

“Roma in European gender equality policy debates: intersectionalized and feminized”*

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The aim of this paper is to explore how are Roma, who constitute the largest ethnic minority in the European Union, constructed in the selected gender+ equality policy debates in QUING's four issues. More precisely, the focus of this analysis are the intersections between “gender” and “Roma (race/ethnicity)” dimensions detected in QUING's gender+ equality policy frame analysis. The preliminary analysis shows that this intersection had been invoked in 16 sampled documents that were produced both by state and non-state actors mainly from the countries with a sizeable Roma or Traveller population, i.e. Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia. Although only one EU document, which was included in the QUING's frame analysis, invokes a gendered Roma category (“Roma women”), the analyzed member states' documents will be explored also in the light of other relevant EU policy documents putting this specific intersectionality on the EU and domestic political agenda as well.

As it is evident from the diagnostic and prognostic statements referring to the gender-Roma intersectionality axis found in QUING's software, concerned national documents refer exclusively to “Roma women” and “Roma girls”, while only one (Romanian) document contains a reference also to “Roma men”. Through these specific intersections and the intersectionality approach developed by Crenshaw (1991), this paper will explore the emerging phenomenon of *feminization of Roma community* in the EU and in member states' gender+ equality policies. Furthermore, it will also discuss the broader implications of the policy debates focusing on minority (Roma, Muslim, Turkish, immigrant, non-white etc.) women across Europe, and how do they relate to the reproduction of racial and/or ethnic power relations in the European Union and to specific cultural constructions of dominant (non-Roma, non-Muslim, white, autochthonous, European etc.) groups as *masculine*; in other words, as those that are called to “save” the minority women from “oppression” (see Oprea 2005).

Key words: intersectionality; Roma / Traveller women; European Union; Bulgaria; Czech Republic, Greece; Hungary; Ireland; Romania; Slovakia; Slovenia; racial / ethnic power relations

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1. Introduction

This paper explores the gendering of Roma in European gender equality policy debates; more precisely, it undertakes strategic examination of gender and Romani ethnicity / race intersecting dimensions detected in the QUING's selected policy debates.¹ Nevertheless, before tackling it, it should be noted that the policy documents included in the QUING's frame and voice analysis do not necessarily reflect all relevant gender+ equality policy debates emerging in the European Union and 29 analyzed countries,² however, they pertain to be the most recent and the most authoritative and comprehensive documents in QUING's four main issues, i.e. in general gender equality (GEQ), non-employment (NE), intimate citizenship (IC) and gender based violence (GBV).³ As a result of the coding process, in which the sampled documents were coded, the QUING researchers altogether produced more than 2.000 supertexts. Ultimately, the empirical material was interpreted in accordance with the Critical Frame Analysis approach, which is anchored in Carol Bacchi's (1999) constructionist "What's the problem?" approach (cf. Verloo and Lombardo 2007). At the core of the theoretical and methodological framework of critical frame analysis is that of a "policy frame", which Verloo defines as an "organising principle that transforms fragmentary or incidental information into a structured and meaningful problem, in which a solution is implicitly or explicitly included" (2005: 20).

Critical frame analysis constitutes a relevant methodological tool also for tracing and framing intersectionality in gender equality policies (Verloo and Lombardo 2009). By referring to intersecting dimensions of gender and Romani race/ethnicity, the concept of intersectionality constitutes one of the central concepts in the paper, and therefore, it needs to be further clarified. In relation to "intersectionality", which has become the "buzzword" of feminist theory and research (Davis 2008, Urbanek 2008), there is a significant conceptual confusion. This

¹ The sampling procedure was carried out in accordance with the guidelines for selecting documents for frame and voice analysis in the QUING project – Quality in Gender+ Equality Policies (see Verloo, Krizsan and Walby 2007). This paper is a result of the intersectional research carried out in the frame of the QUING project, for which the author participated with other researchers in the country studies on Croatia and Slovakia. In my paper, I use the data for the EU and eight analyzed countries, so I would like to thank to country researchers participating on the EU and the respective countries: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia. For further information about QUING project, please, visit www.quing.eu.

² The countries included in the QUING's comparative analysis are 27 EU member states, and Croatia and Turkey as candidate countries.

³ Main topics were further divided into sub-issues; GEQ into gender equality legislation and gender equality machinery; NE into tax and benefits, reconciliation of work and family life, care and work, gender pay gap and equal treatment in employment; IC into divorce, marriage and separation, sexual orientation discrimination and same-sex partnership, reproductive rights; GBV into domestic violence, sexual assault, and trafficking, female genital mutilation, honour killings etc.

can be largely attributed to the “theoretical complexities of intersectionality”, however, on the other hand it indeed seems to be “ideally suited to the task of exploring how categories of race, class and gender are intertwined and mutually constitutive” (Davis 2008: 71). Conceptual confusion is further exacerbated by the fact that this phenomenon has been - more likely than not - “hidden” behind other labels used not only in the policy debates, but also in earlier academic debates (for example, “dual systems”; cf. Walby 2007).

“Intersectionality” was originally coined by Kimberle Crenshaw (1989) to address the problem of exclusion of Black women's employment experiences, which fell out of both feminist and anti-racist identity politics. Crenshaw (1991) also introduced the distinction between the *structural intersectionality* and *political intersectionality*. Thus, she uses “structural intersectionality” to highlight different experiences of Black women emerging when systems of gender, race and class domination converge. The result is “intersectional subordination”, which is produced through the interaction of pre-existing sub-ordinations along different inequality axes, and which creates another, exacerbated dimension of disempowerment. With “political intersectionality” Crenshaw refers to as how are intersecting dimensions relevant to sometimes opposing political strategies (cf. Verloo and Lombardo 2009). As the most authors notice, academic works on intersectionality mostly deal with structural intersectionality, while the exploration of political intersectionality in policy-making is rare (Verloo 2006, Urbanek 2008, Verloo and Lombardo 2009).

As the present work undertakes a strategic examination of how are Roma gendered in recent gender equality policy debates throughout Europe, political intersectionality will be the primary focus of this paper. Furthermore, it draws also from other works theorizing intersectionality, particularly those understanding intersectionality as “a *process* through which ‘race’ takes on multiple ‘gendered’ meanings for particular women and men” (Ferree 2009: 85). The main feature of the understanding of intersectionality as a process, sometimes also called “constructionist intersectionality” (Prins 2006), “interactive intersectionality” (Ferree 2009) etc., is that it analyzes intersectionality as time and context contingent, rather than fixed and ahistorical (Yuval-Davis 2006, Walby 2007, Ferree 2009, Hulko 2009). Finally, this paper aims to address not only the intersections of subordination, but also to question “privileged intersections”, which is inextricably related to the issue of production of categories and of hegemonic discourses (Bacchi 2005).

2. Contextual analysis

Following Yuval-Davis' advice that an intersectional analysis of policy initiatives can be conducted only after a contextual analysis is carried out (2006: 205), I will first define intersecting dimensions, ie. that of gender and of Roma race/ethnicity. The next step is to merge the contextual analysis with the empirical analysis of the data obtained through frame and voice analysis in the framework of the QUING project, which will result in the exploration of how is the examined intersection framed in European gender equality policies. For this purpose, I anchor present analysis in the theoretical model of intersectionality developed for QUING (Walby 2007) Finally, I will also employ a "reflexive framing" analysis, which involves "critical introspection on the conceptual and interpretive premises underpinning these frames" (Bacchi 2009: 30).

When referring to "gender", I understand it as a "political process" with concrete results of *gendering* (Evelin and Bacchi 2005). According to Jalušič, the understanding of the process of gendering "enables us to describe not only relationships between women and men but the political processes of gendering institutions, norms and organizations, thus enabling us to uncover and challenge the systematically gendered character of the reproduction of power relations" (2009: 53). On the other hand, when invoking gendered Romani categories (as it will be shown later, these categories are virtually confined to "Roma women" and "Roma girls"), we refer to one of the most salient European intersections of gender and race/ethnicity.⁴ This specific intersection is contingent upon the EU integration processes in the "new member states" and upon concrete "sets of power relations" (Walby 2007) of gender and race/ethnicity between dominant non-Roma (assumably European) and minority Roma (assumably non-European) populations. What is particularly striking in relation to the EU policies on Roma is that their emergence coincides with the increased attention of the EU policies to the issue of multiple discrimination / disadvantage, which is usually used to denote the intersections of multiple inequalities. Since the last EU enlargements in 2004 and 2007, when twelve new members states - most of them with sizeable Romani population - joined the European Union, its policies on social inclusion, equality and non-discrimination of Roma

⁴ Furthermore, as some QUING country reports notice, "ethnicity" is in some "new member states", most notably in Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania and Slovenia, implicitly translated into "Roma" (see Stoykova 2008; Dombos et al 2008; Popa 2008; Kuhar 2008). On the one hand, this contributes to larger visibility of Roma, however, on the other hand, the symbolic equation of Roma and ethnic "other" makes other ethnic collectivities – both majorities and minorities – less visible or unrecognized. Such overt attention to Romani minority in policy making is perhaps the most salient in Slovenia, where Roma represent a tiny minority (less than 1% of total population), while more numerous ethnic minorities from the former Yugoslavia are not formally recognized as ethnic minorities (Kuhar 2008: 37).

have increasingly demonstrated a commitment to “use all means to improve their inclusion” (European Commission 2008: 3).

The reasons for singling out Romani population and for addressing the specific situation of this race/ethnic community are underlied by demographic and socio-economic factors. Thus, the demographic factor is contingent upon the fact that “Roma are the European Union's largest minority ethnic community” (European Commission 2004: 6).⁵ The socio-economic factor relies on numerous assessments in both “new” and “old” member states that clearly illustrate that members of Romani communities experience persistent discrimination and social exclusion, and encounter systemic obstacles in gaining equal access to employment, education, social security, healthcare, housing, public services and justice (ibid.). Also recent European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey (hereinafter: EU-MIDIS) shows that “47% of all Romani respondents indicated they were victims of discrimination based on their ethnicity in the previous 12 months” (EU Agency for Fundamental Rights 2009: 4).⁶ An analysis of the EU policy documents on Roma reveals that they – without exception – do include “gender aspects” (European Commission 2004: 33-35, European Commission 2008 etc.), and the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC)⁷ published a special edition on Romani women and access to healthcare (EUMC, Council of Europe 2003). Furthermore, more recent EU reports explicitly mention multiple discrimination against Roma (European Commission 2007) and intersection of gender and Romani ethnicity in social exclusion (European Commission 2006: chapter 6).

Similarly, there are numerous civil society policy documents drawing attention to the problems of multiple discrimination, disadvantage and disempowerment of Romani women (Roma Women Association Romania 1999; European Roma Rights Centre 2005; European Women's Lobby 2009 etc.), however, there is surprisingly little feminist works dealing with Romani women and/or including an intersectional perspective (for example, Oprea 2004, 2005; Schultz 2005). One of the most visible authors writing about Romani women is Alexandra Oprea, a Romani feminist activist, who draws on Crenshaw's concept of political intersectionality to criticize feminist and anti-racist discourses, because they both construct the terms “Roma” and “women” as mutually exclusive. Oprea is also critical of the

⁵ Although no official figures exist, the European Commission is uniform that Roma are “numbering millions of people” (2008: 4), a population that outnumbers the total population of a number of European Union member states (2004: 6).

⁶ Survey was carried out in seven EU member states (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Slovakia), and overall discrimination rate varied from 25% (Romania) to 64% (Czech Republic) (FRA: 2009: 4). For comparison, the Eurobarometer's survey on personal experience of ethnic discrimination shows that the overall EU average is 2% (2008:40).

⁷ European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia transformed into the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights.

“anthropological perspective” embedded in scientific discourse concerning Third World peoples and cultures, and also Roma, because “it has generally failed to take into account gender concerns within Third World communities” (2005: 134). As she puts it

“The ideology of unity in the face of oppression by majority society serves to hinder many women from speaking about internal community issues. Roma being a nation without a territory, the rhetoric of unity seems especially pertinent: In order to preserve identity, ties to community and family must be strong in order to compensate for lack of territorial ties. This being said, due to the pressure to espouse one unified Romani political view, one that excludes gender concerns, when Romani women choose to work in the Romani movement without elaborating the gender dimensions of being Romani in a racist state, they ultimately replicate patriarchy and perpetuate the psychological, physical, and institutional subordination of their Romani sisters” (Oprea 2004: 33).

I would agree with Oprea that Romani women generally do not receive due attention in feminist research, however, as I showed above, this is far from being the case on a policy level in the European Union and also in some member states.⁸ Nevertheless, as “questioning privileged intersections” should be one of the key features of intersectionality analysis, I will divert my attention from the “‘normative subject’ of feminism” (Brah and Phoenix 2004: 78) when it does address gender (in)equality issues related to Roma. In this respect, tackling the sets of social relations that produce specific experiences of Romani women and girls and position them in a specific location is the “normative subject” of the most (if not all) feminist works addressing gendered issues related to Roma. In this line, I will divert my attention to the glaring absence of Romani men in the European gender equality policies and to a complete silence on gendered experiences of racism by Romani men in the existing intersectional analyses on Roma. Of course, completely wrong conclusion would be to assume that this “blindness” to specific positionings of male intersections is confined only to Roma. As a matter of fact, with a slight exception of an intersection between gender and sexuality due to frequent reference to “gays” AND “lesbians”, such “blindness” operates similarly across other gendered intersections as well. What could be the reason for this? Without a doubt, this can be - at least partly – imputed to the representation of gender inequality as a problem of male domination and of female subordination within the gender power relations. Nevertheless, intersectional analysis of gender equality policies, and particularly the “reflexive framing” analysis (Bacchi 2009) impose a more complex understanding of gendering and of the gendered character of other power relations, such as

⁸ See QUING country reports analysing intersectionality in gender equality policies, most notably on Bulgaria (Stoykova 2008), Hungary (Dombos et al 2008) and Romania (Popa 2008).

race/ethnicity, class, sexuality etc. which results in systematically gendered character of these power relations.

The gendered meaning of race/ethnicity, religion, class, sexuality etc. is never random, but is shaped by hegemonic discourses and specific gendered socio-cultural constructions of dominant and subordinate races/ethnicities, religions, classes, sexualities etc. in the given political space. As concerns the contemporary European gender equality policies, this space is construed as the “European Union”, which represents a supra-national political institution composed of a certain number of *European* nation states.⁹ The gendered character of the EU is reflected exactly in the twofold, simultaneous processes of degendering and gendering; thus, on the one hand we have degendered European nations, linguistic, cultural and ethnic collectivities with “power to *make/deploy* discourse” (Bacchi 2009: 30), and on the other hand we are witnessing the emergence of increasingly gendered minority and integration policies - both at the EU and national level – that pay attention almost exclusively to *non-European women*. Thus far, we still await comprehensive analyses of processes of both gendering of minority / integration policies and of ethnicization of gender equality policies in the EU, however, the intersectional policy analyses that have been implemented clearly demonstrate such trends in some national contexts. Namely, in relation to the Dutch minority and gender equality policies, Roggeband and Verloo notice that “emancipation policies have become ‘ethnicized’, focusing almost primarily on the emancipation of ‘allochthonous’ women” (2007: 273). Thus, the focus on “migrant women” and “Muslim women” is becoming one of the key features of the recent gender equality policy debates in the “old member states”, particularly in relation to some gendered cultural and religious practices seen as “non-Western”, such as honour killings, veiling, forced marriages etc. (see Urbanek 2008; Hellgren and Hobson 2008).

The result of degendering of dominant (European, Western) cultures and societies, and of the asymmetric gendering of minority (non-European, non-Western) race/ethnic, religious groups is that unequal gender relations are more and more defined as a problem of non-Western cultures, while gender relations in dominant cultures and societies are implicitly recognized as unproblematic (Verloo and Lombardo 2009: 74). Furthermore, the process of asymmetric gendering manifested in the feminization of minority groups produces specific gendered versions of the dominant (assumably European) collectivities as *masculine* and of

⁹ The political composition of the EU is mirrored also in the QUING project, in which 27 member and 2 candidate states + EU constitute the basic research units.

the minority (assumably non-European) collectivities as *feminine*.¹⁰ Thus, it is strikingly resonant with racist and ethnicized “inherent obsession with the ‘exotic’ oppression of Third World women” (Oprea 2005: 134), which implies that they need to be saved from “oppression” by the masculinized Europe/West. In this sense, the QUING's frame analysis provides for an opportunity for observing how the boundaries of Europeanness are “co-constructed” (Ferree 2008: 85) along with the meanings of gender. And the considerations of co-constructed intersectionality in the EU open not only the questions concerning overt political attention to some intersections and blindness or bias to other intersectionalized inequalities in the EU and member states (see Verloo and Lombardo 2007), but also about the role of gendered racism in the EU enlargement and external relations policies.¹¹ Nevertheless, as this paper is focused on gendering Roma in the European gender equality policies, I will employ policy frame analysis to demonstrate how this specific co-constructed intersectionality is framed in the selected policy debates.

3. QUING frame analysis

The aim of the empirical part of the analysis is also to explore how are the intersections between “gender” and “Romani (race/ethnicity)” dimensions framed in the selected QUING's policy debates. For the purpose of the frame analysis, a wide range of gender+ equality policies was selected, so that for each of 12 QUING sub-issues four types of documents would be chosen: a law, a government policy, parliamentary debates and a civil society text (see also introduction).

As more than 2.000 supertexts were produced in QUING's coding process, I used the computer software for searching gender-Roma intersections. More precisely, I looked in the specific locations within the supertexts called “diagnostic” and “prognostic” statements, where country researchers mapped the intersections detected in the coded country documents. As concerns intersectionality in general, a common (if not unanimous) conclusion among QUING country researchers is that intersections occur rather rarely. Although some researchers have already attempted to identify wider patterns of intersectional approach in the policy processes,¹² at this stage it would be too speculative to

¹⁰ Similarly, Standing (1989) speaks about the “feminization of labour”, which has emerged from the convergence of the processes of capitalist globalization and ideologies of femininity and masculinity (see Acker 2004).

¹¹ Namely, some EU member states ground their objections against Turkey's membership in the EU precisely by invoking gender equality argument.

¹² See, for example, Urbanek (2008) and Platero (2007).

make any generalized conclusions on eventual intersectional strategies throughout the EU. This is also one of the main reasons why I limited my intersectional analysis only to Roma, which inevitably entails some pitfalls. First is the fact that gendered categories related to Roma appear only in documents of eight observed countries (out of 29 countries included in the QUING project). Then, I have encountered methodological limitations imposed by the comparative methodology itself, due to which I had to exclude other (non-Roma) intersectional categories that are used in some political contexts which usually refer to Roma. Namely, the inclusion of the categories implicitly referring to or encompassing Roma women would diminish the comparability, as they may have completely different connotations in other political contexts. For example, an intersectional category “women from economically weaker classes” used in the draft National Programme of Protection of Reproductive Health in the Slovak Republic refers primarily to Roma women, as “the discursive practices used in the Slovak context refer to Roma minority by using both inequality axes, i.e. ethnicity and class” (Očenašova and Dedić 2008: 6). Similarly, a Romanian researcher comments the concept of “cultural differences” used in the Romanian National Strategy on Domestic Violence that it “most likely refers to Roma communities”.¹³ Other country specific terms referring (also) to Roma women are “risk groups” in Bulgarian documents (Stoykova 2008: 24) and “vulnerable groups of women” in Greek documents (Maloutas et al 2008: 8).

Background reports produced by QUING country researchers on the concerned countries confirm the previous general observation that “Roma / Traveller women” represent the most visible European intersection between gender and race/ethnicity. However, the visibility and representations of Romani women vary significantly from one country to another. Thus, in Bulgaria, a public debate on gender (in)equality and ethnicity has evolved around “demographic crisis”, since Romani and Turkish ethnic minorities had not experienced the drop of birth rates as the Bulgarian ethnic majority (Stoykova 2008: 7). High fertility rate of Romani women is also at the core of the Romanian employment action plan that blames Romani women having many children at a young age for “contributing to the poverty of Roma communities” (Popa 2008: 25). On the other hand, public debate on “multiple discrimination” and the related changes of gender equality legislation, and the civil society texts in general focus on “specific barriers related to the compound effects of ethnicity, gender and frequently social class” affecting Romani women in all areas of public life, in their families and communities (ibid.: 24). Heated public debates on the forced sterilisations of Romani women have prevailed in the Czech Republic (see Röder 2008: 30), Slovakia (see Očenašova and

¹³ See RO/NationalStrategy_DomViol.

Dedić 2008: 5), and to a certain extent also in Hungary (see Dombos et al 2008: 2).¹⁴ Hungarian policy documents mainly focus on Romani women as a specific group at intersection and the social problems affecting them as a group, such as low employment and education rates etc., without seriously challenging the causes of these problems (see Dombos et al 2008: 21). In Greek, Irish and Slovenian gender equality policies, Roma / Traveller women are merely mentioned as groups that deserve special concern, however, no specific policy actions are proposed to address the inequalities experienced by Romani / Traveller women (see Maloutas et al 2008; Strid et al 2008; Kuhar 2008).

As it is evident from the Table 1, gender-Roma intersection is invoked in 15 sampled country documents, i.e. in Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia. Although there is also one EU document that is included in the frame analysis, which addresses the sterilisation of Roma women in Eastern Europe, I did not include it in the present analysis, because it was coded as a past activity, not as a dimension of intersectionality nor as a problem.¹⁵ The most numerous country documents invoking this particular intersection are Romanian (five) and Hungarian (three) documents respectively. As concerns QUING's main issues, nine documents, in which gendered Romani intersections had been detected, can be found in documents concerning general gender equality. Three documents can be found in non-employment and in gender-based violence respectively, while there are no documents containing gender-Roma intersection coded in intimate citizenship. Regarding the type of documents, eight documents invoking gendered Romani intersections are government policy documents¹⁶ and five are civil society texts.¹⁷ There is also one Hungarian parliamentary debate on equal treatment legislation¹⁸ and a report of the International Organization for Migration on trafficking.¹⁹ The most striking feature of the

¹⁴ Unfortunately, none of the texts analyzed in QUING addresses the issue of forced sterilizations of Romani women, which could be imputed to the QUING criteria for the selection of documents (Röder 2008: 30, n15).

¹⁵ Document code "EU/ICreproductrightsCIVILTX"; its relevant part claims that "Roma women face double discrimination making it more difficult for them to access health services. Furthermore, forced sterilisation of Roma women in Slovakia was denounced at the end of 2002 by the Centre for Reproductive Rights, and, more recently, by the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe. It constitutes a serious violation to bodily integrity, freedom of choice and the entitlement to self-determination of reproductive life. In response to the CRR allegations, the Slovakian government has recently adopted a new legislation, based on basis of human rights approach and informed consent". See Position Paper of the European Women's Lobby on women's sexual rights in Europe (2005), p. 10.

¹⁶ Document codes BG/Gender_Equality_PLAN; CZ/Strategy; GR/natcomongenequal; HU/EqTreat_RomaDecPlan; IE/GBV_DomesticViolencePolicy; RO/Gov_WorkFamilyReconciliation; RO/GenderEquality_StrategyandPofA; SI/Doc2GeGeNationalResolution.

¹⁷ Document codes BG/Reconc_NGO_Mitcheva; HU/EqTreatment_WomensLobby; RO/Letter_MultipleDiscrimination; RO/ShadowReport_2006_RomaW; SK/50_CST_Trafficking_Farkas

¹⁸ Document code HU/EqTreatment_debate_Bernath.

¹⁹ Document code RO/TraffickingReport_IOM.

detected intersections of gender and Roma, which is in line with above observations, is that they are saliently feminized. Thus, the most frequently appearing intersectional category is that of “Roma / Traveller women”,²⁰ which is sometimes coupled with other inequality axes, such as age (“young Roma women”)²¹ and family / marital status (“single mothers from Roma minorities”),²² disability and region (“disabled Romani women living in the countryside”).²³ Less frequent is a category of “Romani girls”, which appears in two documents.²⁴

Frame analysis shows that the most frequently occurring frame generating gender-Roma intersectionalized dimension is a *double discrimination* diagnostic frame, whose main feature is that different groups are “explicitly mentioned as facing double discrimination”, usually in a combination of gender and race/ethnicity or sexuality (Carbin, Harjunen and Verloo 2008: 10). The identified documents generate this frame by invoking various problems affecting Romani women, such as involuntary sterilisations, multiple disadvantage and multiple discrimination.²⁵ The most representative case of *double discrimination* frame is a Romanian civil society text from 2006 concerning the changes of the Romanian Law on Equal Opportunities.²⁶ In the open letter to the Romanian National Agency for Equal Opportunities between Women and Men, Romani activists from different non-governmental organisations, thus, claim that “Roma women in particular, since they are discriminated against on multiple grounds, are confronted with different experiences of inequality than majority women”. Therefore, they suggest to the National Agency to include the concept of multiple discrimination and to introduce aggravated sanctions for multiple discrimination (Popa 2008). In this document, a major double discrimination frame is coupled with a minor *structural intersectionality* frame, which presents intersecting inequalities as a structural problem and links gender, race/ethnicity, class etc. to larger systems of unequal power relations, such as gendered hierarchies, racism, ethnocentrism or heteronormativity (Carbin

²⁰ This category appears in the following documents: BG/Gender_Equality_PLAN; CZ/Strategy; GR/natcomongenequal; HU/EqTreatment_WomensLobby; HU/EqTreat_RomaDecPlan; IE/GBV_DomesticViolencePolicy; RO/Letter_MultipleDiscrimination; RO/ShadowReport_2006_RomaW; RO/GenderEquality_StrategyandPofA; SI/Doc2GeGeNationalResolution; SK/50_CST_Trafficking_Farkas.

²¹ This category appears in Romanian documents coded as RO/Gov_WorkFamilyReconciliation and RO/TraffickingReport_IOM

²² This category appears in Bulgarian document coded as BG/Reconc_NGO_Mitcheva.

²³ This category appears in Hungarian parliamentary debate coded as HU/EqTreatment_debate_Bernath.

²⁴ These documents are coded as CZ/Strategy and HU/EqTreat_RomaDecPlan.

²⁵ This frame is mapped in CZ/Strategy, HU/EqTreatment_debate_Bernath, HU/EqTreatment_WomensLobby, RO/Letter_MultipleDiscrimination, RO/ShadowReport_2006_RomaW.

²⁶ Document code RO/Letter_MultipleDiscrimination.

et al 2008: 14-15).²⁷ It is noteworthy that “majority women”, who are assigned the role of the normgroup for the Romani women in this document, are deethnicized, which – again – covers racist and ethnocentric power relations in contemporary Romanian society.

Relatively important frames are also gendered frames of “*women inclusion: include migrant women or low educated women*” occurring in two non-employment documents²⁸ and “*women centered approach*” occurring in two documents on gender-based violence. The common feature of both frames is that they are about including women without addressing the structural causes of gender inequality. *Include migrant women or low educated women* frame is one of the purest forms of intersectional framing and it calls for the inclusion of specific groups of female actors mainly described along the axes of race/ethnicity or class (Verloo and Sauer 2008: 18). It is the most elaborated in the prognostic part of the Hungarian Decade Action Plan on Roma Inclusion from 2004. In the coded part, the Action Plan calls for the improvement of opportunities of Romani women, which should be achieved through the increase of educational performance of Romani girls, the improvement of employment rate of Romani women, the effective collaboration between care services and Romani women, and the provision of support for capacity building for Romani women. In addition, this document generates also *positive action* frame, as it explicitly calls for positive discrimination and other measures (special incentives for employers, special courses for gaining skills) that would enhance the employment rate of Romani women. Both documents generating *women centered approach* frame, which “explicitly recognizes that women are one of the main victim groups of gender based violence” (Krizsan and Popa 2008: 8), deal with the issue of trafficking of human beings.²⁹ Thus, both documents invoke gender-Roma intersection by singling out (young) Romani women as particularly vulnerable to trafficking in human beings.³⁰

Rather degendered *nationalism / demographic balance* frame usually instrumentalizes families “for the demographic balance of the country” (Verloo and Sauer 2008: 20). In two

²⁷ In QUING, researchers employed the distinction between “sole”, “major”, “minor”, “significant”, and “marginal” frames, which is not a strict criteria, but rests on researcher's perception of the occurrence of certain concepts across the supertexts (Verloo and Lombardo 2007: 36, note 9).

²⁸ *Women inclusion* frame is mapped in HU/EqTreat_RomaDecPlan and RO/Gov_WorkFamilyReconciliation. Nevertheless, Romanian researcher notes that *women inclusion* “frame does not adequately capture the frame in the text, which is a wider intersectional frame, and it adds ethnic minorities in general, not just women from ethnic minorities.”

²⁹ *Women centered approach* frame is mapped in RO/TraffickingReport_IOM and SK/50_CST_Trafficking_Farkas.

³⁰ The Slovak document (SK/50_CST_Trafficking_Farkas) among vulnerable groups lists also young women, female asylum applicants, and foreigners with illegal residence in Slovakia.

non-employment documents,³¹ in which this frame appears, the high fertility rate of young Romani women (Romanian document) and the increasing rate of single mothers of Romani origin (Bulgarian document) are considered problematic.³² It is noteworthy, however, that Romanian document is the National Action Plan for Employment 2006 (i.e. government policy), while the Bulgarian document is presented by the non-governmental organisation “Motherhood for Future” in the discussion forum on reconciliation of work and family life. In both documents, we witness the culturalization and extension of the underlying problem irrespectively whether we speak about the problem of low employment rate of Romani population in Romania or about the problem of the erosion of a traditional family model in Bulgarian society. Similarly, as Roggeband and Verloo (2007) notice in relation to Dutch integration policies focusing on migrant (Muslim) women, “a cultural dimension has been added to a preexisting socio-economic problem definition” (2007: 268). Especially the Bulgarian civil society text links the “proper” family model with the majority Bulgarian ethnic group, and particularly the Bulgarian married mothers, while the single mothers from the Roma minority are seen as eroding the traditional family model. Thus, the mentioned text is also the only document that generates *against gender equality* and *classic marriage* frames in relation to gender-Roma intersection.

Other frames related to gender-Roma intersection, which are mapped in only one document, are *social debate*, *institutionalisation / regulations / better governance*, *public health*, *culturalization / externalising the problem*, *mainstreaming* and *structural inequality* frames. Among these, *mainstreaming* frame, generated by the Romanian National Strategy for equal opportunities and treatment of women and men for the period 2006-2009, is the most transformative frame related to gender-Roma intersection, because it calls for gender mainstreaming in relation to various groups of women. The Strategy, thus, provides that

“In order to affirm the principle of equal opportunities, a gender perspective should be integrated in programs for social protection of families, and programs for preventing and combating marginalization targeted particularly at Roma women, elderly women and women who lack education”.

³¹ *Nationalism / demographic balance* frame is mapped in BG/Reconc_NGO_Mitcheva and RO/Gov_WorkFamilyReconciliation.

³² Link between Romani population and higher birth rate is established also in other texts, such as in parliamentary speech of Slovak MP Július Brocka, who ascribes a higher birth rate in the Eastern part of Slovakia to different reproductive behaviour of the Romani population. See document code SK/12_C_ParlDeb_TaxBenefits.

In sub-issue on domestic violence, *public health* frame is generated by the Irish National Women's Strategy 2007-2016, which notes that "Traveller women experience high levels of domestic violence" and calls for special programmes for Traveller women victims of violence. *Public health* frame understands violence against women as a health issue, which affects both the victims and the society as a whole (Krizsan and Popa 2008: 13).

As I announced above, I will address also the absent gendered Romani categories (ie. Romani men) in the policy documents coded in QUING. As a matter of fact, a reference to "Roma men" intersectionalized category is detected in only one (Romanian) document. More precisely, the problem of "Roma men being killed" is coded among the problem statements in the civil society shadow report on Romania prepared for the UN Committee for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.³³ As such, it had been strategically framed (Verloo 2001) to bring attention to "a wide range of problems related to discrimination and violence against Romani women in Romania".³⁴ Thus, the shadow report claims that "as a result of a culture of violence in Romania, in which women and minorities are particularly exposed, Romani women are extremely vulnerable to acts of violence. Perpetrators include public officials, members of other ethnic groups, Roma, and indeed close family". This part of the concerned supertext is particularly relevant for the present intersectional analysis, because it tackles the core of the problem that I addressed above, ie. that policymakers deal only "with a few homogenous and largely salient target groups" (Verloo et al 2007: 285), such as Romani and other minoritized women. Namely, the shadow report clearly demonstrates that gendered experience of racially targeted violence affects both Romani women and Romani men as well. Furthermore, although the shadow report explicitly defines "a culture of violence in Romania" as a problem, and although that violence entails severe gendered consequences, such as sterilization of Romani women without their consent by the medical staff, abuse of Romani women by the police, killing Roma men by the police and members of other ethnic groups etc., the perpetrators of racially/ethnically motivated violence against Romani women and men are being coherently degendered and deethnicized.³⁵

The Romanian case of killings of Romani men is especially insightful, because it is far from being an isolated incident throughout Europe, both in the "new" and "old" EU member states

³³ The relevant part refers to pogroms against Romani settlements throughout Romania in the beginning of 1990s. In 1993, the most notorious racial attack took place in the village Hadareni (Mures county), where numerous Romani houses were burnt down and three Roma were killed (Popa 2008: 51).

³⁴ See document RO/ShadowReport_2006_RomaW.

³⁵ Although this document mentions "members of other ethnic groups" among perpetrators of racial violence against Roma, the perpetrators are still considered to be deethnicized, because it fails to name the ethnicities of perpetrators explicitly.

Namely, as the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe notes in his report on the human rights situation of the Roma, Sinti and Travellers in Europe, some of the cases of violence against Roma “concerned deaths and violence in police custody, others are related to insufficient action by law-enforcement officials” (Council of Europe 2006: para. 79).³⁶ Also the recent EU-MIDIS report shows that 18% of all Roma surveyed considered that they were a victim of a racially motivated assault, threat or serious harassment in the last 12 months (FRA 2009: 9).³⁷ Nevertheless, policymakers hardly ever problematize the gendered implications of racially motivated attacks against the members of Romani minority by non-state actors (skinheads, gangs etc.)³⁸ and of ill-treatment by law-enforcement institutions (police, courts, prisons etc.) in many European countries. This “ostensible gender neutrality” (Acker 2004: 19) towards racist violence actually masks the implicit masculinization of dominant race/ethnic power structures, which are being reproduced unhindered because the issue of gendered implications of racist violence “does not get problematised” (Bacchi 1999: 36) in policy discourses. And precisely the racist violence encroaching upon the physical existence of Roma as a collectivity constitutes one of the most powerful mechanisms through which the racialized/ethnicized boundaries of Europeanness are co-constructed along with the meanings of gender.

4. Conclusions

According to Yuval-Davis, the intersectionality is “a major analytical tool that challenges hegemonic approaches to the study of stratification as well as reified forms of identity politics” (2006: 201). Indeed, in the present strategic exploration of how are Roma being gendered in European gender+ equality policies analyzed in the QUING project, the intersectional approach provides the ground for reflexive questioning of possible gendered, racist and ethnicized implications of overwhelmingly feminizing intersectional categories, particularly those involving women from race/ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities. Of course, we always have to bear in mind that some categories are more contingent upon specific historical and socio-cultural context, which necessitates the construction of specific categories. However, as Yuval-Davis notes, “some social divisions, such as gender, stage in the life cycle, ethnicity and class, tend to shape most people's lives in most social locations”

³⁶ See for example the case *Nachova and others vs. Bulgaria* (2005), in which the European Court for Human Rights found a violation of art. 2 (the right to life) of the European Convention for Human Rights in a case involving deaths of two Romani men at the hands of the Bulgarian state agents.

³⁷ Unfortunately, EU-MIDIS report does not provide with gender disaggregated data on the racially motivated violence experienced by Romani women and men.

³⁸ If we recall only the most recent incident with tragic consequences, ie. that of killing of a Romani man and his 5-year-old son in Budapest in February 2009. See European Roma Information Office (2009).

(2006: 203). Therefore, the intersectional frame analysis should not reflect critically only upon the policy framings and upon the absences in the policy discourses, but should also strive for understanding why those discourses readily employ certain intersectional categories, while others are – intentionally or unintentionally – consistently overlooked.

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Annex: List of analyzed documents in QUING

1. BG/Gender_Equality_PLAN: National Action Plan for Promotion of Gender Equality for 2006, Meeting of the Council of Ministers on 24 November 2005.
2. BG/Reconc_NGO_Mitcheva: Gender Project for Bulgaria Foundation. 8th Annual Discussion Forum "Reconciliation of work and family life", 18 May 2006
3. CZ/Strategy: The National Strategy of the Czech Republic for the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All (2007) - Towards a Just Society and Priorities for the European Year, 2006.
4. EU/ICreproductrightsCIVILTX: European Women's Lobby Position Paper on women's sexual rights in Europe, January 2005.
5. GR/natcomongenequal: First meeting of the national committee for gender equality, 26 March 2007.

6. HU/CEDAW_WomensLobby: Shadow Report of the Hungarian Women's Lobby on the realization of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women in Hungary, 25 May 2007.
7. HU/EqTreatment_debate_Bernath: Debate on the Bill T/5585 on equal treatment and the promotion of equal opportunities, 17 October, 25-26 November, 9 December 2003.
8. HU/EqTreatment_WomensLobby: Position of the Hungarian Women's Lobby on the Project of Law on Equal Treatment and the Promotion of Equal Opportunities, 28 November 2003.
9. RO/Gov_WorkFamilyReconciliation: Government Decision no. 970/ 2006 approving the National Action Plan for Employment 2006, 26 July 2006.
10. RO/TraffickingReport_IOM: Who is the Next Victim? Vulnerability of Young Romanian Women to Trafficking in Human Beings, August 2003.
11. RO/Letter_MultipleDiscrimination: Open Letter, Debate on changes to the Law on Equal Opportunities 202/2002, 8 February 2006.
12. RO/ShadowReport_2006_RomaW: Shadow Report, May 2006.
13. RO/GenderEquality_StrategyandPofA: Decision no. 319 from March 8, 2006 on the approval of the National Strategy for equal opportunities and treatment of women and men for the period 2006-2009 and the General Plan of Action for implementing the National Strategy of Equal Opportunities between Women and Men for the period 2006-2009, 8 March 2006.
14. SK/12_C_ParlDeb_TaxBenefits: Excerpts from the parliamentary debate on approving the Act on the State Budget of the Slovak Republic for 2004; NC SR III, sessions 20, 2003; statement of Július Brocka, 9 December 2003.
15. SK/38_Other_draft_ReprodHealth04: Draft National programme of reproductive health protection in the Slovak Republic, 2004.
16. SK/50_CST_Trafficking_Farkas: Farkašová, Katarína, et al. The current situation in Slovakia: Trafficking in human beings. Report. Bratislava: Aliancia žien Slovenska, 2004.
17. SI/Doc2GeGeNationalResolution: Resolution on the National programme for equal opportunities for women and men - 2005-2013, 10 November 2005.

Table 1: Intersecting dimensions of gender and Roma in QUING

Country	Quing issue	Document	Intersecting dimension of gender and Roma	Frames
Bulgaria	GEQ/legislation	BG/Gender_Equality_PLAN – policy plan	Diagnosis: Roma women can not protect their rights because of lack of knowledge and funding	GGE (D11) Social debate (Lack of consultation or NGOs in policy process) / diagnosis / marginal
	NE/reconciliation	BG/Reconc_NGO_Mitcheva – CST	Diagnosis: high rates of single mothers from Roma minorities grow very fast	NONE (03) Against gender equality /major; IC (08) Classic marriage / significant; NONE (05) Nationalism /demographic balance/ significant
Czech Republic	GEQ/legislation	CZ/Strategy – policy report	Diagnosis: involuntary sterilisations of Roma women Prognosis: improve the status of Roman women and Roma girls; survey mapping all discriminations against Roma women	GGE (D02c) Double discrimination / diagnosis – prognosis / major
Greece	GEQ/legislation	GR/natcomongenequal – policy report	Diagnosis: immigrant women, Roma women, women in long-term unemployment are victims of a double discrimination	GGE (P01) Institutionalisation/regulations/better governance
Hungary	GEQ / legislation	HU/EqTreatment_debate_Bernath – parl. Debate	Diagnosis: disabled romani women living in the countryside are in the worst situation in the labour market	GGE (D02c) Double discrimination; GGE (D09a) Culturalization/externalising the problem
	GEQ/ legislation	HU/EqTreatment_WomensLobby – NGO opinion	Diagnosis: multiple disadvantages of Roma women Prognosis: provide special protection for Roma women with multiple disadvantages	GGE (D02c) Double discrimination
	NE/ pay gap	HU/EqTreat_Roma DecPlan – policy plan	Prognosis: increase Romani girls's educational performance; improve Romani women's rate of employment; provide access to preventive health care services for Romani women; effective collaboration between care services and Romani women; provide support for capacity building for Romani women	NONE (02c) Women inclusion: include migrant women or low educated women / diagnosis-prognosis GGE (P02b) Positive action (Equal outcomes/group rights) / prognosis
Ireland	GBV/ domestic violence	IE/GBV_DomesticViolencePolicy –	Prognosis: Traveller women experience high levels of domestic violence	GBV (D12) Public health - significant

		policy plan		
Romania	NE/reconciliation	RO/Gov_WorkFamilyReconciliation – policy plan	Diagnosis: young Roma women have many children	NONE (02c) Women inclusion: include migrant women or low educated women – diagnosis – prognosis / major NONE (05) Nationalism /demographic balance – diagnosis / minor
	GBV/trafficking	RO/TraffickingReport_IOM – other (int'l organization report -IOM)	Diagnosis: Young Roma women are more exposed to trafficking in human beings than the rest of the population	GBV (D03) Women-centered approach - minor
	GEQ/legislation	RO/Letter_Multiple Discrimination - CST	Diagnosis: Roma women in particular, since they are discriminated against on multiple grounds, are confronted with different experiences of inequality than majority women	GGE (D02c) Double discrimination – major; GGE (D04c) Structural intersectionality - minor
	GEQ/legislation	RO/ShadowReport_2006_RomaW – CST	Diagnosis: women belonging to the Roma minority face multiple discrimination Problem: killed Roma men	GGE (D02c) Double discrimination – diagnosis / major
	GEQ/legislation	RO/GenderEquality_StrategyandPofA – policy plan	Prognosis: In order to affirm the principle of equal opportunities, a gender perspective should be integrated in programs for social protection of families, and programs for preventing and combating marginalization targeted particularly at Roma women, elderly women and women who lack education	GGE (P04b) Mainstreaming - significant
Slovenia	GEQ/legislation	SI/Doc2GeGeNationalResolution – policy plan	Diagnosis: situation of minority women, in particular Roma women, is issue of concern	GGE (D04b) Structural inequality - significant
Slovakia	GBV/trafficking	SK/50_CST_Trafficking_Farkas – NGO opinion	Problem: human trafficking Passive actors: young women, Roma women, female asylum applicants, foreigners with illegal residence in Slovakia	GBV (D03) Women-centered approach / significant

