

PORTRAYAL OF ROMA IN TV BROADCASTING

in Bulgaria, Greece,
Italy and Romania



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Council of Europe
2023

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

■ This report, commissioned by the Council of Europe under the European Union/Council of Europe Joint Programme “Equality and Freedom from Discrimination for Roma” (EQUIROM), examines the portrayal of Roma¹ people in TV broadcasting in Bulgaria, Greece, Italy and Romania, and how this portrayal contributes to the persistence of inequality, prejudice and discrimination against Roma. The report considers international, European Union and domestic standards on antidiscrimination, combating hate speech and equal treatment, as well as the relevant case law. The study covers the period from January 2022 to April 2023, and researchers have analysed at least 20 of the most recent broadcast materials related to or about Roma, recorded and presented by a variety of broadcasters in each country. The report aims to answer the key questions on how Roma are represented and portrayed in broadcasting, and whether there are any initiatives, practices or ways to combat antigypsyism promoted through broadcasting. However, the report’s scope is limited to materials available and recorded in the public domain, and only those broadcasters licensed/registered before the competent national bodies have been included in the study.

■ The national regulatory frameworks in Bulgaria, Greece, Italy and Romania prohibit hate speech and discrimination against Roma people, but the media in these countries continue to negatively portray them through stereotypes and prejudices. This study shows that media tend to focus on crime, poverty and discrimination, portraying the Roma as violent, uneducated and backward. These negative portrayals reinforce harmful attitudes and biases, limiting opportunities for social inclusion and equality. While there have been some efforts to increase positive representation, these are few and far between.

■ Recommendations to overcome the negative portrayal of Roma in the media include: strengthening capacities of regulatory bodies to combat hate speech; increasing awareness among media professionals; avoiding negative generalisations; giving Roma agency in media representation; providing positive depictions of Roma contributions to society; including more Roma voices in news and media; and avoiding dehumanising language and portraying Roma as a homogenous group. These recommendations could contribute to a more accurate and inclusive portrayal of Roma in news and media, and support the broader fight against antigypsyism.

1. The term “Roma and Travellers” is used at the Council of Europe to encompass the wide diversity of the groups covered by the work of the Council of Europe in this field: on the one hand a) Roma, Sinti/Manush, Calé, Kaale, Romanichals, Boyash/Rudari; b) Balkan Egyptians (Egyptians and Ashkali); c) Eastern groups (Dom, Lom and Abdal); and, on the other hand, groups such as Travellers, Yenish, and the populations designated under the administrative term “Gens du voyage”, as well as persons who identify themselves as Gypsies. The present is an explanatory footnote, not a definition of Roma and/or Travellers.

INTRODUCTION

■ The Council of Europe is currently implementing a European Union/Council of Europe Joint Programme “Equality and Freedom from Discrimination for Roma” (EQUIROM). The aim of this programme is to fight and prevent antigypsyism and discrimination, and promote equality for Roma people. The programme is being implemented in Bulgaria, Greece, Italy and Romania from December 2022 to December 2024.

■ Some of the objectives of EQUIROM are to combat stereotypes in the media, raise awareness of the history and culture of Roma and other ethnic minorities, including awareness of the Roma Holocaust, and contribute to building positive narratives about Roma by journalists and other media representatives.

■ Hate speech and ultimately hate crimes build on discriminatory or negative narratives targeting specific individuals or groups of persons because of their real or attributed personal characteristics or status. Such narratives persist in public and political discourses, including on TV broadcasters and media platforms. Many Roma continue to face inequality, prejudice and discrimination, and serious obstacles in fully enjoying their human rights. Their access to essential services such as healthcare, housing, education and employment is often hampered by an underlying and deeply rooted antigypsyism. These problems are aggravated by their often very negative portrayal in the media, and their underrepresentation in public and political life and decision-making processes. Roma women face particularly high barriers to equality and participation, due to multiple forms of discrimination, gender bias and stereotypes.

OVERVIEW OF RELEVANT STANDARDS AND DEFINITIONS

■ The materials of the present study were examined in light of the relevant international, European Union (EU) and domestic standards on antidiscrimination. These include the standards laid out in the European Convention on Human Rights (“the Convention”), the case law of the European Court of Human Rights, relevant United Nations (UN) standards (the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD)), EU Race Equality Directive 2000/43/EC, Directive 2010/13/EU, the Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA of 28 November 2008 on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law, the EU Roma strategic framework for equality, inclusion and participation for 2020-30, the EU Anti-Racism Action Plan 2020-25, applicable national legislation, and others.

■ Bulgaria, Greece, Italy and Romania are all signatories to the Convention, which protects against hate speech. Article 10 of the Convention guarantees the right to freedom of expression, but this right is not absolute and can be subject to limitations. One of these limitations is set out in Article 17, which states that no one may use the rights granted by the Convention to engage in activities or perform acts aimed at the violation of any of the rights and freedoms set forth in the Convention. This means that hate speech, which aims to incite violence, discrimination or hostility towards individuals or groups based on their race, ethnicity, religion, nationality, sexual orientation, gender identity or other characteristics, is not protected by the right to freedom of expression under the Convention.

■ Furthermore, the European Court of Human Rights (the Court) has held that hate speech can constitute a violation of Articles 8 and 14 of the Convention, which protect the right to private life and prohibit discrimination on any ground, such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status.² The Court has held that states have a positive obligation to combat hate speech and protect individuals and groups against it. In its recent case *Budinova and Chaprazov v. Bulgaria*,³ the Court held that “while an expression of opinion might touch upon a matter of public concern – such as the relations between ethnic groups in a country – it can at the same time promote or justify hatred and intolerance towards some of those groups, and thus be entitled to no or very limited protection under Article 10 of the Convention”.⁴ It went on to conclude that “sweeping statements attacking or casting in a negative light entire ethnic, religious or other groups deserve no or very limited protection under Article 10 of the Convention, read in the light of Article 17.”⁵

■ The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) General Policy Recommendation No. 13 on combating antigypsyism and discrimination against Roma, adopted on 24 June 2011 and amended on 1 December 2020, recalls that antigypsyism is a specific form of racism, an ideology founded on racial superiority, a form of dehumanisation and institutional racism nurtured by historical discrimination, which is expressed, among others, by violence, hate speech, exploitation, stigmatisation and the most blatant kind of discrimination, and stresses that antigypsyism is an especially persistent, violent, recurrent and commonplace form of racism.⁶

2. *Budinova and Chaprazov v. Bulgaria*, Application No. 12567/13, judgment of 16 February 2021, available at <https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng?i=001-207928>, accessed 26 July 2023.

3. *Ibid.*, paragraph 95.

4. *Ibid.*, paragraph 93.

5. *Ibid.*, paragraph 94.

6. Available at <https://rm.coe.int/ecri-general-policy-recommendation-no-13-on-combating-anti-gypsyism-an/16808b5aee>, accessed 26 July 2023.

Moreover, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe adopted Recommendation CM/Rec(2022)16 on combating hate speech on 20 May 2022,⁷ on the basis of the European Court of Human Rights case law, the recommendations made by ECRI and other international bodies. The Recommendation provides a set of guidelines for member states and other key stakeholders (internet businesses, political bodies, media, national human rights institutions, civil society organisations) on how to put in place a comprehensive and properly calibrated set of legal and non-legal measures to prevent and combat hate speech. The Recommendation defines hate speech as “all types of expression that incite, promote, spread or justify violence, hatred or discrimination against a person or group of persons, or that denigrates them, by reason of their real or attributed personal characteristics or status such as “race”, colour, language, religion, nationality, national or ethnic origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity and sexual orientation.” It recommends member states to adopt a comprehensive and effective legal framework to prevent and combat hate speech in the offline and online environments, consisting of appropriately regulated provisions of civil, administrative and criminal law.

In combating hate speech, media and journalists are recommended to fulfil their public watchdog role by providing accurate and reliable information on hatred and intolerance, while promoting a culture of tolerance and understanding. Public-service media should actively encourage intergroup dialogue and positively represent diverse voices in the community. Media professionals should avoid derogatory stereotypes and unnecessary references to personal characteristics. Independent regulatory authorities and media bodies should play a proactive role in addressing hate speech, maintaining independence, accountability and transparency.

The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union brings together all the personal, civic, political, economic and social rights enjoyed by people within the EU, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. The EU Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA of 28 November 2008 on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law provides for the approximation of laws and regulations of EU countries on offences involving certain manifestations of racism and xenophobia. Certain serious manifestations of racism and xenophobia must constitute an offence in all EU countries and be punishable by effective, proportionate and dissuasive penalties. Article 6 of Directive 2010/13/EU⁸ (the Audiovisual Media Services Directive) expressly provides that EU member states shall ensure by appropriate means that audiovisual media services provided by media service providers under their jurisdiction do not contain any incitement to hatred based on race, sex, religion or nationality. Article 9(1)(c)(ii) of the same Directive provides that EU member states shall ensure that audiovisual commercial communications provided by media service providers under their jurisdiction comply, *inter alia* with the requirement that audiovisual commercial communications shall not include or promote any discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, nationality, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.

Beyond international standards, the domestic standards relating to hate speech, non-discrimination and equal treatment, including legislation adopted in implementation of EU secondary law, have been taken into consideration.

7. Available at https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectId=0900001680a67955, accessed 26 July 2023.

8. Available at <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32008F0913&qid=1697642250945> and <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=celex%3A32010L0013>, accessed 26 July 2023.

METHODOLOGY

■ The objective of this study is to establish the current characteristics and specificities of the portrayal of Roma in TV broadcasting in four member states of the Council of Europe: Bulgaria, Greece, Italy and Romania. The study is part of the EQUIROM project of the Council of Europe and covers the period from 1 January 2022 to 30 April 2023.

■ For the purpose of this study, researchers in the four countries have randomly selected a minimum of the 20 most recent broadcast materials related to or on the subject of Roma, recorded and presented by a variety of broadcasters in each country. A list of all the analysed materials, and relevant links, are listed in the appendices of this report. The randomly selected broadcasts include news and entertainment media, and cover a variety of programming, including news, talk shows, reportage and contests. The analysis of each piece of content aims to answer the following key questions:

- ▶ to what extent are Roma represented in broadcasting?
- ▶ how are Roma portrayed in broadcasting: in a positive, neutral or negative way?
- ▶ are there any good initiatives, practices and ways to combat antigypsyism promoted through broadcasting?

■ To ensure randomness, the researchers used Google advanced search tools and other similar search engines, using advanced tools such as designating a given period, using video and news search, and using keywords such as “Roma”, “Romani” and “Roma ethnics”, and the translation of “gypsy” in national languages. Furthermore, the YouTube channels and websites of various broadcasters were also queried using relevant keywords. The report is structured on a country-by-country basis, followed by an overall analysis and recommendation. Each country chapter contains a section outlining the national legal and regulatory framework followed by the analysis of all the reviewed materials from the country.

Limitations

■ The researchers selected only materials available and recorded in the public domain – open-source information – and reviewed each piece of material. Materials that have not been broadcast on TV, and/or have not been published, and/or are not available anymore on various publicly accessible internet platforms and internet sites, were out of the scope of the study. In addition, only those broadcasters who have been licensed/registered before the competent national bodies have been included in the study.

REPORTS BY COUNTRY

Bulgaria

Summary of national legal and regulatory framework

■ In Bulgaria, the regulation of electronic media and hate speech is primarily governed by the Radio and Television Act (RTA),⁹ the Protection Against Discrimination Act (PADA)¹⁰ and the Criminal Code.¹¹

■ Under Article 8, paragraph 1, point 1, of the RTA, electronic media service providers are prohibited from broadcasting content that incites violence or hatred based on various grounds, including race, ethnic and social origin. In addition, Article 75, paragraph 5, point 2, of the RTA mandates that advertising content should not promote discrimination based on gender, race, ethnic origin, nationality, religion, disability, age or sexual orientation.

■ These provisions serve to ensure that electronic media services adhere to principles of non-discrimination and avoid broadcasting content that promotes hatred or discrimination against specific groups.

■ The PADA prohibits hate speech, although implicitly. Article 5 states that harassment and incitement to discrimination constitute discrimination. According to paragraph 1, point 1, of the additional provisions to the PADA, “harassment” means any unwanted conduct based on the protected grounds, expressed physically, verbally or otherwise, which has the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person and creating a hostile, degrading, humiliating, offensive or threatening environment. According to paragraph 1, point 5, of the additional provisions to the PADA, “incitement to discriminate” means directly and intentionally encouraging, instructing, pressuring or inducing a person to discriminate.

■ Article 162, paragraph 1, of the Criminal Code prohibits the advocating or incitement to discrimination, violence or hatred based on race, nationality or ethnicity through speech, print or other means of mass information, electronic information systems or otherwise. Individuals who are found guilty of this crime can be fined and imprisoned for a term of one to four years.

■ Furthermore, the Bulgarian Council for Electronic Media (CEM) is responsible for monitoring electronic media content and ensuring that it complies with regulations. The CEM has the authority to impose fines and other sanctions on electronic media service providers that violate the regulations on hate speech.

■ It is also worth noting that Bulgaria is a signatory to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), which requires the government to take measures to prevent and combat racism and racial discrimination.

9. Radio and Television Act (published in the State Gazette, issue 138, 24 November 1998, last amended in the State Gazette, issue 104, 30 December 2022), available at <https://lex.bg/laws/ldoc/2134447616>, accessed 26 July 2023.

10. Protection Against Discrimination Act (published in the State Gazette, issue 86, 30 September 2003, last amended in the State Gazette, issue 7, 19 January 2018), available at <https://lex.bg/laws/ldoc/2135472223>, accessed 26 July 2023.

11. Criminal Code (published in the State Gazette, issue 26, 2 April 1968, last amended in the State Gazette, issue 10, 31 January 2023), available at <https://lex.bg/laws/ldoc/1589654529>, accessed 26 July 2023.

■ There is an ethical code of conduct for Bulgarian media¹² – a non-binding document developed and adopted by non-governmental organisation National Council for Journalistic Ethics,¹³ which was founded by several major media and professional journalistic associations. The code sets out the principles and standards of professional conduct that journalists and media organisations in Bulgaria are expected to follow. All media outlets can join the code voluntarily. Presently, over 100 Bulgarian media are signatories to the code, among them the major state-owned and private broadcasting media.

■ The code of ethics covers a wide range of topics, including accuracy, fairness, impartiality, privacy, the right to a response, the protection of sources, conflicts of interest, and the avoidance of hate speech, discrimination and incitement to violence. The code also sets out guidelines for handling issues related to children and vulnerable people, as well as guidelines for the use of images and other visual material.

■ The code is not legally binding, but it is widely recognised and respected by the Bulgarian media industry and is used as a reference point for ethical behaviour. Media outlets that subscribe to the code are expected to follow its principles and standards, and the Bulgarian media ethics council can investigate and mediate disputes related to breaches of the code.

■ The code specifically addresses hate speech and requires that media outlets respect the human dignity of all individuals and refrain from any form of discrimination, including on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation or any other personal characteristic. The code explicitly states that the media must respect everyone's right to live in safety and security, and not publish material that incites or promotes hatred, violence, or any form of discrimination. It stipulates that the media must not indicate race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical condition, if these facts are not material to the meaning of the information. Media outlets are expected to exercise responsible journalism and avoid any form of sensationalism, prejudice or propaganda that could lead to the spread of hate speech or other harmful content. The code also requires that media outlets provide accurate and impartial information and avoid any conflicts of interest or bias that could compromise their journalistic integrity.

Analysis

■ Based on the findings of the present study, different types of narratives can be classified.

- ▶ Narrative that infringes the presumption of innocence: several news reports are found to use language that suggests criminal behaviour without clarifying whether the person in question has been convicted or not.
- ▶ Neutral narrative: some materials are objective and do not convey any specific prejudice towards Roma or any other ethnic group. These include, for instance, a report on a case of physical altercation resulting in the death of a taxi driver and a report on a case of physical assault in a Sofia neighbourhood.
- ▶ Positive narrative: some materials adopt a positive narrative towards Roma culture and traditions. These include the report on a Roma music band preparing for the celebration of Bango Vasil (Roma New Year), the report on a female Roma singer and the success story of a young Roma woman who became a kindergarten teacher in a Roma community.
- ▶ Negative narrative: some materials express prejudice and negative attitudes towards Roma. These include the disturbing comments made by users in the comment section of some reports, the mockery of a group of Roma waiting in line to purchase a collectible coin and the derogatory remark made by a TV presenter regarding Roma neighbourhoods.
- ▶ Solidarity narrative: one material shows solidarity towards the victims of a case of alleged racial profiling committed by police in Greece.

■ Based on the analysis of 34 video materials published during the research period, the media coverage of Roma in Bulgaria is predominantly neutral, with a notable but limited number of negative reports and, to a lesser extent, positive ones. The most common topics covered include election-related issues such as vote buying, physical assaults and domestic crimes. However, many of the news reports lack comprehensive information to substantiate criminal activities or convictions. It is concerning that some comments in both the news materials and online platforms display discriminatory attitudes towards the Roma community.

12. Available at <https://mediaethics-bg.org/%d0%b5%d1%82%d0%b8%d1%87%d0%b5%d0%bd-%d0%ba%d0%be%d0%b4%d0%b5%d0%ba%d1%81-2/>, accessed 26 July 2023.

13. Available at <https://mediaethics-bg.org/>, accessed 26 July 2023.

■ The news materials vary in their coverage of alleged criminal activities involving Roma individuals, highlighting incidents such as theft, fraud and disturbances in the community. Reports show Roma individuals in instances of violence involving Roma people,¹⁴ with some reports specifically mentioning the ethnicity of those involved.¹⁵ While negative reports receive more attention, positive stories about Roma achievements or community initiatives are scarce.

■ It is important to note that the research findings indicate a need for greater accuracy and fairness in reporting on Roma-related issues. The media should strive to provide more context, verify information before publication and avoid perpetuating stereotypes or promoting discrimination.¹⁶

■ In terms of the type of broadcaster, the vast majority¹⁷ of the news materials are from cable/satellite TV, which suggests limitations of their reach to certain segments of the population who have access to cable/satellite TV.

■ Regarding the territorial extent, most of the news materials are national in scope, with only two being regional/local. This suggests that the news materials are reaching a large audience across the country, which could potentially have an impact on public perception and attitudes towards Roma.

■ From the above-mentioned examples, it is evident that there may be a violation of the presumption of innocence and a departure from the principles of fair and unbiased reporting. When news materials focus on alleged criminal activities of individuals from the Roma community without providing sufficient evidence or context, it can perpetuate negative stereotypes and lead to discrimination.

■ The research findings, as presented in the appendices, reveal that the majority of news materials mentioning Roma ethnicity are published by private national cable/satellite TV broadcasters. These materials primarily consist of news reports, although there are some exceptions such as entertainment pieces, talk shows and commentaries. It is noteworthy that all the news materials are published by private companies.

■ Furthermore, the dominance of cable/satellite TV broadcasters in publishing these news materials suggests that their reach may be limited to specific segments of the population who have access to cable/satellite TV services. This further emphasises the need for balanced and fair reporting across all types of media platforms to ensure a more comprehensive and accurate representation of the Roma community.

■ The analysis of the news materials reveals that while most adopt a neutral narrative, there are instances where the titles or user comments display a biased or prejudiced perspective towards the Roma community. In particular, the use of the phrase “the people who beat up an elderly man were Roma” in the title of one news material is irrelevant and stigmatising. Moreover, the user comments accompanying certain news materials contain alarming suggestions of violence and prejudice against Roma.

■ It is important to note that the statements within the news materials primarily come from private individuals. However, there are also cases where representatives of institutions, including police officers and prosecutors, have made statements in relation to the incidents involving Roma individuals.

■ Some news materials include highly offensive and discriminatory comments that exhibit explicit racism towards the Roma community. These comments not only contain threats of violence, but also include hate speech and references to Nazi concentration camps.

■ Such instances highlight the need for responsible media practices, adherence to ethical standards and effective moderation of user comments to prevent the dissemination of discriminatory content and the incitement of hatred towards the Roma community.¹⁸ Such comments contribute to the creation of a hostile and discriminatory environment for Roma in Bulgaria.

■ The visibility and representation of Roma in Bulgarian broadcasting media can vary significantly depending on the programme and network. While some broadcasters, such as the state-funded Bulgarian National

14. “About 30 Roma fought with axes and clubs in a parking lot in Kazanlak”, Bulgaria ON AIR, 20 March 2023, available at www.bgonair.bg/a/166-kriminalno/299470-okolo-30-romi-se-biha-s-bradvi-i-sopi-na-parking-v-kazanlak, accessed 26 July 2023.

15. “Roma are the beaters of the grandfather from Turnac, brothers aged 18 and 20 have received accusations”, Bulgaria ON AIR, 10 June 2022, available at www.bgonair.bg/a/166-kriminalno/268541-romi-sa-biyachite-na-dyadoto-ot-tarnak-bratya-na-18-i-20-g-se-sdobih-s-obvneniya, accessed 26 July 2023.

16. “Several cities dawned surrounded by police, Roma do not understand why they are arrested”, Bulgaria ON AIR, 29 September 2022, available at www.bgonair.bg/a/166-kriminalno/280507-nyakolko-grada-osamnaha-obgradeni-ot-politsiya-romi-ne-razbirat-zash-to-sa-arestuvani, accessed 26 July 2023.

17. The few exceptions being internet streaming/podcasts/on-demand TV providers.

18. Examples include: “Sprinkle them with Novichok for reassurance ... or let them sort themselves out”, “The Austrian with the small moustache could only fix you ...”, “Take them to Buchenwald”, “Only the gas chamber can integrate them”.

Television, may strive for diversity and inclusion, others may still lack representation of Roma individuals. In addition, media providers affiliated with right-wing and conservative political parties have been known to promote stigmatising and discriminatory narratives against Roma, as well as other marginalised groups.

Overall media coverage of Roma in Bulgaria tends to be influenced by negative stereotypes and prejudice, leading to the perpetuation of a negative image of the Roma community. This can contribute to further discrimination and marginalisation of Roma individuals.

In recent years, efforts have been made to increase awareness and enhance the professional competences of media professionals in Bulgaria. These initiatives aim to promote responsible and unbiased reporting, combat stereotypes and encourage a more inclusive representation of marginalised communities, including the Roma population,¹⁹ which can help to ensure that Roma voices are represented and heard in the media. For example, there have been initiatives to increase the number of Roma journalists and media professionals in Bulgaria, in order to ensure more accurate and inclusive representation. Furthermore, development of the Roma TV channel *Romani Yak* began in January 2023. However, despite these efforts, Roma people in Bulgaria continue to face challenges in terms of their representation in the media and broader societal discrimination.

Greece

Summary of national legal and regulatory framework

It was only in 1979 that the government of Konstantinos Karamanlis initiated a policy to grant Greek citizenship to the Roma population residing in Greece. Prior to this, many Roma individuals were stateless. This citizenship acquisition process for the Roma was carried out through the systematic application of *jus soli*, which grants citizenship to individuals born on the territory of a country.

Granting Greek citizenship to the Roma was facilitated by Article 1, paragraph 2, of the Greek Citizenship Code. According to this provision, Greek citizenship is acquired at birth by anyone born on Greek soil, provided that their nationality is unknown (“c. is of unknown nationality”). This specific provision was consistently applied during the process, enabling the Roma population to acquire Greek citizenship.

The principle of equality among citizens holds a special place in the Greek constitutional tradition. Article 4 of the Greek Constitution states that Greeks are equal before the law, and that Greek men and women have equal rights and obligations.

As a result of the citizenship acquisition process initiated in 1979, the vast majority of Roma in Greece, with the exception of Roma immigrants from Albania and Bulgaria, are now Greek citizens. However, studies indicate that there is still a significant number of Roma individuals whose citizenship status remains unidentified, leading to a stateless situation. Although statelessness as a status does not directly concern the subject of this study, such a major obstacle to access all human rights enlisted in the Greek Constitution needs to be taken in consideration as a major disadvantage influencing the image of the population in question. Stateless Roma are virtually non-subjects.

The law on equal treatment (Law 4443/2016 on equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin) plays a significant role in combating hate speech. This law criminalises intentional public incitement or provocation of acts or actions that can lead to discrimination, hatred or violence against individuals or groups based on race, colour, religion, ancestry, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability. Such acts or actions that endanger public order or pose a threat to the life, liberty or physical integrity of individuals can result in imprisonment ranging from three months to three years, as well as a fine ranging from €5 000 to €20 000.

According to Article 15, paragraph 2, of the Greek Constitution:

radio and television are under the direct control of the state. The national radio and television council, an independent authority as defined by law, has the exclusive competence to exercise control and impose administrative sanctions. The objective of the state’s direct control, which is also reflected in the licensing process, is to ensure the objective and equal transmission of information, news, as well as products of speech and art. It aims to maintain the quality level of programmes in line with the social mission of radio and television and the cultural development of the country. Additionally, it emphasises the importance of respecting the value of human beings and protecting the rights of children and youth.

19. See, for instance, “Intercultural seminar for journalists and cinema from and for Roma”, Association of European Journalists Bulgaria, available at <https://aej-bulgaria.org/seminar/>, accessed 26 July 2023.

Article 8 of Law 4779/2021 provides that audiovisual media services must not contain incitement to violence or hate against a group of people or a member of a group, which is defined by race characteristics, colour, national or ethnic origin, descent, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or sex characteristics. The journalists' code of conduct, which applies to TV and radio programmes, sets an obligation to treat citizens without discrimination.²⁰

The Greek Criminal Code was amended by Law 4619/2019, as a result of which Article 184 of the code provides that whoever publicly, by any means, including the internet, causes or incites the commission of a crime and puts in danger the public order, is punished with one year of imprisonment or a fine. If the intention was to perform violent acts against persons who are defined by race characteristics, colour, national or ethnic origin, descent, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or sex characteristics, the sentence may reach three years of imprisonment. In 2018, the prosecutor general issued guidelines on how to deal with hate speech cases.²¹

Analysis

During the study period from January 2022 to April 2023, two notable incidents involving Roma individuals took place in Greece, leading to extensive media discussions. In December 2022, a 16-year-old Roma boy named Kostas Fragoulis was fatally shot by a police officer during a car chase. This incident resembled a previous case in which an 18-year-old Roma boy was killed by a police officer under similar circumstances. These incidents sparked significant public debate and received extensive media coverage.

Another event took place in February 2023, when Greece experienced a deadly rail disaster: a tragic train collision in Tempi claimed the lives of 57 people, primarily students. In the aftermath of the incident, media reports and discussions highlighted the alleged involvement of Roma clans in the theft of wires and rails from Greek railways, suggesting a potential contributing factor to the tragedy.

In addition to these two prominent cases involving the murder of a young Roma individual and the portrayal of "copper Roma gangs", our analysis reveals a significant number of other reports concerning the Roma community over the past year. Notably, a recurring theme in media coverage is the depiction of Roma individuals in police reporting. Whether the reports focus on incidents of drug dealing, robberies, murders or vendettas, Roma individuals are frequently portrayed as the main perpetrators, with their ethnic origin often emphasised. This pattern underscores a persistent association between criminal activities and the Roma community within the media narratives.²²

Another notable observation is the difference in how regional and national channels handle Roma-related topics. Regional channels tend to approach these subjects in a more positive manner compared to their nationwide counterparts. This distinction can be attributed to the fact that in smaller provincial societies, where communities are closer knit, there is often a greater understanding of Roma issues. As a result, regional channels provide more extensive coverage and airtime for Roma-related content, reflecting a heightened awareness and sensitivity towards the Roma community.²³

Portrayal of Roma in the Greek media also occurs when international reports shed light on their situation, such as the report conducted by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, titled "Roma in 10 European countries – Main results".²⁴ This study, published in October 2022, highlights the fact that 86% of Roma in Europe and 96% in Greece live at risk of poverty. The release of this report prompted several TV productions that covered Roma communities, presenting a range of perspectives including neutral, negative and positive portrayals.

20. Council of Europe, ECRI report on Greece, published on 22 September 2022, available at <https://hudoc.ecri.coe.int/eng?i=GRC-CbC-VI-2022-028-ENG>, accessed 26 July 2023.

21. Ibid.

22. See the downloaded videos: "Vendetta between young men in Mesogeia", Antenna channel, 3 April 2023 (13:17:10-13:20:13); "Police arrested a gang of drug dealers. 18 members were Roma", ERT1, 11 March 2023 (15:32:30-15:34:30); "By the side of the young patricide stands his mother", ERT3, 22 March 2023 (18:50:04-18:51:40); "Vendetta in Drosero. The victim's relatives threaten the perpetrator's family", Mega channel, 21 March 2023 (06:16:22-06:23:59); "The perpetrator and his sons were remanded in custody for the murder in Drosero", Mega channel, 23 March 2023 (05:50:30-05:53:42).

23. "Roma women - their lives and their dreams", Kriti TV, 3 May 2022, available at www.youtube.com/watch?v=c4I9WQgLTfC, accessed 26 July 2023; "Roma demand equal participation in housing, health and work", ERT, 1 November 2022, available at www.youtube.com/watch?v=JcGMcXxZi085, accessed 26 July 2023; "Meeting of the Roma of Agrinio - What they say", Agrinio TV, 20 May 2022, available at www.youtube.com/watch?v=UgCt-ZVpMVQ, accessed 26 July 2023; "Transport of Roma to other camps", New TV Kritis, 23 February 2023, www.youtube.com/watch?v=GpMT5mt46kQ&t=37s, accessed 26 July 2023.

24. Available at <https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2022/roma-survey-findings>, accessed 26 July 2023.

During these televised discussions, it is notable that Roma consistently emphasise their Greek citizenship. Their interlocutors often emphasise that Roma are indeed Greek citizens who have both rights and obligations. This is not accidental. It is a natural defence of the Roma population: a common and harmful stereotype against the Roma is the perception that they take advantage of their rights, such as receiving state financial allowances, without fulfilling their obligations. This stereotype perpetuates negative perceptions and contributes to the marginalisation of the Roma community.²⁵

After the Tempi train crash, extensive discussions on the “copper gangs” dominated Greek television. These discussions consistently portrayed the “copper mafia of Roma” as responsible for derailing trains. Interestingly, Roma individuals were notably absent from these discussions, except for one occasion featuring the president of a Roma association. However, the majority of speakers in these programmes reinforced the negative stereotype by linking copper theft exclusively to Roma individuals. This case exemplifies the negative stereotyping of Roma in Greek television, where they are unjustly depicted as thieves solely based on their ethnicity.²⁶

Following the shooting of the 16-year-old Roma boy, Roma individuals received increased visibility on television. Reports featured Roma engaging in demonstrations, protests, expressing anger and attempting to highlight the racial nature of the murder.²⁷ For approximately 10 days, Roma individuals appeared on TV broadcasts, carefully choosing their words to avoid provoking the audience.²⁸ However, family members, friends and representatives of the Roma community were primarily interviewed through live reporting and rarely invited to the studio. This limited their ability to fully express themselves and relegated them to secondary roles. Meanwhile, studio guests had ample time and comfort to make comments and statements after the live connections ended. These comments often perpetuated negative stereotypes and prejudices,²⁹ portraying Roma as violent, prone to criminal behaviour and taking the law into their own hands.³⁰

One noteworthy show featured a far-right politician as a guest commentator in the studio, openly supporting the policeman who shot the Roma boy. During the programme, the politician systematically stigmatised the Roma community with various stereotypes.³¹

Another programme that gained significant attention was an episode of the TV show “Autopsy” on Alpha channel, “The unwritten laws in Roma societies”.³² This episode likely aimed to address the findings of the Agency for Fundamental Rights report and a viral TikTok video where Roma individuals discussed divorce. The show primarily featured Roma individuals who explained various aspects of their communities, including underage engagements, marriages, divorces and community “judges” who settle disputes. However, the programme perpetuated negative and positive stereotypes without offering a comprehensive understanding of the community’s circumstances.

The present research identified four TV programmes that can serve as positive examples for combating stereotypes and raising awareness by promoting positive narratives about the Roma. One outstanding example is the Vice Specials programme “Roma: breaking the stereotypes”. This programme focuses on the personal stories of five Roma citizens who have successfully challenged prejudice and stereotypes.³³

25. Star TV, 9 December 2022, available at <https://web.archive.org/web/20240223083850/https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sTXI-pE92K5s> (1:14:30-1:14:57), accessed 26 July 2023. Far-right politician Konstantinos Bogdanos, who was on the panel of the show in which various topics were presented, found the opportunity in every topic to refer to the Roma in a negative way. For example, when a guest with a disabled child said that her allowances were not enough to live on, he commented that the Roma get a lot of allowances, while the disabled do not.

26. See the downloaded videos in the file “Tempi, train accident”, Alpha TV, 3 March 2023 (11:13:42-11:16), Kontra channel, 14 March 2023 (20:36:00-20:40:00), Mega channel, 14 March 2023 (20:36:00-20:40:00), Open beyond channel, 14 March 2023 (08:47:41-08:49:46), Skai channel, 13 March 2023 (13:12:28-13:18:00).

27. “Clashes with Roma: Police commander shot in the face - 10 police officers injured” Skai channel, 7 December 2022, available at www.youtube.com/watch?v=6WzSPL8k7ak&t=10, accessed 26 July 2023; “Stones against an ambulance from Roma in Zevgolatio - It was transporting an intubated patient”, 7 December 2022, available at www.youtube.com/watch?v=QGUKVnk7Lcos, accessed 26 July 2023; “Roma burnt a bus and a tyre shop - They closed the national road in Agrinio”, 8 December 2022, available at www.youtube.com/watch?v=EoDJ05TslGk&t=41s, accessed 26 July 2023.

28. ERT, 9 December 2022, available at www.youtube.com/watch?v=9bQT1rwc1sQ, accessed 26 July 2023.

29. Skai channel, 7 December 2022, available at www.youtube.com/watch?v=GBgFfz5rkOg&t=74s, accessed 26 July 2023.

30. Skai TV, 11 December 2022, available at www.youtube.com/watch?v=uON2onwgBLI, accessed 26 July 2023; Skai TV, 6 December 2022, available at www.youtube.com/watch?v=SJ3GiEm7Kio, accessed 26 July 2023. It is typical that the host of the TV show was trying to get the Roma guests to say that they want to take the law into their own hands, while they were saying that they were trying to impose order and calm in their community.

31. Star TV, 9 December 2022, available at www.star.gr/tv/psychagogia/alitheies-me-ti-zina, accessed 26 July 2023.

32. Alpha channel, 10 November 2022, available at www.youtube.com/watch?v=E5_Hcqz063o&t=3560s, accessed 26 July 2023.

33. Antenna channel, 13 December 2022, available at www.youtube.com/watch?v=AOp12oDLMyg, accessed 26 July 2023. The show, which is independently and internationally produced by Vice, is presented on the private Greek channel ANT1.

■ Another example of a positive programme is the local show “Andriani” on Creta TV, focused on Roma women and titled “Roma women claim a better tomorrow”. It highlights Roma women who are members of the Roma women’s association “The mother”. These women share their experiences of getting married at a young age, having children and some going through divorce. However, they have all made the decision to work and raise their children according to their own aspirations, which includes pursuing education and hoping for eventual integration into the broader community. The show sheds light on their efforts to overcome societal and community barriers and emphasises their determination for a brighter future.

■ In both cases, the programmes feature Roma individuals speaking for themselves, providing insights into their experiences and aspirations while challenging stereotypes and prejudices associated with their origin.^{34 35}

■ Determining whether there is “objective and equal transmission of information and news” about the Roma on Greek television, as well as whether there is “respect for the value of the human being” in related broadcasts, is a complex question. Many broadcasts today maintain a facade of “objectivity” while perpetuating a discourse of social stigmatisation. It is difficult to ascertain whether the principle of “objective information” is violated when, for example, a Roma individual is reported as being guilty of a crime. Although such reporting may be considered objective, it can still carry negative stigmatising connotations about the Roma and be instrumentalised accordingly, without violating Greek legal provisions.

■ The racist discourse often emerges in the form of comments made by guests during panel discussions, rather than directly by the journalists themselves. In general, the prevailing impression from most television reports about the Roma is that they contribute to an indirect racist discourse disguised as “objective information”. Within the context of these reports, neutral references to the ethnic origin of perpetrators are made, and during panel discussions guests subtly or implicitly express contempt towards the entire Roma group by sharing negative and often explicitly racist generalisations. Public speakers are skilled at disseminating their racist messages in this manner.³⁶

■ Another type of content focuses on cases where Roma individuals are not perpetrators but victims of crimes, such as instances of inhumane treatment or even homicides by police officers during pursuits. When presenting these incidents, the main emphasis of the shows is to evoke sensationalised compassion towards the victim while also displaying complete understanding towards the perpetrator and the authorities. In most cases, journalists make efforts to pacify the anger of the victims’ relatives by assuring them that “justice is blind” and that justice will ultimately be served. That has been the case in both homicide cases reported here, namely Sambanis and Fragoulis.

■ In general, the racist anti-Roma discourse by commentators, participants in media debates and certain political figures in Greece manifests indirectly and in disguised forms. Among the 30 reports analysed, 17 were neutral,³⁷ nine exhibited covertly negative portrayals of Roma and four were positive. It is worth noting that Greek public television, in contrast to private channels, predominantly features neutral and positive reports. Instances of broadcasting good practices related to Roma communities are rarely found in private TV channels.

Italy

Summary of the national legal and regulatory framework

■ The Italian Constitution of 1948 establishes the fundamental elements and principles governing the Italian legal system, including the broadcast sector. These principles include democracy (Article 1), the full and effective respect for human rights and the pluralist principle within the framework of democracy (Article 2), the principle of equality (Article 3) and in general the overarching principles of the rule of law, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms (Articles 1, 2, 3, 6, 8), also in compliance with the European and international

34. Kriti TV, 3 May 2022, available at www.youtube.com/watch?v=c4I9WQgLTfc, accessed 26 July 2023.

35. In our research we have found two more positive reports. See the videos: “Struggle for integration and social dignity”, OPT news, 27 December 2022, <https://mycloud.coe.int/s/b9kLPDXLzFLDGdH> and “A report about the creation of a film by students in Alexandria Imathia”, ERT3, 4 April 2023. <https://mycloud.coe.int/s/QgEqkEeYfaRN3D>

36. For example, Star TV, 9 December 2022, available at www.star.gr/tv/psychagogia/alitheies-me-ti-zina, accessed 26 July 2023.

37. Along with the 13 neutral reports already mentioned in the research, see four more: “A live interview from Sofades, Karditsa, featuring a representative of the Roma community”, ERT3, 15 November 2022; <https://mycloud.coe.int/s/RpQ7QEoSX8gxRaB>; “The anchorman of the central news broadcasting interviews the victim’s father”, Antenna, 7 December 2022; <https://mycloud.coe.int/s/kw7W3CPXjkBdgPC>; “The funeral of 16-year-old Kostas in an atmosphere of emotion”, TV100, 15 December 2022; <https://mycloud.coe.int/s/iCayEAzrQPRx5ya>; “Broadcasting live from the funeral of the 16-year-old Roma boy”, ERT3, 14 December 2022; <https://mycloud.coe.int/s/RacRnYZtR3d5aZY>.

standards (Articles 10, 11, 117). The Italian legal system aims to provide a robust framework of guarantees to protect individual fundamental rights comprehensively.

■ Law No. 205 of 25 June 1993 is the main legislative instrument that the Italian legal system offers for combating hate crimes and incitement to hatred. It sanctions and condemns phrases, gestures, actions and slogans aimed at inciting hatred, inciting violence, discrimination and violence for racial, ethnic, religious or national reasons. The law also punishes the use of emblems or symbols.

■ In addition, within the Italian legal framework, propaganda and incitement to commit a crime for reasons of discrimination are generally sanctioned as crime (Article 604 bis Criminal Code). The relevant offences, which have been amended several times over the years, are currently defined in Article 604 bis of the Criminal Code (in compliance with Legislative Decree 21/2018). Article 604 bis reflects the provisions transposing the EU Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA of 28 November 2008 on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law into Italian law. Furthermore, in case of acts of hate online or in broadcasts, may be deemed as crimes of defamation aggravated not only by the means of advertising used (Article 595, paragraph 3, Criminal Code), but also by the purposes of racial hatred (Article 3, Law No. 205/1993). In fact, those who have acted for purposes of discrimination or ethnic, national, racial, religious hatred are punished more severely.

■ Law No. 223/1990 addresses the “Regulation of the public and private radio and television system”³⁸

■ Decree No. 208/2001 primarily addresses audiovisual media services, including the transmission of television programmes (linear and on-demand), radio programmes, data programmes with conditional access, interactive services, conditional access services on broadcasting platforms, audiovisual commercial communications and video-sharing platform services. The decree prohibits incitement to hate, violence and public provocation to terrorist offences. It also ensures the protection of human dignity and minors concerning audiovisual content and commercial communications shared on platforms.

■ Decree No. 44/2010 simplifies the provision of linear services, regulates non-linear services (such as download and on-demand services), imposes limits on advertisement crowding and includes provisions for the protection of European works.

■ Two main institutional bodies in the media sector are the Italian Communications Authority (Agcom) and the Ministry of Economic Development – Communications Department. Agcom, established by Law No. 249 of 1997, is an independent authority responsible for ensuring fair competition among market operators and protecting the fundamental freedoms of users. It operates as a “convergent” authority, regulating and supervising electronic communications, audiovisual media, publishing, postal services and online platforms. The choice of a convergent model recognises the impact of digitisation on audio, video and data transmission systems, which have become standardised. Like other authorities in Italy, Agcom is accountable to the parliament, which determines its powers, defines its statute and elects its members.

Analysis

■ After analysing 20 randomly selected video materials,³⁹ several themes and patterns emerged regarding the portrayal of Roma in Italian media.

■ Firstly, there is a prevalent negative stereotype depicting Roma, primarily as non-violent criminals, except for instances of collaboration with local mafia.⁴⁰ They are often portrayed as uneducated and backward. This stereotype is reinforced through selective representations of Roma as subjects or objects in reports of minor crimes, domestic violence and social disputes involving Roma communities near local neighbourhoods. Such portrayals contribute to negative stereotypes, presenting Roma as “clan” people who are irresponsible, particularly regarding childcare and the treatment of women within their families.⁴¹

■ Aside from daily news TV reporting, insight and debate TV programmes frequently feature extremist politicians exploiting the above-mentioned topics for electoral gain, especially during election campaigns.

38. Published in the Official Journal No. 185 of 9 August 1990. The text reported is the one currently in force based on subsequent amendments, as updated on 7 September 2000.

39. The list of randomly selected materials is available in Appendix II.

40. “Drugs, the Lamezia-San Luca axis. 49 arrested, 55 under investigation. At the centre of the investigation by the Dda and Guardia di Finanza, the Roma camp of Scordovillo”, TGR Calabria – Rai 3, 20 February 2023, available at www.rainews.it/tgr/calabria/articoli/2023/02/lasse-lamezia-san-luca-nelloperazione-di-catanzaro-7edf431b-14a7-4112-a859-539f2d622bf1.html, accessed 27 July 2023.

41. “Children among waste and fires”, TGR Campania – Rai 3, 25 March 2023, available at www.rainews.it/tgr/campania/video/2023/03/il-video--bambini-tra-rifuti-e-roghi-a98b3ba3-b771-413e-b29b-d0880f0f161e.html, accessed 27 July 2023.

It is worth noting that Roma individuals are mainly depicted in relation to their social and economic status rather than showcasing their positive integration into wider society. Whether portraying wealthy individuals (for example third- or fourth-generation Sinti in Rome in the past) or recent impoverished residents of informal settlements, the focus is on their cultural status, often highlighting the most negative aspects, that is inaccurate prejudices that resonate with the average Italian citizen. These prejudices include the lack of hygiene conditions of children in Roma settlements, the subservience or tendency for pickpocketing by Roma women and other similar random accusations.

Within private commercial networks, particularly Mediaset channels, the main objective seems to be highlighting and reporting on the skilful thefts committed by small groups of Roma individuals on public transport and in crowded places. These reports often include interviews with young or juvenile Roma women, emphasizing their seeming impunity and frequent pregnancies at a young age to evade arrest or other consequences.

As a result, the narrative often centres around the challenges of integration and inclusion, especially concerning the housing emergency and the illegal occupation of social or private housing. While such issues also involve Italian citizens or foreigners of different origins, the focus and attention on Roma individuals differ significantly.⁴²

Daily TV news, whether broadcast by state-owned or private commercial networks, reports on Roma people's involvement as both victims and perpetrators of crimes⁴³ in a mostly neutral manner. This neutrality⁴⁴ also extends to coverage of social housing and evictions of informal settlements.⁴⁵ Furthermore, debate TV programmes occasionally feature short video documentaries that approach Roma issues more moderately, including situations where Roma have experienced discrimination or mistreatment by the police.⁴⁶

Another noteworthy example⁴⁷ beyond the aforementioned broadcasts addressing Roma history and culture comes from the regional newscast of Friuli Venezia Giulia (TGR Rai) called "East-West". This programme attempts to shed light on the vulnerable situation of Roma in one of the European countries that traditionally serves as their place of origin. The aim is to showcase the leaders of the Roma community's commitment to improving their conditions of emancipation in their countries of origin while preserving their minority culture.

An effective method to challenge stereotypes involves interviewing Roma who can express their viewpoints and feelings about their rights to dignity and fair treatment in fluent Italian. Selecting such individuals is not a difficult task and can help dispel stereotypes, although this topic may still be sensitive within Italian local communities.⁴⁸

Roma people have long faced discrimination and marginalisation in Italy and across Europe, and this is reflected in their representation in the media. The historical experiences of Roma, including ancient diasporas and the Porrajmos (Roma Holocaust), should receive greater attention in school education and be disseminated through broadcasting⁴⁹ to foster an understanding of the multiple forms of discrimination and common prejudices faced by Roma, Sinti and Caminanti communities.

42. "Milan, the police evacuate the "vertical Roma camp" in via Bolla", TG4 Rete 4 Mediaset, 4 November 2022, available at www.youtube.com/watch?v=G-MxbnJ5NuM, accessed 27 July 2023; "Rome, bonus of €10 000 to leave the Roma camp and find a home", Mattino5, Mediaset – Canale 5, TGCOM 24, 31 May 2022, available at www.tgcom24.mediaset.it/cronaca/lazio/roma-bonus-di-10mila-euro-per-lasciare-il-campo-rom-e-trovare-una-casa_50871442-202202k.shtml, accessed 27 July 2023.

43. "Primavalle, the Omerovic case and the co-existence between Italians and foreigners", LA7, 20 September 2022, available at www.la7.it/piazzapulita/video/primavalle-il-caso-omerovic-e-la-convivenza-tra-italiani-e-stranieri-29-09-2022-453759, accessed 27 July 2023.

44. "Report on the case pending within the Supreme Court for the confirmation of the sentences imposed on the nomadic perpetrators, in 2018, of a tragic chase on the outskirts of Florence", TGR Toscana Rai 3, 06 July 2022, available at www.rainews.it/tgr/toscana/video/2022/07/tos-roma-cassazione-rinvio-sentenza-ragazzo-investito-nomadi-234e61c1-8179-4d09-ad95-4a57ae5d5ab1.html, accessed 27 July 2023.

45. "Rome, bonus of €10 000 to leave the Roma camp and find a home", Mattino5, Mediaset – Canale 5, TGCOM 24, 31 May 2022, available at www.tgcom24.mediaset.it/cronaca/lazio/roma-bonus-di-10mila-euro-per-lasciare-il-campo-rom-e-trovare-una-casa_50871442-202202k.shtml, accessed 27 July 2023.

46. "Primavalle, the Omerovic case and the co-existence between Italians and foreigners", Piazza Pulita, LA7, 29 September 2022, available at www.la7.it/piazzapulita/video/primavalle-il-caso-omerovic-e-la-convivenza-tra-italiani-e-stranieri-29-09-2022-453759, accessed 27 July 2023.

47. "#EstOvest – Dignity for everyone", available at www.facebook.com/TgrRaiFVG/videos/1211057802964525/, accessed 27 July 2023.

48. "We are Roma and in Turin we occupy 100 houses - Sevko Halilovic at #Drittoerovescio", Rete4, 13 May 2023, available at www.facebook.com/TgrRaiFVG/videos/1211057802964525/, accessed 27 July 2023; "#EstOvest – Dignity for everyone", available at www.facebook.com/TgrRaiFVG/videos/1211057802964525/, accessed 27 July 2023; "What drives a person to give the fascist salute in front of a Roma people house", LA7, 07 October 2022, available at www.la7.it/piazzapulita/video/cosa-spinge-una-persona-a-fare-il-saluto-romano-sotto-casa-dei-rom-dijana-pavlovic-a-borgonovo-07-10-2022-454764, accessed 27 July 2023.

49. "Genocide of Roma and Sinti", RAI Play, available at www.raiplay.it/video/2022/12/Gli-Speciali-di-Rai-Scuola---Genocidio-dei-rom-e-sinti-3726cf79-97ab-4b80-ac08-42ffc46c92e5.html, accessed 27 July 2023.

Efforts have been made to address this issue and promote a more positive representation of Roma in Italian broadcasting media,⁵⁰ or at the very least, foster a narrative of solidarity. While the participation of Roma community representatives is supported, it falls short of achieving the desired outcome on its own.

Roma people exist in a paradoxical state of visibility and marginalisation. It is crucial for the school education of young Roma individuals to focus on increasing the number of Roma journalists and media professionals in Italy. This would ensure more accurate and inclusive representation in media broadcasts, while also shedding light on social discrimination.

While the majority of statements in broadcast media come from private individuals, it is worth noting that representatives of institutions, such as politicians and prosecutors, also contribute to the dialogue.

To combat antigypsyism or prejudice and discrimination against Roma people, there is a pressing need for more initiatives, practices and strategies to address the issue through broadcasting. In recent years, the only notable initiatives have come from the EU Commission/Council of Europe Joint Programme JUSTROM,⁵¹ which aims to increase awareness and professional competences of media professionals in Italy. These initiatives involved spreading knowledge of Roma history and providing training for journalists, as well as attorneys, prosecutors and social assistants involved in journalism. The goal was to ensure that Roma were represented in the media without prejudice and with fair terminology, while actively combating hate speech and avoiding generalisations of Roma, Sinti and Caminanti communities as a monolithic group, recognising their unique differences.

Romania

Summary of national legal and regulatory framework

In Romania, the relevant national legal and regulatory framework regarding media and hate speech is governed by the Audiovisual Law,⁵² the Code of Regulation of Audiovisual Content,⁵³ the Antidiscrimination Law (Governmental Ordinance No. 137/2000 republished, with amendments)⁵⁴ and the Criminal Code.⁵⁵

The Audiovisual Law mandates the Council on Audiovisual (CNA) to, *inter alia* ensure the correct information of public opinion;⁵⁶ the equidistance and pluralism of opinions;⁵⁷ the defence of human dignity and the right to one's own image;⁵⁸ and non-discriminatory policies regarding race, sex, nationality, religion, political beliefs and sexual orientation.⁵⁹ The law stipulates that commercial communications of media providers shall not include nor promote acts of discrimination on the ground of sex, racial or ethnic origin, nationality, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.⁶⁰ Equally, audiovisual media services shall not contain incitement to violence or hatred against a group of people or a member of a group, based on grounds such as sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic characteristics, language, religion, beliefs, political or other opinions, belonging to a national minority, wealth, birth, disability, age, sexual orientation or chronic contagious or non-contagious disease.⁶¹

The Romanian Antidiscrimination Law prohibits and sanctions all forms of discrimination and provides for the protection of human dignity⁶² and specifically sanctions the infringement of the right not to be discriminated

50. "Giuseppe, Roma restaurant manager against prejudice, 'Puglia is my land'", TGR Puglia, Rai 3, 19 February 2022, available at www.rainews.it/tgr/puglia/video/2022/02/pug-rom-laterza-barbetta-macelleria-cavallo-db07d134-f32e-41b0-843d-7417048ee9b1.html, accessed 27 July 2023.

51. JUSTROM3, available at <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/access-to-justice-for-roma-women/about-justrom3>, accessed 27 July 2023.

52. Law No. 504 from 11 July 2002 related to audiovisual published in the Official Gazette No. 534 from 22 July 2002, available at <https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocument/37503>, accessed 27 July 2023.

53. National Council of Audiovisual, Decision No. 2020/2011, Code of Regulation of Audiovisual content, published in the Official Gazette No. 174 from 11 March 2011, with further amendments from 2013, 2017 and 2019, available at <https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocument/215180>, accessed 27 July 2023.

54. Governmental Ordinance No. 137/2000 on preventing and combating all forms of discrimination, approved by law, with further amendments, republished, available at <https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocument/24129>, accessed 27 July 2023.

55. Criminal Code adopted by Law No. 286/2009 with further amendments, available at <https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocument/267695>, accessed 27 July 2023.

56. Law No. 504/2002, Article 17, paragraph 1.d, No. 1.

57. Law No. 504/2002, Article 17, paragraph 1.d, No. 3.

58. Law No. 504/2002, Article 17, paragraph 1.d, No. 6.

59. Law No. 504/2002, Article 17, paragraph 1.d, No. 7.

60. Law No. 504/2002, Article 29, paragraph 1.d, introduced by Law No. 190 from 28 June 2022, published in the Official Gazette No. 651 from 20 June 2022, available at <https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocumentAfis/256901>, accessed 27 July 2023.

61. Law No. 504/2002, Article 40, paragraph 1.a, introduced by Law No. 190 from 28 June 2022.

62. Governmental Ordinance No. 137/2000, republished, Article 1 paragraph 1, comprising an implicit reference to the values protected in the Romanian Constitution such as human rights, rights and liberties of citizens and free development of human personality.

against and the violation of personal dignity.⁶³ Equally, the law prohibits harassment and defines this form of discrimination as “any behaviour based on race, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, social category, beliefs, gender, sexual orientation, belonging to a disadvantaged category, age, disability, refugee or asylum seeker status or any other criterion that leads to the creation of an intimidating, hostile, degrading or offensive framework.”⁶⁴

■ The Romanian Criminal Code prohibits incitement to hatred or discrimination in the context of the previous Article 317 that has been amended by Law No. 286/2009 and incorporated in Article 369.⁶⁵ In 2022, the provision of Article 369 was further amended by law⁶⁶ to be better aligned with the Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA.⁶⁷ Currently, the legal provision states that “inciting the public, by any means, to violence, hatred or discrimination against a category of people or against a person on the grounds that they are part of a certain category of people defined on the basis of race, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, gender, sexual orientation, opinion or political affiliation, wealth, social origin, age, disability, chronic non-contagious disease or HIV/Aids infection, considered by the perpetrator as causes of a person’s inferiority in relation to others, is punishable by imprisonment from 6 months to 3 years or with a fine.”⁶⁸

■ Lastly, Law No. 2/2021⁶⁹ regards measures for preventing and combating antigypsyism regulating penal liability for promoting, in public, in any way, antigypsyism ideas, conceptions or doctrines⁷⁰ and for distributing or making available to the public, by any means, news and information, antigypsyism materials.⁷¹

Analysis

■ After analysing 20 randomly selected video materials, several themes and patterns in how Roma are portrayed in Romanian media were established.

■ Firstly, there is a prevalent negative stereotype of Roma as violent criminals who are uneducated and backward. This stereotype is reinforced through the selective representation of Roma as a subject or object in reports of violence, crimes, domestic violence and disputes involving Roma. Roma appear as subjects without agency. The portrayal is negative and reinforces stereotypes, depicting Roma as “clan” people who are irresponsible, prone to emotional reactions and violence.

■ The analysis reveals that a clear majority of reports on news media channels such as ProTV, Antena 3 and Romania TV follow this trend by focusing on criminality, police raids, internal conflicts and conflicts with the wider communities (see the appendices). The terminology used is severely biased, the common use of the term “clan” to indicate primitivism, backwardness and tribal organisation. The term is not used in its scientific meaning, as Roma are not organised politically as clans, they are citizens of their respective countries. The stereotypical use of the term amounts to racism and discriminatory portrayal and may well be subject to relevant legislation.

■ In most of the news media reportage, police raids in Roma communities are presented. In this context it is important to note that police raids on Roma communities have been a recurring issue in Romania.⁷² In most cases, the raids are conducted under the premise of combating criminal activity, such as drug trafficking or violence within the community.

63. Article 15 of the Antidiscrimination Law provides for the protection of human dignity stipulating that “It constitutes misdemeanour, ..., if the act does not fall under the criminal law, any behaviour manifested in public, having the character of nationalist-chauvinist propaganda, of inciting racial or national hatred, or that behaviour that has as its purpose or aims at the achievement of dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive atmosphere, directed against a person, a group of persons or a community and related to their belonging to a certain race, nationality, ethnicity, religion, social category or a disadvantaged category or of his beliefs, gender or sexual orientation”.

64. See Antidiscrimination Law, Governmental Ordinance No. 137/2000 republished, with amendments, available at <https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliuDocument/24129>, accessed 27 July 2023.

65. Criminal Code, Law No. 286/2009, available at <https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliuDocument/267695>, accessed 27 July 2023.

66. Law No. 170 from 3 June 2022 for amending Article 369 from Law No. 286/2009 regarding the Criminal Code, available at <https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliuDocumentAfis/255941>, accessed 27 July 2023.

67. Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA of 28 November 2008 on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law, available at <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32008F0913>, accessed 27 July 2023.

68. Additional information was provided through the Permanent Representation of Romania to the Council of Europe, aiming to provide an updated image of the national initiatives undertaken on the subject, accessible at <https://rm.coe.int/clarification-romania-study-on-roma-in-broadcasting-/1680aed9e3>.

69. Law No. 2 from 4 January 2021 regarding measures for preventing and combating antigypsyism, published in the Official Gazette No. 9 from 5 January 2021, available at <https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliuDocument/235923>, accessed 27 July 2023.

70. According to Article 3 of the law imprisonment from three months to three years and the prohibition of certain rights.

71. According to Article 4 of the law imprisonment from one to five years.

72. ECRI, Country monitoring in Romania (fifth report on Romania), adopted on 3 April 2019, available at www.coe.int/en/web/european-commission-against-racism-and-intolerance/romania, accessed 27 July 2023.

■ The portrayal of such raids exacerbates negative stereotypes and reinforces harmful biases against Roma people. News coverage tends to focus on criminality within the community and often demonises the entire community, rather than providing a nuanced perspective.

■ Secondly, another pattern is the disempowering portrayal of Roma, with many materials presenting them as objects rather than agents of their own lives, with little agency to express their own opinions or aspirations. This portrayal is particularly evident in materials that do not feature Roma voices or leaders from the community in focus. Most news media reports mentioned above are about Roma and exclusively give voice to law enforcement authorities, or to majority Romanians. The profile presented of the Roma is that of poor, backward and violent people that need constant policing.

■ Thirdly, the fact that Romanian news media frequently mention ethnicity only when Roma are involved in cases of violence, crimes, domestic violence, etc., reinforces the implicit bias against them. The media often avoids mentioning ethnicity in cases involving ethnic Romanians or others which highlights an underlying trend to associate negative actions with a particular ethnicity.

■ The imagery that accompanies these types of materials generally shows Roma in either poor and degraded environments – small housing in bad conditions, unpaved roads, poor garments etc. – or in contrast in very rich and opulent environments. Opulence is a common theme that is repeated in material depicting so-called Roma “clans” and “mobsters”. The materials presented by Kanal D focus on rich and traditional Roma families and their opulent behaviour.⁷³

■ In contrast to the above, there are some good practices in reporting that aim to combat antigypsyism. These reports depict Roma as leaders, highly educated and competent, and emphasise the contributions of Roma people to the historical trajectory of Romania. These reports also feature Roma as agents, expressing their own opinions and aspirations, thus counteracting the disempowering portrayal of Roma present in the news media.

■ Examples of good practices in reporting on Roma communities and individuals include the Trinitas TV reportage on the Day of the Liberation of Roma,⁷⁴ which presents a positive narrative about Roma as contributors and victims of the country they are citizens of. Two Roma figures of authority conveyed an image of competence, education and leadership, and young Roma pupils presenting works of art reinforced a positive image that contrasted common stereotypes and prejudices. The material was a good example of using broadcasting to combat antigypsyism.

■ Another positive example is the “From the life of Roma” production series that focuses on Roma people in Romania, financed and supported by the Roma Party in Romania.⁷⁵ The programme covers a variety of topics, including a programme by Untold Stories, an organisation led by a prize-winning Roma actress who works with institutionalised young people, many of whom are Roma. The programme also features celebrations for International Women’s Day, highlighting Roma women in leadership roles in the Partida Romilor, as well as Roma women who work as social workers, medical doctors and nurses. The production is Roma-led and supported, presenting Roma people in a positive light as the main protagonists who are working to support their community.

■ In addition, the Antena 3 reportage that covered Dorin Cioabă’s announcement that his organisation intended to sue the Orthodox Church for years of enslaving Roma people was a good example of reporting on Roma individuals.⁷⁶ The report highlighted that the church had never expressed regret for its historical involvement in Roma slavery, and Cioabă requested that the church publicly express remorse and provide moral reparations. The portrayal of Roma in the report was neutral and factual, and a Roma person was featured as an expert on the matter who was able to convey key advocacy messages without biased questions. The report allowed Roma to express their views and have agency, which is a positive aspect of the report.

73. Pe timp de criza, romii invata lectia economiei! (translation: During the crisis, Roma learn the lesson of economy), Kanal D, 9 October 2022, available at www.youtube.com/watch?v=M7rq9EnHgw8, accessed 27 July 2023.

74. Ziua Dezrobirii Romilor, marcată prin evenimente culturale și duhovnicești (translation: Roma Liberation Day, marked by cultural and spiritual events), Trinitas TV, 20 February 2023, available at www.trinitas.tv/ziua-dezrobirii-romilor-marcata-prin-evenimente-culturale-si-duhovnicesti/, accessed 27 July 2023.

75. Din viata romilor (translation: from the life of Roma), National TV, 18 March 2023, available at www.youtube.com/watch?v=4R36veakQlg, accessed 27 July 2023.

76. Dorin Cioabă anunță că romii vor să dea în judecată Biserica Ortodoxă pentru anii de sclavie (translation: Dorin Cioabă announces that the Roma want to sue the Orthodox Church for the years of slavery), Antena 3, 28 February 2023, available at www.antena3.ro/actualitate/dorin-cioaba-proces-biserica-ortodoxa-romana-sclavie-romi-667148.html, accessed 27 July 2023.

■ The public TVR also has a rather positive track record, with material focusing on historical facts such as the genocide of the Roma, aspects of Roma culture in the context of the International Roma Day on 8 April and Roma university students and their aspirations (TVR Craiova).⁷⁷

■ In “Young Roma help change mentalities”, the TVR material features discussions on the occasion of International Roma Day. The material is mostly positive and features regional Roma leaders who emphasise education and integration. Several young Roma university students are interviewed as well, who are training to become pedagogues, business managers, etc. The portrayal is positive and the Roma are seen as agents who express opinions and aspirations. The event is organised in collaboration with local educational institutions, and Romanian authorities attend and speak. Similarly, in “Interview with Catalin Manea, Roma deputy in the Romanian Parliament”, the TVR producers are focused on the Romanian law on education. The material presents a competent and active Roma representative who is knowledgeable and supportive of the Roma community. The material also presents historical facts, the aspirations of the Roma community, and calls for accountability for historical injustice.⁷⁸

■ In summary, the portrayal of Roma in Romanian media remains predominantly negative and unbalanced, reinforcing stereotypes and failing to give Roma agency. While there are some positive examples that aim to combat antigypsyism, they are few and far between. The media have a responsibility to present Roma in a more balanced way and challenge negative stereotypes. This can be achieved by featuring Roma leaders, experts and members of the community in focus, depicting them as agents and emphasising their contributions to society.

77. Tinerii Romi pot schimba mentalități (translation: young Roma can change mentality), TVR Craiova, 6 April 2023, available at www.youtube.com/watch?v=KCxtiBJ7BGQ, accessed 27 July 2023; Romii, cultura supraviețuirii. În 8 aprilie, de Ziua Mondială a Romilor, câteva pagini de istorie (translation: Roma, the culture of survival. On 8 April, World Roma Day, a few pages of history), TVR, 8 April 2023, available at http://stiri.tvr.ro/romii-cultura-supravietuirii-in-8-aprilie-de-ziua-mondiala-a-romilor-cateva-pagini-de-istorie_928336.html#view, accessed 27 July 2023.

78. Parlamentul României: Interviu cu Cătălin-Zamfir Manea, deputat Asociația Partida Romilor (translation: Romanian Parliament: interview with Cătălin-Zamfir Manea, deputy of the Roma Party Association), TVR, 17 March 2023, available at www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pe2nQHgzGQw, accessed 27 July 2023.

CONCLUSIONS

■ The national regulatory framework in Bulgaria prohibits hate speech and discrimination, and there is an ethical code of the Bulgarian media that requires media outlets to avoid hate speech and discrimination. However, both historically and up to this date, Roma people in Bulgaria have been portrayed negatively in the media. Negative and stereotypical portrayals of Roma in the media reinforce harmful attitudes and biases, and can limit opportunities for social inclusion and equality. Certain broadcasting media providers have traditionally adopted stigmatising and discriminatory anti-Roma narratives. It is of particular concern that a media broadcaster with nationwide coverage, and which is reportedly the most watched TV broadcaster, on several occasions depicted Roma in an extremely biased way when reporting incidents involving Roma. Nevertheless, there have been efforts to increase the positive representation of Roma in the media, although the ways in which this is done are again somehow stigmatising and one sided.

■ Negative stereotyping against Roma is a common problem in the Greek media, although the anti-Roma discourse in Greece is indirect and covered. The media cover a variety of topics related to Roma, including crime, poverty and discrimination, but tend to focus on negative stereotypes and prejudices, portraying Roma as thieves, violent and prone to delinquent and criminal behaviour. The media coverage of incidents involving Roma was often negative and portrayed Roma as responsible for the events. However, regional channels handle Roma topics in a more positive way than national channels, and some positive reports are also produced.

■ In Italy, there is a prevalent negative stereotype of Roma as non-violent criminals who are uneducated and backward. The media often selectively represent Roma as a subject or object in reports of minor crimes and domestic violence, and social disputes involving Roma living near local communities. This portrayal reinforces negative stereotypes of Roma, depicting them as irresponsible “clan” people who do not take care of their children and treat women unfairly within their families. The media often portray Roma people in a way that focuses on their social and economic status, whether they are rich or poor, and highlight negative aspects of their culture. The narrative in the media often focuses on the difficulty of integrating and including Roma people, especially in relation to the housing emergency, which is deeply felt due to the shortage of social housing available for vulnerable individuals.

■ The portrayal of Roma in Romanian media also remains predominantly negative and unbalanced, reinforcing stereotypes and failing to give Roma agency. The media portray Roma as violent criminals who are uneducated and backward. Police raids in Roma communities are presented frequently, which exacerbates negative stereotypes against Roma people. Ethnicity is often mentioned only when Roma are involved in negative actions, reinforcing implicit bias. The media frequently disempower Roma by presenting them as objects rather than agents of their own lives. While there are some positive examples that aim to combat antigypsyism, they are few and far between.

■ Generally, for all four countries, despite legal frameworks and ethical codes in place that prohibit hate speech and discrimination, media outlets continue to reinforce harmful attitudes and biases against the Roma through their negative portrayal in the media. The media tend to focus on negative stereotypes and prejudices towards Roma. Ethnicity is often mentioned only when Roma are involved in negative actions, reinforcing implicit bias. However, there are also some positive examples that aim to combat antigypsyism. The negative portrayal of Roma in the media in the four examined countries limits opportunities for social inclusion and equality, and reinforces negative stereotypes and biases.

RECOMMENDATIONS

■ The following recommendations aim to improve the situation regarding the predominantly negative portrayal of Roma in the media in Bulgaria, Greece, Italy and Romania.

- ▶ Strengthening the capacity of the national regulatory and supervisory bodies to prevent and/or combat acts of hate speech towards the Roma community through training and exchange of good practices. Capacity building programmes may include developing guidelines and training workshops on diversity and inclusion for (executive) producers, and senior management, as well as exchanges of practices.
- ▶ Raising the awareness about the issues of antigypsyism and hate speech among the media professional community, such as journalists, editors and presenters, through training dedicated to understanding antigypsyism and racism, media ethics and reporting, promoting positive narratives, legal standards of the freedom of expression and its limitations, etc., notwithstanding the freedom of the media, or without interfering with media freedoms or something along those lines.
- ▶ Encouraging broadcasters to avoid generalising headlines and linking ethnicity with negative portrayals by putting in place ethical codes and observing compliance.
- ▶ Broadcasters should make sure that Roma are given agency and allowed to express their opinions and aspirations. Roma should be presented as active agents in their communities, not just subjects of the reportage.
- ▶ Encouraging broadcasters to provide more positive depictions of Roma, highlighting their contributions to society, history, culture and other areas. This will help to counteract negative stereotypes and prejudices.
- ▶ Inclusion of more Roma voices and representation in the news and media. This can help to provide a more accurate and nuanced portrayal of Roma communities and their experiences.
- ▶ Broadcasters should refrain from using dehumanising language or presenting Roma as a monolithic group. Roma communities are diverse and have different experiences and perspectives. It is important to avoid painting them with a broad brush and presenting them as a single, homogenous group.

■ By following these recommendations, the national regulatory and supervisory bodies, broadcasters and the professional community can help to create a more inclusive, balanced and accurate portrayal of Roma in news and media.

APPENDIX I – CASE STUDIES

Bulgaria

Case study on the media coverage by Nova TV of a mass brawl that occurred in the town of Kazanlak on 20 March 2023

I. Introduction

■ A mass brawl involving axes and hoes occurred in Kazanlak on 20 March 2023. One person was killed, and four others were left in a critical condition. The incident took place between two groups of people, and the reason for the dispute is still under investigation. The police have reportedly detained several suspects in connection with the incident, and an investigation is ongoing.

■ The incident was covered by all major TV broadcasters. The national Nova TV⁷⁹ broadcast a series of materials dedicated to this incident. One of the materials covered the aftermath of the incident.⁸⁰ This material was extremely biased in reporting the case of the mass fighting in Kazanlak in March 2023. At the beginning, one of the TV presenters explicitly said that the beating had occurred “between two Roma families”.

■ Later a journalist from the scene in the town of Kazanlak joined in by explaining the incident in a sensationalist manner and stressing the extreme brutality of the beating. Introducing the public with the aftermath of the incident he went on to state: “The fear among the locals is enormous due to the extreme aggression of the Roma.” The journalist mentioned the ethnic origin of the participants of the incident on several occasions. Later on a local police officer reported on the incident in a neutral manner, only providing information about the casualties and the number of arrested people.

■ Moreover, towards the end of the material one of the presenters from the TV studio commented on the incident by generalising on the “unthinkable barbarianism and savagery” of the incident.

■ Furthermore, the other studio presenter proceeded to call Roma communities “tribes who enter the city centre” and noted that “we have been witnessing an animal-like battle”. He went on to mention that “they lack respect for everybody”, “they really look like tribes that can appear with spears in their hands the next time” and “they must self-localise this mob law between themselves only”. He finished his comment by saying: “I am not against them killing each other but against doing it among children, elderly and peaceful people.”

II. Reactions to the material

■ The commentary section under the video material on the TV’s website has remained open although it received very few comments. One of them states:

“I don’t agree with public money being spent that way ... There is no point in guarding it. Leave them, in the end whoever survives goes to jail and that’s it.”

■ Another one states:

“Don’t guard them ... These are ‘cultural particularities’. Let them kill each other ...”

■ It is unclear whether there were any complaints about the way the incident was covered and commented upon by Nova TV. It is also unclear if the Council for Electronic Media undertook any supervisory measures pursuant to the Radio and Television Act.

III. Violations of human rights and international law

■ Based on the media coverage of the incident in Nova TV, there are indications of potential human rights violations and discrimination against the Roma community. The media coverage appears to be biased and sensationalist, with a focus on the ethnic origin of the participants and the use of derogatory language towards the Roma community.

■ The initial statement made by one of the TV presenters, explicitly stating that the incident occurred “between two Roma families”, highlights the emphasis on the ethnicity of the participants. The journalist from

79. Website of Nova TV: <https://nova.bg/>.

80. Material available at www.vbox7.com/play:4fcc6d24c3.

the scene in Kazanlak also sensationalises the incident by emphasising the extreme brutality of the beating and repeatedly mentioning the ethnic origin of the participants. These statements have the potential to create negative stereotypes and promote discrimination against the Roma community.

■ The comment made by the studio presenter referring to the Roma community as “tribes” and likening them to “animals” suggests dehumanisation and reinforces negative stereotypes about the community. The presenter’s call for the Roma community to “self-localise this mob law between themselves only” may also be seen as discriminatory and promoting segregation.

■ Overall, the media coverage of the incident appears to be biased and discriminatory towards the Roma community, potentially contributing to a hostile and discriminatory environment.

■ This type of coverage bears no protection under Article 10 of the Convention (Freedom of expression) and may well be perceived as inciting discrimination under the Bulgarian Protection Against Discrimination Act. Moreover, it clearly breaches the Code of Ethics of the Bulgarian Media, to which Nova TV is a signatory and which states, *inter alia*, that:

We respect everyone’s right to live in safety and security, and we shall avoid publishing material that incites or encourages hatred, violence, or any form of discrimination.

We shall not refer to a person’s race, colour, religion, ethnic background, sexual orientation, or mental or physical condition, unless it is of relevant importance to the meaning of the story.

We respect the assumption of innocence and will not describe a person as a criminal prior to the person’s conviction.

IV. Conclusion

■ The video reports a mass brawl that took place in Kazanlak, Bulgaria, resulting in one person’s death and four others in a critical condition. The reason for the dispute is still under investigation, and the police have detained several suspects. The coverage of the incident by the national broadcaster Nova TV is biased and discriminatory towards the Roma community, using derogatory language and emphasising the ethnicity of the participants. The commentary section under the video material reveals further discriminatory attitudes towards the Roma community. The media coverage potentially violates human rights and international law, including the Code of Ethics of the Bulgarian Media. Such coverage could contribute to a hostile and discriminatory environment, inciting discrimination against the Roma community. This material highlights the need for a better and timely response on the part of the media supervisory bodies in cases of irresponsible and biased reporting in the media to prevent the promotion of negative stereotypes and discrimination towards Roma.

Case study on a segment by Nova TV about violations of the election process in Bulgaria on 20 March 2023

I. Introduction

■ This segment⁸¹ in a morning programme on Nova TV82 was entitled “Which is the bigger problem – the corporate or the bought vote?” and was related to the then upcoming parliamentary elections in Bulgaria that would take place on 2 April 2023. The material included two guests who are representatives of NGOs and experts in the subject matter. The key takeaways from what the experts had to say were as follows:

- ▶ since 2014, there has been a strong outflow from Roma neighbourhoods and a decrease in the vote purchasing;
- ▶ there was a higher police turnout, but there was a possibility that because of paper ballots there would again be an increase in the vote purchasing. This would be evident by the increase in voter turnout in certain places;
- ▶ the problem with the corporate vote has deepened;
- ▶ controlled voting was a bigger problem than bought voting;
- ▶ the deficiency of law enforcement and public administration regarding said issues was also pointed out.

81. Link to the video and the text version of the material: www.vbox7.com/play:df022b25b1.

82. Website of Nova TV: <https://nova.bg/>.

■ However, despite the above-mentioned observations and the experts pointing out that there were issues more severe than votes purchasing in Roma neighbourhoods, throughout the whole segment footage of people (apparently of Roma origin) being arrested by police was played on loop for a total of at least 22 times. This footage was not accompanied by any indication that people had been convicted of any crime related to violations of the election process.

II. Reactions to the material

■ At the very outset of the segment the presenter from the TV studio made use of the expression “reservoirs for bought Roma votes”. This expression had gained wide use in the Bulgarian journalistic landscape and could be considered biased and degrading towards Roma people, solidifying the stereotype that this ethnicity is the sole source of such malpractices and the very root of the problem regarding violations of the election process.

■ One of the experts expressly pointed out the footage that was looped on the screen and stated that what the footage depicts is neither the only, nor the most severe problem regarding the discussed issue. Furthermore, the other expert stated that for the year in question voter turnout in Roma communities had been significantly lower than in previous years.

III. Violations of human rights and international law

■ Although no violations of domestic and international law could be identified *prima facie*, based on the content of the segment, there are indications of violations of the Code of Ethics of the Bulgarian Media, to which Nova TV is a signatory and which states, *inter alia*, that:

We shall not refer to a person's race, colour, religion, ethnic background, sexual orientation, or mental or physical condition, unless it is of relevant importance to the meaning of the story.

...

We respect the assumption of innocence and will not describe a person as a criminal prior to the person's conviction.

...

We shall refrain from ... sensationalising crime, violence, and brutality ...

IV. Conclusion

■ Despite all of the above-mentioned points, the journalist seemed to have adopted the preconceived notion of “bought Roma votes” being the primary issue when it comes to election manipulation.

■ The journalist and the editorial staff demonstrated biased and borderline discriminatory attitudes towards the Roma community, using derogatory language (“reservoirs for bought Roma votes”) and emphasising the ethnicity of the people, although it could be deemed irrelevant in the context of the topic and, moreover, in the context of the guest experts' observations.

Romania

Case study I “Strong raids on Roma clans in Barlad and Murgeni” (PRO TV news), 10 May 2022

■ The material presents a police raid in a Roma community where “clans” have allegedly committed violence against each other. The reportage conveys that multiple white firearms were confiscated and shows images of these. The news anchor underlines that one man (unnamed) has been found to be sought by EUROPOL.

■ No Roma people from the said communities appear in the reportage, no community members, no local leaders, no experts. Data from police about how many officers conducted the raid and where the raid took place are conveyed.

■ As in many such materials, the linking of ethnicity with the acts of violence and crime are quite explicit, reinforcing stereotypes. No context is provided and Roma are simple objects of the reportage without any opinion presented. The images show a very poor community with no paved roads and old dilapidated housing.

■ The reportage presents an event that occurred during an engagement party in a Roma community and is part of a news media programming Stirile PRO TV. As in a previous material, violence among Roma is the subject of the reportage. The material includes snippets of interviews with Roma women, but without much context. The Roma community appears to be poor, the housing is small and the roads in the community are unpaved.

■ The profile of the Roma as presented is that of poor, backward and violent people that need constant policing. Police spokespersons present the facts of the “case”.

■ At the end, a social media video of alleged perpetrators is shown presenting them dancing, drinking and wielding wood batons and swords.

■ In this material, the profile of the Roma people is that of violent criminals organised in clans, whose behaviours are backward and uncontrolled and who need constant policing.

Case study II “The film about the mafia feud in Strasbourg. In Romania, the mobsters have taken over 144 historic buildings and revolt against mobsters in Salaj! People are beaten, humiliated and robbed in the middle of the street” (Antena 3, Newsmedia), 18 October 2022

■ Both of the materials discussed only feature the Roma community as subjects, without giving them any agency. The portrayal is negative and reinforces negative stereotypes, depicting Roma as “clan” people who are prone to emotional and violent reactions, despite being victims of tragic circumstances.

■ It is important to note that the Romanian news media often only mention ethnicity when reporting on crimes, violence or domestic disputes involving Roma, while failing to mention ethnicity in cases involving ethnic Romanians.

■ Regarding the material on the interethnic conflict, it is noteworthy that only Romanian voices are presented, and there is no representation from the Roma community. Additionally, locals emphasised that the conflict only involved a specific part of the Roma community and should not be generalised to all Roma. Unfortunately, the producers of the reportage failed to investigate this fact and instead used generalising headlines.

Case study III “The Day of the Liberation of Roma, marked by cultural and spiritual events” (Trinitas TV), 20 February 2023

■ The reportage by Trinitas TV presents a commemoration event organised by the Orthodox Church in the Roma community of Sintesti to mark the abolition of slavery and liberation of Roma in Romania.

■ Two priests of Roma origin are the main protagonists of the reportage. They talk about the history of Roma in the Romani language, including the period of slavery, the situation of Roma during that time and also highlight the Roma people who fought for Romania in the two world wars. They emphasise the need for reconciliation, harmony among Roma and Romanian communities and the contributions of Roma people to the historical trajectory of Romania.

■ Young Roma pupils are also interviewed and present their works of art completed in schools. They talk about their school work and the guidance of their teacher.

■ The material presents a positive narrative about Roma, portraying them as both contributors and victims of the country of which they are citizens. The two Roma figures of authority convey an image of competence, education and leadership. Roma are portrayed as agents, not subjects of the reportage, and the material shows that Roma people are part of Romanian society. The presentation of young Roma people and their works of art reinforces a positive image that contrasts with common stereotypes and prejudices, depicting them as kind, knowledgeable and proud of their work.

■ The material can be considered a good example of using broadcasting to combat antigypsism. Roma are portrayed as leaders, with a high level of education and competence. The presentation of young Roma people conveys a sense of normalcy and integration. The objective presentation about history is meant to emphasise reconciliation, belonging and historical contribution, while also highlighting past injustice.

Italy

Case study on the media coverage of the death (suicide/murder) of a deaf and dumb young Roma man (Hasib Omerovic) during a search without a warrant at his home (La7 Channel “Piazza Pulita”), 29 September 2022

1. Introduction

■ “In the Primavalle district, north-west of Rome, Hasib Omerovic, of Roma origin, falls from the window of his house. Was Hasib beaten up by some police officers? Or did he jump into the void to escape a search

(without a warrant)? Questions that remain unanswered for now. In a climate, that of the Roman suburbs, where coexistence between Italians and foreigners is not always easy.”

■ The above is the translated subtitle of the reportage.⁸³

■ The incident concerns a deaf and dumb person who, a few days before, had been the object of hate speech on Facebook by people from his neighbourhood.

■ The victim’s sister (who was also vulnerable because of a disability) stated that her brother had been beaten up by policemen (without a warrant) at home. The use of several forms of hate speech by the people from the neighbourhood who were interviewed is evident in the reportage. There is no information as to whether an investigation of the incident is ongoing.

II. Reactions to the material

■ There is no commentary section under the video material on the TV’s website.

■ It is also unclear if the Agcom undertook any supervisory measures pursuant to the relevant normative.

■ It appears absolutely inhuman opening the reportage on such a serious event, with the words of a citizen of Rome protesting about the assignment of social housing in favour of migrants, foreigners and Roma, highlighting stereotypes regarding the huge quantity of sons of foreign families (preferential criterion for the award of social housing) and reporting that with the habits and customs of the gypsies the area would be “bastardised”, almost pointing out that the removal of the victim’s family is a positive event for maintaining peace of mind, since the presence of Roma would create dirt and disorder. The Roma family is portrayed as isolated but the report noted that it enjoyed the legitimate assignment of public housing by the municipality.

■ The first person interviewed stated a wide variety of discriminatory discourses although he highlights that he proudly belongs to that traditionally left-wing neighbourhood (which normally claims a monopoly on the protection of the weak), which had never seen the extreme right clearly win as in the last national elections.

■ The reportage also shows that, the day before the accident, some people called for measures against the young Roma man who allegedly disturbed women in the street on the Primavalle community page on Facebook. Some of the people interviewed considered the victim to be a “maniac” and others again stigmatised Roma people as “dirty” and “socially different” (to affirm that two different cultures must remain separated). Furthermore, the interview came back to the first person interviewed to show the reaction to the news that the Roma family had obtained a new social house due to the claimed perceived danger. Also on this occasion, the statements reflect the feeling of unfair privilege in favour of such foreign people, although the hypothesis of favouritism towards Roma people is highly improbable.

■ This kind of message expresses clearly the hate for people perceived as coming from abroad who take the few benefits and support available for vulnerable local people.

III. Violations of human rights and international law

■ There are indications of potential human rights violations and discrimination against the Roma community. The media insight appears to be sensationalist, with a focus on the ethnic origin of the participants and the use of derogatory language towards the Roma community. The video may also be seen as discriminatory and promoting segregation, potentially contributing to a hostile and discriminatory environment when similar situations may be repeated.

■ The statements made by the narrative voice of the journalist are not unfair. Nevertheless, the reportage persisted in explicitly emphasising the ethnicity of the victim and his family.

■ These statements have the potential to create negative stereotypes and promote discrimination against the Roma community.

■ The comments made by the people allegedly living in the same building suggest dehumanisation and reinforce negative stereotypes about a little Roma family of four people, in which both the son and daughter suffer serious disability.

83. La7 Channel “Piazza Pulita”, 29 September 2022, available at www.la7.it/piazzapulita/video/primavalle-il-caso-omerovic-e-la-convivenza-tra-italiani-e-stranieri-29-09-2022-453759.

■ This type of coverage bears no protection under Article 10 of the Convention (Freedom of expression) and may well be perceived as inciting discrimination. It clearly breaches the ethical code stated by the state-owned TV RAI network.

■ Potential infringements of prohibition of torture and of an active obligation to effectively protect fundamental rights such as the right to life, to dignity, to family and private life as protected under the Convention have been followed by violations related to discrimination, facilitation of incitement to hatred, minimisation of conditions of multiple and intersectional vulnerability, as well as minimisation of the particular psychophysical conditions that could have led the victim to be misunderstood and badly perceived by the local community where he should have been integrated and included.

IV. Conclusion

■ The video reports an incident resulting in one person's death and several evident psychological traumas for the family members who survived.

■ The media coverage potentially violates human rights and international law. Such coverage could contribute to a hostile and discriminatory environment, inciting discrimination against the Roma community. This material highlights the need for a better and timely response on the part of the media supervisory bodies in cases of irresponsible and biased reporting in the media to prevent the promotion of negative stereotypes and discrimination towards Roma.

■ A different approach is possible. On the web press, titles showed different statements as in the case of *La Repubblica*:⁸⁴ "Disabled person flies out of the window during a search", the family: "The officers grabbed him by the feet and threw him down". Prosecutors: "Attempted murder". The man is in a vigilant coma. The episode, which occurred in Primavalle on the outskirts of Rome last July, was denounced by the deputy Riccardo Magi, Ministry of Interior: "Maximum collaboration with the Public Prosecutor's Office to shed light on what happened."

■ A different journalism must be promoted, especially in similar cases over which there are shadows hanging, confirmed by the first judicial results. "Hasib Omerovic, policeman arrested accused of torture: warrant for four other officers" as reported by the paper *il Fatto Quotidiano* for instance:⁸⁵

The 36-year-old had fallen on 25 July from his home during a search by the police. In the ordinance the reconstruction of what happened in the apartment that day: threats with a knife, tied wrists and slaps that caused the man "a verifiable psychic trauma", by virtue of which he fell into the void in an attempt to flee to escape violent and threatening conduct.

■ The piece of video journalism did not respect the necessary pluralism, by interviewing Roma representatives (other than the victim's family members), the competent public officials responsible for the legitimate assignment of the social housing, but also by not mentioning in any way doubts relating to the ill-treatment, despite the dubious behaviour connected to the illegal raid on the victim's home. These aspects were undoubtedly of such journalistic importance that they should not have been overlooked, since they were much more linked to the issues of the rule of law that were intended to be treated, compared to those actually treated. Hence the report, apparently not openly praising hatred and discrimination, appears to be oriented towards the prejudice and social segregation of a minority that Italian, European and world institutions have declared worthy of particular protection, because it is the victim of multiple and intersectional discrimination.

Case study on a segment by The Specials of Rai Scuola about the genocide of Roma and Sinti, broadcast on 16 December 2022

I. Introduction

■ What is meant by the Romani terms Samudaripen and Porrajmos? It indicates the genocide of Roma and Sinti by the Nazi-fascists during the Second World War. The Rai Scuola special *The genocide of the Roma and*

84. https://roma.repubblica.it/cronaca/2022/09/12/news/sordo_vola_dalla_finestra_famiglia_accusa_polizia-365334446/.

85. www.ilfattoquotidiano.it/2022/12/21/hasib-omerovic-arrestato-poliziotto-accusato-di-tortura-avviso-di-garanzia-per-altri-4-agenti/6914009/: he allegedly tied him to a chair using an electric wire, slapped him and threatened him with a knife, terrifying him to such an extent that, in an attempt to escape the violence, Hasib Omerovic jumped out of the window. For this reason Andrea Pellegrini, a policeman from the Primavalle police station in Rome, was arrested and is now under house arrest on charges of torture. This is one of the police officers involved in the story of the 36-year-old deaf-mute man who fell from his home on 25 July 2022 during a search by the police. The Public Prosecutor's Office also charges against the agent the crime of false ideology committed by a public official in public documents. Four guarantee notices were also served to as many policemen under investigation, for various reasons, of the crime of "false ideology" committed by a public official in public documents and misdirection.

*Sinti*⁸⁶ traces the historical events that led to the genocide. And it does so on 16 December, because on this date in 1942 Heinrich Himmler ordered the deportation of Roma and Sinti living in Germany to the Auschwitz extermination camp. The episode features witnesses, experts and scholars, moving from in-depth history (regarding persecution in fascist Italy and within the Auschwitz camp) to cultural insight, with the aim of creating empathy and promoting a context of peace and inclusion, through mutual understanding between different cultures. The idea is to prevent new generations of Roma and Sinti from undergoing the same discriminatory stigmatisations at school as those conveyed by the fascist and Nazi language.

■ In this documentary the linking of ethnicity with the acts of violence and crime during the Nazi-fascist period is free from stereotypes. It is very important to note how the context is provided, and Roma are neutral objects of the reportage with opinions presented to provide a profile of the Roma people as a cultural minority to be respected and supported to emancipate.

■ The material includes snippets of interviews with Roma representatives, focusing on the richness (for example) of a culture of music and not on poor conditions.

II. Reactions to the material

■ There is no commentary section under the video material on the TV's website.

■ One of the experts expressly pointed out the genocide suffered by Roma and Sinti and the difference between Porrajmos and Samudaripen (in the Romani/Romanès language), another one recalled the importance of recognising the same dignity awarded worldwide to the Shoah to the latter.

■ In the documentary direct and indirect witnesses of the time of the deportations are heard, and the most severe problems regarding the persecutions of Roma and Sinti are discussed.

■ Furthermore, also thanks to the interview of a musician and teacher of Roma origin, the culture and customs of Roma and Sinti people are valued. In such TV broadcast product devoted to students, after provoking the right solidarity towards the innocent victims of the bloody madness of Nazism, it focuses on the positive aspects of Roma and Sinti culture.

■ This is a positive example of narrative able to provide a fair portrait of Roma and Sinti communities, consistent with RAI's code of ethics (state-owned TV network, financed in a significant way with the taxes of the Italians as well as with the proceeds of advertising).

III. Violations of human rights and international law

■ Of course, no violations of domestic and international law may be found in this TV broadcast product.

IV. Conclusion

■ The documentary can be considered a good example of using broadcasting to combat antigypsyism. Roma have been portrayed as victims but also as leaders, with a high level of education and competence. The presentation of adult and/or old Roma people conveys a sense of normalcy and integration. The objective presentation about history is meant to emphasise reconciliation, belonging and historical contribution, while also highlighting past injustice.

■ Despite the importance of the above-mentioned points related to the Roma and Sinti Holocaust, the journalists and the editorial staff demonstrated that discriminatory attitudes towards the Roma and Sinti communities may be faced using the language of culture, emphasising the solidarity of other communities (such as the Jewish one), the deep feelings lying within Roma and Sinti music, oral tradition and symbolism nowadays.

■ Both Italian and Roma experts convey an image of competence and education, and the latter also an example of emancipation and leadership. Roma have been portrayed as a European minority, and the material shows that Roma people are part of European society. The presentation of well-educated Roma artists (or old well-integrated people who witnessed the deportation) reinforces a positive image that contrasts with common stereotypes and prejudices, depicting them as kind, knowledgeable and proud of their culture and history.

■ The impact and significance of this video lie in the fact that the material does not want to simply present a positive narrative about Roma, portraying them as both contributors and victims of the continent of which

86. Rai Scuola, 16 December 2022, available at: www.raisplay.it/video/2022/12/Gli-Speciali-di-Rai-Scuola---Genocidio-dei-rom-e-sinti-3726cf79-97ab-4b80-ac08-42ffc46c92e5.html.

they are citizens, but also shows that there might be several points of contact between different cultures coexisting within the same territory.

Greece

■ We have divided the video footage into five categories:

- I. Police reports
- II. Murder of a Roma boy by a police officer
- III. Tempi train accident
- IV. Local channels
- V. Research broadcasts

The position of each video is chronological from the newest to oldest.

I. Police reports

1. ERT1 (public TV), 11 March 2023

■ Police report on drug dealing in the news. In her introduction the anchorwoman mentions the word Roma, however the word is not included in the title of the report “Drug ring busted”. The reporter says that 18 of the 19 members of the gang are Roma and related to each other.

■ Neutral reporting.

2. March 2023

■ Discussion with guests about the murder of a Roma boy by another Roma person because he had promised to give his daughter to his son and broke the agreement. After killing him the perpetrator went on TikTok and admitted that he had killed him. The one presenter says that this is unacceptable: “The crime of paedophilia and human trafficking is taking place here.” The other presenter answers that in Roma communities this is how they get married, and this is a custom. Anyone who rebels becomes the black sheep. But what will happen at the end, another journalist, a guest in the show, is wondering, how will these people be integrated? And who wants to be integrated? And the parties take advantage of them, they use them in the elections and then we all forget about them, concludes the guest journalist.

■ Neutral reporting, many opinions are presented.

3. ERT3 (public TV in Thessaloniki), 22 March 2023

■ Police report in the news about the case of parricide in a Roma settlement. Roma from the settlement of Agia Sofia and the victim’s lawyer are speaking.

■ Neutral reporting.

4. Mega, 23 March 2023

■ Report of the morning show *Time for the society* on the Mega channel on a case of murder (vendetta) in a Roma camp in Drosero Xanthi. One man killed another in cold blood for a matchmaking that ultimately did not happen. The mayor of Xanthi and Roma from the settlement are speaking.

■ The presenters emphasise that vendettas do not only take place in Roma communities but also elsewhere, such as in Crete.

■ Neutral reporting.

5. ANT1, 3 April 2023

■ Police news report on a feud between Roma groups. Careful reporting, the word Roma is mentioned just once during the report. There is no word Roma in the titles. The news anchor and the reporter are talking.

■ Neutral reporting.

II. Murder of a Roma boy, Kostas Fragoulis, by a police officer

1. ERT (public TV), 5 December 2022

■ Live broadcasting from Thessaloniki to the news titled “Relative of 16-year-old: ‘And what happened that he didn’t pay? – Did they have to kill him?’” The reporter from Thessaloniki gives the floor to a Roma person who is protesting among others asking for justice. He wonders how it is possible to kill someone for not paying €20. He admits it was a mistake but, as he underlines, even if you kill a cat, you go to jail. The anchorwoman ends up by saying that is terrible that the life of a 16-year-old kid is in danger for €20.

■ Neutral reporting.

2. Skai, 6 December 2022

■ On the *Today* morning show which was reproduced on the internet with the title “Wild clashes and explosions”, there was an extensive report about the clashes that took place the day after the shooting. The situation is described as “explosive”, “a war scene” with burnt cars and damage. While showing the video of the chase, the presenters comment that not only the perpetrator but also the victim were facing serious charges for murder. They clearly equate victim and perpetrator by saying that nobody can know what happened since we were not present at the scene.

■ “They didn’t tell them he’s an ‘ass kid’ sorry for the expression” the one presenter is wondering, while the other presenter uses the word “thug” for the victim but neither can understand how a policeman can shoot a boy in the head. Government and opposition representatives take the floor. The policeman’s statement was read and members of the victim’s family expressed their opinions.

■ Neutral reporting. It focuses on the clashes more than one might expect after the assassination attempt.

3. Skai, 6 December 2022

■ In the midday news show *Oi Atairiastoi (Mismatched)* the journalist and managing director of the channel comments: “I don’t share the defensive line but I listen to it, but let’s face it, here we have an act of stealing. From the robbery to the shooting I don’t know what happened. An examination will take place and we will see ... The government is to blame for young children not going to school and becoming beggars.” He continues: “A lot of money has been set aside for integration, even for journalism courses in a camp.” He says this mockingly. (Note that in a programme we describe below entitled *Roma, breaking the stereotypes* a Roma man, who is now a lawyer, says that it all started when he took part in these journalism seminars.) The same day at 7 a.m., on the *Today* show, when one of the presenters shows the same journalist the front page of a left-wing newspaper with the title “He killed him for €20”, he comments: “What is the DI.AS (Bicycle Police Force) for? Is it to drink coffee? What do we want from the members of the force? To sit and drink a frappé? If we want it to do its job, let it do its job!”

■ Negative reporting.

4. ANT1, 6 December 2022

■ “A 16-year-old is fighting for his life after being shot by police after a car chase” is the title of the morning show *Good morning Greece*. Discussion with journalists and invited politicians who have different views. All views are supported. The presenter and the guests agreed that the tragic event should not be made a political tool for the coming elections.

■ Neutral reporting.

5. Skai, 7 November 2022

■ Connection with Thessaloniki and reporter in the studio of the morning show *First image* with news from the police report “Roma burnt a bus and a tyre shop, closed the national highway in Agrinio”. Extensive report of damage.

■ Negative reporting, with reports of a barrage of clashes and delinquent Roma behaviour following the 16-year-old’s injury.

6. Skai, 7 December 2022

■ In the morning show *Today*, the title of which is “Battlefield on the roads”, a policeman and a lawyer are invited to comment. The presenters persistently ask the policeman why the police did not do something to prevent the chaos, and the policeman replies that it is not always possible for the police to suppress the crowd by force. After giving his wishes for a good recovery to the victim, the lawyer launches an attack on the parents who let their child engage in delinquent behaviour. Furthermore he comments that the place of the father should be in hospital near his son and not protesting out of the court.

■ Negative reporting.

7. ANT1, 7 December 2022

■ The anchorman of the central news broadcasting interviews the victim’s father. The presenter says that for €20 you don’t shoot whoever you’re chasing. The father claims that this action was racially motivated.

■ Neutral reporting. It should be noticed that below the report on YouTube are more than 700 highly racist comments against the father, fewer than 20 in favour.

8. Skai, 7 December 2022

■ A news report entitled “Roma shot police with shotguns”. The report and the reporter presenting it live in the studio focus on the clashes that took place after the attempted murder in many Roma camps throughout Greece. The presenter comments and talks about “a war zone”. At the end of the report, the homicide is mentioned. There are statements by the father of Roma teen Kostas Fragoulis, who asks for justice and calm.

■ Negative reporting, focuses on the clashes.

9. ERT1, 9 December 2022

■ In the morning show of ERT, *Connections*, live broadcasting from Thessaloniki, outside of the court with the title “Tense at this time in the courts of Thessaloniki”. The reporter points out that there is no tension, just the gathered friends and relatives of the victim are protesting in a calm way asking for justice. She gives them the floor and they say that they want justice. They want to keep a low profile. The title of the show changed to “Gathering of Roma outside the courts”.

■ Neutral reporting.

10. Star, 9 December 2022

■ In the social morning show *Truths with Zena*, which was half dedicated to the case of the murder of the 16-year-old Roma boy, reports and live broadcasting from Thessaloniki are taking place. First of all, the policeman’s testimony is presented in an extensive report. A politician, representative of the Greek far-right (alt-right) and president of the Patriotic Force of Change party is invited to the studio. He is the main commentator along with the presenter and the panellists-journalists of the show. His motto is “self-righteousness does not express civilised societies”. He was joined by a well-known lawyer, who emphasised that hundreds of Greek citizens are victims of the Roma, but not all of them are the same. What does the state do to keep these kids from being delinquent? There is creeping racism. There was also the statement of the policeman’s lawyer as well as a ballistics analyst, who stated that the policeman could not find his target because he was on a bike. He actually acquitted the policeman with his statements. Link to the president of the confederation of Greek Roma, who says that the decisions of justice (not to remand the police officer) convey the message that police violence against Roma can be arbitrary. The presenter and the guests ask the president various questions about the criminality of a huge part of the Roma community and how to stop it. The president says that is not the case. The president is not invited to the studio, the sound is not good and finally he is cut abruptly from the screen. The show closes with the report from the settlement. For the first time, a camera enters Kostas’ house and all the relatives are talking. Melodramatic reporting with background music and the reporter sympathising with the victim’s relatives, they demand justice and talk about a racist crime. The tribute closes and the show continues with another topic about disabled children. The politician comments that the Roma, because they are considered a vulnerable group, get plenty of allowances for their children while the state does not support children with disabilities.

■ Negative reporting. Although a long melodramatic report about the Roma was broadcast in the show, where the relatives of the victim were given space to speak, the comments of the guests and especially the words of the politician, who no one knows by what criteria he was invited, were offensive for the Roma and full

of stereotypes (delinquents, criminals, those receiving benefits). The comments under the report about Kostas' family posted on YouTube are overwhelmingly racist, but there are also a few sympathising with the family.

11. Skai, 9 December 2022

■ Live broadcasting with a reporter for "Police raid in Menidi, 15 arrests". Testimony of a couple whose car was hit by stones, which some Roma people were throwing while protesting. The couple complained that there was no police on the spot.

■ Negative reporting.

12. Skai, 11 December 2022

■ In the morning show *Dekatiano* the two anchors speak with the president of the Roma community and the grandfather of the victim. The title is "Prosecutorial intervention for the threats made by the father of the 16-year-old and other Roma". Both speakers are trying to be attentive and kind. The Roma president says that an effort is being made to calm spirits and prevent demonstrations and clashes. The presenters insist on asking them if they will take the law into their own hands. There is also a police representative trying to explain why the policeman was not remanded in custody. A representative of the residents of Menidi, an area in Attica where many Roma camps are concentrated, is also invited to give his opinion. He is not talking against the Roma but against the Greek state, which does nothing in order to improve the situation of Roma people. The hosts interrupt him and tell him to focus on the clashes. The title changes to "In Menidi the bullets fall like hail". The president says that the clashes have stopped and justice must be seen to be done. The presenter continues to say that there are threats by Roma people.

■ Negative reporting. Biased presenters trying to insinuate that the Roma want to take the law into their own hands.

13. ERT3, 14 December 2022

■ In the TV show *Day with colour* the reporter from Thessaloniki is broadcasting live from the funeral of the 16-year-old Roma boy. Her approach is humane and touching. The atmosphere is very heavy, there are calls for calm. The reporter stops talking and the cameraman only sends a picture with sound. It was an exceptional report, the presenter was emotionally affected.

■ Neutral reporting.

14. TV 100 Thessaloniki, 15 December 2022

■ Report in the news bulletin entitled "The funeral of 16-year-old Kostas in an atmosphere of emotion". A moving report about the funeral of Kostas Fragoulis with a description of the atmosphere of the funeral and statements of the heads of associations and federations of the Greek Roma and the Secretary General for Social Solidarity and Fight against Poverty of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Georgios Stamatis. There was only one common message: Roma ghetto walls must be broken down through the efforts of the state and the communities as well.

■ Positive reporting.

III. Tempi train accident

1. Alpha, 3 March 2023

■ In the infotainment show *Super Katerina* the panellist and the guests are talking about the "copper mafia". The guest is a policeman who says that Roma are stealing cables from the railways. A panellist corrects him and says "some Roma". They all agree but they go on talking about the Roma again.

■ Neutral reporting.

2. Skai, 13 March 2023

■ In the talk show *Atairiastoi (Mismatched)* the two anchors are discussing the copper thefts. Guests in the studio are three journalists and the president of the Roma confederation. Asked by the presenters if the copper thieves are Roma, he replies that one cannot target an entire tribe. The presenter tells the president that he is very calm. The president called on the Roma people on television not to commit such dangerous thefts

for the common good. The presenters say that this phenomenon is not only about Roma and give credit to the president for being so calm.

■ Neutral reporting. From the attitude of the presenters it seems surprising that a Roma person can be so calm and serious, but it is important that he was invited to the studio to express his opinion and it was heard that not all copper thieves are Roma.

3. Kontra, 14 March 2023

■ Commentary of a journalist who denounces this government and the previous one because they all know that Roma are stealing copper and do nothing to stop them. He also said that there are not only Roma in this “game” but non-Roma as well. He points out that he has nothing against Roma people who are his friends, and they are beautiful and nice people who care about their families.

■ Neutral reporting, speaks for all sides involved and accuses them.

4. Mega, 14 March 2023

■ In the morning talk show *Time for the society* on the Mega channel they discuss the co-operation of the Roma copper gangs with Greek officials who are working for the Greek train company. The one guest is a policeman who says that thefts are becoming more common as not only Roma but also non-Roma people are getting rich by selling scrap metal. The anchor asked the policeman why we were talking about Roma gangs. The answer is that many Roma have been arrested. The other guest, a former president of the Greek train company, says that copper is a magnet for would-be thieves, both Roma and non-Roma, because it is easy to steal, and its price is getting high because it is a stock market product.

■ Neutral reporting.

5. Open, 23 March 2023

■ In the morning show *Greece time*, the anchors are talking with the manager of the Spain–France railway line. They ask him if Roma gangs are stealing tracks and cables from their railway. The guest answers that such phenomena occur very often but the railways are immediately fixed. He does not mention whether the thieves are Roma or not.

■ Negative reporting because it implies that Roma people not only in Greece but also in other countries are thieves.

6. Alpha, 27 March 2023

■ In the morning entertainment show *Happy day* a journalist comments on the “copper thieves” and says that the Roma who live in Xanthi (a town in northern Greece) have become rich from the copper trade and spend their money in honky-tonks while at the same time potatoes are rotting (implying that they no longer work in agricultural work).

■ Negative reporting, reproduction of negative stereotypes about the Roma.

IV. Local channels

1. Crete TV, 3 May 2022

■ The show *Andriani* in the local channel of Creta TV, with the title “Roma women claim a better tomorrow” is dedicated to Roma women. The show features Roma women, members of the Roma women’s association “The Mother” who, after getting married very young and having children, some divorced, some not, all decided to work and raise their children as they think best, that is, to go to school and study in the hope that, at some point, they will be integrated into the wider community.

■ Positive reporting.

2. Super TV Peloponnese, 12 May 2022

■ Police report entitled “Gypsies who had vandalised cars in Pylia were arrested”.

■ Neutral reporting.

3. Agrinio TV, 24 May 2022

■ Report on the demands of the Roma of the city of Agrinio entitled “Meeting of the Roma of Agrinio – What they say”. In this report, Roma representatives were given space and time to state their demands. 1. As far as the education is concerned, they ask for mixed schools and not a ghetto and need help from the state in order to persuade the Roma parents to send their children to school. 2. Jobs. There should be no racism when a Roma person asks for a job. 3. They face discrimination in various places, where they want to go but they do not let them in. If there are delinquent behaviours of particular Roma, these particular Roma should be punished and not all Roma people.

■ Neutral reporting. Of the 13 comments below the link on YouTube, 10 are highly racist, three are positive.

4. ERT3, 15 November 2022

■ Following the publication of the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights’ “Roma survey” report (“FRA report”), which shows that 80% of the Roma live in poverty in Europe and in Greece this percentage amounts to 96%, a reporter interviews a representative of the Roma community in the TV programme *Perimetros*, in live broadcasting from Sofades of Karditsa. He speaks about the red loans that the gypsies received with a state guarantee, which were given now to foreign funds and this means that they will go back to the shacks. They also talked about the unequal treatment Roma experience when looking for work. The title of the report is “Roma demand equal participation in housing and health”.

■ Neutral reporting. However, in the written text on the official site of the channel, the journalist who wrote the article added her comments to the interview of the Roma representative. Her comments were mean and reproduced all the negative stereotypes about the Roma.

5. orttvgr, TV Ilias, 27 December 2022

■ In a report entitled “Struggle for integration and social dignity” and subtitled “Gypsies live in tragic conditions in the Gastouni camp” the president of the Roma pan-European association describes the miserable living conditions of the Roma and appeals to the state to take measures.

■ Neutral reporting.

6. ERT3, 4 April 2023

■ In the morning show *Day with colour*, a report was broadcast about the creation of a film by students in Alexandria Imathia. Students and their teachers are interviewed. This activity is part of a programme to support the Roma communities, with the aim of getting Roma children to school. Programme managers and Roma mediators speak about the project.

■ Positive reporting.

V. Research broadcasts

1. Alpha, 10 November 2022

■ The programme concerning the Roma with the most views on the internet is entitled “The unwritten laws in Roma societies” is an episode of the TV programme *Autopsy* on the Alpha channel which was aired in November 2021. We assume that the reason for this production was the FRA report and the video posted in TikTok by a group of Roma who explain how Roma get a divorce. This video went viral. As the official description says, the episode presents the customs and traditions of a Roma community, such as underage engagements and marriages, divorces and community “judges” who settle disputes between community members and marriages. Only Roma people speak in the show, and they explain what is happening in their communities. The narrator talks about people who have not changed their way of thinking and lifestyle for many years because they want to be different from the rest, they cannot integrate because their lifestyle does not match the lifestyle of the rest of society. The programme starts and ends with the same motto: gypsies are a proud people, welcoming and free who do not want to fit into moulds. They want to combine respect for authority with their freedom. It is emphasised that there is no support from anyone from the state. Unfortunately, instead of explaining why this community is so, this programme only reproduces negative and positive stereotypes.

■ Negative because it presents the Roma as a separate race that wants to be different and reproduces stereotypes without explaining the main reason why these communities are like this, namely poverty and their exclusion from the rest of society.

2. ANT1, 13 December 2022

■ The *Vice Specials* show “Roma: Breaking the Stereotypes” focuses on the personal stories of five Roma citizens who managed to overcome prejudice and stereotypes. From Agia Varvara in Athens to Aspropyrgos and from Kareas to Dendropotamos in Thessaloniki, all the protagonists describe how difficult it is to confront stereotypes and prejudices due to origin. On the one hand, as they explain, they must overcome the obstacles from the side of society and on the other, the obstacles put up by their own community. The protagonists of the documentary “Roma: breaking the stereotypes” are a lawyer, a master’s degree holder who is now working on his PhD, a Pamak student, a mediator and a young student who wants to become a police officer.

■ Positive reporting because it is really a show that breaks stereotypes and shows five personal stories of Roma people who managed to become what they wanted with a lot of effort, both because of the stigma they had as gypsies but also because of their stigma in their community because they wanted to take a different path.

■ It is striking that under the playback of the show on YouTube, the vast majority of comments are positive for both the show and the Roma.

APPENDIX II – TV BROADCASTERS

Bulgaria

Date	Territorial extent	Type of broadcaster	Type of the material	Type of the message	Title	Link to the material
13/01/2022	Regional/ Local	Cable/Satelite TV	other	Positive	The Roma celebrate Bangó Vasilij	Etv Haskovo
14/01/2022	National	Cable/Satelite TV	Entertainment	Positive	Greetings to Bangó Vasil from 'Riko Bend	Btv Bulgaria
10/02/2022	National	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Negative	Usury and extortion: Roma gang defrauded people of around 500,000 Bulgarian Lev	Bulgaria on air
12/02/2022	National	Internet streaming/ Podcast/TV on demand	Entertainment	Negative	Numismatic Roma line up for a coin featuring Stoyanka Mutafova	Gospodari
20/02/2022	National	Cable/Satelite TV	Entertainment	Positive	Roxana, "the queen of Romani music", with a techno version of "Djelem, Djelem"	Btv Bulgaria
26/02/2022	National	Cable/Satelite TV	Talk show	Negative	Nobody's Land: TURN ON YOUR TV!	No Man's Land
20/03/2022	National	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Negative	Gendarmerie will guard the families involved in the mass brawl in Kazanlak	Bulgaria on air
22/03/2022	National	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Neutral	Special operation in the villages of Tyazha and Manolovo, with 13 people detained	Bulgaria on air
24/05/2022	National	Cable/Satelite TV	Commentary	Positive	Young Roma are being trained as teachers in small communities	Bulgaria on air
07/06/2022	National	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Negative	The court decides on the arrest of the brothers accused in the attack on the doctor in Samokov	Bulgaria on air
10/06/2022	National	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Neutral	The Roma are the nephews of the uncle from Tarnak; brothers aged 18 and 20 have been charged	Bulgaria on air
03/07/2022	National	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Neutral	"Do you want me to blow your brains out?" – the victim in "Student City" has a suspected fractured skull	Bulgaria on air
22/07/2022	National	Cable/Satelite TV	Commentary	Neutral	"Crossroads": what is needed for the integration of the Roma community	Bulgaria on air
29/09/2022	National	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Negative	Several cities woke up surrounded by police, Roma don't understand why they are being arrested	Bulgaria on air
09/10/2022	National	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Neutral	Protests in Sofia over the murder of a taxi driver	bTV Novinite

12/10/2022	National	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Neutral	Clash meters away from the police building in Kazanlak	Bulgaria on air
14/10/2022	National	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Neutral	The Roma were beaten due to the stolen corn	bTV Novinite
16/10/2022	National	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Neutral	How is voting done unanimously in the Roma neighborhood in Ihtiman?	Btv Bulgaria
09/01/2023	National	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Neutral	“Deutsche Welle”: How a 16-year-old boy died after a police operation in Greece	Bulgaria on air
27/01/2023	National	Internet streaming/ Podcast/TV on demand	Entertainment	Negative	Confrontation Between GDNP and Vidin Roma	Gospodari
14/03/2023	National	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Neutral	Nine detained in a new raid, Roma admitted to having bags of money for the elections	Bulgaria on air
20/03/2023	National	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Neutral	About 30 Roma fought with axes and sticks in a parking lot in Kazanlak	Bulgaria on air
20/03/2023	National	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Neutral	The mass brawl in Kazanlak – Due to old feud, Roma – There were weapons and axes	Bulgaria on air
20/03/2023	National	Cable/Satelite TV	other	Negative	What are the sentiments in Roma neighborhoods before the elections?	Bulgaria on air
20/03/2023	National	Cable/Satelite TV	Commentary	Negative	Which is the bigger problem – corporate influence or the bought vote?	Bulgaria on air
22/03/2023	National	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Neutral	After the mass brawl in Kazanlak: relatives of the deceased demand justice	Hello Bulgaria
22/03/2023	National	Cable/Satelite TV	other	Positive	“I Am Roma”: a story of success and the fight against prejudice	Bulgaria on air
24/03/2023	Regional/ Local	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Negative	Fight between two Roma families in Devin. It is alleged to be due to the collection of personal IDs for the elections	Etv Haskovo
02/04/2023	National	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Neutral	Investigation: a Nova team obtains 100 votes	Nova News
03/04/2023	National	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Neutral	Action in the neighborhood in Stamboliyski: Roma claim they were beaten and pursued by police	bTV Novinite
08/04/2023	National	Cable/Satelite TV	Commentary	Positive	On international Roma Day: the teacher who breaks stereotypes	bTV Novinite
19/04/2023	National	Cable/Satelite TV	Commentary	Negative	Iskren Veselinov: the state is not taking measures and cases of Roma crime will become more frequent	VMRO BG
21/04/2023	National	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Neutral	After the massive brawl in Kazanlak: two involved families are being forcefully evicted	Hello Bulgaria

Italy

Date	Territorial extent	Type of Broadcaster	Type of the material	Type of the message	Title	Link
01/02/2022	Regional/ Local	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Positive	Giuseppe, Roma restaurant manager against prejudice: "Puglia is my land"	Rai News
06/05/2022	Regional/ Local	Cable/Satelite TV	Commentary	Positive	#EstOvest - DIGNITY FOR EVERYONE - The writer and activist Valeriu Nicolae is his commitment to guarantee dignity, rights and social progress to the Roma community in Romania	TGR
31/05/2022	National	Cable/Satelite TV	Commentary	Neutral	Rome, bonus of €10 000 to leave the Roma camp and find a home	TG COM 24
13/06/2022	National	Cable/Satelite TV	Commentary	Neutral	Milan, furious brawl between Italians and Roma	Mediaset Infinity
05/07/2022	Regional/ Local	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Neutral	Duccio Dini, the Cassation postpones everything to October. Empty journey to Rome of the boy's family members, who were waiting for the confirmation of the sentences imposed on the nomadic perpetrators, in 2018, of the tragic chase on the outskirts of Florence	Rai News
06/09/2022	National	Cable/Satelite TV	Commentary	Positive	Video of the Northern League (Lega Nord) councillor against Roma woman	La 7
29/09/2022	National	Cable/Satelite TV	Commentary	Neutral	Primavalle, the Omerovic case and the coexistence between Italians and foreigners	La 7
07/10/2022	National	Cable/Satelite TV	Talk show	Neutral	What drives a person to give the fascist salute in front of a Roma house?	La 7
04/11/2022	National	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Negative	Milan, the police evacuate the "vertical Roma camp" in via Bolla	TG 4
12/12/2022	National	Cable/Satelite TV	Commentary	Neutral	The housing emergency in Rome	Mediaset Infinity
16/12/2022	National	Cable/Satelite TV	Commentary	Positive	Genocide of Roma and Sinti	Rai Play
20/02/2023	Regional/ Local	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Neutral	Drugs, the Lamezia-San Luca axis – 49 arrested, 55 under investigation. At the centre of the investigation by the Dda and Guardia di Finanza, the Roma camp of Scordovillo	Rai News
19/03/2023	National	Cable/Satelite TV	Commentary	Negative	Roma pickpockets: "Stealing is our job"	Mediaset Infinity
21/03/2023	National	Cable/Satelite TV	Commentary	Negative	The Roma camps of shame	Mediaset Infinity

25/03/2023	Regional/ Local	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Negative	Children among waste and fires	Rai News
26/03/2023	National	Cable/Satelite TV	Commentary	Negative	The Roma pickpocket: "I steal to live"	Mediaset Infinity
27/03/2023	National	Cable/Satelite TV	Commentary	Negative	The case of pickpockets in Rome and Milan	Mediaset Infinity
02/04/2023	National	Cable/Satelite TV	Commentary	Negative	Roma pickpocket alarm	Mediaset Infinity
03/04/2023	National	Cable/Satelite TV	Commentary	Negative	How Roma pickpockets steal	Mediaset Infinity
13/05/2023	National	Cable/Satelite TV	Commentary	Neutral	"We are Roma and in Turin we occupy 100 houses" Sevko Halilovic at #Drittoerovescio	Mediaset 4

Romania

Date	Territorial extent	Type of Broadcaster	Type of the material	Type of the message	Title	Link to the material
01/05/2022	National	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Negative	Raids on Roma clans in Bârlad and Murgeni. «Arsenal» confiscated by police after a street fight	STIRILE PRO TV
22/05/2022	National	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Positive	Roma Art at the Venice Biennale	Deutsche Welle RO
07/06/2022	National	Cable/Satelite TV	News	other	A female driver beaten up in Baia Mare after hitting a child who crossed without looking. They also destroyed her car	STIRILE PRO TV
06/08/2022	National	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Negative	A mafia clan from Timisoara is blocking the expansion of a hospital. The clinic should move to a two million euro building	Observator News
10/08/2022	National	Cable/Satelite TV	News	other	Street fights in Vaslui between two families. The area was cordoned off by police and gendarmes	STIRILE PRO TV
18/08/2022	National	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Negative	Images of the disaster left behind after a raid of the Roma clans in Lugoj	Antena 3 CNN
13/09/2022	Regional/ Local	Cable/Satelite TV	Commentary	Positive	Thousands of Roma were deported from Romania to Transnistria during the Second World War (TVR)	TVR Craiova
09/10/2022	National	Cable/Satelite TV	Commentary	Negative	During the crisis, the Roma learn the lesson of economics!	Asta-i Romania
18/10/2022	National	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Negative	Revolt against the mafia in Salaj! People are beaten, humiliated and robbed in the street	Antena 3 CNN

02/11/2022	National	Cable/Satelite TV	Entertainment	Positive	Stories of good taste: culinary secrets of the Roma community (@TVR2)	TVR
06/12/2022	National	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Negative	General fight during an engagement party in Târgoviște. One of the guests hit in the head with a shovel	STIRILE PRO TV
20/02/2023	National	Cable/Satelite TV	Commentary	Positive	Roma abolition of Slavery Day, marked by cultural and spiritual events	TRINITAS TV
28/02/2023	National	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Neutral	Dorin Ciobă announces that the Roma want to sue the Orthodox Church for the years of slavery	Antena 3 CNN
16/03/2023	National	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Negative	America, terrorised by a clan from Vâlcea. Luxury cars worth 800 000 euros, confiscated from robbers	Antena 3 CNN
17/03/2023	National	Cable/Satelite TV	Commentary	other	Romanian Parliament: Interview with Cătălin-Zamfir Manea, deputy of the Roma Party Association	TVR
18/03/2023	National	Cable/Satelite TV	Entertainment	Positive	From the life of the Roma – 18 March 2024	NationalTV
28/03/2023	National	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Negative	The movie of Strasbourg mafia clashes. In Romania, the mafia took over 144 historical buildings	Antena 3 CNN
29/03/2023	National	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Negative	Five Romanians died and four others were seriously injured, after a car chase broadcast on Facebook video	Romania TV
06/04/2023	Regional/ Local	Cable/Satelite TV	Commentary	Positive	Young Roma can change mentalities	TVR Craiova
08/04/2023	National	Cable/Satelite TV	Commentary	Positive	The Roma, the culture of survival. On 8 April, International Roma Day, a few pages of history	TVR INFO

Greece

Date	Territorial extent	Type of Broadcaster	Type of the material	Type of the message	Title	Link to the material
11/01/2022	National	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Neutral	Roma demand equal participation in housing, health and work	ERT1
03/05/2022	Regional/ Local	Cable/Satelite TV	other	Positive	Roma women - their lives and their dreams	KRITI TV
20/05/2022	Regional/ Local	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Neutral	Meeting of the Roma of Agrinio – What they say	AGRINIO TV
12/06/2022	National	Cable/Satelite TV	Talk show	Negative	Portosalte comments on the shooting of the 16-year-old by a police officer	SKAI
12/07/2022	National	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Negative	Clashes with Roma: police commander shot in the face – 10 police officers injured	SKAI CHANNEL
12/07/2022	National	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Negative	Stones against an ambulance from Roma in Zevgolatio – It was transporting an intubated patient	SKAI
12/08/2022	National	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Negative	Roma burnt a bus and a tyre shop – They closed the national road in Agrinio	SKAI
12/09/2022	National	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Neutral	Tense outside the court	ERT1
11/10/2022	National	Cable/Satelite TV	other	Negative	The unwritten laws in Roma societies	ALPHA TV
12/11/2022	National	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Negative	Grandfather on SKAI: if the police officer is not prosecuted, we will take the law into our own hands	SKAI
13/11/2022	National	Cable/Satelite TV	other	Positive	Roma: breaking the stereotypes	VICE SPECIAL, ANTENNA
15/11/2022	National	Cable/Satelite TV	other	Neutral	A live interview from Sofades, Karditsa, featuring a representative of the Roma community	ERT3
07/12/2022	National	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Negative	P. Mantouvalos on a 16-year-old: "They should have taught him some things about delinquency"	SKAI
07/12/2022	National	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Neutral	The anchorman of the central news broadcasting interviews the victim's father	ANTENNA
09/12/2022	National	Cable/Satelite TV	Commentary	Negative	Alitheies-me-ti-zina – Truths with Zina	START TV
14/12/2022	National	Cable/Satelite TV	other	Neutral	Broadcasting live from the funeral of the 16-year-old Roma boy	ERT3

15/12/2022	Regional/ Local	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Neutral	The funeral of 16-year-old Kostas in an atmosphere of emotion	TV100
27/12/2022	Regional/ Local	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Positive	Struggle for integration and social dignity	OPT NEWS
23/02/2023	Regional/ Local	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Neutral	Transport of Roma to other camps	NEW KRITI TV
04/03/2023	National	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Neutral	Vendetta between young men in Mesogeia	ANTENNA
13/03/2023	National	Cable/Satelite TV	Entertainment	Negative	The Roma steal cables from the railway	SUPER KATERINA, ALPHA TV
13/03/2023	National	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Neutral	The thefts of copper and issues in the OSE (Hellenic Railways Organization) network	SKAI CHANNEL
14/03/2023	National	Cable/Satelite TV	Commentary	Neutral	Roma copper gangs	KONTRA CHANNEL
14/03/2023	National	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Neutral	Employees along with Roma steal rails and stations	MEGA CHANNEL
14/03/2023	National	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Neutral	How other countries treat copper gangs?	OPEN CHANNEL
21/03/2023	National	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Neutral	Vendetta in Drosero. The victim's relatives threaten the perpetrator's family	MEGA CHANNEL
22/03/2023	National	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Neutral	By the side of the young patricide stands his mother	ERT3
23/03/2023	National	Cable/Satelite TV	Talk show	Neutral	The perpetrator and his sons were remanded in custody for the murder in Drosero	MEGA CHANNEL
04/04/2023	National	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Positive	A report about the creation of a film by students in Alexandria Imathia	ERT3
03/11/2023	National	Cable/Satelite TV	News	Neutral	Police arrested a gang of drug dealers. 18 members were Roma	ERT1

This report, commissioned by the Council of Europe through the European Union–Council of Europe Equality and Freedom from Discrimination for Roma (EQUIROM) joint programme, delves into the portrayal of Roma in television broadcasts across Bulgaria, Greece, Italy and Romania.

The study, which ran from January 2022 to April 2023, outlines national legal frameworks and scrutinises more than 20 recent broadcasts from licensed/registered broadcasters per country, analysing how media narratives do or do not perpetuate stereotypes, sensationalism and discrimination against the Roma community.

How is the same piece of information reported differently from one channel to another? What is the impact of repeated negative portrayals? How is it possible to counterbalance the power of images? The report answers these questions and advocates for a multifaceted approach to challenging the negative portrayal of Roma in the media. It makes recommendations primarily to media professionals (broadcasters, producers, journalists) and regulatory bodies, but also to civil society and the public to raise awareness of biased narratives and how they affect individual and social behaviour.

The implementation of the recommendations has the potential to foster a more accurate and inclusive representation of Roma in the media. By identifying bias, challenging stereotypes and combating antigypsyism, this report aims to contribute to broader societal efforts for equality and understanding.

The member states of the European Union have decided to link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders.

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