Bradford District European Roma Communities Strategy Research Report

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The Questionnaire

The questionnaire consisted of 40 questions altogether (see appendix 2), with 39 answered by the interviewee (Q1 identifies the person responsible for collecting it). Questionnaires were taken out by a number of Roma partners. Many were conducted in community languages and translated for analysis. The questionnaires were done in physical, not electronic form. They used a mixture of numerical and verbal questions.

The Participants

104 questionnaires were initially received and form the basis of this analysis (see Appendix 3 for full breakdown). A majority of respondents were female and under 50 years old. While coming from a wide area of Bradford, the largest group were from BD5, followed by BD4 and BD7. Most were established residents, with over half having lived in Bradford for over 5 or more years. Seven countries of birth were recorded and eleven ethnic identities self-identified.

In addition, a further ten questionnaires were received later from the Keighley area, which were analysed separately (see Appendix 1).

The Purpose of the Research

It is important to record from the beginning this is not an academic research project. It is really a structured "reconnaissance" of community views. The questions were shaped in part by the needs of the strategy but also to test the applicability of findings about Roma communities elsewhere to the Bradford situation. So, for example, questions were included about support from churches (Q16, 17) because this has been mentioned as important elsewhere.

The research, therefore, is not robust enough alone to support definitive solutions. It does, alongside other elements of evidence gathering, provide useful perspectives to inform the strategy and it should provide pointers to where more detailed research is required.

Lifestyle Questions (Q2-5)

Based on 1-10 score of importance, how important to you is:

	Av		No. Firsts	%1sts		Rank totals	
Q2 Education	8.68	4	67	64	4	183	4
Q3 Secure job	8.84	3	73	70	2	164	2
Q4 Healthcare	9.52	1	90	87	1	124	1
Q5 Housing	8.95	2	72	69	3	168	3

53 of 104 respondents scored these the same. 52 of those scored them all equal top score. Multiple interviewers recorded these and those interviewers also recorded variable scores on other questionnaires, so these scores are not from a single lazy interviewer. This blurs the ranking somewhat but can be read as meaning they are all very important to interviewees.

We can say, then, that access to healthcare is most important and education least to the respondents. Work and housing are very similar. Does this mean that education isn't that important to Roma community, as is suggested in some national literature? The question was framed in a "user friendly" way but contains a weakness. If there are no children in your family of school age, would you make this of lower importance, even if you believed in education in general? In fact, cross checking against question 6 shows that 89 of our respondents commented on their children's schools, so the proportion of the sample with school age children is high, but not, unlike Health and Housing, a universal.

Q3 also brings up questions. We know some Roma women don't work but look after their children from our case studies. This may explain why this is of less or no importance for some.

What does seem unequivocal is the importance of healthcare. 87% of respondents scored this first or equal first.

Sources of Support Questions (Q6-22)

How helpful / supportive do you find:

(Based on 1-10 score of importance)

	Agent	Average	Rank	Number scoring	% scoring
Q6	School	6.47	2	93	89
Q8	GP	5.59	5	104	100
Q10	Hospital	6.37	3	92	89
Q12	Police	4.44	8	70	67
Q14	Neighbours	5.05	7	96	92
Q16	Church	6.70	1	51	49
Q18	Landlord	5.93	4	97	93
Q20	Council	5.11	6	90	87

Please tell us why you have chosen this rating:

Note that the numbers scoring in this table can be less than the number commenting below, as an explanation for not scoring could have been given.

	Agent	Number answering	Substantive answers	Good	Inter	Bad	Other	G%	I%	B%	O%
Q7	School	94	80	47	8	25	-	59	10	31	
Q9	GP	95	91	26	13	52	-	29	14	57	
Q11	Hospital	91	78	22	29	27	-	28	37	35	
Q13	Police	90	82	13	3	32	34 no contact with-	16	4	38	41

Q15	Neigh-bours	98	96	32	18	33	13 no contact	33	19	34	14
Q17	Church	91	87	15	13	0	59 don't attend	17	15	0	68
Q19	Landlord	88	86	47	16	34	-	47	16	23	
Q21	Council	81	73	23	16	34	-	32	22	47	

Substantive: Other than don't know/ n/a

Other: a significant group of answers which don't fit quality assessment

Intermediate: Either neutral or a mix of good and bad

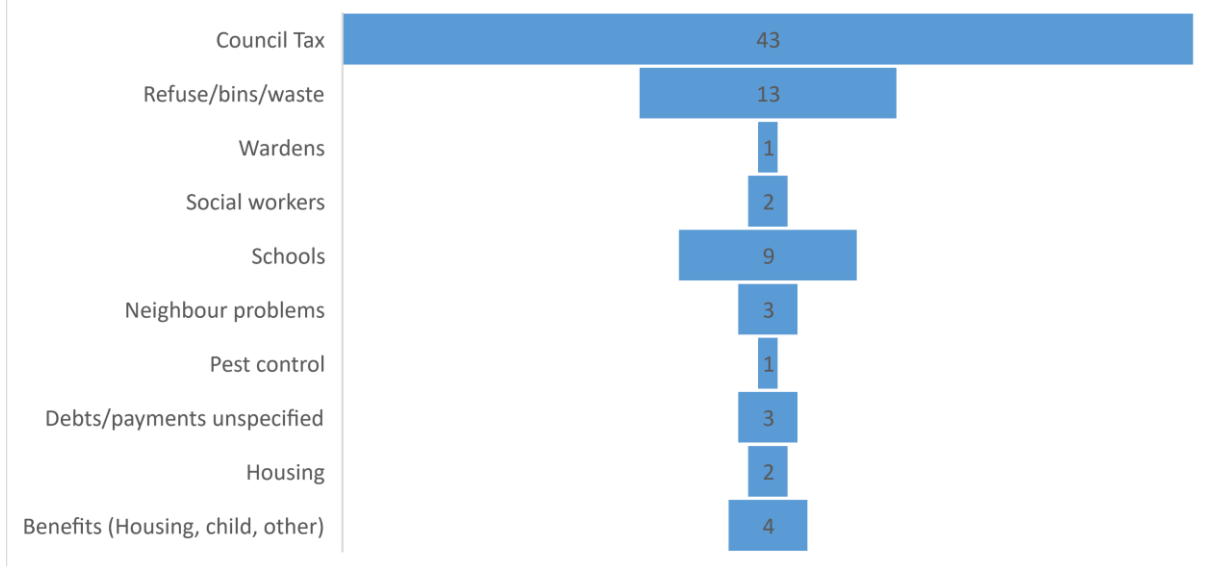|	Agent	Comments
Q7	School	Support level seems to vary – some happy, some not. Some victimisation/bullying. Not enough parental engagement in some cases
Q9	GP	27 complaints about appointments. Other common issues rudeness, only prescribing paracetamol, poor level diagnosis
Q11	Hospital	21 complaints about waiting times. Other common issues rude staff, lack of interpreters or translated material
Q13	Police	42 "no knowledge/contact". Complaints about response times, ineffectiveness, fear of Police, blaming the victim
Q15	Neighbours	Issues include racism, violence toward children, vandalism and drugs
Q17	Church	High proportion don't attend church. Those who do seem content. Overall, the suggest from other research churches play a major role in supporting community is not supported here but more localised effects of individual congregations may be hidden in a broad survey.
Q19	Landlord	The high response rate and fact only one person recorded themselves as a house owner demonstrates the importance of the rental sector. Many

		comments pro and con are about speed of repairs. Some comments about violence and intimidation
Q21	Council	Problems particularly with rude staff, lack of translation, slow attention to problems. 14 of the complaints relate to Council tax staff.

Q22. What did you need to contact Council for?

(83 answers, 16 answers non-specific but many gave multiple reasons)

	Number mentioned by	% Mentioned by (n=67)
Council Tax	43	64%
Refuse/bins/waste	13	19%
Wardens	1	1%
Social workers	2	3%
Schools	9	13%
Neighbour problems	3	4%
Pest control	1	1%
Debts/payments unspecified	3	4%
Housing	2	3%
Benefits (Housing, child, other)	4	6%

Why did you need to contact the Council?

Category	Value
Council Tax	43
Refuse/bins/waste	13
Wardens	1
Social workers	2
Schools	9
Neighbour problems	3
Pest control	1
Debts/payments unspecified	3
Housing	2
Benefits (Housing, child, other)	4

The proportion of people whose contact with the Council is largely around paying Council tax and refuse collection is noticeable. As can be seen from Q21, many of those contacts are rated poorly. Occasional references are made to a range of other services, but some services (for example, entertainment and leisure) don't feature. Is this because they are not recognised as Council services or that they aren't accessed?

Q23. Is there anyone you find helpful that we haven't mentioned?

|	Number mentioned by
Community Centres	3
Connecting Roma	10
DWP	1
Employment Agency	1
Food banks	1
Friends - Polish Community	1
Girlington Benefits Advice	1
Health Visitor	2
KaskoSan	28
Local Wardens	1
Midwives	1
Ridge Medical Centre	2
Roma Community	1
Roma Support Worker	2
Social Workers	2
Solicitors	1
Supported Accommodation	1

By far the largest additional support provider, listed by 28 out of 104, was Kaskosan. 10 listed Connecting Roma. In both cases, all mentions were in questionnaires conducted by those organisations. This was a methodological issue – the interviewers' selection of interviewees wasn't randomised or based on a scientifically structured sample but on their contacts.   It was a conscious trade-off – access through trusted intermediary v. disinterested outsiders with less access.

This caveat doesn't remove the importance of the responses – clearly these organisations are important sources of support to some community members. But it is perhaps significant that no-one not interviewed by these organisations mentions either.   We cannot judge how widely these services are known from this exercise, but they do not seem to be accessed by all. Other community organisations (advice centres, community centres and food banks) are mentioned less often. There are 5 mentions for health professionals here too.

Community Cohesion Questions (Q 24-26)

Q24. How comfortable do you feel talking to people from different backgrounds to you (more than just saying hello)?

Comfortable	45
Uncomfortable	26
Neither comfortable nor uncomfortable	22
I don't get many opportunities to talk to people from different backgrounds	10
Total Answers	103
Out of	104

How comfortable do you feel talking to other people from different backgrounds?

- Comfortable
- Uncomfortable
- Neither comfortable nor uncomfortable
- I don't get many opportunities to talk to people from different backgrounds
- No response
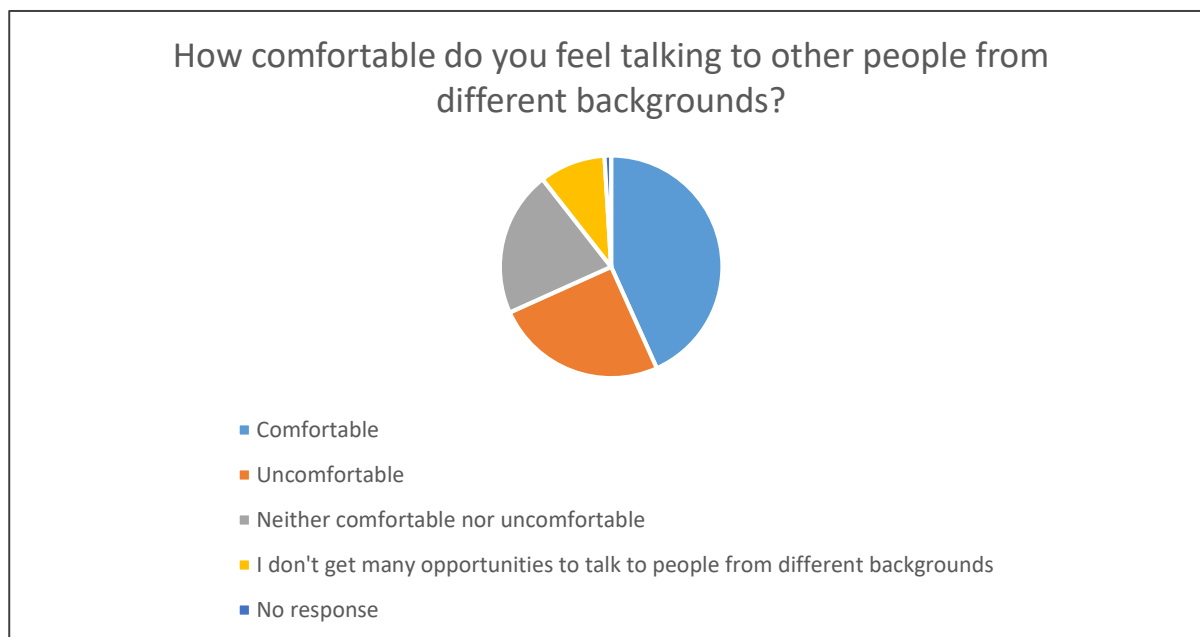
Q25. Please tell us why.

The reasons given for being uncomfortable vary. For many it is simply a question of language skills. Others feel more comfortable speaking with other members of the Roma community. For yet others, it is caused by perceived hostility or indifference of neighbours of different ethnicities.

Q26. Do you think people from different backgrounds get on well together in your local area?

|	
Yes	36
No	31
I don't know	36
No answer	1
Out of	104

Q27. Please tell us why.

These results do not seem abnormal for Bradford district. The percentage of people who get on well together from different backgrounds is an indicator used to brief the council on cohesion levels in the district. From 2019-2020 the positive result increased from 49.6% to 55.7%. Taking only the definitive answers, this survey gives 53.7%. The high number of "don't knows", though, implies considerable uncertainty.

Personal Future Questions (Q28-29)

Q28. Thinking about the future. What worries you most about the future for you and your family?

Worry	Mentions	% (n=145)	Comments
Job/money/finances	33	22.7	
Housing/place to live	12	8.3	
Health	21	14.5	Covid 19 frequently mentioned
Family	21	14.5	Usually in relation to children
Education	9	6.2	
Brexit	24	16.6	

Staying in UK	12	8.3	Sometimes alongside Brexit, sometimes independent of it
Discrimination/racism	3	2.1	Rarely mentioned directly but perhaps implicit in some other answers
Other	10	6.9	Includes travel (3), pensions (2)

Thinking about the future. What worries you most about the future for you and your family?
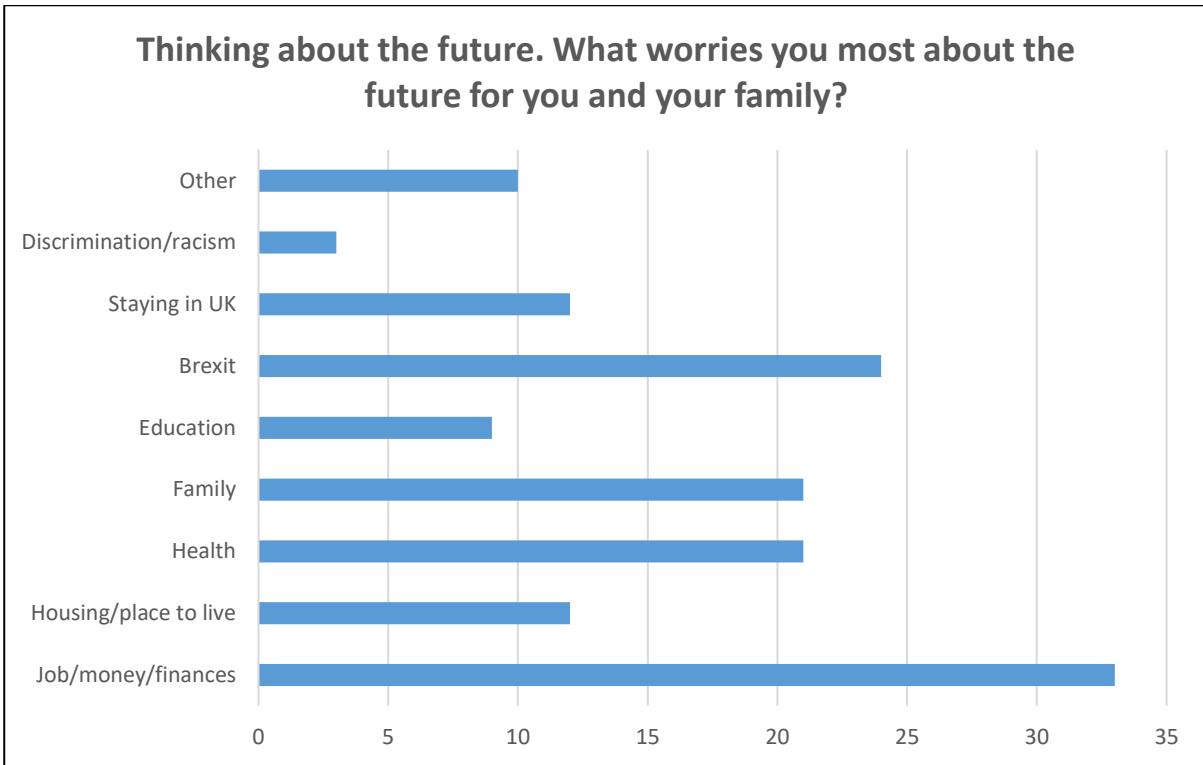
Q29. What, if anything, do you think needs to happen to improve the lifestyles of you and your family?

Improvement	Mentions	% (n=118)	Comments
Better job	34	28.8	
Better house	20	16.9	
Better area	15	12.7	
Education	4	3.4	
Car	6	5.1	No questions were designed to test mobility but clearly car ownership is an issue for at least 5.8% of our 104 respondents
Money	8	6.8	
Other	31	26.3	Includes better access to services, better future for children, better health, better community relations

Community Strengths (Q30)

Q30. What do you think are the greatest strengths of your community?

	Mentions	% (n=78)
No strengths	36	46.2
Strengths	42	53.8
Not supportive	6	7.7
Stick together/supportive	13	16.7
Family	5	6.4

It should be noted here that at least seven respondents read "community" to mean "local community", and this may be a factor in some other answers. The obvious geographically based answers have not been taken into account here. They cannot disguise the fact, though, that there is a lack of appreciation of Roma strengths. The most obvious strengths have been extracted but others include being hardworking, music and parties.

Appendix 1: Keighley Additional Data

The group

10 individuals completed the questionnaires, six men and four women, all from BD21. Most were aged 30-49 and all lived here for a number of years. All are originally from Slovakia, 9 identify as Roma, one as Slovak/Hungarian/Roma.

Lifestyle questions (Q2-5)

Based on 1-10 score of importance

	Av		No. Firsts	%1sts
Q2 Education	9.1	3	6	60
Q3 Secure job	9.1	3	6	60
Q4 Healthcare	9.9	1	9	90
Q5 Housing	9.6	2	8	80

6 of 10 scored them all 10. This is similar to the Bradford survey, except here education ties for 3rd.

Sources of support questions (Q6-22)

Based on 1-10 score of importance

	Agent	Average	Rank	Bfd rank	Number scoring	% scoring
Q6	School	6.9	7	2	10	100
Q8	GP	8.5	4	5	10	100
Q10	Hospital	9.2	2	3	10	100
Q12	Police	6.4	8	8	10	100
Q14	Neighbours	8.3	5	7	10	100
Q16	Church	9.8	1	1	10	100
Q18	Landlord	9.1	3	4	10	100

Q20	Council	7.1	6	6	10	100

Generally, the scores are higher on average than the Bradford group. The big difference is schools – the Keighley group have a much lower opinion of their children's schools. However, there is a particular sample size issue here. Half the respondents are very positive, and only three are actually particularly negative, one of which represents a serious case. Hospital experiences are likely reflecting Airedale and are much more positive than those for Bradford hospitals.

Q23 Other help

Again, there is some surveyor bias here. These were Youth Service contacts, and half the respondents found the Youth Service helpful. Like the Bradford sample, despite a section on Council support, many of the other sources of help are Council services. Two people mention Good Shepherd and one Salvation Army.

Q24. How comfortable do you feel talking to people from different backgrounds to you

Comfortable	8
Uncomfortable	0
Neither comfortable nor uncomfortable	2
I don't get many opportunities to talk to people from different backgrounds	0
Out of	10

This group is clearly more at ease with talking to people with different backgrounds. This may be due to the sample, or better local experience. The answers to Q25 are positive about ethnic mixing, people getting along and lack of racism.

Q26. Do you think people from different backgrounds get on well together in your local area?

Yes	10
No	0
I don't know	0
Out of	10

Again, this fits the general level of positivity in the group.

Appendix 2: The Questionnaire

Name of Group / Session	Name of Interviewer / Facilitator

How Important is it to you:-
LEAST **MOST**
For children in your family to get good qualifications at school or college? 0   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10
To have a secure job? 0   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10
To have access to good healthcare? 0   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10
To live in a good house/flat? 0   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

How helpful / supportive do you find: -										
LEAST MOST										

Children's School?

| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

Please tell us why you have chosen this rating?

Family doctor (GP service)?

| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

Please tell us why you have chosen this rating?

The Local Hospital?

| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

Please tell us why you have chosen this rating?

The Local Police?

| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

Please tell us why you have chosen this rating?

Neighbours?

| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

Please tell us why you have chosen this rating?

Church?

   0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Please tell us why you have chosen this rating?

Landlord (if renting)?

   0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Please tell us why you have chosen this rating?

The Local Council?

   0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

What did you need to contact them for?

Please tell us why you have chosen this rating

Is there anyone you find helpful that we haven't mentioned?

How comfortable do you feel talking to people from different backgrounds to you (more than just saying hello)?

☐ **Comfortable**

☐ **Uncomfortable**

☐ **Neither comfortable nor uncomfortable**

☐ **I don't get many opportunities to talk to people from different backgrounds**

Please tell us why you gave this answer

Do you think people from different backgrounds get on well together in your local area?

☐ **Yes**

☐ **No**

☐ **I don't know**

Please tell us why you gave this answer

Thinking about the future

What worries you most about the future for you and your family?

What, if anything, do you think needs to happen to improve the lifestyles of you and your family?

What do you think are the greatest strengths of your community?

About You				
Gender	**Postcode**	**Age**	**Religion**	**Do you consider yourself**

In which country were you born?

How would you describe your ethnic background?

Polish ☐   Slovakian ☐ Latvian ☐   Hungarian ☐ Ukraine ☐   Bulgarian ☐

Czech ☐   Romanian ☐ Russian ☐   Roma ☐   Other (please state)_____

If Roma, which country did your family live?

How long have you lived in Bradford District?

If you have lived in other parts of UK, how long have you lived in UK altogether?

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Appendix 3: Make-up of the Bradford survey group

Gender

Female	**63**
Male	**38**
Prefer not to answer	**3**
Total	**104**

Postcode

BD1	**1**
BD2	**2**
BD3	**13**
BD4	**18**
BD5	**38**
BD6	**1**
BD7	**18**
BD8	**4**
BD9	**4**
BD10	**1**
BD12	**1**
Prefer not to answer	**3**
Total	**104**

Ages

18-25	**34**

30-49	58
50-64	7
65-75	1
No answer	4
Total	104

Faith/Belief

Christian	88
Jewish	1
Muslim	1
No religion	7
Other	2
No answer	5
Total	104

Do you consider yourself to have a disability or long-term health problem?

Yes	9
No	74
Prefer not to answer	21
Total	104

Country of Origin/Birth

Belarus	2
Czech R	20
Hungary	7

Latvia	3
Poland	4
Romania	7
Slovakia	43
No answer	16
Total	102

How would you describe your ethnic background?

Czech	9
Czech Roma	8
Hungarian Roma	5
Latvian	4
Polish	4
Polish/Romanian	1
Roma	35
Romanian	1
Russian	2
Slovakian	13
Slovakian Roma	19
No answer	3
Total	104

How long have you lived in Bradford District?

Less than 12 months	4

12 months - 2 yrs	**4**
2-3 yrs	**4**
3-5yrs	**29**
5-10 yrs	**25**
10-20 yrs	**27**
20-30 yrs	**6**
No answer	**5**
Total	**104**

If you have lived in other parts of UK , how long have you lived in UK altogether?

Less than 12 months	**1**
12 months - 2 yrs	**2**
2-3 yrs	**1**
3-5yrs	**19**
5-10 yrs	**14**
10-20 yrs	**22**
20-30 yrs	**5**
No answer	**40**
Total	**104**

Appendix 4: Thank you

This report was written and compiled by Anthony Clipsom with contributions from the following people who carried out the interviews of members of the Roma Communities to help to inform this strategy:

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