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ROMANI. EDUCATION, SEGREGATION and the EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR REGIONAL OR MINORITY LANGUAGES

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Introduction[1]

For centuries Romani was rarely perceived publicly; it was marginalised and, if acknowledged at all, stigmatised, as were its speakers. Scientific interest in the language and culture of the Roma – reliable descriptions date back to the 18th century – also remained peripheral and little considered until well into the 20th century. Only during the emancipation movement, the so-called *Romani Movement* from the second half of the 20th century onwards, was Romani developed into a factor of cultural identity by the Roma themselves. It subsequently entered the wider public awareness for the first time.[2]

The Roma's self-organisation was on the one hand a direct consequence of the genocide during the Nazi terror regime, but was also closely connected to an increased democratisation process in Europe after the Second World War and the associated increasing acceptance of minorities and their languages both at the political level as well as by dominant population groups. One of the results of this general policy development was the *European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages*, which has so far been ratified and implemented in 25 countries, thereby making a major contribution to establishing Romani in the public European awareness.

Due to the specific legal and sociolinguistic situation of Romani, which repeatedly leads to misunderstandings and is therefore subject to an intensive and controversial discussion process, the Charter's implementation also occurs under special conditions.[3] Romani as a language which is passed on orally and spoken in all regions of Europe, but which is seldom used in public contexts, differs from most other European minority languages. These are typically regionally defined, often have a written tradition and usually also serve in public contexts.

The study at hand tries to illustrate both this specific situation of Europe's minority language with the largest number of speakers, as well as to outline the discussions and developments concerning Romani as part of its treatment by the *Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.*

Starting from an introductory clarification of the terms *Romani* and *Romanes*, the first part deals with the structural and sociolinguistic characteristics of Romani whose understanding is essential for an adequate handling of this language as an equal European minority language. The characterisation of Romani as a heterogeneous cluster of varieties with a homogeneous core also applies to most of the world's

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1 Parts of this study are based upon research conducted in the context of the RomIdent-Project (09-HERA-JRP-CD-FP-030).

2 An overview of the emancipation movement is available online at *Factsheets on Roma / History / 6.2 Institutionalisation and Emancipation* at <http://romafacts.uni-graz.at/>.

3 None of the individual characteristics of Romani is unique. The unique feature of Romani within European minority languages results exclusively from the sum of its individual features.

6000 to 7000 languages, as does the fact that, from a sociolinguistic perspective, it is a dominated language whose speakers are always plurilingual due to the dominance of other languages, first and foremost the respective standardised national languages.

The position of Romani in the educational system and the segregation of Romani children in schools are subsequently discussed. The various forms of segregation – school prohibition to marginalisation in the classroom – not only prevent the use of Romani as the language of education, which is by far the lesser of two evils, but deny Romani children their human right to equal opportunities in education. The subsequent chapter about Romani in the context of the *Charter for Regional or Minority Languages* also primarily, but not exclusively, deals with education.

The following discussion under the heading "Standardisation and Codification" has a focus on language planning and tries to demonstrate that Romani cannot be developed on the basis of the experiences of the emancipation of current national languages and established minority languages but that it requires more subtle approaches due to its specific situation. Regarding the still controversial discussion about standardisation, it has to be stressed that any initiative for the promotion of the Romani language has to be perceived as a major contribution to the emancipation of Roma in public life and education. Any improvement in the status of Romani through its expansion into formal public domains of usage is highly welcome. Such initiatives are fully in line with the Council of Europe's strategy to support the Roma in their efforts to integrate into society on an equal basis.

However, the diversity of Romani always has to be taken into account in the context of such undertakings. The importance of plurality is rooted in the fact that both Romani identity and Romani as a language of socialisation are linked to local and regional varieties or dialects. These need to be taken into account and integrated into the teaching of Romani at the local level, especially to children who have Romani as their first language. Only by taking these factors into account will a common written Romani be successful or generally acceptable to speakers of Romani regardless of dialect and thus successfully contribute to social development, integration and emancipation.

1 Some notes on denominations

The denomination for the language of the *Roma*, *Sinti*, *Calé* and most other European population groups pejoratively labelled as gypsies is *Romani* or *Romanes*.[4]

- *Romanes* is derived from an adverb: *Džanes romanes?* 'Do you know/speak "roma"?' Romanes is used almost exclusively in German; most probably because it is also used by the Sinti, who are or have been living for a long time in the German-speaking areas of Europe.
- *Romani* is derived from an adjective: *romani čhib* 'Romani tongue, Romani language'. Romani – often spelt Romany in English texts – is used internationally. Moreover, most names of New-Indo-Aryan languages, to which Romani is genetically affiliated, end in -i: *Assami, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Maharathi, Panjabi,* etc. The international name thus simultaneously implies its kinship to the language group.

In the following, exclusively the term Romani is used for the Romani language.[5] Single Romani varieties are labelled *Lovara Romani, Sepečides Romani, Sinti Romani* etc.; meaning: the Romani varieties of the *Lovara* ('horse dealers' < hun[6] *lo* 'horse'), *Sepečides* ('basket weavers' < tur *sepet* 'basket'), the *Sinti*.

The etymology of the ethnonym 'Sinti' is unclear. It has nothing to do with the region of Sindh in the Northwest of the Indian subcontinent. It is a recent denomination. Until the 17th century the Sinti were referred to as *Kale* 'blacks', a denomination which most probably also was used as endonym; cp the *Calé* of the Iberian peninsula and the Finnish or rather Scandinavian *Kaale*.

In European countries where Sinti dominate the political movement for emancipation, equal opportunities and human rights, the term 'Sinti and Roma' is used. The international representation associated to the Council of Europe uses the label 'Roma and Travellers': *European Roma and Travellers Forum* (ERTF). A denomination which – on the one hand – erroneously associates Roma with nomadism and – on the other hand – subsumes groups which don't speak or rather never have spoken Romani. Some of the latter are labelled 'Travellers' and use this denomination also endonymically.

The Romani speech community is subsumed under the cover term *Roma* in this paper. This is in conformity with the convention of the European Union. In EU documents only Roma is used for this heterogeneous population which consists of citizens of almost all European countries.

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4 The restriction indicated by "most other" refers to *Bayash*, who speak an ancient Romanian dialect, to *Yeniche* people, who speak varieties of German with a special vocabulary, to *Travellers*, who speak *Shelta*, *Gammon* or *Cant* that are varieties of English or rather Hiberno-English with heavy influences from Irish respectively Scots and influences from Gaelic, etc.

5 Note that in English, *Romani* is generally used as an adjective: Romani history, Romani pupils, etc.

6 The abbreviations – hun, tur, etc. – used for languages in this paper correspond to the ISO 639-3 standard.

2 Romani: linguistic structure and sociolinguistic situation

Before trying to elaborate on the structure and situation of Romani it is necessary to discuss some prejudices, apparent contradictions, and prevailing ambiguities in connection with Romani.

2.1 Some popular assumptions about the language(s) of the Roma

Popular assumptions about the language(s) of the Roma are generally pejorative; an attitude which results from stigma transfer: Culture and language of a disregarded and stigmatised people cannot be equal to those of full-fledged nations. The prejudices against the language(s) of the Roma can be listed as follows:

- gibberish,
- mixed language(s),
- jargon(s),
- different languages,
- defective language.

Since centuries the idioms used by Roma are stigmatised as gibberish and even today one can hear opinions similar to that of Johann Christoph Wagenseil who wrote in his book "De Civitate Norimbergensis Commentario" of 1697 that

> *Roma are German-born Jews and their language is a mixture of German, Yiddish, Hebrew, and phantasmagorical words.*

Although the other opinions listed also do not apply to Romani, they relate to the communicative reality of some groups of Roma or population groups which often are associated with Roma.

As a result of language shift Roma in Great Britain, Spain, etc. use so called mixed varieties or Pararomani varieties. Linguistically these idioms – *Angloromani, Caló,* etc. – are varieties of the respective majority languages – English, Spanish – with lexical elements of Romani. Sociolinguistically and according to the speakers these varieties are perceived as the language of the respective speech community. The British *Romanichal* use 'Romani' endonymically for their language, which linguistically is labelled as *Angloromani* and consequently as a variety of English. Pararomani varieties are the result of sociolinguistic developments at the fringes of Europe and have to be distinguished from inflected Romani which – as will be outlined briefly in the following chapter – is a New-Indo-Aryan language.

Similarly, the assumption that Roma use jargons – i.e. varieties of (majority) languages with a special non-standardised vocabulary – does not meet the definition of Romani. But just as there are mixed languages with Romani elements there also exist jargons with Romani vocabulary. The *Yeniche* people – mobile traders of non-Romani origin who also have been forced to live on the fringes of society – use varieties of German with special vocabularies. These also comprise words originating from Romani which result from contact primarily with Sinti. Yeniche and Sinti have been resp. are still sharing economical niches as mobile traders.

There is also no denying that Roma speak various languages: As a rule, adult speakers of Romani are plurilingual and have competence at least in the language of the respective majority population. Furthermore, there are Roma who have undergone language shift and don't speak Romani any more. Apart from speech communities using Pararomani varieties this is particularly true for Roma who are or have been living in Hungary and Romania for centuries. Whereas Hungarian speaking Roma, sometimes pejoratively labelled *Romungri*, reside almost exclusively in Hungary, Romanian speaking Roma – rum *Băeşi*[7] – also have migrated to Central Serbia, the western Vojvodina and Croatia – srb/cro *Bojaši* – as well as to Hungary – hun *Beás*. *Boyash* or *Bayash* speech communities use an archaic dialect of Romanian which is recognised as a language of the Roma in Hungary and Serbia. Consequently, in Hungary as well as in Serbia there are two languages of the Roma which differ from the national language: Romani and *Beás* resp. *Bojaši*.

Regarding the structure of Romani the presumption that Roma speak a defective language is mere stigma transfer. Structurally Romani is as simple or complex as any other Indo-European language including almost all European national languages. Functionally Romani is restricted to informal domains; i.e. it is almost exclusively used for internal communication and functions as intra-group vernacular in domains of private and everyday life. This functional limitation is a typical feature of dominated minority languages. As a rule minority speech communities participating in public life are bilingual and use the dominant language of the majority population for intergroup communication as well as in formal domains. This holds true for all stateless languages of European minority communities. As other dominated groups Roma are prone to linguistic assimilation or rather language loss and not only Romani but also languages of other marginalised groups contributed to special vocabularies of jargons used by fringe groups of majority populations. In no way, Romani has to be treated as a special case among the languages of the worlds. It functions like each other minority language. The only difference with respect to other languages of Europe is the attitude of large parts of the majority towards Romani. It has been and it still is stigmatised corresponding to the marginalisation and discrimination of its speakers. But even this is not a unique characteristic, it also holds true for other languages.

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7 Aside of *Băeşi*, there are other linguistically assimilated groups of Roma living in Romania: *Lingurari*, *Rudari*, etc.

Romani is neither structurally nor functionally limited. It meets the communicative needs of its speakers, which is the primary function of any language. It also has the ability to expand into formal domains, which is an ongoing process triggered by the European-wide emancipatory movements since the 1970s. Basically Romani is equal to all other languages of the world.

2.2 Romani: affiliation and structure

From a genetic point of view Romani belongs – as already mentioned – to the Indo-Aryan sub branch of the Indo-Iranian branch of the Indo-European language family. It is one of the Indo-Aryan diaspora languages which are almost exclusively spoken outside of the Indian subcontinent. Romani is spoken in Europe since the Middle Ages.[8] Although its genetic affiliation is Indo-Aryan it is an European language and an integral part of the linguistic and cultural plurality of Europe.

From a structural point of view Romani may be described as a heterogeneous cluster of varieties with a homogeneous core – a common morphology and a common lexicon – but without any generally accepted homogenising standard. The latter is often perceived as a shortcoming but relates to the vast majority of the languages of the world. Only 2-3% of the approximately 6-7.000 languages have developed a generally accepted standard. First and foremost, a standard is a means of administration which is developed by a politically, economically and culturally dominant group to control and rule a territory inhabited by different groups of speakers. On the one hand, a dominant group imposes a standard on dominated groups, on the other hand, dominated groups take over the standard to participate in political power. Roma never have dominated over territories and ruled over others and consequently their language has not developed a standard variety; a "fate" Romani shares with the majority of the languages of the world.[9]

The same applies for the characterisation of Romani as a variety cluster. Heterogeneity, or better plurality of dialects is a typical feature of the languages of numerically large and geographically widespread speech communities.[10] There is a tendency in Romani linguistics to identify – at least tentatively – seven dialect groups (Matras 2005b).

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8 Romani is spoken all over Europe and in all countries which attracted immigrants from Europe. It is also traditionally present in nowadays Turkey with numerically small groups living in the Kurdish region of Iran.

9 Against the background of these facts, any proclamation of a Romani standard remains a mere symbolic political act without any functional implications.

10 Even the languages of numerically quite small and geographically relatively consistent speech communities like those of the *Ladin* and *Rumansh* speaking populations of Italy and Switzerland are heterogeneous variety clusters with an artificial standard which is not accepted by all of the speakers.

Table 1: Classification of Romani varieties / dialects

		etc.		*etc.*
		ROMANES		*Xaladitka*
		Manouche		*Polska*
(Errumantxela †)	*(Angloromani)*	*Estrexarja*	*(Scandoromani)*	*Lotfika*
(CALÓ ?†?)	*Welsh ?†?*	Sinti Manuš	*Kaalo*	*Lithuanian*
IBERIAN	BRITISH	NORTHWESTERN		NORTHEASTERN

ROMANI

BALKAN				VLAX		CENTRAL	
	ARLI		"zis dialects"	Southern	Northern	Southern	Northern
Iranian	*Krim*	South-Italian	*Bugurdži*	*Agia Varvara*	*KALDERAŠ*	*Prekmurje*	*Bergitka*
	Sepečides		*Drindari*	*Čerhari*	*LOVARA*	*Roman*	*Bohemian †*
	URSARI		*Kalajdži*	*GURBET*	*Mačvaja*	*ROMUNGRO*	*East-Slovak*
	etc.			*etc.*	*etc.*	*etc.*	*etc.*

Groups / dialects or varieties / (Para-Romani varieties) / DIALECT CLUSTER

The dialect names used in table 1 are quite inhomogeneous. Besides trade labels – *Kalderaš* 'kettle smith' < rum *căldáre* 'kettle' – denominations relating to the status of a group – *Arlije* < tur *yerli* 'local', *Čerhari* < rom *čerha* 'tent' – also ethnonyms like *Finnish*, *Polska*, *Welsh* and toponyms are used: *Agia Varvara,* St. Barbara near Athens, *South Italian* stands for a group of dialects, i.a. *Abruzzian* and *Calabrian Romani*, which most probably are an early split of the Balkan group, *Mačvaja* are Californian Roma originating from the Serbian region of Mačva, etc..

The composition of the Romani population of a single especially western European country is quite heterogeneous: So called first migrants who came during the 15^{th} century to Western Europe are by far outnumbered by later migrants. A second migration movement with consequences for Europe and beyond started in the middle of the 19^{th} century. The so called Vlax[11] migration was triggered by the abolishment of bondage and slavery in Walachia and Moldavia and reached Western Europe at the brink of the 19^{th} to the 20^{th} century. During the labour migrations from the Balkans which began in the 1960s also Roma came to Western Europe. Towards the end of the 20^{th} century east-west migration of Roma intensified as a consequence of the Yugoslavian war and the downfall of communism.

11 *Vlax* derives from rum *Valahia*, indicating that Vlax Roma originate from Walachia and adjacent Moldavia.

Variety clusters basically can be categorised by continuity. A continuous variety cluster or rather a dialect continuum is spread almost evenly over a certain area. Adjacent dialects are mutually intelligible. But the more geographically distant dialects are, the higher is the possibility of mutual unintelligibility. Because of permanent forced migration of its speakers the Romani variety cluster is discontinuous, as are the sub-clusters which form the Romani of a particular country. Discontinuity implicates partial unintelligibility, which in most cases is due to the influence of different contact languages. Partial unintelligibility might cause problems for the speakers of a specific Romani variety to accept other varieties. But disapproval of other varieties is often triggered by a difference in status between Romani speech communities. Therefore, communities who attribute themselves a higher status than the others – e.g. because of longer residence in a country – tend to stress differences between the varieties instead of favouring similarities when the language question arises.[12] This is a psychosocial phenomenon that, under no circumstances, challenges the status of Romani as one language. The fact that Romani has a homogeneous core indicates that it is one language and, consequently, that its speakers have to be treated as one ethnolinguistic group.

As mentioned above, the structural homogeneity of Romani is rooted in morphology and a common pre-European vocabulary. This lexical core consists of words that etymologically can be traced back to Indo-Aryan, Iranian, Armenian and Byzantine Greek roots.[13] According to Boretzky (1992) this vocabulary comprises about 700 roots from Indian, likely no more than 100 roots from Persian and other Iranian languages, at least 20 from Armenian and up to 250 from Byzantine Greek. This total of more than 1000 lexemes, however, does not exist in any variety in its full amount.

Table 2 gives an impression how single words of the pre-European vocabulary are preserved in individual Romani varieties of six of the dialect groups and their accompanying sub groups which are listed in table 1.

12 For sure, these differences have to be taken into account in Romani teaching, but they should not be used politically to divide Roma into separate groups with different status, etc.

13 The pre-European loan strata of Romani have made possible a reconstruction of the migratory route followed by Romani speakers. After their emigration from the north-west of the Indian subcontinent, the first sustainable language contact took place in what was at the time Sassanide Persia. Since Romani does not dispose of any Arabic loans at all, it can be assumed that Romani speakers must have left the Persian region before the hybridisation of the Iranian and Arabic cultures. They moved on via Armenia into the Byzantine Empire, where they stayed for a longer period of time. This assumption is supported by loans from Armenian on the one hand, and a strong influence of Byzantine Greek that by far exceeds mere lexical loans, on the other.

Table 2: Lexical cognates of Romani varieties[14]

Arlije	Bugurdži	Gurbet	Kalderaš	Roman	E-Slovak	Lithuanian	Kaalo	Sinti	Welsh	gloss
baxt	*bah*	*baxt*	*baxt*	*bast*	*baxt*	*bax*	*baxt*	*baxt*	*baxt*	'luck'
buti	*buci*	*bući*	*bući*	*buti*	*buťi*	*buťi*	*butti*	*buti(n)*	*buti*	'work'
dela	*dela*	*del*	*del*	*del*	*del*	*dêl*	*dela*	*del*	*del*	'(s)he gives'
džala	*džala*	*džal*	*źal*	*džal*	*džal*	*džal*	*džela*	*džal*	*džal*	'(s)he goes'
ofto	*ohto*	*oxto*	*oxto*	*ofto*	*oxto*	*oxto*	*oxta*	*oxto*		'eight'
gras	*gras*	*gra*	*grast*	*gra*	*grast*	*graj*	*graj*	*graj*	*graj*	'horse'
kalo	*kalo*	*kalo*	*kalo*	*kalo*	*kalo*	*kalo*	*kaalo*	*kalo*	*kalo*	'black'
jevend	*jeven*	*jivend*	*ivend*	*jevend*	*jevend*		*ven*	*vend*	*vend*	'winter'
šukar	*šukar*	*šukar*	*šukar*	*šukar*	*šukar*	*šukar*		*šukar*	*šukar*	'beautiful'

oxto < grc / *grast* < arm / *baxt* < ira

If we consider that Roma have been living dispersed and to some extent in small isolated groups all over Europe since centuries and always have been under massive pressure to assimilate linguistically the single cognates in table 2 show amazing correspondence. Their similarity resembles that of cognates of dialect continua and demonstrates the homogeneity of Romani.

The lexicon of a single Romani variety contains an average of 500 pre-European lexemes which are part of the basic vocabulary.[15] The rest, or rather the vast majority of lexemes of a Romani variety is made up of loans of European languages. This is caused by the minority status of Romani and the dominance of majority languages in contact situations and is under no circumstances a symptom of deficiency.[16]
The homogeneity of the morphological core of Romani only can be outlined and dem-

14 *Bugurdži* 'drill makers' and *Gurbet* 'strangers' are denominations of Turkish origin: tur *burgu* 'drill'; tur *gurbet* 'strangers' – the meaning of the latter indicates a later migration into Ottoman territories from Walachia. *Roman* is the self designation of the Burgenland Roma for their south-central Romani variety: *Roman* < *Romani*. The Burgenland is the easternmost county of Austria. Because Sinti – especially elders living among German speaking majorities – perceive their language as tabooed in-group marker, which has to be kept secret from the *Gadže*, only words of a generic variety listed in Finck (1903) are used in this paper.

15 The basic vocabulary of a language consists of lexical items referring to the most common and universal elements of human experience, such as universal features of the environment, parts of the body, common activities, low cardinal numbers, etc.

16 As any specific speech community is in contact with other communities lexical loans are a sociocultural reflex of these contacts and consequently a common feature of all languages: Almost 70% of the English vocabulary are loans, mainly from Romance respectively Latin. Even the lexicon of Japanese – the language of a culture which is perceived as highly unique and homogeneous – has approximately 50% loans from Chinese and 10% from English with approximately less than 35% "original" words.

onstrated in this context. It characterises the inflectional and derivational morphology of nouns and verbs as well as the so called integration morphology, the patterns used to integrate loans into Romani.[17]

Table 3: Singular declension of pre-European nouns of Romani varieties

case	Arlije	Bugurdži	Gurbet	Kalderaš	Roman
Nominative [Accusative]	*manuš* *jag*	*manuš* *jag*	*manuš* *jag*	*manuš* *jag*	*manuš* *jag*
Oblique [Accusative]	*manuš-e* *jag-a*	*manuš-es* *jag-a*	*manuš-es* *jag-a*	*manuš-ês* *jag-a*	*manuš-e* *jag-a*
Dative	*manuš-es-(k)e* *jag-a-ke/-ce*	*manuš-es-ke* *jag-a-ke*	*manuš-es-ke* *jag-a-ke*	*manuš-ês-kê* *jag-a-kê*	*manuš-es-ke* *jag-a-ke*
Ablative	*manuš-es-tar* *jag-a-tar*	*manuš-es-tar* *jag-a-tar*	*manuš-es-tar* *jag-a-tar*	*manuš-ês-tar* *jag-a-tar*	*manuš-es-tar* *jag-a-tar*
Locative	*manuš-es-te* *jag-a-te*	*manuš-es-te* *jag-a-te*	*manuš-es-te* *jag-a-te*	*manuš-ês-te* *jag-a-te*	*manuš-es-te* *jag-a-te*
Instrumental Sociative	*manuš-eja* *jag-a-je*	*manuš-es-(s)a* *jag-a-sa*	*manuš-es-(s)a* *jag-a-sa*	*manuš-ês-sa* *jag-a-sa*	*manuš-eha* *jag-a-ha*
Genitive	*manuš-es-(k)oro* *jag-a-koro*	*manuš-es-koro* *jag-a-koro*	*manuš-es-ko* *jag-a-ko*	*manuš-ês-ko* *jag-a-ko*	*manuš-es-kero* *jag-a-kero*
Vocative	*manuš-a* *jag-ija*	*manuš-a* *jag-ija*	*manuš-a* *jag-e*	*manuš-eja* *jag-ije/o*	*manuš(-a)* *jag(-e)*

case	E-Slovak	Lithuanian	Kaalo	Sinti	Welsh
Nominative [Accusative]	*manuš* *jag*	*manuš* *jag*	*manuš* *jang*	*manuš* *jag*	*manuš* *jag*
Oblique [Accusative]	*manuš-es* *jag-a*	*manuš-es* *jag-a*	*manuš-es* *jang-a*	*manuš-es* *jag-a*	*manuš-es* *jag-a*
Dative	*manuš-es-ke* *jag-a-ke*	*manuš-es-ke* *jag-a-te*	*manuš-es-ke* *jang-a-ke*	*manuš-es-ke* *jag-a-ke*	*manuš-es-ki* *jag-a-ki*
Ablative	*manuš-es-tar* *jag-a-tar*	*manuš-es-tar* *jag-a-tar*	*manuš-es-ta* *jang-a-ta*	*manuš-es-ter* *jag-a-ter*	*manuš-es-te* *jag-a-te*
Locative	*manuš-es-te* *jag-a-te*	*manuš-es-te* *jag-a-te*		*manuš-es-te* *jag-a-te*	*manuš-es-ti* *jag-a-ti*
Instrumental Sociative	*manuš-eha* *jag-a-ha*	*manuš-es-(s)a* *jag-a-sa*	*manuš-eha* *jang-a-ha*	*manuš-eha* *jag-a-ha*	*manuš-esa* *jag-a-sa*
Genitive	*manuš-es-kero* *jag-a-kero*	*manuš-es-k(r)o* *jag-a-k(r)o*	*manuš-es-k(ier)o* *jang-a-k(ier)o*	*manuš-es-kro* *jag-a-kro*	*manuš-es-k(er)o* *jag-a-k(er)o*
Vocative	*manuš-eja* *jag-ije*	*manuš-a* *jag-e*		*manuš(-a)* *jag(-a)*	*manuš-aja* *jag-a*

manuš 'human being', jag 'fire' / brackets ( ) indicate variety internal variation

17 One of the striking features of Romani is the fact that this integration morphology has been borrowed from Byzantine Greek (Bakker 1997). For a detailed presentation of the structure of Romani see Matras (2002).

To demonstrate the morphological homogeneity of Romani table 3 on the previous page shows the singular declension of pre-European nouns ending in a consonant of nine Romani varieties belonging to five dialect groups and their sub groups. Besides the fact that the lexical morphemes – *manuš* [noun masculine] 'human being' and *jag* [noun feminine] 'fire' – are identical in all the varieties, also the grammatical morphemes are quite consistent and only show little variation. As indicated by different alignment in table 3, the eight cases of Romani are organised into three primary and five secondary cases.

The primary cases are nominative, oblique and vocative. As marked in square brackets, the accusative functions are performed by both nominative and oblique: For discourse prominent entities which in most cases are characterised by the semantic feature [+ animate] the oblique functions as accusative: *Dikhav manušes.* 'I see a human being.'. For nouns that lack discourse prominence and mostly have the feature [– animate] the nominative functions as accusative: *Dikhav jag.* 'I see a fire.'. The third of the primary cases, the vocative, is preserved in at least some fossilised forms in most varieties: But it is prone to be lost and substituted by the nominative if the primary contact language does not dispose of a morphological vocative itself. As most of the languages of the Balkans have special vocative forms Romani varieties of this region have preserved the vocative. Varieties with i.a. German as primary contact language have only a few lexicalised forms left and the nominative has taken over the vocative functions. In table 3 this is indicated by brackets in the columns for Roman and Sinti which are used since centuries in German speaking regions.

The five secondary cases – dative, ablative, locative, instrumental/sociative, genitive – are characterised by so called secondary suffixes which are added to the oblique.[18] Variation is considerable low with Welsh showing the most differing forms among varieties and the genitive among cases. The latter is due to the contraction of the suffix *-kero* > *-kro* > *-ko*. The second process contributing to variation is the assimilation of the first vowel to the ending: *-kero* > *-koro.* As the genitive functions i.a. as attributive adjective with gender and number agreement[19] there is also a feminine form which shows assimilation: *-keri* > *-kri* > *-ki* respectively *-keri* > *-kiri,* whereas *-kere, etc.* is the corresponding plural for both genders. The variation of the instrumental/sociative is caused by the reduction of *ss* > *s* > *j* > *h.*

Although it covers only a condensed and limited excerpt of the grammatical structure this partial outline of the noun declension illustrates both the complexity and the homogeneity of Romani.

18 This agglutinative aspect of Romani is typical for New-Indo-Aryan languages.

19 Thus Romani also disposes of a special genitive noun phrase construction.

2.3 The sociolinguistic situation of Romani

The sociolinguistic situation of Romani reflects the sociopolitical and the sociocultural status of its speakers. Consequently Romani has to be described as a

- primarily oral,
- functionally restricted,
- dominated,
- stateless
- diaspora language with non-monolingual speakers.

Romani is a language that until recently has not existed in a written form and has exclusively been passed on orally. It has not developed a generally accepted written standard and, as a consequence, no common prescriptive norms. This linguistic situation reflects the sociopolitical situation of the Roma: Politically, economically and culturally marginalised, ethnically stigmatised, discriminated against and persecuted up to genocide, the Roma could only survive in small groups which led to the geographical and social heterogeneity that still exists today. Consequently, Roma have never been in a position to build large political-economic structures or to get their share of political and economic power. Considering the fact that the development of standard varieties generally follows the development of political and economic power structures, it becomes clear why Romani has not developed such a variety. Furthermore, the outlined sociohistorical situation explains why Romani is labelled a stateless diaspora language.

2.3.1 Language use

For most Roma their respective Romani variety is reduced to intra-group communication, and thus limited to the private domains. Romani primarily functions as an intimate variety in the social microcosm. Adult Romani speakers always use the language(s) of the respective majority population(s) for inter-group communication in the public domains and more often also in the domains of everyday life. Consequently, adult Romani speakers always are plurilingual. The domain specific distribution of majority languages and vital Romani varieties which dominate in private domains and are used in everyday life is shown in repertoire 2 in table 4 below.

More frequently, however, the functions of Romani as the inter-group variety in everyday life are extremely limited. In many cases it only functions as an intimate variety in the social microcosm, and even in these domains majority languages are often more frequently used than Romani. This is shown by repertoire 1 in table 4 below.

The dominance of majority languages in the linguistic repertoires of Romani speech communities – not only in the public sphere but also in everyday life and in private contexts – characterises Romani as a dominated language. This asymmetri-

cal relationship between Romani and the majority languages results not only in the functional restrictions mentioned, but also in strong influence or rather pressure of majority languages on Romani. This influence results in lexical loans as well as in the replication of patterns of the majority languages in Romani varieties, which account for the differences between individual Romani varieties. These lexical and structural differences are often perceived as obstacles to inter-group communication and sometimes even lead speakers of a particular Romani variety to value other varieties as different languages. Essentially, problems in inter-group communication are caused by the functional restriction of Romani to intra-group communication in the private sphere. If there is a constant need to use Romani in inter-group communication and in public life, Romani will adapt to these new situations. The ability to meet the communicative needs of its speakers is inherent to any language of the world. Although Romani has been written for some decades now, the constant communicative need to functionally expand it into all domains of everyday and public life has not generally been given until now. In inter-group communication Romani is primarily used by activists – see repertoire 3 – who are able and willing to adapt to each other linguistically. The same applies to the oral use of Romani in formal domains.

Table 4: Linguistic repertoires of Romani speech communities and speakers

DOMAINS	Repertoire 1 "general"	Repertoire 2 "vital"	Repertoire 3 "activist"	DESCRIPTION
public	DOMINANT LANGUAGE(S)	DOMINANT LANGUAGE(S)	DOMINANT LANGUAGE(S) Romani	Varieties used in formal public domains: in the media, in religious contexts, in (higher) education, when dealing with authorities, etc.
everyday life	DOMINANT LANGUAGE(S)	DOMINANT LANGUAGE(S) Romani	DOMINANT LANGUAGE(S) Romani	Varieties in the social macrocosm that are used in domains of everyday life: with acquaintances (at work, at school, etc.) with strangers in the streets, when shopping, etc.
private	DOMINANT LANGUAGE(S) Romani	dominant language(s) ROMANI	DOMINANT LANGUAGE(S) Romani	Varieties in the social microcosm that are used in informal private domains: with the partner, in the family, when in contact with close friends, etc.

Formal written Romani, above all, has symbolic functions with only marginal communicative ones.[20] The overwhelming majority of texts are translations from majority languages into Romani. Their main purposes are to highlight the ability of Romani to function in these contexts, to support the struggle for sociocultural equality of the Roma, to symbolise the will, need or demand for the sociopolitical integration of the Roma, etc.

20 For a detailed discussion of the functions of Romani see Matras (1999). An overview of the functions and the status of Romani is given in Halwachs (2003).

2.3.2 Sociopolitical status

The vast majority of Romani speakers use Romani exclusively for intra-group communication, and majority languages in all other domains. As outlined in the last paragraph, this has nothing to do with the linguistic insufficiencies of Romani, but is sociolinguistically rooted. The functional restrictions of Romani are reflected by its sociopolitical status. Romani is

- marginalised in the media,
- marginalised in education,
- irrelevant in public life,
- neglected in administration.

Romani is present in almost all types of media. Apart from daily and weekly newspapers, Romani is used in journals, brochures and books. There are radio and television broadcasts on public and private channels and even a few private radio and television stations broadcasting exclusively in Romani. Radio and television are also present on the internet, as are websites, mailing lists and chat rooms. Especially print publications, but also radio and television broadcasts, are often bilingual, thus reflecting both the linguistic repertoires of Romani speakers and the sociolinguistic situation of Romani as a dominated language. But despite its presence in the media, compared to dominant languages, the impact of Romani media on Romani speakers is insignificant. Romani speakers are above all exposed to the mainstream media of dominant languages and Romani media products and broadcasts are in most cases symbolic, as is written Romani.

Generally the demand to use Romani in education is part of the political agenda of the Roma's struggle for equal rights and equal opportunities. Resulting activities range from local grass-roots level activities via regional and national measures to European-wide initiatives. But the higher the level of an initiative the more unlikely its implementation. Without local or regional bottom-up initiatives, most of the national and international top-down measures would not be brought into force or would remain ineffective declarations of good will. Only a productive cooperation between NGOs and authorities offers the possibility that Romani teaching becomes part of the education system. But being part of the system does not automatically mean that Romani is integrated into the regular curriculum. On the contrary, for the most part Romani is taught in extracurricular lessons, often only in the framework of lessons on Romani history and culture. Romani as a language of instruction is even more marginalised than Romani as a subject. If a teacher is competent in Romani – which is quite exceptional – it might be used with children whose mother tongue is Romani and who have a low competence in the majority language. In such exceptional cases Romani functions as an auxiliary language for the purpose of acquiring the majority language.

The outlined situation is most probably related to the fact that Romani teaching, and up to a certain point, minority language teaching in Europe in general is less a pedagogical than a political matter. Romani NGOs see Romani teaching as part of the political struggle for emancipation from the majority population and their dominant culture and language. Representatives and authorities of the majority try to value the language and the culture of the Romani minority by declarative acts which grant Romani a marginal role in mainstream education. Depending on the prevailing conditions, extracurricular Romani lessons which also discuss culture and history contribute to the empowerment of Romani children and counteract, at least to some extent, the pressure to linguistically and culturally assimilate into the majority population. Yet despite these side effects, the main function of Romani teaching remains, once again with the background of primarily political motivation, on a symbolic level. There are no known cases where Romani is used systematically to teach literacy to children who have acquired it as their mother tongue during their primary socialisation. Such a systematic approach to Romani teaching would be the most suitable reason to include it into mainstream education.[21]

The marginalisation of Romani in education, again, is a direct result of the sociolinguistic situation of a dominated diaspora language with almost no tradition in literacy. As public life as well as administration are always connected with dominant languages with a profound tradition in literacy, it becomes obvious why Romani is irrelevant in public life and neglected in administration.

The sociolinguistic status of Romani outlined so far explains that changes in the situation of Romani will only result in improvements in the status of its speakers, the Roma. Although it is obvious that Romani will most probably never reach a balanced relationship with the dominant national languages of Europe, the ongoing emancipation process is already effecting changes in its status. Romani is perceived by the majority population as a primary cultural identity factor, public opinion more often attributes it the status of a language. The previously dominant opinion that regarded it as gibberish, as the jargon of fringe groups and as the idiom of crooks is slowly losing strength. This change in opinion results, inter alia, in moderate official attention attributed to Romani as a European minority language. Furthermore, the use of Romani among activists on the international level has an effect on both its functions and structures. Although limited to a small subgroup of speakers, as a means of communication of the political movement, Romani is functionally expanding into formal domains. This expansion results in lexical enrichment as well as in structural changes. Romani is developing the vocabulary needed to discuss legal, administrative, scientific, etc. topics, as well as structures that enable its users to reflect, write and publicly talk about any relevant topic. Due to its communicative use

21 This would be in line with the UNESCO recommendation that the best way to teach literacy is to use the mother tongue of the learner. This recommendation was formulated as early as 1953 in a monograph with the title "The Use of Vernacular Languages in Education" see: http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0000/000028/002897EB.pdf.

in formal domains among Romani representatives, Romani has entered the stage of development from a vernacular to a standard language. This development in no case follows the traditional standardisation pattern – i.e. the imposition of a codified variety by law through education – but has to be described as harmonisation, by trial and error in actual communication processes using all linguistic resources at hand. Therefore, translations and standardisation products with primarily symbolic functions as well as communicative experience, repertoire resources, etc. of all speakers involved contribute to this harmonisation process, which is slowly resulting in something like an international Romani or *Inter Romani*. The higher the numbers of Romani speakers participating in this process, the more this Inter Romani will spread and contribute to overcome the communication obstacles between speakers of different Romani varieties. Preconditions for the further development of this international variety are further improvements of the sociopolitical situation of the Roma. Current conditions not only limit the development of Romani, but above all hamper the integration of Roma as equal citizens of their native countries and, consequently, also as European citizens.

3 Romani in education

In contrast to the role of standardised European national languages in the educational system, the functionality of Romani in this domain is by no means to be taken for granted. The difference in the sociopolitical status of the dominant majority language and the dominated and partly also stigmatised minority language obstructs and prevents the use of Romani as a language of education. The associated discrepancy between homogeneous, written national standards and variable, heterogeneous, orally transmitted group language also contributes to this.

3.1 Heterogeneity and its implications

The heterogeneity of Romani with regard to its use in education is threefold. Romani is heterogeneous with regard to

- varieties or rather dialects,
- language competence of the pupils,
- language attitude of the parents.

Linguistic heterogeneity or rather plurality among Roma is twofold: on the one hand members of the Romani community of a specific country use different Romani varieties, on the other hand their linguistic repertoires also cover different languages in addition to the dominant national language. The latter is particularly true for recent migrants.

The Romani population of almost every European country consists of various groups who in turn show internal diversity. The following table 5 shows the resulting ethnolinguistic variety in three sample countries. Each of those has a relatively low number of *Estrexarja Romani* speakers who, as indicated by their name *Estrexarja* < Österreicher or /esterajxa/ 'Austrians', are *Sinti* who arrived from the Austrian part of the Habsburg monarchy. The speakers of *Krim Romani* came to what was then Ottoman *Dobruja* after the Russian conquest of the peninsula. *Ursari* are very likely the most numerous group in Romania.

Table 5: Ethnolinguistic plurality within individual countries[22]

	Hungary	Romania	Serbia
Northwestern	*Estrexarja Romani*	*Estrexarja Romani*	*Estrexarja Romani*
Central	*Romungro Romani, …*	*???*	*???*[23]
Vlax	*Lovara Romani, …*	*Kalderaš-Romani, …*	*Gurbet, Kalderaš R., …*
Balkan		*Ursari, Krim R., …*	*Arli Romani, …*

The Hungarian *Lovara* form part of the Vlax migration as do the *Gurbet* and *Kalderaš* living in Serbia. This migration contributes to the heterogeneity of the Romani population in western European countries, which is generally based on three migration waves:

- 1st migration: "original" or indigenous Romani population living in a country since the 15th or early 16th century;
- 2nd migration: from the middle of the 19th century Vlax Roma spread from Wallachia, Moldavia, and adjacent areas all over Europe and beyond as a consequence of the abolition of slavery and bondage;
- 3rd migration: (south)east-west migrants and refugees from the 1950s onward.

22 To simplify matters, this table only contains names of varieties or groups from Table 1.

23 There is no reliable data on the speakers of Central Romungro varieties in Romania and Serbia. Romungro speakers may exist as both Romanian Transylvania and Serbian Vojvodina used to be parts of the Kingdom of Hungary, yet the majority of the so-called Ungrika Roma have by now been linguistically assimilated.

The following table 6 shows the resulting triple-layered ethnolinguistic variety in western European countries:

Table 6: Ethnolinguistic plurality within western European countries

	Austria	France	Sweden
1st	*Sinti & Burgenland R.*	*Manouche Romani*	*Scandoromani & Kaalo*
2nd	*Lovara Romani*	*Kalderaš Romani*	*Kalderaš Romani*
3rd	Vlax, Balkan, Central & Northeastern varieties of Romani		

Regarding the names of the indigenous speaker communities, *Manouche* < rom *manuš* 'human being' is the self-appellation of Sinti living in France which is integrated into French. *Resande*, how the initial Swedish immigrants refer to themselves, are speakers of *Scandoromani*, a para-Romani which is defined as a variety of Swedish with primarily but not exclusively lexical elements from Romani. The speakers of Vlax varieties of the second migration are usually bilingually socialised, as are the speakers of the so-called indigenous groups. Among the latter there is usually a dominance of the majority language or national language in all domains. Many, primarily younger, speakers have adopted the dominant language and are *de facto* monolingual with only marginal competence in Romani. In contrast, speakers of the third migration are usually still plurilingual. Their repertoires comprise, in addition to Romani and the dominant language of their country of immigration, also the language or languages of their countries of origin.

European monolingual education systems treat cases 01 to 05 – see table 7 on the following page – with no competence in the national language as severe problems. This is intensified by the fact that these cases above all apply to children of migrants with a divergent cultural background and a problematic sociopolitical status as foreigners, asylum seekers or even illegal aliens. Furthermore, the situation is complicated by the fact that among recent migrants the plurality of Romani varieties as well as of other languages is most pronounced. But cases of Romani children with little or no competence in the national language and low sociopolitical status are not limited to western European countries. Over the last decades many Romani refugees have been repatriated to their country of emigration; however, in many cases, not to the place or region from which they originally came. Therefore, dislocated Romani families with children who have little or no competence in the respective national language are also living in the Balkans and eastern Europe.

Cases 06 to 18 with high competence in the national language are seen as normal and convenient. Cultural richness and possible advantages of the cultural and linguistic plurality, which are represented by all these cases, are mostly neglected. If

at all taken into consideration, competence in other languages, mostly with respect to the national language of the country of emigration, is used as an auxiliary tool to establish the national language as the only language of instruction.

Table 7: Plurilingualism and languages of socialisation of Romani children[24]

CASE	ROMANI / dominated	OTHER / foreign	NATIONAL / dominant
01	●	–	–
02	●	+	–
03	●	●	–
04	–	●	–
05	+	●	–
06	●	●	+
07	●	–	+
08	●	+	+
09	–	●	+
10	+	●	+
11	–	●	●
12	+	●	●
13	●	–	●
14	●	+	●
15	+	+	●
16	–	+	●
17	+	–	●
18	–	–	●

other Ls languages of the country of emigration and / or international languages

● language(s) of socialisation / full competence

\+ additional language / L2 / high competence

– marginal language / limited or almost no competence

24 Table 7 formalises possible cases. In reality the 18 cases have to be multiplied with both the number of Romani varieties and the number of other languages involved which results in quite a high number of possible scenarios.

Heterogeneity of Romani competence and differences in the language(s) of socialisation to some extent have an impact on discrepancies in language attitude.

- Indigenous speech communities often correspond to case 18 – socialisation in the dominant language and very limited or almost no competence in Romani – with some exceptions corresponding to case 17 – socialisation in the dominant language and competence in Romani. Language attitude among such groups is quite positive if they are organised in NGOs dedicating their work to emancipation and culture.
- Although speech communities of northwestern varieties correspond to the same cases, language attitude is different. First of all Sinti, especially older speakers, perceive their language as a taboo in-group marker which has to be kept secret from the majority population. Therefore Sinti Romani is, almost as a rule, invisible in public and education.
- Long resident speech communities of Vlax Roma often encounter a similar shift scenario as indigenous speech communities. There are more competent older speakers and the number of the younger exceptions with competence in Romani might be higher but language attitude is indifferent. Romani is to some extent treated as a feature of the old life, the times of real *Romanipen* 'Romaniness', and language shift among the younger generations is perceived as an irreversible process. Consequently, there are no initiatives to teach Romani and the language has only one public function, to illustrate the cultural heritage with songs, poems, stories, etc.
- Among recent migrants with language maintenance there is almost no language awareness. Romani is the language of everyday family life and pronounced language attitude, if at all present, concerns the dominant language. For these speech communities there is no need for Romani teaching, they want their children to become fluent and proficient in the national language. In public life Romani is used by activists and organisations to flag identity in the political emancipation process, and even more, to satisfy the demands of the ethno-folkloristic mainstream entertainment industry.
- Among groups where Romani has lost its functions in everyday life, language shift is perceived as a loss if they actively participate in NGOs. Because of their involvement in the emancipation process members of such groups develop a positive language attitude which triggers demands for Romani teaching.

If recent migrants with no contacts to NGOs have undergone language loss and are socio-economically integrated, language loyalty is not an issue. It seems that the price for their socio-economic integration is sociocultural assimilation. In most cases they consider Romani as part of the past.

These discrepancies in language attitude which are paralleled by discrepancies in language loyalty at least to some extent reflect the minority language policy in Europe. The status of Romani in education is only a symptom of a policy in line with the European ideology of the national state which is common sense in Euro-

pean society. This ideology essentially excludes plurality and, if at all, only allows it a marginal status. But if an ideology of plurality were common sense in our society, the situation of Romani as described above would not be seen as problematic, but as richness and advantage and despite its diversity it would function as an integral part of society. Consequently, it would be used as the primary language to teach literacy to all children who have been socialised with Romani and, furthermore, it would be taught as a second language to all other children with a Romani background as well as to all people interested in it. However to this day, such a scenario is still utopian, not only for Romani, but for minority languages in Europe in general.

3.2 Cases of Romani teaching

Efforts regarding Romani teaching can be distinguished by the primary initiators into bottom-up and top-down activities. This differentiation is by no means a dichotomy but should be seen as the two ends of a gradual scale; as previously noted, a productive co-operation among authorities and NGOs is a prerequisite for possible success in the implementation of Romani teaching.

3.2.1 Romani teaching in Burgenland / Austria: a bottom-up initiative

Romani teaching in Austria is mostly restricted to the easternmost county, Burgenland. Activities during the Commemorative Year 1988 (in 1938, Austria had become part of the German Third Reich) triggered the foundation of the first Austrian Romani NGO in the south of Burgenland, in *Oberwart / Felsőőr / Gornja Borta / Erba* on 15 July 1989.[25] Young Roma, with the help of committed social workers, artists, and intellectuals of the region, carried out this first step toward self-organisation for emancipation. Soon, aside from social and political topics and initiatives, culture became more important. Due to this cultural awareness, the continuous decline in the use of Burgenland Romani was perceived for the first time as language loss and was consequently interpreted as a symptom of cultural assimilation.

To counteract language loss and assimilation, an initiative to codify and subsequently teach Burgenland Romani was started in the early 1990s.[26] After the first printed results – grammar, primer, and textbook – lessons started in the framework of the NGO's activities in 1997.

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25 Because the region is a Hungarian enclave, toponyms are bilingual: *Oberwart*, German, *Felsőőr*, Hungarian. *Gornja Borta* is used by Croatian speakers of the region, *Erba* is the Romani name of the city.

26 This initiative is based on the commitment of a single person, *Emmerich Gärtner-Horvath*, who has been the driving figure behind Burgenland Romani teaching in the framework of the organisation *Roma Service*. For more information on this organisation's teaching activities, see their website at http://www.roma-service.at.

In the meantime, the sociopolitical situation had not only changed on the legal level, but also in the public consciousness. In December 1993, the Roma were recognised as a national minority; in 1994, the school administration of the county of Burgenland extended the law on minority language education to Romani; in February 1995, after four Roma were killed by a politically motivated assassin using a pipe bomb placed in front of their settlement in Oberwart, the situation of the Burgenland Roma became known to the general public.

This change in situation resulted in top-down measures for Burgenland Romani and as a consequence, made Romani teaching in schools attractive to politicians and authorities. However, most of the contributions to implement Romani into education were declarative. Only the responsible authorities at the federal level, such as the Minority Promotion at the Federal Chancellery and departments of the Ministry of Education contributed financially to the development of the prerequisites for Romani teaching: teaching materials, syllabus, and teacher training for Romani speakers. The work was done on the NGO level in co-operation with an academic project. On the basis of this collaboration, Romani teaching started in autumn 1997 as extracurricular lessons on the NGO level with Romani children who were looked after in the context of a learning aid program. It was two more years before all the problems were solved and Romani lessons finally started in the primary school of Oberwart. However, as previously mentioned, these two hours per week of lessons are optional. Parents must enrol their children, and pupils must stay in school longer because the Romani lessons are subsequent to the regular ones. In the succeeding years, this model has only been expanded to the lower secondary schools in Oberwart and to the primary school in the neighbouring village of Unterwart / Alsőőr / Tenu Erba. A further expansion on the primary and lower secondary level has been hampered so far by a lack of resources, too few pupils, lack of initiative, and lack of interest from Roma and the authorities. Lessons at the multilingual grammar school in Oberwart and courses at the University of Graz have been offered on upper secondary and tertiary levels only. Contrary to the optional subjects on primary and lower secondary levels these courses primarily aim at non-Roma.

Although the prerequisites, the legal framework, and the political will are present, Burgenland Romani teaching at school is declining. Since 2007, no courses have been offered at schools in Oberwart, only the optional subjects in Unterwart are currently running. Primarily, this decline is due to the small pool of potential pupils. However, school administrations have made no proactive measures to promote Burgenland Romani teaching among Romani and non-Romani pupils and to support the activities of the NGO Roma Service, the prime mover in the field.

Because Burgenland Romani teaching is a bottom-up initiative, the decline of teaching in schools has partially been compensated by extracurricular activities. In 2005, Roma Service introduced the *RomBus* as a mobile service centre and a rolling classroom. This bus regularly visits Romani settlements in towns and villages between Vienna and the Slovenian border covering the whole of Burgenland and

adjacent counties. Aside from information about Roma-related issues and assistance in social and political matters, the *RomBus* is a rolling library which offers journals, books, films, and music on Roma-related topics and mostly in Romani, as well as courses in Burgenland Romani. Such courses bring together families and their neighbours. Working with language competent elders, the teachers use Romani like a living language and thereby pass it on to partly competent speakers as well as children and adults without any competence in Romani. It is an open question as to what extent these courses counteract language loss. Their most important effect is their contribution to a positive image of being *Rom* or *Romni*, especially among children and teenagers. Ethnocultural awareness and pride raises self-consciousness and self-esteem, thus supporting the social integration of young Roma.

3.2.2 Romani teaching in Romania: a top-down initiative

The only known case of Romani teaching based on a national initiative is the Romanian approach.[27] The prime influence behind this approach is the Ministry of Education and Research, which initiated Romani teaching at three secondary schools in 1990. In the beginning, teaching was scheduled for three hours weekly and was expanded to four hours at the pupils' and parents' request. Parallel to this, an initiative to attract Romani students to become primary school teachers was started. In the following years a practical Romani university course was introduced at the University of Bucharest. This course later led to the foundation of a department of Romani language and literature. Furthermore, the cooperation between the authorities and Romani and non-Romani NGOs involved in education was intensified and the first "unqualified ethnic Romani teachers", secondary school graduates with a special training or knowledge about Romani language and culture were employed.

Within 20 years, Romanian authorities in cooperation with NGOs and Romani communities have developed a sustainable framework for Romani teaching at all levels of education with all necessary prerequisites. The latter are:

- legal framework,
- educational infrastructure, inter alia special school inspectors for Romani teaching,
- teacher training,
- national syllabus for Romani teaching,
- teaching materials.[28]

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27 The description of the Romanian situation is based on Zatreanu (2003) and on Sarău (2009).

28 The driving force behind all these activities is Gheorghe Sarău, an activist, linguist, and civil servant at the Romanian Ministry of Education.

In Romania, Romani parents can choose between education in Romanian or Hungarian for their children, depending on the local tradition and the individual Romani family. Furthermore, parents may require additional lessons for their children on Romani language and literature or Romani history and traditions to the extent of three or four hours per week. Although Romani teaching is still based on voluntary enrolment and the instruction offered does not cover the need, the number of students, classes, and schools is impressive and is not paralleled anywhere else in Europe or beyond:[29]

- about 200 children in 10 preschools with bilingual – Romani / Romanian – teaching;
- about 25.000 students from grades 1-12 in roughly 250 schools are taught in Romani three or four hours per week by approximately 450 teachers;[30]
- Romani is the language of instruction in primary education (grades 1-4) for about 400 students in five schools (with weekly four hours lessons in Romanian);
- within ten years, approximately 300 Romani teachers graduated at the Universities of Bucharest and Cluj.

The only potential shortcoming of this centralist approach is the Romani variety used for teaching. Romania opted for a global solution in Romani teaching and chose to use the standard variety the Romani *Union* proposed in its Warsaw declaration of 1990. This standard disposes of a special alphabet with unusual letters and diacritics to adapt to special features of Romani and to cater for the breadth of possible realisations of phonemes and their corresponding letters. Furthermore, it contains neologisms with formation principles that are marginal or have never been used in Romani before. Considering the background of the Romani varieties spoken in Romania and the fact that several Romani communities have undergone language loss resulting in their children learning Romani as a second language, the decision for an international standard is reasonable. Its obligatory use, however, causes problems for many competent Romani speakers. They perceive this artificial standard as alien compared with their mother tongue. Its use in Romani classes is often criticised by local Romani activists and teachers; primarily, because neither pupils nor their Romani competent parents can identify with this variety. In these accounts, the standard is described as distant to local varieties and even as incomprehensible to some extent. Furthermore, because this standard is almost exclusively used in the classroom and consequently has no function in everyday private or public life, it is valued as useless for the future life of the pupils. However, to date, there are no reliable evaluations of Romani teaching in Romania which would prove the impressions, opinions, and evaluations reported in these accounts as generally valid.

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29 Data given in this list are based on those presented in Sarău, *op.cit.* note 16.

30 These 25,000 students are 10% of those who openly declare their Romani identity.

3.2.3 Basic conditions of Romani teaching

In both cases, the activities of the prime mover – the NGO as a bottom-up actor in the Austrian case and the Ministry of Education as a top-down actor in the Romanian case – are urged by the dedication of a single person as the driving force. This parallels many other initiatives, not only in the context of Romani, but also for the teaching of most other minority languages in Europe and beyond.

Furthermore, the accounts given for both cases demonstrate that, despite the high commitment of the prime mover, Romani teaching is hampered if all players involved do not equally support the undertaking. In the Romanian case, the centralist approach marginalises local speech communities. Consequently, some of these oppose Romani teaching. They consider the standard to be too distant to their children's mother tongue as well as useless for their future. Consequently, they perceive its use in Romani teaching as forced imposition. In the case of Burgenland Romani, aside from the declining numbers of potential students, the involvement of regional and local school authorities leaves much to be desired.

In the majority of cases, the low commitment of authorities, which hamper or even block ambitious teaching initiatives, is rooted in the fact that their representatives simply question the whole purpose. Negative evaluations of Romani teaching are often based on the assumption that only education through the majority language provides an opportunity for Romani children to improve their situation. The argument that linguistic assimilation is a prerequisite to succeed on the labour market and integrate into society insinuates that Romani teaching has no practical function at all; neither for the educational system nor for the future life of the students.

4 Segregation of Romani children in education

Sometimes Romani is a reason for segregation and Romani teaching is conducted under aspects of segregation. However, segregation is much more. The report of the *Commission for Human Rights at the Council of Europe* on *Human Rights of Roma and Travellers in Europe* published in February 2012 contains a special section on *Segregation of Roma Children* (123-131). Based on the three patterns of segregation defined in the position paper of UNICEF (2011: 19), namely

- segregation between schools,
- segregation within schools,
- segregation into special schools,

the report provides examples of the segregation of Romani children which are not repeated here. The following discussion of segregation goes beyond this threefold pattern and discusses the phenomenon more generally.

In general, ten types of segregation and two types of non-segregation can be distinguished. These twelve types are discussed according to their respective classifiers in order of their position in the summarising Table 8 at the end of this chapter:

1_ Segregation – exclusion – imposed exclusion – attendance forbidden

This type of exclusion summarises historical cases of exclusion by law as well as cases of practical exclusion still occurring.

- Attendance forbidden by law: This type of segregation is a phenomenon of the past.
- Attendance *de facto* forbidden:
  - Exclusion is imposed by threats which nowadays happens quite rarely.
  - Social pressure causes exclusion from education. School attendance of Romani pupils is prevented on the local level with arguments like low standards of hygiene and the resulting danger of infection for *Gadže* pupils, mental and/or social disabilities, differences in the level of civilisation, culture, etc.
  - Exclusion from education is caused by demands for school attendance which cannot be fulfilled by the parents of Romani children without support. They cannot afford shoes, clothing, educational tools, etc. The school administration implicitly and in some cases even explicitly makes this a precondition for attendance.

2_ Segregation – exclusion – self exclusion – attendance refused

The various arguments of Romani parents who refuse to send their children to school are summarised into three categories:

- Parents of Romani children refuse to send their children to school because of poverty (and pride): “We cannot send our children to school because they have no shoes, adequate clothes or educational tools like pencils, exercise books, etc.”
- Parents refuse, are unwilling and sometimes even unable to send their children to school because of initially imposed, nowadays traditional service nomadism: "We cannot send our children to school for existential ≈ economic reasons."
- Children are not sent to school because of self-determined separation caused by ethnocultural differences, prejudices, fears, etc.

3_ Segregation – inclusion – separation – special schools – imposed separation

Romani pupils are sent to the schools of the mentally handicapped because they do not conform to the requirements of the educational system: They have not mastered

the language of instruction sufficiently, if at all. Sometimes they behave differently to the children of the *Gadže*: They can be *inter alia* more lively and not used to sitting quietly for extended periods of time, they acquire knowledge differently by participating, watching and trying, etc.

4_ Segregation – inclusion – separation – ethnic schools – imposed separation

There are, more or less officially, schools for Romani children and there are schools for *Gadže* children: separate buildings in different places; different teaching times for the *Gadže* children who go to school in the mornings while Romani pupils are taught in the afternoons, etc. The reasons for this kind of separation are diverse, ranging from covert racism, arguments such as a lack of space in schools, schools in mono-ethnic environments or settlements, etc. to overt racism.

5_ Segregation – inclusion – separation – ethnic schools – practical separation

The educational system theoretically precludes separation. However, schools with a high number of Romani children are at great risk of becoming mono-ethnic schools because *Gadže* parents strongly tend to send their children to schools without Romani pupils. The individual reasons which contribute to such cases of separation are diverse and range from the simple wish of economic success and education-conscious parents who want to offer their offspring the best education possible to, again, overt racism.

6_ Segregation – inclusion – separation – ethnic schools – voluntary separation

This type of segregation is usually dealt with under labels like positive discrimination, pro-active measures, empowerment, etc. This usually happens in private schools, above all secondary and higher secondary schools, founded exclusively for and attended by Romani pupils. Such schools mainly aim to educate skilled workers, mainly social workers, and/or to get Romani students to university level. However, there is a danger that ethnic cocooning does not prepare the students properly for the competition at universities and the labour market.

7_ Segregation – inclusion – integration – ethnic classes – ethnic separation

This type of segregation refers to special classes for Romani pupils. In the vast majority of instances of ethnic separation, less material and fewer intellectual resources are allocated to the classes of Romani pupils compared to the classes of *Gadže* children. Such measures are not based on reasonable arguments at all. They simply are the result of racism made possible by the marginalisation and the low socio-economic and sociopolitical status of Romani communities.

8_ Segregation – inclusion – integration – ethnic classes – pedagogical separation

Segregation exclusively based on pedagogical considerations refers to cases where Romani pupils are taught in separate classes to compensate for deficits and, consequently, to enable them to actively participate in mixed classes. This mainly happens because of deficient or no competence in the language of instruction, a deficit which obviously makes any educational progress impossible. Such deficits are caused by practical monolingual socialisation in Romani of children of marginalised or even socially segregated Romani groups. In addition, children of Romani families who have been repatriated from western Europe to their countries of emigration are often bilingual in Romani as well as in the dominant language of the country of immigration and incompetent in the language of their country of emigration or rather repatriation. Even if a racist background can be ruled out, pedagogical separation is under no circumstances justified. The best way to enable children with no or little competence in the language of instruction to catch up with their fellow pupils linguistically and with respect to learning is an integrative approach.

9_ Segregation – inclusion – integration – mixed classes – integrated separation

A contradictio in adiecto with respect to its denomination, this type of segregation is most likely the most frequent one. Superficially, Romani pupils in mixed classes seem to be treated equally. Superficially they are well integrated into both the school community and the teaching process. However, a closer look shows that they are concentrated at the back or periphery of the classroom which in many cases matches their marginalisation in society. However, it is not only the spatial position of Romani pupils in the classroom that characterises integrated separation. It is the fact that spatially marginalised Romani pupils are, almost as a rule, more or less neglected by the teachers. Neglect causes disturbances and disruptions of the lessons that increase the negative status of Romani pupils and, furthermore, result in their absence which is not sanctioned by the teachers at all but rather perceived as a relief. Consequently, Romani pupils often only sit out compulsory school attendance without being properly educated. The neglect of Romani pupils in integrative or rather mixed classes is often defended by citing different behaviour compared to the *Gadže* children (see above) and with symptoms of poverty – no shoes, inadequate clothing, low standards of hygiene – which are said to hamper their inclusion. However, these explanations are superficial pseudo arguments. The main reason for cases of integrated segregation is latent racism.

10_ Non-segregation – inclusion – integration – mixed classes – integrated separation

In such rare, and in its whole range of measures non-existent, cases of non-segregation, the cultural and social background of Romani pupils is fully taken into account:

Romani is used for the teaching of literacy to children socialised with it and/or is taught as a subject with open access and encouragement to participate for all pupils irrespective of their ethnolinguistic background. Romani history and culture are discussed and dealt with as an integrative part of local, regional, national and European history and cultures. Possible deficits caused by the social background of Roma as well as *Gadže* pupils are compensated for by special measures like extra tuition, free educational tools, school meals, etc. Such special measures are never linked with the ethnicity of the beneficiaries but only with their social situation. Furthermore, if social measures are introduced in a school, they have to be provided to all pupils to avoid social stratification within schools.

11_ Segregation – inclusion – integration – special subject(s) – ethnic separation

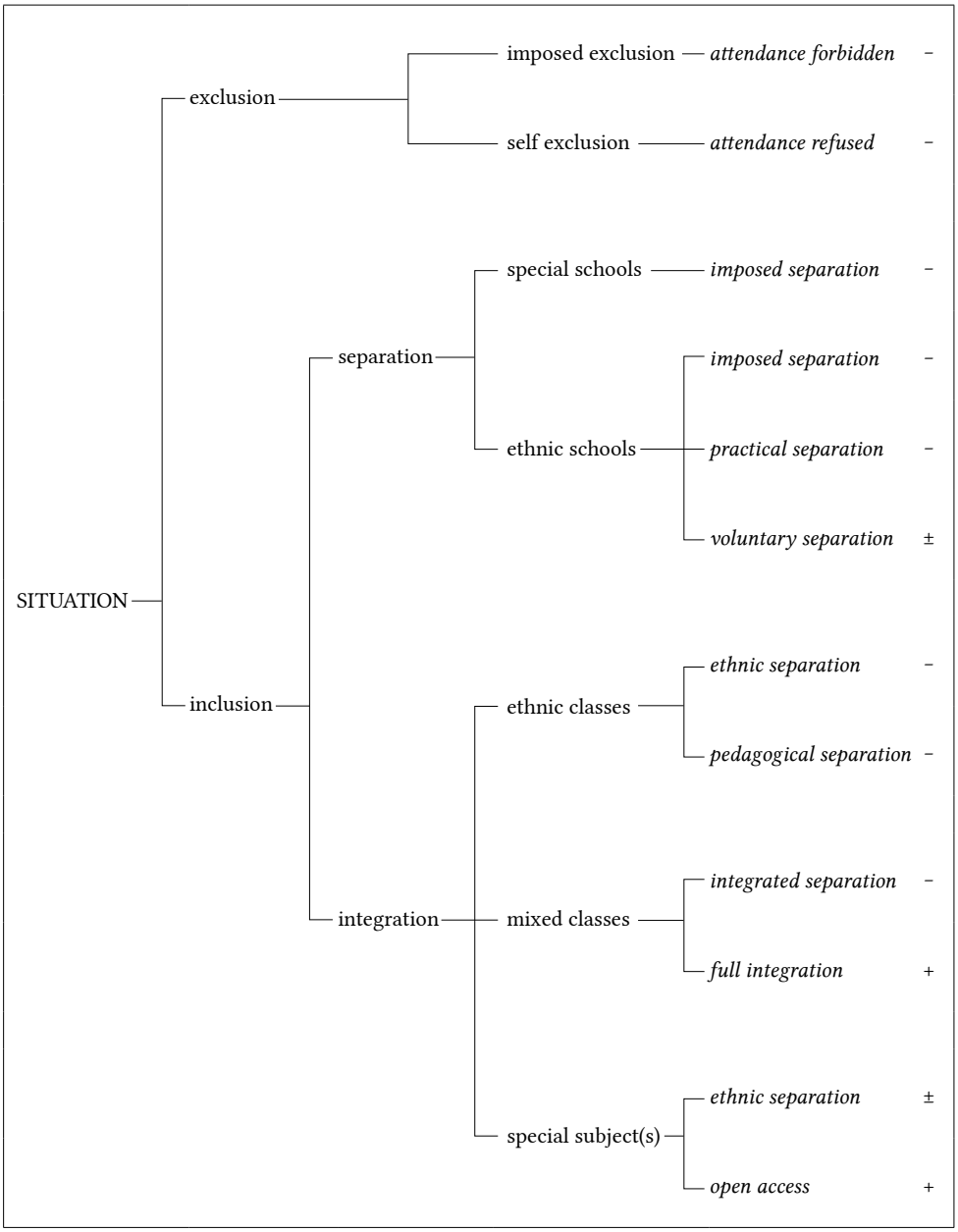
This type concerns the teaching of Romani history, language and culture as a subject which is exclusively offered to Romani pupils. For the most part such courses are an extra offer of schools with a certain number of Romani students. Often the parents of Romani children have to demand these courses and actively enrol their children. Furthermore, these courses are only set up if a certain threshold is met and teachers are available. However, they are extracurricular and in competition with other optional subjects such as sport activities (football etc.), performing and other arts related activities, etc. Almost as a rule, offering special subjects on Romani history, culture and/or language is not pedagogically but politically motivated. Therefore, the mere existence of courses already fulfils the demands of both Roma as well as *Gadže* activists and politicians. Consequently, pedagogical standards and the quality of content are mostly of minor, sometimes even of no importance.

12_ Non-segregation – inclusion – integration – special subject(s) – open access

This type is the integrative version of the previous one. Although political symbolism still prevails over pedagogical quality, open access and encouragement for pupils to participate irrespective of their ethnic background result in positive pedagogical effects. Provided the necessary awareness of teachers, these effects might go far beyond the educational context by positively contributing to social cohesion in society.

Segregation of Romani pupils which hampers the use of Romani in education is one of the issues the *Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional Minorities* is confronted with in its monitoring work. The *Council of Europe's European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages* (ECRML) is the only legally binding instrument for the protection of Romani as a European language and therefore also contributes to the de-segregation in the education of Romani children by protecting their language of socialisation and ethnic identity.

Table 8: Ten types of segregation and two types of non-segregation of Romani pupils



– … segregation / ± … segregation with some positive aspects / + … non-segregation

5 Romani and the Charter for Regional or Minority Languages

Due to a quite liberal phase in European politics during the 1990s the recognition of the Romani movement on the supranational European level coincided with the development of instruments for minority protection like the *European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages*/ECRML. The Charter defines regional or minority languages as

- different from the official language(s) of a state,
  not a dialect of an official language,
- traditionally used
  by nationals within a given territory (= territorial languages)
  by nationals within the territory of that state (= non-territorial languages),
- not a language of [recent] migrants.

This basic blueprint for the definition of a European minority language fully complies with Romani. On the background of the criteria listed, Romani has to be described as

- different from all official languages of Europe,
- used all over Europe since the Middle Ages
- by nationals of all states of Europe.

Consequently, Romani should be protected as a minority language by the ECRML in all ratifying countries. However, not all of these countries so far have recognised Romani and many which recognised it opted for the minimum protection as a non-territorial language.[31] On-going migration is used against the autochthonous status of parts and sometimes even the whole Romani population in a country. To counter such assertions and to prove that Romani is spoken traditionally in a specific European country sometimes proves almost impossible: Because of social exclusion, Roma have been prevented from owning land and property. Furthermore, their settlements have often not been registered properly.

Despite such shortcomings in the ratification of the ECRML it is – as already mentioned above – the only legally binding instrument for the protection of Romani as a European minority language and has contributed sustainably to its recognition on national levels as well as in supranational European contexts.

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31 Territoriality as a criterion for the definition of minority languages is highly questionable. Languages, above all, are linked to speech communities which consist of mobile individuals. This shortcoming is rooted in the 19th century when minorities were perceived as rural, conservative, immobile relics of another (archaic) culture with another language. This anachronism is, nevertheless, still a common feeling in European minority politics.

5.1 Ratification

By the end of 2011 the Charter had been ratified by 25 countries. 15 of these have recognised Romani as traditionally used as a minority language on their territory.

The initially indicated variety of denominations for the language of the Roma, Sinti, Kale, etc. is reflected in the ratifications of the Charter in an intensified form. Table 9 below summarises the labels used for the Romani language in the English versions of the ratification documents of the 15 countries which have ratified the ECRML so far. To include the plurality of denominations for Romani in the national languages used in the ratification documents would most probably multiply the number significantly.[32]

Table 9: Romani names in the English versions of ratification documents

Name	Countries	N°
Roma	Czech Republic, Slovakia	2
Romanes	Finland, Norway, Netherlands	3
Romani Chib	Sweden	1
Romani	Bosnia and Herzegovina, Hungary, Norway, Poland	4
Romany	Austria, Germany[33], Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia	6

In the majority of cases the common international denominations are used: Six state parties use *Romany* which is in line with the traditional dictionary entry. Four ratifications show the more recent *Romani*. The other three labels require comments:

- *Romani Chib* is the ASCII code equivalent of *Romani čhib* 'Romani tongue/language' which is primarily used as a self-denomination by Roma of the second

32 This confusion even could be intensified by the inclusion of the self-denomination of Romani speech communities for their "language". Austria ratified for *Romany* in the English version which is the traditional dictionary translation of *Romanes* in the German version. *Romanes* is primarily used by speakers of northwestern varieties with the Sinti being the most numerous and dominant group. However, Austria's protection for Romani concentrates on the variety of the Burgenland Roma who name their variety *Roman*.

33 As Germany ratified in line with its federal constitution there are differences in the scope of ratification by the federal states of Baden-Württemberg, Berlin, Hamburg, Lower Saxony, North-Rhine-Westphalia, Rhineland-Palatinate, and Schleswig-Holstein that ratified for Romani under Part II. The federal state of Hesse ratified for Romani under Part III of the Charter. However, the label Romany is commonly used.

and third migration (see above) living in Sweden today.

- *Romanes* is above all used as a self-denomination by speakers of northwestern varieties, i.e. the Finnish *Kaale*, the Dutch and German *Sinti*, who dominate the emancipation process in the countries where they are resident. This fact is reflected by the ratification documents.
- *Roma* is generally used as an ethnonym by many, but not all Romani speech communities. As in the case at hand, ethnonyms often also name the language of the respective community. The ratification of the Czech Republic mentions "Roma languages" which is confusing but only represents the reality of more than one Romani variety spoken in Bohemia and Moravia.

The plurality of Romani is probably also the reason why Norway ratified for both *Romani* and *Romanes*. The latter relates to the Romani variety of the "Norwegian Rom" (Gjerde 1994: 1). As the endonymic ethnonym *Rom* indicates, these are speakers of a northern Vlax variety who first came to Norway during the second migration at the turn of the twentieth century. *Romani* denotes the *Scandoromani* variety of the Norwegian *Resande* whose ancestors were among the first immigrants to Norway and are thought to have lived in Scandinavia since the sixteenth century. This distance in time between the immigrations of the two Romani speech communities living in Norway today *inter alia* results in the structural distance and practically mutual unintelligibility between the respective Romani varieties which is pragmatically taken into consideration by Norway's ratification of the ECRML.

Reservations that affect the protection of Romani range from the rather anxious emphasis on the obvious, that only the Romani language of the speakers residing in the country is protected – e.g. "the Romany language of the Austrian Roma minority", "with regard to Romany in the Land Burgenland" in the Austrian ratification document – and the avoidance of the official recognition of Romani by excluding non-territorial languages from the ratification[34] to the simple statement that Romani has no tradition of usage on the territory of a state. Such reservations always have to be seen against the background of the low sociopolitical status of the Roma in general. The Roma are a people without any efficient and strong lobby.

34 Croatia has opted for this reservation. However, this does not mean that Croatian authorities are neglecting Romani. There is support for Romani-speaking communities both in education and in the media but Romani is excluded from the protection offered by the Charter.

Another symptom of the low status of Romani is the level of protection which above all becomes obvious in the proportion of ratifications under Part II of the ECRML compared to ratifications under Part III:

Table 10: Level of ratification of Romani

Level	Countries	N°
Part II	Austria, Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Romania, Slovenia, Sweden	9
Part III	Bosnia and Herzegovina, Hungary, Montenegro, Poland, Serbia, Slovakia	6

Part II comprises the basic principles of the ECRML that are vital for the preservation of a regional or minority language. These apply to all languages traditionally spoken on the territory of a state that has ratified the ECRML regardless of whether the state's ratification takes special provisions for the protection of a specific language under Part III. The following discussion of the level of protection of Romani under Part III of the ECRML concentrates on Article 8 – Education. This is in line with the underlying topic of the paper and also exemplifies the overall treatment of Romani in the framework of the ECRML.

Table 11 below gives an overview of the provisions for Romani education chosen by the six countries that have ratified for Romani under Part III. In addition the table also presents the provisions chosen by Austria and Germany which in principle have ratified for Romani under Part II but have additionally opted for individual requirements laid down in Part III of the ECRML. Furthermore, the table shows the ratifications of the individual German federal states which have chosen special provisions for the protection of Romani on their territory. However, the Austrian and German ratifications, except those of the German federal state of Hesse, are still far below the threshold of 35 provisions which are obligatory for the protection of a language under Part III of the ECRML.

Although most probably in line with the federal constitutions of Austria and Germany, the low level of provisions for the additionally chosen protection of Romani under Part III is somehow striking but symptomatic.[35] The higher total numbers for

35 On the background of both quantity and quality of the respective Part III additions one might feel tempted to interpret these in line with the reservations mentioned above. To explicitly state that the authorities have no competence in the field and therefore only will favour and encourage the offering of Romani in adult and continuing education is much less than the obligations ratified in accordance with Part II. But as indicated, this is only one possible interpretation and has no factual value. Would going even further and putting this low level of additional and unnecessary ratification of Part III provisions in line with the notorious "migrantophobia" in Germanic-speaking Europe and beyond maybe be going too far?

provisions listed in Table 11 as a rule correlate with a considerably low commitment of the ratifying state which is *inter alia* reflected by rather vague formulations:

- to apply measures to those who
- so request and whose number is considered sufficient (1.a.iii, 1.b.iv),
- so wish in a number considered sufficient (1.a.iv, 1.d.iv),
- to allow, to encourage, to favour … (1.e.iii, 1.f.iii).

The only provision with a number higher than five in Table 11 which includes a clear obligation for active measures is "the teaching of the history and culture which is reflected by" Romani (1.g.). However, this is the only obligation a state party can realistically guarantee to fulfil without detailed knowledge of the actual situation of Romani on its territory. As this is not the exception but almost the rule in the ratifications for Romani, even the low and vague obligations chosen by most of the state parties cause problems when it comes to implementation, realisation and, consequently, to reporting.

This has become obvious among others in the Part III ratifications of Montenegro and the German federal state of Hesse. In the latter case the realisation of the ratification was hampered by the fact that not all the persons affected and their representatives respectively were included in the pre-ratification process. For many Sinti, especially the elders, their Romani variety, *Romanes*, which is traditionally spoken on the territory of Hesse, is a tabooed in-group marker which has to be kept secret from outsiders. Naturally they do not want *Romanes* to be taught in schools. Other speakers of Romani living in Hesse today accept that their varieties be taught in school but point out that there is no codified form of Romani that could be used for teaching their children. The lack of a standardised variety of Romani is the argument for the non-implementation of all provisions ratified for Romani by Montenegro. In this case an admittedly low but nevertheless ambitious level of ratification is not implemented because of unrealistic preconditions and exaggerated demands for a standard.

To sum up this description and analysis of the ratifications of the ECRML with respect to Romani, it is clear that the differences in the treatment of Romani oscillate between nothing and too much, between sidelining and overdoing, between prolonged discrimination and political correctness. However, the basic problem is the fact that ratifications are above all politically motivated and never really tackle the linguistic needs of Roma by taking the sociolinguistic situation of Romani varieties and their speech communities into account. This is the basic problem state parties face and the Committee of Experts (COMEX) of the ECRML is confronted with in their reports and commentaries.

Table 11: Part III / Article 8 / Education

1	With regard to education, the Parties undertake, within the territory in which such languages are used, according to the situation of each of these languages, and without prejudice to the teaching of the official language(s) of the State:
1.a.i	to make available pre-school education in the relevant regional or minority languages; or
1.a.ii	to make available a substantial part of pre-school education in the relevant regional or minority languages; or
1.a.iii	to apply one of the measures provided for under i and ii above at least to those pupils whose families so request and whose number is considered sufficient; or
1.a.iv	if the public authorities have no direct competence in the field of pre-school education, to favour and/or encourage the application of the measures referred to under i to iii above;
1.b.i	to make available primary education in the relevant regional or minority languages; or
1.b.ii	to make available a substantial part of primary education in the relevant regional or minority languages; or
1.b.iii	to provide, within primary education, for the teaching of the relevant regional or minority languages as an integral part of the curriculum; or
1.b.iv	to apply one of the measures provided for under i to iii above at least to those pupils whose families so request and whose number is considered sufficient;
1.c.i	to make available secondary education in the relevant regional or minority languages; or
1.c.ii	to make available a substantial part of secondary education in the relevant regional or minority languages; or
1.c.iii	to provide, within secondary education, for the teaching of the relevant regional or minority languages as an integral part of the curriculum; or
1.c.iv	to apply one of the measures provided for under i to iii above at least to those pupils who, or where appropriate whose families, so wish in a number considered sufficient;
1.d.i	to make available technical and vocational education in the relevant regional or minority languages; or
1.d.ii	to make available a substantial part of technical and vocational education in the relevant regional or minority languages; or
1.d.iii	to provide, within technical and vocational education, for the teaching of the relevant regional or minority languages as an integral part of the curriculum; or
1.d.iv	to apply one of the measures provided for under i to iii above at least to those pupils who, or where appropriate whose families, so wish in a number considered sufficient;
1.e.i	to make available university and other higher education in regional or minority languages; or
1.e.ii	to provide facilities for the study of these languages as university and higher education subjects; or
1.e.iii	if, by reason of the role of the State in relation to higher education institutions, sub-paragraphs i and ii cannot be applied, to encourage and/or allow the provision of university or other forms of higher education in regional or minority languages or of facilities for the study of these languages as university or higher education subjects;
1.f.i	to arrange for the provision of adult and continuing education courses which are taught mainly or wholly in the regional or minority languages; or
1.f.ii	to offer such languages as subjects of adult and continuing education; or
1.f.iii	if the public authorities have no direct competence in the field of adult education, to favour and/or encourage the offering of such languages as subjects of adult and continuing education;
1.g	to make arrangements to ensure the teaching of the history and the culture which is reflected by the regional or minority language;
1.h	to provide the basic and further training of the teachers required to implement those of paragraphs a to g accepted by the Party;
1.i	to set up a supervisory body or bodies responsible for monitoring the measures taken and progress achieved in establishing or developing the teaching of regional or minority languages and for drawing up periodic reports of their findings, which will be made public.
2	With regard to education and in respect of territories other than those in which the regional or minority languages are traditionally used, the Parties undertake, if the number of users of a regional or minority language justifies it, to allow, encourage or provide teaching in or of the regional or minority language at all the appropriate stages of education.

BIH: Bosnia and Herzegowina | HUN: Hungary | MNE: Montenegro | POL: Poland | SRB: Serbia | SVK: Slovakia | AUT: Austria | DEU: Germany

Table 11

	BIH	HUN	MNE	POL	SRB	SVK	AUT	DEU	a	b	c	d	e	f	N°
1.a.i				x						x					2
1.a.ii										x					1
1.a.iii	x	x	x		x	x						x			6
1.a.iv			x		x				x			x		x	5
1.b.i				x						x					2
1.b.ii			x							x					2
1.b.iii						x				x					2
1.b.iv	x	x	x		x						x	x			6
1.c.i				x											1
1.c.ii															0
1.c.iii			x			x									2
1.c.iv	x	x	x		x						x	x			6
1.d.i															0
1.d.ii															0
1.d.iii				x		x									2
1.d.iv	x	x	x		x							x			5
1.e.i										x					1
1.e.ii			x	x	x	x				x					5
1.e.iii	x	x							x	x		x	x	x	7
1.f.i															0
1.f.ii						x									1
1.f.iii	x	x	x		x		x	x							6
1.g	x	x	x	x	x	x		x							7
1.h		x	x	x		x		x							5
1.i		x		x		x				x		x			5
2		x								x		x	x		4

a: Baden-Würtemberg | b: Berlin | c: Hamburg | d: Hesse | e: North-Rhine/Westphalia | f: Rhineland-Palatinat

5.2 Reports by the Committee of Experts

In order to provide the context for statements and remarks by the Committee of Experts (COMEX) with regard to Romani and education, the following general overview of the main facts and issues in their evaluation reports, followed by a more detailed analysis of the most important points raised, is given below.

The COMEX found in almost all states that ratified the Charter that the legislative framework that guarantees the general right to receive Romani education was covered, usually in general terms together with any other recognised regional or minority language in that state. However, there is a significant gap between the legislation and the implementation.

> *While acknowledging the strong commitment of protection of Romani under Part III of the Charter, the Committee of Experts must nonetheless evaluate the present level of implementation of the precise undertakings entered into under Part III with respect to the Romani language. This evaluation clearly shows that there is a significant gap between a number of the undertakings chosen and the level of implementation provided for by the domestic legal framework and practice. The Committee of Experts observes, in particular, that compliance with many of the selected undertakings is rendered difficult, or even impossible, by the fact that the Romani language has no standard written form in Montenegro, as it has hitherto not been codified.* (2nd Report on Montenegro / 2011)

If Romani is taught in schools at all, it is apparent that the offer is, with only a few exceptions, severely limited in terms of numbers of schools and pupils attending, and patchy in providing continuity from pre-school education to secondary school education. Although some countries offer Romani from pre-school through to secondary school, it is more often the case that Romani is taught at only one stage of education, most commonly in the earlier years. Almost as a rule, Romani is offered as an optional subject, either as an integral part of the curriculum, or as an extracurricular activity without formal assessment. However, in most cases, Romani is only used as a marginal element, for example in the context of teaching Romani history and culture, or as an auxiliary language or rather as a communicative necessity by teaching assistants in the classroom. Romani education seems to be often affected by the discontinuation of classes or decrease in teaching more than other regional or minority languages. Education for non-speakers is only very rarely offered, mainly by Romani associations.

The COMEX identified three prevailing clusters of sources for the deficit in Romani education in its reports:

- The first is the lack of teaching infrastructure.
- The second is the more complex issue surrounding the discrimination of Roma.
- The third is the linguistic status of Romani, above all the lack of a written norm.

5.2.1 Teaching infrastructure

The recurring and most prevailing problem in realising Romani education is the lack of teachers and opportunities for teacher training as well as shortcomings in the support structure. The most basic elements of a teaching support structure are textbooks and teaching materials which in most cases are lacking.

> *The representatives of the Romany speakers identified the lack of teaching materials and qualified teachers as the main obstacle with respect to education in Romany.* (1st Report on Austria / 2005)

> *During the "on-the-spot" visit, several Roma organisations expressed their frustration about the fact that, having encouraged their members to demand mother-tongue education in Romani, they find themselves in the difficult situation that these demands are denied by municipalities owing to the lack of teachers and teaching materials.* (2nd report on Sweden / 2006)

> *The Committee of Experts urges the Finnish authorities to devise innovative solutions to the lack of Romani teachers in co-operation with the speakers and to ensure the provision of adequate and sufficient teaching materials.* (3rd Report on Finland / 2007)

A further aspect highlighted by the COMEX in its reports is the potential of the role of the teaching assistants and social workers at school.

Teaching assistants play a role in the context of Romani education. They are employed at pre-schools and schools with the aim to further the integration of socially disadvantaged children. Assistants use Romani to create trust and familiarity and overcome insufficient knowledge of the dominant language rather than to teach the language as a subject in its own right. Some countries have pointed to the language barrier as a reason for non-integration and use the assistants as a medium between the authorities and the children. However, the COMEX's view on integration has been different (see below on 'segregation'):

> *The Roma assistants had turned out to be good mediators between the family and the school and helped the Roma pupils integrate better. The assistant thereby also employs the Romani language. However, according to the headmaster, there is no permanent support for assistants from the Ministry of Education and Science, […].* (1st Report on Montenegro / 2009)

5.2.2 Integration vs. assimilation

In its reports, the Committee of Experts observed a considerable degree of absenteeism and a relatively high drop-out rate among Romani pupils. In many countries the teaching of Romani seemed to have been subordinated to teaching in the state language for the sake of 'integrating' Romani pupils into mainstream society and providing a base for socio-economic success. Cases of teachers who even forbid the use of Romani on the school grounds have been reported. In contrast to the aim of 'integration', a highly disproportionate number of Romani pupils have been sent to schools for special needs.

For their part, the authorities seemed to conveniently justify the lack of Romani education through the attitude and behaviour of the Roma:

- Parents did not demand Romani education for their children, and, if it was offered anyway, showed lack of interest in such, and courses were discontinued.
- Certain segments of the Romani community are reluctant to see the teaching of Romani in public institutions and to have their language taught by people from outside their communities.
- A low attendance rate of Romani pupils in schools made Romani education impossible.

These sensitive issues were addressed by the COMEX who was not easily appeased by the authorities' arguments. The COMEX recognised that the underlying causes of lack of demand for Romani education lay in the low prestige of Romani and low self-esteem of the speakers, coupled with the desire of Roma to enable their children to achieve socio-economic success and therefore prioritising the learning of the dominant language. The COMEX also noticed that in many cases, parents were not aware that such a demand was possible and that there was a need for campaigns to raise awareness of the offer and explain the benefits of bilingual education, and indeed of education in general, coupled with confidence and trust building initiatives between Roma and the authorities in order to increase the school attendance rate. The COMEX also observed a significant lack of communication between the authorities and the Roma as well as a lack of interest in the needs of the community.

> *During the discussions with the Dutch authorities the Committee of Experts noted that there was a significant lack of communication between the authorities and the Romanes-speaking community and a lack of interest for the needs of Romanes speakers.* (2nd Report on the Netherlands / 2004)

> *While it is clear that the linguistic issues concerning Roma people cannot be divorced from their socio-economic context, the opposite may also be true. Indeed, on the basis of the information made available to the Committee of Experts, it would appear that there is a widespread lack of self-esteem amongst the Roma*

people, which results in their distancing themselves from their original culture, language included. The Committee of Experts considers that the prestige attached to the Romany language could be raised by protection and promotion measures, and these would in turn help the self-esteem of Roma people, and consequently their integration into Slovenian society, without giving up their cultural and linguistic identity. (2nd Report on Slovenia / 2007)

Experts from the Charles University told the Committee of Experts during the on-the-spot visit that there was also a need to raise awareness within the Roma community of the benefits of education in general and of bilingualism in particular. A lack of information in this respect, combined with clearly assimilationist practices within schools and the absence of a policy from the authorities have led to the current virtual absence of Romani education.
(1st Report on Czech Republic / 2009)

Already in its early evaluation reports, the COMEX grasped the complexity surrounding Romani in education and the need to contextualise the lack of offers with the prevailing topic of social exclusion which arguably distinguishes the treatment by the COMEX from those of all other regional or minority languages. From the start, the COMEX took a clear and consistent stance on the topic of social exclusion through segregation on the basis of social discrimination of Roma. The COMEX is clearly opposed to the practice of segregation. Another issue to mention in this context is that many Romani children do not speak the respective national standard language well or well enough, and this is an issue that the COMEX has been challenged to deal with as it had to date not really been a major issue. Not only does the COMEX oppose segregation, it also uncovers the authorities' practices of integration as actual assimilation. The COMEX is of the view that real integration implies also the teaching of Romani.

A serious problem obviously exists with the two Romani linguistic communities. (..). If one follows the estimates that put the number of Roma/Gypsies at some 500.000, this would mean a significant group of some 150.000 Gypsy people speaking a minority language. Despite these rather high numbers of speakers, there have been practically no efforts to upgrade the standing of the two Roma/Gypsy languages in public life, and few educational programmes fostering the linguistic capabilities of minority children in the minority languages of their families. This is undoubtedly due to a traditional conception of anti-discrimination policy as entailing assimilation and past efforts to free the Roma population from its marginal status, with its economic, social and cultural disadvantages.
(1st Report on Hungary / 2001)

A specific feature of the Hungarian situation is a high degree of segregation in schools and its knock-on effects for Roma children: according to a survey carried out in 4000 primary schools in 2001, Roma children were segregated in

700 classes mainly by means of remedial classes. In addition, a disproportionate number of Roma children are still enrolled in schools for the disabled.
(2nd Report on Hungary / 2004)

The information gathered by the Committee of Experts during the "on-the-spot" visit suggests that the competent educational authorities in the field are for the most part still pursuing a fundamentally assimilatory approach with regard to education for Roma in Slovakia. Romany-speaking teachers' assistants at pre-school level are intended to facilitate this approach. The Slovak school authorities' main argument in this respect is that the Romany-speakers themselves give priority to their children having a full command of the Slovak language in order to have better chances than their parents to get fully integrated into the Slovak society, particularly from an economic point of view. However, many Slovak school authorities are in fact reluctant to introduce teaching of or in Romany and on the other hand many Roma parents are not aware of their rights.
(1st Report on Slovakia / 2007)

In conclusion, (...) the Committee of Experts is convinced that integration of the Romani-speaking people into Czech society implies inclusion of teaching of and in Romani in the Czech school system.
(1st Report on the Czech Republic / 2009)

The COMEX also recognised that, as with other regional or minority languages, although legislation and initiatives including financial means and encouragements are welcome, they do not suffice to seriously introduce and sustain Romani education. Adopting a comprehensive strategy and policy is necessary if the offer is to be more than half-hearted, haphazard or purely symbolic. Of course this is bound to imply a substantial effort from the authorities. In addition to the adoption of a strategy the COMEX asks for short-term and medium-term solutions, recognising that the implementation of a strategy can take time, something that a minority language cannot afford to waste. Romani shares this with endangered languages. In addition, in order to overcome some persistent barriers and in order to break the vicious circle, an innovative and flexible approach is needed. The recommendation is perhaps almost unique to Romani compared with other regional or minority languages.

5.2.3 Written Romani

One recurring issue in the reports on Romani is its low level of codification. From the beginning, the COMEX has consistently taken the view that the existence of at least an agreed written form of Romani is necessary to apply certain fields covered in the Charter, including education.

While in its early reports the COMEX recommended the development of a standardised form of Romani and in its later reports even a standardised European form, it changed its approach in its second Slovenian report to recommend a codification. Regardless of the state and process of standardisation or codification, the Committee does not accept the lack thereof as hindering the teaching of Romani.

> *[…] during the "on-the-spot" visit the Government referred to two aspects hampering education of and in the Romany language: the lack of standardisation of the language and the different varieties of the language spoken in Slovenia. The Committee of Experts is fully aware of these factors and of the related difficulties, since they resemble difficulties experienced in other countries.* (1st Report on Slovenia / 2004)

> *The Committee of Experts is not convinced that the lack of standardisation argument is justification for the failure to offer education in and of Romany. The Committee acknowledges that standardisation is a crucial step, especially for teaching in further and higher education (…), and that ultimately a standardised form of the language should be generally accepted. The Committee of Experts further advocates that standardisation be sought preferably at European level, in close co-operation with the Roma representatives themselves, and the other European States concerned, to avoid a purely 'national' standardisation which would risk cutting ties with other Roma communities throughout Europe.* (2nd Report on Hungary / 2004)

> *In accordance with the suggestion of representatives of the European Roma and Travellers Forum, the Committee of Experts has decided to use the term "codification" rather than "standardisation" which it used previously.* (2nd Report on Slovenia / 2007)

> *According to the best available expertise on the Romany language, linguistic pluralism within the Roma society is a reality and must be supported since that corresponds to how the Romany speakers are socially structured. […] The linguistic pluralism characterising Romany-speakers should therefore not be seen as an obstacle but as a distinctive feature of the linguistic richness, flexibility and dynamism of the Romany language.* (1st Report on Slovakia / 2007)

With respect to a written form of Romani, the opinion of the ECRML's COMEX has significantly changed from a general treatment on the basis of common ideas about language planning to an adequate treatment on the background of the actual sociolinguistic situation of Romani.

6 Standardisation and codification

In general, four types of regional or minority languages (RMLs) protected by the ECRML can be distinguished:

- RMLs with a so called "kin state" where the language dominates,
- RMLs with a former dominant role and a written tradition,
- RMLs with a former dominant role but no written tradition,
- RMLs with neither former dominance nor written tradition.

Romani corresponds to the last type in this list: It has never had a dominating role in formal public domains and has been and effectively still is functionally restricted to informal domains of everyday life and the private sphere. Although it has been regularly used in written form for almost a century it has neither developed a generally accepted linguistic norm nor a written tradition similar to those of other dominant or formerly dominant languages of Europe. So far written Romani has only limited communicative functions for the average Romani speaker and symbolic functions mark its usage in formal domains. However the written use of Romani contributes substantially to the empowerment of its speakers if they are, *inter alia*, able to identify with the codified variety used. As indicated, the full extent of this self-consciousness and self-esteem raising effect is not guaranteed by the traditional standardisation approach but rather by a flexible codification strategy in line with the sociolinguistic situation of Romani taking into account the democratic as well as the social situation of minority languages in an open, globalising society.

6.1 Standardisation and imposition

A standard results above all from communicative needs in the organisation of complex socio-political structures. A commonly understood linguistic variety is a necessary prerequisite for the management of a large number of individuals in a geographically large political entity.

This was the case in the Austro-Hungarian Empire of Maria Theresa: The army needed soldiers who were able to cope with a common command language, the sovereign needed money to finance the army as well as the reforms for a modern state administration. These organisational needs resulted *inter alia* in the further development of a previously developed inter-regional administrative variety of High German[36] into a standard norm which was implemented by law via the educational system or rather compulsory education.

36 The epithet or rather attributive adjective *high* originally was geographically defined. The high status of this variety of German is the consequence of political power associated with its administrative use.

On the background of such scenarios it becomes obvious that a standard is an instrument of power to guarantee the administration of a dominion by top-down information where administrative functions dominate the communicative ones. The standard is needed for exercise of power as well as for the participation in power. The more other groups besides the ruling elite gain participation in power, the greater the number of individuals who actively profit from competences in the standard. Consequently, the importance of the standard as the primary and dominant means of public communication increases and it expands its functions into domains of everyday life and beyond in post-feudal and post-colonial democratic societies.

A modern example for the establishment of a standard in a post-colonial context is the declaration of Swahili as the national language of Tanzania. The variety the standard is based upon is the one used on the island of Zanzibar. Swahili has functioned as the regional *lingua franca* of East Africa from the times of Arab supremacy through the period of Portuguese hegemony and an era as a German colony to the times when the region was part of the British Empire. Today Swahili and English are official languages of Tanzania. However, only Swahili has the status of a national language.

Whereas the declaration of Swahili as the national language of Tanzania by Julius Nyerere in the second half of the 20th century was politically motivated, the language planning initiative of Maria Theresa in central Europe in the 18th century was primarily based on practical administrative concerns. However, despite these differences in time, space and purpose the patterns used are virtually the same: The declaration of one variety of a language as the official language of the dominion or state and its implementation by law via the education system.

This process has been described and formalised from the 1920s onwards. In principle the planning stages for the development of a standard variety are always based upon the selection of a single variety and its declaration as the dominant variety on the territory of a state. This initial declarative step is followed by three interlocking planning stages which are defined based on Hornberger (2006: 28) in the following list:[37]

- Status planning
  efforts directed toward the allocation of functions of the language in a given speech community which affect language use, inter alia, by declaring a vernacular variety of a language the standard,
- Corpus planning
  efforts related to the adequacy of the form or structure which affect the language itself by codification, i.e. standardising a writing system, compiling a dictionary and determining a normative grammar,

37 Hornberger (2006) gives a detailed overview of this rather complex process that is outlined only superficially here.

- Acquisition planning
  efforts to influence the allocation of users or the distribution of the language which affect its users by legal acts that impose its use in public domains and in education.

The formalisation of the standardisation process into four stages by Haugen (1983) further distinguishes both corpus planning (CP), which relates to the form of a language, and acquisition planning (AP), which relates to its functions:

- Codification / CP
  defines a language's form, i.e. writing system, lexicon, and grammar
- Elaboration / CP
  relates to a language's functions, i.e. language planning goals as modernisation, etc.
- Selection / AP
  defines a language's formal role in society, i.e. the domains in which it is used,
- Implementation / AP
  relates to a language's functional role in society, i.e. acquisition, maintenance, etc.

On the background of the sociolinguistic situation outlined above it is evident that Romani language planning cannot conform to this "traditional" pattern. In practice it is more or less reduced to corpus planning or rather to codification and elaboration. In his widely read policy paper, Matras (2005a)[38] gets to the very heart of this problem:

> *In order to protect and promote Romani language rights as human rights, there is a need to develop educational materials and media in the language, and to train teachers and writers. In the absence of an existing standard written language, this cannot be done without language planning. However, there is no uniform concept on which to base language planning, and no obvious accredited authorised body that could draft and implement such a concept.* (Matras 2005a: 33)

There is neither a "uniform concept" to guide the selection process nor an "authorised body" which would be able to take generally accepted decisions and carry out their implementation. This shortcoming is rooted in the aforementioned lack of power structures. A centre of power with administrative and educational institutions is a precondition for the implementation, or rather imposition, of a codified variety as the standard of a large, widespread, and heterogeneous linguistic community.

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38 Matras (2005) is the printed version of an electronically published paper from 2004. The original paper is available on the Manchester Romani Project website: http://romani.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/downloads/2/Matras_Pluralism.pdf

6.2 Codification and harmonisation

Regardless of the underlying motivation, be it based on practical administrative considerations or primarily motivated by political symbolism, successful standardisation is only possible if the planning efforts are borne by institutions which have the necessary power to implement the standard variety in society. This precondition is above all met in centralist systems with a political elite dominating all aspects of public life. In such cases the genesis of a standard is essentially an act of declaration, status planning, followed by codification, corpus planning, and imposition, acquisition planning. The more democratic a political system, the less imposition is possible and the more decisions for a uniform concept in language planning have to be discussed with a broader public. Consequently, decisions concerning a standard must be in line with the ideas and requirements of the whole speech community to be successfully implemented. Nevertheless, an authorised body which is based on political power is needed also in democratic contexts to implement the standardisation product. Yet as already mentioned, the implementation will only be successful if it meets the needs of the respective speech community or rather if the users are convinced that the standard variety guarantees participation in political decision-making as well as in economic welfare.

Representatives of speakers of RMLs with neither a written tradition nor a dominant role in at least some sectors of society aiming for a unified variety of their language for the most part lack the necessary prerequisites for successful standardisation in line with the language planning pattern outlined so far. In most cases there is no generally accepted and authorised body with the necessary politico-economic power to successfully implement a standard into the speech community. Thus the scope of language planning efforts is limited to

- Codification: compilation of a dictionary and production of a descriptive grammar based on a writing system which conforms to the ideas and needs of the speakers,
- Elaboration: the functional expansion of the language into formal domains by creating the necessary vocabulary and structures for written use.

As codified and elaborated varieties of minority languages obviously have no formal public functions and their implementation is not an administrative must, prospective users of such a variety must at least be able to identify with the codification product, i.e. their individual and societal language use must be reflected by the codified variety. If this prerequisite is met, the use of the codified variety on the background of the oral and written language use of individuals and sub-groups of the speech community will initiate a harmonisation process which has the potential to develop the codification product into the generally accepted variety of public and written language use. The more diverse a minority speech community, the more importance has to be attributed to a sound basis for the possibility of harmonisation and the less any pseudo imposi-

tion in line with the top-down power model of language planning is successful. This is particularly true for Romani which is, as outlined above, a heterogeneous cluster of varieties whose adult speakers are always plurilingual and exclusively use the respective dominant languages in formal public domains as well as in contact with members of the majority population in everyday life.

Contrary to the reality that Romani lacks the necessary prerequisites to develop a generally accepted standard, language planning activities in line with the traditional model are among the priorities of Romani representatives on international as well as on national levels. Although all these initiatives are essentially monocentric, mostly individually dominated approaches aiming for a sole Romani standard, they contribute to a polycentric development in line with the harmonisation processes outlined so far.

Most of the individuals involved in Romani language planning are also political activists. They not only use their Romani in meetings from a local to an international level but also distribute and promote their written variety at these occasions and beyond. In this way they become part of an on-going harmonisation process which is gradually resulting in an international Romani variety. Although this variety is used only by a relatively small group of speakers as a means of communication in the political sphere and beyond, Romani is functionally expanding into formal domains. This expansion results in lexical enrichment as well as in structural changes. Romani is developing the vocabulary needed to enable its users to reflect, write, discuss and publicly talk about any relevant topic. Due to the use in formal domains for communicative purposes among Romani representatives, Romani has entered the stage of development from a vernacular to a standard language. As already mentioned, this development by no means follows the traditional standardisation pattern. Therefore, translations and standardisation products with primarily symbolic functions, codification products of all kinds, as well as the communicative experience and the repertoire resources of all speakers involved contribute to this harmonisation process. The greater the number of Romani speakers participating in this process, the more this international variety will spread and contribute to overcoming the communicative obstacles between speakers of different Romani varieties in formal domains. A precondition for the further development of this international variety is further improvement of the sociopolitical situation of the Roma. Current conditions not only limit the development of Romani but above all hamper the integration of Roma as equal citizens of their native countries and, consequently, as European citizens.

6.3 Conclusions

Romani is a language in transition. It is developing from an exclusively oral language only used in informal domains of private and everyday life to an oral and written language with a complete range of registers. These cover the entire spectrum of communication from the private sphere and the informal public area of everyday life to official language use in the media, in administration, education, and other public formal domains.

Although there are efforts that aim for a standardised variety of Romani, the establishment of a generally accepted standard by using the traditional language planning patterns of modern European national languages remains a *desideratum*. This is above all due to the lack of an authorised body with the necessary power needed for the imposition by law of any codified variety through education. Thus Romani language planning is intrinsically polycentric. Language planning approaches range from idiosyncratic activities based on the idiolects of influential speakers via the corpus-based codification of single dialects and dialect groups to national and regional attempts to create a common Romani variety and international standardisation initiatives. However, all these attempts have at least three goals in common:

- Improvement of status,
- Expansion into formal domains,
- Modernisation of Romani.

Furthermore, the political movement for emancipation is becoming increasingly international with the number of activists participating in this process permanently rising. This organisational expansion intensifies regular communication between speakers of diverse dialectal background. These speakers use their communicative experience and the appropriate resources of their plurilingual repertoires to reach the communicative goals in inter-group contacts. Among these resources, individual as well as collective language planning products aiming for modernisation, among others also new vocabulary and new structures developed by editors, publishers and journalists of Romani media, play an important role in contributing to an on-going harmonisation process towards an international variety or "Inter-Romani".

Inter-Romani is by no means a standard but a pool of writing conventions, new vocabulary and grammatical structures for use in written as well as oral formal domains. It has to be described, at least currently, as an unstable, permanently expanding resource of lexical and structural items. Almost as a rule, it offers more than one possibility for a lexical or structural item thus giving users the opportunity to choose between various options and pick the one appropriate for their dialect. Most probably Inter-Romani will not develop into a standard but it might turn into a relatively stable bundle of registers which offers Romani speakers a common resource for the use of their variety in formal domains without excluding speakers of other dialects. Inter-Romani is a product of polycentric language planning based on linguistic pluralism.

Matras (2005a: 38) lists the following three principles of linguistic pluralism for written Romani which can easily be employed for both the oral and written use of Romani in formal domains:

- Regional pluralism: Different forms of formal Romani are used in different regions without making transnational communication impossible.
- Contextual pluralism: Individual users of Romani are willing and able to choose between different forms of formal Romani in different contexts.
- Functional pluralism: Efficiency of communication is the only criterion for the choice of linguistic variants, of phonological forms, morphemes, lexemes and their spelling as well as of syntactic structures and pragmatic patterns.

Linguistic pluralism of Romani in formal domains results not only from polycentric language planning but is above all rooted in the communicative flexibility and adaptability of Romani speakers. Plurilingualism as inter-lingual flexibility has always been a tool to easily adapt to varying communicative contexts with mostly monolingual *Gadže* ('Non-Roma') of different linguistic backgrounds. Intra-lingual adaptability is the primary communicative strategy when speakers of different Romani varieties interact. In such contacts Roma are used to accepting linguistic forms that differ from those of their own variety and are able to avoid loanwords from languages their interlocutors are not familiar with. Thus the principles of linguistic pluralism in Romani are rooted in the communicative behaviour of Romani speakers in informal inter-group contact. Furthermore, linguistic pluralism reflects the main common social feature of the Roma, sociocultural plurality. Consequently Inter-Romani as a harmonisation product in the context of linguistic pluralism is based on the communicative behaviour of Romani speakers and also rooted in sociocultural plurality. Therefore, the development of Inter-Romani most probably demonstrates how a dominated language like Romani is adequately and "naturally" expanding into formal domains, improving its status, and undergoing modernisation.

Demands for the expansion of Romani into formal domains and its emancipation as an integrative element of the linguistic plurality of Europe by developing a unified language via top-down measures in line with traditional language planning models are counterproductive. To foster the outlined harmonisation process taking into account the sociolinguistic situation of Romani is the only reasonable strategy political instruments of minority language protection can base their efforts on. Therefore the development in the evaluation of Romani by the Committee of Experts of the ECRML from general treatment on the basis of common ideas about language planning to adequate treatment on the background of the actual sociolinguistic situation of Romani is fully in line with the real needs of Romani speech communities and an adequate development of the language on the background of the principles of codification and harmonisation.

7 Summary

Although in principle committed to the protection of all indigenous European minority languages, the ECRML reflects above all the sociopolitical and sociocultural status of western European minority languages whose representatives played a leading role in its genesis. As a result, the ECRML is at least implicitly based on the common European definition of minorities that is rooted in the ethnic romanticism of the 19th century. According to this concept, minorities are rural, conservative, immobile relics of another, sometimes archaic culture of another, sometimes formerly dominant ethnicity, which often perceives itself as a nation, and which in most cases speaks another language. As the Charter is primarily devoted to the protection of such languages, its application to a transnational, stateless and functionally restricted language of a stigmatised and discriminated minority, such as the Romani language, poses a certain challenge, but does not exclude its safeguarding through its inherent flexibility and adaptability. However, the Charter's fundamental orientation in combination with the outlined definition of minorities causes problems and contradictions in its application to the Romani language, which are summarised below.

7.1 Territoriality

Defining languages primarily through territoriality is somewhat problematic. Languages are primarily associated with speaker communities consisting of mobile individuals. They are hence subject to spatial as well as cultural and social changes. Only the administrative languages of nation states are primarily spatially defined, since they dominate the territory of a state due to this specific functionality.

Territoriality regarding minority languages moreover implicitly assumes the former dominance of a minority language on the present-day territory of a modern nation state. Languages without a clearly recognisable usage territory, be it because it has never existed or because it was lost simultaneously with the loss of dominance by its speaker community, are usually categorised as non-territorial. This is based on the assumption of a dichotomy [± territorial]. However, territoriality is not "either/or", but a gradual field, or in relation to Romani a "both/and". Roma reached territorial status in Europe in the 18th century at the latest. Since then they have been resident in villages, cities and regions of all contemporary nation states, which is inter alia reflected in Romani dialectology. As this kind of territoriality is not associated with dominance, Romani is still fundamentally defined as non-territorial. This view, which is especially common in western and central Europe, however, relies heavily on the stereotype of nomadism. Roma are not nomads but due to their marginalisation were – and often still are to this day – often forced to pursue mobile niche occupations which were considered inferior by the established population because they offered sufficient income only to those who were willing – i.e. forced – to be mobile and flexible. It is only

natural that occupations such as blacksmiths, musicians, horse traders, basket weavers, farmhands, day labourers, etc. are not performed by the peasant and bourgeois establishments due to the activities' inherent problems, but by social fringe groups.

Marginalisation and stigmatisation are often the reason that the centuries-long residence of Roma and thus the continuous use of Romani in certain regions cannot be proven. Documents proving residence and real estate property are often missing because they were never issued. In addition, the permanent presence of Romani families in one place is in turn often negated by referring to nomadism or mobile niche occupations, although it is known that these transient services were only provided within a certain territory with the same starting and finishing point.

Romani's definition as non-territorial based on the background relationship between language and nation state outlined above becomes evident if we regard Romani primarily as a transnational language which is used in all European countries and beyond but which has never dominated any European territory at any time. Yet defining Romani exclusively as non-territorial does not do justice to its situation in any way. Thus the Charter's context should allow Romani to be treated both as a non-territorial as well as a territorial language.

7.2 Indigenousness

Fundamentally based on the criterion of duration of residence, indigenousness in the context of minority protection is implicitly a political category which is also defined by dominance.[39] As Roma and Romani have never dominated any region of Europe at any time, their indigenous status in many European countries is, despite centuries of residence and language use, by no means self-evident. 'Indigenous' is generally only what is considered to be indigenous by the respective nation state. Stigmatised and marginalised groups and their languages usually do not fall into this category, or the indigenousness of stigmatised and marginalised languages, provided that they are even recognised as languages, is often questioned or usually differs in its status in comparison to other recognised minority languages. The latter is relatively frequently observed in the case of Romani.

As Romani speakers have lived in most regions of Europe for centuries, Romani is fundamentally an indigenous language of each European country. However, it is still not recognised as such due to its transnationality in connection with the stereotype of nomadism against the background of the pan-European migration since the mid-20th century. In cases where Romani is recognised as indigenous, there are usually restrictions on "national" varieties or dialects.

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39 If the criterion of original residence was rigorously applied to all languages of Europe, then perhaps only Basque and with some reservations the Sami varieties would remain. Provided the necessary time depth, all other European languages can indeed be classified as immigrant languages.

As a result of the aforementioned pan-European migration movement, the Romani population of almost every European state is heterogeneous and is composed of long established indigenous groups of speakers as well as of those who immigrated to the respective country in the last few decades. Not recognising individual groups as indigenous is therefore legally covered. Yet questioning Romani's continuity of use based on this is a wrong conclusion in the Charter's context, which explicitly refers to languages and not to speakers.[40]

7.3 Plurality

Romani's status as a functionally restricted, dominated language whose speakers are usually bilingual and who mostly use the locally dominant language in everyday life and in formal contexts directly results in non-territoriality, non-indigenousness as well as assumedly undesirable heterogeneity. It is comprehensible that the recognition of a heterogeneous minority language without a homogenising standard and kin state as a fully-fledged language can be considered 'problematic', particularly bearing in mind the conception on which nation states rely of language being based on criteria of homogeneity and exclusivity. This is reinforced by the still widely held view of language as a homogeneous, uniform system. This view is based on educated middle-class, formalistic notions of standard, writing, prescriptive grammar and enforceable communicative standards which by no means correspond to the sociolinguistic situation of languages. Languages are both structurally and functionally diverse, multifunctional and flexible. Plurality distinguishes especially non-standardised minority languages. In the case of Romani, this is also a reflection of sociocultural and sociopolitical plurality, expressed not only in the aforementioned difference between Roma and Sinti and the associated problems in the application of the Charter.

Problematising linguistic diversity as heterogeneity must not only be avoided in the case of Romani. It is rather necessary to regard plurality as normal and given and to make the flexibility in the application of the Charter to Romani into a principle.

40 Arguments stating that the continuity of use is not given due to collective expulsion, escape from or murder in concentration camps during the Nazi era, are to be deemed cynical.

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