case of Roma CEE migrants seem to be controversial. It has been argued that

. ‘increasing numbers of Roma see emigration as a way to sort out their problems is not independent from their economic deprivation and the discrimination to which they are exposed.’ Not having any special qualities or skills to offer on the labour market, ‘most of them see a refugee status as the only chance for a residence permit in the target country and the disadvantages suffered in their country of origin become their primary “social capital” that can be converted into some other kind of benefit. The underprivileged position of the Hungarian

Roma on the labour market and the social ladder is likely to assert itself in their chances of acquiring temporary jobs abroad. It is not only in Hungary that the unskilled worker who is difficult to mobilise is the employer's last choice' (Kováts, 2002, pp. 11-12).

Yet, in the research completed for this dissertation shows that social security has just an important role in mobility even if one has no networks in the host country.

As will be described in the fifth chapter, these refugee claims in Canada and in other EU states provided Roma with essential experiences with foreign bureaucratic systems, which have recently being exploited by newcomers in the UK. However, temporary work done overseas or in Western Europe has no specifically Roma or non-Roma character. In addition, regarding the role of identity in the choice of mobility Vidra stated that 'the chances of getting a job are predominantly shaped by supply and demand, and being an Eastern European is more important to the Western employer than being (or not being) a Roma (Wizner, 2000). This ethnic element is a key aspect in the motivation of CEE Roma to leave their countries for an environment in which Roma identity has limited implications for their social economic position. Although Slovak and Czech Roma have regularly been in the media, Hungarian Roma mobility is one of the most invisible in many host countries '(Vidra, 2013b).

As will be discussed in the following section, the recent existential deprivation of Roma has been politicised, partly fuelled by their Westward mobility. Negative media attention given to Romani migrants has been extensive in countries of origin, especially regarding refugee claims. The Slovak media, for instance, citing high-level government officials, has spoken extensively of "ethno-tourism" by way of stigmatizing Romani migrants and asylum seekers from Slovakia in Western Europe (Russell, 2008). Romani migration has become a supplementary reason for already existing very high levels of anti-Romani antipathy. As a result, many Roma report increased levels of discrimination in their home countries, which is forcing Roma minorities into situations of increasing deprivation.

### 4.3 Politicising marginalisation

The situation in Central Eastern European countries after the democratic transition is summed by Pogonyi (2013):

'After the economic shocks of the early transition years, east-central European economies grew. Since 2008, however, economic growth has again slowed down. Welfare cuts and austerity packages have been introduced throughout Europe. Unemployment rates are growing. As for the economic malaise, the current economic crisis may not have as big an impact on

welfare as the transition to the market economy in the early 1990s. The context in east-central Europe is, however, different from that of two decades ago. In the early 1990s, the prospect of joining the prosperous club of Western Europe counterbalanced the decline in welfare. Today the context is far less favourable for democracy, since there are no similar external factors which could strengthen the legitimacy of fragile democratic institutions.’(nb)

Euroscepticism, lack of solidarity, distrust of collective action, and many other signs suggests that ‘social transition still lags behind institutional transition. While institutions, thanks to EU accession, have been democratised, democratic values are still not entrenched in the political culture of east-central European populations’ (ibid. 2013).

The combination of a weak state apparatus, increasing corruption and clientalistic relations, and polarisation in society has eroded trust in the political leadership. State crimes linked to privatisation and control over the main assets are in the hands of a few. Corrupt political elites and administrative systems have allowed the spread of organised fraud, illegal border trafficking, bribery and money laundering, posing a direct threat to fragile democratic institutions (Swank & Betz, 2003). Socio-economic instabilities and experiences with exploitative hyper capitalists have resulted in ontological anxiety, new dependency relations and the experience of deprivation by the middle class, which has led to an increase in conservative political ideas, nationalism and xenophobia. Extremism as a political force in Central and Eastern Europe has, in many cases, been able to penetrate mainstream politics and its ideological discourse has infiltrated wider social mentalities.

As a response to extremist developments, human rights issues have been raised by local NGOs and brought under the umbrella of social Europe, claiming socio-economic rights for marginalised and discriminated minorities. This socially-oriented politics focuses people’s attention on exclusion, marginalisation and poverty in association with Roma. Ethnic discrimination and racism are stressed to different degrees, depending on the political ideologies in which they are framed. As part of this political economic transition, the shift from defining Roma as a “transnational European minority” to conceiving them as a “European social problem” occurred at the turn of the century.

Roma integration strategies have played a great role in situating issues of Roma poverty and social exclusion as the responsibility of the European Union and its member states. These strategies have aimed at raising the awareness of all stakeholders about the gaps between Roma and the non-Roma population in all domains of life (Vermeersch, 2006). The majority, who blame the Roma for their socio-economic deprivation, have interpreted these narratives as

positive discrimination, which has resulted in decreasing solidarity, economic exclusion, social deprivation and the “ghettoization” of some Roma communities.

Through this marginalisation process, the Roma have become increasingly dependent on informal economies, driven by exclusion from the legal labour market, local patron-client structures and geographic isolation (Bárány, 1998). These structures have exacerbated labour exploitation (locally and internationally), organised crime networks in identity fraud, prostitution, and dependency on international migration networks. These aspects will be used later to explain some of the specific coping strategies applied by Roma in London. During these local developments, transnational ties became stronger through social media networks and chatrooms. An increasing number of entrepreneurs have recruited Roma and facilitated housing and labour in Western Europe by recruiting in different localities without infrastructure. Roma mobility has become a highly-politicised topic. In short, there is a strong top-down European integration narrative that frames the inclusion of Roma and supports nation states in their local inclusion strategies, which contributes to the securitisation narratives adopted by the sending countries, which associate Roma ethnicity with public disorder, economic parasitic behaviour and crime.

#### 4.3.1 Ghettoization and criminalisation

The recent criminalisation, exclusion and de facto segregation of Roma are the result of historical developments, which have created specific circumstances that have shaped and reshaped the mobility structures of Roma. In the case of the V4 states, political transition and changing bureaucratic apparatus have resulted in the removal of many of the mechanisms that helped keep anti-Romaism under control. ‘During the socialist era racist media invectives, whether directed against Roma or other national, ethnic or religious groups, could not be published. Paradoxically, the introduction of cosmopolitan law in the CEE region [...] was accompanied by a surge in racially motivated assaults on Roma, by stereotyping of Roma in the media’ (OSCE, 2000). ‘Roma became convenient scapegoats for societies experiencing economic pain and ideological dislocation in the transition to democracy and market’ (Pogány, 2012, p. 16).

Communist administrations, as indicated above, transformed the socio-economic conditions of Roma by integrating them within the general workforce and giving them access to improved housing and public services. ‘By discouraging and, in some cases, criminalising Roma entrepreneurialism and economic independence, as well as by creating welfare systems that provided an unprecedented degree of economic security for Roma, communist

administrations suppressed Roma adaptive skills, encouraging a culture of dependency that is still much in evidence' (Pogány, 2006, pp. 337–341). In addition, by proletarianising the Roma, i.e., by directing working-age Roma towards mostly unskilled or semi-skilled jobs in state-owned enterprises or in agricultural co-operatives (Bárány, 2002, pp. 137–140), the communist authorities were at least partially responsible for the fact that Roma generally lacked the formal qualifications necessary to find regular employment in the economic environment that emerged in the 1990s. As a result, the anti-Roma sentiment in the CEE area is more intense now than in either the socialist or inter-war periods (Bárány, 2002, p. 98; Mirga, 2009).

Writing about on Bulgarian Roma, Dimitar Panchev claims that Roma are disproportionately targeted by the police and are often used as a scapegoats based on stereotypes that emphasise their “criminal nature” (Commissioner for Human Rights, 2010, Gounev et al., 2006 and Gounev and Bezlov, 2006, in Panchev, 2013). Panchev says that ‘the emphasis [is] on the “otherness” of the Roma, making a “distinction” between the law-abiding majority and the socially disadvantaged, who “lack the necessary cultural capital in order to be integrated” into the mainstream (Bourdieu, 1999)’ (Panchev, 2013).

As a reaction, the strategies of Roma activists focus on interest articulation targeted at political elites/authorities and the media. While the Roma movement is fragmented, with organisations pursuing a bilateral approach to lobbying the EU, their specific responses underscore the tension between transnational identity and national belonging (Waeber et al., 1993). By mobilizing transnationally, activists are essentially demanding rights and privileges that transcend those of citizens of nation states. ‘Since the 1970s, efforts to build Roma identity in the transnational political context occurred with a concerted move away from the exonym “Gypsy” towards the use of the endonym “Roma”, an umbrella term which harbours a highly diverse community’; however, ‘Mirga & Gheorghe (1997, p. 22) cautiously warn against the danger of constructing Roma identity beyond the state as a stateless nation, because it reinforces the idea that Roma are not constitutive of the dominant nation and are not full citizens of the states in which they reside’ (McGarry, 2011, p. 286).

The intertwined failure of national policies and international human right claims have resulted in a new mobility wave in the EU and new forms of the criminalisation of migrants. Parkin explains that ‘Bridget Anderson (2013) has historicised the migration challenge, charting the development of state control and the criminalisation of, first, poor people within the territorial boundaries of a realm, then later of non-citizens outside the state. This historical perspective is useful, in that it contextualises assumptions concerning sovereignty, citizenship and the state, and highlights the necessity for any analysis of the criminalisation of migration

to consider questions of socio-economic status and the organisation of labour. [...] Indeed, when examining the discursive aspects covering the criminalisation of migration, the boundaries between migration, race and ethnicity are often highly blurred' (Parkin, 2013, p. 12). In the following overview I will offer a short description of V4 Roma minorities who have recently been involved in mobility flows to London.

#### 4.3.2 The British dream

Beginning in the 1990s and continuing to the present day, many tens of thousands of Roma from the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, the Baltics, Romania and elsewhere have gone to the United Kingdom, initially as persons seeking (and often receiving) refugee status, and currently as persons exercising EU free movement rights. Immigration into the UK, which resulted from the entry of V4 countries into the EU, was different from previous immigration to the UK due to high employment rates among newcomers. In the UK, A8<sup>7</sup> workers have been able to freely and legally take up employment since May 2004, as long as they are registered in the Worker Registration Scheme. The opening of the UK labour market to workers from these countries led to a surge in immigration. From 2004–2009, the net migration of A8 migrants to the UK was about 304,000 and A8 migrants accounted for about 25% of all net migration to the UK during that period. Until 2004, those born in the A8 countries working in the UK had employment rates well below those of UK-born citizens and those born in the other original EU member states. Employment rates are not the only difference between A8 workers and other migrants. The geographical dispersion of A8 migrants is very high in comparison to other migrants, who tend to gravitate to London and other urban centres. A8 migrants are also relatively young and well educated, although they tend to find work in lower paid jobs. Their lack of fluency in English is a likely reason for their low earnings compared to their education (Vargas-Silva, 2011).

There are several reasons why Roma migrate to the UK. Some argue that it is purely an economic decision and that Roma 'are not unlike other temporary economic migrants: they are generally looking for short-term opportunities that will allow them to elevate their status at home to a level of minimum sustainability and ideally create a base (new business, ongoing investments) for further income generation. Unlike other economic migrants from the EU, however, Roma are likely to be significantly poorer, less skilled at higher-level jobs and

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<sup>7</sup> The A8 countries joined the EU in 2004 and are: Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia.



desperate enough that they will go to extremes to secure even a meagre income. They are more likely to travel in groups and rely on existing networks of migrants whenever possible and, because of language limitations, much more vulnerable to abuses by other Roma “handlers” (Pusca, 2014).

According to a report by Salford University (Brown, et al., 2013), Roma are moving (and settling) in different locations because they experience relatively low levels of discrimination in these new locations compared to in their countries of origin. This survey, involving 104 Roma participants across 10 different locations, found that work was a key motivation for migration, with 58.7% indicating that they had moved to the UK for this reason. Following employment, the main reasons were ‘a better life for children’ (22.1%) and ‘discrimination in country of origin’ (15.4%). The majority of those surveyed (97.1%) said that their lives had improved since coming to England; however, the report raises the question as to whether or not Roma in general possess low expectations due to experiences in their country of origin (see European Dialogue, 2009, p. 7–8). As will be discussed in the fifth chapter, most Roma enjoy the invisibility offered by the diversity of London, which provides socio-economic and existential perspectives for their whole family (Brown, et al., 2013).

As the OSCE report describes, there has been explicit governmental actions taken against these newcomers. ‘The Blair government (i) instructed border officials to subject a number of ethnic groups, including Roma, to more stringent border checks than others; (ii) placed officials at Prague Airport to conduct the preclearance screening of persons boarding aircraft bound for the UK; (iii) pressed for an arrangement whereby German and Czech authorities would identify particular groups of persons travelling in buses over land and subject them to rigorous checks’ (OSCE, 2010, p. 38).<sup>8</sup> To sum up, the criminalisation of Roma migrants has been a gradual process, resulting from the social historical development of transitional nation states. In the last part of this chapter I will give a brief overview of the different forms of Roma mobility, based on the field research conducted for this study and previous migration reports.

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<sup>8</sup> Casually derogatory headlines have prevailed across the media spectrum and have included “Gypsies Invade Dover, Hoping for a Handout” and “Gyro Czechs Arrive”, playing on stereotypes of Gypsies out to rip off the system. An overview of panic-driven media in the United Kingdom is provided in the Open Society Foundation (2004) *Who is afraid of migrating Roma?* EU Accession Monitoring Programme, Available at: <http://www.eumap.org/journal/features/2004/migration/pt2/whoafraid> (accessed 28 September 2008).

## 4.4 Mobility and ethnic history

Studies by Vidra (2013b) and Kováts (2002) apply a classical conceptual framework to the analysis of Roma migration, in which Roma are considered as a combination of refugee and labour or economic migrant (Klimova & Pickup 2003). In the following description, I take these notions as a starting point and, with reference to the three contemporary waves of Roma migration from Central Eastern European countries (see section 1.2.1), I focus on the interrelationship between different categories of intra-European labour movement.

To understand how and why people migrate, we need to know ‘why local livelihood qualities are rejected in favour of migration, and to evaluate the local migration culture, in the sense of conventions about who goes where when’ (White, 2009, p. 7). Concerning the European Union, the concepts of ‘survival’ or ‘coping’ strategies are sometimes invoked to explain mobility, but these do not fully explain migrant’s motivations (Pickup & White 2003). This study applies a livelihood strategy approach to understand mobility, in both the sending and receiving localities. In particular, it looks at ethnic connotations in certain spaces which limit ‘the choice of destination to localities accessible via social networks; [the] dynamics of household decision making and the role of family networks in determining the suitability of certain locations to move; how the receiving location is seen through the lens of expectations brought from the home town or village (creating a “good” local livelihood in the UK, but according to the criteria of the sending countries’ society); and how in the UK Roma migrants keep a close eye on livelihood options in their home locality, with a view to a potential return to that place in particular’ (Garapich, 2011).

### 4.4.1 Facilitated by Gadje & Co. - Roma and non-Roma transnational interrelations

According to the existing data, and confirmed by the preliminary findings of the MigRom research project by Manchester University (Matras et al. 2015) and the latest Roma SOURCE report by Salford University (Brown, 2012), Roma mobility is generally motivated by a lack of local economic and social security, as well as ethnic discrimination. Harsh economic conditions and poor welfare have generated relatively stable annual migration flows of Roma over time, but differences between countries of origin confirm the importance of income and job opportunities as key factors in relocation. Three major factors that are common to V4 countries reflect similar motivations among those who migrate: the level of welfare, the availability of job opportunities and a restructuring of the production base during the period of

transition, with the third factor having implications beyond just the shrinking of employment opportunities.

These three factors have an asymmetric impact on various populations, affecting certain working-age groups more than others and setting higher barriers for their reintegration into the workforce. Among the most affected are older workers, those ethnically different from the majority population and people with disabilities. One of the most affected groups is the Roma. They face difficulties in accessing basic services, including education and health, as well as jobs in their home countries, due to the discriminatory attitudes of service providers and employers. One hypothesis is that the motives for the migration of Roma from these countries do not differ considerably from the motives of millions of other migrants who have left their homeland in search of work and a livelihood. However, due to increasing harassment and discrimination in the host countries, their opportunities are much more restricted than their peers among the local majority and other migrant populations. However, when we raise the question of why this subject has recently become so relevant, we need to consider other facilities that enable greater mobility for less advantaged groups.

It can generally be maintained that Roma who plan to migrate have up-to-date and relevant information about foreign opportunities and ways of obtaining legal status in the host country. However, the institutions and regulations involved in immigration and refugee affairs are rather complex. The Roma do not rely on official information given by governments or civil organisations. Even if they know about such information and about the reports in the press, they think that such sources are misleading, manipulated and unreliable. Instead, they rely on their practical everyday knowledge of the working mechanisms of immigration and refugee matters, which can be acquired from experience passed on personally by those who have been through the process. This helps them to compile, edit and submit application forms (for refugee status, welfare claims, National Health Service registration etc.) that are likely to succeed and also helps them to integrate into everyday life in the host society (Kováts, 2002, p. 21).

Modern means of communication, such as Facebook and Skype, provide a flow of information about employment opportunities and wages on the grey markets of Western European countries. This in turn stimulates and facilitates emigration, as will be described in the sixth chapter. Previous personal life and work experience gained abroad can also facilitate the decision to leave again for a foreign country. People with relatives and acquaintances abroad, are more likely to migrate to join them. The larger the number of people from a particular area working abroad, the greater the likelihood that other people from same neighbourhood will emigrate (Cherkezova & Tomova, 2013).

Newcomers mobilise a network of relationships in order to secure the journey and their stay in the new place. For instance, newcomers can receive help from others with the sale of their movables and real property and with the acquisition of documents and tickets. Low education status and lack of language competence is not considered a problem in this case, as emigrants depend on their relatives and acquaintances for support (Cherkezova & Tomova, 2013, pp. 23–25).

‘With Roma communities, most networks of connections are organised along familial lines. Irrespective of the principle of descent and the fact that cohabitation can facilitate the formation of ties akin to consanguine connections, it is the closeness of familial relatedness that determines the quality and intensity of the relationship in most cases’ (Formoso, 2000, pp. 154–161; Piasere, 1997, pp. 73–89; but cf. Piasere, 1997, pp. 54–56). As Hajnal added, ‘despite maintaining a diversity of connections with their environment, they have mostly managed to retain the integrity of their group (1999, pp. 84–87, in Hajnal 2002).

Without contradicting the above, it can also be remarked that, by examining the principle upon which Roma communities are constructed, it becomes clear ‘that factors other than those related to descent may play a vital part in fostering communal ties. These include a shared place of residence, a common language and a similar lifestyle’ (Prónai, 2000, p. 56).

However, in the case of westward Roma mobility from V4 countries, movement does not seem to be a cultural feature of Roma, as is described earlier by Durst (2013). It is more a security strategy facilitated by an internal self-perpetuating mobility industry (Massey, et al. 1993; De Haas, 2010; Vidra, 2012) that profits from a need for social and economic sustainability in the Roma community. In fact, migration agencies, which, for a fee, package housing, travel arrangements and employment, as well as bureaucratic support, are playing an increasing role.

It is essential to understand the legal changes in mobility agreements, changes in the socio-economic position of particular groups on the move, their information resources, and the formal or informal networks in sending and receiving countries to explore the different connections between those who stay at home and those who migrate, and to determine which elements are dominant, particularly in cases of network dependency (Ringold et al., 2005). In order to find particular patterns of mobility in relation to ethnicity in the EU context, we have to extend the existing concepts of population control in case of undesired groups who have a right to replace.

#### 4.4.2 Concept boxes of migration

Legal and social categories of migration can lead to a static approach to mobility. Legislation around citizenship-based rights and the different terms or conditions for remaining in foreign countries are constantly shaped by international politics and trans-economic agreements. Therefore, we need to contextually describe particular interrelations between different modes of mobility and law enforcement targeting particular groups. Kováts points out that, ‘Although Roma descent and its consequential persecution is often sufficient for acceptance and for enjoying international protection, it must not be forgotten that massive waves of immigrants asking for asylum may cause tension in particular countries, which, in turn, inevitably affects relations at the diplomatic level. Roma, who claim to be discriminated against in their home countries, have been made responsible for undermining countries’ good reputation and this makes the conflict between majority of the home society and the Roma population even deeper’ (Kováts, 2002, p. 11). He goes on to say that the:

‘appearance of impoverished, unskilled or uneducated, cheap labour from the East caused a great degree of tension in the lower segments of the EU labour market, too. Although predictions about labour migration based on research do not support this belief, it is often heard in political statements and in the media, resulting in compulsory visa requirements for East and Central European citizens in EU member states.... the key aspect to Roma migration is the liberalisation of the labour market and the free movement of labour that give rise to a massive appearance of East and Central European Roma in EU member states as jobseekers’ (Kováts, 2002).

Empirical data on the migration potential of the present CEE population (Sik, 1999) suggest that the migration potential of the population above 15 years of age has been more or less the same throughout the 1990s. Some 3–4% of the population want to take on some job abroad, and a mere 1–2% of them are prepared to live abroad, too. However, these characteristics have changed over the last decade. ‘There is an increasing desire to leave and there is an extending stratification among those who leave temporarily or permanently. Seasonal work in the agriculture and construction sectors seems to have increased. Roma are travelling by bus to the Netherlands, Germany and Austria to work on short-term contracts for local entrepreneurs. Although most of them are unwilling to settle down, some are working longer in these industries and ultimately remain in the host country.’(Kovats, 2002) There has also been a

boom in asylum claims overseas in the last decade, which has had serious implications for the recent westward movements of Roma to the UK.

‘In the early 1990s Roma applicants referred to political persecution and grievances resulting from defects in democracy, whereas fear of persecution because of ethnic or racial identity have come to the fore in the second half of the decade. Roma, not only from Central Eastern European states, but also from Hungary, have sought refugee status during this period. As it is described in the following chapter, in 1997, the Canadian government imposed visa controls on the Czech Republic after large numbers of Roma – who have historically faced discrimination in the country and claim that they face constant attacks from skinheads and neo-Nazi groups – arrived in Canada seeking continued their efforts in the UK (Vidra, 2013a). In addition, earlier migration waves of Polish Roma, who were accepted in the UK before the political transition, created the fundamental social and economic structures for their extended families, who moved towards the West after EU accession. According to my findings on recent mobility resulting from these experiences, Roma from V4 countries evaluate the target country in terms of opportunities for doing business and living (Marek & John, 2014). Although all of them clearly mention discrimination, they are not seriously affected by it, as a result of their influence and social position. Although many of the well-off Roma who derive their livelihood from business enterprises had at some time considered emigrating, very few of them decided to leave the country. This is explained by the lack of foreign language skills, the difficulties involved in building up a network of relationships necessary to run a successful business and fear of insecurity.

In previous studies a strict differentiation was made between guest workers and migration (Vidra, 2013; Kováts, 2002) as well as between subgroups in the legal migration framework. Some of these are not included in this research due to their A2<sup>9</sup> nationality, as they were later included in the EU, and their subgroups are historically and culturally different from CEE Roma. However, these classifications often ignore highly-educated Roma expats and professionals who are integrated into the high-middle classes in their host societies. As these Roma do not appear in the support systems of the host societies, they seem to be invisible in most studies on migration. Not surprising, however, is the visibility of Vlach or Olah Roma communities, who are willing to escape from their modest, but not hopeless, living standards and life prospects, or those young musicians, or Romungro, who settle abroad. As it is analysed

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<sup>9</sup> A2 refers to Bulgaria and Romania, which joined the EU on 1 January 2007.

in Chapter 9, these groups engage in casual physical work (predominantly unskilled jobs in the construction industry), or work for local authorities via employment agencies. Others try trading and operate at a low level of success due to a lack of capital and organisation.

Kováts explains that: ‘They [Roma] engage in commercial activities in between the host and sending countries as their commercial activity is bi-directional: by systematically monitoring market conditions they try to make the best possible profits on goods. For many, cross-border migration is part of an economic activity, which has a long tradition going back several generations, whose direction and intensity is regulated by the extent of foreseeable profit. Although they try to maintain good contacts with non-Roma, on the whole their community is rather closed and traditional’ (Kováts, 2002, p. 28).

The most interesting categorisation of Roma is when they are problematised as an imposition on the labour market and social security system of receiving countries. These Roma migrants are described as a serious challenge to receiving countries (and later to their countries of origin) as they “put all their eggs in one basket”. These newcomers are often seen as “benefit tourists”, who, if they have to return to where they started from, might end up in a much a worse social and economic position. It was with these emigrants that the strategy of “fishing for benefits” is observed, i.e. shaping one’s migration strategies according to the possibility of receiving social transfers, which is the sole survival resource (Vidra, 2013b, p. 31). These migrants arrive, almost without exception, with valid passports and find employment in the informal sector of the economy.

As this chapter shortly concluded, Roma mobility has specific aspects but not necessarily due to cultural or ethnic characteristics, but because of their socio- economic positions in their home countries. When Roma are described in terms of poverty and dependency in governmental and EU reports, these parameters are taking over ethnic connotations regardless other Roma who are educated and living high middle class or middle class lives around the world. These financial welfare dependent parameters are associated with non- productivity and a ‘social burden’. These connotations are adapted in the social service provisions that are meant to sort out those who are ‘undeserving’ according to neoliberal market values. According to such connotations Roma feels to be sorted out from the welfare provisions. Social Sorting of Roma is thus constructed by financial parameters then ethnic connotations. In the following chapter it will be analysed how moralised and essentialist categories of such deservingness of the foreign poor are translated into selective parameters by deconstructing social policies.

## Chapter 5 Welfare Policy and the New Social Sorting of Europe

The policy umbrella of EU regulations has resulted in new processes of control and transparency techniques, redesigned bureaucratic incentives of member states and increased the role of entrepreneurial governments. Before describing these new articulations of managerialism in social service structures, I must stress some important issues regarding governmental aims. This study began with the hypothesis that different forms of control and sanctioning in the bureaucratic field are implemented with the purpose of high efficacy. Efficiency is generally defined as increased productivity, which is a problematic term in the field of social services, since the welfare system is supposed to refer to equal treatment of citizens and act on behalf of the population to protect individual rights and resources. To be able to recognise an increase in differentiation patterns related to practices guided by efficiency principles, we first need to understand the changing values behind social policies and the pragmatic guidelines of policy implications.

As previously mentioned, neoliberal market mechanisms in the EU and the growing mobility of citizens between different member states have introduced new business-like structures in bureaucracy. Besides critical assumptions about the self-sustaining dependency structure created by these entrepreneurial government principles, it has been assumed in the second chapter, that this new public service principle is naïve, since it prefers to change top-down services into semi-self-sustaining systems. As ‘responsibilisation’ lies at the heart of this managerialism principle, citizens’ participation is supposed to develop a shared authority and reduce the amount of power that is normally entrenched in government organs and thus allow citizens to become more influential in policy making.

According to its proponents, this engagement-based idea would ideally promote interoperability, or information sharing that is more transparent and efficient. In practice, rather than focusing on controlling and delivering services, ‘public administrators are responding to admonishments to “steer rather than row”, and to be the entrepreneurs of a new, leaner, and increasingly privatized government’ (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2000, p. 549). This privatisation has become the focus of strategic management through which citizens are defined as clients. It also uses innovative financial methods and creates competitive services, representing some of the reforms that Western governments have implemented in response to the New Public Service built on a management philosophy (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2000).



As Denhardt and Denhardt (2000) suggest, government agencies adopt practices that have been found useful in the private sector, ranging from “scientific management” to “total quality management”. The New Public Management philosophy takes this idea one step further, arguing that government should not only adopt the techniques of business administration, but adopt certain business values as well. This is often described as a form of public entrepreneurship or what Terry (1993, 1998) has called “neomanagerialism”. These processes have taken place on several levels; key values of equality and solidarity in social policies have gradually been lost, laying the ground for social sorting practices.

As part of EU multi-level governance, supranational and sub-national governmental and non-governmental agencies negotiate over policy areas, causing contradictions in bureaucratic measures at different levels. According to Kaboolian (1998), bureaucratic structures increasingly simulate ‘market-like arrangements such as competition within units of government and across government boundaries to the non-profit and for-profit sectors, performance bonuses, and penalties (to) loosen the inefficient monopoly franchise of public agencies and public employees’ (p. 190). This threatens to undermine democratic and constitutional values such as fairness, justice and representation. Above all, this arrangement system moves away from traditional modes of legitimising the public bureaucracy, such as procedural safeguards on administrative discretion, and toward ‘trust in the market and private business methods...ideas...couched in the language of economic rationalism’ (Kaboolian, 1998, p. 191). For instance, in Great Britain, the Conservative party imposed cuts on local authority costs and pushed them to shift their service provisions to contractors (Smith. 2010). These dysfunctions and the *social sorting* side effects of these measures will be discussed in detail in the following chapter, as these are the key aspects of this study and have contributed to distrust, suspicion and criminalisation tendencies in local implementation.

As introduced in the theoretical chapter, this study is particularly interested in those managerialist shifts that might cause harm and trigger illegal responses by social service clients. As critical social policy scholars warned about the possible harmful consequences of neo-managerial governmental structures in public and private sector agencies, it seems that these are designed and carried out in policies and procedures that perpetrate harms, including the deaths of welfare recipients. These business-like structures are interlinked with neoliberal labour market participation principles, in which deserving and underserving citizens are differentiated, excluded and dehumanised. This is exacerbated in the daily media discourse.

Following this paradigm, the first managerial principle serves to homogenise every person who receives benefits and lives in municipality, based on moralised dependency

relations with authorities. These narratives enlarge the gap between “us” and “them”, and juxtaposes the “hardworking taxpayer” and the “immoral scrounger”. As White (2014) confirms:

‘Those who work hard and pay taxes are constructed as having a superior ontology compared to those who do not work and receive benefits. Welfare benefits have been constructed definitively as a moral issue, which has served to construct those receiving benefits as morally inferior.’ (p.3)

The second principle is strictly built on responsabilisation of the poor (Bauman, 1998). This involves a moral construction of work that implies that those who “choose” not to do their duties are “abnormal” and do not “deserve” support. The unemployed are constructed as the undeserving poor. These unrepresentative depictions of “welfare-guzzling layabouts” serve to denigrate welfare claimants and legitimise benefit cuts. Once the media and public discourse name benefit claimants as “scroungers”, “skivers”, “the feckless”, “the idle”, “cheats” and “social scum”, negative associations arise.

The third and final principle is that the targeted groups are subject to discrimination. These three managerial principles and values have led local authorities to use different methods and tools in their administrative practices. These include the recently invented restrictions that will be described in the following UK case.

## 5.1 Hunting zombies or the reality of welfare tourism

The media discourse adopts many simplified explanations to try to clarify the reasons for the migration and mobility of specific ethnic groups or nationalities. Many of these explanations are moralising and ignore the internal diversity of these groups and the historical and legal circumstances of their departure. Theories about intergenerational cultures of unemployment in Roma communities and their welfare dependence as a cause of mobility can be seen as “zombie arguments”: resistant to evidence and to social scientific efforts to eliminate those (McDonald et al, 2014). As a historical example of these developments in media discourse, I will introduce a case of jeopardised Roma claimants.

In the early 1990s, almost 1,500 Central and Eastern European (CEE) Roma entered the UK from former Communist countries. Relatively little attention was paid to them until 1997, when a growing number of asylum-seeking Roma arrived from the Czech Republic. After the

partition of Czechoslovakia in 1993, serious legal changes excluded many Czech Roma from citizenship in the new Czech Republic, informing them that they were unwanted (Guy, 2003).

As it was described in chapter four, Czech Roma was one of the first flows of westward migrants due to the changing political situation. The neighbouring countries on the western border (i.e. Germany and Austria) had already introduced restrictive policies that made it impossible for Czech Roma to enter. It was only in 1997, following a documentary shown on the Czech TV channel Nova that showed access to asylum procedures in the UK and Canada, that many Roma felt it was safe to leave (Guy, 2003). After the Canadian government denied visas for Czech citizens to prevent more asylum claims, the mobility path of Roma shifted toward the UK. However, similar restrictive asylum application processes were in place there, and Roma were confronted with unexpected hostility that led many claims to be deterred and rejected (McDonald et al., 2014). The total number of Roma migrants was still relatively low: estimated at around 1,500.

Even though the number of Roma asylum seekers represented less than 4% of all refugees to the UK in that year, the British media seized on their immigration, characterising it as an ‘invasion’ and a ‘tidal wave’ (Clark, 1998). Media coverage was almost universally xenophobic, suggesting that the Roma were ‘bogus asylum seekers’ who were solely motivated by high UK benefit payments (Guy, 2003). Even the British Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, explicitly said that there would be no ‘soft touch’ for Czech gypsies (BBC, 1997). The local media presented these newcomers as a threatening flood of economic migrants. In fact, only the better-educated middle-class Roma elite who had previously owned small businesses were able to leave, and they had sold those businesses to raise money for the journey (Vasecka & Vasecka, 2003). Still, media reports suggested that Roma migration was a form of ethno-tourism in which they were hoping to collect short-term benefit payments until they got deported.

Sociological research in Kent found no evidence of such instrumental motivation among these claimants (Clark & Campbell, 1997). Even if it were partially true, ‘the underlying social and economic roots can nevertheless not be ignored’ (Fenton & May, 2002, p. 68). The importance of local benefits in these movements was not irrelevant, but other factors remained mostly unstated. The motivation for the mobility of CEE Roma can be explained by their loss of existential security and economic deprivation in the new democratic regime. As described in Chapter 4, structural changes in the labour markets of post-transition countries led Roma

migrants (as well as significant members of the national majority in their home countries) to try to find employment abroad (EU-LFS, 2008).<sup>10</sup>

The welfare-magnet theory provides the key argument for digitalised social sorting mechanisms in social policies that advocate welfare restrictions for immigrants (Böcker & Havinga, 1998; Thielemann, 2008). Due to the social construction of benefit tourism associated with unemployed newcomers, financial ability becomes the core parameter of exclusion manifested in social policies. Borjas (1999) developed this concept, which asserts that the choice of destination countries is mainly influenced by welfare provisions (Schulzek, 2012).

However, as Schulzek explains, there are contradictory academic arguments for the decision-making process in the European context: coincidence, employment, security and social networks seem to be just as important in such a consideration. A contributing factor in the case of the Roma is the ethnic diversity in larger Western cities; it seems to provide a sense of invisibility and equality where Roma can avoid discrimination and harassment. Furthermore, other studies have argued that ‘welfare generosity has an influence on immigration in the EU-15 – although this effect is considerably smaller than the effect of wage levels on migrants’ choices of a destination country’ (ICF GHK, 2013, p. 48). In addition, ‘where some studies found evidence supporting the “welfare magnet effect” hypothesis, the overall estimated effects are typically small or not statistically significant’ (ICF GHK, 2013, p. 49).

Regardless of the newcomers’ labour participation, government support for accessing local benefits has been increasingly differentiated and restricted for newcomers from EU member states (McDonald, 2003). As the report concluded, the terms of eligibility for welfare support and the entitlement to access are shaped by the suspicion of illegitimacy. After the last EU expansion in 2014, tensions about the unintended effects of welfare attraction in their migration population have been increasing in Western states. The social economic position of Roma has worsened and local tensions between the majority and the Roma have been increasing in central Europe.

#### 5.1.1 The territorial politics of welfare – Principles of suspicion

“Outsiders” are a universal subject of books, poems, songs, movies and other forms of art. Policymakers in various times and places — even the Tudors in the sixteenth century — have

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<sup>10</sup> Work was by and large the main reason for EU nationals to move to the UK between 2002 and 2011. Figures from the Office of National Statistics (2011) show that 53% of migrants coming from other EU countries stated that they came to the UK for work (EU-LFS, 2008).

used a combination of administrative and criminal law to control the mobility of these paupers and beggars (Weber & Bowling, 2008, p. 356). A continuous line of mystified images of strangers who embody risk, danger and unpredictability has been increasingly projected on foreign nationals in the EU (Parkin, 2003). While the criminalisation of migration is a historical phenomenon, recent application of such mobility restrictions has taken a more sophisticated and invisible form. As Anderson (2013) analysed the relationship of migration and the criminalisation of poor people within territorial boundaries of realms, she also contextualised assumptions about sovereignty, citizenship and the state. She urges scholars to pay attention to the criminalisation of migration based on socio-economic status and the organisation of labour, as well as to how it influences the deterrence and control of ‘the mobile’ (Melossi, 2003). This study aims to include the labour-market-oriented approaches of migrant belonging and participation.

Although recent studies have referred to non-Europeans or illegal migrants subject to incarceration and expulsion, there are also legal European citizens whose cases demonstrate how the unregulated mobility of those deemed to be “outsiders” — in both socio-economic and geographical senses — have long been associated with social unease and disorder (Parkin, 2013, p. 3). These people are often from Roma ethnic groups. When we look at media coverage of the criminalisation of migration, the boundaries between migration, race and ethnicity are often quite blurred. As the Czech case presented above implies, these measures are primarily symbolic: geared toward communicating a message to the public to justify new control policies.

The Roma, as one of the most undesired EU minorities, have come to embody the mobile “vagrant outsider” and to embody the consequent threat of social disorder. This image of Roma people, who are often seen as racially predisposed to crime and idleness, has been centuries in the making. It highlights a frame that links migrants with crime, but also with the racialisation of the migrant/crime association, especially for visible minorities (Sigona & Trehan, 2011). The real questions are how can securitisation measures based on assumptions of the benefit tourism change the behaviour of Roma newcomers and what are the real effects of interventions based on these classifications?

#### 5.1.2 Time to kill the zombies – The real impacts of criminalisation and exclusion

Although the lack of transparency about government monitoring and evidence of success has been regularly criticised, European states keep “hunting zombies” (McDonald, 2013). Legal studies have generally concluded that the impact of criminalisation of migration has more

counter effects in creating distrust than success in its aims of protection (FRA, 2011; Parkin, 2003). In addition, ‘given the academic consensus surrounding the misapplication of criminal law in the field of migration control and its risks to the foundational principles of criminal justice, there is surprisingly little reflection in the literature to key questions’ (Parkin, 2003, p. 18) that concern the impact on public trust as a result of “crimmigration” trends.

To understand the real impact of these practices on particular groups, we need to analyse the “policy gap” between official policy goals and actual outcomes. What effect does it have on the empirical legitimacy of criminal justice systems (i.e. individuals’ perceptions of the legitimacy of justice systems) and on levels of trust in justice institutions (Parkin, 2003)? This study will not consider whether the host society believes that these monitoring policies and sanctions are legitimate for regulating mobility flow. Instead, I will use an analysis to uncover side effects that might impact general perceptions about these measures and that might endorse restrictive control policies on the basis of social sorting. As suggested earlier, this study might lead to a paradoxical situation in which trust appears to be created by governments excluding and exacerbating the marginalisation of certain categories of individuals. It might also endorse restrictive control policies.

Especially in the case of Roma EU citizens, we need to consider the “spaces of contestation” that have opened up around monitoring Roma mobility. More research on the proliferation of campaigns in support of Roma as a transnational minority and against criminalising policies and practices, including the use of civil disobedience like protests, could help to provide a more multi-layered understanding of how the treatment of Roma in host societies impacts empirical legitimacy (Parkin, 2013, p. 18). In order to interpret empirical data, we need to understand the legislative changes that represent not only national lobbies but also historical changes in this transnational field. First, I will discuss EU legislation related to control of mobility and welfare service harmonisation. After the general overview, I will discuss the UK’s local legislative guidelines in detail.

## 5.2 Geopolitics through welfare regimes

In recent decades, welfare policy implications have taken a central place in immigration discourses, reinforcing the attention of academics and politicians in different disciplines. Discussions about the harmonisation of European immigration policy reinforce the general assumption about welfare as a pull-factor for immigration and a risk of poverty flow (Bank, 2000, p. 149). On the one hand, there is a discussion about welfare eligibility based on citizens’

different migration statuses; on the other hand, there is a discussion about the respective diversity related to eligibility for welfare services and the amount of benefits available in various EU member states. As Schulzek (2012) writes: ‘In 1999, Jacques Chirac already noted that “the situation regarding welfare benefits is apt to break all the barriers that we could elevate against increases in immigration”’ (p. 1). As a result, there are two major tendencies in European welfare policies: one is the general harmonisation of welfare regimes between different states and the other is a new welfare principle based on entrepreneurial governance.

An international consulting firm, ICF GHK, produced a report for the EU in 2013 named *a fact finding analysis on the impact on the Member States' social security systems of the entitlements of non-active intra-EU migrants to special non-contributory cash benefits and healthcare granted on the basis of residence*. The report includes the following definition: ‘non-active “intra-EU migrants” refers to all EU citizens who are currently residing in another EU-26 Member State and who are not in employment. This category includes economically inactive migrants (e.g. pensioners, inactive migrants fulfilling domestic roles) and jobseekers’ (p. 7). The report continues:

‘Non-active intra-EU migrants form a heterogeneous group comprising pensioners, students (who are not involved in any forms of employment), homemakers and single parents who do not work because of child or adult care responsibilities, persons with disabilities unfit for work etc.’ (p. 21)

The report goes on to address possible problems related to migrants’ access to special non-contributory cash benefits (SNCBs):

‘There are several hypotheses in which the access of non-active EU citizens to SNCBs and healthcare could potentially lead to problematic situations (whether unintended or intended):

Hypothesis 1: Non-active migrants move to a country to benefit from its generous social security system, which they would not otherwise have moved to (i.e., the “social security magnet” effect); this might lead to higher financial burdens in the EU countries with more generous benefits. These countries may report a much higher proportion of non-active persons in their EU migrant population than would be normally found in the population of their nationals.

Hypothesis 2: Non-active migrants are/become more intensive users of certain social security benefits compared to the natives with similar socio-demographic characteristics (e.g., of same age, health status), even if they did not initially arrive in the country in order to do so (i.e., the “social security overuse” hypothesis)’ (ICF GHK, 2013, p. 44).

Although these assumptions do not include cases of fraudulent claims, little evidence has been found to support these hypotheses to date. In addition, it is difficult to specify EU citizens here, since ‘most migration studies cover third-country nationals and EU nationals together, as well as active and inactive population’ (ICF GHK, 2013, p. 44).

In line with that report, this dissertation aims to provide evidence about active and non-active intra-EU Roma residing within the EU-2710 territory, particularly in London. I will address their motivation and the budgetary impacts of their entitlements to special SNCBs granted on the basis of their residence in the UK.

5.2.1 Sim City Deluxe – The EU policy context and social rights of citizens new member states  
European enlargement politics remind me of the city-building computer game *SimCity*, in which there are endless possibilities for social and spatial engineering. American journalist Ava Kofman wrote about the game in a 2014 article for Jacobin magazine:

‘In *SimCity*, you anticipate. You try to predict a series of complex, emergent social phenomena. You optimize, maximize, and extrapolate from afar — no hand-eye coordination necessary. You embody, in essence, the spirit of urban industry.’

The game mirrors ideas about government that are relevant to EU welfare policies:

‘Some see the game as replicating statist socialism in its centralized development and ownership of all utilities and major infrastructure; others, pointing to its regressive tax policies and rational-choice modelling, understand the simulator as a mouthpiece for neoliberal common sense. Neither is entirely wrong.’ (Kofman, 2014)

As it was suggested before, these social policy restrictions are based on similar fictive notions of the social security overuse of ‘non active’ citizens as the virtual construction of *SimCity*. However, the real concerns about welfare policies started to arise after 2004, when citizens of A8 countries increasingly moved toward the West and began to use different governmental support programmes in their new host countries.



Harmonisation of social policies became an urgent issue with the introduction of the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe in 200, which included ‘the right to move and reside freely within the territory of all Member States’. That same year, EU Directive 2004/38/EC defined the right of EU citizens ‘to reside in another member state for an initial period of three months’. This directive is supposed to regulate equal treatment regarding access to social assistance and the right of residence for non-active EU citizens other than jobseekers.

However, the conditions of Jobseekers seems to be vaguer. According to EU case law, an EEA national seeking work has a right to reside in another member state for an initial period of six months, but the period can be extended if the EEA national can show that he or she is ‘genuinely seeking work and has a reasonable chance of being engaged’ (Case C-292/89 R v Immigration Appeal Tribunal, ex p Antonissen [\[1991\] ECR I-7450](#), Directive 2004/38/EC, Art 7(3)(b)–(c)).

According to secondary EU laws, the right of equal treatment in the country of residence is irrespective of the exercise of an economic activity by EU citizens. Residents’ right to access to social security is set out in Article 48 of the Treaty of the Functioning of the European Union and Article 34 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU, which also refers to the rules set up by EU and national laws that regulate entitlement to benefits. While these EU laws are referring to harmonisation of rights, member states are increasingly implementing restrictions for new EU residents and use their autonomy to regulate social provisions.

The 2013 ICF GHK report for the EU describes the coordination of social security systems in the EU:

‘Member States are free to regulate their own social security systems; however, for the past 50 years these systems have been subject to EU level coordination to ensure that people have social security coverage and do not lose rights when exercising their right to free movement in the EU. Regulation 883/2004, as amended by Regulation 465/2012, sought to modernise and simplify the rules on the coordination of social security systems at the EU level. It applies to certain branches of social security, *but not to social assistance.*’ (p. 1)

The report goes on to say:

‘At policy level, various Member States have raised concerns about the potential consequences of the coordination of social security systems in the wider context of the right to free movement of persons in the EU. It has been argued that the entitlement which EU law gives to non-active EU migrants to claim access to healthcare and special non-

contributory benefits in cash can lead to “welfare tourism” and threaten the sustainability of European welfare states.’ (p. 7)

Due to differentiation between human rights, social security and social assistance, several limitations were tagged in EU legislation. This has enabled different local interpretations and allowed individual member states to pass legislation that includes new control and selection mechanisms.

### 5.2.2 ‘Control-Alt-Hack’ – Who are guaranteed social security?

In the field of EU social policy, there has been extended debate about “social Europe” and Regulation (EC) No 883/2004, in particular about the distinction between “social security” and “social assistance”, as well as eligibility for SNCBs. The debate focuses on which extend benefit payments will be harmonised among member states and who will be eligible under which conditions. During the early years of European integration, social policy primarily consisted of efforts to secure the free movement of workers. National social security systems were also coordinated with a view to improving the status of internationally mobile workers and their families. Due to different legislation in various member states and the fragmented practice of social services, it is difficult to measure the extent to which these regulations have had a real impact on the mobility of welfare-dependent populations in Europe.

Leibfried and Pierson (1995) investigated the dynamics of social policy integration by comparing the evolution of EU social policy in several areas. Leibfried and Pierson’s idea is that there is a ‘system of shared political authority over social policy’ (as cited in Falkner, 2009, p. 4) organised as a multi-level highly fragmented system. Further, ‘in this system, the power of the member states was not only pooled, but also to an increasing extent constrained’ (Falkner, 2009, p. 10). This occurs ‘without the firm control of any single political authority’ (Pierson & Leibfried, 1995, p. 433 as cited in Falkner, 2009, p. 10).

However, the literature also highlighted that EU institutions are not simply tools of the member states, but that member states’ power is actually restrained by the autonomous activity of EU institutions. Falkner (2009) asserts that it is also restrained by the impact of previous policy, like:

‘the Maastricht Treaty (in that the then eleven member states agreed far-reaching additional competences and procedural reforms, including significant extension of qualified majority voting, with a passing exception for the UK in 1992), the Amsterdam

Treaty (that ended the UK opt-out and inserted an employment co-ordination chapter into the EC Treaty in 1997) and finally the Nice Treaty of 2001 (that however only contained very minor reforms in the social realm, such as unanimous decisions that qualified majority suffices thereafter).’ (p. 10)

As the report concludes:

‘The variety of welfare provision concerning both the funding (employer or/and employee contributions, direct/indirect taxes on various sources and groups) and the spending sides (universalistic versus occupation-related welfare systems; only basic social benefits with means-testing and/or also income-sustaining transfers even from public system sources and/or service provision in the private realm such as childcare), plus the differential normative assumptions and value judgements involved, made joint EU-level welfare policies much more difficult... Large-scale comparative studies that systematically take into consideration all roots of EU impact outlined above, for all kinds of welfare systems and for all countries, in turn, are lacking and would be extremely demanding to coordinate.’ (Falkner, 2009, p. 20)

As this short description of EU social policy illustrates, there is a complex interrelationship between national legislation about the provision of welfare and EU directives. This interrelationship creates problems for national authorities in the daily implementation of benefit claims. Since these policies and guidelines are manifested in the local bureaucratic field of social services, these directives have been implemented according to the new principles of entrepreneurial governments, which has resulted in structural changes to the approach of ground-level service providers.

### 5.3 Civilisation revolution – Managerialism in the UK welfare approach

#### 5.3.1 Targets and pressure in bureau-professionalism

Recent welfare bureaucracies bring to mind *Civilisation Revolution*, the popular strategy game in which players control a virtual geopolitical platform based on policy developments that provide endless possibilities for governing different populations. Just as in this game, recent

public management, particularly its digitalised monitoring structure, has had significant impacts on the traditional organisational settlement of service provisions. This change has recently been coined “bureau-professionalism”. As suggested above, this principle implies a shift in public professional organisations from public toward business values (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2000). These changes increase accountability procedures and bureaucratisation, limiting the focus of professional work to quantifiable and measurable outcomes (Diefenbach, 2009). In short, this leads to more rules, less funding, more procedures and more tick boxes to standardise decisions about care planning and needs assessment.

Kirkpatrick summarised how recent developments have led to changes in the nature of professional work. Now more than ever, decision making is constrained by ‘ever-increasing procedural instructions’ (Postle, 2002, p. 343 cited in Kirkpatrick, 2006, p.14). Service providers are facing high targets, more administration and intensified contact with clients, as well as competition with similar service provider branches. In addition, this form of bureau-professionalism requires the field of social services to focus more on collaborating with new types of stakeholders and professions (Van Berkel & Knies, 2013). As social services practices are subjected to ‘proceduralisation and commodification of the social work labour processes, differences between practices have been increasing. Instead of performing well, many have become less effective than expected due to decentralised decision making (Harris, 1998, p. 858 cited in Kirkpatrick, 2006).

### 5.3.2 Methods – Sticks and carrots

Social services need to be more cost efficient, and citizens need to be more responsible for their own role in the bureaucratic system. One of the major implications of welfare reform has been the cut of free aid in the UK for those who might rely on these services. Client groups who were previously defined as vulnerable, like migrants or Romas, lost their special government-funded support. Since the privatisation process sets competitive targets for local service providers, “unattractive” clients who might hinder the efficacy of these street-level bureaucrats now receive only limited information that would enable their claims. Frontline workers in these agencies have become responsible for promoting the employability and labour market participation of their clients, without much flexibility to consider individual conditions. As Berkel & Knies (2013) note, ‘traditionally, these agencies’ “core business” was the administration of income benefits, but this changed with the introduction of welfare-to-work

or activation policies and programmes' (p. 4). The goal is simple: decrease benefit costs and increase clients' participation in the labour market. In other words, control and push.

After clients manage to get through the online application systems, they face other challenges. They have to deal with "sticks and carrots": they are sanctioned if they do not comply with the obligations related to social assistance, and they are rewarded with regular benefit payments if they cooperate, which usually means carrying out regular job search activities. As it will be presented in Chapter 8, The assessments that determine a client's compliance are not only impersonal due to the digitalisation of service provisions, but they are also restrictive toward foreigners who have extra limitations to participating in these bureaucratic channels, such as language barriers. Due to security procedures, mediation by friends is restricted; even interpreting is problematic when foreigners try to complete phone application procedures. When they call they need wait long till the call is answered. By control questions in order to prevent Fraud, service provider restricts interpreters in giving suggestions or additional information for claimants. Although applicants are obliged to provide all kind of personal data, they are unable to access their own information registered at service providers' databases. However, when there is a miscommunication or a claim is incomplete, the claimant is responsible for fixing it. Unfortunately, when a claimant needs to know which data or documents are missing, bureaucrats may not be transparent about the procedures, for fear of benefit fraud.

Clients were regularly receiving letters refusing their benefit claims with an argument that 'The information provided does not match our (HMRC or JCP) records". When applicants phoned for additional information their requests were refused. Shortly, applicants are often not aware of the discrepancy between the data they provide and the data collected by service providers about their circumstances. In the meantime, inspection of clients and assessments of their financial conditions are gradually increasing, with decreasing respect for privacy.

Surveillance and control originated in the conception of the mixed welfare state that promotes participation in a market society and efficiency in bureaucratic mechanisms (Gilliom, 2001). Technological development enables an extended process of sorting, categorising and qualifying welfare recipients by checking and enhancing the information applicants provide. Judgements about qualifications for benefits, previously based on interviews or an occasional home visit, are now guided by information from a vast array of national law enforcement, property ownership, savings and court records. In his review of Gillom, Munger emphasise that in this structure the clients are more directly subjected to the power of higher, more centralised, less flexible administration and screening methods. 'Technology increases control exercised

through surveillance, for now the recipient and caseworker have far less space in which to negotiate the pre-emptive description of a recipient's identity presented by a database' (2003, p. 664).

These digitalised conformist systems not only screen claimants' data, but also define characteristics of groups, which could be used to invent restrictive legislations. As I illustrated in the beginning of this chapter, this entrepreneurial new bureaucracy is paired with the assumption that non-active foreign non-active claimants might abuse access to cash-paid benefits and will move to host countries just to exploit them instead of contributing to the local economy. Surveillance methods and assessments are influenced by studies of this "welfare-magnet effect", "welfare tourism" or benefit temptation, which has led to targeted policies that reinforce dissimilarities between the "deserving" and "undeserving" poor. These surveillance practices and their attempts to modify behaviour can be illustrated by the experiences of welfare recipients as it will be presented in the Chapter 7. Because these programmes assume that foreign benefit claimants are morally suspect, benefits are based on degrees of rectitude and submission to disciplinary measures intended to force recipients to work and to "responsibilise" their spending (see Rose, 1999).

### 5.3.3 Welfare shopping in Welfare management – inflation in the 'Benefit street'

As described in the previous chapter, social and political changes in different countries have affected the intensity of Roma mobility toward Western Europe. In recent decades, the media has used two controversial approaches to explain Roma movements. On the one hand, the media has acknowledged the exclusion, hostility and racism against Roma in their home countries, describing them as victims who legitimately leave their homes to find a safe environment in other countries. On the other hand, as it was illustrated in the Introduction, they describe Roma ethnic migrants as a financial threat, expressed in terms such as "Roma invasion". Their emigration is also framed as cultural opportunism in which Central European Roma are attracted toward Western states because of generous social services. These media narratives describe the Roma as 'benefit tourists' or 'welfare shoppers' who are unwilling to work and willing to abuse Directive 2004/38/EC, which guarantees the right to move and reside freely in the EU, to take advantage of eligibility differences between member states.

Many of these prejudices about Roma were raising hostility toward benefit claimants in Western welfare states. White (2014) describes such media discourses as key ideological tools the elite use to manipulate public views of welfare claimants, especially migrants. She argues

that these messages legitimise political responses to welfare claimants and serve as ‘propaganda to denigrate, exclude and stigmatise welfare claimants and cultivate animosity and a perception of “us” as being superior to “them”’ (White, 2014, p. 3). These assumptions about ‘welfare cheats’ and ‘dole scroungers’ (Cohen, 2002, p. xviii) in the British treatment of welfare claimants as a socio-economic group have been used to offset them against the group of “hardworking taxpayers”. This rigid polarisation of “benefit claimant” versus “hardworking taxpayer”, which has been constructed for political ends, is oversimplified and stigmatising. The reality is much more fluid: some people who work and pay taxes also receive benefits, and some people move in and out of the labour market (White, 2014).

As will be shown in this chapter, austerity toward welfare claimants, used by managerialist bureaucracies as a key tool for welfare reforms, has been constructed to reduce costs and make foreign welfare claimants self-sustaining. While designing national policies for foreign welfare claimants is generally seen as a welfare-to-work strategy, these policies also serve as mechanisms of territorial control of different populations. Due to the lack of visa requirements, the surveillance practices and restrictive incentives of these welfare bureaucracies enable geopolitical reorganisation in the EU. However, these assessments and the way in which their incentives shape transnational mobility are deeply problematic.

This chapter aims to provide an overview of changes in social welfare services available for EU citizens in the UK. It will particularly focus on how migration and welfare are increasingly interwoven with criminalisation practices, and how the social division of welfare surveillance is applied in the managerialism of a national bureaucratic system. First, I will describe the reality of so-called “welfare tourism” by using an example of Roma mobility before the 2004 expansion of the EU. This case illustrates the development of the image of the “welfare tourist” and how this perspective changed the platform of migration control from border agencies to social services. I will present the rise of the welfare-migration-crime triangle, which shapes local and federal government administrations that aim to control the population inside national borders. Second, I will discuss specific bureaucratic approaches toward social rights regarding intra-European mobility. Third, I will describe recent EU legislation about welfare provisions and how national policies reject these incentives in the case of the UK. In the last decade, EU member states have adapted neoliberal principles related to welfare objectives. These new principles around social provisions have been changing the bureaucratic field into an entrepreneurial system, including the implementation of new methods for service providers. These restricted and broadly assessed services have created new structures for controlling and monitoring mobile groups.

In the second part of this chapter, I will discuss the specific aspects of such welfare surveillance and describe how they are related to the social sorting of migrants. This analysis of the recent changes in the principles, methods and tools of social provisions will uncover new surveillance tasks related to population selection, in particular for undesired migrants. New restrictions, changes in eligibility and access to certain benefits, and sanctions will be reconstructed as the new social sorting of welfare in the UK.

#### 5.4 Does control of welfare = control of migration?

A social policy perspective on welfare surveillance defines how surveillance mechanisms operate to construct and categorise populations, and to unevenly inspect citizens in the seemingly routine processes of distributing services and resources (Gilliom, 2001). Welfare providers need to deploy the power of surveillance to draw conclusions about recipients' behaviour, which requires detailed and intimate information about family and cohabitation, means of subsistence and personal needs. However, the introduction of computerised data aggregation has enormously increased the power exercised through surveillance in recent years, creating a new threat to individual autonomy. These processes take place as a deal, a:

‘universal, identity-shaping attribute of welfare state citizenship subordination to the regimes of surveillance required in exchange for the very means to maintain an ordinary and secure life. The increasing powers of surveillance that binds citizens to the welfare state’s central institutions of employment, market, and governance demand a broadly based politics of resistance to excessive intrusion.’ (Munger, 2003, p. 661)

The interactions between these mechanisms are the central aspects of this study. Therefore, I need to define those cases of interaction where these counter-dynamics are manifested. In doing so, attention can be drawn to the unequal distribution of both burdens and benefits in the social relations of welfare, and to how clients are responding to it. As suggested above, the new policies are increasingly restrictive and redefine the methods and tools of social services to prevent service provision for undesired benefit claimants. These targeted restrictions are easy to follow on different levels of entitlement in the benefit system as well as in the bureaucratic management of service providers. These steps will be introduced in the following section, based on cases from the UK.



#### 5.4.1 National Habitual Residence test

To become eligible for any government welfare provision in the United Kingdom, not only EU migrants but all EEA nationals have to meet certain special requirements that are not imposed on UK nationals. After a prospective foreign benefit claimant receives a National Insurance number based on their tenancy contract and bank account, he or she must also pass a National Habitual Residence (NHR) test. This test was introduced in 1994 by the Tory government to limit the number of state hand-outs available to migrants. In order to apply for any government benefits, claimants first need to pass the test to prove that they are habitually resident in the Common Travel Area (the UK, the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man or the Republic of Ireland). They must also intend to remain in the UK for the time being and have actually resided there for an ‘appreciable period’. That period was not originally fixed, so each case had to be decided on its facts. From 1 January 2014, based on a revised version of the test, entitlements cannot begin until the claimant has completed a three-month period of continuous residence within the Common Travel Area. EEA nationals who arrive in the UK to seek work are also subjected to this test to establish a link with the UK employment market.

The controversy centres on a second rule, called the ‘right to reside test’, introduced by the Labour government in 2004 to prevent benefit tourism when the EU expanded to Eastern Europe. This rule states that economically inactive migrants, who are neither in work nor seeking work, must be self-sufficient if they want to live in the UK. They are banned from receiving Income Support, income-related Employment and Support Allowance, income-related Jobseeker’s Allowance, pension credit, Housing Benefit or Child Benefit. The EU found this legislation to be discriminatory but, according to Prime Minister David Cameron, restrictive measures were necessary to stop ‘rogue EU benefit claims’ and the test was designed to ‘stop people abusing Britain’s benefit system’ (Wintour, 2013).

This approach was seen by some as an attempt ‘to rush through a block on EU migrants’ access to benefits in response to the politically sensitive lifting of the restrictions on Romanians and Bulgarians working in the UK from 1 January 2014’ (Rutledge, 2014a). This change in legislation radically affected EU migrants’ access to benefits as jobseekers. These restrictions often had their intended effects on a national level, while simultaneously pushing those migrants toward other municipalities, where similar processes would be repeated with the same service providers. Although several social service databases are accessible from different boroughs, claimants experience differences in support from client managers and civil servants, which might impact the success of the claims. In the following section, I will give a short

overview of how service-dependent claimants are monitored and controlled based on their benefit claims.

#### 5.4.2 Social sorting tools and restrictions

After a foreigner passes the NHR test, different claims can be processed online. Although most of these claims belong to different government organs or to privatised services, entitlements are strongly interrelated and complex. Jobseeker's Allowance and Income Support are the most frequent benefit claims among immigrants from CEE, who often depend on irregular jobs from employment agencies that cannot provide them regular income.

These claims brought these foreign claimants, like any other UK claimant, in contact with JobCentre Plus (JCP) offices. This executive agency was created by combining two agencies: the Employment Service, which operated JobCentres, and the Benefits Agency, which ran social security offices. Programmes such as 'Employment Zones' and 'Pathways to Work' were managed from these offices, sometimes by JCP. These offices regulated many aspects of unemployed people's lives by making job searching obligatory and sanctionable.

From 19 October 2012, all claimants applying for Jobseeker's Allowance are expected to look for work online, using the new Universal Jobmatch website, an online system accessible from a government portal and powered by Monster.com. Jobseekers who do not possess the necessary computer skills are offered IT training. However, they often cannot even manage to arrange their online application to become JCP clients in the first place. Jobseekers are expected to spend 30 hours per week searching for jobs on top of the mandatory Work Programme, or to take part in community service.

Interaction with client managers is essential to the financial well-being of migrants, since other welfare implications depend on their JCP contract. Several barriers limit efficient communication between these offices and their clients. First, there is limited face-to-face contact and what little there is mostly consists of inspections of the claimants' situations and activities, but there is hardly any support of claimants. Second, many clients are not Internet literate, so they cannot use online job search applications. This results in sanctions and further restrictions on their finances, which are controlled by case managers. Third, there is a high turnover among case managers and legislation changes frequently, so clients are often not up-to-date. Due to these issues, claimants' payments are often cut before they are able to understand that they are not fulfilling the obligations defined by JCP.

There is also a lack of transparency about case managers' activities, their targets and their system of sanctioning, which is often debated in the media. Both foreign claimants and UK nationals who are jobseekers feel like they are treated as criminals when their job search activity is tracked. If they do not appear to apply for enough vacancies, they can have their money halted. They are also sanctioned for voluntarily leaving work or refusing a notified vacancy: the first sanction period can be up to 13 weeks, the second up to 26 weeks and the third up to three years. This seriously impacts these families' housing situations due to the interrelationship between Housing Benefit and Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) claims.

Transnational mobility of many migrants from CEE is defined by their access to resources in addition to their regular income from work. If they leave the country they are losing their eligibility. The interdependency of additional benefits from welfare services plays a key role in their possibilities to settle down or to move to another borough, so I will give an overview of these resources and how restricting access to them changes clients' mobility patterns.

#### 5.4.3 Groping in the dark – Changing entitlement rules of EU citizens

Knowing the rules and administrative practices of the local eligibility system for welfare services plays a central role in claimants' decisions about intra-European mobility; not only because of its selective nature, but also because of its sanctions. In the case of the UK, after claimants from CEE have passed the NHR test, they are able to access various resources based on their position in the labour market. However, these are not regularly assessed. Therefore, if claimants leave the country and they keep receiving tax credits they might get into debts due to monthly overpayments. In addition, the following possible claims have implications for applicants' entitlement for council tax cuts, tax credit payments and housing benefits:

- Housing Benefit is the most important financial support for welfare-dependent foreign citizens. It is a statutory instrument regulated by the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992 that reduces the level of rent payable by the tenant. It is only available to those who are liable to pay rent and have a permanent right to reside in the UK. Private tenants' benefit is paid to the claimant, who has the right to decide to whom payments are made (in some cases, to the landlord). The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) pays local councils and administration grants, as well as various other cost factor adjustments to take into account the relative staff and accommodation costs.

Some elements of the subsidy claim are subject to penalty to encourage local authorities to control that element of expenditure. Overpayments of benefit are not fully funded in order to ensure that the local authority takes recovery actions where appropriate. Since the amount of Housing Benefit is the highest among all benefit payments, it has a major impact on the living condition of newcomers, particularly on their chances to settle down in the host society.

- Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) is a form of unemployment benefit for those who are actively seeking work. It is part of the security benefits system and is intended to cover living expenses while the claimant is out of work (during my fieldwork period in 2013 and 2014, it was £71 per week). It is administered by the Social Security Agency, an executive agency of the Department for Social Development. It is contribution-based or income-based; to be eligible for JSA, claimants must state that they are actively seeking work by filling in an agreement form and attending a New Jobseeker interview. They must also go to a JCP every two weeks to "sign on" (i.e. to certify that they are still actively seeking work). JSA claims are maintained by a legal computer system called JSAPS.
- Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) is a state benefit introduced in 2008. It replaced Severe Disablement Allowance, later called Incapacity Benefit, which was paid in case of illness or disability. ESA can be either contributory or income-related. If a claimant meets National Insurance conditions, he or she can claim contributory ESA for up to one year (for the work-related activity component) or indefinitely (for the support component). Income-related ESA is subject to a means-test, but if claimants meet both sets of conditions, they can get contributory ESA topped up with income-related ESA.
- Income Support is an income-related benefit in the UK for people with a low income who have less than £16,000 in savings. Claimants must be between 16 and state pension age, work fewer than 16 hours a week and have a reason why they are not actively seeking work (e.g. illness, disability or child care).
- Tax credits involve payments from the central and local governments. Despite their name, tax credits should not be confused with tax credits linked to a person's tax bill.

Unlike most other benefits, they are paid by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC). Two types of tax credit claims are important for migrants from CEE:

- Child tax credits (Guardian's Allowance or Carer's Allowance), available on top of Child Benefit for families with children that have an income below £32,200. The tax credit is “non-wasteable” (i.e. it is paid whether or not the family has a net tax liability) and is paid in or out of work. Higher rates are paid for disabled children.
  - Working tax credit, for those who work and have a low income. It is part of the current system of refundable (or non-wasteable) tax credits introduced in April 2003 and is a means-tested benefit.
- 
- Personal Independence Payment (PIP) is a welfare benefit to help with costs caused by a health condition or disability. It is non-means tested, non-contributory and can be paid whether the recipient is employed or not. PIP is based upon the effects of a condition on a person. PIP was introduced in 2013 by the Welfare Reform Act 2012. It replaced the Disability Living Allowance as of 8 April 2013 for people aged 16 to 64 years and was phased in over the following years.
  - Attendance Allowance is a non-contributory social security benefit paid to disabled people over 65 years that was introduced in the National Insurance Act 1970. A claimant must show that they need help in connection with their bodily functions or need continual supervision. At night, supervision has to involve someone being awake to watch over the claimant. Claimants must have met the conditions for at least six months before they are entitled to the allowance, unless they are terminally ill.

These eligibility rules and the structure of their implementation have major impacts on the lives of newcomers, who must try to stay up-to-date with legislative changes in order to keep their welfare eligibility.

These listed provisions are rapidly changing or even disappearing, such as with family credits or disability allowance. These descriptions should therefore be taken with caution as benefits are reconstructed or renamed regularly, even when changes take place gradually. For instance, Severe Disablement Allowance has been closed to new claims since 2001, but there are still thousands of recipients. And Income Support, which used to be one of the most important benefits, is going to be divided by transferring its functions to other benefits that

have yet to be determined. These constant changes are difficult to follow, not just for clients, but also for bureaucrats who must try to apply and harmonise different legislations, claims and payments (Spicker, 2011). These changes also represent political guidelines implemented into policies: for instance, the harassment of newcomer benefit claimants and the subsequent restrictions of benefit rules are easily traceable to recent changes in welfare provisions. These changes have triggered new coping strategies for CEE migrants who are already settled in the UK.

First, I will introduce the most recent changes that have had a serious impact on the living circumstances of EU transnational migrants. Then I will reflect on the complexities that have increased due to these rapid legislative and managerialist shifts in social provisions. As part of this problem, I will discuss the role of control in these monitoring procedures and how these selections and sanctions reshape the social division of welfare claimants.

### 5.5 Trapped in a loop – Welfare restrictions as mobility control

As part of the political narratives of the Conservatives under the Prime Ministership of David Cameron, social benefits have been defined as a dangerous attractant for CEE migrants, who are portrayed as lazy, opportunistic free riders who live off the backs of hardworking UK taxpayers. These narratives have resulted in tougher NHR tests, less eligibility, stronger penalties for fraud (or error) and extensive assessments or investigations of data provided by claimants.

The first serious wave of restrictions started with the Welfare Reform Act of 2012. This act, enacted on 8 March 2012, changed the British social security system to restrict ‘access to welfare benefits for new EU migrants including a six-month statutory habitual residency for benefits paid to jobseekers’ (Rutledge, 2014a). Among the provisions of the act that came into force on 1 April 2013 were key changes related to accessing Housing Benefit, the Social Fund, child support, JSA, PIP and other benefits for CEE foreign nationals. The act abolished the discretionary social fund, community care grants and crisis loans. Instead, funding was given to local authorities to provide such assistance in their regions. Most of the measures implemented placed more responsibility on local authorities and pushed them toward intense monitoring of their clients. Local councils are already struggling with financial cut that makes them less willing to provide more payments for benefit claimants. In order to understand the restrictive implications of these social policies I provide a short overview of the most pervasive changes that influence the lives of EU transnational migrants:

- The benefit cap was the first serious restriction. It was gradually introduced as a limit to the total amount of money available to social security claimants. The cap is set at the average (median) net earnings for a working household (e.g. total benefits paid to a single person may not now exceed £350 per week; the maximum available to families (single parents and couples with children) is £500 per week). The benefits limited by this new cap include most of those described in the previous paragraphs. It was strongly criticised by the national Housing Federation for its unintended side effects, which will be described in the next chapter.
- The Under-occupancy penalty, referred to by its opponents as a “bedroom tax” or “spare room subsidy”, reduces Housing Benefit by 14% for one extra room and by 25% for two or more extra bedrooms if claimants have too much living space. This new Housing Benefit criteria considers the number of rooms and number of people occupying a property and restricts payment for the property they are renting. If it is estimated that there are too many rooms in a rented dwelling for the number of occupants, housing benefits are drastically reduced. The rule applies to tenants in local authority (council) and Housing Association accommodation, which stipulates that all children under 10 years of age are expected to share a room; children under 16 of the same gender are expected to share; and carers of disabled tenants who need to stay overnight are permitted to have one extra bedroom.
- Universal Credit is meant to replace six of the main means-tested benefits and tax credits — JSA, Housing Benefit, Working Tax Credit, Child Tax Credit, ESA and Income Support — with a single monthly conditional means-tested payment for working people on a low income and the unemployed (Department for Work and Pensions, 2010). Its stated aims are to increase the incentive to work by making it easier for people who have temporary, low-paid work to move in and out of employment without losing benefits, and to simplify the benefits system by bringing together several benefits into a single payment. Due to complications in implementation, it has not replaced existing benefit payments.

- Council Tax Benefit was replaced by a new system called Council Tax Support, offered under the Universal Credit scheme. Prior to this change, benefits, discounts, exemptions and reductions were paid by the central government to support claimants unable to pay council tax. Regulations, responsibility for assessment of claims and payments have now been shifted to local authorities paid by the central government, but the budget available has been reduced by 10%, requiring councils to limit support payments.
- The Personal Independence Payment gradually replaced the Disability Living Allowance. An initial pilot began in selected areas of northwest and northeast England in April 2013, followed by a full roll-out across Great Britain through October 2015. Claimants are required to undergo assessments to prove their eligibility for the benefit. The tests must be passed three months prior to the claim and claimants must be able to satisfy the requirements of the test for a period of at least nine months after their claim. Payments are varied according to the severity of disability as determined by the tests and relate to the claimant's ability to carry out daily living activities and their level of mobility. Claimants are also required to undergo periodic reassessments to ensure ongoing eligibility for the benefit; depending on the type of disability, a person may be given a short award of up to two years or a longer PIP award, which lasts for up to five or 10 years. Responsibility for the tests has been outsourced by the DWP to private companies, like Atos Healthcare.

Iain Duncan Smith, the Work and Pension Secretary who sponsored the Welfare Reform Act 2012, argued that the new benefits system would encourage people to work and reduce social benefit costs (BBC, 2013a). His statement in an interview that it was possible to live on £53 per week attracted considerable media attention. He criticised the older system of disability benefits, which did not contain systematic checks to assess whether the claimant's condition had improved or worsened. Controversially, many organisations raised their voices about the dangers of recently privatised screenings and assessment, as the criteria were flawed, caused undue hardship to disabled people and were too strongly focused on cutting welfare budgets (BBC, 2013b).

Private contractor Atos Healthcare, who performed work capability assessments, was accused of unreasonably cutting the benefits of disabled clients, some of whom were driven to



suicide by their experience. The report<sup>11</sup> notes that ‘DWP currently investigates all deaths of benefit claimants “where suicide is associated with DWP activity”, and in other cases where the death of a vulnerable benefit claimant is brought to its attention, through a system of internal “peer reviews”’. Since February 2012, DWP has carried out 49 peer reviews following the death of a benefit claimant. Although these cuts affected all welfare claimants in the UK, new additional measures explicitly targeted newcomers who might rely on state benefits.

An amendment to the Immigration (European Economic Area) Regulations 2006 was passed in 2013. Rutledge (2014a) explains that it:

‘...introduces a 6 month statutory presumption for Jobseeker’s Allowance. The Regulations make changes with respect to the definitions of “jobseeker” and “worker” in the 2006 Regulations to the effect that:

- EEA nationals seeking to reside in the UK while looking for work must provide, from the outset, evidence that they are seeking work and have a genuine chance of being engaged;
- EEA nationals seeking to enjoy the status of “retained worker” – i.e. a worker who is involuntarily employed – must provide, from the outset, evidence that they are seeking employment and have a genuine chance of being engaged; and
- EEA nationals may not enjoy the status of jobseeker or retained worker for longer than six months unless they provide ‘compelling evidence’ that they have a genuine chance of being engaged;
- There will be an absolute limit of six months for the retention of worker status for an EEA national who is a retained worker and who had worked for less than 12 months before becoming involuntarily unemployed.’

In January 2014, the UK government introduced a number of measures aimed at restricting EEA migrants’ access to income-based Jobseeker’s Allowance (Income-Based) or JSA(IB). A key change was the introduction of a statutory presumption that entitlement to JSA(IB) would be limited to a three-month period unless the jobseeker could pass a Genuine Prospect of Work (GPoW) assessment (Rutledge, 2014b). As Rutledge (2014b) notes, the report laying out these measures:

‘arose from the Committee’s consideration of the Housing Benefit (Habitual Residence) Amendment Regulations 2014, SI 2014/539, which, from 1 April 2014 onwards, had the

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<sup>11</sup> [https://ico.org.uk/media/action-weve-taken/decision-notices/2015/1424160/fs\\_50557638.pdf](https://ico.org.uk/media/action-weve-taken/decision-notices/2015/1424160/fs_50557638.pdf)

effect of removing access to Housing Benefit for EEA jobseekers who have a right to reside solely as jobseekers who are in receipt of income-based Jobseeker's Allowance'.

This was interlinked with the minimum earnings threshold guidance to determine whether an EEA national's previous or current work can be treated as genuine and effective in deciding whether they have a right to reside in the UK as a worker, or whether they can retain the status of a worker after becoming involuntarily unemployed.

On 20 November 2014, the Social Security Advisory Committee published a report critical of those regulations that removed entitlements to Housing Benefit for certain categories of EEA jobseekers. As Rutledge (2014b) explains, 'the Committee expresses a number of concerns about the impact of these measures, including what will happen to existing EEA migrants for whom returning to their "home" country is not a realistic or viable option'. Rutledge (2014b) continues:

'The Report describes some of the difficulties facing EEA migrants seeking to establish that they hold the status of a retained worker after the six months period of unemployment has ended:

- firstly, many migrants are only able to obtain transient work associated with certain industries, for example, agriculture, catering, hospitality etc. which pay minimal wages and use zero hours contracts;
- secondly, some employers are poor at record-keeping and tend to operate around the borders of legality, which means that expecting those employers to produce the required documentation in order to show that the EEA migrant has acquired worker status may be problematic.'

Rutledge (2014b) concludes that 'Member States should not use the right to reside condition as a blanket rule which automatically excludes EU citizens who are not economically active at the time they apply for social assistance'. However, Rutledge (2014b) notes that:

'The Government's response to the Committee's recommendations that action is needed in order to mitigate potential unintended and harmful effects is blunt and uncompromising:

'The Government wishes to deter EEA migrants from coming to the UK if they do not have a firm offer of or realistic chance of securing work. Those who come to

the UK to look for work should ensure that they have sufficient resources to pay for their accommodation needs, as well as other support that they or their family may need while here. The best option for those EEA migrants who are unable to find work, who lack savings or support networks and who are at real risk of ending up destitute is to return home.’

In practice, claimants did not give up that easily and tried to find their way between changes and restrictions.

On 9 February 2015, the DWP published [DMG Memo 2/15 – Extending GPoW Assessments to Stock EEA Nationals](#), which advised that the GPoW assessment will be extended to all remaining EEA nationals whose entitlement to JSA(IB) started prior to 1 January 2014. The memo described cases that fall within this group as ‘stock cases’. A review of existing clients’ right to reside in the UK and their continued entitlement to JSA (IB) would be undertaken in three months’ time at a GPoW assessment interview. If the claimant sought to rely on their right to reside as a jobseeker only, they would be asked to provide ‘compelling evidence’ that they had a genuine chance of being engaged in the near future (Kennedy, 2015, p. 17).

Although there are constant changes in benefit provisions and in service provisions for unemployed migrants, some are still able to follow up these measure and as in will be presented in chapter 7, they are finding ways to keep themselves entitled to their benefits.

## 5.6 Bermuda Triangle – complexities in benefit claims

Complexities are the breeding ground of changes, expectations, misunderstandings and creativity. Although ideas about conformity and harmonisation form interrelated links between different benefits, the complexity of the benefit system teaches clients how to increase their income depending on their registered circumstances. As described in the chapter 7 and 8, clients try to learn the preconditions of different entitlements and assessment strategies of their claims. When there is an error in their application process, they are able to trace the mistakes and weaknesses of particular structures. In addition to interrelationships between claims, clients learn the rules of complex benefits (like JSA or Income Support) and others that consist of several benefits bundled together. The real challenge starts with the interaction of multiple overlapping benefits.

In his article titled *Five types of complexity*, Spicker (2005) describes a lack of balance between agencies, constantly changing guidelines and rules developed for benefits. Some rules are intrinsic, like those based on a points-based scheme that help establish who meets certain criteria. There are also two main classes of additional imposed rules: conditional and administrative. There are various sorts of conditional rules: ‘some benefits are conditioned morally: rules about voluntary employment and availability for work are illustrative’ (Spicker, 2005, p.3). Administrative rules are concerned with operations like complexities caused by management procedures, because ‘the landscape of the benefits system changes like the sands of the desert’ (Spicker, 2005, p. 3). The restructuring of local offices, agencification, computerisation, the new public sector management, and radical changes in the division of labour between different agencies are leading to a loss of expertise in the delivery of specific benefits.

Spicker (2005) distinguishes between three changes in administrative procedure that contribute to the loss of expertise. The first is computerisation; an obsessive pursuit of comprehensive technological solutions has failed since these programmes cannot cope with the complexity of the operations required. The second is file management; because these programmes cannot store paper copies, there always have to be two files and files also migrate between different offices (Spicker, 2005, p. 4). In addition, the files are not accessible to everyone. The third is the growing division of labour between the offices (e.g. a local office, a regional office and the national agency), leading to misunderstandings about responsibilities for particular parts of processing a case.

Processing time and changes to individual circumstances are the biggest challenges, since clients move, age and divorce, and the benefits system rests on the assumption that people know their situation and will report it. This is where clients are able to abuse or be victimised by the interaction with different service providers (or lack thereof) and can potentially be subject to sanctions. The growth of short-term contracts, casual and intermittent patterns of work, changing physical conditions and dependency like disability has increased uncertainty and has made survey estimates unreliable. Because childcare is so often “shared”, people are not sure when they are responsible for it. Income and marital status fluctuates; consequently, the benefits offices have to recalculate and attribute it to different time periods. Overpayments are actively tracked without regard to claimants’ ability to pay, which increase fear and anger in clients who are accused of dishonesty. Long-term payments are the most efficient when they are independent from other benefits and based on stable circumstances, like State Pension and Child Benefit. However, disputes about priority for claims and the Revenue’s excessive caution

about the possibility of duplicate claims are still causing problems and increasing distrust on both sides (Spicker, 2005, p. 3-5).

#### 5.6.1 Chess with benefits – Contamination of the eligible working migrant

As suggested in the previous paragraphs, newcomers have to prove that they are able to cope with their own circumstances to become entitled to a welfare provision in the UK. If migrants can provide compelling evidence that they have prospect of legal work, a short extension to income-based JSA might be considered. If not, their income-based JSA claim will stop and they will automatically lose the rights for housing benefits. It is unclear exactly how many EEA jobseekers are affected by these new guidelines, as the U.K.'s benefit payment systems do not systematically record the nationality of benefit claimants (ibid.).

So there is a contradiction: the only people who might become entitled and supported are those who are almost self-sustaining and probably will not need structural support. In addition, the percentage of newcomers who want to claim JSA compared to the percentage of UK citizens is unknown but, according to these preconditions, no foreign EU citizen should rely on benefits in the UK in the first place. Even if migrants try to claim support, the Nationality Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 limits their support provided under section 17 of the Children Act. As local authorities are increasingly overloaded with time-consuming assessments and complex matters that take up their staff and resources, there is less time and fewer human resources to provide legal aid for foreign claimants (Rutledge, 2015). What is left for newcomers wishing to complete a claim is an informal exchange of knowledge, NGOs or trial and error.

In short, recent legal approaches and their impacts increase the dangers of unfair treatment through methods of social sorting. This top-down pressure makes central authorities control practitioners by shaping the discretionary power of civil servants to achieve better outcomes. As Diller (2000) warns us:

‘This channelling takes place through a variety of means, including performance-based evaluation systems and efforts to redefine the institutional culture of welfare offices. These techniques are part of a broad trend in public administration that seeks to make government agencies function like entrepreneurial organizations. This new model raises serious questions of public accountability. In the new system of welfare administration, critical policy chokes are reflected in incentive and evaluation systems rather than formal rules. As policy decisions are made in ways

that are less visible, there are fewer opportunities for public input. Moreover, in the new regime the efficacy of administrative hearings as a means of holding agencies accountable to recipients is diminished.’ (p. 1121)

Due to a lack of public accountability, benefit claimants become suspects of crimes and become moral hazards to the welfare industry — hunted down like figures on the chessboard. There are generally two ways public institutions implement these absolutist values: by sanctioning and monitoring.

#### 5.6.2 Criminalised by welfare – Perceptions of welfare fraud

As part of this target-oriented bureau-professionalism, hostility toward recipients is intensified during efforts to shrink welfare rolls through fraud persecutions (Kohler-Hausmann, 2007, p. 333). This suspicion-based service system extends monitoring strategies that might harm the privacy of clients. Consequently, it has a major impact as a punitive state policy in directing public antagonism toward specific target groups such as benefit claimants.

Over the past 20 to 30 years, a preoccupation with benefit fraud has become a distinctive characteristic of governments in Britain (Dean, 1998; de Parle, 2004). Cruikshank (1999) argues that it is important to understand the development of welfare fraud administration over this period as a system established to discipline the welfare system rather than the recipients *per se* (Kohler-Hausmann, 2007).

Fraud investigations and sanctions have always been a part of welfare administration. From the 1970s, the penal and welfare systems intertwined to create new political, legal and technological means of shrivelling and disciplining welfare recipients. Anti-fraud initiatives are embedded in the long history of welfare bureaucracies’ struggles to limit costs while policing racial, gender and class hierarchies (Kohler-Hausmann, 2007, p. 332). Law enforcement agencies have taken on new responsibilities for identifying and penalising welfare fraud. The increased monitoring of welfare recipients hardened claimants’ marginalised position in society due to its unintended side effects, such as homelessness. ‘Relentless media attention about welfare fraud convictions and indictments tangibly linked criminality to what had been a more elusive, moral stigma against [the] poor. The spectacle of the actual indictments framed welfare recipients as dishonest criminals, eclipsing their status as mothers and citizens’ (Kohler-Hausmann, 2007, p. 331). Particularly ethnic minorities have been objects of suspicion and intense scrutiny of their financial and moral worthiness.

Recently, sanctions applied by JobCentre Plus on benefit claimants raised new dilemmas about the real function of these measures and the extent of harm they might cause, as they might cause serious financial problems for claimants. The most problematic issue is the restriction on JSA, because it might affect other benefit payments to clients, causing a domino effect in different benefits. The problematic aspect is the application of sanctions by case managers. Many sanctions are based on administrative errors, like sending letters to the wrong address.

For instance, JSA claim cases in which clients were immediately sanctioned for not having the right ink to fill in an application, or for missing appointments due to sickness. They experienced this as condemnation instead of support. The Guardian (2015) also listed several cases of sanctions for ‘trivial reasons’ or due to DWP’s ‘administrative errors’. They gave examples of hospitalised clients who were unable to appear at the JCP office due to their own sickness or caring for a sick partner, or clients who missed their job centre appointments because of an actual job interview. In one case, a diabetic client was found dead because he was not able to afford to keep his insulin properly refrigerated. This case led to a parliamentary select committee investigation of sanctions (Wintour, 2014).

Oakley’s (2014) independent review of the operation of JSA sanctions touched upon several barriers defined by participants in this study, notably the increase in ESA sanctioning since 2013 and the lack of appropriate, fair and proportionate sanctions. The increase since 2013 in the number and proportion of ESA claimants who were sanctioned, is related to ‘claimants’ failure to participate in work-related activity — i.e. predominantly non-attendance at mandatory Work Programme appointments. As several media reports suggested, this increase partly resulted from the pressure case managers dealt with regarding their targets, and also because of increasing errors due to fast changes in policies and restrictions of specific groups. Transparency in sanctioning clients was one of the major problems (Oakley, 2014).

The government rejected the recommendations, although there was a staggering amount of evidence concerning approaches of some individual JobCentres, especially about whether targets for sanctions exist (Oakley, 2014). As Dame Anne Begg MP, Chair of the Work and Pensions Committee, said:

‘Benefit sanctions are controversial because they withhold subsistence-level benefits from people who may have little or no other income. We agree that benefit conditionality is necessary but it is essential that policy is based on clear evidence of what works in terms of encouraging people to take up the support which is available to help them get back into work. The policy must then be applied fairly

and proportionately. The system must also be capable of identifying and protecting vulnerable people, including those with mental health problems and learning disabilities. And it should avoid causing severe financial hardship. The system as currently applied does not always achieve this.’ (Oakley, 2014, p.9)

As the following chapter will illustrate, the hardships of social sorting have their questionable advantages too. Claimants learn to control these agencies, include their expectations into their performance and use those systematic dysfunctions that enable additional claims for benefits. They also pit different agencies against each other and employ experiences of others with particular case managers. However, problems also arise because clients are often unaware of the application process or about additional possibilities like hardship payment. Clients then tend to hide information that can be essential for new claims or changing circumstances, or they are put off from applying at all because of the difficulty in understanding the system (Commons Select Committee, 2015). Due to technical developments, there is a growing awareness about the strategies of clients who are successfully navigating the system but who are defined as underserving EEA claimants. Therefore, new inspections are introduced that harden the social division of welfare-dependent groups along the lines of gender, ethnicity and citizenship.

### 5.6.3 Social service in a new coat – controlling and disciplining the stranger

There are several methods of assessing and inspecting benefit claimants to control their reliability and discipline their behaviour, or to prevent fraud. However, there is a growing discrepancy in the level of transparency between claimants and service providers, since the latter are not obliged to clarify the operationalisation of surveillance methods.

According to the Chief Surveillance Commissioner, no information about the covert surveillance methods or any statistics regarding monitoring practices requested from HMRC could be made publicly accessible, since this information ‘falls within the revision of the freedom of Information Act which exempt it from disclosure’ (Office of Surveillance Commissioners, 2014, p. 5). In this letter (Covert Surveillance and Property Interference: Code of Practice), which referred to the annual report of the Chief Surveillance Commissioner, it was suggested that all these monitoring practices are defined and authorised by Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) Information management rules.

The government’s website (UK Government, 2013) explains:



‘RIPA is the law governing the use of covert techniques by public authorities. It requires that when public authorities, such as the police or government departments, need to use covert techniques to obtain private information about someone, they do it in a way that is necessary, proportionate, and compatible with human rights.’

Generally, the website (UK Government, 2013) provides information on how the government regulates surveillance and acts in case of a terrorist incident:

‘RIPA’s guidelines and codes apply to actions such as:

- intercepting communications, such as the content of telephone calls, emails or letters
- acquiring communications data: the “who, when and where” of communications, such as a telephone billing or subscriber details
- conducting covert surveillance, either in private premises or vehicles (intrusive surveillance) or in public places (directed surveillance)
- the use of covert human intelligence sources, such as informants or undercover officers
- access to electronic data protected by encryption or passwords’

The investigative measures that are available in a case of suspicion of benefit fraud are similar to those available in a case of a terrorist threat, which is clearly disproportionate. The narratives refer to public safety and public trust to justify an intricate element of covered inspection and to keep the applied strategies hidden. As Sharpe (2007) writes, supporters argue that:

‘Many criminals are constantly active and astute in their assessment of covert investigation capabilities and will capitalise on any information they can glean about police and practice. They will use the information to compromise investigation methods and frustrate prevention and detection of their criminal activity, for example by enabling criminals to develop counter measures against disclosed surveillance technics.’ (p. 1)

In the case of local authorities, RIPA provides the authorisation for covert inspection. These local authorities have a wide range of functions and are ‘responsible by law to enforce

benefit fraud, fraudulent claims for housing benefits, investigating “living together” and “working whilst in receipt of benefit” allegations and council tax evasion’ (RIPA, 2013). As part of their investigations, local authorities use three techniques: directed surveillance, a covert human intelligence source and obtaining and disclosing communications data after obtaining judicial approval (UK Government, 2012). However, local authorities are not allowed to use any other covert techniques, such as intercepting the content of a telephone conversation.

These anti-fraud efforts that criminalise benefit claimants contribute to the increased surveillance of poor urban neighbourhoods and suspicious newcomers. Recipients’ homes are inspected more frequently and they are forced to comply with continual bureaucratic examinations of their personal and financial decisions. In this study, I will further analyse how these intrusions are specified by surveillance of particular groups — social sorting — and used by social service policies to sanction and monitor behaviour.

#### 5.6.4 Social sorting of welfare surveillance

Reich (1964) noted the near universality of dependency by law, for nearly all citizens receive benefits from the government through social insurance and public benefit programmes, public education, licences, public employment and a wide variety of services. He argued that the benefits provided by government are so pervasive and foundational for civil society that their security must be viewed as fundamental, akin to the security historically presumed for property interests.

The tension between welfare provision for the needs of CEE foreign nationals and oppressive surveillance is not a product of cost cutting, but of welfare’s inception. Yet the tension concerning rights may indeed be something new, a product of an intervening era of economic prosperity and civil rights (Munger, 2003, p. 663). As mentioned above, although there is a conformity in procedures and standardised definitions such as extended tests for benefit claimants, there is still a distinction made between the intensity, intrusiveness and coverage of claims. Individual offices also interpret these rules in different ways.

The UK’s welfare system is a subjective self-oriented service system that hides the methods of consideration. These practices do not follow a common guideline, but neither do they look at each claim individually. They have their own rules for competing with other services in the field of this welfare industry. When claimants appeal their decisions, commissioners prefer “approved” societies ‘to provide evidence to support allegations against members’ (Gulland, 2011, p. 13), demotivating clients to appeal. However, as will be presented

in Chapter 7, ‘in their own weighing up of conflicting evidence the commissioners appear to have a preference for their own observations of appellants’ trustworthiness (sometimes bringing in their own ideas about moral probity)’ (Gulland, 2011, p. 13). Besides these appeals, the majority of claimants are ‘susceptible to the more morally charged decision making mechanisms of the approved societies’ (Gulland, 2011, p. 13).

From this social policy perspective on welfare surveillance, we need to understand which surveillance mechanisms enable organisations ‘to construct and categorise populations, to inequitably scrutinise citizens in the seemingly routine and mundane processes of distributing services and resources’ (Chunn & Gavigan, 2006). This will help draw attention to the unequal distribution of both challenges and advantages in the social relations of welfare.

The moral or value distinctions (“deserving” and “undeserving”) between the social, fiscal and occupational welfare systems signify differences in the intensity of surveillance. Domains in which recipients are seen as “deserving” (particularly fiscal and occupational welfare) receive less surveillance than those regarded as “undeserving” (Henman & Marston, 2008). Thus, Henman & Marston (2008) note:

‘in the same way that the notion of a “social division of welfare” brings to light — and challenges — the perceived “naturalness” of differentials in welfare *provision*, the concept of a “social division of welfare surveillance” brings to light and challenges the perceived “naturalness” of differentials in welfare *surveillance*.’ (p. 192)

The concept of the ‘social division of welfare surveillance’ points to the existence of differential levels of surveillance for the same provision of welfare benefit/service. For example, the surveillance of individuals receiving unemployment allowances may not be treated equally. Some unemployed people are considered riskier and/or regarded more suspiciously than others, with variations in the corresponding level of intrusion and surveillance (McDonald et al., 2003). These examples will be illustrated in the next chapter, where I will identify individual counterstrategies. However, it cannot be denied that these differentiated monitoring processes have a serious impact on both clients and service providers.

#### 5.6.5 Conclusion - Differential surveillance treatment or the digital poorhouse

As it has been argued in this chapter, with the securitisation of intra-European migration, control measures are extended into the field of social service provisions and with the growing privatisation of public sector activities new values and mechanisms are introduced through welfare services. On the one hand security has become defined in terms of financial dependency, and on the other hand governmental services turned into a poverty-management industry, adapting efficiency oriented strategies and competitive values of the business sector. These values define foreign welfare claimants as social economic threat that should be eliminated. Consequently, welfare dependent newcomers become targeted by extra control measures and welfare restrictions as geopolitical technologies in order to make the financially dependent outsiders move on.

By including privatised services providers into the management of the poor and enabling new technologies for monitoring and profiling applicants, social benefit provisions turned into new mechanisms of population control and provided a new platform for social sorting. According to the Deleuzian surveillance assemblage we can trace the dynamics of the interrelation between migration policies implemented through financial screening of a business like public sector and adaptive applicants. By focusing on the ‘viewer society’ which explicates the dialectical interaction of panoptical (top down) and synoptical (bottom up) processes transmitted largely through the media and professionals, it can be demonstrated “how a complete understanding of contemporary surveillance systems must take seriously the social and cultural forces which give rise to, and sustain, assemblages.”(Hier 2003, p. 400)

However this process is more complex than it seems. As Hier argues, “when surveillance technologies began to facilitate the monitoring of a wider population base this has been interpreted as a shift in the cultural character of surveillance with its concomitant leveling of hierarchies. In an effort to account for the more fundamental forces and desires which give rise to, and sustain, surveillant assemblages, the functioning of a dialectic embedded in many surveillance practices is revealed in the present analysis to contribute to a polarization effect involving the simultaneous leveling and solidification of hierarchies. The impetus, however, is not located in powerful social actors or elite bodies. Rather, it is purported that considerable foundational support derives from popular social grievances, various antagonisms directed at a variety of socially constituted risk groups from below, which come to secondarily culminate in the intensification of top-down regimes of surveillance” (2003, p. 401).

Shortly, in such a dialectic process different stakeholders shape the parameters of selection by leading the public discourse associating crime with financial dependence in interplay with cultural references.

‘Surveillance programs were aimed at ferreting out and eliminating fraud in its welfare programs rather than ferreting out’ (Gilliom 2001, pp. 127-128) and assisting any vulnerable poor. However, recent restrictions and selections — in contradiction to welfare incentives — highlight the uneven distribution of burdens and benefits in the social division of welfare surveillance. As Henman and Marston (2008) write:

‘Some contracts of benefit claimants offer forms of regulated freedom for those receiving payments, while others are administered with excessive interference. Such interference, whether it takes the form of restraint, state-sanctioned surveillance or coercion is morally questionable when it is applied to one part of the population but not another.’ (p. 194).

The social assistance system has a long history of highly intrusive, detailed and ongoing surveillance. As Henman and Marston (2008) write:

‘Clearly, a moral rationale rather than an economic rationale drives the heightened level of surveillance dedicated to detecting and prosecuting welfare fraud. Sainsbury (1998: 18) argues that “claimants who defraud the benefit system have always occupied a place among the demons of modern society”, a position that the mass media and governments of all persuasions have been happy to enforce.’ (p. 190)

Distribution of what we call “welfare surveillance” is not new: heightened surveillance of the poor has been well documented (e.g. Fox Piven & Cloward, 1971).

Priorities in the risk society not only define the threat, but also the worth, of particular individuals, placing them into a new type of social division based on surveillance practices that measure economic values. Ramage (2007) notes:

‘Statistical surveys are analysed to provide an outline of people with an above average risk of incorrect payment, with other words, risk of fraud. The computer selects clients with these characteristics and regional office staff is asked to review these. All results are recorded in the computer system so the Department of social security can increase its knowledge of the characteristics of clients receiving incorrect payments.’ (p. 213)

This means that there is regular improvement in the targeting of clients who are most likely to be incorrectly paid (DSS, 1987, p. 24). Note that such risk-based surveillance targets people on the basis of predicted — not actual — behaviour. It is expected that with the increasing levels of computer power, data capture and data mining practices, such differentiated surveillance will continue to intensify (Gandy, 1993).

While considerable attention has been paid to the questions of privacy rights and data protection, it should be clear from the presentation of these social sorting mechanisms that adopting such a framework as the sole public policy response to surveillance is limited because it fails to engage with relations of power and authority that pervade the social relations of welfare. Indeed, the privacy paradigm overlooks the capacity of various sectors of society to repel practices of surveillance or configure them to their own benefit, while the personal realities of other sectors of society are investigated in ever-greater intensity. As Tony Fitzpatrick (2005) observes:

‘While almost nobody fails to receive assistance from the state at some point during their lives, those wealthy enough to buy themselves out of the public sector are also thereby able to reduce the amount of state surveillance to which they are subject...Surveillance is first and foremost a form of classification and recording. What matters less is how the data is gathered and more the categories into which the information is sorted and the social uses to which it is put...these categories and their human contents are the effects of state surveillance: you prove yourself to be deserving by accepting or even welcoming the gaze of surveillance.’ (pp. 174, 178-179)

Henman and Marston (2008) note that a social policy perspective on welfare surveillance ‘interrogates the ways in which surveillance mechanisms operate to construct and categorise populations, to inequitably scrutinise citizens in the seemingly routine and mundane processes of distributing services and resources’ (p. 187). In doing so, we can draw attention to the unequal distribution of benefits by following claimants in application and control processes.

This chapter gave a detailed overview of how welfare provisions are changing in values and practices and the extent to which local social services are included in the selection and control of newcomers in the UK. It discussed how different restrictions have been implemented for accessing benefits, and how managerialism has changed the tools and methods of service providers in their interactions with their claimants. Of course, these measures are manifested

in interactions with claimants who are learning the values and tools of these services and who anticipate the changing incentives of local authorities.

Roma newcomers are subjected to suspicion, control and sanctions for several reasons. Newcomers who are unable to prove their labour history, who are stigmatised culturally as non-productive and who are framed in the political discourse as welfare dependent, poor and uneducated, are representing the parameters of the financially threatening population defined in profiling mechanisms of social security restrictions. Although Roma are not associated with benefit fraud, but with opportunism, by targeted sorting mechanisms, they get excluded from basic service provisions. Although these profiling mechanisms are not constructed in cultural or ethnic terms, Roma applicants compare these exclusionary mechanisms with their previous experiences of institutional racism, and justifies several coping strategies that eliminate such social sorting measures.

In the following chapter it will be discussed how parameters of such profiles are constructed and how different stakeholders contribute to the transmission of ethnic frames in a transnational context. In order to understand the constantly changing, fluid dialogues between digitalised service providers, newcomer claimants and the intermediates, online and office interactions are analysed.

## Chapter 6 Mediators, Protectors and Pathfinders – Invisible Players in Roma Mobility Approaches

### 6.1 The road to hell is paved with good intentions

When Roma mobility and the use of social services is being discussed, it is often presented as a direct interaction between migrants and local bureaucrats. However, there is a growing critical voice regarding the role of actors who are directly or indirectly bridging these interactions, and reinforcing particular stereotypes, as well as changing local perceptions of ethnic migrants. Although these cultural transmissions are mostly well meant, many emphasise the existing prejudices that might have legal implications for local bureaucratic practices. Although Roma are generally blamed for their marginal position, it has hardly ever concerned how stigmatising assumptions have been spread along the mobility path of Roma migrants. In the last few decades several reports have been published discussing the failure of Roma inclusion in Europe. Although there have been successes (Simandi, 2015), the majority report on the poor results of human rights campaigns, EU integration projects and NGO activities, such as the failure of the national integration strategies, the Roma Decade programme or academic publications that have contributed to the criminalisation and evacuation of many Roma migrants (Sobotka & Vermeersch, 2012; Spidla, 2009; Themelis, 2009).

With the Europeanisation of the Roma integration politics, millions of Euros have been invested in local, regional, national, and transnational Roma projects on different bureaucratic levels. The results of which not only signify the structural inefficiency of these interventions, but also emphasise the counter-efficient, self-supporting projects that benefit from the marginal position of the targeted group, while sustaining their marginal position and their negative image. Based on my fieldwork findings and previous literature studies, I will analyse the role and impact of intermediaries involved with, working for or writing about Roma migrants. There are two major levels of interactions, where bridging actors are actively involved in the relationship of Roma migrants' with local authorities. Those who personally act on behalf of migrants in their daily lives are advocacy workers, NGOs, interpreters, community representatives and legal advisors. On a more abstract level we can define those who are indirectly shaping welfare policies and frame general ideas about Roma ethnicity. These actors can be differentiated here by their roles as policymakers on the EU level, academics and international activists. These bridging actors geographically transmit structural connotations about Roma as a cultural, economic, political construct defined by ethnicised features. This



chapter provides an overview of how these actors shape existing ideas about Roma and what are the recent implications of these narratives represented in the host society. I will first discuss the role of those who are indirectly framing the interaction and recognition of Roma in the network of welfare provision. Second, the role of Academics and professionals will be discussed. Thirdly, I will reflect on the challenging position of Roma activists and how they impact the discussion of Roma exclusion. In the last part of this chapter, the role of language interpreters will be analysed regarding ethnic framing in welfare bureaucracies.

As it was described in Chapter 3, the collection of empirical data started with interviews in the sending countries in order to prepare the participant observation period in London. Interviews and meetings were completed first with academics working in the field of migration, ethnicity, social policy and criminology, later with professionals were approached for their knowledge on Roma migration and their experiences with the implications of welfare restrictions. As it was the first phase of the research, the digitalised surveillance measures were not discovered yet, which later provided the central objective of this study. As the final tables show, several police officers, interpreters, council employees, advocacy workers, social workers and probation workers were approached in order to discuss their experiences, concerns. The selection of samples and the ethical concerns regarding the involvement of these stakeholders were also discussed in chapter 3.

Surprisingly, most of the academics has hardly any first-hand information on migration experiences of Roma, most of them referred to activists and NGOs as stakeholders or experts on this topic and they reconstructed their knowledge based on media resources, or newspaper articles. Few junior academics are working with Roma and do ethnographic research on mobility or migration, but most of them avoid the topic of welfare dependence and try to justify the situation of unemployed Roma living abroad by lack of language skills or educational background. Irregular income was defined in careful terms, unwilling to indicate crime as welfare fraud in association with ethnicity. Ethical issues were regularly stressed regarding such a topic, and most of the interviewed scholars claimed to be unaware of such cases or preferred to remain silent. Similar was the response of activists and NGO workers in the sending countries, who regularly claimed that returnees in their networks were back to their home country due to family issues, or because of their structural unemployment abroad. In contrast, academics and activists in London were more aware of the conditions and activities of Roma newcomers, and they regularly emphasised the importance of benefit cuts, bureaucratic barriers and the hostility towards newcomers, especially Roma. Police responses

were regionally different, but in London ethnic Roma connotations were associated with Romanians, in particular in interviews with professionals. Hungarian Roma were only mentioned in Manchester as a diaspora, and there were several interviews referring to Czech and Slovak Roma in the north of England, but most of these cases were referring to media messages, repeating the narrative of benefit tourists. Shortly, although many academics and professionals work with Roma, migration related issues and experiences with foreign benefit assistance were unknown in the host countries. Regardless to the migration aspect, these representative voices are regularly frame ethnic migrants in economic terms as ‘dependent’, ‘without any financial resources’, or ‘exploited’. Shortly, most of these interviews could not provide sufficient data on Roma migration processes, but they raised concerns about the role of these stakeholders in the process of framing ethnic connotations in a foreign setting.

As the following analyses explores, such economic framing of ethnic groups has transnational implications on transmitted stigmas, serving new parameters for profiling and selection measures.

#### 6.1.1 Constructing belonging – Framing the Roma with margins

In order to understand the relationships between welfare policies, the attitude of service providers and these bridging actors, we need to understand how the particular framing of Roma ethnicity has been developed in the last few years, and subsequently lead to claiming special attention and targeted support for Ethnic Roma in the EU member states. Most studies on social science that use the concept of framing offer a definition derived from the writings of Erving Goffman (Goffman, 1975). He used the designation “primary framework” to refer to what he called a “conceptual structure” that organises interpretation, or a “mental set” through which people understand and construct social events.

‘Goffman’s concept provided an important source of inspiration for scholars who studied social movements (McAdam, McCarthy & Zald, 1996). Frames do not only perform an interpretative function, but they are often promoted with a specific intention, as in the case of Roma ethnicity. Activists use these frames ‘to mobilize potential adherents and constituents, to garner bystander support, and to demobilize antagonists’ (Vermeersch, 2003, p. 885).

As will be presented in the next section, the promotion of their type of framing had a major impact on recent assumptions regarding Roma migrants moving towards the West. Social movement scholars have been more interested in framing, as the way in which

stakeholders ‘disseminate their understanding of social reality in order to appeal to a constituency’ (ibid., p. 42). However, these frames are not always beneficial for the subjected group. Several research has been carried out on individual control over framing processes where they analyse the role of the actors like civil society, and how these assign meaning to social reality, and promote a certain understanding of reality. ‘These actors mobilise specific narratives as conscious strategic efforts by groups of people to fashion a shared understanding of the world and of themselves that legitimate and motivate collective action’ (McAdam, McCarthy and Zald, 1996, p. 6). In the case of Roma, due to their vast diversity and fragmentation, these narratives are not appreciated by many, who cannot identify themselves with these realities. In addition, these framings are not taking place in a vacuum, but ‘in negotiation with complex, multi-organizational, multi-institutional arenas in which they take place’ (Vermeersch, 2003, p. 885). Considering these processes of conscious framing of Roma in the European context, we need to understand how recent Roma ethnic categories are formed and implemented by representatives in the political arena.

#### 6.1.2 Othering the self – Roma political identity forming

The problem starts with the politicisation and racialized academic definition of Roma ethnicity emphasised in victimising narratives. These static notions are frequently employed by activists and civil societies, stressing the marginal social-economic position of people who are seen as Roma. Although it is important to acknowledge that these problems are real and definitely relevant to gain more recognition of discrimination issues in Europe, it is also counter-efficient in integrative processes due to its emphasis on the otherness of Roma migrants. As I have described in the previous chapter, when decisions about the eligibility and distribution of welfare are defined, access to governmental support is based on definitions regarding the social construction of different groups who are in need, not only in the host state but also in the sending countries. When these definitions include ethnic connotations linked to economic deprivation, these references are becoming included into the welfare construction of deserving citizens in the geopolitical control strategies. In short, policymaking is making use of connotations produced by academics and non-governmental actors who are mapping the situation of marginal groups and their cultural, social, and economic characteristics.

In the case of Roma mobility these narratives are turned so that they are interrelated with top-down narratives, stressing the excluded and marginalised position of Roma in the European Union. As has been mentioned before, after the fall of communism, in a process of liberalisation

and democratisation, Roma were granted the right to participate in public and political life as an ethnic minority. ‘Responding to economic insufficiency and aware of the danger of being scapegoated by the majority population new political Romani elites and non-governmental organizations emerged. They raised the Romani issue and put forward cultural, social and political demands and attempted to mobilize Romani communities’ (Novoselsky, 2015, Chapter 2). In short a new European Roma Policy has been developed. Although the risks and negative side-effects of ethnicisation are regularly debated in the literature, recent political voices keep emphasising the marginalised situation of Roma, reproducing existing narratives on a lack of self-sustainment that lead to direct implications in welfare measures. Therefore is it unavoidable to include a discussion on the political framing of Roma identity in order to understand how it shapes interactions between Roma migrants and welfare service providers in London (Nacu, 2012).

### 6.1.3 Ethnicisation as a Roma political strategy

Roma political advocacy and self-representation turned into schizophrenia. On the one hand, Roma advocacy tries to claim more attention for the structural exclusion of Roma by political representatives who are mostly not Roma and, on the other hand, many Roma distance themselves from Roma politics because they think that these ethnic frames contribute to their daily exclusion. Hemelsoet and Van Pelt have recently criticised how the “ethnicisation” of Roma identity in policy measures influences the way mediators like academics and activists contribute to the construction of Roma identity and the “use” of these connotations (Hemelsoet & Van Pelt 2015, p. 148), reinforce stigmatisation schemes. As my participants have also confirmed, throughout their contacts with public institutions, Roma identity is always in the foreground and determines their daily interactions. Roma are subjected to these notions and try to employ them in their own narratives to turn the situation to their advantage. This process, of course, is thus not unidirectional. Beyond the question of how a constructed ethnic identity shapes the politics of Roma migration, it should be examined how self-definitions of Roma may in turn be meaningful to conceive of policy differently. In order to encounter both the way Roma define their own attribution of their identity and how it is defined by other professionals, we need to understand the fringes between them so as to challenge the recent socially constructed framework (Hemelsoet & Van Pelt, 2015 p. 150). This process starts in the European discourse about the Roma. As an illustration we can see how in European

parliamentary presentations marginalised and victimised aspects are stressed in references to Roma in their home countries:

‘I’ve seen mothers who come to me crying asking me to help them because they have not been issued with a health insurance card, which is why they had to give birth outdoors which resulted their newborn child dying.

- I’ve seen mothers leaving their children crying because there was no work or social aid and they had to leave and go begging to other countries to get food for their children
- I’ve seen families whose father and grandchild were shot dead by neo-Nazis
- I’ve seen Roma houses burned down by extremists
- I’ve seen youngsters who have been beaten by their fellow citizens just because they were “gypsies”
- I’ve seen teenagers living in urban sewage systems because they had no other place to live
- Personally I saw my mother, who was pregnant with twins, forcibly sterilized and other Roma women from various countries who experienced the same fate
- I’ve started several court cases during my life, when I was not allowed entrance to public shops, restaurants and similar places, because of my ethnic origin and Roma outfit’ (Vuolasranta, 2015).

A common denominator of these political narratives is the conviction that the Roma face a set of problems, which differ considerably from those faced by the majority population (i.e., spatial segregation, discrimination, low educational attainments, and inter-generational poverty) (Sigona & Vermeersch, 2012). As Kostka explains, ‘it is this understanding that is most pronounced in policy literature, stubbornly isolating questions concerning characteristic features of contemporary European society from questions pertaining to the living conditions of Roma communities’ (2015, p. 81).

These deprivation aspects are theorised and conceptualised in recent policy guidelines by an essentialist, one-sided picture of Roma underpinned by normative contentions about the causes of poverty and marginalisation. ‘While policy-makers rely on empirical assessments to formulate the definitions of Roma exclusion, these assessments tend to be mediated by the existing cognitive and moral maps that orient their actions and routines. In turn these politically accepted definitions legitimize a specific course of action, even if it is not needed or demanded by the final beneficiaries’ (ibid., p. 87). For example, the creation of an EU Framework for

national Roma integration strategies (2011) and the development of the European Roma Institute (ERI) (2014) mark a significant step in the politicisation of Roma identity by ensuring a further increase in the number of initiatives, projects and programmes explicitly targeting Roma. However, both initiatives are harshly criticised by academics and activists, claiming that they represent particular interests of small groups. For instance, the leader of the MIGROM project, Prof Matras argues that ERI is a Roma elite oligarchy, ‘dedicated, ostensibly, to the fight against Anti-Gypsyism, though in fact its main purpose was to showcase the self-proclaimed “Roma elite” that has recently acquired political recognition’ (Romani Studies Network, 201).

The political collation of disparate Roma groups into a national political community is a historical process which ‘scrutinizes different strands of identification practices that have contributed to the *longue durée* development of today’s Roma as an epistemic object and policy target: police profiling of particular communities; administrative surveys; Romani activism; Roma targeted policies; quantitative scientific research’ (Surdu & Kovats, 2015, p. 2). Historically, Gypsies/Roma have been externally identified by police-led censuses, expert estimates and policy-related initiatives based on physical appearance and social context rather than self-identification. However, due to the recent economic and political conditions this identity-framing process turned into a self-sustaining cycle where Roma knowledge identifies Roma problems requiring a policy response, which produces more Roma knowledge, more needs and more policy responses. As a consequence, an expert framing of Roma groupness in an essentialist narrative that differentiates them from any majority. This has affected social solidarity by disconnecting and distancing Roma from their fellow citizens. Such political tendencies enable to differentiate Roma mobility from other intra-European movements and justify specific measures in host countries.

People who identify themselves as Roma experience a gap with (institutionalised) majority society since they attribute a far more limited meaning to an ethnic concept compared to how it is understood in the public debate (i.e., as an ethnic group versus an international movement). According to the research participants there are also intergenerational identification differences (youngsters having much more out-group communication and identifying less strictly with being Roma than older adults) as a result of migration experiences. In short, there is a distance between the specific community (i.e., one’s own network which predominantly consists of the extended family) and mainstream society, but there is no desire to identify with the broader Roma community. As Hemelsoet and Van Pelt confirm, ‘no support whatsoever has been defined by Roma migrants for a targeted approach towards “the Roma”

as such. This particularisation just makes the local distinctions more problematic, therefore Roma might prefer to be recognised as persons, rather than as Roma' (Hemelseoet & Van Pelt, 2015, p. 158). This ethnic focus as a reference has been mentioned by many participants who felt that they would like to be not indexed by this label but rather other social characteristics. As later examples show, there is a structural disagreement between Roma political representatives and academics and, as will be shown, civil society in the role of ethnic framing and how it is adapted in local integration policies. Nonetheless, deconstructing identity is also not resulting in structural solutions to the problems Roma and the majority around them identify.

Most Roma-specific policies result in "Roma projects" that contribute to the ethnicisation of the problem, because they prevent a systemic transformation from taking place as the targeted Roma groups only experience short-term benefits from subsidised activities. As an example of the counterproductive effects of Roma policies Kostka (2015) discusses the use of Slovak Social Funding and how this programming framed social exclusion in terms of individual or group adaptability with negligent attention being given to general institutional inequalities. 'This neglect enforced channelling of funding towards measures that aimed to change the behaviour of target groups – Roma communities. The adopted targeted approach was supposed to offset the pervasive practice of re-directing funding from the most marginalized communities, instead leading to the isolation of Roma measures from regional and local development strategies. This de facto only reinforced the re-direction of funding to other priorities' (Kostka 2015, p. 6). These findings challenge the perceived positive influence of the targeting approach championed by the EU and numerous international Roma advocacy organisations, since the example shows they might lead to the ethnicisation of the problem and its separation from mainstream policies. This often leads to disenchantment and the delegitimisation of the entire Structural Fund programming. In the case of Kostka it was also confirmed that an increase in the allocation of funds towards Roma integration priorities generated greater contestation of their usefulness in facilitating inclusion (Kostka, 2015, p. 8).

Brubaker (2004) defines several aspects of attention that have to be considered in framing ethnic groups, in which he stresses the importance of sensitivity to framing dynamics of 'the generalised coding bias in favour of ethnicity' (2004, p. 176). Similar to Matras, he warns against a reductionist view of politicised ethnicity (i.e., elite manipulation), the performative nature of ethno-political, groupist rhetoric and the personal interests of key actors, who are living off politics. He also stresses the role of divergence between the interests of leaders and those of their alleged constituents, as well as the contingent nature of groupness and he claims

a disaggregating approach focusing on intra-ethnic mechanisms (Brubaker, 2004, pp. 176-177). Although these aspects seem to be simple and unnecessary, Roma identity framing has nevertheless proved that the political construction of Roma ethnic minorities is an extremely complicated and sensitive issue, where most of the stakeholders have conflicting interests with long-term implications for Roma policymaking.

## 6.2 Walking on eggshells – Ethnic framing of Roma for academic perspectives

To be able to develop a political strategy, European institutions needed a bureaucratic apparatus with specific objectives to problematise the different aspects associated with Roma. These generally rely on expert narratives, which, according to Surdu (2015), in turn serve to strengthen the ideology that guides institutional policy. Though, the lack of a theoretical perspective in studies about Roma ‘renders Romani studies a marginal position in academia’ (Surdu & Kovats, 2015, p.14). Academics and the activist elite identify the “classifiers” that make up the social construction of the target population of these policies. While political scientists concentrate more on the role of international organisations and Romani activism, the role of academic scholarship emerged in the construction of public Romani identity. In their turn, quantitative researchers most often use both a-theoretical and a-historical perspectives when explaining the Roma they are discussing (ibid., 2015, p. 16). Noticeably, there are many epistemological issues in different disciplines working on Roma-related topics. There are not only distinctions between academics based on different epistemological backgrounds, but also by affiliation. Some scholars are linked with universities, while the work of others is published and disseminated by policy bodies such as the OSCE, ERRC, OSI, the World Bank or the Council of Europe. The latter enjoy wider dissemination, but the distinction becomes blurred when academics assume the role of advocate consultants paid by NGOs.

When I started this research and attended Roma conferences, meetings and workshops in order to extend my professional network, I was frightened by the narratives and comments of different scholars, who offended and criticised each other. Due to the interdisciplinary nature of this topic, I contacted scholars from several study fields, such as social policy, anthropology, human rights, Romani studies, security studies and, of course, migration studies. Besides conflicting research objectives there were personal tensions and many scholars, in particular in Romani studies, are convinced about having the right approach and they accuse others of risky ethical considerations, such as informing media, presenting research findings or sensitive topics that might be disadvantageous to others. At conferences attendees were emotionally charged



and made personally offensive remarks based on the content of presentations; some walked out of the room, others screamed, and in some cases the speaker was even threatened. Summer schools in Romani studies have become the symbol of conflicting academic objectives with unwritten guidelines about the selection of speakers, whether these speakers are welcome or not. This division between different academic objectives cannot be explained by the lack of appreciation of others' ideas or by subjectivity due to personal involvement in the lives of Roma research participants. Rather, these conflicting positions have strong interrelations with their involvement in activism, NGO work and with dependency on European political agencies. Research topics about the Roma minority are emotionally charged with a strong narrative of loyalty to the Roma and the protection of their rights. Although many scholars have Roma family members, or as activists also represent particular interests of Roma groups, it cannot justify a moral framing, resulting "ethic-filters" in data and in research topics, based on the perceived interests of Roma.

This fragmented academic field represents not only the disconnections of disciplines, but also the fragmented nature of Roma activism, advocacy and policy-making, which are built on the same narratives as Roma studies. These fragmentations result in a greater amount of studies on Roma healthcare, gender, labour and education issues that are financed by local or EU funds. Most of these studies aim to prevent Roma children leaving school early, to change health conditions, to decrease school segregation, to widen access to non-formal and informal learning validation systems among Roma, to provide legal labour, to provide better housing conditions, to improve political participation, and to change the negative attitude towards Roma. Still, these studies employ common ethnic frames, in which Roma are subjected to structural inequality and social economic dependency. Some are also using the cultural framing of ethnicity where Roma ethnicity is associated with cultural traits that conflict with the majority's expectations. Recent critical studies stress the theoretical and methodological limitations thereof, but more importantly they challenge academics who avoid sensitive topics in which illicit behaviour should be analysed (Tremlett, & McGarry, 2013; Stewart 2013; Stewart et al., 2011).

In the following analysis I will provide a brief overview as to why these isolated narratives of academics might influence inefficient policies and how these can lead to further stigmatisation. First, I will discuss the general issues of ethnic framing in academia. Particular aspects provided by anthropologists, criminologists and human right studies are presented along with the limitations of these academic frames in studies on Roma migrants. Then the role of activists and NGOs are discussed and how their practices - in conflict with, but also in

interdependent of academics – shape ethnic frames in Roma policymaking. Finally, the direct impact of interpreters will be presented and how their ideas of Roma ethnicity are transmitted in their interactions with Roma migrants in bureaucratic processes.

#### 6.2.1 Fata Morgana in ivory towers - Academic frames of Roma ethnicity

When the World Bank reports on Roma as having an aversion to engage in education and healthcare, and make Roma culture responsible for their precarious situation, we need to critically evaluate the role of the academic framing of ethnicity in such policymaking. This particular description of Roma has been suggested in a World Bank publication written by Jean Pierre Liégeois, a consultant of the Council of Europe's ROMED programme. This programme promotes the need for "mediation" and so, according to Surdu (2015), it implicitly promotes the view that 'their culture leads Roma to disengage from public institutions' (Matras, 2015, p. 168). This essentialist statement in Liégeois's work has been just one of those, such as 'a Traveller is someone who remains detached from his surroundings' or 'the Gypsy worldview emphasises the present moment' (Liégeois, 1988) that made his name one of the references that links policymaking with academic misconceptions.

Institutions adopt expert statements and impose a narrative, which then perpetuates itself through repetition across a sector of institutions and becoming a dominant policy narrative. But how can Roma ethnic identity be defined in the case of such diversity? It is generally claimed that a pragmatic construct is needed to develop efficient policymaking for Roma. Even without territorial claims and without lifestyle-oriented popular depictions of nomadism there is one key classifier, a historical narrative of Indian origin and the validity of the Romani language that might serve as a classifier for those who define themselves as Roma. These aspects divide academics based on ethical arguments. Those who disagree state that this approach constructs a non-European Roma ethnic group, just like Roma cultural practices, and therefore the approach reinforces the opposition between Roma and non-Roma. A similar argument claims that 'describing Romani practices in itself already amounts to "essentialising" and creates boundaries' (Matras, 2015, p. 168). Can we speak about any Roma ethnic classifiers that can be constructive in policymaking?

Although they are often used as such, academic constructions of Romani ethnicity are not objective concepts. Disciplines have contradicting definitions, which are then turned into products of political institutions. For instance, "Roma" which is generally seen as a politically correct placeholder for "gypsy" denotes now a much wider and more vaguely defined group in

the EU consisting of diverse populations (Matras, 2015). The term Roma was introduced as a programmatic overarching label, meant to eclipse a series of terms that were burdened with negative or overly romantic connotations (Gypsies or Tsiganes). The use of the term Roma is closely connected with the process of interest representation in the context of a political project of representing, ‘defending and speaking in the name of all those groups with myriad self-designations that were previously widely associated with other but mostly pejorative overarching labels’ (Vermeersch, 2011, p. 93).

These types of academic concepts cause methodological contradictions, since the ‘definition of Roma is permeable and survey tools that are applied to Roma are porous, rendering quantitative data unreliable’ (Matras, 2015, p. 169). Still, many researchers complain that Roma are undercounted, implying that more precise counting is possible and that there is an objective measure for identifying Roma. This discussion will be later illustrated by the case of the publication of the Salford Report, which that raised serious tensions in the Romani research network. Surdu (2015) flags this contradiction as arising from experts’ self-interest in promoting organisations that seek to secure resources and funds for themselves, and which therefore need to frame a problem and to highlight its importance (Matras, 2015; Matras, Leggio & Steel, 2015). Also, there is a general discussion about the importance of avoiding ethnic constructions and to refer to the same issues in a contextual social economic framework. These contradictions and conflicts cause a framing gap, confusion in policy frameworks and loopholes in local legislative practices, as is analysed in the next chapter. In the following discussion different ethnic constructions are presented and how they cope with taboos in their ethnic framing of Roma migrants.

### 6.2.2 Flowers and songs – Social science and anthropology of Roma

Academics represent different objectives regarding the situation of Roma in the larger social, political and economic context. Anthropology is one of the oldest disciplines working with Roma to develop a better understanding of the social economic position and cultural values of different Roma communities (Kállai, 2002; Szuhay, 2011; Horváth, 2005; Prónai, 2006; Ryder, 2011; Tenigl-Tenigl-Takács, 2007). Many of these studies have a folkloristic nature, mostly descriptive, focusing on structural aspects of local communities, interrelationships of families and their interactions with non-Roma in different settings. They have an advanced methodology, but often theoretically weak and highlight the social othering of specific Roma networks. Concerns raised by anthropologists are also more methodological than political. One

of the Roma-oriented academic networks, the Gypsy Lore Society, for instance used to rely on folkloristic approaches. It is an international association founded in the UK in 1888. Other academics often criticise the network for their approach that might add to demonised or romanticised images about Roma, Gypsies and Travellers. Members are not only relying on ethnographic research but also on literature, linguistics, media analyses, musicology and historical analyses. Although these informative studies provide a huge amount of information about the kinship, gender, economic and social structures of Roma ethnic groups, they often lack theoretical funding and have little implications on the Roma image shaped by politics and the public discourse. Most of the anthropologists avoid any valorising connotations and sensitive subjects to avoid the further criminalisation of Roma and focus on small communities and their understanding of ethnicity as well as national belonging. I have regularly heard the following from my colleagues: ‘I will never talk about that...’ or ‘I would never carry out your research’ or ‘it is too risky’ and ‘we are never going to mention illegal activities, or irregular income’ (Matras, 2015). The anthropological field serves as an intermediate link between all other academic disciplines working with Roma due to their distance from political narratives.

Recently there is increasing interest among academics in the mobility of Roma (Vidra, 2013a; Grill, 2011; Tremlett 2014; Brown et al. 2014) and how ethnic affiliations and religious belongings are changing along with migrant transnationalism (Ripka, 2015). Most of these studies pay attention to the social formations, spanning across borders, often linked to ethnic diaspora. At the same time, anthropologists also turn their attention to online activities and dense networks of social media that are cutting across borders and create forms of solidarity and identity that do not rest on contiguity and face-to-face contacts. Debates about these concepts of “multiple ethnic belongings” and “parallel identities”, “situational ethnic identifications” as well as various forms of “ethnic hybridity” and “in-betweenness”, led to policy-oriented definitions in which this hybridity produced “new ethnicities” characterised by the concept of transnational Roma, who have been socialised between or across different cultural fields (Humphris, 2014).

These notions are not only challenging initiatives of top-down EU Roma policies, but also of academics who are working with established identity concepts. These conceptual confusions are transmitted to local administrative bodies that are unable to employ them and, as a consequence, prefer to ignore the whole issue. In addition, they also fear that any positive discrimination would fuel local tensions, but there are no references for policy initiatives as for how to help frame Roma that encourages other local social groups to accept them as equal partners and fellow citizens. ‘Debates about Roma mobility among the general public, in the

media, but also among policymakers and activists, would benefit from some sort of increased effort at conceptual clarification' (Vermeersch, 2011, p. 93). 'Therefore, top-down initiatives implementing these ethnic concepts should avoid such a political recuperation and highlight the advantages of these policies for the whole population, not only the Roma' (ibid., pp. 96-97). The key problem is the taboo of framing Roma ethnicity in sensitive research topics, such as their participation in illicit markets.

### 6.2.3 Don't use the C word! – 'Cigany economy' or illicit networks in ethnic frames

There are two types of studies concerning Roma. One that contains Roma ethnic framing, in which no illicit phenomenon is mentioned; and, on the other hand those studies working on deviant behaviour, but they avoid using any ethnic framing of Roma. Although later ones are based on goodwill in order to prevent stigmatisation, they also have side-effects. Criminologists have for a long time been interested in the correlation between deviant behaviour, ethnicity and migration experiences (Aas & Bosworth, 2013). Although much academic discussion focused on the "race and crime" debate, and there have been many attempts to explain why ethnic minorities are overrepresented in the prison population, exactly what the role of the formulation of minority perspectives is in criminology was never questioned. When we are talking about elevated rates of offenses, or discriminatory treatment in the criminal justice system, police discrimination, harder sanctions or ethnic bias in crime statistics, a conceptualisation of ethnicity seems to be a given variable. The selectivity of migrants in the law enforcement system, selective crime registration or law enforcement, when government officials exercise enforcement discretion, based on racial prejudice, have hardly been researched topics in the case of Roma. Although there are many assumptions about the targeted policing of Roma in Europe and also about the cultural explanations of Roma deviant behaviour, or illicit trade across borders, it remains an eluded correlation in academic studies.

In his latest book Bovenkerk (2014) included different theoretical approaches that are used to explain the link between crime, ethnicity and migration. One of these is the Import Model that gives an explanation for these interrelations based on the migration process of newcomers (Shaw, McKay 1942) with the assumption that deviant behaviour is taken with them from their home country. However, since Roma come from several countries and have no shared homeland, it would be a mistake to apply this notion.

Other academics use explanations such as the lack of social control due to changes of gender roles, family structures, or a culture conflict. The latest is a condition that occurs when

the rules and norms of an individual's culture conflict with those of conventional society. These would be quite common in cases of Roma who move to Western countries. Sellin (1938) believes that in any culture, the behaviour of individuals that does not conform to the social norms is seen as a violation thereof. It has also been stated that ecological fallacy can explain the high percentage of delinquency in particular minority groups but no correlation has been proven. Empirical research is therefore needed to challenge these theories and the ethnic frames that they employ.

Whereas academics who fear that collecting data on ethnicity may reinforce stereotypes, others argue that such data are needed if we want to get a complete and rigorous picture of the population, including existing forms of discrimination and inequality. Consequently, recent studies that focus on ethnicity (independent from nationality) in relation to crime tend to remain largely qualitative, providing a micro but in-depth picture of criminality, while studies on immigration and links to crime tend to rely on quantitative methods, showing a broader, but less nuanced view of crime. Yet, the interplay between ethnicity, migration, and crime is rarely studied from a geopolitical perspective (Gomes, 2014), which would include the mobility aspects of participants, as will be presented in this study.

Further, crime data show mostly the nationality of offenders but not their ethnicity nor, in the case of foreigners, their migration status. This results in great obstacles to statistical research by official state institutions and academics. The failure to collect particular kinds of social data effectively results in the silencing of certain social evidence, which is counterproductive in efforts developed to address problems and inequalities that thus remain concealed. As it will be presented in chapter 6 and 7, my research reveals that stereotypes, prejudice, and racism exist and do shape the objective living conditions of ethnic groups.

#### 6.2.4 Crime and culture in framing ethnicity

Although Frank Bovenkerk, as one of the critical voices in criminology, warned against the essentialist use of ethnicity (2003), these notions are still common in criminological analyses, which are often transmitted into new control policies. Connotations about Roma and crime have historical roots, especially in institutional discrimination cases and with the recent transnational movement in Europe. In fact, there is increasing attention to interrelationships between mobility and ethnic groups and criminal networks (Siegel, 2014).

Cultural explanations, based on the differential association theory of Sutherland, are still popular in explaining the differences between crime rates and the causes of deviance

between different groups in society. However, the strategic use of culture needs critical attention, because ‘culture is not a given, it is not a *thing* that shapes human conduct outside the individuals themselves’ (Baumann 1996, p. 11). Culture should therefore be considered as the outcome of the process in which people give meaning to their world, and the formation of ethnic groups is a process that develops by way of collective identification (Kinket & Verkuyten, 1997). Yet, as will be shown, interpreters, activists and civil servants often rely on static cultural differentiations allocated to particular groups, based on their names, nationality, skin colour or dress code. This kind of stereotypes are excluding Roma from ethnic framing who are not fitting into these assumptions and add to existing stereotypes of the traditional Roma image. ‘The formation of ethnic groups is frequently accompanied by drawing ethnic borders and cultivating or even inventing traditions. Conceived in this way, culture and ethnicity are in themselves qualities that require an explanation, and not fixed givens of traditions that provide an explanation for whatever phenomena are under examination such as special forms of crime’ (Ferrell et al., 2004, p. 86).

It is stated by police officers and even by some social workers that Roma “sell their daughters”, “prostitute their wives” and “exploit others, who are not their relatives”. “Cultural offences” or “culturally motivated crimes” (Van Broeck, 2001) constitute an intriguing variation of the ethnicity and crime nexus. In keeping with the reasoning of Thorsten Sellin in 1938, crime may result from ethnic minorities following their own conduct norms and violating the law of their new homeland. ‘Many of these customs are not viewed as being against the law, in fact if they did not adhere to them they would endanger their position in their own community and perhaps even run the risk of being ostracized’ (Bovenkerk & Yesilgöz, 2004, p. 4).

Crime is always defined as undesirable deviant behaviour, but cultural crimes evoke a great deal of approval in certain communities and individuals whom we might view as the victims do not necessarily define themselves as such. As Bovenkerk and Yesilgöz (2004) argue, ‘in culture-related crime the offences are committed by individuals who prevent deviance from happening or getting worse’. In fact, offenders are not lured into crime due to *differential association* but that is what they are expected to do according to their community values. Their social status might become diminished if they do not respond to these exactions even if it means committing a crime. In many cases crime is a tool to restore harm (ibid., 2004). This geopolitical fringe about socially accepted deviance and the cultural fluidity of ethnic codes defining these restorative tools are extensively analysed in the next chapter.

Although there are some cases of cultural delicts among Roma migrants, it is more the cultural misinterpretation of local bureaucrats that leads to their criminalisation in host countries. Due to mutual distrust among Roma and service providers, there is a selection in the information they exchange that leads to further misunderstandings and expectations. The implication of this view is that ethnically specific crime emerges within a certain social context and in interaction with the environment. Criminals use their *culture* creatively and manipulate it to get what they want, such as convincing civil servants about their threatened situation or they strategically use a reference to the criminal image of their families in order to get the upper hand. Van Poeck and Vandenabeele (2012) also stated that in contrast to previous explanations, cultural aspects could not be seen as being independent from social economic factors, like solutions developed in subcultures. Hebbenrecht and Baillergeau (2012) added that comparative research is unavoidable to understand these cultural determinants considering their social-economic circumstances in relation with law enforcement, and the political structure as determinants of decision-making. Baumgartner et al. (2009) found that cultural and ethnic factors have no effect on the risk of delinquency, but social deprivation can play an important role in socio-economic factors. Multifarious studies have been conducted on issues of immigrant and ethnic minority crime, particularly among the second generation (Tonry, 1997; Marshall, 1997) but there is still little consensus on how to define the problem and why some migrants are highly politicised in security discourses as is recently the case with the mobility of Roma.

#### 6.2.5 The bigfoot of criminology – The affective turn and the taboos

We believe it, but we cannot prove it. We know it exists, but we never name it. Roma ethnic framing is like Bigfoot in crime studies. Several policy projects have been set up to prevent crime associated with Roma, UK police operations are targeting Roma migrants, such as Project Lamplight, or Operation Golf, but still it is politically incorrect (Jorna, 2013) to talk about research in criminology including Roma migrants. Ethnic connotations in criminology, as was shown in studies like those by Van San and Leerkes (2001) have been directly linked to stigmatisation, discrimination and racism; however, it would be hypocritical to state that these connotations are not included in policymaking. So how are these ethnic connotations slipping into recent control measures?

Although it has been argued that academics shape the public discourse with their theoretical approach, it is generally based on broad assumptions especially in the case of Roma



migrants. Ethnic connotations is a taboo subject, which is manifested in a polarised discourse, where law enforcement ignores the facts in contrast with romanticised approaches. As Petintseva (2014) explained, the way in which academic voices are constituted in the discourse might end in dividing practices, which delineates who or which viewpoints are acceptable and which are regarded as useless or naive. The discourse is not just the interpretation of academic voices but it also shapes the conditions that come about with these representations and that gain importance. In particular, which are dominant discourses, which are dismissed or stigmatised? (Petintseva 2014, p. 214). As Petintseva argues, ethnic taboos are still avoided since criminologists are demonised by other scholars, and are described as a danger to the Roma empowerment movement. Criminological notions associated with Roma might confirm existing discriminatory connotations and might lead to further stigmatisation. To put it succinctly, the academic framing of topics such as Roma ethnicity is not only shaped by political or pragmatic notions but also by emotions. Emotion ‘as a dimension of the relations between persons or social agents’ (Barbalet, 1992, p. 161) are often denied an aspect in academia. ‘For those [legal scholars] who are prepared to understand emotion not simply as a departure from rationality, but as an affirmative mode of apprehension and response, the law and emotions perspective offers a way by which legal actors and institutions can both accommodate and influence crucial dimensions of human experiences’ (Abrams & Keren, 2009, p. 2000). In order to understand these apprehensions we need to include academic climates as emotional climates in the framing process of Roma ethnicity.

Emotional climates are sets of emotions or feelings which are not only shared by groups of individuals such as academics and activists and are set in common social structures and processes but which are also significant in the formation and maintenance of political and social identities and collective behaviour. ‘The emotional climate therefore includes emotional tones and patterns which differentiate social groups or categories by virtue of the fact that they are shared by their members and are unlikely to be shared with non-members’ (Demertzis, 2013 8, p. 176).

Considering this emotional framing of Roma ethnicity in different disciplines we can also better understand human rights objectives in legal studies. In the following paragraph it will be explored how affective aspects shape the academic narratives in the framing of Roma minority.

### 6.2.6 Academic crucifixion – The cavalry of Roma rights

As the term “violation” of human rights implies, by stressing equality issues, Roma ethnicity is framed in a “victim” narrative of human rights and development studies. These often objectifying approaches claim institutional justice by creating an antithesis for conservative governmental narratives. While studies on Roma rights protection brought the topic of Roma exclusion onto the European agenda, as many of the critics concluded, it also added to the exclusionary framing of the Romani population, and emphasised the dependent characteristics that are meant to be reduced by the Roma empowerment movement. Notions about the Roma from a human rights approach also have an essentialist connotation, making Roma who cannot identify themselves with these notions dismissive about these studies. According to many participants these voices are unwilling to acknowledge the innovative and self-sustaining skills of Roma individuals, especially those of well-established middle-class Roma families, and create a state-dependent image.

Academics who are taking a radical position, blaming local governments for the situation of Roma and try to push law enforcement bodies to act in hate crimes and discrimination cases. Roma, who are suffering exclusion and often evictions, such as cases in France and Italy in the last few years, are often studied by human rights scholars, but there is little attention to more invisible cases of privacy issues. Although these studies are giving voice to many who are unable to step up against these measures, and raise more public awareness about the structural humiliation experiences of Roma migrants, they are unable to increase the responsabilisation of political bodies. In the case of Central European countries, several discrimination studies have even increased tensions between Roma and non-Roma, due to their defensive ethnicising narrative.

As was described above, witlessness about sensitive issues are developed along with the development of Roma politics, which is strongly intertwined with empirical studies in human rights that has a central objective in avoiding any risks of additional discrimination. Controversially, these careful and often overprotective academic approaches include simplified and demonising narratives about authorities, stressing the shortcomings of states, local service providers and discriminatory practices in bureaucratic systems. These mostly cultural relativist approaches include romanticised images of the studied ethnic group, in particular about the Roma. Human rights narratives are mostly criticised due to their ethnic framing that ignores the power relationships created in the neoliberal political frames about rights and duties. These new work-based values are ignoring humanist notions of equality and therefore welfare

narratives associated with Roma migrants are regularly being abused in order to confirm the stigmatising notions of benefit shoppers.

These criticisms are based on the classical epistemological expectations of social research, but there is now an increasing acknowledgement of these disciplines involving action research. Academics in human rights studies often cooperate with different non-governmental organisations representing cases of Roma discrimination. However, these links tend to weaken the public credibility of these scholars since they are presented as being biased in the public discourse, especially in Roma victimisation cases where their analyses avoid the inclusion of topics concerning the problems experienced by non-Roma, such as public disturbances. Still, they contribute to a common good where they can foster their academic skills in writing, arguments, public speaking and critical reflection. Because of their interactions, many are under pressure within the scholarly world that discourages social engagement, and they are targeted for attack, which provides a potent symbol to others to keep a low profile until they obtain tenure or sufficient advancement. These considerations have serious ethical implications as it has been also presented in Chapter 3.

#### 6.2.7 Deserving a seat at the round table –The knights of Romani studies

The link between policymaking and the academic framing of Roma ethnicity is the most obvious by analysing interactions of the European Academic Network on Romani Studies (Romani Studies Network, 2014). This online network has about 400 members and it intends to support efforts towards the social inclusion of Romani citizens in Europe.

‘The project facilitates intercultural dialogue and raises the visibility of existing research outside the academic community in order to foster cooperation with policymakers and other stakeholders. By creating an interface between academic researchers and political decision makers, while promoting and improving the existing resources on the European Roma communities, the project shall ultimately allow for the implementation of better conceived policy initiatives based on reliable evidence’(ibid.).

I have already been following the network discussions for more than three years and I have offline contacts with several members. Although the network covers many disciplines and have well known academic members, only a few are regularly active. In the last three years ‘the essence of the “cultural identity” of Roma’ (Romani Studies Network, 2014) has been extensively discussed which might here serve as an illustration to understand how different conflicts feed the Roma framing with controversial images and definitions of Roma. The

network members have several conflicting affiliations with the EU, with the Open Society Institute or with each other NGOs, Roma programmes or journals.

In online discussions topics have been discussed relating to Roma identity, ethical and methodological issues and the political affiliations of academics. These discussion points provide a detailed overview of the conflicting Roma frameworks provided by Romani scholars. In the field of Romani studies academics represent stratified objectives and conflicted affiliation of this fragmented study field. Discussions about the situation of Roma often illustrate the conflicting interest and epistemological differences between stakeholders of Roma research projects as it was in the case after the Radio interview on Channel 4 about the Roma migration project of Salford University.<sup>12</sup> After a radio interview with the project leader, the UK news has been filled with the notion that this study states that there are more than 200,000 Roma migrants in the country.

As has been mentioned before, the relevant numbers are one of the major topics attracting conflicting views among academics, but in this case the critique was started by the ethical implications of the radio interview as a source of moral panic about the influx of Roma. Many reacted that the Salford report is damaging for the Roma and feeding extreme right-wing populist narratives with unverifiable data by presenting research findings in the popular media.<sup>13</sup>

Since this research did not include empirical data, one of the network members tried to emphasise the importance of ethnographic methods, using his example with exploited Slovak Roma in the UK as an illustration. He was stressing the importance of data collection methods and in the end he was the one who was criticised for not reporting the crime cases he mentioned to the police, accused of being racist and unprofessional<sup>14</sup>. Topics and accusations were continuously shifting in the debate in which presenting crime issues in relation to Roma appeared as a hypersensitive topic, raising furious reactions and personally offensive remarks. Similar discussions were taking place when the European Romani Institute was developed with support from Gyorgy Soros to promote Romani culture and protect Romani grassroots. Several members presented their concerns about this initiative, though it was not the top-down political

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<sup>12</sup> <https://romamatrix.eu/about-us>

<sup>13</sup> <http://romanistudies.eu/documents/email-list-archive/>

<sup>14</sup> See discussion 'Compiling data on Roma. Discussions on Roma migrants in the UK and the number games' ed. Durst, J.(2014) Download from: <http://romanistudies.eu/documents/email-list-archive/>

interest that bothered these scholars, but their interrelation with Roma representatives selected by stakeholders.

It was claimed that the ERI portrayed Roma not as subjects, but as the object of Soros' educational enterprise. These Roma frames thus make a differentiation between the elite Roma who are not raised with his kin and poor authentic Roma who are suffering and need political advocacy. These normative differentiations between Roma categories are also transmitted into Roma research projects where successful or middle-class Roma are hardly included. The policy implications of these academic frames are often discussed, but network members take hardly any responsibility for the failures.

Although Romani scholars have a strong political objective in Roma-related policies, organisations and methodological priorities, these narratives on Roma have limited impact, due to their overprotective approach regarding academic responsibilities. Besides internal critical notes on the European policies, on the Roma Decade and or any national Roma strategies, network members have hardly any public concern for their ethnic framing in recent debates on Roma migration. As Vincze summarised:

‘While talking about the public responsibility of the researchers and in particular of those producing and disseminating knowledge about Roma migration, we should not forget that the whole anti-Roma immigration politics and its underlying racism is part of an effort to "justify" on the side of older EU member states (and of the European Economic and Monetary Union) why capital might travel freely across EU member states, and labour (especially labour force from former Eastern and Central Europe) should not’.<sup>15</sup>

These academic connotations of austerity measures are shaped by and implemented through policies, activism and civil society contributing to general assumptions of Roma ethnicity. Like emotionally charged and carefully selected notions of Roma, these are emphasising the victim position of Roma and their otherness. Although Romani scholars think that they are able to protect Roma by avoiding notions of crime, manipulation, exploitation and disturbance, they

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<sup>15</sup> Short broadcast about Roma communities living in the UK – video. <http://www.channel4.com/news/uk-immigrations-migrants-roma-eu>

<http://romanistudies.eu/documents/email-list-archive/>

<http://www.theguardian.com/local-government-network/2013/dec/09/migrant-romacommunities-integration-uk-manchester>

also conserve existing differentiations and frustrations experienced by local national majorities. Human rights are definitely important issues in the structural deprivation of Roma, but in a labour market-oriented welfare philosophy of host countries, where solidarity and support need to be earned, provide structural conditions where humanitarian concepts of engagement are counter-effective. As long as the survival strategies are not discussed and analysed openly, it will be impossible to provide counterarguments to populist penalising voices that are using the negative stereotypes of Roma for political purposes.

### 6.3 Activists

‘And then we were sitting in an open air pub, listening to a concert of a famous Hungarian Roma band, while complaining about the progress of Roma empowerment. “I wanna get out of this” he said. “It is so frustrating that I prefer to do the dishes in a cheap restaurant, but this makes no sense” – he said. We ordered another round of shots and as two thieves, the guys were looking at each other and drank the shots at a time. After he finished his glass, he added: “this is a filthy business...we shouldn’t get involved in this”. These men, who are key actors in the civil society of Roma empowerment, working for well-known organisations, highly educated and dedicated to do their best for Roma equality were sitting hunched above the empty shot glasses, their grey faces were turned towards the stage with a half smiling cynical expression, as they were sinking in their thought about the stalled conversation, which just started about 15 minutes ago when we bumped into each other coincidentally. They all quit with the Roma after a while, I thought’ (Research diary, 2014).

Non-Roma activists, those who are engaged in the Roma movement, become mainly discouraged and sometimes ashamed when they get entangled in the complexity of interests in this field. As the quote illustrates, some activists have the impression that they are not able to help Roma in the way that activism is supposed to help empowerment, and they often question to what extent their activities might contribute to the advantages of those who are already better off, such as many Roma political representatives. The question is why would this Romani civil society be so problematic and what are the implications of this on the bureaucratic view of Roma. The quote above illustrates the realities and controversies of the recently acknowledged

barriers of Roma activism and the implications on the relationship between Roma and non-Roma actors in the global civil society.

During the last years, I had contacts with local activists who became involved in the “Roma issue” for several reasons. Some of them had personal reasons for doing so, others were unwilling to ignore the daily humiliation of their friends, while others were informally elected by their social networks and some turned into activists due to their profession as lawyers (TASZ, Helsinki Committee), probation officers (Bagázs), journalist (Vojta Lavicka) or NGO workers. Some of the research participants believe in political protests, others in revolution, or are fighting for independent political representation at a national level. Therefore foreign examples, such as the US Black Empowerment, are used by activists as reference to promote egalitarian aspects in cooperation with LGBTQ and Jewish activist groups. This brief section is not meant to describe their narratives, but to review the role of these actors in foreign bureaucratic policies targeting Roma migrants. Due to multiple overlaps between Roma experts, activists and the European Roma civil society, it is important to understand how these interrelationships shape selective administrative measures concerning the Roma in Europe.

### 6.3.1 Feed the monster or fight it? Roma activism in foreign security policies

Although Roma activism is frequently seen as a political construct, its controversial relationship with securitisation policies is often disregarded. Roma activism started in the 1920s and 1930s when Romani organisations in Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Romania and Greece started to promote education for Gypsy youths and regularly published periodicals about different local minority issues (Marushiakova & Popov, 2004; Klímová, 2002). However, the First World Romani Congress in London in 1971 is seen as the real beginning of the international Romani movement. In the Visegrad countries, post-transitional conditions became a breeding ground for Romani activism and emerging Romani political elites, who took up the promotion of a shared Romani ethnicity (Puxon, 2000, p. 94). After the Communist regime collapsed, ‘ethnopolitical mobilization was increasing in the region as well as racial intolerance and violence against Roma, triggering a new wave of activism that united a new generation of Roma intellectuals’ (Puxon, 2000, p. 94).

Weakening economic conditions and increasing social tensions have stimulated the movement too, and there have also been strong relations between political stakeholders and activists. ‘The changing institutional and political circumstances of the post-1989 period, such as open borders towards the West, brought new opportunities to organize ethnic claims. Roma

gained support from the new political elite, such as in Czechoslovakia where activists publicly identified themselves as a separate group of the anti-communist movement, and joined the coalition parties that won the first democratic elections' (Vermeersch, 2003, p. 879).

Under pressure from some stakeholders like the Open Society Institute, the Council of Europe (CoE) and the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) started to focus on the situation of Roma. From the 1990s onwards these EU bodies specified their recommendations for national Roma strategies and established special bodies to tackle the different issues specified under ethnic connotations. Expert bodies were created such as the contact point for Roma and Sinti issues, employing experts from different disciplines, mainly recruited by the CoE. Later more representative bodies were established with the involvement of Roma elites. For many scholars even the fact that the protection of the human rights of Roma and Sinti is defined under an Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe becomes a debatable political issue (Van Baar, 2012). Although these initiatives meant to address the social equality of ethnic minorities, they mainly resulted in the monitoring of and targeted reporting on Roma.

Shortly afterwards, under the auspices of the CoE and the platform of *Roma Inclusion within the EU*, the European Roma and Traveller Forum was created in 2004. Although these new movements were important in the political representation of Roma as an ethnic minority, the social economic situation and discrimination issues of member states against their Roma populations have been used as a deterrence to join the EU. In this political discourse successful Roma integration became the entry ticket to the European Union for several Visegrad countries. This led to European financial allocations supporting local national and international NGOs, alongside the special bodies that shaped a transnational advocacy network, in order to change government policies vis-à-vis Roma. In the last decades these international organisations produced myriads of reports, recommendations and resolutions, but were unable to challenge the conditions of the most dependent layers or segregated minorities (Majtényi & Vízi, 2006). These reports are often inconsistent and are unable to specifically detect the problems of Roma communities, but they have created new narratives among activists who have warned about the risks of Roma "ethno business" along these integration frameworks.

EU membership has been the main motivation for CEE countries to live up to the Copenhagen Criteria and to support NGOs that have prepared some well researched and focused submissions on the situation of Roma communities for the European Commission. In the end these reports have been turned into verbatim passages regarding the improvement of the situation of Roma in the Commission's explicitly formulated criteria for joining the EU.



‘The descriptions of the situation in the Commission’s yearly “regular reports” were rather brief and general, and, more importantly, they did not indicate exactly to what extent the situation had to be made better in order to result in a positive evaluation. The regular reports did not list any concrete requirements for the introduction of national legislation prohibiting discrimination in crucial areas such as employment, education, or housing. Consequently, there was a broad margin of interpretation on how to satisfy the minority protection requirement’ (Kóczé & Rövid, 2012, p. 12).

Memberstates defined “Roma strategies” are a sign of political commitment, but in the daily lives of Roma, little has changed. These processes increased the critical voices among Roma activists and conflicts emerged between Roma activists with EU affiliation and those who turned out to be sceptical about these top-down international initiatives.

Beside these tensions, ‘some Romani activists have been hesitant about bringing Roma under the discourse of national minority rights, because they fear that national minority rights do not primarily reflect Romani interests, but rather the interests of the authorities’ (Vermeersch, 2003, p. 890). Thus, instead of inadequate minority protection being seen as an obstacle to EU membership, many activists feared that the Roma themselves would be perceived as the obstacle. That this fear was not unfounded is illustrated by the way domestic actors as far right movements, responded to the problem of Romani migration and asylum seekers (Bárány, 2002). In fact, international pressure on Central Europe exerted by individual EU states responding to Romani asylum seekers even seemed to exacerbate this problem (Kóczé & Rövid, 2012, p. 13) as described in the fourth chapter. To put it briefly, local Roma activists are sandwiched between local political interests and political pressure from the EU.

The framing of ethnic identity by activists takes a contrary position in comparison with the previously mentioned narratives of academics and politicians. Activists’ narratives are built on critical power relations in which Roma are defined as the suppressed national enemy, who constructed by political entities to disrupt the majority’s attention to real social economic problems. Roma as an ethnic group are defined in terms of critical reflections of the governmental rhetoric in which the definition of Roma serves as a political tool. These critiques claim that the political framing of Roma denies the structural and historical development, which forced the majority of Roma into geographic segregation and welfare dependency. The activists advocate the ideas of multiculturalism, and therefore they turn Roma cultural identity

into the central focus of a political struggle for recognition by relying on culturally constructed elements of Romani identity. These tend to construct a particular minority identity that not only fails to give full expression to individual identities, but it is also “stigmatised” in the sense that it is associated with stereotypical images of the Roma culture, and moral and economic deprivation. While these minority rights claims resonate well in international forums, they also run the risk of reifying cultural boundaries, stimulating thinking in ethnic collectives, reinforcing existing stereotypes, and hampering collective action. Following the ideas of Kóczé and Rövid (2012) this section reflects the ambiguity in contemporary Roma projects of minority rights advocacy represented by Roma activists.

Roma framing directs attention to the urge for ethnic minority mobilisation as community engagement among a wider audience.

‘An ethnic minority is not simply a group of people that differs from the rest of society in terms of language, tradition and so forth, but rather the result of a process in which such differences are made socially and politically meaningful and are acted upon. By employing the concept of framing to the subject area of ethnic mobilization, an opportunity is created to examine the element of choice in the construction of an ethnic identity (the use of intentional frames) as well as the element of designation (the presence of counter-mobilizing frames or the (in)ability of a particular frame to resonate in a given context)’ (Vermeersch, 2003, p.882).

Vermeersch made a distinction between activists based on their political affiliations, using the terms “opportunists”, those who have clear local relationships with the governmental parties, and “radicals”, who are distancing themselves from the local political forces. Many are working for the recognition of and equality for Roma as an ethnic minority with equal rights and opportunities in post-transitional counties (ibid.). Nicolae Gheorghe, Aladár Horváth, Blanka Kozma, Klara Orgovanova, Kristína Magdolenová, Karel Holomek, Ivana Mariposa Čonková, Ľubomir Zubák, Mirga, Andrzej, Lucie, Jenő Setét, Ágnes Daróczy, Kata Bársony, Gábor Daróczy and hundreds of others are working to change issues of discrimination, legal and administrative barriers, relations with schools and educational support and healthcare. As Nicoleta Surdu explains, many of these problems are interrelated:

‘In a nutshell: no health insurance, no access to quality infrastructure, little information, isolated settlements. These problems are multiplied by instances of discrimination, for example by separation of Roma from other patients in hospitals,

determined consulting hours or even refusal of some family doctors to register Romani patients. There is a strong intolerance by the medical staff towards Romani customs and a lack of understanding concerning the fact that Roma move around with their family for seasonal work, or that a Roma woman cannot go alone to the gynaecologist' (Roma Decade 2009, p. 62).<sup>16</sup>

Roma activists have increasingly separate agendas. There is an increasing amount of small grassroots groups and there is a growing network of professionals, who thus play a central role in establishing political bodies affiliated with the CoE and OSCE and also other advocacy groups like ERRC which is an international public interest law group. Several online Roma radio stations have been set up and even a handbook for Roma activists has been published by the ERIO with guidelines on how to advocate for Roma inclusion at the local, national and European level. The handbook, as a symbol of the professionalization of Roma activism, has been developed with the view that Roma community-based advocacy needs to be better promoted, especially at the level of grassroots groups, networks, and organisations with the necessary information and advocacy skills to demand that Roma community needs and priorities need to be addressed.<sup>17</sup>

These developments increase awareness of several structural problems, and they are entrenched in an essentialist ethnic framing of contextually diverse socio-economic issues. In addition these processes are raising tensions between local political representatives and radical activists like Mirga, who have been accused of becoming, in effect, diplomats who no longer understand their own communities. Others, like Florian Farkas, is accused by international Roma leaders of distancing themselves from the reality of everyday Romani experiences. In general, the Romani movement has its Malcolm Xs and Martin Luther Kings too, who as Romani leaders are revealing that their socio-economic marginality is clashing with scholarly activism (Bárány, 2002, p. 263).

Although there is massive progress in the professionalization of Roma activism, there is also a growing division between the real needs of the Romani population and the needs that activists represent, and there is also a growing disconnection between the international and the local needs of Romani communities. These discrepancies were developed along the framing of

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<sup>16</sup> [http://www.romadecade.org/cms/upload/file/8525\\_file1\\_roma-realities-%25E2%2580%2593-decade-2005-2015.pdf](http://www.romadecade.org/cms/upload/file/8525_file1_roma-realities-%25E2%2580%2593-decade-2005-2015.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> [http://www.erionet.eu/doc-handbook-roma-activists\\_en](http://www.erionet.eu/doc-handbook-roma-activists_en)

Roma as a “non-territorial nation” based on their “Indian origin” and “transborder cooperation”. These are very academic notions, and thus insufficient for bolstering domestic mobilisation. As Kóczé and Rövid (2012) suggest, “ordinary” Roma are not interested in being regarded as a nation: they do not want Romani schools, they want to be regarded as equal national citizens without any differentiation. Promoting the Roma as a nation was primarily in the interest of individual states, since it shifted the focus of attention away from the responsibility of domestic governments (*ibid.*). Thus many Romani activists perceived the strategy of the IRU as potentially undermining the position of the Roma as a national minority in the domestic context.

Other activists who present Romani identity through a “national minority” frame also set out the distinction between the Roma and the ethnic majority, but they do not demand a special European status for the Roma. They maintain that nation states are regarded as the “homelands” of Roma where Roma should be conceptualised as a national minority to find support from other national minorities and non-Romani supporters of minority rights (Vermeersch 2003, p. 890). This framing was also debated, since Roma, who never demanded political autonomy, experienced their situation as a minority, which is different from other national minorities. This was also confirmed by interest groups from other national minorities who distanced themselves from the Romani perspective, like the Hungarian minority in Slovakia.

Since most of the local projects were developed along the guidelines of national strategies initiated by non-Roma, Romani activists who became involved in these macropolitical structures have been strongly criticised by those who they meant to represent. They were accused of earning money on the backs of their brothers living in deprivation and that they are betraying their own people for their individual interests. These tensions emerged in many internal fringes of the Roma activist networks (Kóczé and Rövid, 2012, pp. 117–119). These tensions should be linked back to the way that Roma and their problems have been ethnicised by Roma activists. Discrimination issues concerning Roma are undeniably a serious problem in many countries; however, ethnic framings in reference to other problems can be counterproductive, such as in cases of migration.

Many activists claim that structural and institutional discrimination is the root cause of Romani migration. Others have used migration to put pressure on the local government, like in the case of RIS supporting activists, who stated that even more Roma will leave the country if no endeavours will be made to improve the situation of the Roma. Some activists argue that the refugee movement to Canada in the last decennia has negative effects on Roma activism,

especially after there had been public speculations about deliberate attempts by Romani political parties to organise the migration. There have also been concerns about the responses of host countries regarding the position of Roma in their home country, as happened in the case of visa restrictions introduced by the UK as a result of Roma asylum claims. Some governmental narratives used the case of these Roma refugees against activists by stating that Romani migration was being deliberately organised by individuals to discredit both the Hungarian government and the Hungarian Roma. A large number of Romani activists did not want to see the Roma blamed for blocking Hungary's entry into the EU, as the president of the National Gypsy Self-Government, Flórián Farkas stated (*ibid.*, p. 27). These activists who cooperated with government institutions openly disagreed with the argument that Roma were really fleeing persecution and therefore undermined the legitimacy of the claim of those who wanted to put pressure on the government by referring to the waves of migration. Other Roma activists have been convinced that host countries have been discriminatory regarding Roma asylum seekers by seeing them as economic refugees (Vermeersch, 2006).

An ethnic connotation as an explanation for migration and mobility has been detrimental for those who are subjected thereto, making them even more eager to hide their identity in the host environment. Briefly stated, there are several issues regarding the problems caused by the ethnic framing of Roma in a transnational context that made Roma activists even more divided in their positions. These tensions were also fuelled by financial conflicts that were increasing with the European funds of Roma integration projects. These conflicts are easy to trace along interrelations between Roma activists and NGOs.

### 6.3.2 The Roma ethno-business – Interrelations between activism and civil society

In the last decades Roma rights activism has been accused of being counter-efficient and of even backfiring as it reinforced anti-Roma prejudices and worsening local conflicts between Roma and the majority (Van Baar, 2015). Many of these arguments were built on the financial dependency of activists and their loyalty to organisations such as the OSI. Others stated that EU Roma civil society also slips into discriminatory framing by differentiating Roma from other minorities and remaining vague about the minority protection criterion of Roma. As a consequence – also labelled in the media as “ethno-business” – controversial practices have been developed under the flag of Roma, whereby political entrepreneurs started to use the legal framework for the protection of national minorities in order to obtain material, financial or

political gains, which were also assigned to activists raising the human rights claims of Roma (Cârstocea, 2012).

The conflicts started with the growing range of European funds resulting in local ethnic competition, because this support is seen (and actively portrayed) as solely focused on helping an ethnically defined segment of the population (“Roma”) and not the entire local community. Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) that receive these funds have become the key players in this field, merging competition and cooperating with local activist groups.

Traditional social movements have been absorbed by the ‘culture of projects’ (Sampson, 2002), in which NGOs generate the new, unprecedented forms of Roma activism. In the case of Central European Roma migrants it is unavoidable to see how these ethnicity-based activist narratives are included in these project definitions and what sort of tensions and contradictions activist alliances and collaborations have produced in specific settings. These narratives should be read as representations of emotions, qualities of transpersonal ties, bonds, or relations and ‘collective emotional processes that shape social constructions of ethnicity and mobility’ (Nagel, 1994, p.155). By emphasising a victimisation narrative with essentialist concepts, Roma activist movements extend the emotional dimension of policymaking. Raising local tensions and political arguments, Roma activism has an increasing role in the securitisation of Roma migrants and in ethnic connotations that shape the dynamics between law enforcement and collective emotions of security, crime, and punishment. This process is strongly intertwined with Roma NGO developments and their support in European politics.

### 6.3.3 Activists and NGOs work in surreptitious symbiosis

While at first glance NGOs seem to be disconnected from recent Roma activism, and activists seems to publicly distance themselves from NGOs, the boundaries between formal NGOs and informal groups of activists are more complex, affiliations are blurred and there are several forms of cross-over and collaboration between the two. These interrelations have the direct implication of Roma framing in civil societies and many images are transferred from one network to the other. Roma activist and NGO links can be defined as a mutually beneficial *surreptitious symbiosis that enables sustained activism to improve social exclusion without becoming a part of the civil society industry*. Activists rely on NGOs as a result of their individual ties, for contacts with funders and formal institutions and for technical support to avoid direct reliance on funders or for legal aid. Some activists also work for NGOs and NGO workers also escape the constraints imposed by managerialist NGOs in activist networks. This

is a cyclical logic, however. Some activists institutionalise and scale up, bringing their constructed ideas about Roma into an institutionalised field. In opposite cases, challenging the cosy relations that some NGOs have with donors and the state, NGOs are also reconnected with grassroots activism in cases where they re-radicalise from within. In some cases the opposition between NGOs and activists can also grow into conflict or might lead to hybrid organisations such as social businesses. ‘For NGOs, given the growing competition for funding and pressure from both governments and donors in which NGOs are required to demonstrate their professionalism and efficiency, being too close to movements that are radically critical of governments could be seen as endangering NGO contracting relationships or grant-based support’ (Glasius, Ishkanian 2014, p.34).

Although some Roma activists steadfastly rejected and criticised the “managerialism” of NGOs, many activists, recognised the advantages of their more institutional shape, and by the cooperation mentioned above, they were creating alternative spaces as well as new practices and forms of organising which preserved the ideational and emancipatory logic of activism. Still, activists continue to denounce and oppose NGOs that have embraced the material and coercive logics of the market and state respectively. The main difference between the two is their individual interest manifested in daily practices that structurally shape the representation of Roma. In the following section I give an extended view on the situational selection of ethnic frames applied by NGO workers and how their managerial practices are shaping interactions between Roma migrants and local services.

#### 6.4 Living for or living from the Roma? – The role of funding in civil society

‘They make a living off our backs’, she said. ‘I am sorry Veronika, but I am not going to go there’, she said when I invited her to the office of the local NGO I had contacts with. ‘These people are making money out of our problems. Maybe they mean well, but at the end, look at us. Nothing is changing. We have to solve them all. This is a new business. We are the new cash-cows.’ (HF73)

As the quote about shows, there is scepticism among many Roma migrants about the role of NGOs that are trying to support them. Some avoid them because they feel exploited and refer to NGOs as part of the bureaucratic system, which gain funds for Roma, keeping ethnic minorities in a dependent relationship to justify their existence and gain more financial support for their organisations. Others are using small NGOs to exploit their connections with local

services for their own benefit, and accept only practical support in claiming benefits. Some feel that they are fully supported and even become NGO workers, partners, trustees while some Roma activists publicly accuse NGOs of taking money from those in need. Shadowing several small NGO practices enabled me to understand the underlying relationships and their structural effects in the everyday practices of Roma.

There are several conflict angles that increase tensions between different groups and NGOs, in particular because of their competition for resources. In general Romani civil society is driven by distrust and rumours that are reinforced by conflicting connotations of Romani identity. Due to the majority of non Roma activists in Roma movements it is often suggested in the public discourse that Roma are not willing to engage in their own political representation. Many young highly educated Roma who are trying to fulfil these roles often give up. Facing conflicting interests they have said that they are being pulled apart by different stakeholders without making any progress. Then they prefer to assimilate into the majority, and avoid these expectations of being a representative in order to prevent the negative connotations surrounding their Roma identity in their daily practices. ‘One has a better chance on the labour market and a high chance to prevent that the kids are bullied if this Roma identity stays hidden, especially here (abroad) where we are less often recognised as Roma and able to stay as “East Europeans” by referring to our national identity’. These patterns have different explanations.

Due to the influence of the Open Society Foundation, the Roma Decade and the National Framework of Roma Integration project, there is a strong hegemony of the Hungarian NGO perspective on Roma issues that marginalise others in civil society. These narratives are transmitted to other organisations that are using the same narratives in their fundraising to compete for financial support for these projects. This has led to a structurally adapted frame of the Roma as the poor, regularly evicted homeless minority of Europe like an image of the avant-garde non-territorial stateless nation. As a consequence, an ethnic conceptualisation of this international “pro-Roma” civil society raised more attention for the socio-economic status of these minorities in Western countries where Roma NGOs keep re-emphasising Roma exclusion. In addition, these organisations are creating a blueprint as a political organisation for Roma representing Roma issues which is more suited to the global world than affiliation to the nation states.

In conclusion, compared to the classical concept of NGOs that are seen as a progressive response to neoliberal globalisation, recently growing Roma civil society is seen as the opposite, injected with international funds in the service of the neoliberal agenda and European migration policies. In this section I define my findings about the role of the neoliberal business



like civil societies and how their managerialist structures shape Roma civil society and the political framing of Roma.

#### 6.4.1 The commodification of humanitarianism

Non-governmental organisations have difficult position in the field of Roma empowerment. There are regularly accused that they get involved in scams to maintain their legitimacy, and that their activities are sustaining the dependency of Roma. NGOs are often portrayed in idealistic tones as ‘entities set to “do good” unattained by either politics or the market, and as agents of “democratisation”, “development” and “empowerment” of weak or marginalised groups. For neoliberals, the significance of NGOs lies in the socio-economic realm. They view NGOs as part of the private sector, delivering services to the poor cheaply, equitably and efficiently’ (Payes, 2005, p. 19).

Shadowing NGO workers and spending time with them gave rise to two controversial issues about loyalty to the Roma, which might have counter-efficient and ethical implications concerning loyalty to the organisation. One NGO worker, who was working full time in a rehabilitation project funded by the government, stated that she feels uncomfortable at her NGO and in her spare time because she has loyalty problems. ‘A good liberal member of the civil society is not working for the government.’ She raised this issue when she was complaining about the fact that the other members of her organisation are viewing her as a spy or someone who cannot be fully trusted. Civil servants and local authorities are often defined as enemies, bureaucrats who have no social sensitivity, no critical view and who are partly responsible for the problems of their clients. Although it is often claimed that their role is to challenge the hegemonic social order, they also serve as a channel for the dominant group to consolidate this hegemony, by providing information about their clients (ibid., p. 38). In every city where I visited Roma, for most of the time I was given access to those NGOs which are supporting local Roma families, organise activities and support their bureaucratic issues, in particular concerning housing problems that Roma face in their neighbourhoods. Most of these organisations are small, run by local social workers who are engaged in Roma advocacy. They see Roma as vulnerable underdogs in society, suffering social and physical exclusion and who have financial difficulties. These NGOs mostly have an office in Roma neighbourhoods with staff who are specialised in tasks concerning educational, financial or legal support. These employers are as critical as they are protective of their clients. Most of them are tired of seeing researchers and ignore new requests for information and interviews since they cannot see any

benefit from these PhD programmes and international reports. Many have offered voluntary jobs in exchange for information requested for PhD projects. While shadowing clients and NGOs, it was surprising that although these organisations provide a tremendous amount of assistance for Roma families they are also reproducing fake data and willingly or unwillingly assist in illegal activities. What is even more problematic is that organisations such as the IOM working on Roma migration issues are also adopting these data and likewise reproducing the same images of Roma, created by falsified data. These images are constructed during the daily interactions between NGO workers and their Roma clients when clients hide additional information about the background of their cases that leads to modified data in welfare applications.

In face-to-face interactions NGO workers serve the will of their clients to keep their loyalty to their organisations, even if the tasks required of these workers are perhaps legally debatable. I saw how NGO workers ignored the background knowledge about families they were working with to fulfil their expectations and to keep their trust in the organisation. In one case I was also asked to appeal against decisions by the HMRC on overpayments, when I realised that the tax credit claims were based on false payslips. In other cases I was also filling in forms for NGO clients as an advocacy worker when I realised that the data filled in was fake or outdated. This was problematic since the name of an assisting person is also on the forms. When I asked other NGO advocacy workers how they coped with these issues, and if they ignore these claims or assist, they said ‘if the client doesn’t tell us the truth, we don’t know they are not completely honest’. These strategies were different in cases of Roma workers with Roma clients, since clients seem to be more open about their cases, claiming the loyalty of the Roma workers when asking for assistance.

With non-Roma workers, clients were more selective with information and tried to present the claims as real. Since many family members were making use of the services of the same NGOs, advocacy workers knew the real living conditions of the families and also knew the contradictions in their claims. In fact, NGO workers inform their clients about the claim procedures, the weaknesses of the system and how the monitoring of their claims takes place. They also appeal when claims are refused and they help to legitimise issues when clients have no proof. I never witnessed a case when a worker refused a client, as they try to keep their trusted relationship with clients and also the number of clientele. When I asked the workers if the head of organisation is aware of these practices, they informed me that it is normal business. ‘What do you think Veronika, who is running this criminal organisation? There is too much money in this to risk it.’ (NGO worker, London).

Although many of the NGO clients really need help and are unable to solve their problems on their own, some of the clients are using these facilities for financial reasons. Making a phone call might take a really long time with service provider call centres and these are also quite expensive calls, so NGO workers are asked to call on behalf of clients to solve their problems. In other words, NGO workers are trapped between the ethical issues of individual claims, organisational guidelines and neoliberal principles that do not always serve the benefits of Roma empowerment principles. While clients remain dependent on NGO services, these processes also result in NGO workers being involved in fraudulent claims.

In addition, the empowerment of Roma is also dependent on the level of their engagement in local political processes; however, many NGOs profile themselves as non-political actors representing empowerment principles. ‘This perception leads NGOs to shy away from political confrontation and to promote technical solutions to problems with political roots. The preference for non-political solutions for political problems in turn limits their impact on processes of political, social and economic change’ (Payes, 2005, p. 41).

State and civil society are always interpenetrated both complementarily and conflictingly, and they enhance power structures that already exist in society at large. NGOs’ contribution to political change is not only the promotion of specific material interests in order to change the misallocation of governmental resources but they also negotiate for greater Roma participation in decision-making processes. However, in many central European Countries, populist governments invoke “public opinion”, in particular discriminative voices and manipulate mainstream media messages to justify unpopular actions by appealing to civil society, NGOs and social movements (ibid., p. 61). These conflicting interrelations not only have an impact in the framing of Roma, but also by stressing Roma marginalisation these contribute to the structural ignorance of Roma by local authorities. By stressing the “special situation” of Roma to gain funding for their support, “Roma issues” become privatised by NGOs in order to gain exclusive funding as the expert organisation for their activities. These self-sustaining narratives are contributing to Roma framing that justifies the need of special care.

In critical development studies (CDS) there is increasing attention to professionalization. Scholars who attend to techniques promoted by donors contribute to the dominance of experts, enhancing their power over Roma (Hickey & Mohan, 2005). This is the growing “technicalisation” of development, the reliance on checklists, forms, and procedures that formalise the top-down process of development interventions, particularly fiscal accountability. Popular tools include those that measure developmental outcomes such as

social capital assessment (Srinivas, 2009). In contrast to managing, NGO managerialism, similar to the structures described in Chapter 4 regarding UK social service providers, is the set of assumptions that only personnel with certified training are capable of accomplishing organisational goals to enable social progress (Parker, 2002, p. 10). This requires greater control through organisations that efficiently coordinate ‘people and things in order that agreed collective goals can be achieved’ (p. 4). Interestingly, the tendency to outsource public services that was mentioned in the previous chapter, has frequently led to the devolution of responsibilities to these NGOs and the activists involved (Olomofofe, 2007). Consequently, NGOs and the public-private partnerships in which they are strongly encouraged to invest have often not been able to develop the necessary tools and capacities to adequately deal with these responsibilities.

Under-funded and under-staffed as these development and human rights agencies usually are, taking on these responsibilities has often led to a situation in which they are structurally demanding too much of themselves. Additionally, often they cannot comply with “globalised” benchmarks of NGO performance and, in some cases, they cannot even guarantee equal treatment for their own personnel (Trehan & Kóczé, 2009) or are tempting themselves into representing their project outcomes as less ambiguous as they frequently are. ‘The devolution of several important responsibilities to civil society agencies often has yet another crucial de-politicizing effect: the reduction of the democratic accountability of how, for instance, anti-poverty and anti-inequality measures are enacted, in particular where the monitoring and evaluating of civil society organizations is inadequate or even completely non-existent’ (Kóczé & Rövid, 2012, p. 20). In short, representatives of local communities must deliver results concerning developmental funds offered to them, with NGOs liaising between donors and governments.

As a volunteer and researcher working with several NGOs I was attending training sessions offered to employees of NGOs and I studied several questionnaires with clients for NGO donors. The questions were sometimes irrelevant or culturally sensitive, time-consuming and in some cases gave rise to distrust among clients (Srinivas, 2009). The results of the real extent of the success of NGO projects are often manipulated or aspects are defined that seem to be more representative of effective jobs offered by development agencies. Advocacy workers are often contacted for their interpreter role in phone claims for social benefits, so they started to register the amount of cases in which they were interpreting in order to gain more funds for providing interpreting services for Roma. In comparison I saw several less successful projects like afterschool studies and healthcare training programmes that have been modified

in their description or have been ignored in annual reports. I have hardly ever read about projects that were described as inefficient or a professional failure. Especially in international EU projects Roma NGOs are deemed a success.

These processes driven by key stakeholders lead to the conclusion that Roma NGO projects, financed and monitored by donors, are not challenging but contributing to Roma governance on the local, national and international level by implementing the same victimising narrative under the ethnic framing of Roma.

#### 6.4.2 Monkey love – Critical notions on the trinity of donors, NGOs and professionals in Roma civil society

Roma are often described as an underdeveloped, uneducated savage tribe in Europe, victimised by the harassment of local majorities. Escobar (2011) argues that although development projects have often benefited different groups, they actually maintain underdevelopment by depoliticising the issue of income and submitting Roma to external political and technical control. Roma NGOs throughout Central Europe identify ethnic tensions as the main source of the low socio-economic status of Roma, and therefore concentrate on service provision and humanitarian aid for their community. According to Stroschein (2002), this NGO targeting is often counterproductive because it relieves the government from its responsibility to provide equal services and keeps the Roma separate from other ethnic groups. Most Roma NGOs avoid open dialogue, because of concerns that Roma, as members of the poorest and most disenfranchised minority in Central Europe, may not be able to express themselves properly. This, in turn, accentuates existing stereotypes (Payes, 2005, p. 104).

The most important aspects in transmitting ethnic frames about Roma migrants through NGOs are defined in the goals of these networks. In order for NGOs to intervene and take on a more prominent role, something else is required for their work to be carried out, in addition to gaining visibility, attracting funding and support from powerful institutions, and being well placed to capitalise on the opportunities created by neoliberal structural adjustment. They require a “need” for their work, a humanitarian subject, as explained in the following quote:

‘NGOs overemphasize poverty and stories of discrimination in order to construct a “needy subject” – a population constructed as a “problem” in need of a “solution”. The needs identified by NGOs may not correspond to the actual needs of the people in question, nonetheless, it is the dominant discourse by which those people come to be defined as a “humanitarian project”. To attract funding and to gain visibility by

claiming that its work is *necessary*, a NGO must have “tales that inspire pathos and encourage people to act” (Timmer, 2010, p. 268, in Forte, 2014, p. 12).

These NGO practices are shaping a project elite by funds gained through close access to the donor community. In competition for funding NGOs increase their professional power by employing intellectuals with good English skills and management knowledge. So ‘if they are willing to “spout the civil society-free market-alternative development line” and collaborate with policies of neo-liberal regimes and international financial agencies’ (ibid., p. 115), together with these donors they indirectly enhance state control as their by-products. This occurs regardless of whether or not they achieve their economic and social objectives. In addition, by proving potential ideological responses from their professionals and with the use of foreign funds, Roma social projects help to elevate local representatives (Ferguson, 2007, p. 34).

Consequently, these elite feed tensions between radical activists, big international NGOs, small grassroots associations and the formal political parties who criticise their establishment. Although non-governmental organisations have made a sustainable contribution to democratisation by an active attempt to influence social meanings, and challenge the terms of governmental “truths”, the Roma political frames are working the other way around. This “strategic reversibility” of power relations and the terms in which people think of Roma are not shifted but shaped by transnational organisations such as the Open Society Institute or the ERRC (ibid., p. 119).

By restraining inequalities and macro-sociological and economic processes of Central Europe, these NGOs oversimplify social relations, mainly blaming the local majority for discrimination. These narratives are often missing internal conflicts among the Roma and the local aspects of interethnic relationships. Similar to Roma activists, highly educated Roma describe the social effects of their engagement in NGO work, and how they have been blamed for becoming detached from their roots, refusing to help family members and earn their money on the backs of their poor community members. Some of them choose migration as a solution to get out of these clashes of expectations. On the one hand, they are expected to represent the Roma in the “gadjo society” and there is strong pressure to participate in Romani politics, but on the other hand they experience frustration and a lack of recognition by their own minority groups.

During the period of my fieldwork I was regularly associated with these narratives by friends and colleagues who verbalised their concerns about me and my contacts with these

organisations. In several cases, such as in Hungary and Slovakia, it became obvious that these NGO narratives are feeding local right-wing political forces, which turn these discrimination-centred narratives inside out and blame the Roma for local crime problems and social deviance. One of the Czech experts on Roma integration stated that Roma NGO funding should be stopped because he also witnessed how funding is shared among corrupt politicians who set up their own NGOs to benefit from local Roma integration funds. Roma activists also accused international organisations of loyalty and priority issues defined along the lines of donors' priorities that conflicted with those of local Roma communities. Even radical conservatives are critical of these funds. Since several pro-Roma organisations are financed by the OSI, these are seen as the employees of Gyorgy Soros, whose name is linked to several conspiracy theories in Eastern Europe, linking the xenophobic connotations of Soros to Romaphobia. These voices in right-wing populist politics have defined NGOs as being financed by the West to destruct the Hungarian culture and economy benefiting the Jewish community who exploit Hungarian society. To put it briefly, these advocacy groups are seen as the protectors of criminals in order to destroy the nation state. In addition, local Roma representatives also criticise these organisations as being technocratic and detached from traditional values of community service (Trehan, 2001). Roma feel patronised by these networks and complain that they are turned into the social customers of professional benefactors.

Roma civil society has turned into a privatised EU government project. Besides dependency issues relating to donors, there are clear barriers in the case of Roma NGOs along the lines of Roma participation. Due to fragmented Roma communities, rigid and unadaptable organisational structures and their lack of transparency regarding their funding effectiveness and selection of board members, there are constant conflicts on a personal and organisational level. When Roma members are included, their relations remain highly hierarchical and leaders mostly appoint their family members to their boards (Bárány, 2002, p. 292).

#### 6.4.3 Ethnic governance by civil society

EU geopolitical control measures are built on incentives to define and select different groups, which have increasingly fed the workings of NGOs in global civil society. Many Roma advocacy organisations are involved in the implementation of such governance, yet at the same time they work to expand, challenge, undermine and reorient these measures towards 'other objectives than those proposed by the apparent and visible official governmentality of society' (Foucault, 2007, p. 199). NGOs are demanding that these efforts happen within the framework

of “good governance” that is characterised by broad and meaningful participation across all stakeholders, transparency in funding and decision-making, and respect for the rule of law.

However, the ethical bases for managerial actions in NGOs and the social consequence of corporate power between NGO and governments seem to be controversial (Grey & Willmott, 2005). Martin Kovats explains this by academics and intellectuals who often inadequately address the wider socio-economic and political context of poverty and inequality (Kovats 2001). By linking academic, activist and NGO responsibilities, Roma have become stuck in ‘ghetto economies, where they contribute to isolating disadvantaged communities by this localized [aid-based] circuit of capital, disconnected from the mainstream economy’ (Amin, et al. 1998, in Mayer, 2003, p. 121). Indeed, NGOs and activists have often contributed to connecting marginalised Roma to the global aid and development circuits of capital, rather than to including them in the economies of their region or country; a process that has produced its own forms of political and cultural disintegration. Under the current circumstances this process leads to a fully funded self-fulfilling prophecy and the problems become reinforced rather than countered, thereby undermining solidarity in foreign contexts. In short, NGOs extend governmentality by making more people and places governable and administrable.

The promotion of civil society as the realm of social action and organisation serves the neoliberal agenda of minimising the role of the state in society. Politically, civil society-based organisations lack the permanence of the state and have no capacity to address the distribution of wealth on a systematic basis (Kapoor, 2005). Further, the political outcome of transferring development work to NGOs is ‘to place the burden for poverty alleviation on the structurally poor which, in turn, leaves NGOs de facto legitimising neoliberal structural adjustment programmes because they fill the welfare delivery gap’ (Mohan, 2002, p. 149). Development volunteers and aid industry “professionals” alike are key social mediators of neoliberalism and new managerialism in developing states (Georgeou, 2011). In short, strategies toward European governance have explicitly encouraged building on the extensive participation of non-governmental and other non-state agencies to more effectively facilitate the EU’s politics of integration throughout the Union’s member states.

In conclusion, Romani activists and NGOs need to be highly critical with neo-liberal discourses, entrepreneurship and human and social capital formation in civil society. Ethnic discourses themselves have often contributed to isolating their target groups from the wider socio-economic and political circumstances. Not only activists and NGOs, but also international donors have often encouraged these ethnic connotations in order to encourage the sustainability of these projects to justify their political objectives. It has been convincingly and



repeatedly argued that by concentrating on the marginalised as agents of their own improvement, theories of self-help and of human and social capital-building obscure ‘the structural sources of inequality produced by the present political-economic conjuncture’ (Rankin, 2002, p. 10). This critique does not imply that all NGO projects are essentially problematic, but that they, when mobilised in isolation, may actually lead to defending or reinforcing existing hierarchies along the lines of class, ethnicity, or gender (Van Baar, 2009).

## 6.5 Transmitted stigmas, bureaucratic guides, migrant interpreters working with Roma

As has been shown, NGOs and activists are indirectly shaping ethnic connotations of Roma while they echo the neoliberal professionalism of governmental bureaucratic structures. These private-public partnerships with their managerialist values appear in other services as well, in particular with service providers who have face-to-face contacts with Roma in formal interactions. The following fragment of my conversation with a police interpreter provides an introduction to the topics on the role of interpreters:

- *‘Can you help me Veronika? Actually, I want to make the police understand who are the Olah Gypsies, and which are typical Olah last names? Because last week they’ve (the police) spoken of the name of Kolompár, as if it would mean something, but I think it means no more than the Orsós, right? Just because someone has Kolompár as a surname, it does not mean that it is more dangerous than Orsós, right? Or any of the Vlach Roma names... how can you get to know them...*

- *Such a conclusion would be utterly dangerous.*

- *Or to which areas they belong to in Hungary?*

- *You cannot classify any behaviour based on their relation to a particular subgroup. The territorial distribution is even less relevant for anyone.*

- *Because, as far as I understand it, most organized crime is linked to the Olah Gypsies. Here we are extremely interested from a criminal point of view, like we should draw something so that you can see what these connections are (SEE drawing)... We’ll talk about this later, only because crime is related to culture.*

- *Please don’t conclude anything (for the police). It is pure discrimination. I have seen Beash traffickers and Lovaar counterfeiters. It is not relevant.*

- *But the geographic terrain is possibly relevant... Well, I do not know how it is! We'll talk to you later.*
- *All right. Carefully. There are also mixed families so please take it seriously.*
- *Anyway, the map could be not only Gypsies but also to ensure that I get....*
- *I mean the stigma. It is not.*
- *I do not care about the stigma.*
- *There are mobility traces, but in no case along clear ethnic lines.*
- *If one is permitted to exploit someone else as an income, because it is in their culture, then they are criminals. It is not clearly along ethnic lines, but if you make a drawing you can see it clearly.*
- *Well, if you find anything like that, then I would be curious too...For me it is absolutely not clear.*
- *We don't have enough information ...But we really need to explore these organised crime networks and geographic acquaintances and kinship are really important.*
- *It depends. I see an increasing utilization of homeless or poor people, who are not part of these networks.*
- *I do not care where they are from.*
- *Many people are recruited on the Internet.*
- *I didn't mean that, I mean it depends on for what purpose they are taken.*
- *Families' acquaintances exchanging these unfortunates among each other. Families help each other so (IN9)*

As the table shows, drawn by this interpreter, she identified herself with police forces working with Roma suspects where she provides information about Roma as “gypsies” (who are) ‘primitive folk, discredit women, living from crime, prostitution and exploitation of others’.

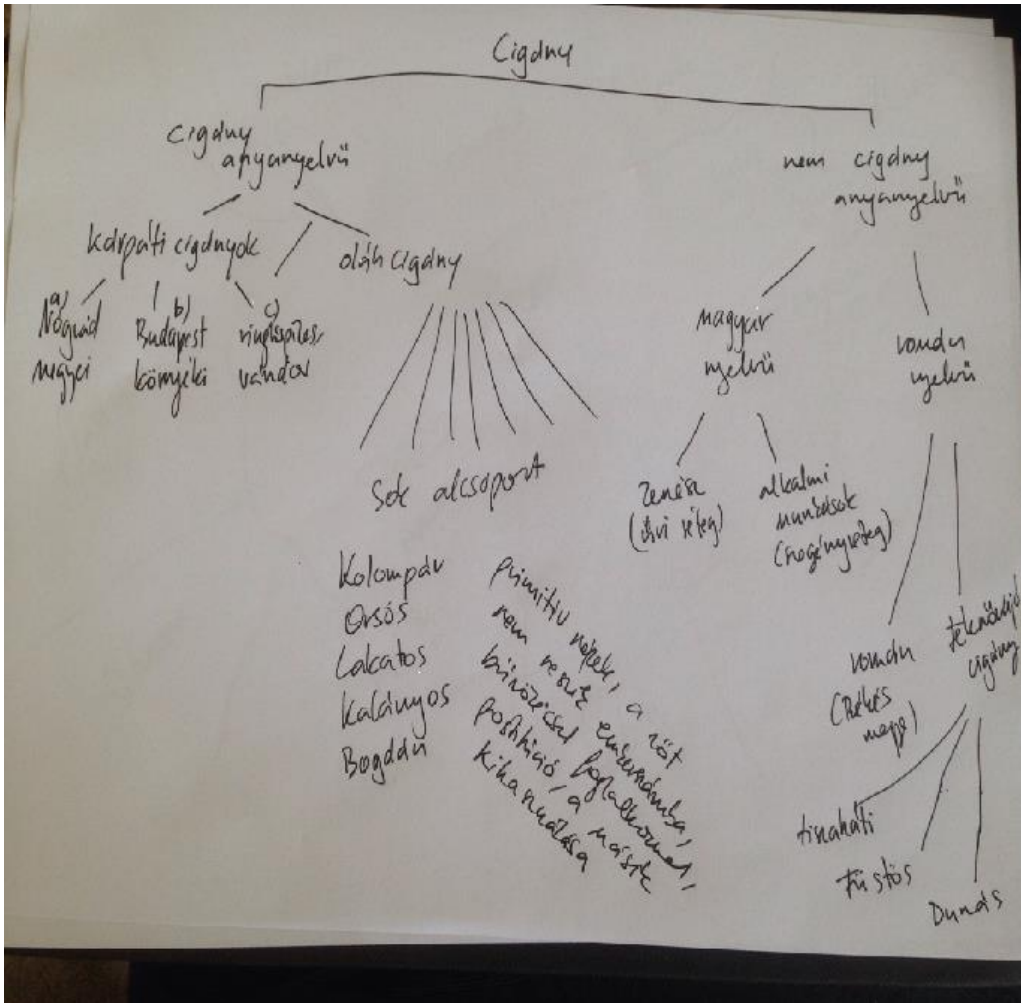


Figure 2. Roma groups defined by an Interpreter

This quote is from a conversation with an interpreter from Central Europe, working for the UK police. This legal interpreter has been a police officer in her home country and she was clearly willing to transmit her “cultural knowledge” in order to support the police forces working with Roma migrants. These narratives on Roma are migrating different connotations on ethnic subgroups with reference to crime used by the police in the sending country, without a real understanding of the correlations between crime and ethnicity. In order to understand the long-term impact of these practices we have to analyse the role of interpreters in the construction of Roma ethnicity in a host country.

Interpreters who play a central role in bridging bureaucratic service providers with Roma newcomers are often overseen in interactionist studies on bureaucratic practices. From the first moment of their arrival, migrants need formal and informal support in their socialisation with the local system, in particular to bridge language barriers. There are self-employed interpreters who are helping newcomers for a small amount of money and there are professionals who are payed by the service provider for interpreting in applications or in more

specific cases at the police or Court. Likewise, those who are working more informally and provide information about local administrative rules, are more trusted than interpreters of the police. Many interpreters would generally give the first guidance in the settlement process and they are also able to provide a cultural interpretation for local service providers. Language translation in administrative issues is an overestimated part of an interpreter's job. These mediators provide background information about processes in the local administration system, suggestions about employment agencies and most frequently information on housing issues. These "interpreters" can be friends, flatmates, landlords or professional interpreters who provide different types of services, such as document translation and support in application calls.

The implications of suggestions regarding the guidance and transmission of cultural notions about Roma ethnicity, as the quote illustrates, are increasingly significant. In this research interpreters are not only included due to their experiences with Roma migrants, but also in order to understand the impact of interpreters on the level of cultural understanding in local administrative services. Interpreters are not only witnessing different types of challenges that migrants are faced with, but they also identify patterns between different coping strategies. Due to their involvement in advocacy cases, they might employ their own personal view of ethnicity and unwillingly provide information, particularly about Roma, that might result in changes in legal assistance in the long term.

Interpreting is contextually defined, depending on local legislative regulations. I have been interpreting for Roma in different settings, attended court meetings, job centre appointments and school assistance interventions in order to see different institutional interactions with Roma. I tried to understand if interpreters' knowledge about the ethnic background of Roma clients had any implications for communications and for the outcome of the cases discussed. I also interviewed several interpreters, most of whom are working as court interpreters and registered in the UK National Register of Public Service Interpreters. Many interpreters are concerned about the legislation on qualified interpreting, claiming that unqualified migrants are taking their jobs because they offer cheaper services and they destroy the reputation of trained interpreters by their prejudiced practices. However, working with diverse ethnicities is not only a training issue. While assisting in training for interpreters on the topic of Roma ethnicity, sensitising issues seems to be generally underestimated in the basic training of interpreters. A lack of cultural awareness enables interpreters to employ their personal views about Roma that might echo narratives of the sending countries' majority, referring to Roma as a backward and uneducated criminal group. In the following section three

major implications will be presented that relate to cultural assumptions applied in interpreting practices with local service provisions. The first implication is the cultural mediation of interpreters and how they import ethnic stigma into the host country. The second is the practical involvement of interpreters in interactions with Roma and how advocacy, mediation and administrative interpreting overlap. The third implication is how emotions are transmitted as a result of the identity construction of interpreters working for Roma migrants abroad. Finally, the key implications of interpreting will be summarised as they change legal policies and the local understanding of Roma ethnicity by civil servants in the host country.

#### 6.5.1 Mobile stigma and label trafficking – The price of language dependency

Before the previously mentioned concerns about the role of interpreters, we need to discuss the local legislative practices defined for interpreting. Migrants often question in which circumstances they are eligible for interpreting and in which context is it not obligatory for service providers to provide translation services. In different interviews and also in my advocacy practice I was told that Roma are discriminated against by having no interpreters provided in their interviews in Job Centres or for appointments with local councils. When I asked Job Centre employers about the legislation regarding interpreting their answers were quite vague. ‘It depends on the case or how serious it is’ (JSA worker in Redbridge). ‘We have financial limitations and they can solve this by bringing some friends’ (JSA worker in Eastham). In many cases even service providers were unsure about the conditions for using interpreters.

For many Roma, access to interpreters is also defined as discrimination. Although it is not experienced as ethnic discrimination, many participants stated that their East European background is hindering them, whereby they think that other minorities such as Pakistanis are provided with such a service. The Race Relations Act 1976 as amended by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 makes it a legal obligation for public bodies to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination. A requirement to speak English in order to access services could be construed as being racially discriminatory. Furthermore, the Race Relations Act requires that services should be delivered in a non-discriminatory way. Failing to use an appropriate qualified interpreter with cultural sensitivity and instead relying on family members, friends or individuals who are socially connected to the client compromises the client in access to and the delivery of services, as well as the quality and confidentiality thereof. Professional interpreters should be qualified, vetted and bound by a Code of Ethics. They should understand and practice

impartiality, confidentiality and accuracy when interpreting and their conduct abides by the National Occupational Standards of Interpreting in the UK. However, practice shows different attitudes.

#### 6.5.2 Limitations of professional interpreting as discrimination

According to most of the participants the local practices regarding interpreting have changed a great deal in the last few decades and they argued that '*this is a UK strategy to avoid the access of unskilled migrants to social welfare and social housing*' (HM69). On the one hand, they defined increasing restrictions on additional interpreter services in their conversations with HMRC or Job Centre Plus employers and, on the other, they were forced to include someone who can assist them at their own cost. However, restrictions have also been implemented for these informal interpreters as well. Sandra Hale (2004) defined in her ethnographic research several disadvantages that migrants are experiencing due to these limitations on professional interpreting, such as misunderstandings that lead to incorrect bureaucratic decisions. In addition, HMRC has decreased live contacts and forced its clients to apply online and to make contact by phone or communicate by letter. There is less opportunity to speak to an HMRC case manager and there are increasing restrictions on the use of informal interpreters. Some of the participants saw this as a part of a selection strategy against unskilled migrants, while others linked it to the managerial bureaucratic system where cuts are resulting in limited services. This was also confirmed by several interpreters working as professionals:

*They refuse the use of interpreters, or if they do allow this they do it with agencies who pay peanuts for interpreters. And once they told me that the policy had changed and they just use interpreters for the first session and then clients should bring someone else with them (to the appointments) who can translate. But family members are not accepted as interpreters. Because if you are not trained then you cannot be impartial, so that you can take side of the person you are interpreting for and confidentiality can be broken. So I believe that impartiality and confidentiality is not guaranteed so I don't know what is happening now. Cause anybody can be an interpreter now. And I don't want to work with people who are not qualified, for the same money. The problem is that our legal status is not protected as an interpreter. And again it is scary because if you provide quality services to my client, if the link between me and my client is not qualified I will not be able to deliver the service I meant to deliver. All the information that I get from the other*

*side would be fully modified by the link in between. So you will never get the same feeling. It is really dangerous. (IN8)*

Others think that it is not a financial issue, but policymakers are not familiar with the role of an interpreter and therefore underestimate the qualification of this profession. These cuts might lead to changes in the service provision that might cause structural problems in legal cases. As one of the court interpreters complained:

*Most of the people do not really understand what the work of the interpreter entails. They don't understand that you need a proper education to do it. For example, me... an interpreter is actually a qualified linguist who masters that language in order to master interpreting techniques and is bound by a code of conduct and needs to be something of an expert in the area in which he works. So you can be dangerous if you interpret because you have lots of rules. For example at the courts we have lots of problems with CAPITA, which is an interpreting agency. Before, all the people who were qualified were on the national register and you needed to have an education and could prove that you had 400 hours of practice and you needed to be vetted to have a CRB. This register would be taken by the court and police and they would have their own list etc. So CAPITA came in and said we can offer you cheaper services and qualified people were cast aside. ... so if they interpret for Roma... a qualified person who is passing the information and who is distorting what a Roma person is saying completely... they are biased they look down on Roma people. (IN2)*

Differentiation between different agencies, which are hiring unqualified interpreters confirmed many concerns defined by Roma; however, none of my research participants felt discriminated against by interpreters.

Working for one of the local NGOs as a voluntary advocacy worker gave me the opportunity to become involved in application procedures and appeals by Roma clients where my interpreting became an interesting aspect in claiming benefits. I had to identify myself, and I was not allowed to explain anything I heard if I noticed that it was unclear for the clients. However, even English-speaking clients thought that it was to their advantage if I made a call for them because of my formal status as an advocacy worker. In the eight months that I spent at the RSG, increasing restrictions were introduced on the inclusion of informal interpreters, as

indeed I was. An increasing amount of test questions have been implemented to register a person who is interpreting and no additional comments in the conversations are allowed while interpreting to clarify the question posed to the clients. In some cases they were asked about the name of their youngest sister or of the second letter of their mother's first name.

Although it was often inconvenient and clients were unable to pass the first few control questions due to interpreting, many of my participants argued that these restrictions and control are legitimate due to exploitation cases, which have happened before. They told me about several cases when good English speakers were making use of their documents to claim tax benefits, even their own family members. Many Roma who returned to their home country told me that they had to pay for someone who was coming from the same country, promising interpreting and support in benefit applications, thereby abusing their lack of language skills or social dependency. In the case of Job Centres, client managers were doing the opposite and they were pushing clients to bring their own friends or family members as interpreters. The major difference is that HMRC interaction is never face to face, but mostly completed on the phone or in a written form while Job Centre appointments are mainly still face to face for Job seekers.

Job Centres are the most frequently bureaucratic contact points for Roma migrants but there are many other contexts when interpreting is needed such as courts, councils or schools. In these interactions interpreters might take different positions based on their involvement in the content and understanding of cultural connotations. Besides restrictions in accessing interpreters, different forms of interpreting have to be distinguished and some contextual fields have to be selected for an extended analysis of these dialogues.

### 6.5.3 Cultural mediation or imported ethnic stigma?

Interactions through interpreters not only implicate practical support for migrants, but it is also a way to transfer ethnic connotations about clients to local service providers. Classifying notions of interpreters, who are often from the same country as their clients, is essentially important in the differentiation and categorisation of ethnic newcomers in host countries, such as Roma in the UK. Professional interpreters are often seen as bilingual entrepreneurs who are latterly translating documents in a live interaction. According to the experience of Roma migrants in London that is a much less important task of interpreters who are transmitting the cultural connotations from their home countries. The term "cultural mediation" is often used as a blanket term to cover both translation and interpreting. However, an interpreter and a



cultural mediator are complementary and distinct. As was suggested above, the ability to speak two languages does not make one an interpreter, just as familiarity with two cultures does not make one a cultural mediator. There are several definitions of cultural mediation, regarding the role, training, codes of practice of interpreters and how their core principles resemble or differ from those of interpreters (Phelan & Martín, 2010). In this section transmitting ethnic connotations of Roma as part of a cultural mediation will be discussed based on an ethnographic analyses.

#### 6.5.4 What is the right answer? – Helping with forms or providing interpreting?

In interactions between the host society and the newcomer, interpreters might fulfil several roles since cultural mediation goes in two directions. On the one hand, local actors try to understand the values and norms of newcomers in order to cope with their expectations. On the other hand, interpreters can also pass information to Roma about the local legal procedures, application forms, and eligibility rules and the possible outcomes of different claims. Therefore, they are able to clarify bureaucratic processes for newcomers, such as how to fill in a claim form in order to qualify for something as soon as possible. Some interpreters openly admitted that they feel morally obliged to help families with their applications to increase their possibility of being eligible and inform them about the preconditions of benefit entitlements. They tell them about counter-indications and which personal data have to be hidden or stressed in order to pass the screening process. Some interpreters feel uncomfortable with these kinds of demands since they thought that they were in conflict with their code of conduct, so they also avoid Roma who are requesting their support in order to ‘give the right answers on application forms’. Some interpreters were also scared to talk to me for this research, because their income was based on this kind of advocacy work. Many of these interpreters work for several families, going to their houses and “fix their claims and appeals”, or as they call it “helping them” for a fixed amount of money. Their clients know how much they ask for which type of forms or what is their salary per hour. I also had to face similar expectations when doing fieldwork: phone calls, invitations, letters, emails, Facebook messages. The more my involvement was known among migrant Roma, the more requests I was faced with. Participants were sharing their concerns and I was mostly asked to give advice on applications based on their calculations. I was calling different agencies on behalf of participants, writing appeals to HMRC against its decisions, and requesting forms for them. I tried to explain the possible consequences of different decisions regarding the personal data they share. These tasks were

ethically debatable, but it helped to get in-depth knowledge on the real conditions of migrant families and how they represent themselves in digitalised bureaucratic procedures. Also it gave a better understanding of institutional dysfunctions and the lack of professionalism.

Roma whom I have helped have been regularly ignored by service providers, or their claims were not taken seriously. When I was stressing my role in these conversations and taking over the case of these families, I got a different response, which often led to clarifications about the mistakes of client managers. Due to loopholes in the technocratic social service provision, and the rapidly changing eligibility rules, there are many misunderstandings and controversial decisions about benefit claims. As a result many Roma collect advice in their networks and, as I saw under the guise of interpreting, they update discrepancies between the real living conditions and the registered ones to keep themselves eligible. When doing advocacy work for NGOs, I realised that this process aims for constantly updated knowledge in order not to mislead clients. This fluid process of “helping applicants” raised dilemmas around the limits of responsible “cultural mediation” since these might trigger clients of interpreters to fraud benefit applications. The question is, what would be the limit of interpreting and providing mediation between cultures.

Interpreters also regularly referred to the complexity of their role in certain situations, such as court or police interpreting and the communication problems associated with their presence and actions. One of them was seriously concerned about being recognised in this research, others described how they have been threatened due to the court decision being interpreted for a convicted person. Some were stressing their role purely as “verbatim” – as a reproducer of messages in another language – and one is therefore expected to remain “neutral”, “invisible“, a “non-person“ (Berk-Seligson, 1990). Others mentioned their presence as a guarantee for fair hearings, where they also felt like a bystander which guaranteed that Roma cannot be discriminated against. However, there is also an expectation that ‘the interpreter actively manages the communication in the way of acting as a cultural mediator, rendering services of “conciliation”’ (Merlini & Favaron, 2003, p. 212). This involvement is highly problematic in the case of cultural mediation for Roma and how they express themselves in the perception of interpreters.

Many interpreters said that they recognised Roma by their vocabulary, language use and by their surnames. When they felt that pure verbatim translations of messages were raising tensions due to structural misunderstandings between Roma and civil servants they said that they try to clarify this by cultural framing. For instance, family relations are defined in different terms for many Roma families, who also call their cousins a brother or sister, or refer to their

nieces and nephews as their own children. Household situations are often defined differently from those of non-Roma according to legal interpreters. As will be discussed in the next chapter, there is often a case of subletting, multiple occupation and, due to benefit issues, unregistered or outdated addresses. These aspects become relevant when interpreters try to clarify the behaviour or living conditions of their clients in different interactions. Based on situational aspects four forms of interpreting are differentiated: dialogue, liaison, court and ad hoc interpreting (Jiang, 2007).

The first form of interpreting refers to a dialogic setting (in hospitals, public service, business or diplomatic situations) with professional encounters such as: ‘police, immigration and welfare service interviews, doctor-patient interviews, business negotiations, [...] and so on’ (Mason, 1999, p. 147). During the period of my fieldwork I was translating these dialogues and collected data on these interactions. Research participants were really cautious in these conversations and they were consciously selecting information that they shared with the authorities. On the one hand, these selections of information are symptoms of distrust while, on the other, confusions often resulted from these conversations, since incomplete data resulted in more suspicion by service providers. These led to further accusations of fraud and dishonesty in cases where administrative bodies were confronted with mismatching or missing data about the same families.

Liaison interpreting, the second form of interpreting, verbalises the link or contact between different groups of speakers who do not speak the same language. In the literature, the term is used synonymously with “delegate interpreting” (Kade, 1967, p. 9). These practices were most common in church ceremonies or in conferences with attendees from different Roma ethnic groups with different nationalities. This is fairly common practice on the European policymaking level, but it has few implications for local interactions with Roma migrants.

Two very important fields of interpreting that contribute to images of Roma ethnicity are court interpreting and public service interpreting. These reflect a specific legal situation-related (institutional) aspect in which interpreter-mediated communication takes place (Mikkelsen, 2008). Community interpreting in a legal context describes the main legal domains in which interpreters work (police interviews and interrogations, tribunal hearings, courtroom hearings and trials) in the English-speaking world, highlighting the importance of employing qualified interpreters for an accurate service (Mikkelsen, 2008). As was mentioned by all interpreters, neoliberal market principles also infiltrated the field of interpreting, resulting in unprofessional practices due to financial decisions by hiring an agency which employs uncertified interpreters. Due to high competition and low job security there is strong rivalry

between interpreters working in the same field. One of the participants complained about the unintended consequences:

*Like one of the barista came to me in one of her cases. And she said I don't want to work with this interpreter I want you back, because since she came I have to cover for both of the parents... I had to handle it... cause this interpreter thinks that Roma are just drinking, spending money on food and my client doesn't trust her. So if you are unable to establish a relationship as a professional person, if they don't feel that they can trust you, they are not going to talk to you and if they are not going to talk to you then they are not talking to a solicitor so they cannot be appropriately defended. Because the link in between is impeding the communication. And they change what they say, cause they might be ashamed of it. The other day I was interpreting for the social services and the person next to me was against another person who was not qualified. So in the case of migrants, their rights are being impeded because of the interpreter. (IN2)*

Attempts to make clarifications in the conversation were also found to create more confusion. Untrained interpreters might show a lack of understanding of the discourse strategies of the courtroom and of the role of the interpreter, as well as inadequate linguistic and interpreting expertise. Hale also studied court cases where a misunderstanding of the interpreter's role has been common among non-professionals hired as interpreters. Instead of seeing their role as that of impartial interpreters, they see themselves as advocates or gatekeepers. Such attitudes may be manifested overtly in their comments or advice to their "client" or to the legal practitioner, or covertly (Hale, 2004). Some of the untrained legal interpreters I was working with shared several cases with me and provided a follow-up on the legal issues where Roma migrants were involved. Once we had a discussion about how to keep a neutral position as an interpreter. Most of the non-professionals stated that it is impossible to stay neutral. Others were saying that they support justice. When I asked what is justice, she said 'those who are right', by referring to taking sides in the conversation, on behalf of those who, according to the interpreter, morally deserve it. Untrained interpreters were often seeing themselves as local experts who support newcomers. They provide translation for individuals as a part-time job, and help in ad hoc interpreting, such as calls with landlords or other service providers when the services are rendered by whoever is immediately available, such as medical hospital staff, even family members (Jiang, 2007).

These interactions are the most valuable in understanding cultural transmissions since these are spontaneous, implying a face-to-face situation (distinguishing itself from note taking in consecutive interpreting) without mentioning contextualising it (Jiang, 2007). When following court cases, I interviewed court and police interpreters, police officers, and ex police officers and teachers who are now interpreters. Some also refused to give an interview, because they were scared of the consequences of breaking the code of conduct. In some cases we were in contact with the same person who had been involved in legal cases. I followed a Crown Court case on human trafficking for sexual exploitation involving Roma migrants, but ethnic background had no relevance in the court case. Ethnicity was never mentioned by interpreters in the court. At the police hearing it was more frequent that interpreters were willing to tell the police if they were translating for Roma, with the assumption that it will help to understand the situation of the suspect from a cultural point of view.

In general two contradictory narratives have been distinguished when making ethnic connotations about clients from the same country. One sees the Roma in court as victims of circumstances who have a lack of contextual knowledge, in particular about childcare norms in the UK. Others stressed the well-informed and skilled characteristics of Roma who are calculative and know how to take advantage of the contextual aspects, such as the lack of knowledge about Roma stereotypes. These narratives refer to Roma migrants as innovative newcomers who cooperate and support each other and benefit from their hidden identity in a foreign country where they are spared from daily discrimination. I have met interpreters who stopped interpreting due to frustrations about the discriminatory attitude of police officers. In short, stigmatising ethnic connotations in the legal context and stereotyping cultural transmissions have several explanations. One of the key arguments is the limitations of interpreting in legal service provision due to managerialist autocratic measures, as well as financial cuts of contracted governmental services.

#### 6.5.5 Importing stigma – Interpreting cultural constructions of Roma ethnicity abroad

During my fieldwork several interpreters have been interviewed who are working for agencies and receive their appointments for court and police investigation hearings. Some of these interpreters were claiming that due to the financial cuts for interpreting, many uncertified newcomers are providing services with insufficient knowledge of cultural mediation. The majority ha experience in medical appointments, were accompanying social and health workers on visits, as well as helping at schools and translating for other state institutions. In most cases,

interpreters were also immigrants coming from the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia and Poland with considerable cultural capital in the form of a completed higher education degree or a language certificate. With the exception of four Roma participants in this research, they had little previous experience working with Roma from their respective countries of origin. Nevertheless, like all Czech and Slovak citizens, their opinions concerning Roma are firmly embedded within a field of common-sense knowledge. Most of their notions about Roma are framed in a normative approach about daily routine, the socialisation of children and general social codes. As one of the interpreters explained: ‘If they come with an impoverished background from Slovakia and they are suddenly taken in by foster parents where they get everything, they are absolutely brilliant at school.’ As this quote shows, poverty and the lack of a proper social economic environment is linked with the parenting skills of Roma and the educational success of Romani children. These notions often indicate that Roma children would prefer the wealth and lifestyle of the non-Roma middle classes, which has been frequently mentioned in childcare proceeding cases. As this interpreter explained: ‘Compared to segregated school education to Slovakia, here, when they are given the right support and routine because routine is really important for children, then Roma children are really efficient. Because there is no way to get children back.’ These references to Roma who have no routine and live in poor conditions and to Roma parents who cannot give the right support were also common notions among NGO workers who define cultural conflicts between Roma and the host society based on ideas that Roma feed their children unhealthily, that they have no sense of time and do not cooperate with the authorities. These notions are mainly transmitted by interpreters and social workers from CEE countries.

‘I have never experienced any form of discrimination and I would say all of the baristas were treating them as they were white English people. Because they don’t have the cultural package, because we have lots of problems in our countries, so they are not that prejudiced. I have experience with solicitors...they don’t distinguish, those who have been exposed to work with lots of migrants, they don’t differentiate. When baristas do get upset they do not turn up to the proceedings. It is a very serious problem. Because Roma never ever, ever come on time. Once we had a case and we gave the necessary travelling expenses to the lady, we googled the time of the train, she knew the times of the trains, she had the money for the journey from the station to the court but she always missed the train and she never come on time. I had to go to the station to collect her, which is completely outside

of my role as an interpreter, but I really wanted to make sure that she reached the court on time. Because when they come late, at least four solicitors are waiting for them. It is unacceptable that judges have to wait for them. And there are so many proceedings and they have to wait another 2, 3 or 4 months for another proceedings. So whenever they come late they are upset. Because English people are very strong on the need to be punctual. So at that stage people are not very happy when they eventually turn up. But they would never tell them, oh next time you need to come on time. And they don't really understand the importance of getting there on time. So I don't think that the message is getting across. Because English people are very polite so the English will act from their position of cultural mentality. So then they will say "I would appreciate it if you would be on time on the next occasion". But they are never firm in that. So I don't think that it is strong enough, but they cannot change it and really mean that you must be on time. I would say make it more explicit if you want the client be here on time. So I always have to somehow wait and see what is the best way to get them to court and to get them the money.' (IN4)

This interpreter attended the sensitising course and she is also instructing interpreters. She tried to remain as professional and neutral as possible in her answers, but she clearly associated herself with the legal services by using "we" and she used several assumptions of the behaviour of Roma as cultural traits.

As many participants confirmed, gadje with the same nationality maintained a strict and exclusive boundary, making distinctions discursively, but also employing them in practice at the workplaces where Roma and non-Roma had to work alongside each other. As was the case with many interpreters, non-Roma CEE migrants talked about feeling a sense of embarrassment when Roma were taken to have the same nationality, and they worried that their own national identity would be stereotyped (Grill, 2012, pp. 49–50). In short, there are controversial metanarratives being transmitted by interpreters: othering, victimising, romanticising, as well as crime associations when ethnic connotations are used for being uninformed, uneducated and in chronic poverty.

Jan Grill (2012) and other Czech scholars working with Roma, have similar experiences about the transmission of stereotypes by interpreters. As Grill described, Central European interpreters, just as other migrants from the same sending countries, play a crucial role in identifying and describing certain individuals as Roma. Most of the Central European interpreters are highly educated and have professional certificates, are mainly self-employed

and contracted by several agencies which provide cases where interpreters are needed. Still, socio-cultural baggage that many brought with them to the UK identified Roma as the most problematic minority in Central Eastern Europe with a plethora of mostly negative associations, suggesting that Roma are liars, uneducated, aggressive and lazy.

Many of the interpreters I followed confirmed the notion of Roma as benefit tourists who are abusing the naïve welfarist bureaucratic system of the West. One interpreter I was interviewing was a minority herself in her home country and although she was personally familiar with the power of stigmatising notions, she emphasised the same negative connotations about the Roma as others. When we first met she reacted to my research as: ‘Ooooh my... I can tell you a lot about them! Sometimes you cannot believe what you see’. She suggested that most of her legal cases were about 60% Roma suspects and some of them even threatened her by thinking that the previous interpreter had caused the previous conviction. She was also suggesting that some Roma ask for interpreters even if they are able to speak English just to make the court pay, or when they do not want to get into trouble due to their limited English skills. When she realised that my purpose was not to collect criminalising notions of Roma, she tried to change her narrative and ignored the questions that refer to her understanding of Roma cultural aspects. Although most of the interpreters stated that they adhered to their code of conduct and emphasised the interpreter’s impartiality, they all became involved in acts of “cultural translation”, especially when encountering confused expressions on the faces of civil servants dealing with Roma. As Grill suggests, interpreters serve as cultural mediators of knowledge for local institutions:

‘Equipped with some kind of “common-sensical wisdom” about “our Gypsies” (i.e., Czech or Slovak), acquired naturally (eo ipso) through the toxic experience of growing up in the Czech Republic/Slovakia, most of them felt obliged to explain the difference between Roma/Gypsies and non-Roma Slovaks and Czechs in the area. For some, this was a matter of urgency and the thought of being classified by Scottish persons alongside of Roma/ Gypsies through one unifying national category of Slovak was a source of embarrassment. It was not just feelings of obligation that made interpreters engage in acts of “cultural translation”; it was also the expectation of Scottish institutions’ (Grill 2012, pp. 49–50).

Many professionals also have a lack of understanding about the role of an interpreter which is to interpret faithfully and not to clarify confusing questions, to make sure that the witness



answers in a relevant manner, offers advice, or takes on any other peripheral task that is not within their remit of competence. My data show that it is common for lawyers to resort to the third person (e.g., ‘can you ask him’) when they lose control or when they want to reprimand the witness. Service providers, police officers and lawyers often expect the interpreter to rectify the situation or to reprimand the witness, rather than do it themselves. This mutual complicity was highlighted by one of the Czech interpreters: ‘It is their [the interpreters’] job to explain the cultural differences, but it should not be up to them. But as you well know yourself, it is expected (by the institutions).’

Inter-cultural commentaries regarding Roma differences and what they called “the situation” in Central Eastern Europe lay the foundations for the development of future interest in getting to know the “culture” of the Roma/Gypsy by many state employees working with migrants. During my fieldwork cultural assumptions about Roma were being spread within police networks and Social Service providers, causing confusion about the reasons for specific form of behaviour, such as in domestic violence cases. As an advocacy worker, I was approached by the social services for confirmation about the cultural acceptance of violence within Roma families and the child exploitation issues. Although many of the cases made a reference to Roma, besides human trafficking, hardly any legal issues were Roma-specific. Interestingly, “class” or East European cultural notions were not included in the explanations of civil servants and neither was the post-industrial, rundown character of the neighbourhood in East London where the majority resides. The dominant mode of classification was in terms of culture and community. Regardless of their actual sympathetic or negative attitudes toward Roma/Gypsies, most of the dominant white Slovaks openly avoided practical interactions as well as any symbolic associations with Roma.

#### 6.5.6 Transmitted emotions, travelling fears

With cultural mediation not only ideas and expectations are transmitted by interpreters but also emotions that have direct implications for the interaction and the long-term policies developed in local bureaucracies such as social sorting practices. Roma are often described as vulnerable, underdeveloped, welfare-dependent people who are often living outside the law and society. These connotations emphasise the otherness and a lack of compatibility with the rest of society.

As was mentioned above these notions are also stressed by Roma activists and NGOs which leads to suspicion and fear in the host society. In addition, interpreters stressed the vulnerability of Roma to victimisation or organised crime or the opposite, their involvement in

human trafficking. These ideas about the dangerous “other” might have implications for crime control measures and the definition of a threat in host communities. Some interpreters suggested that as a result of ethnic notions, recent human trafficking law could be applied as a migration control technique to exclude suspicious groups. Others said that on a micro level social workers seem to apply the rules more strictly with unwanted Roma in order to make them move on to another borough. Several references about situations described by interpreters have been defined in emotional expressions which clarified their role in the logic and the effects of “civilization survival” increasingly saturated into the public sphere of the international arena. These discourses, ‘which (re)produce fear among the public at large are routinely mobilized by state officials to justify practices such as the increase in covert policing, the adoption of “pre-crime” national security measures, and in policing incorporated people including citizens’ (Pasquetti, 2013). By referring to Roma in terms of criminal networks, mobile outsiders and welfare shoppers these transmitted emotions are operating as forces at the intersection of macrostructures and micro-interactions (Barbalet, 1992; Scheff, 1994). By turning one’s attention to law enforcement’s production of emotions, power and status theories will be extended beyond the level of individual interactions, and claim that the emotions binding privileged segments of a population are different from those binding marginalised segments (Kemper & Collins, 1990).

As the following quote illustrates, interpreters are not only transmitting stigmatising notions about Roma, but even report them to the police when they view them as suspicious, which increases the association between Roma and the risk of crime. As most of the CEE interpreters linked Roma with human trafficking, one interpreter described these ethnic strategies as follows:

*For example, last Friday we went to take a statement from someone who had been trafficked. Women are targeted by how I shall call them...gangs. A Roma person who abuses Roma people. He would come to the settlement and he would say to give them work, take these ladies into your houses, lock them up and take their IDs, and they would then take their benefits or marry them off. They would normally marry them off to ...in my experience Palestinians or Nigerians. They wouldn’t get the money. They would normally get 200 or 300 pounds. But the amount they normally exchange is 8,000 pounds which means that the Nigerian pays something like 9,000 pounds to someone in the middle. So there are two more actors, who share 8,000 pounds. So 4000 pounds staying here 4,000 for the other actor and just*

*400 pounds for the girl. I think they know the situation of the ladies. They are very clever. I think those are the Slovaks who set this up. They would know the situation and they would know the ladies in question. I am not sure if they arrange the ceremony. I think the Nigerians are setting that up. They mostly try to have it done be someone else because they themselves need permission to stay here. I had two very dodgy marriages over the phone at the register office that I declined to attend because if I was present and if I saw that it was suspicious it would be my duty to call the police. It is probably not my duty, but it would feel that it is my duty to call the police and to say that there is something dodgy about the whole thing. I would be putting myself in a very risky situation. There was one case when I went to a church ceremony and two Roma ladies and a big Nigerian family were present. It was the first time in my case and I did not know how to react so I informed the church minister and she said it happens everywhere in the UK. And she didn't even talk to me about it anymore. I didn't know what to do so I didn't report it, but if I would find myself in that situation again I would go to the bathroom, make a call and say this is what is happening right now. You have to be very quick, so I have to say what is happening right now and I cannot delay the case....The women don't report it because they don't speak the language, they are forced into these marriages. They are not there of their own free will, they just want to get out so they would agree with anything to get out of this country. They would normally be reported by the registrars or the police would have some kind of informant who would report it. (IN2)*

Although research participants who used to work with interpreters were never complaining about them, some interpreters were claiming about other they are working with that they are prejudiced and tell the authorities “what Roma means”. Along these lines institutional actors like interpreters have a direct impact on the state’s responses to these types of “external threats” (Pasquetti, 2013). Yet, security practices and discourses inevitably move from the policy-making arena to the ground where they permeate the fabric of everyday life. The incorporation of state practices of security and discourses of suspiciousness in everyday life – which includes everyday practices such as spotting “suspicious” people on buses and driving circuitously around “dangerous” neighbourhoods – has important emotional components.

## 6.6 Conclusion

Today's "Roma" are the contemporary inheritors of the gypsy legacy, an identity that has been historically fabricated by scholars, experts and bureaucrats. 'To be clear, the claim we are making is not that the Roma group does not exist, quite the opposite. We assert that the group is being formed and that the driving force behind this process is competitive political interest' (Surdu & Kovats, 2015, p. 7). The question is how law-enforcement practices can affect emotions among those people – mainly, but not exclusively, minority citizens or incorporated non-citizens – who are constructed in policy and public debates as dangerous and unworthy outsiders of the legitimate political community. Academics, activists and interpreters, just as any policing and security agency, are playing a role in the (re)production of emotions in which law-enforcement practices interact with a key ethno-national cleavage within the citizenry between Roma and non-Roma citizens( Pap, 2014 ; Brubaker, 2004).

As it will be shown in the next chapter, Roma narratives offer insights which could not be retrieved elsewhere and, as such, they "inform" policy making: they may break through existing prejudices, affirm existing conceptions, clarify underlying motivations or causes and bring in new elements. As such, they add to the discussion on a proper understanding of social practices of surveillance and the securitisation of ethnic migrants. The latter are not static realities though: social practices change over time and therefore the process of understanding is never-ending. From a political interpretative approach, these case studies not only inform us but also contribute to the constitution of that reality and form part of it in a creative way. This political dimension relates to one of the purposes of giving a voice: taking voices or perspectives into account is a democratic act. Interest in these narratives opens space for participation in an ongoing conversation and in discussions on what is in the best interest of Roma and how they anticipate these emotionally defined control practices. What they say is literally "taken into account": it forms part of the societal debate. There are thus good reasons to take an "insider perspective" into account besides the voices of other relevant stakeholders when constructing policy (Hemelsoet & Van Pelt, 2015, p. 157).

## Chapter 7 Return to the Bermuda Triangle– Accessing benefits

### 7.1 Passing the sally port – Coping strategies of Roma newcomers

Although words like “tourists” and “shopping” are used to describe foreign benefit claimants, living on welfare in a foreign country is more comparable to living in a detention centre. Provisions are interrelated, like prison cells connected to central corridors. Claimants are expected to pass control measures like sally ports, where officers open the port doors individually after verifying that the person is allowed to pass. Benefit claimants wait in uncertainty for decision makers who act like guards, controlling and selecting them.

Settling in a different country is often considered to be a smooth process in which newcomers, just like products on an assembly line, follow the steps of their fellow countrymen. Although the UK is often described as a welfare paradise, Chapter 5 described how benefit claims are regularly suspended or ignored. To find their way around the benefit labyrinth, newcomers develop coping strategies alongside changing welfare restrictions that are meant to restrict the westward mobility of unemployed newcomers.

After the EU expansion, some member state bureaucracies began changing their priorities toward business structures and increasingly including private organisations in social service practices. These organisations are increasingly subjected to efficiency-oriented practices, targets and limited discretionary powers. The changes in social service practices have altered the role of bureaucracies in the surveillance society. ‘Welfarism’ has turned into targeted policing of the unemployed in which socially dependent newcomers are subjected to strict controls and sanctions through social service provisions. These processes are meant to control transnational mobility and prevent financial abuse. Currently, the digitalisation of population control as a geopolitical measure of electronic governance has resulted in new strategies in which selection parameters are independent of nationality and ethnicity but profile economic status. Service users are encouraged, both explicitly and implicitly, to adapt themselves to the demands of the neoliberal market. Likewise, marginalised migrants exhibit dispositions of the desired citizen consistent with shifts in this bureaucratic field (Woolford, & Nelund, 2003, p. 23). The welfare surveillance of local social services is triggered since surveillance subjects are not passive actors in these control processes. Different generations of newcomers develop suitable strategies to find their way in these procedures by manipulating, bypassing or hiding from these techniques of governance.

The last part of this dissertation will consist three chapters that address migrants' coping strategies. Each chapter focuses on one particular form of interaction with welfare bureaucracies. The first will address the provision of basic conditions in the host country and the challenges of job seeking. The second will analyse the struggles Roma people face with tax credit applications. The third will describe the coping strategies of those who are hidden from welfare bureaucracies.

Surveillance subjects play an active role in the structural forces that shape and guide their interactions with social service agencies. Dialogic interfaces between service providers and newcomers are constantly shaping the preconditions of benefit entitlements. Profiling methods are retargeting suspicious claimants, who are identified based on updated information registered in digital databases. As a reaction applicants are searching for new loopholes in the system in order to avoid selection mechanisms. As it has been described above, they have to present the ideal character of the proactive neoliberal citizen. Likewise, bureaucratic application systems have been developed to include several screening moments that push benefit applicants toward participation in the labour market and restrict their eligibility (see Figure 1).

Simply qualifying to apply for benefits can be difficult for newcomers to the UK. They need to prove their address to apply for a National Insurance (NI) number. Bank accounts are required for every benefit application, but it is difficult to get one without proof of income. While a migrant has to pay the rent regularly from the time of arrival, Housing Benefit is only available to people who have a job or receive Jobseeker's Allowance. However, Jobseeker's Allowance is only available to people who have passed the National Habitual Residence test. This test requires proof of residence in the UK, so migrants are unable to claim anything in their first three months. The complexity of these interdependencies are not only interpreted as obstacles, but also as a bureaucratic fringe space where well-informed newcomers are able to circumvent restrictions to become entitled to benefits. In Chapter 1 it was suggested that social services agencies target monitoring practices toward Roma migrants, who then apply counterstrategies against social sorting and criminalisation in order to be able to stay in the host country.

I will next present a detailed analysis of ethnographic data on Roma mobility to analyse the ways in which changing bureaucratic practices in London shape the knowledge of Roma newcomers about monitoring and selection practices. Extended case studies will serve to chronologically illuminate the changes in mobility patterns and coping strategies that Roma have used when coming into contact with social services. This chapter will then provide an

analysis of the different stages of settling in the UK, in particular interactions with JobCentre Plus offices.

## 7.2 The first stage – preconditions for settling

This section will analyse different stages of interactions between local bureaucratic structures and migrants, from the moment of their arrival. These stages are observed using three central questions. First, what are applicants supposed to do according to social policies? Second, how are they supposed to manage their claims and what are they expected to do to achieve that? And third, how do they actually react?

I will first describe how brokers are the key actors in these interactions. Then, I will address difficulties with basic registrations, such as access to NI applications. Finally, I will present interactions at JobCentre Plus, as well as the recent managerial implications of welfare provisions like financial sanctions.

The central argument in this chapter is that “deservingness” is constantly defined in the interplay of face-to-face interactions between service providers and clients, in which efficiency in job applications is defined as the precondition of benefit entitlement.

### 7.2.1 Help for sale – Broker, landlord or idol?

To be able to stay in a foreign country, it is almost required that a person know someone who is familiar with the foreign bureaucracies. These actors can be paid interpreters who provide extra information about the local procedures, landlords who benefit from applicants’ success, family members who try to make their relatives self-sustaining in order to prevent extra costs or professional brokers who make a living from the commodification of information. As will be illustrated in identity commodification/fraud cases, these agents combine different tasks, such as providing accommodation and selling information for job applications, bank account registrations or national security numbers. However, there is blurred line between consensual or predatory relationships with these middlemen.

One of the Roma brokers (BR5) I interviewed, a Hungarian man in his mid-thirties, had lived in London for five years. He explained how he stepped out of the grey market and started his own letting agency. Like many other settled entrepreneurs, he makes money by renting houses from other ethnic minorities and subletting them to his fellow countrymen. He also uses the help of a contracted friend in Hungary to recruit migrants, and assists them after their

arrival. He started his business as a recruiter for another agency; when he made enough money, he rented a large property and also started subletting. Nowadays, he has several houses and lives in one of them.

In addition to acting as a landlord, he offers a “complete package” with which he keeps assisting the migrants recruited from Hungary with practical arrangements to ensure that they become employed. He complained that everything he does for new arrivals makes him look bad because people are unable to relativize the circumstances and realise how much easier he makes their lives for a £200 fee. For that fee, he provides newcomers with information and a corrupt job interview at a local hotel. This practically means that he pays for an intern HR manager to sell the job interview questions and tells the names of the applicants so they will be taken by hotel as a new employee. He helps newcomers apply for a bank account and an NI number. Without an NI number and proof of an address, it is difficult to open a bank account, which is a precondition for job applications and social benefits. He claimed that out of the £200 ‘administration fee’, he pays £150 to the hotel recruiter and about £20 to cover his transport. Thus he hardly earns £30 per person after these costs.

*When I asked why he went to such an effort for such a small payment, he was stressed and irritated: ‘Why? Because you will live in my house and you will pay the rent for me. So it is good for everyone, you see?’ (BR5)*

In short, information, complex applications and “favours” like interpreting offered by such a middleman can cost a newcomer up to £200, which is a serious financial investment. Newcomers also have to pay their rent, housing deposit and travel costs, all of which is also organised by the broker described above. Since legal aid is no longer available for these claimants, they depend on these agencies and often acquire debts. Although NGOs also assist migrants with application forms and appeals, newcomers are usually not aware of the existence of these offices and outreach services are quite uncommon. These restrictions increase the role of middlemen who have local connections and help newcomers pass through the sieve of the welfare sorting machine, although these dependency relations with a stranger increase the risk of data abuse.

Although many of these Roma middlemen are highly exploitative with regard to their tenants and some are living and working for them in a modern slavery relationship, these middlemen are also seen as role models by people who are inspired by their lifestyle. One of the research participants (BR3) who was in London for the first time, also working as a cleaner



in a hotel, followed the same strategy as her recruiters. First she was unable to keep her job due to her disability and she moved back to her home country. While she was preparing her return she invested in online friendships on Social media and made her first arrangements from her hometown to be able to move back. When she returned to London, she was more prepared than first time and she had invested her backdated PIP payments in a property she was subletting, just like the brokers above. She was following the same techniques but reduced the preconditions for clients to one week's rent plus one week's deposit. She advertises her rooms on social media and invests a lot in personal relationships with her tenants, who also support her by providing additional services such as babysitting and translations.

Agents who were participating in this research have their own specific target groups (e.g. recruitment for hotel work, factory jobs or just tenancies), but surprisingly none of them are willing to rent to Roma, which raised the question of ethnic solidarity. A participant who sublets houses and who was raised in a traditional Roma family asked for my assistance with a room she wanted to rent. Interestingly, she was willing to look for a relationship with a Roma, but she was unwilling to have Roma as tenants: *'I don't want Roma, they don't work'* (BR2). Other participants regularly mentioned these discriminatory practices, stressing that these practices increase their difficulties when they are trying to find accommodation or jobs. This leads to their repetitive social and economic exclusion. Roma therefore have no trust in "professional recruiters" and prefer to rely on their own social networks.

Participants who were assisted by these middlemen described them as exploitative brokers who often abused their clients' naivety or trust. Some not only sold their know-how for benefit applications, but recruited newcomers to use their documents for credit contracts or tenancy agreements. Some described recruiters as traffickers who make Roma sign benefit claims or open bank accounts in their name and then send them back to their home countries. These cases will be described in the last analytical chapter. These predatory relationships have resulted in a growing awareness not only among migrants, but also among service providers.

With the help of social media, newcomers are now better informed about the possibilities of brokerage and can verify the agencies they are paying for services. More newcomers are able to make their arrangements alone and fewer become victimised by exploiters who increase distrust that damages the businesses of the fair trade middlemen:

*They are no longer easy to rip off, or fewer are now coming. It was messed up at that time when 90% were cheated, and now they do not trust the agencies anymore... But some who are told that they will get £20 per hour are still tricked... A few years ago,*

*many more people were coming, but now you have these social media and other websites so they are more careful now. And yet many competitors are discrediting each other too. I am also tired of constantly being compared to others [his business is also discussed on several websites]. I used to do stupid stuff, I admit it. (BR5)*

Thanks to the experiences during previous migration flows to London, many Roma possessed sufficient amounts of social and symbolic capital to act quickly within the interstitial spaces of various systems opened up after the EU expansion. These pathways were often temporary and quickly closed off. As Grill (2015) describes, Roma migrants ‘were aware of the limited duration of these efforts, and knew that the key to success was not only to understand certain techniques or mechanisms but also to explore these at a particular moment’ (p. 101).

Within the continuous dynamic of control and proof, monitoring authorities have discovered several manipulation techniques. These have made their screening mechanisms more restricted and introduced high sanctions for any misuse or abuse of personal data. This leads to new types of dependency relations, innovative data abuse and the increasing visibility of exploited migrants. In the following section, I will describe the first challenges and how such marginal newcomers find the most inventive solutions.

### 7.2.2 Settling down – tenancy agreements

Every EU member state has basic administrative procedures that enable foreign EU citizens to live and work there. Migrants are expected to pay their own travel costs and manage their own accommodation. This investment often starts with short-term loans and a dependence on relatives or friends in the host country. Although newcomers are often accommodated first by relatives, their residence address can usually not be used to apply for an NI number, because the application might affect the main tenant’s tax credit payment. And when a room is being sublet illegally, landlords are unable to provide tenancy agreements. To put it succinctly, newcomers need to find an address to register for proof of residence.

Unlike some other EU countries, the UK has no central database that records tenancies, so there are other requirements to prove UK residency. When a tenant rents a room from a registered local agency, the agency provides a formal document. However, these agencies have many preconditions and usually require several months’ deposit, long-term contracts and high rents compared to the informal subletting of rooms described above. Many Roma cannot afford

such a high rent for a room, and even more documents are needed for a free property. The preconditions for a tenancy contract are not problematic for the tenant who is subletting the room, but they are for the landlord who is not paying tax and has not registered the property, if he is claiming Housing Benefit or other benefits for the property.

When landlords are unwilling to provide a tenancy agreement, migrants are forced to use a different strategy. In interviews, most participants said they provided a temporary address when applying for an NI number. But there are also tenancy agreements for sale that are registered at “polluted addresses”, which brokers can provide for a small payment. Other participants falsified their own tenancy contract and sold it or gave it to their friends. There were hardly any participants who lived at their registered address during the first few months, which pollutes the data analyses of service providers. After a lot of applications these *commodified addresses* are controlled, but due to the high fluctuation in the London housing market, this is not considered a priority for law enforcement agencies. The real problems start when benefit applications have to be registered.

### 7.2.3 National Insurance Number – The real identity in London

The most important part of the registration process is the ‘NINO’, the application for a National Insurance Number. After newcomers get a tenancy agreement, they need to make an appointment to apply for an NI number on the phone in English, which often requires an interpreter. And if newcomers are able to book an appointment with their local JobCentre Plus office, they are invited by means of an English letter for an interview. These offices are often unwilling to provide interpreters (the conditions for the provision of interpreters are not defined), which makes the applicant dependent on others who are willing to translate for them. Many newcomers prefer to attend the appointment with someone who can clarify the questions and might indicate which the “right answer” is. However, these informal interpreters can cause misunderstandings, delays in the application process and even rejected claims.

The questionnaire for the NI number application is long and complicated and has particular questions that migrants must learn “to answer properly” in order to become entitled to an NI number. A participant mentioned a general example about the ‘will to work’ as a precondition. Many families try to register their parents for family reunion. Although the parents are often retired in their home country, in order to receive an NI number and healthcare, they have to *confirm that they are coming to work*, since they are not entitled to a pension in the UK. In short, people who are not coming with the purpose of work or study have almost no

chance of being included in the national registration system. In short, potential benefit claimants are in some cases forced to lie about their real intentions to get access to social provisions since otherwise they are unable to get a National Insurance number. As will be shown below, some participants said that during interviews, even the officer processing their claim suggested lying to make the applicant eligible for registration.

As an interpreter and advocacy worker at different NGOs, I made several appointments for newcomers from different countries and attended their interviews. Almost everyone was aware of the importance of this process, and some participants even changed their names and ID to be able to apply for a “second” NI number especially for credit checks. One of the participants told that he ‘made many trouble’ when he was last time living in London. He committed fraud, took day pay loans and therefore he has a damaged credit history. He went back to his home country, changed his name and applied for Identity documents in order to claim a new National Insurance Number. By claiming a new NI they felt to create a new debt free identity. Central European Roma who have been in contact with local NGOs in London have a strong overview of the bureaucratic system, and they are aware of the interrelationships between the different eligibility regulations. Still, many were unable to apply this knowledge due to language issues or the registration defaults online.

*Limiting Access to interpretation for benefit applications* is one of the most efficient bureaucratic obstacles that has been justified by recent financial cuts in service provision. At the same time, interpreters argued that the prices are really low as these offices are working with one particular agency employing uncertified interpreters. In addition to interpreting, another barrier erected in the fieldwork period is the restriction on bank account applications. Without an account in the UK, there is hardly any possibility of becoming employed or claiming a benefit.

#### 7.2.4 Bank account

Although there is free mobility in Europe, migrants are expected to have a British bank account in The United Kingdom. To open an account, foreign citizens are asked to provide evidence of their identity and confirmation of their address. For those who have been living abroad and are planning to move or return to the UK, this is problematic due to a lack of credit history in the UK.

Various general preconditions made it difficult for the participants to furnish the required documents. They were asked for original passports, NI cards or birth certificates, and their

travel documents had to be current (i.e. unexpired). Letters about utility bills needed to have a recent date and, for students, the course dates stated in the letter of acceptance had to reasonably correspond with the date of the account application to the bank.

The majority of banks are unwilling to offer domestic banking services to people who do not have an address in the UK because of concerns over the prevention of fraud and extra administrative costs. Migrants with no income and no proper address regularly had problems opening a bank account. Even those with a proof of address could be thwarted by a suspicious bank employee. One of the participants, an older lady who had just moved to East London to stay with her family, was wearing traditional clothing and pinned hairstyle when she tried to open a bank account in order to be able to claim JSA. She was trawling the High Street with her daughter, but she was refused by every single bank. Her daughter started to become upset and told a bank employee that she had opened an account at the same branch under the same conditions as those of her mother; the employee replied that ‘the preconditions were modified two weeks ago’. After several failures, she managed to open a Santander debit card account online (BR3).

Due to extreme cuts in the provision of legal advice by local councils, access to assistance is restricted. Solicitors are also often so overloaded that many are unable to take on new cases. An experienced advocacy worker at a local NGO, stated that this is worrying since these cuts also stop people from building legal cases against the government. Any irregular situation with bureaucratic exclusion should thus be channelled toward NGOs who have the capacity to build a case from the facts.

Fear of fraud is causing banks to make opening accounts more difficult. As one branch manager in Ilford clarified, after a few fraud cases involving Eastern European migrants, a central decision was taken that banks should only provide accounts to foreign EU nationals if the applicants can provide some written documents, such as a bill, to demonstrate that they are actually residing at the address on the application form. According to the general argument, these restrictions are due to money-laundering regulations that were introduced in 1993. In short, even banks have introduced extra checks and placed limitations on new clients based on their bureaucratic track records.

As a solution to being denied a bank account, many participants are *using the card of a family member* or only using debit cards that are easily accessible but less secure than other accounts. Roma often rely on information provided in family networks or on online social media forums. On such forums, many Roma ask for suggestions and collect ideas about how to create a credit history. Although there are many paper tracks toward mobility, it is still not

enough to settle in a new society. The general solution is to *wait* or to choose the easiest temporary account, as illustrated above, until EU migrants can prove enough history to open a better account.

A participant who had been living in Canada and Ireland explained his tactics concerning these restrictions. He informed me that a few years ago, before these restrictions took effect, he was able to open several accounts when his family had debts or short-term loans linked to his accounts. He stated that there are similar practices in Canada and Ireland too (HM36). This family regularly *sold bank cards, credit cards or even bank accounts with a PIN code* and documents. After the transaction, they would declare at their local branch that the card had been lost or stolen. These practices are still common, but according to many participants who are involved in similar commodification practices, recent restrictions make newcomers even more vulnerable. However, for those who have been involved in card transactions for a longer period of time, it is even more profitable.

#### 7.2.5 How to make a living?

After arrivals manage to arrange a tenancy agreement, an NI number and a bank account, they then need to generate a source of income. On the British labour market, job applications are mainly organised by employment agencies. These agencies play an important role in the financial stability of newcomers, especially for those who are looking for unskilled work. As many participants described, it is a stressful and unpredictable way of life. Jobs provided by these agencies are short-term, irregular and badly paid, and applicants are usually only informed a day in advance that they will be going to work. As described in Chapter 4, many Roma are recruited through these agencies to work for the local council, warehouses and factories. Those Roma participants who had no extended network in the host country had to face the bitter reality of the British dream; before their debts increased, many applied for social benefits in order to be eligible for housing benefits.

Since rents are extremely high in London, the most important benefit is Housing Benefit. However, the route to becoming entitled can feel like following the yellow brick road to Oz (Figure 1). In the following section, I will present the basic tactics of participants who apply for basic social provisions. This stage of their contact with bureaucratic processes increasingly includes the digital welfare system, which requires specific skills and a knowledge of the application processes.

### 7.2.6 Playing theatre – PIP, DLA and the life in between

One of the targeted groups of benefit claimants are the vulnerable newcomers who are unable to work. As one of the most interesting bureaucratic processes, cases of Personal Independence Payment (PIP) applications has been followed in the fieldwork period. PIP was introduced in 2013 as a new form of disability benefit that replaced Disability Living Allowance (DLA). That represented a major change for disability benefits available to claimants aged 16 to 64 years. After the replacement of the legislation almost every DLA claimants had to screen with the risk, that they might use their entitlement. The forms become long and applicants have to provide many medical documents to prove their disabilities. There were believed to be over 3 million claimants for DLA, in 2013 but by 2018 the UK government believes that there will be 600,000 fewer claimants for the new PIP. Many DLA claimants lost their payments in 2013, not because they all moved away or recovered, but because they were not eligible for PIP according to new screening tests. This new selection measure was in addition to restrictions about the habitual residency of claimants. To apply for PIP, the applicant must have been a resident of Great Britain for two of the last three years, must not be subject to immigration control and must have a long-term disability that presents problems relating to mobility and daily living.

This new PIP programme means that disabled people arriving to the UK are unable to claim PIP in the first two years, but they are also unable to work. That effectively closes the border to chronically ill migrants or forces them to lie about the length of their residency, which increases the production of false paperwork.

As the latest statistics confirm, the UK government appears unwilling to support people with healthcare problems and is trying to force everyone back on the labour market (Ohara 2015). The latest DWP report concluded that almost two out of three people who apply for PIP get nothing at all unless they are terminally ill. The statistics also expose the massive backlog created by the combined failures of Atos, Capita and the DWP: less than one in six claims have so far been decided. Many claimants receive no decision and of those who do, only 37% were awarded some rate of PIP. To put this in perspective, this means that only 12,654 of the 220,300 people who made a new claim for PIP in the nine months after April 2013 were awarded PIP. This contrasts with the report on the success of new DLA claims, which in the year ending March 2011 showed a 43% award rate (DWP, 2014).

It would appear that the government is on track to successfully reduce spending on welfare benefits, not only by delaying awards and payments for many months, but also by

finding a higher percentage of claimants ineligible for benefits. Most claims are not properly investigated and those applicants who are not eager or devastated enough to appeal a negative decision are left to accept this decision and apply for jobs they have no chance of getting. A participant told me that when he appealed, he was asked at the court hearing to tie his shoelaces. When he managed to do so, his claim was refused. Many participants were told that their documents had been lost at the welfare offices or, when they phoned, they were told they were not in the computer system. That is impossible since the phone application for benefits registers everything in the computer. Such restrictions and re-selection of unproductive citizens are also representing the parameters of selection in Social Sorting procedures.

Government organisations are not sending letters of decision on time and claimants are unable to appeal if they receive the decision too late. When I called on behalf of some of them, I could hardly get any information; employees promised to call me back, but it almost never happened. Officers are not cooperative; instead they try to refuse new claims or discourage claimants. NGO workers are aware of these tendencies and have learned how to express or even exaggerate applicants' complaints.

One participant was almost blind, but she had to apply three times before her claim was accepted. Forms were regularly lost or the NHR test was not sent out. She asked someone to attend the meeting with her to make it clear that she is really disabled. She regularly had to pay an interpreter to help with the forms and had to manage phone calls on her own. Her disability made her unable to work, but the test asked how she was supporting herself while she waited for approval. This was quite a quandary, since her income could be used as an excuse to refuse her claim. She patiently kept trying until her claim was finally accepted after five and a half months. However, the delay meant that she had no formal income for the first half year of her stay in the UK. In short, only well-trained and persistent migrants are able to make an honest claim while they are able financially support themselves till the decision is made. As the participant said, 'we are forced to lie to survive' (HW61).

PIP applicants often felt that it was not enough that they had to wait for years, but they also had to make their situations appear much worse than they were be taken seriously by the PIP office. Some argued that they had to prove they were in debt. Dependence on external funds such as study loans or other credits made participants felt controlled by their debts.

These shifts in the financial support of newcomers have already been recognised as a governing strategy to force unproductive migrants out of the country. However, there is lack of attention paid to those individual tactics that are challenging these restrictive control measures every day. As the above cases illustrate, newcomers combine local facilities from



third parties to effectively overcome those barriers that are meant to keep them out of the welfare system or even out of the country. Neoliberal values not only trigger those who are willing to find work, but also those who are willing to be supported.

### 7.3 The ivory tower of JobCentre Plus

JobCentre Plus, which some participants referred to as ‘the mafia’, has many offices around the country. They are primarily responsible for NI number interviews and for the provision of benefits and control of those who are claiming Jobseeker’s Allowance, Income Support, an Incapacity Benefit or Employment and Support Allowance. As will be discussed in the following section, different claims have different implications. All of them are managed in the discomfiting environment of JCP offices that are protected by security guards, which is reminiscent of a police station. Here, claimants must regularly report their activities and efforts in finding jobs or minimising their costs.

The application process is full of minor obstacles that discourage many people from becoming benefit claimants. Most claims for financial support depend on the first application, which has to be made online. Then claimants receive a form for an NHR test. If they pass the test, they are invited to an interview with a client manager to discuss the preconditions for their payments. Being rejected for a claim can have a domino effect: rejection for one claim can make the applicant automatically ineligible for several other benefits too. These processes are serving Social Sorting processes in a Bulimia society by selecting and excluding those who are unable to prove their deservingness.

Time is a strategic tool, not only for service providers but also for applicants. Since these procedures take a long time, some migrants employ other strategies until they are approved. Many end up with debts like unpaid rent and facilities bills, and migrants are regularly evicted. In that case, they are forced to start a new application registered under their new address, so they are constantly on the move. According to advocacy workers at local NGOs, landlords and agencies now run a thriving business exploiting tenants and workers in such a marginal position. In the following section, I will provide a brief overview of how participants have managed to get through these bureaucratic stages to access basic benefits.

### 7.3.1 National Habitual Residence test

The NHR test was invented in 1996 as a primary selection instrument for people claiming benefits in the UK. Rutledge (2014c) described how it is applied:

‘Under the test, new entrants to the UK and returning nationals are required to show that they are habitually resident in the Common Travel Area (the UK, the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man or the Republic of Ireland); otherwise they will be ineligible to claim benefit. *Nessa v Chief Adjudication Officer* established that in order to satisfy the test the claimant must have both a settled intention to remain in the UK for the time being *and* have actually resided here for an “appreciable period”. What amounted to an appreciable period was not fixed, and each case had to be decided on its facts. It was subsequently established that in an ordinary case, if a settled intention had been established, the appreciable period needed was likely to be between one and three months: see CIS/4474/2003’.

After an applicant makes an online application for any benefit claim, the NHR test is sent to him or her to verify their term of residence and financial background based on their labour history in the host country. The test was briefly described and discussed among social policy requirements in Chapter 5.

When my fieldwork period started in 2013, almost all the applicants who managed their tenancy agreement, NI number and JSA application passed the test, even though the questionnaire was long and many needed some assistance with translations. The test changed on 1 January 2014. After that date, those who came to the UK and applied for benefits during their first weeks were denied, since the new test required a minimum fixed period of three months’ residence for claims for income-based benefits such as JSA. In addition, the maximum term for JSA was reduced to six months, which means claimants have to become employed after that period. These requirements have caused one of the most controversial situations for many people who realise, after a month, that they are unable to support themselves after such a short period in the host country (Rutledge, 2014c). As one participant explained:

*The system forces you to lie. Because when you go to the Job Centre, you have to lie and say that you have already been here for three months, and then with the bank account you have to lie that you have been here for six months because there are preconditions even there. Then you try to turn to those who can help (with receiving short-term loans)*

*like Money Shop and Speaking Cash (short term loan shops) and then you slide into a situation where you are better off if you forget your account and open another one that you can keep clean. The interest rates are really high and maybe they cancel your account after a while, but at least they register you for two, three, four years. (HF37)*

In summary, those who were willing to apply had two choices: lie about their length of stay and apply for their NI number, or *return to their country* to generate some income and apply for JSA three months later to pass the NHR test. When they are coming back with an NI number of three month and they can manage a tenancy agreement they have a chance to pass the test. So the main strategy of newcomers was to *wait*.

### 7.3.2 Waiting

As a bureaucratic encounter, waiting implies an expectation when someone is oriented toward the future (Trehan & Sigona, 2009, p. 30). There is a clear distinction between an individual who waits for someone or something and an individual who expects something to be done at a certain time. The difference between waiting and expectation can therefore be defined as the degree of control over the situation.

Many participants constantly made calculations about the costs in relation to the time for payments. Although there is a common assumption that Roma live day to day (Szuhay, 2011, p. 116), I was witnessing the opposite. Many potential newcomers were approaching me on Skype or Facebook to ask about the terms of payment and the minimum term for eligibility. As one of those participants explained, many families were coming up with a plan for processing the different stages of their application:

*If you hand in a claim, then maybe you will be eligible after three months for the benefits. If you can manage for three months with your family, then you can get that small amount of money to fix your situation or you apply to be self-employed, ... so he (another Roma) fix his self-employment registration 'that they call work,' but he doesn't work in the meantime. He just receives tax credits and due to this fake employment his family might receive housing benefits. For three months even if he doesn't receive it, but generally they come for the big nothing because they live for free.' (HM49)*

As the quote above suggests, the three-month waiting period is supposed to end in monthly payments for the future. According to Lefebvre, ‘waiting is an inevitable product of the bureaucratic appropriation of everyday life — the development of large-scale economic systems, the increasing segmentation of time, the rigid separation of public and private spheres’ (quoted in Moran, 2004, p. 219). As Hoag (2011) notes, ‘for many people, *bureaucracy* signifies slowness and delays, unnecessary paperwork, complicated protocols, and other measures or conditions that generally constrain the individual’ (p. 82). Claimants are searching for confirmation, comparing their supplication among each other and calculating their chance of success. With the digitalisation of data exchange, Hoag (2011) writes:

‘These organisations’ rules and hierarchies are often clearly spelled out, and yet bureaucracies are always at some level opaque, inscrutable and illogical to both “insider” and “outsider” alike. This opacity empowers bureaucracies and bureaucrats — they become gatekeepers, with control over the flow of information and resources.’ (p. 82)

Once data is registered in the system, these gatekeepers have more knowledge than the applicants themselves. ‘In times of budget cuts and increasing workloads, this flow of information is put under increasing pressure with waiting becoming a growing feature. In short, waiting in certain situations can therefore also be examined as a form of exchange and power between actors, where the individual who has more power succeeds in avoiding waiting since he or she has forced the others to wait’ (Gasparini, 1995, p. 35).

A key theme in negotiating these controls, as Humphris (2013) stated, is the role of waiting and the temporal aspect of bureaucratic practice in granting access to rights (Hoag, 2011). Waiting can be seen as a strategy that gives bureaucrats and clients room to manoeuvre (Sigona, 2009) and waiting for the end of transition controls in 2014 adds to the concept of the ‘hope-generating machine’ (Nuijten, 2003).

In the following interactions with service providers, we can trace how information and relationships are brokered in the waiting process. This leads to an examination of what information is not given, what questions are not asked and how “public secrets” develop. Roma and bureaucrats can create an environment of confusion, scepticism and resentment on both sides, leading to increasingly partial positions. Bureaucracy’s capacity to act as a ‘hope-generating machine’ and waiting for a future change shape decision-making in the present.

### 7.3.3 Answering tactics

When waiting tactics failed to discourage more newcomers from applying for benefits, additional restrictions were introduced as a response. Although JSA and Income Support give recipients very small amounts of money, without the eligibility and the NHR tests, newcomers were unable to apply for Housing Benefit, which used to cover the majority of their rent when they had to rent their own apartment. So their access to both JSA and Housing Benefit was restricted. The previous regulation 10(3B)(k) was abolished, so the receipt of JSA is no longer sufficient in itself to gain access to HB. Consequently, only EEA jobseekers who have retained their worker status can access Housing Benefit while receiving JSA (Rutledge, 2014d). HB A6/2014, quoted in Rutledge (2014d) says:

*A person who approaches DWP to claim JSA after a period in employment will be treated as a jobseeker and not a retained worker where the employment they were previously engaged in did not meet the MET and fails the enhanced scrutiny of whether it was genuine and effective. So long as that claimant has been in the UK for three months, they will be immediately eligible to claim JSA(IB), but as an EEA jobseeker will not be eligible for HB.*

In short, there is one way left to go: back to work! Golyunker, quoted in Poptcheva (2014) argues that:

‘The special treatment of jobseekers in comparison to economically inactive Union citizens such as students has no justification in the Directive... It is therefore argued that the Directive makes no distinction between the three categories of EU migrants — short-term visitors, students and newly-arrived jobseekers — as regards access to social solidarity within the host society. The Directive is thus seen as excluding such migrant EU citizens from national welfare systems, as they are neither contributors nor integrated into the host society through long residence.’ (p. 15)

Broeders and Engbersen (2013) wrote about the constant struggle between the state and migrants:

‘The state diverts funds, technology and manpower to surveillance and detection (their weapons of mass detection) and the immigrant tries to circumvent these policies and innovations, sometimes by simple, yet effective means. Policy on irregular immigrants

resembles an arms race: action provokes reaction. Illegal aliens will attempt to frustrate government policies that aim to identify and control them using strategies that can be captured under the notion of ‘foggy social structures’: social structures that emerge from efforts by individuals and organizations to avoid the production of knowledge about their activities by making them either unobservable or indeterminable; or, put another way, the practical production of fog (FOGSOC 2003: 5 of 133). Caplan and Torpey (2001: 7) noted that states and their subjects/citizens routinely play cat-and-mouse with individual identification requirements.’ (pp. 2-3)

As a reaction to increasing restrictions on benefits, newcomers changed strategies and tried to ‘*make themselves employed*’. Many participants registered as *self-employed* and those who were honestly willing to work and stay felt forced to cheat on their documents, such as buying payslips and fake employment contracts so they could claim tax credits and keep their housing benefits. As described in Chapter 9, migrants who have strong transnational networks slide into the grey market economy or into irregular labour. Slowly, job seeking claimants turn into tax credit claimants. While many participants were changing their strategy in order to keep their income, those who have children under 5 years of age were still eligible for Housing Benefit when their Income Support claim was accepted.

#### 7.3.4 Income Support – A single mother from one day to another

After passing the NHR test, Income Support is meant to be one of the most stable sources of income for many families. Not because it is so generous, but because it is for the long-term and it might ensure that families receive their housing benefits. As described in the chapter on social policies, in order to qualify for Income Support, applicants have to be pregnant, a carer or a single parent with a child under the age of 5 or, in some cases, be unable to work because of sickness or disability. Claimants need to be older than 16 years, live in the UK and have no income or a low income (working less than 16 hours a week). Income Support is paid until the youngest child turns 5, so newcomers who are willing to settle with their family in London have a structural coping device that is also regularly utilised by the British majority.

One participant, a singer living with three children in a council flat in East London, stressed the problematic image she faced as a Roma migrant. I once visited her at her perfectly decorated flat, which felt like a little palace. She sipped her coffee from a Chanel coffee cup and was dressed in elegant clothes while restlessly pacing in her tiny living room, smoking and

explaining: *'You know Veronika, we can choose to be the filthy Roma at home or the filthy welfare scum here'* (PF26). She also described how stigmatised she felt by living on welfare and explained how she would like to get a job when her children are older. Still there was no good possibility for her in that situation other than living on benefits.

Many parents with small children choose to claim Income Support by falsifying data about their marital status or hiding their partners' income. First, the applicant registers as a single mother and takes care to register the tenancy contract in her own name. Fathers register at a different address where the real tenants are not claiming any benefits, so the fathers can earn money with a regular job. The mother then applies for Housing Benefit, child tax credits and child benefits, so together they generate a full income for the family. Although these practices are common in London and local authorities are aware of them, this was not being checked in any single household I worked with, whether the mother was really living without a husband or not. The real challenge starts when the children grow older and the mother is forced to find a job.

#### 7.3.5 Jobseeker's Allowance – Policing by tick boxing

Jobseeker's Allowance is the least favoured benefit among newcomers, but is often the only legal way for CEE migrants to become eligible for Housing Benefit. JSA is meant for adults who are under the state pension age, not in full-time education, and available for work, actively seeking work or working less than 16 hours per week. The intensity of controls is relatively high compared to other benefits and claimants need to explain, on a weekly basis, their job search progress. The government website (UK Government, 2016) gives a vague description of the requirements, but one sentence is unmissable in the middle of the page: *'Your JSA payments will be stopped if you don't keep to your agreement to look for work and can't give a good reason'*.

Those who manage to obtain access to JSA are expected to work on improving their employment possibilities in a transparent and active way and to sign a contract about these agreements with their case managers. The UK labour market is mostly available via employment agencies or government Universal JobMatch applications, which means internet literacy is absolutely necessary. For those who have limited skills, these online applications can be extremely complicated, even if they are obligatory in order to be entitled to JSA. Since JCP offices have targets, case managers control and sanction those who are not fulfilling these

requirements, which has direct implications on their additional benefits, such as free school meals, housing benefits or council housing.

JSA pays a really small amount of money and if a claimant leaves the country, his or her payments are cut. In order to generate enough money for a household, many Roma men claim JSA and work in the grey market (e.g. selling cars or cigarettes) while their wives apply as single mothers for Income Support and Housing Benefit. These families earn a normal income, but they are living under a constant threat related to their circumstances. As the following participant explained, some claimants are more often controlled or need to do more for the same payment than others, which creates a paranoid relationship:

‘Like a month ago, I had to prove on a weekly basis that I had sent 20 job applications to get the JSA. Others need to do this every two or three weeks. So I was asking how it works. I even had to click on to jobs that I had nothing to do with. But I have to, because if they cannot see that I am active they immediately pick on me. Honestly, they just check how you cannot get the job. Like they have this job search site and many jobs are asking why you are unable to take the job so there are two options and you can choose one. There is nothing like how you would be able to take the job! When you apply for a job, you are not adding that it is too complicated for my educational background or it is too far from my home. It is total nonsense.’ (HM50)

Benefit applicants are constantly monitored and qualified by service providers who are trying to force them into self-sustaining economic conditions. Claimants are defined by calculative distinctions based on notions of ‘risk’ to welfare dependency that have been measured by data collected on the government job search webpage. Those groups of people are determined by complex statistical methods that calculate who poses a greater risk (e.g. of fraud or long-term unemployment). They encounter greater surveillance (and, in many cases, higher expectations when proving their eligibility).

Benefit recipients are subjected to various forms of technological surveillance in combination with face-to-face control interviews carried out by JCP. Public housing tenants must first undergo a rigorous application process to prove their eligibility. Then there are inspections of their tenancy agreements and regular income reporting to determine rent levels. There are also extra control measures targeting those who are suspected of engaging in fraudulent practices, such as tax credit claimants who work very few daily hours as cleaners.

Transactional websites also force users to engage in specific dealings with the agency online as they actively look for employment. Users must authenticate themselves to the agency



and reliably register their identities. They can then undertake a complete transaction with the agency online, and check the agency's databases at various levels of security when they try to track the progress of an application. Although many of these transactional websites have been adopted by semi-governmental organisations, case officers are not fully aware of the limitations thereof and how they can be manipulated. As will be analysed in the following section, these transactional websites increase suspicion among case officers and fear among the claimants themselves. These attitudes shape their face-to-face interactions, in which both are trying to bypass the rules and use the tactic of rhetoric to reach their targets.

### 7.3.6 Online and offline interfaces – Interaction with CEE Roma newcomers

In the first bureaucratic procedures, JobCentre officers are practically the only people who make face-to-face contact with applicants. As described in Chapter 5's discussion of managerialism, migrants view JobCentre case managers and digital application systems as policing in place of support, which includes the constant screening of personal conditions, activities and income. Financial sanctions are the biggest fear for migrants who are not always up to date with the conditions for their payments. On the other hand, case managers are also under pressure from this target system: they are aware that they sanction those who are especially in need of government aid, but they also have to reduce claims as much as possible. Bypassing the rules is thus a dialectic process in which not only clients but also case officers develop coping strategies to circumvent the rules.

For example, one participant was struggling to help his mother who was moving to London. She had no right to healthcare without an NI number. The lady in question was already of pensionable age, but she was not yet eligible for UK pension payments, so her son was hopelessly searching for a way to get her medication. He explained that a JCP officer helped by telling him what to say:

*So when she [his mother] was asked about why she was coming [to the United Kingdom], I told them, to work! The officer put this into my mouth; I said that she is old, so it can be seen that she is living on a pension and here is her family. So she [the officer] said that she does not have to give her number if she says she is just working for four hours. So I said fine, let's make it four hours. So that's how she got NI, as otherwise she would have been unable to receive her medicine. (HM36)*

As this example shows, some officers are willing to support applicants, especially in cases involving children, but they still take a moralising approach toward clients for several reasons. These forms of support, ranging from informal to more or less formal arrangements, enable professionals to act according to the law and simultaneously ensure that inhumane and threatening situations do not occur. Officers are also forced to get their clients into the employment market as soon as possible and, due to their individual targets, they are more willing to help those who are more promising clients. However, that means that they are often more restrictive when it comes to clients who have fewer skills and opportunities to find an employer. These people often receive sanctions and more restrictions. While witnessing several interviews at JobCentre Plus offices, I saw case officers approach claimants disrespectfully, presuming that they were unwilling to get a job or lazy, or describing their husbands as reckless in taking care of their families.

For example, a young participant with three children living in East London was divorced and her youngest son was almost 5 years old when she had to show up at the local JobCentre. The purpose of her interview was unclear, but the benefit officer explained the situation to her as follows:

*Your payments (Income Support) will be cut when your son turns 5. It will be difficult for you now. This country wants people coming here who want to work. Who would support you in your country if you would live there? The father of your children is responsible for taking care of them, not the UK. Do you expect the state to take care of your child? You have to learn English! Now it is even too late to attend job search training. You have to find a job and prove 20 searches for every two weeks if you will be on Jobseeker's Allowance...Your Housing Benefit will be cut and you will not be eligible for tax credits.*  
(JCO2)

These narratives are often offensive, moralising and, in some cases, threatening. Advocacy workers have also defined a pattern in postponing and holding back their clients' data: *'they are deliberately not sending the decision so that clients are unable to appeal'* (JD).

Participants regularly complained about decision-making processes and some stress that "equality before the law" more or less loses its meaning' (Dowling et al., 2006, p. 152). Impressions about decision-making processes have been constantly evaluated by applicants and it was stated that there need to 'invest' in a good bureaucratic relationship.

Lipsky (2010) describes such dialectic processes as being associated with ‘street-level bureaucracies’ in which civil servants elect people for certain government services or social support by applying their discretionary authority to general rules of law with regard to their clients. If they believe that a client deserves a certain kind of service, they can bend the rules, carry out extra research to find a solution tailored to the client’s needs or ignore minor infringements or omissions in the application. Davies, (Hartfree, Kellard, & Taylor, 2004, pp. 54-55) and ‘not on the whole target group or a wider range of solutions’ (Winter & Nielsen, 2008, p. 117). In line with Lipsky, these strategies involve cherry-picking. Frontline officers select the most promising clients with good prognoses or those for whom they can use well-acknowledged or prestigious treatment technologies. Or they choose clients with the promise of a rapid and inexpensive process and not those who are most in need or first in line.

In conversations where newcomers’ lack of language skills prevents a sophisticated interaction with officers, claimants employ manipulation techniques to avoid future payment cuts. Roma as ethnic migrants also invent coping strategies that prevent additional stigma and motivate the officers dealing with their cases to provide assistance with their benefits.

#### 7.4 Abracadabra – Coping strategies by rhetoric

As a response to the business-like attitude of officers, Roma claimants use specific techniques in face-to-face encounters. First, they use self-censorship to protect themselves from the additional risks of sharing sensitive personal information with officers. Next, many JCP claimants attempt to profile themselves as good neoliberal job-searching citizens who are unable to work due to temporary conditions. This image is meant to fit within the deserving claimant parameters of benefit users and reduce the pressure on officers who are supposed to activate their clients. When Roma feel that their ethnicity is visible, they may try to rectify the ethnic stigma, assign it to others or stress their positive attitude toward work. In the following overview, I will briefly clarify these practices and the extent to which they change claimants’ ability to succeed in interaction with officers.

##### 7.4.1 Self-censorship

Controlling and selecting information shared with case managers is a common strategy for many benefit-dependent migrants. While attending several meetings at JobCentres where the conditions for benefits were being discussed, I heard clients constantly amend their living

conditions to present their needs according to the prevailing conditions. The rapidly changing legislation creates a foggy structure about the actual conditions which are often unclear, even for case managers (Broeders & Engbersen, 2013). These circumstances have made claimants suspicious and sometimes even paranoid, so they try to influence the ways in which they shape these relationships.

Many Roma live in constant fear of scrutiny. Some worry that scrutiny may result in the loss of welfare assistance for not reporting income, having partners stay overnight or being reported for child abuse and losing their children (Falkner v Ontario, 2002, p. 515, paras 103-104; Mortenson, 1999, pp. 122-123). As a result, they engage in continual ‘self-censorship’ of their activities (Little, 1998, p. 180). Even when officers made erroneous assumptions about the data relating to their clients, Roma regularly remained quiet, avoiding arguments or corrections.

Some welfare-dependent newcomers see themselves as “deserving” welfare recipients who, through taking part in workfare programmes or language training, feel more like “contributing” members of the host society (Chunn, & Gavigan, 2004). Some also feel resentful toward and more “deserving” than others on welfare, whom they feel are ‘faring better in the distribution of scarce resources’ (Swift & Birmingham, 2000, pp. 94-95). These arguments are increasingly used among different Roma subgroups who describe each other as criminals or free riders.

Other participants living on JSA strongly rejected the neoliberal thrust of current welfare legislation and policy, characterising workfare programmes and their rationales as government propaganda. They did not stress their disadvantages due to ethnic stigmatisation or family relations, but they emphasised the temporary aspects of their unemployment. Although self-censorship is mainly about selective data sharing, there are also other coping mechanisms that refer to data production and “deservingness” to justify entitlement to welfare payments.

#### 7.4.2 Identity management technics – Self-profiling, and conflating ethnic stigma

Service-dependent minorities have employed processes of identity making and self-characterisation as a conscious coping strategy in online and offline environments. Roma reconfigure certain aspects of their identity to fulfil the neoliberal ideal that makes them entitled to certain benefits (Engbersen & Broeders, 2011; Woolford & Nelund, 2013, p. 292). Although Roma ethnicity is racialized and romanticised wherever Roma are located, stereotypes and criminalising assumptions are increasingly contested by identity making in bureaucratic

processes on several levels. Historically persistent ethnic connotations are challenged by situationally variable representations of their putative ‘identities’ and challenge several essentialist assumptions by a counter-identity.

Creating a formal labour history was a regular type of self-profiling, sometimes with assistance from NGO workers who gave suggestions about the types of jobs clients could create as evidence of their work attitude. Roma emphasise their individual skills and accomplishments to overshadow the effects of their stigmatised ethnicity, particularly regarding the notion of being “work shy” that makes such clients unattractive for case managers.

Participants also transformed or amended different ethnic boundaries in specific de-stigmatising discourses and regularly capitalised on various ethnic resources in managing their everyday difficulties. For instance, by jettisoning the Pakistani and other ethnic Roma subgroups, claimants transferred the stigma attached to them to position themselves more advantageously in Britain’s ethnic hierarchy. In response to stigmatisation attempts by others, they attempted to dissociate themselves from the stigmatised group by blaming other Roma. This contributes to redrawing ethnic boundaries.

Diverting the stigma to other minorities in bureaucratic relationships increases ethnicity’s everyday relevance in face-to-face interactions. Some Roma erect a boundary between themselves and other minorities by “educating” others about their ethnic deference, their roots and the consequences. But by diverting stigma to those who might be seen as economically less deserving, they also emphasise their own dependency position. When suggesting that Olah or Vlach Roma are not as deserving as others, Romungro participants overestimated the stigmatising effects that were reproduced, since many bureaucrats are unable to make a distinction between the different subgroups. Although strategies such as conflating stereotypes to redress status might reinforce the salience of ethnicity (Moroşanu & Fox, 2013, p. 447), it is also often compensated for by a switch to a register of personal skills and by recalibrating it in positive terms. As Moroşanu and Fox (2013) write:

‘These narratives invoke achieved qualities to dismiss the effects of a stigmatised ethnicity, blurring boundaries in the process. However, participants cannot be easily divided between those who favoured ethicised discourses and repertoires, and those who adopted non-ethicised perspectives. Indeed, the very same migrants often embraced both strategies depending on the social situation or referent involved, drawing thus on multiple tools to build status.’ (p. 447)

In these interplays of shifting coping strategies, the Roma ‘ethnic lens’ is in a state of constant fluctuation (Glick Schiller et al., 2006).

#### 7.4.3 Evaluating differences – racism as a tool for interclass competition

In addition, colour-based differences and the differences in innate moral character and work ethics that supposedly follow from skin colour help to valorise differences. By discursively invoking differences to describe both “self” and “other”, differences between Roma become even more salient.

The valorisation of differences in turn offers certain social-psychological benefits by giving expression to the migrants’ anxieties and frustrations and also helping them restore the “reversals in status” that are part of the migration process. Roma migrants invoke and assert their own putative whiteness and Europeanness to darken “less white” Jamaican and Asian segments of the labour market. In short, “race” is often a culturally mediated interpretation, representation and reproduction of social differences (Brubaker et al 2004, pp. 41-44).

When Roma refer to Pakistani minorities in the UK as “dirty” and “illiterate”, it draws on home-grown and local contextual referents to construct a meaningful framework for arranging the sorts of differences that Roma encounter in comparison with other minorities in the UK.

In referring to the labour market, the efficacy of racism is vividly illustrated by the production and reproduction of racial differences, even when migrants and natives supposedly share the same category. Racism is not a static disposition that resides in the individual, but a dynamic discursive strategy (Brubaker, Loveman, & Stamatov, 2004) used for specific purposes.

Ranking differences into racialized hierarchies clearly has the potential to deliver certain material advantages to the migrants. A fuller account of performances of self and citizenship among Roma requires a broader constraint of these performances, which shapes them. As Woolford & Nelund (2013) suggests, we must also remain attentive to the immediate normative context, as well as to the variety and complexities of human interaction and interpretation. Economic productivity and the social practice of racism are thus interrelated in recent welfare provisions.

Identity of Roma with social service employees are meant to ensure the continuity of basic benefits, to retain access to the Housing Benefit that is often the main income of families who rent their own apartments. Housing issues are strongly interrelated with many other family conditions, and it is the only payment provided by local councils. In the final part of this chapter, I will describe three particular aspects used as a coping strategy to be able to access local service provisions.

## 7.5 Housing capital

After spending almost a year in London, staying with families, helping with interpreting contracts and acting as an advocacy worker, I realised that accommodation, in particular Housing Benefit, is the major source of income for welfare-dependent families in the UK.

There are generally four forms of accommodation for newcomers: subletting rooms, renting rooms from agencies, renting a house or applying for council accommodation. All of them can provide eligibility for Housing Benefit, since the conditions are mainly interrelated with the entitlement to other welfare payments and income. In the following analysis, I will describe three particular tactics Roma use to ensure accommodation by housing benefits, such as forcing the local authority to provide social housing, renting a property that is registered in another person's name or selling documents for a credit history that enables others to rent a house.

In the first case, concerning a council house, I followed a participant for two years. She was an unemployed mother who had a council flat in her home country before she moved to London. After a few months in a small rented apartment in London, she decided to divorce her husband, but all the benefit payments and the tenancy contract were in her husband's name and he had left. The mother was living on JSA and the children were also registered for child tax credit in the father's name at the HMRC. She was trying to apply for a council flat with a homeless application to force the council to help her find new accommodation. She was not yet eligible for a council house, since she had only been registered in the UK for seven months, so she was forced to move back to her home country to avoid the risk that the children would be taken into state care. She went home after she learned about the preconditions for a council flat, but she did not inform the UK authorities in the UK.

Almost a year later, she was back in London with the children. She forced the children's father to rent a house for them, but registered it in her name. When she received the first eviction notice due to a conflict with her neighbours, she again applied to the local council and without any placement in a temporary accommodation she managed to get a council flat in three months. This was able to happen so quickly because she stayed registered in the UK the entire time she was back in her home country.

Others are less fortunate, though they think if they make a homeless application they can automatically get a council flat. Many well-informed Roma in London know which boroughs are easier to convince, but most families are unwilling to leave their social network. Many participants were forced to move on a regular basis: for example, one family stated that they had moved eight times in 2013. So the question is: how do some succeed?

Benefits are often suspended due to changes in circumstances. The terms of the decisions are often unpredictable, and most welfare payments are interrelated. In short, reporting a new address means a new application for JSA will be sent, which causes delays in the housing benefits that are the main resource for many families. Documents are often lost and incomplete applications might result in a rejection which, after a few months, leads to a new eviction notice. Thanks to this vicious circle, many applicants lie about their address to prevent the repeated suspension of their payments.

People who are able to rent a whole property have another major sources of income: turn it into an investment by subletting while claiming housing benefits for the same property. Subletting is a common strategy that newcomers learn from other local minorities. Most private accommodation is rented from Pakistani landlords, who help tenants with applications for housing benefits. It is to the landlords' advantage to have poor tenants, because their benefits ensure payments directly from the local councils and they are also dependent on others that enables clientelist relationships. Many Roma who are unable to stabilise their income rent properties, apply for housing benefits and then sublet the rooms for extra income.

Interethnic relations are often underestimated in these coping mechanisms. Similar to the cases described by Greenfields et al. the enforced settlement of these newcomers brought them into close spatial proximity with other deprived and socially excluded populations who are increasingly concentrated into areas of social housing, such as Pakistani neighbourhoods in East London. It has been argued that "social relations between different social and ethnic groups are often non-existent, and that a deficit of civic identity or polarisation of shared values along racial, social class and cultural lines is the reason for social and community segregation" (2010, p. 8 ). However, 'bonding' social capital, while creating strong in-group loyalty, Roma "may simultaneously result in strong out-group antagonism.(...)The unintended consequence of such 'clustering' may be that the development of 'bridging' (or inclusive) ties to the wider community are inhibited and pre-existing social and economic exclusions are compounded leading to the creation of closed 'parallel communities'(2010, p. 4 ). These suggestions are relying on a static construction of groups and intergroup relations while interpersonal relationships between inter-ethnic groups are in a constantly changing process. Contacts



between the Roma and Pakistani residents in the same neighbourhood was described as a clientalistic dependency relation, in which the older ethnic community support and exploit newcomers in a situationally changing context. Interethnic relationships between them might change from personal to labour or business contacts that operate outside the legal bureaucratic procedure, or in contrast it might bridge newcomers into it. However, “over-reliance on localised forms of ‘bonding’ social capital (Putnam, 2000) may also intensify existing forms of social and economic exclusion through hindering the development of wider ‘bridging’ ties to other sections of the community” (Greenfields et al. 2010, 4). Such exploitation cases will be also discussed in Chapter 9. The only stable inter-ethnic contact of Roma newcomers were explored in the housing market.

The commodification of informal relationships with landlords (Palomera, 2014, p. 107) and the formation of a rental submarket allows some newcomers to rent more than one apartment and to become entrepreneurs within their own social networks. Thus, several participants accumulated their property capital by subletting to other kin who were in more precarious positions. In the flat where I lived with a participants’ household, rent payments became integrated into a wider circle of mutual moral obligations predicated on a sense of friendship. Rent payments were absorbed as one form of support and a dynamic hierarchy emerged among the series of tenants or “protégés” (Gellner & Waterbury, 1977). Some landlords who were aware of these practices offered a lower rent if the Housing Benefit was paid directly to them. Furthermore, in boroughs where landlords are aware of discretionary housing payments, it makes it even more attractive for them to accommodate poor families with several children. In conclusion, the Roma often anticipate the exploitative relationships of Pakistani entrepreneurs who gain their income from local Housing Benefit payments.

The last mechanism is strongly interrelated with the activities of brokers who are aware of the preconditions for rent and who sell documents to enable newcomers to have access to a property for subletting. In brief, when a family arrives with no money, a broker will give them a loan they can use for the two months’ rent deposit and one month’s rent in advance. When the family finds a property, they have to prove their income by providing payslips, their own tenancy agreement and a bank statement. One participant asked a flatmate who was subletting a room from her to sign the tenancy agreement. Some tenants earn a low wage and cannot prove their income to apply for Housing Benefit. They might then purchase a bank statement from a broker, as well as payslips for £125 each. The broker therefore helps them to get a house from an agency, and then the rooms become fully booked within two weeks due to Facebook

advertisements. However, ethnicity becomes a hidden issue as far as the new tenants are concerned. The commodification of these informal relationships helps newcomer Roma be able to sublet their rooms and gain access to Housing Benefit.

Based on the central research objective regarding the Funnel of Expulsion, I will argue that although Roma newcomers are targeted for abuse, discrimination and marginalisation, they can hardly be defined as passive and resigned actors who are overpowered by bureaucratic structures. In fact, the Roma continuously marked their autonomy from the world and the powers of the non-Roma. As a consequence, the more established migrants become landlords with the capacity to provide shelter to those who are undocumented, who then became their tenants.

## 7.6 Conclusion

This study started with the hypothesis that Roma are one of the least attractive groups of newcomers in transnational mobile populations because they are associated with unemployment, benefit tourism and cultural threat. It has also been proposed that unattractive populations are targeted by selective surveillance measures that makes these Roma newcomers distrustful. The main intentions of targeted approaches that when productivity is screened by internal migration control, such as welfare restrictions, those who doesn't fit it are forced to move on. Although this research has confirmed the selective aspects of digitalised welfare practices, it has also discovered how innovative responses might challenge existing monitoring practices and contribute to new monitoring practices.

This chapter presented several tactics used by Roma newcomers to analyse how the cutbacks in welfare services play a key role in contemporary migration flows. Since most of these welfare measures are reactionary and try to respond to the counterstrategies of benefit users, they are constantly changing, so even civil servants are unaware of their conditions. Consequently, migrants regularly receive conflicting information; this makes them suspicious, which becomes a major factor in their decision-making. It has been illustrated how recent welfare barriers trigger migrants to adopt a range of *tactics* cross-cut by divisions of gender, ethnicity, nationality, class and length of time in the UK. In turn, this chapter has analysed how Roma newcomers create a range of innovative tactics for their interaction with social service providers to ensure their short-term survival and to consolidate their long-term ambitions for the future.

The monitoring of applications and the selection of benefit recipients as political technologies of Social Sorting are thus carried out on several levels. It is not just an audit of recipients or a surveillance of eligibility criteria, but there is an extended consolidated verification procedure based on joint databases and, in some cases, maintenance enforced with computer assistance. As the examples illustrate, these notions are constructed as *governmental incentives for profiling* the bad foreign opportunists versus the good citizens who deserve support and protection from the state. These disincentives for foreign benefit claimants can also be traced in other screening instruments. These ongoing transformations of modern penal practices such as benefit sanctions reflect the capitalistic need to carve a docile and hardworking workforce out of the unruly, undisciplined and sometimes riotous ‘dangerous classes’ constantly generated by capital itself as a by-product of its movement of creative destruction (Schumpeter, 1942).

Although HMRC applications are less complicated than the claims mentioned above, there are limitations to face-to-face contacts and most of the applications and appeals need to be managed from a distance. In the following analysis, I will reflect on the surveillance development of the Revenue, and how that forces riskier coping strategies for tax credit applicants.

## Chapter 8 Commodification Online – Social Security Claims in Virtual Bureaucracies

### 8.1 Introduction

This study started with a dystopic film character, Neo, who innovates and employs various strategies in a futuristic virtual hegemony. This portrayal illustrates the contemporary tactics used by welfare claimants in the digitalised systems of government bureaucracy, particularly in the UK's social security system. As detailed in the previous chapter, business like structures are increasingly being adopted by state service providers, such as Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC), which are employing technological tools to select and monitor welfare claimants. Although the clients of Jobcentre Plus still have face-to-face contact with the service provider, HMRC is moving towards entirely online applications and data exchange. An analysis of the strategies and “innovations” used by newly arrived migrants to cope with these digitalised bureaucracies forms the second part of the core argument of this thesis. This chapter describes the technocratic surveillance strategies of HMRC (including spider diagrams), how digitalisation changes the process of ‘social sorting’, and the tactics claimants use in online communication with HMRC.

The digitalisation of the service provision system creates a gap between the data on individuals and the actual person this data is meant to identify. The gap affects the attitude of service users. As the hypotheses suggests, claimants in a virtual application system are less likely to represent themselves accurately in terms of the data they are providing, but rather attempt to come as close as possible to an “ideal type”, based on the requirements for benefit entitlement. In short, claimants learn how to differentiate between personal data describing themselves and data that meets the required parameters in eligibility screening. Through such data selection practices, welfare applicants modify screening algorithms. In this digital dialogic process, screening methods and welfare applicants are continuously changing the parameters of screening requirements, which in turn triggers more restrictive application procedures. The question is, how are these coping mechanisms developed considering the limited technological skills of foreign welfare claimants in the UK?

This chapter analyses the digital field of welfare application within a broader financial context. As eligibility for Jobseeker's Allowance and housing benefits in the UK is becoming increasingly restricted, a shift has occurred in applications. Applicants are increasingly seeking to profit from tax credit claims and apply for different loans in order to generate income while

keeping their housing benefit payments. This chapter examines the tactics used by such applicants to obtain working tax credit and child tax credit. According to the formal requirements in 2013, I will demonstrate how participants manage to obtain benefits by means of transgressive technics, such as the commodifying identity, avoiding updates or submitting fake documents. In addition, two types of credit claims will be analysed: student loans and short-term loans. I describe how these digitalised financial platforms, which are sometimes replacing welfare payments, are forcing potential newcomer claimants into debt. As an illustration, an overview is provided of the interactions with HMRC, followed by a description of the ways in which newcomer claimants operate and the kind of sorting mechanisms applied to claimants who are considered suspect.

## 8.2 Tax credit procedures – The castle of HMRC

When restrictions on Jobseeker's Allowance were introduced, applications for tax credit structurally increased among research participants. Tax credit claims are designed to subsidise low-income taxpayers. Several documents are required by HMRC as proof of income, including payslips with the applicant's PAYE number and work contracts. HMRC<sup>[OB]</sup> is a non-ministerial department of the UK Government responsible for the collection of taxes and the payment of some forms of state support. HMRC is, among other things, responsible for working tax credit and child tax credit. It is an efficiency-oriented tax control office that has been adopting security approaches from the commercial sector. The following cases illustrate how private sector and e-commerce surveillance methods prove dysfunctional when adapted to e-governance<sup>18</sup>. The problem lies in their different objectives: public administration is concerned with the well-being of society, while e-business strives to maximise profit and increase market share (Lau, 2006, p. 39). Furthermore, with regard to privacy issues, information manipulated within an e-government process should be treated with a higher level of sensitivity than in a commercial business and there is no need for the same level of standardisation and optimisation of processes as in a commercial business (ibid: 39). In addition, governmental processes involve more parties, which may have conflicting interests. Although HMRC has strict sanctions and control measures, many participants prefer claiming through HMRC instead of Jobcentre Plus because of the impersonal interactions. Although

both serves the social sorting of the Welfare Banopticon, HMRC tools are far less transparent as those of the JobCentre. It is a non-ministerial department of the UK Government responsible for the collection of taxes and the payment of some forms of state support. HMRC is, among other things, responsible for working tax credit and child tax credit. It is an efficiency-oriented tax control office that has been adopting security approaches from the commercial sector. The following cases illustrate how private sector and e-commerce surveillance methods prove dysfunctional when adapted to e-governance<sup>19</sup>. The problem lies in their different objectives: public administration is concerned with the well-being of society, while e-business strives to maximise profit and increase market share (Lau, 2006, p. 39). Furthermore, with regard to privacy issues, information manipulated within an e-government process should be treated with a higher level of sensitivity than in a commercial business and there is no need for the same level of standardisation and optimisation of processes as in a commercial business (ibid: 39). In addition, governmental processes involve more parties, which may have conflicting interests. Although HMRC has strict sanctions and control measures, many participants prefer claiming through HMRC instead of Jobcentre Plus because of the impersonal interactions. Although both serves the social sorting of the Welfare Banopticon, HMRC tools are far less transparent as those of the JobCentre.

The obstacles that participants encounter when claiming tax claim credits, are similar to the administrative procedures mentioned previously. The first barrier for applicants is the lack of personal contact with advisors. There are several inquiry centres where clients can make free phone calls about applications, but this often requires an interpreter. These phone centres are vast office halls staffed with an officer who distributes a list of phone numbers for different types of applications. Arranged at a proper distance, desks are facing the same direction, resembling a classroom or shared office space. Each phone call starts with a control question. If the client is unable to answer the question, the officer will finish the conversation. The process is stressful and time-consuming. Clients know that they will be asked to provide their name and National Insurance number, but get confused when suddenly confronted with extra control questions. Although participants are usually aware that these questions are designed to protect them from fraud and exploitation, yet they are experienced as a barrier, as understanding and answering requires the assistance of an interpreter. Some of the participants

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<sup>19</sup> E-government refers to the delivery of national or local government information and services via the Internet or other digital means to citizens; see: Palvia, Shailendra C. Jain, and Sushil S. Sharma. *E-government and e-governance: definitions/domain framework and status around the world*. International Conference on E-governance. 2007.

in the study conducted for this thesis were convinced that this process is set up to render filing claims more complicated and prolong the process in order to discourage applicants from following through.

Clients can also apply for tax credit online, which requires them to fill in a form, sign it and submit it to the data centre of HMRC. These forms are filled in with the assistance of brokers who can supply the applicant with the right answers needed to satisfy entitlement screening parameters. In comparison to Jobseeker's Allowance applications, these processes do not deal with claimants as individuals, but rather rely on the data that clients share. This makes it more attractive for applicants seeking to hide information or submit false information due to lack of face to face interaction. Some participants claimed not to be aware of any control by HMRC, in comparison with JCP claimants who are aware that their applications are checked by case managers. The HMRC collects and analyses impressive amounts of data, but the method of data collection and analysis is invisible. In the next section, the surveillance software and selection methods of HMRC are discussed to determine how a gap can arise between a client's digitalised identity and real identity and how applicants for tax credit can use this to their advantage.

#### 8.2.1 Mapping credit claimants – HMRC's electronic monitoring mechanisms

HMRC uses Connect, a business software that enables data collection from 28 different data sources, cross-matching one billion internal and third-party data items in order to uncover hidden relationships between organisations, customers and their associated data links. This software transforms the data into a spider diagram or "spidergram", a visualisation tool representing individuals and their associated data links for investigation, by mapping addresses, phone numbers, bank accounts and employers, which are linked to each other as graphic symbols representing a maze of connections that ripple across the screen to detect any pattern of concealment. When someone is operating in a hidden economy, the spidergram has a different shape. IT service company Detica is responsible for fraud investigations for HMRC and assesses a subset of tax data, cross-referencing information from several data sources to select cases for investigation and target resources and identify potential compliance and fraud risks (Hainey, 2011). HMRC statisticians produce target profiles and risk and intelligence investigators generate campaigns and cases for investigation. Automated feeds into HMRC's case management system allocate work to the correct caseworkers, and their feedback further refines intelligence in Connect.

Access to such comprehensive data not only allows investigators to spot anomalies, but also simplifies HMRC's procedure for checking information contained in individual tax returns, such as, for example, inheritance tax, for which HMRC receives about 300,000 paper returns every year. HMRC can sift through information on property transactions, company ownership, loans, bank accounts, employment history and self-assessment records to spot where estates might be under-declaring. "Mystery shopping" checks, observation of businesses by inspectors, tip offs from informers, identification of fake PAYE numbers, third-party information, and information from businesses or government agencies are some of the tools used by HMRC to check the veracity of claims. In 2008, HMRC honed in on the medical profession, acquiring information from the National Health Service trusts, private hospitals and medical insurance companies to test its suspicion that practitioners were failing to declare fees for consultations, medical examinations and other services.

Land Registry and Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) records contain data on how much a person has spent on their house and vehicles registered to each address, which can be used to check if spending patterns correspond with the individual's financial situation according to HMRC. The number of properties owned can be matched against any rental income declared, with any discrepancy indicating potential fraud.

By controlling the 'data doubles' of personal (legal) identities in the registries and databanks of government agencies and private companies, HMRC is able to generate more knowledge on an individual's data. This "virtualization of citizenship" (Schinkel, 2010) is a crucial technique in the neoliberal communitarian strategy, making it possible to identify, differentiate, monitor and intervene in populations and individuals who deviate from cultural values and individual responsibility. 'Individual cases are reduced to a series of parameters that are accessed and interpreted by the digital system, which renders an individual's profile more accessible for bureaucratic purposes as it is stripped of the diversity and dynamism of a living, breathing individual. By reducing the individual to a series of discrete, but associated, parameters for assessment and evaluation, the bureaucracy transposes the plurality of individualism with the predictability and manageability of the digital profile' (Jarvis 2010, p. 13). Furthermore, the profile represents a sufficiently docile subject for the application of power. This reduction then facilitates the governing and disciplining of the individuals themselves. As Jarvis explains:



'the surveillance/dataveillance profile works to counteract the phenomenon of de-spatialized and deterritorialised social relations by rendering the information pertinent for bureaucratic-subject relations in a medium that transcends spatial constraints and facilitates the kind of stable and depersonalised relations necessary for the continued viability of the bureaucratic model. If, then, this phenomenon is accurately described in this regard, we can conclude that claims about the demise of the bureaucratic model in the face of these de-spatializing technologies (independent from the geographical context) have been greatly exaggerated' (2010, p. 14).

Two forms of tax credit are frequently claimed by the participants in my study, namely, working tax credit and child tax credit. Both require the same documents, but use different screening mechanisms. The next section looks at working tax credit claims, as well as the "tricks" used by study informants when making claims to ensure eligibility.

#### 8.2.2 Working tax credit online – "Dividuals" in the web of spidergrams

When Jobseeker's Allowance and housing benefit restrictions were introduced, many welfare dependent newcomers sought alternative solutions to enable them to keep paying their rent. Restricting state support for newcomers from the new EU member states has increased the debt level of many Roma families. Yet, loopholes in the procedures of welfare bureaucracies created by contemporary dataveillance technology have provided welfare claimants with new opportunities to construct and invent profiles of the "deserving citizen" entitled to state benefits. Not actually having to be present in face-to-face selection encounters allows the manipulation of identity in an attempt to approximate the neoliberal ideal type of the tax-paying citizen.

While Roma are often described as passive victims of their economic circumstances, many participants in the study were in fact actively trying to find solutions and, faced with discriminatory bureaucratic demands, responded flexibly to changing circumstances in order to remain eligible for benefits. Welfare-dependent participants have learnt to manipulate surveillance systems and have found ways to manage their identities vis-a-vis the authorities. By trial-and-error, applicants learn the requirements of different welfare provisions and how to present themselves accordingly. Families manage and manipulate their employment history

and number of working hours in order to remain eligible for maximum benefits, while often enjoying significantly higher incomes in the grey economy.

In April 2014, at the end of the tax year, several families who participated in the study reported receiving a letter from HMRC notifying them of an overpayment. Most promptly appealed against the decision, ready to prove their case, even though their claims were based on fictitious employment contracts. Many welfare-dependent families had contracts with fictitious firms that sell employment contracts and provide payslips for use in tax credit applications. Roma families who were notified of overpayments often made their claims based on these documents, without the firms paying National Insurance contributions for their “employees”. Many of the firms provided fake payslips for cleaning jobs (of one or two hours a day); consequently, all cleaners were subjected to increased screening for potential tax credit fraud. Families were obliged to pay back their tax credits for more than GBP 5,000 annually. Suspect claimants had to provide written proof of their employment. The repercussions people faced were based on their ‘profile in the simulation and computer-generated projections’ (2002, p. 33), not on how they actually behaved. These processes occur continuously without any personal contact (Graham and Wood, 2003).

One participant who was followed by the study for a year, was notified by HMRC of an overpayment in 2013. She was already paying back another debt for an overpayment in 2012 of more than GBP 9,000. She received no housing benefit, because she was living in a new apartment and there had been no decision yet on the amount of council tax to be paid, so she had to wait for the council decision before claiming tax credit. On paper, she was self-employed in a cleaning job and had applied for working tax credit as single mother, child benefits and child tax credit. It is easy to lose track: Once she submitted the same documents to HMRC for her tax credit claim and to JCP for income support, which meant that she had two identical employment contracts. Another time she had to look up the name of her employer’s company during a conversation about her overpayment. Her advocacy worker pointed out: ‘Everyone knows the name of their employer’. Later she admitted to paying for the payslips, but was apologetic and vowed that she would never do it again. And she didn’t do it again. Instead, she changed her status to self-employed and is hoping to avoid another overpayment next year.

Another participant described similar practices, only in this case payslips were not provided by a fictitious firm, but were sold by employees of real companies:

Interviewer: 'Is it a copy they make for you?'

Respondent: *'No, it is based on a registered contract they provide payslips with. It is fake employment, but it is like a real one. It is the same with bank statements.'*

Interviewer: 'Ok, but is it really a registered company?'

Respondent: *'No, it is a payslip from the Grange Hotel. I can fix payslips with the manager.'* (BR5)

This interview suggests that there is an extended network of actors who enable claimants to provide fictitious data about themselves and their labour history. As it has been described in the previous chapter, brokers and recruitment agents are commodifying documents and help to use them in digitalised welfare services. Surveillance in "control societies" like the UK can be characterised as "powered by simulation" rather than representation (Best, 2010). On the surface, the circulation of data represents existing citizens, transformed into a quantifiable and manageable form; however, what is actually occurring is the creation of selves, or "dividuals", which are simulations of the original (cf. Kilger, 1994; Poster, 1991). As Willems describes, (2005) a dividual is a 'physically embodied human subject that is endlessly divisible and reducible to data representations via the modern technologies of control, like computer-based systems'. A dividual is a simulation of itself, constantly 'modulating' or responding 'to differing expectations for productivity, consumption and political conduct' (Packer, 2006: 390).

As it was theorised by Deleuze, these simulations are multiple assemblages and take on a life of their own (Nayar, 2015). 'Unlike the previous discriminatory apparatuses, the categories of differentiation are multiply cross-referenced so that one can hardly define the factors that result in credit being denied, much less change desirability. The repercussions people face are based on their 'profile in the simulation and computer-generated projections', not on how they actually behave (Wise, 2002, p. 33). In essence, the original self is superfluous to the processes that follow on from the gathering of information, processes that distribute impacts and effects based on these multiple simulated data-generated selves, without regard to the original referent (Best, 2010: 11).

Personal activities and documented characters are divided and the need for representation for the real slowly disappears. Besides the fact that data systems know more about the dividuals' parameters than the original person, there is also an overestimation of the all-seeing eye of such technocratic instruments. The vast amount of data collected about individuals often remains unconnected. For example, one of the participants in the study was unable to complete

her application for working tax credit, because she was unable to find the address to which to submit her documents. The claim was closed. As she had become unemployed, she was no longer eligible for working tax credit, but had to apply for Jobseeker's Allowance at Jobcentre Plus instead. When JCP required proof that she no longer received working tax credit, she showed the letter at the office, but her case manager failed to add it to her file. Consequently, her Jobseeker's Allowance was terminated, as well, which in turn led to cuts in her housing benefit. She kept attending Jobcentre Plus appointments without receiving Jobseeker's Allowance because they were paying her pension and National Insurance contribution. She was advised to provide proof that she had no additional income in order to receive Jobseeker's Allowance payments again. Her case illustrates the gaps in communication between the two major benefit distributors (JCP and HMRC). Working tax credit is frequently applied for using false payslips, false contracts, registration at false addresses or self-employment registration. These gaps between real individuals and individuals and the lack of interaction between service providers has enabled tax credit claimants to manipulate data according to changing requirements. In the next sub-section, I will discuss two strategies used by claimants to obtain child tax credits. However, first, a short summary of the credit requirements will be provided.

### 8.3 Child tax credit claims – Identity management online

Formally, child tax credit is a weekly payment paid to a family with a low income for the care of children. The amount of the payment is defined by HMRC, based on the situation of the household. In practice, children are verified by their identity documents, which are submitted to HMRC by the school or their general practitioner and using their address. Many aspects of the claim are interrelated and depend on each other, like a spider web, and if one condition changes, all the other are also impacted. Therefore, claimants try to avoid communicating any changes in their circumstances. If their circumstances do actually change, there are four main strategies used: avoiding the communication about change of circumstances, in particular about the residence of children, sending claims for children who are not family members or selling documents of children to third parties who are able to use them for claims. Although these tactics may be considered immoral or illegal, in transnational mobile networks they are often considered a necessity to prevent future benefit cuts. The next case study illustrates the complexities of these issues.

As mentioned earlier, accommodation is a delicate issue for many newcomer families due to possible welfare restrictions. When a family is forced to move to another borough they are required to inform HMRC about any change of circumstances that might terminate their benefits, as the new council tax credit is determined based on the new property. This can lead to benefits being suspended, leaving the household without housing benefit, which can lead to debt and anxiety. In addition, when a family moves, their children have to be re-registered in the new borough, which impacts on child tax credit payments.

When moving to another borough, informants reported using several tactics to keep their child tax credit payments. Firstly, “buying” an address to stay registered in their old borough enabled them to keep their children in school, which is essential to prevent the school from informing HMRC about the change in circumstances. In one case, two children were registered at their grandmother’s address in order to prevent cuts to the housing benefit of their aunt, who accommodated them. They were forced to move when the landlord realised that he was dealing with Roma and became suspicious about their source of income. Now the family share a 50 m<sup>3</sup> flat with nine about ten other people, including three children. The actual tenant (lease holder) of the apartment was subletting three rooms, which is not legal in the London area. The family was careful to conceal the arrangement at school, because grandma was not a registered carer of the children. These practices are common and serve to ensure regular welfare payments and keep children off the radar of child protection services (From fieldwork notes.London, December 2014).

Moving between different boroughs is not the only challenge that Roma families face. Many reported moving across borders, as well. Transnational mobility entails benefit claims in more than one country and the concealment of transnational movements in order to prevent benefits from being cut. Home schooling children enables participants to move around with their children without problems with school attendance so that children stay registered. In cases where children are attending school, parents may also be fined if they take their children out of the school without notice. One of the participants was forced to move back to her country of origin with her children, but she was able to keep her children registered at school by continuously updating the head teacher and postponing the date of return every month. Keeping the children enrolled in school ensured that they received their tax credits. This, in turn, served as a proof of habitual residence, making them eligible for a council house. As she explained:

*It is quite restricted now, but there are still some backdoors. In my case, I am registered from 2011, but I was not living here from the beginning. Actually I was coming and going, but this country has paid child tax credit from 2011, and when I claimed the housing benefit, they paid it! They pay everything as they are convinced that I am a resident here. Because they are in the EU, there is free movement, no stamps nothing about my trips back home [no trace of border crossing]. So that's how I circumvent the system. (HF73)*

As she explained, by circumventing the system, she is able to claim child tax credit and child benefits in both countries. She first applied for welfare in the UK under the father's name. In her home country, where her children are registered for home education, she has applied under her name. So her children are entitled to benefits in two countries. Referring to the local authorities she stated: 'They would be able to control it, but they are not'. She explained that Roma are more successful in these cases, because they are not ashamed and not interested in the opinion of others (HF73).

The application process at HMRC for child tax credit is one of the most common areas of fraud committed by participants. Members of networks are able to use their foreign background to their advantage. They draw on differences in traditions about reiterating birth surnames and the lack of central databases registering children. Many applications are accepted, even when claimants apply for child tax credits for the children of their relatives. One of the participants felt exploited by her own father who claimed child tax benefits for her daughters. Others told of filing claims for their siblings, or even for children who had passed away. As one of the participants explained:

*So let me say it, many are handing in papers for the kids of someone else to receive these weekly payments. When their own kid turn 18, they already have three children under their name. It does not appear that it is not his child. I see these things because we fill out some office papers and their surname is never the same. And then there are those who take the money after the child is dead. For example, the child might have died long ago, ten years even, but the birth certificate is still there and they use it here in the UK. (PM21)*

This quote from an interview illustrates that many Roma in the region have extended knowledge on how to become eligible for welfare provisions or to increase their income without regular employment. Such information circulates on Facebook, forums for newcomers,

and in private message (PM) conversations on Facebook. Those who are involved in these strategies are known by name and easy to approach. Many of the claimants do not see their child tax application as fraudulent, especially when extended families are raising and taking care of the children. Others fear repercussions and debt due to overpayments. Roma newcomers acquire such knowledge from other claimants, like their Pakistani employers or landlords. Sharing information about avoiding bureaucratic barriers is seen by those landlords as support and a guarantee of tenancy payment. The following analysis explains how disadvantaged families increasingly value their citizenship as they become aware of the loopholes in the welfare system.

#### 8.4 The commodification of identity

The value of identity has structurally changed in digitalised societies. Technological developments in authentication, such as the use of biometric data, are hailed as the future of security and crime prevention. Such assumptions regarding the prevention of data abuse presuppose a binary distinction between victims and perpetrators, the latter being involved in online data theft and the former uninformed about the risks of identity fraud and unaware of the exploitation of their personal data. The following identity fraud cases illustrate that this distinction is not as clear cut. Although these assumptions may lead to several effective prevention measures, it keeps those who are taking these risks with data abuse intentionally out of sight (FPEG, 2007: 30–35). Though victims and fraudsters are often defined in oppositional terms, there are many overlaps. However, the foggy line between the two is defined by the level of involvement, investment and relative experience of benefit or loss. Without empirical data on the relative experience of victims we cannot understand the value of identity fraud. Although the risks of future debts as a result of overpayments are high, it still seems to be beneficial for victims, particularly in fraud claims in a foreign country.

Identity fraud, especially child tax credit applications, follow the path of Central European migrants' identity fraud and usually involves the unlawful use of another person's details for gain or to avoid an obligation (Pascoe et al., 2006). This type of fraud can cover a large range of methods that vary in their use of the other person's details.<sup>20</sup> Through online flows of information even the most segregated societies are able to gain knowledge about living conditions abroad and gather information on the ways in which EU citizens may access

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<sup>20</sup> For additional definition Identity theft see <http://www.identitytheft.org.uk/identity-crime/definitions.asp>

different social provisions from a distance. When EU citizenship becomes a form of capital, it can easily be commodified.

Identity theft used for identity fraud is defined as the misappropriation of the identity (such as the name, date of birth, current address or previous addresses) of another person, without their knowledge or consent, or when a perpetrator decides to simply provide an agency with false personal information (Schwarzenegger & Young, 2014). Individuals can be aware of the value of these data and might want to profit from such activities. Therefore, ‘intermediaries, who are mostly defined as fraudsters by law, are not necessarily seen as perpetrators’ (Lacey Cuganesan, 1004:245). Although fraudsters are often framed as an invisible actor in the dark web, most of the fraudsters involved in benefit fraud operate and live in the same community (Shover et al., 2003).

In the case of British benefit fraud cases, the intermediaries’ most efficient offline approach was “selling a dream”. Under this approach, they offer something that promises profit above average returns. As Titus argues, the lure of something absurdly cheap or lucrative is integral to many fraud “come-ons” (1999: 4). Fraudsters are targeting documents or data, based on the verification system of financial institutions that are also subjected to some legal obligations, mostly deriving from practical requirements and from prevention of the use of the financial system<sup>21</sup>. Consequently, the major factors in identity fraud are relying on the originality of the documents and on technical conditions of control measures that enable authentication of the data.

There are many types of fraud related to the issue of identity fraud, such as fraud by false representation, fraud by failing to disclose information, or fraud by abuse of legal position. Involvement in these types of fraud are linked to the position of the fraudster. In the following I will describe the major phases of identity fraud and analyse the selection phase. I will focus in particular on the role of “victimised” individuals and the techniques applied by fraudsters to obtain their data.

In the analysis, three levels of involvement in different forms of identity fraud will be distinguished. In the first form, guest workers who want to settle down and need to get through bureaucratic procedures acquire knowledge of different types of financial resources in a receiving country and then start to claim government benefits using their family members’ documents (illustrated by the child tax credit fraud cases).

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<sup>21</sup> EU Directive 2005/60/EC30



The second form of identity fraud is related to the first one and involves migrants who exploit their extended networks and act as intermediaries for newcomer migrants, recruiting people in their home country who are willing to provide identity documents. These migrants do not move to the UK seeking employment, but travel there solely to sign applications and register for a social security number. While fully aware of the risks, they argue that, as they lack language skills or professional training, this is the only way for them to make a living. After the application procedure, they return to their home country and wait for their monthly payments. Some receive payments from the middlemen, who collected the monthly benefits of the applicants. Some receive nothing, but usually do not blame the middleman, but rather assume that the application has been rejected. Extended knowledge on application methods develops in relatively small communities in sending countries. In Hungary, for example, identification methods have become common knowledge in networks of marginalised young adults.

This knowledge, coupled with growing socio-economic problems, leads to the third and most interesting level of identity fraud, which involves local households selling their children's documents, like birth certificates, for use in child tax credit applications abroad. These practices are common in villages with extended networks in London or Manchester. One of the participants explained his involvement:

*My sister in law's husband was asking me if I want to go to England to make some money. After Canada, I thought it might work out better and he has been living there for a long time now, making a lot of money with his brother, so he promised to get some benefits for us. He said it is easy money, we just need to go there for a few weeks and we can get 200,000 Forint per a month. When I gave him my passport he gave me 5,000 Forint, but that was it. We went there by car and I lived in their house with some other guys. They gave me a job in construction, but they didn't give me any money, or only something like five pounds per hour, but the others were saying that we were paid by the company eight pounds per hour. He helped with me get a National Insurance number and to apply for a bank account, so I gave the birth certificates of my children and all the other documents I was asked for. I never got my bank card and I never received any money. I haven't lost anything though. I want to go back, and now I know now how to do it. I know they were taking my benefits, but what can they do with this (with the documents and his bank card)? (HM54)*

The applicants selling their documents know the UK procedures for social provisions. Interestingly, these claimants define these contracts not as “selling” their data, but rather as investing in future welfare benefits from abroad in order to avoid future debt. Even if they do not received any benefits after selling their documents, they still consider it a good decision to commodify their data, as they have not experienced any direct loss. Their data is mostly used to apply for social benefits from foreign governments and it is not seen by the seller as a crime. After their enrolment the UK system, fraudsters apply for financial services with their data. These services require information such as: surname, first name, date of birth, address, place of residence, phone number, and etc.<sup>22</sup> In some cases the identity details used by fraudsters are checked against accessible databases containing personal data in the context of identity theft. The components of such initial legal identity data are the most relevant for government institutions. They are also supplemented by biographical elements, which build up over time to support this authentication method (FPEG, 2007: 11).

Legal proof of identity is usually the responsibility of the state and to control these authentication measures there are several vulnerabilities defined on an institutional level (Van Der Meulen 2006: 21). However, the type and quality of identity documents issued by governments varies internationally. This is becoming more problematic with the introduction of biometric data, which entails the risk of falsification (Grijpink & Prins, 2003: 251). According to these authentication issues, and depending on the benefits sought, several techniques are invented by fraudsters to obtain the data needed. Most of these techniques are online strategies (such as scams) and offline strategies (such as procurement fraud, lending fraud, payment card fraud or procurement fraud) (Levi, 2008).

In benefit fraud cases involving Central European Roma, the fraud is designed to be legally ambiguous and beneficial for all actors. However, fraudsters take the least risks and get the most out of it. For instance, in combination with benefit claims, fraudsters sometimes take over the account of a legitimate customer and use his/her credit facilities. New accounts can be created by applying the personal details of the victim to create a new bank account and then apply for credit. In other cases, a fraudster permanently takes on the identity of a person (Newman & McNally, 2005). Identity fraud is even more sophisticated in cases where information is used to secure ‘breeder’ documents such as birth certificates. These are used for multiple applications for credit cards, loans and benefits, securing credit that is never going to be paid back (Gordon & Wilcox, 2003: 19).

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<sup>22</sup> See more details at [http://ec.europa.eu/internal\\_market/fpeg/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/fpeg/index_en.htm)

The participants in the study reported being aware of the risks they take by selling their documents, but they are also aware of the limitations of international law and cooperation. They often do not intend to stay in the UK, so do not care if their actions have consequences for them in the UK. Still, these commodification methods illustrate several recent problems in the identity fraud legislation. According to Muller, in western societies citizenship is being decomposed into 'identity management'. This shift is exemplified by a change in focus from questions of entitlement and rights and the attendant cultural and ethnic attributes of citizenship, to questions of 'verifying/authenticating "identity" for the purpose of access to rights, bodies, spaces, and so forth' (Muller, 2004: 280).

With regard to legislation at the EU level specific legislation on identity theft does not exist' (Mitchison, Wilikens, Breitenbach, Urry, & Portesi, 2004: 23). Practically, there are conflicting interests among member states and cultural differences in identification, credit card use, political systems and legal cultures (Grossman, 2005: 11).

These commodification practices are developing due to diversity in legislation and welfare provisions between different member states, which the marginalised members of weak European countries exploit to survive. It is erroneous to assume that these actors are not aware of the risks they take. They can professionally assess the price they might pay for the identity commodification, but are also aware of the low risk of getting caught. As long as they receive benefits from these documents, they experience their involvement as profitable. They do not blame the recruiters, because it means immediate income for them. Even if some have negative experiences with fraudsters, they keep trying to invest their documents via others familiar with foreign procedures.

According to the classical interpretation, a victim of identity fraud is someone whose identity is abused because a fraudster is profiting from them. In the transnational mobility context these roles are fluid and exchanging overtime. Individuals who sell their data voluntary, actively participate in these applications and can be defined as both victims and perpetrators at the same time. Whether or not biometric technology or other data industry measures could actually reduce the incidence of identity crime is questionable. It is argued that instead of making changes in the identification processes there should be a focus on the role of different actors and the altering the processes shaping these activities. The assumption that biometric data is infallible lulls authorities into thinking that they have found a solution to one of the basic problems of modernity, which has acquired a particular salience in today's globalised world: the problem of suspect identities (Cole, 2001). As Lyon (2010: 607) suggests: 'Showing a token of legitimate ID is now a basic condition for the exercise of freedom.' (cited in Aas

2011). This points not only to how biometric technologies limit movement by producing “disqualified bodies” (Muller, 2004), but also to the advantages such technology can offer to those with the right tokens – the globally mobile “kinetic elites” (Adey, 2004). Identity controls are, thus, not only fraud prevention measure, but also mobility controls on the poor.

In this context, practices of transnational surveillance, unlike more ‘inwardly-directed national surveillance, revolve around alliances between “states like us” and protecting the public, which is no longer defined exclusively as the citizenry of the nation state. On the level of political discourse, these practices seem to aspire to notions of “pan-European and cosmopolitan citizenship” (Aas, 2011, p. 341). However, unequal positions are held by various social groups (citizens, subcitizens, supracitizens and noncitizens) in terms of the degree of surveillance they are subjected to, ranging from extreme deprivation to great social privilege. This inequality reveals the inadequacy of the traditional liberal notion of citizenship as the springboard for articulating a discourse of rights. Consequently, it is unclear how well equipped the critical surveillance and privacy discourse, which is built on the language of citizenship, is to address the unequal social and geopolitical positions of those subjected to surveillance practices on a global level.

As it has been described in Chapter 2 on Social Sorting, the various surveillance measures have different (bio)political objectives and markedly different effects on citizens of the global North, “crimmigrants” (criminal immigrants) and bona-fide global travellers (ibid.). For the latter, they have carved out pockets and corridors of protection and mobility. These practices bring to our attention what Judith Butler (2004: 29) has termed ‘the qualitatively differentiated value of life’ and the ‘geopolitical distribution of corporeal vulnerability’.

In conclusion, tax benefits are easily accessible but difficult to keep. Different tax credit entitlements trigger different methods of circumventing the system to maintain payments. Parents register children of their extended family members, hide changed circumstances, pay for fake addresses, keep their children registered in school while abroad and participate in benefit fraud. These techniques are constantly changing and have major implications for welfare screening methods, as has been illustrated by the commercial diagnostic software used by HMRC investigators. Still, tax credits are not the only way for newcomers who are employed to obtain income. In the following section another coping strategy is presented that confirms a shift from welfare to “debtfare” in neoliberal service provision.

## 8.5 The commodification of debt

Although the previous examples have shown several innovative strategies for obtaining benefits, not everyone is able to access social provisions. Financial surveillance and control of mobility has been seriously impacted on by speech acts against the poor, in which debts receive a new interpretation in risk-oriented geopolitical objectives. As has been illustrated by welfare restrictions, there is a new shift that is forcing welfare dependent newcomers to take loans to deal with social inequality. Governing the poor by debt is one of the major critics of geopolitical studies, which warn against the criminalisation of newcomers who are increasingly slip into debt. Susanne Soederberg explores the illusion of financial inclusion in ‘Debtfare States and the Poverty Industry’ (2014a). She argues that societal structures and processes normalise and naturalise a credit culture by increasing consumer credit at high interest rates, damaging the social fabric of nations by increasing the prevalence of inequality which, in turn, restrains national economic growth.

‘Under the current economic paradigm, debt accumulation is being utilized as a stopgap to circumvent marginalization – consumer credit provides households with the ability to mask inequality through consumption, financed by debt accumulation’ (Hall, 2014). Following his argument, it can be concluded that not only has society become dependent on consumer credit, but also the ‘social machinations involved in normalising, depoliticising, legitimising – the social necessities compel the working poor to depend on credit’ ensure their livelihoods’ (Soederberg, 2014a, p. 30).

Focusing on student loans and short-term credit, the last part of this chapter develops the argument that newcomers are also able to challenge such credit constructions by identity management, allowing the person behind the indebted ‘dividual’ to avoid being caught.

### 8.5.1 Short-term loans

Newcomer Roma families are regularly trapped in commercial short-term loans that restricted their life by piling debt upon debt. Payday loans, which are favoured by many study participants, are short-term loans for small amounts of money to solve immediate financial problems. These are easily available from high-street shops and Internet sites, but interest rates are high. Many contracts include a continuous payment authority (CPA). If there is not enough money in the account to repay the loan on the agreed date, the lender may ask the borrower’s banks for all or part of the money. Charges are added for late payment. However, the lender is

not able to use the CPA more than twice if they have not been able to obtain the money from the borrowers account, and they cannot try to take a part payment.<sup>23</sup>

Many Roma families who are threatened with eviction notices or by bailiffs apply for short-term loans. However, these loans come with several preconditions that should be considered. When participants are under pressure, they are willing to solve their financial problems by taking a loan with fake documents. For such loans, the lender must provide a tenancy contract, bank account and referee for proof of income, which is often another self-employed family member. Newcomer families that are already indebted may need to manipulate addresses to take another loan or obtain a loan from a usurer to cover living expenses. Due to credit check requirements, if an indebted newcomer family is willing to apply for a loan, they need to manipulate with addresses, so they pay for false tenancy agreements, or false bank statements that they can buy from illegal 'agencies'. Increasing debts are covered with other debts. Sometimes electronic devices bought with credit cards are sold on the black market to spin a quick profit, with no intention of paying back the credit card debt. One of the participants, a young man who used to live in several countries explained how he copes when he is unable to make enough money to live on:

*It is easy to sell new bank accounts or gas cards, which you can use to buy products like Tesco cards, which can be used to buy GBP 200 or 300 gas, which you can sell for GBP 1:30 per litre. This also makes some profit, but these are not big deals. It's more like to survive when you have no money at all. But how long will this be enough? Like a month? Here, there is nothing anymore – no new businesses, nothing. There was before, like the bank card business. You even used to be able to get credit till about four years ago, but now I can't name any bank that will give you a card with a credit limit. Before, when we went to the bank, we walked out with a bank account and bought four phones for about GBP 300. It is finished now, this address is shit now [referring to the UK address of his family]. There have been too many applications and stuff registered here. (HM36).*

Similar to bank accounts, accessing loans and credit cards are also becoming restricted. Accordingly, newcomers participate in local credit markets and invest the knowledge and skills learnt in other countries, such as Canada, about alternative short-term financial solutions. There

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<sup>23</sup> Information of the Citizen Advice Bureau: <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/debt-and-money/borrowing-money/types-of-borrowing/loans/payday-loans/payday-loans/>

is hardly any assistance to support newcomers with financial problems. ‘Responsibilisation’ of citizens has become the main principle. In the civil society NGOs are increasingly controlled and threatened by government restrictions, quality claims about service provisions, such as licenced advocacy work. As the director of a Roma advocacy group has summarised, ‘advocacy work is criminalised now’. She explained how many legislative restrictions are introduced in order to control NGOs, such as the working conditions, administrative tasks and financial transparency. The director of this NGO suggested that likewise the state is limiting access to support for vulnerable people, which curbs the ability of poor minorities to access welfare and state-financed service provision, which pushes them into debt.

Although there are many loopholes through which to gain short-term loans, these debts are restricting the long-term prospects of households, many of which are governed by debt and ultimately ejected or forced to return to their home country. Many of these financial problems already start in the home country, when migrants take loans in order to move. These restrictions are pulling newcomers into usury and different forms of dependency relationships. As the following chapter will indicate, there are other solutions than becoming trapped in such cycle of debt leading to expulsion.

In the following sub-section, another novel tactic employed to solve financial problems is discussed, namely, student loans.

### 8.5.2 Student finance through private colleges

The corporatisation of education has created a new market economy that enables private universities or colleges to register anyone as a “student”. These students are then eligible for student finance and additional loans. As Soederberg (2014b) argues, the commodification of debt is:

‘a tension-ridden, class-based strategy that emerges from the contradictions inherent in the credit system within the wider dynamics of capital accumulation. A paradox that underpins the student loan industry is the ever-increasing expansion of loans to student debtors, who often cannot meet their payment obligations. Seen from a historical materialist perspective, the commodification of debt involve more than the buying and selling of debt to generate fee and interest-based income, underpinning these processes are highly unequal and exploitative social relationships of power that entail both temporal and spatial dimensions. The power relations in the credit system seem to be

muted in the debates about student loans, largely because the system has been assumed by many observers to be comprised of rational economic actors.’(p.689)

Student loans are a favoured financial solution of newcomers without families or who are not eligible for any social benefits in London. One of the participants, a young man, appeared to be the recruiter for The London School of Science and Technology (LSST), a private school in London owned by the Zaidi family providing easy access to student loans.

There are strict preconditions on student loans regarding the applicant’s length of permanent residency in the UK, English language skills and education background. However, it seems easy for agents who are helping newcomers with their applications to get around these. Students pay a fix amount of ‘administration fee’ in return for such services by agents. Many private colleges have developed unorthodox practices in relation to recruitment and marketing to maximise enrolment. Whereas universities enrol students in September and maybe January, private colleges enrol every two months. These colleges use street agents who recruit outside job centres, tube stations and even Ikea to bring people to the college. LSST is meant to be a new profit-making sector in the UK that takes pupils from the poorest backgrounds and raises their prospects. However, recently, allegedly because of corrupt application procedures, the college has knowingly enrolled students who cannot speak English and who do not have basic literacy skills in its undergraduate-level courses, and the rates for submitting coursework are below expected standards. Overall achievement is low, the former vice-principal reports, because all that matters to the college is increasing turnover.

Each student represents up to GBP 6,000 a year in student-loan-financed tuition fees for LSST and students receive up to a maximum of GBP 11,000 in student loans a year. One of the participants was explaining how newcomers are reflected in the loan market:

*So you can play the system, and the British believe that they are great scholars. By the way, I do not understand the English in that. Like a few years ago they opened the gates, so people could flow into the country. What did they expect when they closed the gate from one minute to the next? That people will stop coming? They just left the backdoor open. There are some laws that are still not*



*restricted, such as schools paying students GBP 3,000 every three months! So far they have not focused their attention on this. So they give the schools huge amounts of money. Anyone can do it. And you think they might check if you attend the school? I sign my name in the morning and farewell, I go live my life and I get GBP 3,000 every three months. Isn't that great? (HF3)*

Another participant stressed:

*It is all about advertising. What everyone is interested in is the money. If you do not expect to earn more than GBP 21,000 a year [the threshold at which student loans are now repayable], then the GBP 11,000 loan and the non-repayable grants for living are simply free money. Once you are in the "Student Loans Company" [system], it is quite a lucrative place to be. I invested lot of energy in this. Bringing in the folks, explain it to them, everyone has different issues. In the beginning they asked me to fill in the forms for them: [questions like] "Why did you come here?" "Why do you want to stay what are your plans with your education?" I want to stay and settle here blah, blah, blah. For every course it was the same mantra. I get now GBP 50 per person to fill in forms.(BR4).*

These references indicate that most applicants are not registering at these schools to study, but to exploit the financial benefits of school registration. As quality problems with colleges have become obvious and the application procedures more visible, restrictions have been developed. Applicants now need to prove that they will be in the UK for at least three years and, if the student loan office finds that they are not, applicants are obliged to pay back the loan.

In addition, these private providers as LSST have received an injection of over GBP 1 billion from the government. One college group, the London School of Business and Finance, went from 50 to 6,000 funded students in year. The latest official figures indicate there may be 60,000 private students eligible for funding. Shortly after 2014 the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) also stopped government cash going to hundreds of domestic students enrolled at LSST.

Credit systems such as student loans not only entail exploitative relationships of power, but can also play an important role in facilitating the expansion and reproduction of capital accumulation in that they temporarily resolve the contradictions to which capitalism is prone

(Marx, 1991). Soederberg explains (2014, p. 670): ‘Underpinning the student loan industry, there is a core tension between the expansion of student loans and the rise of defaults. Missing from the debates is a rigorous and radical interrogation of how and why this tension has been socially constituted and reproduced’ (Soederberg 2014, p. 690).

### 8.5.3 Skills Certification Scheme

Recruiters are the most advantaged in financial tactics and participate in many professional markets, including by assisting people to pass the test for Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) cards, which is a precondition for unskilled migrants seeking to work in the construction industry in the UK. Concerns have been raised about increasing construction card fraud and employers have been warned to carry out electronic card checks before allowing workers on site.<sup>24</sup>

As it has been argued, these financial mechanisms are constantly changing according to skills and opportunities of migrants, shaped by digitalised administrative practices. Several financial practices of the last years are traceable along different networks between several Central East European (CEE) countries and the UK. These practices change according to control measures and are not ethnicity-specific, but mainly copycat practices. As Grill (2015) argues:

‘Although these ways of “fixing up” money were praised as reflecting the inventive qualities of Roma, most of them were based on knowledge acquired through various encounters during the settlement process in their new niches (in Britain, but also in other places they inhabited on their previous migratory journeys). While some actions were informed by a readjustment of dispositions acquired in their previous social fields to the new conditions in Britain, a lot was learnt from other groupings occupying similar niches in their new destinations. The process of learning how to “fix up money” was often situated at this particular conjuncture between prior dispositions and readjustments to new conditions.’(p. 89)

Grill argues that these groupings are represented in essentialist terms that ascribed certain characteristics and economic practices to particular categories, but these practices are actually a situationally-constructed survival techniques. The most dependent group in the welfare

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<sup>24</sup> See more information at <https://www.cscs.uk.com/>

system are newcomers with physical disabilities, who are often excluded from this financial coping narrative. As the neoliberal values are also restricting access to care provisions, the most innovative should be those, who are unable to work.

## 8.6 Conclusion – Investing in virtual citizenship

Being a migrant is like driving with a GPS that keeps recalculating the path. As it has been suggested in the theoretical framework, the geopolitical aims are implemented in many internal control measures of nation states, which target the least attractive individuals and force them to move. When targeting algorithms are employed in digitalised selection mechanisms, individuals attempt to bypass the restrictions and trick the system in order to stay stable in their microenvironment. Based on the collected data of service providers, which might be manipulated, new directions are defined and recalculated to circumvent welfare restrictions.

The capacity of surveillance and dataveillance to deconstruct the individual into a series of discrete parameters that can be scrutinised, assessed, and assigned value and intentionality is not limited to the medium of data interpretation. The digital image plays a powerful constructive role in allowing the individual to be captured in the digital and rendered as an object of interrogation. This study further illustrates the degree to which this kind of digital profiling has implications for the interactions of individuals with bureaucratic structures and the disciplining of their physical being. ‘Amassing profiles on subject individuals through digital surveillance and dataveillance play a vital role in establishing the parameters on which bureaucratic structures can act’(Jarvis 2010, p. 14).

## Chapter 9 Hiding from Welfare Services

Before I summarise my conclusion about the dialectic relationships of Roma newcomers and welfare bureaucracies in the UK, I need to draw attention to those newcomers who are living on the edge, hidden from the eyes of social welfare institutions as transnational migrants in a host country. Although the social-political framing of Roma emphasises their welfare-dependent, marginal position, many Roma who are living and working abroad are not included in this discourse. As will be described in the following short analyses, social sorting also has unintended effects on newcomers who are adapting to population control by keeping themselves out of bureaucratic surveillance mechanisms. These newcomers create economic coping strategies that often sustain their invisibility. Hiding Roma ethnicity is understood as a technique for gaining social and cultural inclusion.

In the previous chapter, I identified different coping strategies that participants used to be able to stay in the host country by staying eligible for welfare provisions. The main hypotheses of this study presumed that unattractive newcomers are subjected to monitoring practices and selection techniques that force them to move on, or to move back to their home countries. I have described how neoliberal market structures define the unattractive newcomers as unproductive or dependent on welfare provisions. In the previous two chapters, I described their interactions with welfare bureaucracies, as new spaces of selection measures. These digitalised surveillance mechanisms define the profiles of undesired individuals and invent restrictive policies to force these unproductive newcomers into the labour market. Still, it is not only economic participation that makes one included and accepted in a host society.

The social and academic construction of Roma ethnicity designed by stakeholders as activists and politicians was extensively discussed in Chapter 6. It was argued that these narratives contribute to existing images of the welfare-dependent Roma who are living on the margins of every society in Europe. Although there are still families making a living from traditional economic strategies such as selling flowers, trading horses or collecting scrap metal, most of the Roma coming from Central Europe make their livings from low-skilled labour or merchandise services. The data analysis revealed a number of interpretative repertoires, which were drawn upon a number of strategies deployed by Central European Roma to constitute the situational understanding of social sorting and how it shapes their decision making. NGOs and academics often avoid those who are less visible, such as Roma living from irregular market activities or highly skilled professionals, as if they do not fit into the socially constructed image of Roma ethnic minorities. Although many Roma families are dependent on social service

provisions, at least one-third of this study's participants stated that they are unwilling to be associated with state support or unwilling to get in touch with the system due to their previous experiences. Though we cannot speak about clear categories of migrants' economic strategies based on the selected examples of research participants, I will present some of the recent tendencies on the scale of economic strategies that enable migrants to make their livings while avoiding the spotlight of the social service system.

As will be presented here, maintaining a self-sustaining lifestyle with legal labour participation in a host country still does not mean that Roma can avoid structural exclusion. Exclusion is based on an individual's conformity with socially and morally established behaviours defined by the host society. Bureaucracy does not determine the limits of acceptable behaviour, but the social-historical economic market values develop into a regulatory community of value that regulate membership based on ideal conditions of desirability (Anderson, 2013). In short, there is a contextualised intersection between immigration concerns, labour market demands, cultural fears and citizenship that defines inclusion.

This chapter aims to present the coping strategies of those who are staying outside the gaze of welfare services and their experiences with social exclusion, even when they fulfil economic demands. I will discuss those people who stay hidden from welfare services. The first cases will explore the invisibility of regular employees who are willingly not participating in welfare bureaucracies but are trying to stay self-sustaining through temporary or long-term employment in the labour market. The second type of cases represents grey market activities and the role of ethnic recruitment in exploitative labour conditions. The third type of cases, defined as coping strategies, will be framed by participation the black market. Finally, I will add a short reflection about the returnees.

## 9.1 Integration or invisibility – Working class Roma in London

Integration is the buzzword in several EU strategies that aim to improve educational outcomes and inclusion of Roma in every member state. However, those who are integrated seem to disappear from this debate. This section discusses cases of Roma migrants who are willingly not participating in welfare bureaucracies but trying to stay self-sustaining through temporary or long-term employment in the labour market. 'We came to change our history', said a participant who regularly attended network meetings at a local advocacy NGO (PF4). As he describes, many Roma move to London to live and work without an ethnic stigma. According to Miller and Kaiser (2001), stigma is 'an attribute that conveys a devalued social identity

within a particular context' (p. 74) and this devaluation exposes stigmatised individuals to various stressors such as prejudice and discrimination.

In scientific discussions, just as in policy papers, Roma are often generalised in a dichotomy with non-Roma or limited to one specific locality or network. In these approaches, Roma who are working or living in similar conditions as non-Roma and who follow similar transnational mobility traces are staying out of sight. This might also be characterised by their unwillingness to be identified as an ethnic Roma. Participants stated that they prefer to be identified as a national minority, such as Slovak or Polish people. Many Roma in London share the same aspirations as non-Roma, get the same education and work while they secure their invisibility among other national migrants.

According to narratives of Roma who use ethnic mimicry, they have a more sustainable life abroad if they follow in the footsteps of their direct network of fellow countryman. These participants are departing alone and take no responsibility for others in their family. They leave from a relatively less deprived home situation than those who move with their whole family and they know how to apply for jobs abroad. Some participants have excellent language skills, are well-educated and easily make contact with employment agencies before arrival. Some participants stressed their previous experiences abroad as an au pair, construction worker or cleaner. These participants were employed in their home countries and have reliable networks who were able to support them in finding jobs. Most of this study's participants were living in shared accommodations with other Hungarian Slovak or Polish nationals. They were unwilling to stay close to Roma households or to live with their extended family networks. These self-differentiating practices were not only seen as identity management, but also as an internal bordering between different classes in the Roma diaspora. As one participant clarified, many of them prefer to isolate themselves and live in 'in-betweenness'. They do not belong to the local Roma ethnic networks and they are also socially and culturally excluded from the host society. As the following quotes will illustrate, hiding ethnicity might enable one to participate in the local economy, but it does not prevent social exclusion in the host country.

Interestingly, several participants who were using the strategy of ethnic invisibility were raised in state care in their home countries and had mainly negative experiences with ethnic connotations.

One case illustrates this argument. A young Hungarian man who was not even 30 years old shared that as a toddler he was placed in state care by child protection services and he spent most of his life in state care. He had the opportunity to learn a profession and save some money to start life on his own. He got a job in the local audio factory and began a long-term

relationship with a woman who made him take loans from the local bank. When he lost his job at TESCO, he was unable to pay the rent and decided to move to London to find a job to repay the debts. His ex-colleague helped him get a job as a dishwasher in one of the restaurant franchises in London. Like many other Roma men, he rented a room in shared accommodation where his ex-colleague had been living. He had already been living in London for six years and still worked for the same company. He managed to pay back his debt although his relationship did not survive, and he now has a stable life in London (HM11).

I have collected various cases of Roma migrants who lived in similar conditions. Losing jobs and falling into debt or usury in their home country are regularly mentioned as motivations for moving. Three study participants found jobs in the same profession as in their home country, like bakers from TESCO who got the same type of jobs in London (HM12). Almost all the participants who were working in London stated that there were hardly any chances for them to be able to participate in the labour market in recent years due to the prejudices and discrimination in application procedures in their home countries. These young adults often rent rooms in shared accommodation, mainly with people from their same country but usually not with Roma. They have hardly any acquaintances with the British majority or with other minorities, and complain about stress, isolation, boredom, social exclusion and, in some cases, homesickness. Some even referred to a fear of depression.

Roma newcomers are not only keeping their ethnicity hidden, but some also keep a distance from other Roma. One Slovak man described this distance as follows:

*I have no problem with them, of course. I'm a gypsy and often I feel sorry for them, because, like, I do not agree with his gypsy way of thinking and therefore I do not feel comfortable among them. Because, they think differently. They are negligent, annoying, and sometimes I feel like if I'd stay around them they would look down on me and cannot understand that I am different and why. We do not feel happy among many Roma. I cannot tell you why, but no. (SM59)*

Another participant from Poland also stressed that she felt annoyed by her Roma network because people asked her for favours, but never returned her support.

*I know it's going to sound stupid now, but for me, I hate Roma people. I don't know why, but I always say this. (PF24)*

Another Hungarian Roma man, who was living with a non-Roma woman, referred to Roma as ‘tiegnas’, which is a discriminatory name in his language. He even changed his surname to make it less obvious to strangers that he is Roma. He clarified that he hates Roma because he was beaten up on a daily basis by his stepparents who were non-Roma. Controversially, while his Roma background was constantly denied, he repeatedly stated that there is no discrimination in London. He assumes that in such a huge diversity there is a lack of knowledge about Roma ethnicity (BR4).

Similar to his explanation, most of the Roma participants who were hiding their ethnicity stressed the attractive non-discriminatory attitude in the UK and praised the opportunities in London. These controversial narratives can be explained by previous experiences of discrimination in their home countries. One participant I interviewed, who was regularly stigmatised in elementary school, interpreted self-identification as an unnecessary risk that could lead to exclusion:

‘Why would I tell them? If they don’t ask, I won’t tell them. But you know, for me it was the same. I was watching them [referring to dark-skinned men who are friends of her husband] when we are going to the pub and I see people watching. It is a risk to be identified as a Roma. It is not negative but it is always a risk to be seen as a Roma....’

*‘Do they know at your work that you are a Roma?’*

‘They don’t, but if they would ask I would tell them. One man did know, but he didn’t say anything. He didn’t say nothing, but he was a close friend.’

*‘Do you think there’s a negative image about Slovak Roma in the UK?’*

‘It doesn’t matter if you are Slovak Roma or Spanish Roma or Italian. They have a bad opinion.’

*‘Do you think we can challenge these ideas?’*

‘You can challenge these ideas, but cannot change it.’ (CF43)

Others also remained silent about their ethnicity when they got involved in conversations discussing Roma, and did not comment on discriminatory notions. Some young parents did not even tell their children that they were Roma. Still, some activists were unwilling to conceal their ethnicity and used “voluntary engagement coping” strategies, even when they had implications on their personal relationships.



“Voluntary engagement coping” involves targeting the source of stigma or ‘targeting one’s own emotions or thoughts to alter the social environment where stigmatisation occurs, or changing the way one perceives the situation in which stigmatisation occurs’ (Choi, Han, Paul, & Ayala, 2011:146). One participant, who was working and studying in London, stated that he wanted people to know about his identity because he thinks he is a positive counter-example against the negative stereotypes. Still, he found it challenging to share his ethnicity, since his Roma background turned into the primary reference in place of his other qualities.

*I know that people when they know, they never look at you as a Polish person. I feel Polish and I feel Romani! Polish, because it is my country. But they never look at you as a Pole. They will say, “that’s my friend, he’s a Roma”. They like you, but they always highlight this fact that you are a Roma...Actually, I never tried to hide that I am a gypsy because everyone knows that I am a good person. I will always try to get good grades. Because if I just had bad grades, they would say that I am a gypsy and bad grades and everything... so I tried to do better than my college friends. (PM35)*

As these quotes illustrate, many Roma who are willing to participate in the labour market and try to avoid any contact with benefit agencies restrict the information they share about themselves with others, in particular about their ethnic background. By framing their identity as a CEE national migrant they say they are not willing to hide their identity or try to pass as non-Roma, but would rather not share their personal business with others. This creates a wall of silence between these newcomers and the host society, increasing their social isolation and distrust in the host society. In short, by” disengagement-coping “(Choi et al., 2011), Roma actively withdraw from situations where they might experience discrimination. The decision to dissociate from social settings like a Roma diaspora epitomises how participants perceive that they would be treated in London. Accordingly, Roma newcomers employ conscious strategies to mitigate the impact of stigmatisation.

Many newcomers who are coming from a structurally deprived situation want to be able to fully participate and become accepted in a new society. Roma migrants are willing to live without stigma and many try to avoid the same dependency relations they used to live with in their home countries. However, after arrival, many are confronted with the complexities of expectations they have to satisfy in a foreign society. Neoliberal state recognition is not only based on formal citizenship, but on legal economic productivity and, as Anderson (2013) suggested above, a historically developed social citizenship. Therefore, we have to analytically

distinguish between formal citizenship (juridical codified rights and duties of citizen-members of states) and moral citizenship (a counterfactual ideal of citizen participation) (Schinkel, 2008, p. 17).

On the one hand, newcomers who are not participating in the labour market are stigmatised as welfare scavengers. On the other hand, if they provide cheap labour in the host country, Roma are also defined as unattractive newcomers who are poisoning the local labour market. Parameters of good citizenship are manipulated in the populist discourse in which “young migrants” seeking jobs in the EU are also constructed as a “threat” to the national labour markets and economies of the receiving member states. The question is how do newcomers try to manoeuvre along these controversial notions in order to fully participate in the host society?

As a report issued by the Centre for European Policy Studies (2013) notes: ‘an immediate issue of concern arising from these framings is that they challenge the equal treatment and non-discrimination principles laying at the basis of citizenship of the European Union’ (p. 134). As I described in Chapter 2, threat has a new meaning in governance strategies: changing the techniques of power applied in control interventions that lead to the moralisation and virtualisation of citizenship. According to recent social sorting practices, this change does not concern the formal inclusion of citizens that is legitimised by the free mobility of EU nationals, but the moral inclusion in the discursive domain.

The social isolation and ethnic invisibility of Roma not only reflect the differentiation of the good active citizen from the inactive citizen in a host society, but also differentiations based on social and cultural assimilation. The role of “social contracts”, which form the foundations of nation states and in which host societies prescribe the duties, responsibilities and moral capacities of potential citizens, has changed (Schinkel et al., 2015). According to Van Houdt et al. (2011), the new preconditions to earn one’s inclusion as a newcomer should be understood through ‘three intertwined processes, called neoliberal communitarianism:

- 1) (re)formulations of social contracts between (potential) citizens, civil society, the state and the markets;
- 2) a renewed sacralisation of the nation; and
- 3) a form of citizenship that involves an increased emphasis on the need to earn one’s citizenship.’ (Van Houdt et al., 2011, p.16.)

Thus, political programmes of EU citizenship in relation to integration in the UK manifest as, on the one hand, a “neoliberalisation” of citizenship that involves an increased

emphasis on the need to earn one's citizenship and, on the other hand, an increased "communitarianisation" (Etzioni, 2007). In the words of Brubaker (1992), this is a 'sacralisation' of the nation in response to immigration. As the cases of Roma illustrate, they consciously construct an identity for deservingness and inclusion that is prioritised. In this identity-making process, they dissociate themselves from stigmatised parameters to avoid cultural expulsion. However, this mimicry is a situational condition and it doesn't comprehend the mechanisms of assimilation. In assimilative objectives, deservingness and inclusion are not codified. Instead, there is a vague and diffuse aggregate notion that can be ever shifting, continuously redrawing the inside/outside border. In summary, unlike membership in the nation state, membership in society is a non-codified discursive construct.

#### 9.2.1. The grey economy or 50 shades of (un)employment

As suggested above, the least visible Roma participants were those who were following the paths of mainstream CEE migrants and who, with the assistance of employment agencies or the support of friends, managed to participate in the white economy of the host country. However, many of those who were able to find jobs were employed through exploitative employment agencies that could not provide regular employment. When these irregular working schedules did not provide enough income, migrants extended their working days by adding other activities that might provide extra income. Most of these temporary workers developed their contacts in the grey economy and, by investing in their international relationships, irregularly operated as merchants or service providers. This section focuses on employment in the grey market.

Roma economic strategies are often mystified in the public discourse, which associates their market economy with ethnic distinctiveness. Many scholars argue that Roma are living in a marginal position due to their structural exclusion that makes them unable to participate in the mainstream labour market. Others, like Michael Stewart (1997), claim that Roma economic strategies are strictly related to their self-identification practices. In his argument, Roma consciously stay out of the mainstream labour market to maintain their cultural identity. In his study in socialist Hungary, where Vlach Roma were employed in factories, Roma expressed an ideological preference for so-called "Romani butji" (Roma work), which connotes deals in the marketplace that show one's acumen and through which men constantly recreate themselves as Roma. This focus on personhood and the creation of proper social relationships (Gay y Blasco, 1999) highlights the need for researchers to pay attention not only to the

description of Roma participation in different social economic contexts and how is it related to their ethnic distinctiveness, but also to the various ways that Roma conceptualise articulations between gender, money, work and ethnic belonging (Brazzabeni et al. 2015). In short, there are many theories about the resilience of Roma and how it is articulated in their transnational economic strategies.

Given the fluid nature of recent transnational mobility and the diversity of Roma ethnicity, we also need to understand the role Roma economic practices play in the assemblage of surveillance mechanisms. Though control measures are constantly trying to shape individual choices around coping, inventive strategies are always creating space for alternative economic routes. As a fluid inextricably intertwined space, legal labour and grey market activities are in constant interrelation with each other.

This section will present Roma incentives and how temporariness, insecurity and constantly changing policy restrictions shape risk-taking in the grey market economy. First, I will discuss the temporary labour offered by local employment agencies and how their recruitment is interrelated with displacement of Roma newcomers. Self-employment has a specific role in counterstrategies of excluded Roma newcomers, who invent tactics to access the legal labour market. I will then link cases back to the controversial notion of neoliberal communitarianism to describe the notion of earned citizenship.

Roma participants who were unable to find full-time jobs were recruited by smaller job agencies owned by small business entrepreneurs, such as Pakistani meat factories. Taking these jobs means earning the minimum wage (though deductions made by job agencies often means earning even less) or working without a legal job contract. The jobs provided through these agencies were also highly unstable and dependent on work performance and social connections. On some days, participants were employed for 12 hours per day, especially before bank holidays; in other periods, they waited for a job for several weeks without being called on. Employees of these factories were packing meat or skinning lambs under tough conditions for minimum wage. Women often took jobs in warehouses, packing chips or books or, in some cases, bananas or frozen food. Although they were keen to work and to be paid overtime, they often had to wait several days before they were called. The regularity of work often depended on one's relationship with a line manager, the job agency, a friend or broker, on one's performance on the job and, not infrequently, on bribing one of the agency's employees.

The majority of these workers stayed in rather marginal and unstable positions as part of the temporary labour force; only a few managed to get more long-term jobs. Those who did often gained recognition from others for being employed directly through a company or the

council, in contrast to the majority of Roma, who found work via job agencies (Gril, 2015, p. 98). As one participant described: ‘One must have the capacity and acquired disposition “to endure” (birinel) demanding working conditions, as well as the strength “to endure” (fikerel) and to cope with the disrupted intensity of social ties with their closest’ (Grill, 2015, p. 100 in Brazzabeni et al.).

As suggested in the previous chapter, these unpredictable financial conditions have a direct implication on migrants’ living conditions, so most of the participants combined different strategies to fill in the gaps in their income. As I described, some apply for student loans, sell goods or recruit others.

Participants described their relative deprivation in the labour market as they experienced multiple dependence and insecure living circumstances, and they felt deprived by companies who preferred to give contracts to workers from other minorities. Many Czech and Slovak participants working for local councils stated that they could not understand why there is such a tolerance and preference for Jamaicans, whom they described as lazy. One argued that ‘there are still postcolonial dynamics in the labour market, since the British feel guilty and therefore they are more permissive with migrants who are from their old colonies’ (CM27) compared to new CEE migrants. In addition, participants also regularly claimed that “policy restrictions should target Pakistani migrants in place of Roma”, because they are “less tidy”, “have dodgy businesses” and are “involved in organised crime activities”.

Those participants who were unable to find legal jobs were often willing to increase their income with semi-registered jobs. These jobs were often provided by landlords or those brokers who were working for bigger recruiters from companies with highly fluctuating numbers. Several companies had corrupt interview procedures and asked applicants for £100 to £300 for a job interview to work as a cleaner for a hotel franchise or in a warehouse. Most of these workers, who spoke no English and had limited local knowledge, or were unwilling to apply for tax credit arrangements, were satisfied with these conditions.

Roma recruiters who work for a bigger company are often in informal partnership with landlords who sublet houses to their fellow countrymen. They provide a structural supply of people for these agents for a share of the registration fee. These payments are reinvested in advertisements and new properties. Many Roma have experiences with these kinds of recruitment networks and refer to them as “a springboard”. Although their main goal is to find a stable employer who can provide regular income, some Roma also get involved in similar recruitment practices. Often the same brokers are arranging part-time jobs in the informal sector, such as babysitting, dishwashing, cleaning, washing cars or doing home renovation

chores. These overlaps between contracted jobs at agencies, part-time jobs and self-employment are difficult to distinguish due to the dynamic nature of these activities.

Those who did not find enough employment opportunities and had skills often started their own businesses. One Polish family shared their innovative history, which represents the dynamic interrelation of market and control policies. The participant's father moved to Bradford where he had family, but he had a hard time there because he could not find a permanent job. He stayed there for six months, working in a carwash and distributing leaflets, and then moved to London. He was saving money for a rented apartment, so he took gardening, decorating and painting jobs. Later, he recruited other family members to help with leaflet distribution. As the participant explained, they turned the leaflets to their own benefit by distributing their own leaflets with those they were paid to distribute:

*When I finished my 11th [year of school] in Poland, I came to London too. I started straight away doing leaflet distribution with them, so they slowly started to give us more jobs. So we were doing it together, and in addition we started...because I spoke English, not really good, but communicated, we made ourselves our own leaflets too [advertisement for their other jobs] like painter and decorator. During distributing leaflets, we spread our leaflets so we could do additional jobs...My mum was working for a cleaning service, she was cleaning houses. But she was not working through agencies but she found the jobs herself.*

'Was it illegal?'

*No, she was self-employed. Everything was OK. So she also distributed her own leaflets so she found her own jobs. (PM35)*

As this family's case illustrates, those who were unwilling to become dependent on employment agencies danced on the edge of grey market businesses and self-employment. As the previously quoted participants stated: *'If people don't going to give you a job, you can create one for yourself!'* (PM35).

Many Roma participants worked as painters or construction workers, cab drivers, hairdressers, scrap metal collectors or car dealers, and an entrepreneurial attitude was often assigned to Roma as a cultural characteristic. However, participants in London stressed their risk-taking qualities and how they invested in a social network.

Although these were often stable businesses, the people who worked for these entrepreneurs were easily exploited. In a postmodern liquid society, formal regulations are

reduced while market forces are expanded. In this light, social relations have come to be valued as assets, as opposed to relations based on contracts or entitlement. The notion of “social capital” as a “resource” has made its way into the discourses of governments and agencies, which promote the increasing displacement of regulations from the legal field to the moral field of personal ties.

In this society of ‘advanced insecurity, uncertainty is individualised and precarity is no longer a marginal condition but one that covers the unstable transient labour conditions and the states of anxiety, and the risks that go with it’(Brazzabeni et al., 2015, p. 4). Permanent precarity — which one might associate with the current state of “crisis” — has been a normal situation for many Roma and Gypsy for decades.

As case studies have confirmed, Roma newcomers develop social tricks to gain access to foreign job opportunities. One participant told me how she and her sister supported each other by exchanging their identities to be able to get jobs in London. As she explained, her sister, who was applying for a job in England, asked her to attend her job interview in their home country. Because they look very similar and their ID photos are almost identical, she was able to attend the job interview in Budapest. She got the job for her sister, who was unable to speak English at that time.

*I remember I had a telephone interview with their partners in London and absolutely everything went fine (...). And then my sister got to the job, she did not pay for anything like the ticket, and she was doing well. However, I'm still reluctant...I know that it is a public document forgery, because that's what it is, no matter how you look at it, so it is for a would-be lawyer maybe not the best omen...Five years later, I moved to London too, hoped to find some office work, administrative work, whatever. And after a month and a half, I thought I need to earn some money, no matter what...In November 2010, with a little bit of exaggeration, my sister had access to internal correspondence, and saw that they were looking for a waiter and then I immediately swung myself out there and they hired me with a full-time job. (HF14)*

Identity construction as an inventive market strategy evaporates legal borders of eligibility and labour participation. As Woolford and Nelund (2011) writes, ‘neoliberalism is a transnational political project aiming to remake the nexus of market, state, and citizenship from above’ (p. 293). Roma migrants exhibit dispositions of neoliberal citizenship consistent with shifts in the bureaucratic field. Indeed, neoliberal politicians and bureaucrats pressure

government agencies to embrace accountable, business-like and responsibility-inducing models of service (Woolford & Nelund, 2011). However, Roma participants also stress other differentiations in their labour market policies. In 1014, increasing restrictions on economic practices are introduced such as scrap metal collection and antique trade, which are mainly provided by Roma migrants. As one participant explained, these measures are in a dialogic relationship with new incentives that keep Roma newcomers in the market.

*They [cousins] were selling different things, but now police would give you a penalty, if you sell like, for example, not original things... So he already paid a fine, because he was selling before... like jeans. So he couldn't sell it, he didn't know what to do. So my father told him that he can collect these batteries (car accumulator), but he said I didn't want to be a scrap collector, but he started to do it and it became his occupation and he was doing it for many years....But what are they doing now in Bradford?...oh yeah and like boilers from bakeries?..*

Boilers from bakeries?

*You know, the ones they use to make bread. When they mix the flour with water, so they cleaned this. I was sometimes going with my father and it was good money but now they have different steel so they don't need Roma people to do it. Because it is stainless steel. So they need to find a different occupation. So they start to go to Slovakia and they started to sell different things like pants, or curtains or whatever they had demand for. Jackets. They still... like for example lot of Roma are still trading, like crap collectors, like in Poland or they are selling cars, everything is not very official but...(PM35)*

These trades are mainly about commodities spread through distribution channels that are legal but unintended by the original manufacturer. The most common type of grey market activity for Roma is sales of imported goods — by individuals or small companies not authorised by the manufacturer — which would otherwise either be more expensive or unavailable in the country to which they are being imported. Recycling of trash or different types of garbage was also regularly mentioned.

Many of these trades are linked with Roma economic strategies and increasingly draw the attention of local authorities, who try to push these activities outside their territories instead of considering their possibilities and advantages. Neoliberal communitarianism is thus a paradoxical strategy of population management using both neoliberal techniques and rhetoric



(e.g. an emphasis on activation and contractual notions) as well as communitarian notions and techniques (strong emphasis on national community, e.g. supporting its core of shared values as guiding principles). It is a form of governing that requires both community and individual responsibility (Van Houdt et al., 2011, p.16.).

Welfare state retrenchment is focused on individual responsibility, flexibility and innovation, as well as on her- or himself abandoning those welfare state policies that promoted wealth distribution and mass consumption. In this sense, labour force flexibility is conceived of as a key resource in capitalist advancement and defines overly generous social benefits as obstacles to it. The model neoliberal citizen is one who strategizes for among various social, political and economic options, not one who strives with others to alter or organise these options (McBride & McNutt, 2007). However, as the following examples will show, this self-sustaining neoliberal citizenry would be the opposite of public-minded communitarian integrated newcomers. It barely exists as a public citizenship, but is rather an adaptive individual entrepreneur.

Under a neoliberal communitarian regime, it becomes one's responsibility, expressed in the form of "earning" one's citizenship, to convert to a nation that is sacralised as a bounded community of values. Neoliberal communitarianism thus 'combines two strategies that, at first glance, are contradictory: an individualising focus on earned citizenship and a de-individualising focus on the nation. This combination might seem surprising, but on a closer look both neoliberalism and communitarianism are based on the same diagnosis of society and its internal and external threats' (Van Houdt, Suvarierol, & Schinkel, 2011, p. 408).

In summary, new citizens are encouraged to be inventive and self-supporting, but they also need to conform culturally in a society that raises barriers to social participation. As illustrated, the transnational nature of newcomers' grey market activities and the foggy nature of their money transfers trigger control measures by national bureaucracies, particularly in the financial field. These targeted monitoring practices increase the distrust and fear among entrepreneurs who are pushed toward irregular entrepreneurship, but in the meantime are expected to anticipate the local bureaucratic structure. These processes are pushing newcomers who fail to find employment to move forward to the black market economy, where they risk exploitation. As a result, many unemployed newcomers get trapped between welfare dependency and illegal markets.

### 9.3 Is crime innovation? Black market businesses in foreign countries

Irregular migrants and EU migrants are differentiated by legal entitlements based on their citizenship. Yet, they apply several comparable economic strategies when they are willing to operate invisibly. Since Roma are defined in the securitisation narrative of Western societies as an undesired group associated with economic and cultural threats, there are suspicions about their sources of income and economic strategies. As described in the previous chapter, Roma are involved in non-valued labour, such as low-skilled and low-paid jobs (e.g. garbage services, street cleaners). This is, as Eriksen (2002) describes, an ‘ethnic division of labour, where, for example, particular ethnic groups carry out most of the underpaid manual work’ (p. 28). Further on, the dominant group may also ‘emphasize that it is the “nature” of the members of the group to do manual work, that they are “unsuitable” — by nature or culture — to carry out prestigious jobs’ (Eriksen 2002, p. 28). Therefore, Roma use various strategies to earn a living.

Newcomer Roma look for any kind of work that can provide an income. According to Schuringa (2005, p. 16) some reinvent “traditional” handicrafts, while others earn income from marginal seasonal labour (e.g. fruit picking) and from the informal sector. Since Roma are highly exposed to income uncertainty, many newcomers find themselves in black market labour. As Schuringa (2005) notes, ‘if no earnings are found, deviant income generating activities are sought’ (p. 17). It is obvious how deep poverty and multidimensional deprivations have a strong ethnic dimension and are highly concentrated among the Roma population, which urges them toward criminal acts (Schuringa, 2005). As previously mentioned, many of these activities overlap with temporary employment or even with benefit dependency. Some families generally set up their own unregistered companies without any assumption of the illegal nature of their activities. As one participant explained, different businesses are invented alongside local needs and the family’s resources.

*My father was...since we are in the UK...like many stuff...He started to work in a warehouse. After that, he left the warehouse, he started an agency to help people in looking for jobs...like to help people find a job in a warehouse. Then he closed this agency. Then he started to work as an employment agency, for Polish migrants who were making parking gates and producing bricks. Like he sold a car in Poland to buy the tools to produce bricks. Like mould to make bricks. So he sold the car just to buy the material for the business...and after that he found this restaurant. (PM35)*

As she described the changing entrepreneurship of her father, he evolved from a warehouse worker to the owner of an employment agency and was constantly changing his businesses, which were mainly unregistered.

Others consciously operated in criminal activities in several countries and often used the same strategies until they were caught. Abusing bank card credits, commodifying mobile phones, recruiting newcomers for gardening services or window cleaning, and dealing in scrap metal were common activities mentioned by those who were recently settled in Britain.

One participating family had several networks in Germany, Canada, Hungary, Denmark and Sweden. A family member explained to me how he turned into a successful criminal, slid down the financial ladder and was finally left alone in a council flat in England. In the 1980s, he was one of the first Roma accepted in the local secondary school. However, his parents were unable to earn enough income, so he had to quit his education and work. He then started a relationship which linked him into transnational criminal activities like burglaries in Germany. Soon he was supporting a family from criminal activities and his son followed in his footsteps and was also regularly convicted of crimes. His activities ranged from selling scrap metal to committing burglary, fraud and theft in several European countries. His family used to live in Canada, but they were unable to stay there.

When we were in touch in the UK, he was participating in a documentary film; he also had to appear in court and was almost evicted for recidivism. He reflected on his life course as a failure of a new start. When he moved to the UK in 2005, he decided to start a new life. He found a new job and worked hard in a factory and at a car breakers yard. Then he was extradited to Hungary for an earlier crime, where he had to complete a prison sentence for several years. When he returned to the UK, he had lost all his entitlements and started to commit crimes again. As his story illustrates, many people who operate in the illicit market and operate transnationally live in a state of perpetual liminality.

Many of those people who are willing to get out of illegal trades and crime emphasised how difficult it is to start a new life. Some described serving several years in prison for counterfeiting; after their release, they had no job opportunities in their home countries. Importantly, criminal record registration plays a central role in these mobility traces. One participant, who was living off of insurance fraud in his home country, explained that he could even apply for a mortgage in London, which was impossible in his home country with his criminal record. One Hungarian Roma from the Slovak border told me how he failed in the cigarette smuggling business in his home country and therefore decided to move on. When I spoke to him, he was working for the local council in London and was not interested in any

illegal businesses. Although many delinquent newcomers are able to reset their lives, some families continue their successful criminal activities in the black market across all of Europe.

Local knowledge of market dynamics has a high value among Roma newcomers who are able to invent new segments in the local black market. One of these entrepreneurs described the advantages of different countries and how he implemented his knowledge about being “self-employed”. He was living in Germany and then in Canada, where he opened a pizzeria without government support. However, his asylum claim was refused, so he was sent home. There he was involved in numerous black market activities, such as the antique trade and car trade, as well as recruiting gardeners and identity fraud. He was convicted again and was waiting for his court decision at home. He explained that young newcomers are naïve and easily get involved in many illicit businesses, but he said people should be fair with them.

*I do not know where they will go in the world (children). I haven't opened credit cards for them, I just give them businesses, then work, it was the garden business. I need money, and work accordingly. Just like someone from India or Pakistan. The Roma have their system too.’ (HM34)*

Although he never explained it explicitly, his family networks were relying on his decisions in several ways.

Dependence relationships in decision making are strongly related to sponsors, like this participant, who are involved in job matching practices. Similar to his case, there is a significant group of people who are borrowers and moneylenders. This system of credit influences social relations by re-establishing a new set of relations according to who possesses money. Previously complex relationships, defined by a personalised morality in segregated settlements, become cash-based and might get reduced more or less to the dynamics of credit and debt. The new set of relations affect concepts of identity. Rationalisation of usury often goes hand in hand with self-identifying as “better” Roma who are able to cope with difficult situations and secure enough resources to feed their families. In these narratives, moneylenders stand in opposition to ‘those dirty and foolish Gypsies who will always stay at the bottom of society’ (Durst, 2015, p. x).

Social media plays an extremely important role in these situations. Information, advice and decisions are regularly given and made on Skype and Facebook. Networks monitor each other and constantly calculate the most profitable decisions related to the financial implications of investments in different countries.

In summary, the Roma are not inventing specific illegal activities but often move between legal and illegal forms of entrepreneurship. These practices anticipate temporary needs in the labour market and create a clientelistic interrelationship between dependent and entrepreneurial Roma networks. These practices indicate the situationality of intersections between immigration concerns, labour market demands and internal dependency. Although Roma newcomers are often defined as opportunistic migrants who are exploiting the host country, they are often filling the needs of specific market segments by organising the labour force. Roma newcomers who are involved in illegal activities create a position for themselves that keeps them in a space of in-betweenness, not only socially but also as regards legal market participation.

#### 9.4 Returnees – the British dream or the foreign nightmare?

This thesis began with the hypothesis that the criminalisation of Roma and internal surveillance strategies are meant to force unproductive newcomers to leave. Geopolitical strategies of mobility control are supposed to channel transnational movements of people, but these discouraging policies are established based on neoclassical ideas of decision-making processes, which assume that unattached groups make rational calculations and move on toward more promising economic conditions. This would also mean that migrants have access to full information about opportunities abroad prior to migration. In short, if those discouraging policies worked, unemployed Roma would have no more access to financial provisions and would leave the host country. But even if such a decision were made based on economic calculations, determinants of returnees would also depend on wage differentials and on affective processes. As described in the previous analyses, institutional and social inferiority in bureaucratic systems might impact the propensities of Roma newcomers.

In the following section, I will identify four main indicators as recent determinants to leaving the host country: conditions that negatively influence “residential quality of life”, fear of cultural loss or cultural threat, network dependency, and fear of authorities.

First of all, those who were interviewed in their home countries referred to their residence there as temporary and emphasised their plans for after they returned to the UK. Participants who moved back to their home countries stated that there they could have the same quality of life, have a job and establish a relatively stable situation. However, increasing debts, irregular income and distrust toward the healthcare system were regularly described as reasons for returning to the home country. As these cases confirm, experiences of mobile groups cannot

be explained by a contradictory expressions of migration as “success” and “failure”. Mobility should be considered in a situational understanding of participation and inclusion in the host society, including the importance of ‘temporality’. Most participants who had high expectations for their quality of life abroad complained about their deprived position in the labour market and the daily challenges of the housing market in London. Yet, some of the returnees explained that they were willing to return to London and described how they would change their living conditions. Decisions about ‘leaving’ and ‘staying’ are continuously evaluated.

Return propensities also change over time. Participants were continuously moving back and forth between different countries. Bad experiences were associated with direct contacts such as ignorant landlords, exploitative employers, institutional racism in social services and prejudices among the British majority. In those case where returnees were not victimised by labour exploitation or traffickers, participants were returning to join their families.

Roma mobility is not only considered a utility-maximising behaviour, but also a restoration of dignity and an escape from ethnic discrimination. However, it is sometimes difficult to go home again. Some participants decided not to return to their home countries because they did not want to admit that their quality of life was worse in London than in the homes they had left (Gmelch, 1980). Others who had sold their homes had nothing to return to or moved in with relatives. Returnees who were unable to earn any income in London were even more indebted than they had been before. Further, if they did not deregister from the local welfare system in their host country before leaving, they may face legal consequences. Finally, in the sending countries, the hostility of the community elite (e.g. the mayor) can make it difficult to reintegrate in the locality.

This indicates that structural integration through labour market participation, education and the maintenance of economic and social ties with receiving countries do not significantly affect return intentions. In line with neoclassical migration theory, there is a clear negative association between socio-cultural integration and return intentions. This holds for both the subjective and more objective measures of socio-cultural integration. With regard to subjective measures, fear seems to be a central element of intentions to return.

#### 9.4.1 Fear of cultural loss or cultural threat

Roma parents often send their children back to their grandparents when the lack of supervision by school employees makes them concerned that their children might come into contact with

other minorities at school or that their daughters might make intimate contact with peers. These parents regularly included racist notions about criminal black boys and drug takers in their arguments.

One fifteen-year-old girl who was living with her aunt and her grandma was sent back home because her aunt was afraid to take care of her or cannot control her activities. The girl was afraid to go, because she would be unable to attend high school and would be forced to marry—as she said, ‘I will be sold to someone’. She struggled a lot with the fact that she could not have a boyfriend and be as free in her social contacts as others in her UK school. As she said, she had to live according to Roma law. The family was moving at least four times a year between their home country and London, and tried to settle various times. In the end, they took her home, and she recently became a mother to her firstborn son. As this example illustrates, the livelihood strategies employed by households and social networks are prominent in such decisions. Other children were also sent home for similar reasons and complete families sometimes returned due to persistent distress or insecurity.

#### 9.4.2 Network dependency

*When I asked one of the Romani interpreters if Roma get homesick, he simply answered: ‘No because the Roma, their loyalty is not related to a geographical place, it is to the community. Wherever they be. So their homesickness is linked to the people when they are separated, not to a place. I see generally large families, young marriages, lot of kids, and lot of single mothers. Husbands are moving back again... (IN3)*

Since Roma networks are based on strong (usually family) ties and are exclusionary toward others (even people from the same community), several networks function side by side. In fact, as extended families continue to migrate, they join the networks of local minorities such as fellow Roma families or church communities. Job opportunities on the low-skill labour market are scarce, which creates a greater reliance on settled networks. As previously mentioned, these networks do exist and provide income resources for intermediaries. In some cases, it is the pioneers who become the ‘bridgeheads’ (de Haas, 2010) of these migrant networks and they can even be the generators of some of the new migration waves by providing loans to aspiring migrants. These networks seem to be rather small and weak and tend to saturate quickly. ‘Bridgeheads’ quickly become ‘gatekeepers,’ sometimes causing hindrances

for new migrants (e.g. controlling their activities) that may slow down their migration process. However, the process does not appear to diminish and die off.

Although attending language courses is obligatory, most adults find it very hard to go back to school and do not learn English at all. This strengthens their dependence on networks and is one reason why ethnic clustering is, in fact, important — especially for low status migrants.

## 9.5 Conclusion

Although the acknowledgement of newcomers in a host society is a regularly debated issue in mobility studies, the limitations of EU citizenship and “insiderness” are often missing from the discussion. As the case studies illustrate, full citizenship should be earned in a neoliberal society. With the growing extension of the EU, nation states reach back to social contractualist politics with adjustments of specific citizenship criteria (Sassen, 2006; Schinkel, 2009).

As was described in the theoretic framework, Foucauldian connotations of governance and population control have been strictly defined by parameters of inclusion and exclusion, such as citizenship that is not only legally but also morally constructed. The moralisation and ensuing virtualisation of citizenship concerns not only the formal inclusion in the nation state, but the moral inclusion in the discursive domain of ‘society’. This not only comes at the cost of differentiating the good and active citizens from the not-so-good and “inactive” citizens based on market participation, but also based on social and cultural assimilation. Newcomers are not only defined as an economic threat that might exploit attractive welfare services of host societies, but also as a threat to Western cultural values.

As the selected cases illustrate, according to contractualist political objectives, EU citizenship and labour participation are only a technical parameter in accession to full citizenship. Roma migrants who are completely or partly invisible to the eyes of welfare monitoring have different explanations for how they are able to fulfil the neoliberal requirements of citizenship and why they still experience exclusion from the communitarian British society.



## Chapter 10 Conclusion

*Imagine a world where all the cities are identical, where people dress uniformly, where you need written permission to travel beyond your immediate environs (and where failure to gain permission leads to enslavement), where you are obliged to travel in groups, where house doors operate automatically so that nothing is private or exclusive, where there are no hiding places outside the home, no spots for secret meetings, and where inhabitants live in full view of each other. (Marks, 2005, p. 222)*

Is the Brave New World coming of age? The growing popularity of dystopian literature raises the question of whether Western surveillance societies are really moving toward Aldous Huxley's (1932) World State, where geopolitical aims are manifested in extended control measures that are supported by surveillance technologies that govern people on the move. In these surrealistic images of totalitarian control, minorities are defined as uncivilised, traditional and uneconomical, a threat to the happiness of the World Society who should be displaced into 'savage reservations'. Following the idea of such dystopian social critiques, this study explores the promises of the surveillance society, in particular the side effects of monitoring practices that are used as geopolitical tools of population selection. The central aim of the study was to reveal the limitations of digital surveillance systems and their discriminative nature as well as its impact regarding mobility control and social distrust.

In recent decades, Western European societies have increasingly defined Roma mobility as a welfare concern. They have urged the new EU member states to invest in the socioeconomic position of Roma minorities, which they hope will prevent migration. As part of a securitisation process such political speech acts linked the threat of a "Roma flood" with notions of "promising" welfare services in host countries to justify increasing control policies and restrict social benefits for newcomers. In these narratives, the key argument for welfare restrictions is framed in a neoliberal approach of responsabilisation and eligibility for state support, based on labour market participation. These connotations adopted in welfare policies assume that unemployed migrants are responsible for their marginal position and can therefore be legitimately excluded from any entitlement to government support.

This dissertation used empirical case studies to critically analyse EU intranational population control the growing challenge of defending the internal borders of member states, defined as the 'Welfare Banopticon'. The central research question asked: How the interplay between

digitalised bureaucracies of welfare providers and the coping strategies of EU newcomers shapes the dynamics of mobility control?

In order to provide an answer for this research question the following sub-questions are defined:

- How securitisation strategies of internal migration control are merging social security and immigration policies in UK surveillance practices?
- How selective incentives of risk management have been introduced in the digitalised bureaucratic strategies of welfare services?
- How the narrative framing of stakeholders contribute to the social sorting of Ethnic Roma?
- How Central European Roma newcomers who are subjected to the monitoring and control practices of social services invent coping strategies as a response to social sorting in London?

As an interdisciplinary analysis of financial surveillance, this research addressed geopolitical incentives in the EU and how recent securitisation of EU transnational migrants is being implemented through digitalised screenings of social service providers. The central argument of security studies is that consumerist Western societies seek security while individuals sacrifice solidarity for the course of safety. In this frame, competitive market relationships are shaping the rules of social inclusion based on economic production and social conformism. Business-like state bureaucracies are outsourced for corporate companies in order to monitor undesired outsiders, control and sanction them, as part of selective and expulsive governmental incentives. These are also described as the processes of a Bulimia Society.

However, the virtual and institutional ethnography on which this study was partly based found that when bureaucracies collect information online, undesired newcomers are able to hide, or manage their identities to fit in.

In order to contribute to current academic debates, this study blends the postmodern criticism from several disciplines, including critical criminology, critical social policy and critical surveillance studies. By combining the subjects of surveillance, mobility and ethnicity, this study contributes to the debate about social sorting in geopolitical governance. In particular, it develops a new understanding of welfare policing as well as how financial aspects defined as threats contribute to recent securitisation processes. As it will be argued, crime politics and migration control are encompassing new bureaucratic fields, and change the tasks of welfare service providers from support to control.

## 10.1 Collecting data about Roma migrants

In *The Traveller*, his novel about digitalised surveillance societies, John Twelve Hawks (2005) describes a world in which people live in a ‘Virtual Panopticon’ where they are continually watched and monitored. Foreign benefit claimants, especially Roma, often feel as if they are living in such a surveillance society. This fieldwork explores how some Roma migrants as a response try to hide from the virtual Welfare Banopticon, and how the all-seeing eye of digital surveillance shapes their lives in the United Kingdom. Such a disciplinary control system not only implicate the justification of extraordinary measures, but also a structural exclusion implemented in the ‘Funnel of Expulsion’, forcing the poor to operate outside the legal framework of the states’ bureaucratic system.

Like the traveller in this dystopian novel, I moved between different realms while pursuing a multi-sited ethnography that crossed social, digital, and legal borders. In two years of fieldwork, I interviewed, followed and supported NGO employees, academics, professionals and Roma migrants for the sake of gathering in-depth data about mobility. By living with several families and visiting others in their home settlements, I was able to build long-term relationships and the trust needed to share sensitive issues and important moments of decision. As I followed families on their way to England, online and offline, they regularly discussed their dilemmas, fears and excitement, as well as the calculated impacts of their choices. Contact was generally facilitated by social media, which allowed me to follow participants in different localities over time and to maintain contact so we could discuss their evolving financial situations as relates to debts and entitlements to welfare provisions. Small talks held in JobCentre offices, in Facebook chats or around kitchen tables gave me a complete view of the surveillance experience and how it plays a role in welfare applications. They also helped to understand how ethnic stigma shapes coping mechanisms in interactions with service providers and NGOs.

However, simply following those who are the targets of profiling and selection based on their financial abilities cannot provide a complete understanding of the dynamics in situational decision-making processes. By spending eight months at a local NGO, I was able to collect information about the role of civil society, how cooperation and conflict shape local service providers’ knowledge about Roma and how specific application procedures receive ethnic frames in different London boroughs. Based on the narrative of different stakeholders it has been suggested that these ethnic frames define Roma according to parameters of poverty and welfare dependency. Based on these ethnic connotations described in chapter 6, it was

concluded that the major selection criteria of social sorting are not specifically related to ethnicity, but they are framed by economic productivity and social conformity, in which some parameters are associated with Roma migrants.

Collecting this information had its costs. Ethical issues regarding the possible risks taken by the participants resulted a selection of data in order to ensure the participants' confidentiality and prevent their stigmatisation or criminalisation. Therefore, by taking different roles in the field — interpreter, advocacy worker, tenant or teacher — various narratives has been collected and presented based on selected coping strategies in the daily routine of the 'Banopticon'. Being an ethnographer who was exposed to unexpected expectations, conflicts and emotional attachments forced me to get engaged in life situations that provided a better understanding of social transgression based on situational values regarding perceptions on profiling and justification of identity management.

## 10.2 Security and the flow of mobility

In order to understand '*how securitisation strategies of internal migration control are merging social security and immigration policies in UK surveillance practices*', global mobility processes should be analysed, such as the impact of free mobility in the EU. In the recent security narratives threat is defined in terms of migrants' unpredictable mobility. Due to technological developments, the movement of people across borders becomes multilateral and polycentric like flocks of birds, confronting nation states with unpredictable population changes that have intensive economic impacts they cannot control. However, these movements of mobile groups are not occurring randomly. The flow has a definite slope that gives a geopolitical orientation in the European Union.

Consequently, due to lack of mobility control, anxiety is rising as nation states realise they are losing their hold over their own skilled citizens while they are attracting undesired groups, such as 'benefit tourists'. As external control measures are moving towards internal control, technological developments enable an assemblage of new control and surveillance technics to manage population flows. By adapting neoliberal values in population selection, security is defined in economic terms of productivity that forces bureaucratic technologies to screen newcomers based on parameters of financial capability as a precondition of inclusion. As it has been described, in Chapter 2 and 5, these new selection technologies entitle social service providers to screen the unproductive ones and select them out, as a Welfare Banopticon. As it has been described in Chapter 5, welfare surveillance and restrictive policies on eligibility

are justified by speech acts on security, associating threat with newcomers as cultural and economic intruders. As it has been presented in Chapter 7, 8 and 9, the counter-strategies of migrants to combat these bureaucratic measures force local authorities to increase control and financial sanctions to catch a glimpse of those who are slipping through their fingers. As a vicious circle, this process results targeted policies and decrease transparency of state authorities.

In short, this study proves that the dynamics of social sorting are shaped by a conscious dialectic process. Roma mobility illustrates the unintended effects of these geopolitical orientations of population control by presenting how to hide from the digitalised monitoring of benefit claimants.

### 10.3 Managing the stranger

Selective incentives of risk management have been introduced in the digitalised bureaucratic strategies of welfare services through screenings of benefit applicants. As it is described in chapter 5, by increasing the role of screening instruments and profiling of suspicious claimants through algorithms, applicants are constantly under gaze of financial and social monitoring as well as through financial sanctions.

Based on the collected data, I concluded that population control is directed by the neoliberal principles of production in which unproductive citizens are labelled as undesirable. Due to porous intra-European borders, countries have introduced internal control measures in which financial screening has replaced visa restrictions. My observations of JobCentre conversations and Tax Office calls illustrate how social sorting is being conducted by outsourced government bodies that are authorised to screen, control and select foreign welfare applicants. These companies gain increasing power to monitor and sanction vulnerable EU citizens, which turns social provision into security policing, creating fear and distrust among welfare-dependent newcomers. Authorities' strategies are reflected in the disciplinary role of dataveillance, which describes how they manage personal information in public service environments.

Security measures related to welfare services can be compared to obstacles in a computer game: the closer you get to the goal, the more complicated it becomes to achieve it. The real contribution of this study lies in the presentation of different tactics used by Roma newcomers in online and offline bureaucratic interactions. As I noted, the UK government greatly underestimate the behaviour modifications of newcomers aimed at avoiding the security

mechanisms of welfare services. Migrants are generally aware of the social sorting mechanisms they are subjected to and most of them proactively profile themselves to succeed. In the case of Roma migrants, identity management and other economic strategies are not only meant to elude ethnic stigmatisation, but also mimic the social expectations of the desired citizen.

*In order to answer how the definition of foreign threat is shaped by the narrative framing of stakeholders, it should be also discussed to what extent are ethnic classifications are represented in financial terms as a threat?*

Any interpretation of Roma ethnicity is shaped by various actors who are involved into these interactions. Professionals and academics have put forth internally conflicting approaches that cause confusion about the needs and importance of the Roma ethnicity. These connotations have been implemented in European policies, reproducing the social construction of the image of a dependent outsider. This image creates general tensions and increases suspicion toward newcomers who are seen or identify themselves as Roma.

As the case of the Roma illustrates, contemporary western society celebrates difference but attempts to exclude the difficult. In late modern societies the bulimia effect is not just the result of materialist compensations for ontological insecurity, but also moralised labour market participation. Individuals become objectified to profit-oriented mechanisms, while social inequality become politically accepted. In this context, securitisation processes are defined by the principles of economy, moralism and managerialism.

Since the welfare magnet theory is unproved, zombie arguments about benefit tourists shape incentives and targeting practices. This increases distrust toward newcomers who are associated with opportunism, such as Roma, and pushes them to the fringes of society. External border controls have become internal control strategies of newcomers as digitalised cherry-picking methods to control their (im)mobility.

These securitisation processes have increased the field of digital surveillance in order to target and profile unattractive newcomers. Roma newcomers, who are categorised as welfare dependent, try to employ counterstrategies against social sorting and criminalisation in the host country. They are forced to learn the characteristics of the “desired citizen” who is economically productive and culturally conforming. Participation in face-to-face and phone conversations provided a better understanding of this efficiency-oriented bureaucratic approach and how social service providers make clients feel threatened to force them back to the labour market or encourage them to leave.

While service provisions build barriers for new unemployed migrants, those who search for the fringes get past them. As a result, those migrants who are more self-sustaining and are unwilling to take high risks move forward, while others who have nothing to lose or are not able to return to their home countries stay in host countries and get involved in illicit trades and exploitation. Based on the selected cases, I conclude that geopolitical screening and social sorting through welfare provisions generates the opposite of what was expected: the expulsion of those migrants who have more potential to participate in society while the least productive newcomers stay and are forced into informal economic strategies.

#### 10.4 Coping strategies, or becoming the “desired citizen”

The core of the empirical data collected, answers the last sub-question, as *‘how Central European Roma newcomers who are subjected to the monitoring and control practices of social services invent coping strategies as a response to social sorting in London?’*

Accessing welfare provisions is a stressful, time-consuming, unpredictable process that requires a well-informed network, language skills, internet literacy and financial capital to complete the application procedure. Applicants also need to stay updated about the changing rules of eligibility.

The coping mechanisms of Central European Roma migrants can only be understood through an in-depth knowledge of historically constructed prejudices and a recognition of Roma ethnic diversity in different countries. In the post-transitional societies of the Visegrad group, it is social acceptable to cheat the government and to manipulate or select information about personal circumstances. Their experience in other countries makes these newcomers to the UK more aware of the power relationships and dysfunctions of a bureaucratic system. They also know how to use these relationships and dysfunctions to become eligible for support.

Roma migrants use their relationships with others to cope with life and bureaucracy in the UK. Brokers are often unseen mediators who have a major impact on the success of welfare applications. They can also affect dependence relations with landlords and employers by providing services in confined business networks. Many newcomers who hope to settle in the UK cannot survive on irregular low paid agency jobs, so they apply for basic benefit entitlements. Due to previous experiences with social servants, Roma applicants use different types of identity management mechanisms in interactions with service providers. As described

in Chapter 7, they use various techniques to avoid, rectify or conflate ethnic stigma and to prevent discrimination by self-censorship.

Selection for social service eligibility is an interactive process between service providers and claimants. Migrants apply various strategies to reproduce or imitate characteristics of the “desired citizen”. Although Roma are often described as creative pioneers in circumventing monitoring mechanisms, my observations and interviews led me to conclude that applicants who want to become eligible for social benefits learn about the limitations of government data systems and application forms from others. Most of the strategies they apply are learned from others who are familiar with the system, such as settled minorities in their direct environments. Pakistani landlords, employment agency workers and NGO advocacy workers also educate newcomers about how to adapt to screening policies and facilitate documents to make them appear entitled to welfare provisions.

Migrants who consciously construct the identity of a “deserving citizen” also change their coping strategies in line with changes in family circumstances. This development was illustrated by cases in which marital status changed and by shifts from unemployment benefits to tax credits. As it was concluded, virtual identity construction is supposed to ensure the economic and social rights of newcomers, but its behaviour-modification effects are unpredictable.

Policy restrictions targeting EU citizens have led to an increasing shift from unemployment benefits toward tax credit claims, even though this is riskier for applicants. Although tax credit claims often lead to tax fraud and require compliance with an extended digital monitoring system, applicants feel less observed since they feel hidden behind the digital procedures. Choosing to use these tax credit applications is another type of coping strategy, one in which interactions take place in digitalised identification processes.

As presented in Chapter 8, many applicants are selling and investing their European identities and inventing entrepreneurial initiatives to manipulate monitoring processes. These techniques mainly rely on document authentication processes, which are experienced as a low-risk strategy to access tax credit payments. In short, governments regularly overestimate the objectivity and efficiency of surveillance techniques. People with limited resources who are continuously searching for the path to inclusion invent alternative strategies to avoid the eyes of the controller or manipulate it by rectifying social stigma and exhibiting characteristics of the desired citizen. On the one hand, claimants need to profile themselves as more dependent than they are but, on the other hand, they also need to prove how capable they are of making an economic contribution to society. Applicants need to solve that riddle every day, while



administrative forms and control questions challenge their language skills and their local knowledge of bureaucratic jargon.

Although I began this research with a dystopian idea of the European control society, I am ending it with a more optimistic notion of hope. The information-based power relations of surveillance societies are being constantly challenged by innovative ideas from excluded populations who aspire to inclusion, access and recognition. Targeting undesired migrants, who are seen as a financial or security threat, has led Western governments to implement new selective mechanisms in social policies as a mobility control. However, these restrictions are temporary solutions since those migrants who are familiar with the loopholes of the administrative structures can easily find the back doors and invest their knowledge in their networks.

Still, in contrast to the cases described above, some migrants are unwilling to mimic or manipulate the monitoring practices, but instead choose to avoid them. Avoiding welfare bureaucracies can lead to participation in grey and black market economies where undesired migrants can secure their economic positions. Assimilated working newcomers also use tactics such as hiding their ethnic identity. Although hiding their Roma ethnicity helps them gain access to the labour market, these newcomers are still socially excluded. Communitarian societies are not only based on neoliberal productivity, but also on cultural conformity. Thus invisibility has its price, hiding ethnicity comes at a high cost for those people who are raised in a system in which culture and economic strategies are intertwined.

## 10.5 Virtual bureaucracies and the rise of the “dividual”

This study was based on the hypothesis that intra-European mobility control is taken new forms in digitalised state bureaucracies based on neoliberal values of deservingness. The central question of this thesis was: *‘How the interplay between digitalised bureaucracies of welfare providers and the coping strategies of EU newcomers shape the dynamics of mobility control as a geopolitical selection measure?’*

As it was described by the concept of Social Sorting, policies on accessing welfare has been included into intra-European control measures based on data surveillance of benefit dependent migrants. These data collections shall serve to objectively and efficiently select applicants based on parameters of welfare eligibility. However, such selections are representing the

neoliberal values of productivity and in place of support, these profiling systems are excluding the poor unemployed applicants based on their financial capabilities. Such a selection method based on the suspicion of welfare claimants has been defined as a new geopolitical measure, the funnel of expulsion, to keep the undesired migrants away. However, such mobility control is overestimated, since the targeted ones are able to challenge such a mechanism and adapt to the parameters of selection, in particular in a virtual environment.

Surveillance is an active process with different levels of interaction between the surveyor and the survey object. The choice to apply for tax credits instead of welfare benefits represents a change from face-to-face interaction to virtual bureaucratic dialogues that shape the techniques of control and selection. Although virtual bureaucracies require internet literacy, they also provide a special identity-making space since the real person is no longer included in the digitalised interactions. This virtual space enables newcomers who are targeted for social exclusion to turn their virtual characteristics into those of a deserving productive citizen.

As a consequence of these cat and mouse games between the claimant and the bureaucracy, there is an increasing reality gap between the real identity of the claimant and the “dividual” who is translated into data based on specific parameters. Databases become filled with the altered personal information provided by those who feel targeted by local bureaucracies. These mutated profiles lead to unpredictability and inconsistency in spatial sorting strategies, increasing the distrust among benefit claimants who, as a result, become even less transparent. Although screening mechanisms like spidergrams are increasingly included in databases, the algorithm that is supposed to filter claimants is cheated. These retargeting and restrictive policies both underestimate the participative skills of applicants and overestimate the capacities of digitalised bureaucracies.

Due to welfarist notions in the media, service providers and applicants are suspicious of one another and therefore keep each other in constant confusion by selecting information in online or offline interactions. I found that not only claimants but also service providers are involved in transgressive actions related to application procedures. The tightened managerialist norms that restrict professional considerations to a risk-screening analysis illustrate how individual considerations still impact decisions about claims. The reality gap facilitated by the digitalisation of welfare services provides a new space of operations for both civil servants and applicants.

Although increasing attention is paid to meta data analyses and the reliability of digital surveillance, the impacts of smaller local databases used for local population control on the lives of everyday citizens should not be underestimated. Through welfare application forms,

newcomers create a new digital identity that is recycled by governmental statistics, NGO reports and policymakers who believe the data represents their citizens. However, with increasing awareness of data surveillance, those who receive “benefits” from manipulated data will continue their identity management. Criminological studies should pay more attention to the behaviour-modifying effects of surveillance measures and how awareness of control triggers new incentives to trick Big Brother.

## 10.6 Final thoughts

The British dream promises invisibility and social and economic security. CEE Roma not only move in search of financial stability, but also in search of ethnic dignity. Self-differentiating practices between different classes in the Roma diaspora are not only meant as identity management for benefit eligibility, but also as a drawing of internal borders. In order to fit in to their host country, many Roma use economic coping strategies that also sustain ethnic invisibility. Hiding the Roma ethnicity is understood as a technique for gaining social and cultural inclusion.

In short, this study proves that benefit tourism is a misconception. Roma newcomers are moving toward Western Europe with a range of aspirations, particularly a search for social dignity. However, ethnic targeting by NGOs and market-oriented advocacy work contribute to existing ideas about marginal Roma groups that justify targeting mechanisms. In short, these neoliberal selection methods shift discriminatory practices from ethnic parameters to the financial capabilities of applicants. Roma newcomers who settle abroad are constantly monitored by their environment: they are under high expectations from their family networks and are living under the gaze of welfare surveillance. Theirs is a life of transgression on the edge of moral deservingness and legal eligibility, constructed by a hidden identity.

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## Appendices

### Appendix A Overview of Roma participant informants

<b>Code participant</b>	<b>Place of first contact</b>	<b>Age group</b>	<b>Period of contact</b>
CM1	Presov	25-30	2012 aug
HM2	London	35-40	2013 nov
HF3	London	25-30	2013 nov
PF4	London	40-50	2013 dec
HM5	Borsod	30-35	2012 aug
HM6	London	30-35	2014 febr
HM7	Budapest	25-30	2012 aug
HM8	Baranya	25-30	2012 aug
HM9	London	30-35	2012 aug
HM10	Manchester	35-40	2013 march
HM11	London	30-35	2013 Jan
HM12	London	25-30	2013 okt
HF13	Midland	30-35	2013 okt
HF14	London	30-35	2013 nov
HM15	Leeds	30-35	from 2013
HM16	Baranya	25-30	from 2012
HM17	Budapest	35-40	2012 aug
HM18	Miskolc	40-50	2013 aug
HM20	Miskolc	40-50	from 2012
PM21	London	30-35	from 2013
HM22	Budapest	40-50	from 2013
CM23	Brno	25-30	from 2013
PF24	London	40-50	from 2012
CF25	London	30-35	from 2013
PF26	London	25-30	from 1013
CM27	London	30-35	from 2013
HM28	Miskolc	35-40	from 2012
SF29	London	30-35	from 2013
HM30	Manchester	35-40	from 2013
vCF31	Brno	25-30	from 2013
HM32	London	35-40	from 2012
HM33	London	25-30	from 2012
HM34	Manchester	40-50	from 2013
PM35	London	25-30	from 2013
HM36	London	35-40	from 2013
HF37	London	35-40	from 2013
SF38	London	35-40	from 2013
SM39	Liverpool	25-30	from 2013

<b>Code participant</b>	<b>Place of first contact</b>	<b>Age group</b>	<b>Period of contact</b>
SM40	Presov	40-50	from 2012
SF41	Kosice	35-40	from 2012
HF42	Irland	25-30	from 2012
CF43	London	25-30	from 2013
SM44	Bohemia	30-35	from 2013
HF45	Baranya	25-30	from 2012
HM46	Budapest	40-50	from 2012
HF47	Bradford	35-40	from 2013
HM48	Manchester	35-40	from 2013
HM49	Leeds	35-40	from 2013
HM50	London	30-35	from 2013
HF51	Various	30-35	from 2013
HM52	Various	40-50	from 2013
PF53	London	25-30	from 2013
HM54	Baranya	30-35	from 2012
HM55	Budapest	40-50	from 2012
RM56	London	25-30	from 2013
CM57	Ostrava	25-30	from 2012
HM58	Borsod	35-40	from 2012
SM59	London	25-30	from 2013
HM60	Various	30-35	from 2013
HF61	Various	30-35	from 2013
PM62	London	35-40	from 2013
PF63	London	25-30	from 2013
RF64	London	25-30	from 2013
SM65	Various	30-35	from 2013
SM66	London	25-30	from 2013
SM67	London	35-40	from 2013
SF68	London	30-35	from 2013
HM69	Manchester	30-35	from 2012
HM70	Miskolc	35-40	2012 aug
HM71	Miskolc	35-40	from 2012
HF72	Baranya	40-50	from 2013
HF73	Various	40-50	from 2013
SM74	Ostrava	30-35	2013 jun
BR1	London	35-40	2012 nov
BR2	Various	35-40	2012 sept
BR3	Various	30-35	from 2012
BR4	London	35-40	from 2012
BR5	London	30-35	from 2013

## Appendix B Overview of interpreters

<b>Interpreters</b>	<b>Place interview</b>	<b>Language</b>	<b>Date of interview</b>
IN1	London	Hungarian	29/01/2014
IN2	London	Slovak	04/12/2013
IN3	London	Romani	05/02/2014
IN4	London	Hungarian, Romanian	26/03/2014
IN5	London	Hungarian	29/01/2014
IN6	London	Czech	29/01/2014
IN7	London	Hungarian	29/01/2014
IN8	London	Hungarian	29/01/2014
IN9	London	Hungarian	29/01/2014
IN10	London	Slovak	20/02/2014
IN11	Skype	Slovak	27/02/2014
IN12	Leeds	Czech	26/02/2014

## Appendix C Overview of Academics

<b>Academics</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>Year contact</b>
ACCMS1	Institut sociologických studií UK FSV	Prague	07/2013
ACBMC2	Universiteit Gent	Gent	From 2012
ACUKMDS3	PhD London	Skype	06/2013
ACCFDS4	Media	Email	05/2013
ACUKFL5	Law for life	London	02/2013
ACUKM6	University of. Greenwich	London	12/2014
ACFL7	ELTE	Budapest	06/2013
ACHFP8	University of Pécs	Budapest	06/2013
ACHFL9	ELTE AJK	Budapest	07/2012
ACHFS10	ELTE TATK	Budapest	02/2013
ACCMM11	Charles University	email	05/2013
ACHFA12	MTA	Budapest	01/2013
ACRMA13	Romani Academic network	Sibiu	10/2013
ACHMS14	Autonomia	Budapest	08/2012
ACHFL15	ELTE	Budapest	02/2013
ACBMC16	Universit Gent	Gent	10/2012
ACUKFP17	Romany Study Group	London	10/2013
ACCF18	Masarykova univerzita	Brno	08/2013
ACCMS19	Univerity Brno	Brno	07/2013
ACHMS20	Corvinus University	Budapest	05/2013
ACHME21	SZTE	Skype	05/2013
ACHMSS]22	Demographic Research Institute	Budapest	04/2013
ACHMS23	ELTE TáTK	Budapest	03/2013
ACHML24	ELTE, MTA	Budapest	02/2013
ACBFC25	Gent University	Gent	10/2012
ACIMP26	Central European University	Budapest	07/2013
ACHMP27	Central European University	Budapest	01/2013
ACBFP28	Kent University	Canterbury	09/2012
ACSMP29	Platform for Social Housing, University of Ostrava	Prague	08/2013
ACHMS30	NYU Abu Dhabi	Budapest	05/2013
ACHME31	Kistigris secondary school	Alsószentmárton	04/2013
ACRFA32	University Bukarest Migrom Project	Sibiu	10/2013
ACBFES33	KU Leuven	Gent	09/2013
ACHMM34	Romani teacher	Budapest	09/2013
ACHFDS35	ERRC	Budapest	10/2013
ACCMS36	Fakulta sociálních studií University	Bratislava	07/2013
ACDMES37	Lecturer UvA	Amsterdam	05/2012
ACCMS38	Security Studies University Brno	Brno	07/2013
ACBME39	Roma expert -edu	Gent	08/2013
ACCMS40	University Vienna	Prague	07/2013

## Appendix D Overview of Professionals

<b>Professionals</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>Year contact</b>
PUKM1	Redbridge Children's Services	Redbridge	04/2014
PUKF2	Diversity Programme Manager	Redbridge	05/2014
PUKF3	Education Development Officer	Manchester	02/2014
PHM4	Dr Ámbédkar school	London	03/2014
PUKF5	Solicitor	London	03/2014
PHM6	Forrásközpont	Budapest	08/ 2012
PHM7	Roma Repr.	Budapest	05/2013
PUKM8	NCA	London	11/2013
PUKM9	Hazelbury School	London	12/2013
PHF10	Közéleti Roma Nők	Budapest	03/2013
PHF11	Kesztyűgyár	Budapest	03/2013
PHF12	Hungarian Child protection service	Budapest	02/2013
PHF13	Hungarian Probation Service	Budapest	02/2013
PSF14	Department of social affairs	Kosice sk	08/2013
PSF15	Social Services Slovakia	Kosice	07/2013
PUKM16	Police	Bradford	03/2014
PSF17	Salvation Army	Ostrava	06/2013
PUKF18	Social Inclusion Case Worker	London	10/2013
PCM19	Czech Government Agency for Social Inclusion	Prague	06/2013
PUKM20	Police	skype	03/2014
PSF21	Dep. of social affairs	Košice	06/2013
PSF22	Social worker	Ostrava	07/2014
PHM23	Police	Skype	03/2014
PNLM24	Police Academy The Netherlands	Amsterdam	08/2012
PCF25	Programy sociální integrace	Prague	06/2013
PCM26	Magistrát města	Brno	09/2013
PCF27	Agentura pro socialni zaclenovani	Prague	07/2013
PUKF28	JCO1	London, Redbridge	03/2014
PUKF29	JCO2	London, Waltham Forest	09/2013
PUKF30	JCO3	London, Newham	11/2013

## Appendix E Overview of Non-governmental organizations

<b>NGO workers</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>Year contact</b>
NGUSAF1	Skype	2012
NGHM2	Budapest	09/2013
NGRF3	London	01/2014
NGUKF4	London	01/2014
NGCM5	Email	07/2013
NGUKF6	London	11/2013
NGCF7	Brno	07/2013
NGRSF8	Eperjes	07/2013
NGUKF9	London	04/2014
NGUKF10	London	12/2013
NGHF11	Phone	02/2013
NGSRBF12	London	12/2013
NGCM13	Brno	07/2013
NGCF14	Prague	06/2013
NGUKF15	London	04/2014
NGPLF16	London	03/2014
NGUKF17	London	11/2013
NGUKM18	London	05/2014
NGUKF19	Phone	12/2014
NGSF20	Ostrava	07/2013
NGSM21	Moldava nad Bodvou	07/2013
NSUKF22	London	11/2014
NGSM23	Bratislava	06/2013
NGSF24	Ostrava	06/2013
NGUKF25	London	06/2013
NGSF26	Kosice	07/2013
NGCM27	Praga	07/2013
NGUKF27	Redbridge	04/2013
NGUKM28	London	12/2013
NGPLF28	London	01/2014
NGHF29	Budapest	02/2013
NGSM30	Bratislava	08/2013
NGUKF31	Birmingham	11/2013
NGHM32	Budapest	12/2012
NGHM33	Edelény	08/2012
NGUKF34	London	02/2014
NGSM35	Phone	09/2012
NGCM36	Facebook	08/2013
NGUKF37	Conference meeting	11/2013
NGHM38	phone	09/2013
NGSF39	London	04/2014
NGHM40	Manchester	03/2014
NGSF41	Email	12/2013
NGSF42	Ostrava	07/2013
NGUKM43	London	02/2014
NGUKF44	London	04/2014
NGCM45	Skype	10/2012
NGHF46	Budapest	18/2013

NGO workers	Place	Year contact
NGHF47	Budapest	08/2012
NGHM48	Budapest	02/2013
NGBM49	Gent	11/2012
NGCHF50	Bratislava	07/2013
NGSM51	Budapest	06/2013
NGBM52	Ghent	08/2012

#### Overview coding

1, Academics(AC), Non -Governmental org.(NG), OR Professional civil servant(P)	
2, nationality (H)ungarian, (R)omanian, (S)lovak,(C)zech,(P)olish, (UK)British, (B)elgian	
3, Gender	(M)ale, (F)emale
4, Field of expertise	
	(M)inority
	(C)riminology
	(S)ociology
	(A)nthropology
	(E)uropean Studies
	(D)evelopment studies
	(S)ecuritu studies
	(E)ducation studies
	LAWM
	(P)olicy Studies

Appendix F Figure 3. The basic model for application procedures in the UK welfare system

