

Netherlands
FRANET National Focal Point
Social Thematic Study
The situation of Roma
2012

Art. 1, Dutch knowledge centre on discrimination

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Executive summary

Data on the social and economic situation of Roma¹ in the Netherlands are very limited. The Dutch Data Protection Act (*Wet bescherming persoonsgegevens*) forbids the registration of ethnicity as do the Police Data Act (*Wet politiegegevens*) and the Municipal Database (Personal Files) Act (*Wet gemeentelijke basisadministratie persoonsgegevens*). As a result of this legal framework, there is **no systematic collection of data** on the situation of Roma, Sinti and Travellers in place in the Netherlands. This applies to the group of Roma in general, so that information on specific sub-groups such as Roma migrants, third country nationals or EU citizens from other Member States, is even more difficult to access.

Roma, Sinti and Travellers are **not recognized as national minorities** in the Netherlands which, together with the lack of a national approach for Roma, has led to criticism from members of the Council of Europe's Committee of Experts on Roma and Travellers.

Education

Although little reliable data is available, the overall impression of the educational situation of Roma children and adults is that they **lag behind the general population**. Enrolment in pre-school is comparatively low, Roma are overrepresented in special primary and secondary education and truancy and drop out are significant problems among the group. If they reach further education, Roma students are likely to enrol in vocational education and training instead of academic education. Discrimination may play a role in explaining the educational situation of Roma, as might cultural factors and their isolated societal position.

The participation of Roma in pre-school education is thought to be lower than the participation of the overall population. As Roma children often do not speak Dutch with their parents and the conditions at home are not conducive to the cognitive development of the children, they often enter primary school with a **language and learning deficit**. A recent qualitative study on school attendance of Roma shows that most Roma children are enrolled in primary school, though the percentage enrolled in special education is three times the national average. School attendance at primary school level is satisfactory, but public authorities and other stakeholders report **problems with truancy amongst Roma children at secondary school**. According to qualitative information, especially girls are often not enrolled in secondary education. Based on interviews with Roma girls, language and learning deficiencies, the influence of peers and family members, limited expectations from teachers and limited knowledge of Roma culture are factors influencing their low attendance rates.

As a result of the culmination of these issues, **educational attainment of Roma children, and especially Roma girls, is thought to be comparatively low**. Recent data is unavailable, but research

¹ The use of the term Roma in official EU documents follows generally the approach of the Council of Europe, which uses the term to refer to “Roma, Sinti, Kale and related groups in Europe, including Travellers and the Eastern groups (Dom and Lom), and covers the wide diversity of the groups concerned, including persons who identify themselves as Gypsies.” <http://hub.coe.int/web/coe-portal/roma/>

carried out in 2002 showed that few Roma children attain an educational level which can be classified as providing entry to the labour market (ISCED 3). Regarding further education, information is lacking, though it is known that Roma children are mostly enrolled in secondary education strands which lead on to vocational education and training (VET) learning paths.

Experiments have been carried out with separate classes for Roma children in schools, but these approaches are regarded critically, since they can undermine integration in mainstream society. Additional support is however given to Roma children in some schools and municipalities, including homework classes and career guidance. Generally, segregation is thought to undermine intervention, so policy initiatives focus on improving the school attendance of Roma on the one hand and law enforcement on the other hand. In 2009, a budget of €600,000 was reserved for specific initiatives in these two areas which were implemented in municipalities with a high percentage of Roma pupils. In 2011, however, the government announced that it will discontinue policies and programmes targeting specific ethnic groups, including Roma.

There is only **illustrative evidence of discrimination** of Roma at school, which can relate both to enrolment policies of schools and to bullying or harassment at school. As in other societal areas, Roma tend not to report cases of discrimination which results in a lack of reliable registration data on the issue.

Employment

Recent data on the employment situation of Roma is virtually absent. Data from 2002 showed that, at that time, only 13% of Roma, Sinti and Travellers were active in paid employment (compared to 40% among the overall population), that the proportion of Roma not carrying out paid work was much higher than that of the overall population (38% compared to 24%) and that the proportion of people with an income amongst Roma, Sinti and Travellers was also lower than amongst the general population (51% vs. 65%). The **prevalence of self-employment** is, on the other hand, much higher amongst this group than amongst the general population, whereby car trade and music are two relatively well-established sources of income. Projects and initiatives targeted at the improvement of the employment situation of Roma focus on self-employment, providing Roma with support in setting up small businesses or in legalising informal economic activities.

Estimates of the **unemployment rates amongst Roma are rare and diverge significantly**. Official statistics from 2000 show that 17% of Roma were registered as unemployed, but qualitative information published in 2004 claimed that an estimated 90% of Roma received unemployment benefits. Regarding the situation of Roma women, studies suggest that some women's ambitions focus on becoming housewives and mothers rather than entering formal economic activities. This is reflected in the educational situation of Roma girls who often do not enrol in secondary education after leaving primary school. As a result of the low employment and income rates amongst Roma throughout their life span, the available information also points to **lower pension rates** amongst elderly Roma. However, this information is outdated and no recent data is available.

Police reports indicate that Roma and other Traveller communities are involved in **illegal employment and criminal activities**, including drug trade, illegal car trade, illegal gambling and robbery. As a significant proportion of Roma in the Netherlands are classified as stateless, they cannot find legal means of earning an income. **Possible child exploitation** among Roma has also been

mentioned by the government, including child labour, begging, petty theft, trafficking and prostitution.

Regarding discrimination on the labour market, illustrative evidence points to discrimination occurring both in recruitment as well as on the shop floor. The recent qualitative study on school attendance cites some **examples of experiences of discrimination**. To avoid discrimination, the Roma girls interviewed for the purpose of the study hide their Roma identity.

Housing

The majority of Roma in the Netherlands live in regular housing.

However, a pressing issue is the **shortage of sites for mobile homes sites** which resulting in low quality housing conditions. Local authorities are reluctant to allow Roma, Sinti and Travellers to live on sites. With the repeal of the Caravan Act in 1999, authorities no longer feel obliged to facilitate the demands of the Roma communities for new sites. The proportion of Roma renting their mobile home is lower when compared to the prevalence of rental housing amongst the overall population. Data from 2001 shows that on average, 26% of mobile homes were rented, compared to 52% of flats and houses, and even 70% of overall accommodation in the same income group.

Qualitative information gathered for the purposes of a Raxen study in 2009 reports the following issues with regard to the quality of housing available to Roma:

- The legislative framework on building norms does not target mobile homes and therefore does not guarantee a minimum level of quality.
- Renovation of mobile homes is limited, resulting especially in **low-quality housing for the elderly** Roma.
- Shortage of sites leads to **overcrowding and illegal residency**, which can pose a fire hazard.

In general, the last decades of Roma housing policies were targeted at **decentralisation of Roma housing**, i.e. integrating Roma into mainstream housing or moving mobile home sites into cities and towns instead of placing them in the outskirts. This has only partly taken place. Resistance from locals has prevented new mobile home sites being opened in the centre of towns, and Roma have resisted being expelled and being moved into mainstream housing. As a result, mobile home sites are still often located in **isolated areas** having also a negative impact on the access of Roma to public utilities and infrastructure. According to a quantitative study published in 2006, 49% of sites in the area of Amsterdam were located at the periphery, 12% in the outskirts and 38% in the centre.

In the past, some cases of discrimination have become apparent which were mainly related to the **access to mortgages for building a mobile home**. Firstly, it was shown that financial and other service providers may discriminate on the basis of the post code of sites (red-lining) in limiting their service provision. Secondly, mortgage companies often do not treat mobile homes as regular housing. As a consequence, different and often less attractive lending conditions apply, making it difficult for Roma to finance the purchase of new mobile homes. This issue was also reported in the Raxen study referred to above.

Health

There is no statistical information available on the health status of Roma, recent or older. Some qualitative information points to **frequent health problems** amongst the Roma population, including the following:

- obesity
- poor oral health
- unhealthy lifestyle
- high levels of smoking
- psychological and psychosocial problems, including tensions, anxiety, migraine and depression

In recent years, the NGO Doctors of the World (*Dokters van de Wereld*) have carried out a project focused on **improving health awareness** amongst Roma, Sinti and Traveller populations. Based on the experiences from this project, the organisation reports that there is a strong taboo culture surrounding health problems amongst Roma, and that there is a gap between Roma and public health care institutions. Thus, Roma are frequently not aware of their rights in the area of healthcare and care providers often do not take the culture and specific problems of Roma into account. According to the organisation, it can help to train intermediaries within the Roma communities who can mediate between their community and public institutions and who can inform the Roma population of their rights and options.

Roma who are stateless or who **lack adequate documentation** face serious difficulties in accessing healthcare. Firstly, without documentation it is not possible to get health insurance in the Netherlands. Secondly, they may be turned away by health care providers, also due to racial discrimination, regardless of whether they are able to pay for the treatment or not. Thirdly, Roma are indeed often unable to pay for the medical treatment, which leads to outstanding hospital bills and fewer possibilities to get access to the required treatment.

Poverty / Economic situation

Compared to the general population, Roma and Travellers have **lower incomes and are less often employed while more likely to be long-term unemployed**, according to data from 2002. More recent data are not available, but the general situation reported in the area of employment and economic activity suggests that this situation still holds true. The most recent qualitative study on school attendance of Roma also reports that poverty and debt are seen as serious problems by municipalities with a significant number of Roma inhabitants. According to the Minister of Immigration, Integration and Asylum the level of expenditure amongst Roma is excessive when compared to their income, though this information could not be verified using statistical data.

No information is available on indicators of malnutrition/hunger and material deprivation.

Active citizenship / Rights awareness

It is not clear whether Roma are aware of their rights as citizens and their possibilities to exert influence via representative bodies. However, **the visibility of Roma, Sinti and Travellers through representative self-organisations has increased**. Especially European level activities, especially

initiated by the Council of Europe, have also had an impact on policy discussions in the Netherlands, which were characterised by active involvement of Roma representatives. Thus, Roma delegations have provided input and strong criticism of the national policy plan on "The Roma approach in the Netherlands" and they continue to be present in consultations and conferences on the topic.

While there is no data on the formal political participation in the representative democratic system, both as voters and candidates, it is thought that this **involvement is relatively low amongst Roma**. The relationship between Roma communities and public authorities is marked by long-lasting mutual distrust. In recent years, there have been some developments regarding the organisation framework of Roma representation. Thus, the Compensation Fund Sinti and Roma existed from 2000 to 2004 to allow individual claims by victims of Roma persecution in the Second World War. In 2010, the Netherlands Institute for Sinti and Roma was founded, which was tasked to represent the interests of Roma and Sinti in the Netherlands. However, in 2012 the institute was dissolved, due to its bad functioning and lack of support from both municipalities and the Roma and Sinti communities themselves.

Roma are generally **aware of complaints procedures regarding discrimination, but rarely make use of them**. Though racial discrimination can be reported to the police, to the Equal Treatment Commission and to anti-discrimination agencies, the number of registered Roma complaints is very low. This is most likely due to low trust of Roma in these bodies, as well as problems in the registration of such incidents which have not been solved. As a result, it is difficult to draw general conclusions on the prevalence and type of discrimination of Roma in the Netherlands.

1 Roma population

Data on the social and economic situation of Roma in the Netherlands are very limited. The Dutch Data Protection Act (*Wet bescherming persoonsgegevens*) forbids the registration of ethnicity and so do the Police Data Act (*Wet politiegegevens*) and the Municipal Database (Personal Files) Act (*Wet gemeentelijke basisadministratie persoonsgegevens*). As a result of this legal framework, there is **no systematic collection of data** on the situation of Roma, Sinti and Travellers in place in the Netherlands. This applies to the group of Roma in general, so that information on specific sub-groups such as Roma migrants, third country nationals or EU citizens from other Member States, is even more difficult to access.

Under an exception from the general rule, information on ethnicity can be gathered but bodies that collect such data must first apply to the Data Protection Authority for a (temporary) exception. An exception can, for example, be justified in cases in which affirmative action measures are concerned, aiming at improving the situation of an official national minority.

In the past, municipalities have collected sensitive personal data on the Roma population in areas without notifying the Data Protection Authority and were then ordered to destroy the data they had collected. Restrictions placed upon ethnicity-based data collection are justified by concerns regarding the possibility of these data being used for discriminatory purposes. In the case of Roma, this issue is particularly delicate due to the past experiences of registration and deportation during the Second World War. Furthermore, it is very difficult to actually determine ethnic Roma membership, as the background and cultural heritage can differ significantly.

Statistical information in recent years is virtually absent, with **most statistical data dating back to 2002 or even earlier**. The available information is selective and fragmented, based on incidental, mainly qualitative studies focused on particular fields such as education, housing and health. Statistical information quoted in recent years provides mostly rough estimates that are re-quoted and re-used. Information presented in this report originates from recent and older publications, both scientific and policy-related, and includes international publications and information previously gathered for the Council of Europe.

Roma, Sinti and Travellers are **not recognized as national minorities** in the Netherlands which, together with the lack of a national approach for Roma, has led to criticism from members of the Council of Europe's Committee of Experts on Roma and Travellers. On the other hand, not having the status of an official minority results in, among others, a lack of official data on numbers, geographic dispersion, social status and participation in society of these groups. The knowledge presented is thus based on estimates and fragmented information.

Estimates of the number of Roma in the Netherlands vary considerably. The Netherlands Institute for Social Research² estimates the figure to be between 2,000 and 20,000. When indigenous Traveller communities are included, a study commissioned by the Council of Europe's Commissioner for Human Rights and the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities gives a higher estimate of 30,000 to 40,000.³

² Dagevos, J. and Gijsberts, M. (eds.) (2010) *Jaarrapport integratie 2009*, The Hague, Netherlands Institute for Social Research.

³ Cahn, C. and Guild, E. (2010) *Recent migration of Roma in Europe*. Second edition, Strasbourg / The Hague, Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights / OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities.

Roma are not a homogenous group. According to a study by Statistics Netherlands and the Research and Documentation Centre of the Netherlands Ministry of Security and Justice,⁴ around 5,000 individuals who arrived in the Netherlands around 1900 are Roma descendants. A second group consists of working immigrants from Eastern and Southern Europe who arrived in the Netherlands in the 1960s. The number of individuals with Roma origins among this group is unknown. In the 1970s, a group of about 550 Roma from former Yugoslavia travelled throughout the Netherlands. Given legal status through a 'general pardon', they were directed to one of the 'Roma municipalities'. This group is currently estimated at around 3,000 persons. When Yugoslavia disintegrated in the 1990s, an estimated figure of 1,000 to 1,200 Roma from former Yugoslavia moved to the Netherlands. With Bulgaria and Romania's accession to the European Union, it is plausible that labour migrants from these states include also Roma, though there are no estimates on these numbers.⁵

Dutch Roma are mostly sedentary. As the Netherlands does not provide Traveller communities with rights to roam and travel, they either live in regular housing or on permanent sites. According to a study by the Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment, 80% of municipalities have sites on which Roma, Sinti and Traveller groups live.⁶ A large part of the community lives in the southern part of the country. Eleven Dutch municipalities – Berkel-Elschot, Capelle a/d IJssel, Ede, Epe, Gilze en Rijen, Lelystad, Oldenzaal, Nieuwegein, Spijkensisse, Utrecht and Veendam – have relatively large Roma populations as they provided relief sites when Roma were granted the 'general pardon'. Some groups later dispersed to other municipalities such as Amsterdam, Den Bosch, Enschede, Tilburg and Veldhuizen.⁷

Since the Dutch Caravan Act (*Woonwagenwet*) was abolished in 1999, the same housing legislation applies to those living in mobile homes and those living in regular housing. Prior to this, municipalities had already been working towards 'normalisation' and 'decentralisation', as noted in a letter by the Minister of the Interior.⁸ Large encampments were replaced with smaller ones to enhance social integration in the society. With the reduction of sites, Roma and Traveller communities were directed towards regular housing. Municipalities no longer felt responsible for providing sites for the growing number of Roma and Travellers after the Caravan Act was abolished.⁹

In 2009, Forum estimated the shortage of sites in the Netherlands to be around 3,000.¹⁰ Since then, the community has grown while the number of available sites has decreased. Only a small number of sites become available each year when the elderly pass away or are moved into care institutions. A study commissioned by the FRA on the housing conditions of Roma and Travellers in the Netherlands¹¹ describes how numerous applicants from within the family apply for sites when they become available. The lack of sites is a threat to important aspects of Roma family life and culture, curtailing the ability of (extended) families to live in close proximity. The younger generation is thus forced to

⁴ Jenissen, R. (ed.) (2011) *De Nederlandse migratiekaart: Achtergronden en ontwikkelingen van verschillende internationale migratietypen*, The Hague, Boom Juridische Uitgevers.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Netherlands, Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment (*Ministerie Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer*) (2006) *Werken aan woonwagenlocaties. Handreiking voor gemeenten: over beleid en handgaven*, The Hague, Ministerie Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer.

⁷ Jenissen, R. (ed.) (2011) *De Nederlandse migratiekaart: Achtergronden en ontwikkelingen van verschillende internationale migratietypen*, The Hague, Boom Juridische Uitgevers.

⁸ Netherlands, Minister of the Interior (*Minister van Binnenlandse Zaken*) (1996) 'Brief van de minister van Binnenlandse Zaken aan de Voorzitter van de Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal', Letter to the House of Representatives, 21 March 1996. Parliamentary document 22 236, nr. 34.

⁹ Rodrigues, P.R. (2006) 'Few and neglected: Roma and Sinti in the Netherlands', *Roma Rights Quarterly*, Vol. 3, No. 1, pp. 31-38.

¹⁰ Jorna, P. (2009) *Roma and Sinti in the Netherlands: Update Spring 2009. On the occasion of the 27th meeting of the Committee of Experts on Roma and Travellers in Sevilla, Spain (26-27 March 2009)*, Utrecht, FORUM.

¹¹ Schriemer, R. (2009) *Housing conditions of Roma and Travellers – The Netherlands*, RAXEN National Focal Point.

find accommodation on other sites or in regular housing; some choose for 'illegal' settlement on the sites by adding small mobile homes or extensions.¹²

2 Education

a) Pre-school/ kindergarten

There are no reliable data on the participation of Roma children in pre-school or kindergarten. The most recent estimates date back to 2003 and show that the proportion of Roma children in pre-school education is lower than the national average. Thus it was estimated that of the Roma children between 0 and 4 years old, 70% of the boys and 77% of the girls were enrolled in pre-school or kindergarten.¹³

Most Roma and Sinti children speak only *Romanes* at home, which means they face a language deficit when starting school at age four or five.¹⁴ They have had little to no contact with Dutch-speaking adults and start at a disadvantage in educational settings where only Dutch is spoken.¹⁵ Particularly regarding Roma children and the education and care they receive at home, a number of factors have been identified to play a role in contributing to the learning deficit: the limited space in a mobile home; the fact that parents do not read to their children and do not make use of public libraries; the fact that parents speak little to their children and make use of short, directive sentences; limited availability of educative toys for the children which can support the cognitive development; little experience with pre-school by the parents.¹⁶

b) Compulsory school attendance

Dutch children can start school from the age of four, and most do so. According to the Dutch Compulsory Education Act,¹⁷ compulsory attendance begins on the first day of school following the month in which the child turns five. Compulsory attendance ends at the end of the academic year when the pupil has completed 12 years of education, or at the end of the academic year during which the pupil turns 16.

There are no national or official data on the school attendance of Roma and Traveller children. The ethnicity of pupils is no longer recorded. Reliable national data on school attendance are 10 years old,¹⁸ when 90% of the Roma and Traveller children were attending (secondary) school. 71% of the children followed mainstream education, and nearly 20% were enrolled in special education. The participation of Roma children in special education was at that time nearly four times as high as amongst other groups. The majority of Roma children were enrolled in preparatory vocational education and training (VET) (percentage unknown). 90% of the pupils taking a final exam passed it.¹⁹

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ Seuren, W. et al (2003) *Een wereld te winnen. Onderwijs aan woonwagen- en zigeunerkinderen*. 'sHertogenbosch: KPC Groep.

¹⁴ Netherlands, Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment (*Ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer*) (2009) Letter to the House of Representatives (*Tweede Kamer der Staten Generaal*), 29 June.

¹⁵ Van de Veen, C. et al. (2012) *Roma en schoolverzuim: de situatie (waar, waarom en wat te doen) van schoolverzuim en –uitval bij Roma-meisjes in het voortgezet onderwijs in Nederland*, Utrecht, Trimbos Instituut, p. 45.

¹⁶ Seuren, W. et al (2003) *Een wereld te winnen. Onderwijs aan woonwagen- en zigeunerkinderen*

¹⁷ Netherlands (1969) *Leerplichtwet* (1969).

¹⁸ Timmermans, R. and van den Hurk, A. (2002) *Onderwijsdeelname van woonwagen en zigeunerkinderen in de twintigste eeuw*, 's- Hertogenbosch, KPC.

¹⁹ Cebeon (2002) *Monitor maatschappelijke en economische positie woonwagenbewoners: tweede meting*,

Whereas it is estimated that almost all Roma children attend primary school, it is also estimated that 17% of these Roma children attend special primary schools, which is three times the national average. This high percentage is seen as a result of the deficit Roma children have when they enter school.²⁰

Local authorities have observed serious problems with truancy and drop-out among Roma and Traveller pupils.²¹ The Minister for Integration informed the House of Representatives in 2011 the following: "Municipalities acknowledge that the level of attendance is (too) low, especially in primary education. Many do not make the transition to secondary school. Particularly Roma girls are kept from attending school from the age of 12–13."²²

A recent study on school attendance among Roma children (especially girls) made an inventory of the available information on school attendance in a selection of 13 municipalities with relatively large Roma populations, namely the municipalities of Ede, Oldenzaal & Enschede, Amsterdam, Capelle, Veldhoven, Nieuwegein, Utrecht, Sittard-Geleen, Gilze en Rijen, Groningen, Tilburg, Den Bosch and Lelystad. The inventory was based on qualitative interviews with municipal staff and support organisations active in the municipalities. In total, 20 respondents were interviewed, consisting mainly of school attendance officers and municipal civil servants. This inventory shows that three of these municipalities have limited insight into the situation of the Roma population in their area and that ten of these municipalities have an insight into the situation through unofficial data collection, but it is not reported which of these municipalities do and which do not have the required information.²³

The municipalities that have information report that the truancy rates amongst Roma children are low at primary school level, though higher than amongst other groups. Regarding secondary education, in three municipalities the truancy rates are average, but in six of the municipalities the rates are structurally high. No exact figures are provided, since most municipalities only report the general trends. Others have exact figures, but do not publish them. It is reported that Roma children are sometimes not enrolled in secondary education, as they "disappear" abroad or stay at home. The level of education achieved during primary school by many Roma pupils only gives them access to vocational training.²⁴ Parents generally do not support alternative ambitions. With their own limited experience in secondary education, attendance for girls older than 12 is not a priority.²⁵

In one of the municipalities, Roma children usually leave school with a diploma, however not with a labour market qualification. The fact that there are differences between the municipalities studied in this research is interpreted partly through ascribing local policies and initiatives a role in improving the levels of school attendance of Roma.²⁶

The same study also carried out open qualitative interviews with 27 Roma girls and at least one of their parents. 15 of the girls were enrolled in secondary education, whereas 12 of the girls were either

Amsterdam, Cebeon.

²⁰ KPC Groep (2006) *Roma, Sinti en woonwagenbewoners; succesfactoren en knelpunten op het gebied van arbeidstoeleiding*. 's-Hertogenbosh: KPC Groep

²¹ Rodrigues, P. and Matelski, M. (2004). *Monitor Racisme en extreem rechts: cahier Roma en Sinti*. Amsterdam/Leiden, Anne Frank Stichting/Universiteit Leiden, pp. 26-27; VNG (2010) *Projectvoorstellen Platform Roma-gemeenten*; Van de Veen, C. et al. (2012) *Roma en schoolverzuim: de situatie (waar, waarom en wat te doen) van schoolverzuim en – uitval bij Roma-meisjes in het voortgezet onderwijs in Nederland*, Utrecht, Trimbos Instituut.

²² Netherlands, Minister for Immigration, Integration and Asylum Policy (*Ministerie van Immigratie, Integratie en Asiel*) (2011) letter to the House of Representatives (*Tweede Kamer der Staten general*).

²³ VNG (2010) *Projectvoorstellen Platform Roma-gemeenten*; Van de Veen, C. et al. (2012).

²⁴ Van de Veen, C. et al. (2012) *Roma en schoolverzuim: de situatie (waar, waarom en wat te doen) van schoolverzuim en – uitval bij Roma-meisjes in het voortgezet onderwijs in Nederland*, Utrecht, Trimbos Instituut. 45.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 20-21.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

not attending school regularly or had dropped out of school entirely. Based on the interviews, the study listed factors influencing attendance: language and learning deficiencies, emotional well-being and (lack of) self-confidence, the influence of peers, and support from family members. The study also pointed to influences from school, including low expectations from teachers, limited knowledge of Roma culture, and lack of interest in Roma pupils' lives and backgrounds.²⁷ In addition, school attendance is hindered by Roma and Traveller parents' views on education.²⁸ Many have received limited education and have experienced discrimination in schools and elsewhere. They are far from convinced that schooling will improve the life chances of their children.²⁹

c) Educational attainment

As already mentioned, many Roma children, especially girls, drop out of school after primary education. Although exact statistics do not exist, research from 2002 showed that few Roma children attain an educational level which can be classified as providing entry to the labour market. This means that they do not gain a qualification at the ISCED 3 level. Thus, 62% of the Roma pupils were attending preparatory vocational education (*Voorbereidend beroepsonderwijs*) which in itself does not lead to labour market qualification. While it is possible to move on to higher levels of education, at these higher levels the number of Roma pupils was much lower.³⁰

Ten years after the publication of a special edition on Roma in the Netherlands, the Anne Frank Foundation provided an update of the earlier research in its latest *Monitor racism en extremisme*, including a section on educational attainment. It reports that there are no new official data on the educational level of Roma, Sinti and Traveller pupils.³¹ Previous research shows that the self-confidence of Roma pupils at school is lower than that of asylum seeking children. On a scale from 1 to 5, Roma children scored 3.76, whereas asylum seeking children scored 3.84 which was comparable to the general population of children. Furthermore, the results of the final primary school exam (*CITO-toets*) of Roma children are lower on average than the results of other groups of pupils. The average score of Roma/Sinti/Traveller children on the exam was 523, compared to 530 amongst asylum seeking children (scores vary between 501 and 550 points).³²

d) Vocational training

The Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities noted that Roma and Sinti children disproportionately attend vocational schools instead of upper secondary schools.³³ This has to do with the already mentioned fact that they score lower in primary school final exams and thus enter a vocational rather than academic route early on in their school career. No specific information on the situation of Roma in vocational training is available.

e) Different types of schooling (home education, special schools, etc.)

²⁷ Ibid., pp. 9-10.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid., pp. 9-10.

³⁰ Cebeon (2002). *Monitor maatschappelijke en economische positie woonwagengebwoners : Tweede meting - 2e concept-rapport*. Amsterdam, Cebeon

³¹ Davidović, M. and Rodrigues, P. (2010) Antiziganisme, in: *Monitor racism en extremisme, negende editie*. Rodrigues, P. and van Donselaar, J. (eds.) Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, pp. 153-179.

³² Hulsen, H. and Mulder, L. (2005) *Speciale doelgroepen in het onderwijs schooljaar 2002/2003*, Nijmegen, ITS, pp. 59-60.

³³ Council of Europe (2012) *Human Rights of Roma and Travellers in Europe*, Strasbourg, Council of Europe Publications, p. 118.

Separate classes for Roma children have been set up to encourage attendance prior to becoming of school age and to ease their transition from primary to secondary school. Though the approach seems outdated, it was recently re-introduced in one of the so-called Roma municipalities, a group of 10 municipalities with higher numbers of Roma.³⁴ This approach is described in the study on Roma truancy and school dropout amongst Roma.³⁵ In three of the 13 municipalities studied, special homework classes have been set up for Roma children and which focus not only on the concrete task of homework but also on career guidance and further studying opportunities.³⁶ The approach has been criticized by experts for its potential in undermining integration into mainstream society.³⁷ Critics have argued that separate classes are no longer needed as Roma pupils are helped by other interventions including coaching.³⁸

The municipality of Venlo, together with a NGO, are tracking all (known) Roma children in kindergartens and schools.³⁹ A separate class for Roma pupils was set up to help the transition between primary and secondary school. In the 2009–2010 academic year, pupils were integrated into regular secondary classes. The group still receives special attention, e.g. support with homework. Other Roma pupils are now following in their footsteps.

f) Issues of segregation and integration

According to the information collected for the *Monitor racism en extremisme*, segregation in education and separate curricula was one of the main concerns expressed at a visit of Roma experts of the Council of Europe to the Netherlands. In this context, it was stressed that separate treatment, e.g. through the provision of separate classes, is only justified when it is targeted at the improvement of the situation of Roma pupils.⁴⁰

In 2009, the Minister of Integration reserved a budget of €600,000 from the Ministries of Integration and Education to improve the attendance and educational performance of Roma pupils. Ten out of twelve Roma municipalities submitted tenders for projects, namely the municipalities of Nieuwegein, 's Hertogenbosch, Enschede en Oldenzaal, Veldhoven, Utrecht, Capelle aan den IJssel, Ede, Sittard-Geleen, Lelystad. These projects sought to improve the law enforcement on school attendance, set up support networks for Roma pupils and parents, create channels for mediation between schools and families, and improve relations between professionals and Roma communities.⁴¹ Most municipalities opted for a two or three-tier plan.

A project to improve school attendance among Roma and Sinti children was implemented in several municipalities, including the municipalities of Gemert-Bakel and Gerwen, between 2005 and 2008. It targeted Roma and Sinti women, approaching them to become qualified assistant teachers in primary schools. By helping them to become qualified teaching assistants, it was expected that they could also

³⁴ The following municipalities are involved in the group: Nieuwegein, Utrecht, Amsterdam Zuidoost, Enschede, Oldenzaal, Veldhoven, Lelystad, Capelle aan den IJssel en Ede.

³⁵ Van de Veen, C. et al. (2012) *Roma en schoolverzuim: de situatie (waar, waarom en wat te doen) van schoolverzuim en –uitval bij Roma-meisjes in het voortgezet onderwijs in Nederland*, Utrecht, Trimbos Instituut, p. 30.

³⁶ Ibid. p. 29

³⁷ Rodrigues, P. and Matelski, M. (2004). *Monitor racism and the extreme right: Roma and Sinti*. Amsterdam, Anne Frank Stichting p. 42.

³⁸ Rijken, K. (2010). Roma-gemeenten geen behoefte aan etnische registratie in *Binnenlands Bestuur*. October 2010 <http://www.binnenlandsbestuur.nl/roma-gemeenten-geen-behoefte-aan-etnische.337822.lynkx>

³⁹ This information becomes publicly available in October 2012 through the website www.databade-antidiscriminatie.nl

⁴⁰ Davidović, M. and Rodrigues, P. (2010) Antiziganisme, in: *Monitor racisme en extremisme, negende editie*. Rodrigues, P. and van Donselaar, J. (eds.) Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, pp. 153-179

⁴¹ VNG (2010) *Projectvoorstellen Platform Roma-gemeenten*, p. 3.

play a role in improving the attitudes towards education in their own community. In the schools where the Roma participants were involved, the attendance of Roma children improved considerably. The municipality of Gemert-Bakel even reported a decrease in the truancy rate of Roma and Sinti pupils of 80%.⁴²

In 2011, the Minister of Education informed the House of Representatives by letter that the government will discontinue policies and programs targeting specific ethnic groups, including Roma. National organisations that promote the education of Roma pupils at the municipal level will no longer be funded.⁴³

g) Experiences and perceptions of discrimination

There is little evidence to suggest that Roma children are being limited in their choice of school by discriminatory requirements. Although schools do not openly discriminate, there are accounts of schools applying regulations that indirectly affect the enrolment of Roma pupils. There has been one ruling by the Equal Treatment Commission on such an incident.⁴⁴ In that case, a Christian primary school used quotas to keep the size of pupils who did not have Dutch as their native language at a maximum of 15%, whereby Roma and Sinti pupils were automatically counted as belonging to the non-native group. The school justified this approach by referring to the desire to keep the level of education high, to prevent the school from getting an image as a "black" school and to help the integration of ethnic minority children. The Equal Treatment Commission ruled that the school was guilty of indirect discrimination against ethnic minority children through the language quota, and of direct discrimination against Roma and Sinti children, as a result of the direct use of this criterion in the selection policy.

While there is little direct evidence of discrimination at school, there are, however, accounts of other types of discrimination at school. Some Roma pupils experience bullying and social exclusion, common among pupils who are frequently absent, which was reported by the Roma girls interviewed in the recent study on truancy.⁴⁵ This can have the result of further isolating these pupils according to the research as some parents want to shield their children from discrimination. Limited contact with non-Roma and keeping Roma children away from school or work is a strategy to do so.⁴⁶

According to studies by the Anne Frank Foundation, Roma and Sinti communities in the Netherlands face discrimination. But it is hardly documented, partly due to the (mutual) distrust between Roma/Sinti and 'civil society'.⁴⁷ In the study of 2004, it was recommended to improve the registration of discrimination complaints by Roma and Sinti at anti-discrimination agencies and police, after the

⁴² Milterburg, E. (2008) Sinti/Roma onderwijsassistnt in het basisondewijs. 's-Hertogenbosh: KPC Groep p. 5.

⁴³ Netherlands, Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (*Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap*) (2011) letter to the House of Representatives (*Tweede kamer der Staten Generaal*), 8 April.

⁴⁴ Nederlands. (2003) Equal Treatment Commission, ruling 2003-105, available online at: <http://www.mensenrechten.nl/publicaties/oordelen/2003-105/detail>

⁴⁵ Van de Veen, C. et al. (2012) *Roma en schoolverzuim: de situatie (waar, waarom en wat te doen) van schoolverzuim en –uitval bij Roma-meisjes in het voortgezet onderwijs in Nederland*, Utrecht, Trimbos Instituut, p. 59.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p.50.

⁴⁷ Rodrigues, P. and Matelski, M. (2004); *Monitor racism and the extreme right: Roma and Sinti*. Amsterdam, Anne Frank Stichting

Davidović, M. and Rodrigues, P. (2010) Antiziganisme, in: *Monitor racisme en extremisme, negende editie*. Rodrigues, P. and van Donselaar, J. (eds.) Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press pp. 153-179.

database of the Anne Frank Foundation was examined for relevant information. Six years later, no additional information on the discrimination of Roma in education was reported.⁴⁸

⁴⁸ Davidović, M. and Rodrigues, P. (2010) Antiziganisme, in: *Monitor racisme en extremisme, negende editie*. Rodrigues, P. and van Donselaar, J. (eds.) Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press pp. 153-179.

Other relevant issues: ethnic registration of Roma and policies targeting minorities

The Dutch Data Protection Act forbids registration of people's ethnicity. The Data Protection Authority supervises compliance with the Data Protection Act (*Wet bescherming persoonsgegevens*), the Police Data Act (*Wet politiegegevens*) and the Municipal Database (Personal Files) Act (*Wet gemeentelijke basisadministratie persoonsgegevens*).

Although there are exceptions where information on ethnicity can be gathered, bodies that collect such data must first apply to the Data Protection Authority for a (temporary) exemption. In 2010, it became apparent that the municipalities of Ede and Enschede kept detailed files on the number of Roma pupils and residents, including sensitive personal information and criminal data.⁴⁹ On 23 September 2010, the Data Protection Authority ordered them to destroy these data, referring to the restrictions placed on the registration of ethnicity in the Data Protection Act.⁵⁰ On 20 June 2011, the municipality of Ede announced that the data had been destroyed.⁵¹

Amnesty International has outlined the legal, moral and practical objections to registering Roma on the basis of ethnicity.⁵² Legally, ethnic registration is only permitted when its purpose is affirmative action. Morally, the ethnic registration of Roma is a delicate issue. During the Second World War such registration led to the deportation of many Roma families. Practically, it is almost impossible to determine ethnic membership: the backgrounds, original nationalities, languages and cultural heritage of Roma vary enormously.⁵³

The Council of Europe's Commissioner for Human Rights also expressed concerns about the ethnic registration of Roma during his visit to the Senate in October 2010.⁵⁴

The 29th meeting of the Committee of Experts on Roma and Travellers revisited the issue of official minority status. The secretariat and several committee members recalled the recommendations to the Dutch authorities following the 26th MG-S-ROM meeting in The Hague (5-6 November 2008): that the Netherlands officially recognize Roma and Sinti as national minorities and develop a national policy for Roma, Sinti and Travellers, as it was done by more than 24 Member States of the Council of Europe. Other committee members recalled that affirmative action targeting specific ethnic groups is not considered discriminatory at the international level.⁵⁵

The shadow report on the Netherlands' ratification of the Framework Convention on the Protection of National Minorities refers to the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) finding that it is almost impossible to address the disadvantages and discrimination faced by Roma and Sinti without the central government playing a visible long-term coordinating role.⁵⁶ But to date,

⁴⁹ Vroon, V. (2010) 93 Roma jongeren waarvan 62 leerplichtig. *De Groene Amsterdammer* nr 38.

⁵⁰ Dutch Data Protection Authority (*College Bescherming Persoonsgegevens*) (2010) 'Registratie van etnische gegevens slechts bij hoge uitzondering mogelijk', web site, accessed 2 October at http://www.cbpreweb.nl/Pages/pv_20100923_etnische_registratie.aspx

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Amnesty International (2010) *Memo Etnische registratie van Roma*, 24 September 2010, Amsterdam: Amnesty International.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Netherlands (2010). "Report of a meeting between the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe, the Chairman of the Dutch Standing Committee on Justice and the Clerk of the Standing Committee on Justice", Senate (Eerste kamer der Staten Generaal nr 32 500).

⁵⁵ Council of Europe (2010) Committee of experts on Roma and Travellers (MG-S-ROM). 25-26 March 2010. Strasbourg, Council of Europe/ MS-G-Rom 2010 (13).

⁵⁶ Jorna, P. (2009) Shadow report on the ratification by the Netherlands of the Framework Convention on the Protection of National Minorities, Utrecht, Forum.

no move in that direction has been made. The Dutch government has furthermore announced that it will discontinue all policies that target specific ethnic groups.⁵⁷

⁵⁷ Netherlands (2011) Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations (*Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties*). *Integratienota, Integratie, binding en burgerschap*, policy programme, The Hague, 16 June 2011.

3 Employment

a) Paid employment

As in other thematic areas, no recent data on employment rates and income levels of Roma or related groups are available. When this kind of information was still registered, the level of employment of Roma, Sinti and travellers was much lower than that of other groups in the Dutch society. Thus, a study from 2002 reports, based on official statistical data, that only 13% of the Roma, Sinti and Travellers was active in paid employment (compared to 40% of the overall population), that the proportion not carrying out paid work was much higher (38% compared to 24%) and that the proportion of people with an income amongst Roma, Sinti and Travellers was also lower than amongst the general population (51% vs. 65%).⁵⁸

More recently, there is evidence suggesting Roma, Sinti and Travellers' involvement in illegal employment and criminal activities. The Dutch police published a report in 2008 on the criminal involvement of different groups in which a connection was made between Travellers and drug trade, illegal car trade, illegal gambling and robbery.⁵⁹ Although unclear how the police collected its data on ethnic background, the report states that criminal Roma are operating in close family networks. There have also been accounts of young Roma girls being forced into prostitution in the Netherlands according to this police report.⁶⁰

According to a qualitative study of the Anne Frank Foundation among municipalities with projects to boost employment amongst Roma communities, large companies near Roma municipalities are more willing to offer work or work experience to unemployed Roma and Sinti compared to small businesses. But according to this report, Roma and Sinti prefer jobs in smaller local companies where they feel more at ease, in jobs that require little travelling.⁶¹ For this study, key stakeholders both from the Roma community itself and from the municipality were interviewed. According to the same respondents, negative stereotypes and biases about Roma, Sinti and Travellers hamper their employment opportunities.⁶²

b) Self-employment

Recent reliable data on the self-employment of Roma is unavailable. The most recent data dates back to 2002. Back then, it was reported that 10% of the Roma/Sinti/Traveller population with an income can be regarded as self-employed, compared to a general average of 6%. If this share relates only to those active in the economy (e.g. excluding pensioners), the proportion of the self-employed is even four times as high amongst this group as amongst the general population: 40% of the active Roma/Sinti/Travellers were self-employed, compared to 10% amongst the general population. Furthermore, this proportion was reported to be rising.⁶³

⁵⁸ Cebeon (2002). *Monitor maatschappelijke en economische positie woonwageneigenaren : Tweede meting - 2e concept-rapport*. Amsterdam, Cebeon

⁵⁹ KLPD (2008) *Nationaal dreigingsbeeld 2008; georganiseerde criminaliteit*, Zoetermeer, KLPD, p. 228.

⁶⁰ Ibid. p. 232.

⁶¹ Rodrigues, P. and Matelski, M. (2004) *Monitor racism and the extreme right: Roma and Sinti*. Amsterdam, Anne Frank Stichting.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Cebeon (2002). *Monitor maatschappelijke en economische positie woonwageneigenaren : Tweede meting - 2e concept-rapport*. Amsterdam, Cebeon, p.26

A 2008 conference organised around a visit by the Council of Europe's Committee of Experts on Roma and Travellers discussed issues related to education, housing and employment. The report of the conference mentions some small achievements in this area including a chalet-building business set up by a father and son, a young man's training as a chef, and the formation of a group of musicians. Businesses can provide on-the-job training for Roma interns while working Roma have become role models in the community.⁶⁴ This is important because traditional Roma jobs have disappeared in modern society while the car trade – an important source of income for Roma – is under pressure from environmental legislation and law enforcement.⁶⁵ The research supporting the 2009 shadow report on the Ratification by the Netherlands of the Framework Convention on the Protection of National Minorities also pointed to the administrative burdens of running one's own business.⁶⁶

According to the study of the Anne Frank Foundation mentioned above, Roma, Sinti and Travellers are successful in establishing themselves as musicians. This includes both professional musicians as well as street musicians. As a result, in many families music can be regarded as a significant source of income.⁶⁷

Part of the Roma community in the Netherlands is stateless.⁶⁸ This creates uncertainties that can limit their educational careers and employability.⁶⁹ There are an estimated 1,000 stateless Roma in the Netherlands.⁷⁰ Their migration background as well as the lack of documents proving their identity, nationality and residential status make them vulnerable to exclusion and exploitation.⁷¹

In his letter to the Parliament, the Minister for Integration referred to an initiative in the municipality of Capelle aan den IJssel.⁷² The '**Roma in Business**' project, which ran between July 2005 and December 2007, was part of the EU-funded Equal scheme. The primary target consisted of three extended Roma families, made up of 90 persons of all ages and generations.⁷³ Sixteen men and nine women were the direct participants, clients or potential beneficiaries. The secondary target included national and local governments, institutions, and segments of civil society. Representatives of various municipal policy divisions and educational and employment organisations formed the operational team.⁷⁴ The project's primary aim was to create (an undefined number of) small family-based enterprises. The project's evaluation found the goal to be too ambitious.⁷⁵ No small enterprises were set up, although all nine women succeeded in finishing the 'Dutch as a second language' course.⁷⁶

c) Communal work and other forms of payment schemes

⁶⁴ Jorna, P. (2008) *Education and training for Roma and Sinti in the Netherlands*, Utrecht, Forum, pp. 28-29.

⁶⁵ Ibid. p. 57.

⁶⁶ Jorna, P (2009) Shadow report on the ratification by the Netherlands of the Framework Convention on the Protection of Local Minorities. p. 22.

⁶⁷ Rodrigues, P. and Matelski, M. (2004) *Monitor racism and the extreme right: Roma and Sinti*. Amsterdam, Anne Frank Stichting

⁶⁸ Forum (2008) *Education and Training for Roma and Sinti in the Netherlands*. Utrecht: Forum. p.43.

⁶⁹ Van de Veen, C. et al. (2012) p. 11.

⁷⁰ Davidović, M. and Rodrigues, P. (2010) Antiziganisme, in: *Monitor racisme en extremisme, negende editie*. Rodrigues, P. and van Donselaar, J. (eds.) Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press pp. 153-179.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Netherlands, Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment (*Ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer*) (2009) Letter to the House of Representatives (*Tweede Kamer der Staten Generaal*), 29 June., reference number 2009043450, p. 6.

⁷³ Jorna, P (2008). ESF/Equal project 'Roma in business'. Eindrapportage mainstreaming and dissemination, Utrecht, Forum.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

The only information available in this area is illustrative in nature, as no overarching information is available.

A re-integration company in the province of Brabant caters to groups with specific needs and helps male and female Sinti youths (aged 15 to 23) who have dropped out of school to expand their employment horizons. Job coaches approach these youths, aiming to legitimize their informal economic activities. The Ad Hoc Committee on Roma Issues (CAH-ROM) has reported on this project and presented it as a good practice with the central idea to "to match human resources with the labour market at the local level resulting in jobs, vocational training, apprenticeship and the creation of small enterprises in informal economy sectors of the automobile branch, music and food industry, beauty, fashion and clothing, education and environment".⁷⁷ According to the original description, three full-time job coaches are engaged in outreach work, building on their clients' trust, motivation, competences and culture. The coaches regularly visit the youths' homes, consulting with their parents, offering practical help for social and administrative problems, and being present at important social occasions.⁷⁸ The job coaches operate as social workers, trainers/coaches and cultural brokers, mediating between clients and official institutions. The project has coached 60 clients towards the labour market, resulting in jobs, apprenticeships, vocational training and the launching of small enterprises. Concrete and visible outcomes positively affect peers, adults and community elders.

d) Unemployment

There is limited data on unemployment among Roma, Sinti and Travellers. The latest information is based on a report from 2002,⁷⁹ which states that Roma, Sinti and Travellers are more often unemployed, and for longer periods, than the national average. This report was based on statistical information available at that time and which is now no longer collected. In 2000, 17% of the Roma, Sinti and Travellers in the Netherlands were unemployed, compared with the national average of 5%. Thus, unemployment was three times as high amongst Roma, Sinti and Travellers as amongst the general population. According to the report, differences in the age distribution between the different population groups cannot be seen as an explanation. The study noted strong differences between different regions: in the regions of West-Overijssel and Haaglanden the unemployment rate amongst this target group was 10-12%, whereas in Zuidoost-Brabant and Zuid-Limburg it amounted to 21-23%. Regarding the duration of unemployment, the data showed that 29% of all the Roma, Sinti and Travellers registered with the employment service had been unemployed for more than three years, which compares to 17% in the overall population of the registered unemployed.⁸⁰

According to a study published in 2004, an estimated 90% of the Roma received unemployment benefits.⁸¹ This study is based on qualitative interviews with key stakeholders and does not provide actual statistical evidence. The authors state that this figure not only reflects actual unemployment, but it also reflects the way in which social workers dealt with regulations in the past. For example, they did not check on alternative sources of income or possible fraud among Roma – due to lack of

⁷⁷ Council of Europe (2011) Implementation Report on CM Recommendation (REC 2001) 17 on improving the economic and employment situation of Roma/Gypsies and Travellers in Europe. CAH-ROM 2011-7 Strasbourg, Council of Europe, pp. 16-17.

⁷⁸ Jorna, P. (2009) Good practice on employment in the Netherlands 2009. For the Implementation Report of the Council of Europe Recommendation (2001)17 on improving the economic and employment situation of Roma/Gypsies and Travellers in Europe (unpublished)

⁷⁹ Cebeon (2002). *Monitor maatschappelijke en economische positie woonwagewoners : Tweede meting - 2e concept-rapport*. Amsterdam, Cebeon

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Rodrigues, P. and Matelski, M. (2004) *Monitor racism and the extreme right: Roma and Sinti*. Amsterdam, Anne Frank Stichting .

interest or, at times, fear of repercussions. Especially in the time after the Second World War, benefits were easily given to Roma as "the government wanted as few problems as possible and had an interest in keeping the Roma and Sinti quiet".⁸²

In 2010, this 2004 study by Anne Frank Foundation was updated.⁸³ However, the research was not actually repeated, but any new developments were described on the basis of existing information and desk research. The study discussed unemployment benefits, at the core of an initiative by the municipality of Nieuwegein to tackle perceived nuisance and inconvenience caused by members of the local Roma community. The municipality wanted to more tightly control multi-problem families and cut off their benefits if they did not meet certain conditions. The families considered this initiative aimed singularly at Roma as discriminatory and requested an opinion from the Equal Treatment Commission. The commission ruled that the initiative was not discriminatory, but requested the municipality to improve the involvement of the Roma community in developing and executing such projects.⁸⁴

No data are available on the employment of Roma women. Studies of school attendance among Roma girls suggest that their ambitions focus on becoming mothers and housewives.⁸⁵ Another European study suggests that immigrant women (mothers) including Roma are more likely to receive unemployment benefits than immigrant men.⁸⁶ Some initiatives to improve employment opportunities among Roma have targeted women, such as the project to train assistant teachers. The project '**Roma in Business**' includes Dutch language courses for women.⁸⁷ As specified in section 2b), the main aim of this project, funded by the Equal strand of the European Social Fund, was to create a number of family-based enterprises run by members of three extended Roma families (90 persons in total). No small enterprises were set up, but all nine women succeeded in finishing their 'Dutch as a second language' course.⁸⁸

e) Child labour

Possible child exploitation among Roma has been mentioned by the Dutch Minister for Integration in recent letters to the House of Representatives.⁸⁹ There have been several accounts of Roma children, probably from Eastern Europe, working or begging on the streets of Dutch cities. The minister also mentions petty theft amongst the activities of Roma children.

Roma involvement in criminality has been documented by official registration bodies related to prostitution and human trafficking. Quantitative data is not available, but it is reported that cases of Roma children working in prostitution do occur. In this context, the National Rapporteur on Human Trafficking has called for acknowledging the victim status of the exploited children, rather than treating them as perpetrators to be punished.⁹⁰ The Migration Chart Report refers to possible human

⁸² Ibid. p. 28.

⁸³ Davidović, M. and Rodrigues, P. (2010) p Antiziganisme, in: *Monitor racisme en extremisme, negende editie*. Rodrigues, P. and van Donselaar, J. (eds.) Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press p. 153-179.

⁸⁴ Netherlands, Equal Treatment Commission (2009a); Netherlands, Equal Treatment Commission (2009b).

⁸⁵ Van de Veen, C. et al. (2012) *Roma en schoolverzuim: de situatie (waar, waarom en wat te doen) van schoolverzuim en –uitval bij Roma-meisjes in het voortgezet onderwijs in Nederland*, Utrecht, Trimbos Instituut p. 45.

⁸⁶ European Commission (2010). *Ethnic minority and Roma women in Europe. A case for gender equality?* Luxembourg: European Union, p.60.

⁸⁷ Jorna, P (2008). ESF/Equal project 'Roma in business'. Eindrapportage mainstreaming and dissemination, Utrecht, Forum.

⁸⁸ Jorna, P (2008). ESF/Equal project 'Roma in business'. Eindrapportage mainstreaming and dissemination, Utrecht, Forum

⁸⁹ Netherlands, House of Representatives kamerstuk 21501-20 nr 599, 21122011. & TK Kamerstuk 22112 nr 1435.

⁹⁰ For instance: Bureau Nationaal rapporteur Mensenhandel (2010) *Mensenhandel: 10 jaar Nationaal Rapporteur Mensenhandel. Achtste rapportage van de Nationaal Rapporteur*. Den Haag, BNRM, p. 71.

trafficking and child prostitution and concludes that the marginalization of the Roma in the Netherlands, combined with arranged marriages at a young age, make Roma vulnerable to organized crime including human trafficking.⁹¹

f) Old age pension

There is no recent information on the level and distribution of old age pension amongst Roma. The high unemployment and low formal employment rates would however suggest that pension coverage amongst elderly Roma is not high.

This situation was indeed confirmed in the 2002 research based on official statistics. Back then it was reported that the low income throughout the life span of Roma people was also reflected in low old age pension rates. Whereas usually pensioners have a comparatively high income compared to the non-active non-pensioner population, amongst the Roma population this was not the case. The Roma pensioners had on average an annual income of 20,900 guilder, while amongst the general population this amounted to 20,300 guilder.⁹²

g) Experiences and perceptions of racial/ethnic discrimination

The previous chapter on education suggested that high levels of absenteeism, drop-out and limited achievement in school undermine the position of Roma on the labour market. Alleged discrimination in employment can also be a factor of influence. The Anne Frank Foundation stated in its study from 2004 that the willingness to report discrimination is extremely low amongst Roma, Sinti and Travellers.⁹³ As a result, there is only exemplary evidence of discrimination of Roma on the labour market. In the interviews carried out for the study on truancy of Roma children in 2012, one case of discrimination was reported. Thus, one Roma girl looking for an internship as a hair dresser could not find a salon that would accept her.⁹⁴ She felt this was due to discrimination. Helped by a non-Roma adult, she managed to find placement elsewhere. Other girls interviewed said they were hiding their Roma identity to find work or gain work experience.⁹⁵

The *Monitor Racisme & Extremisme 2010* also mentions the problem of statelessness in relation to labour market discrimination. It is estimated that around 1,000 Roma individuals are stateless, including children, as Dutch law automatically transfers the statelessness of the parents to the children. Not only are they vulnerable to eviction and exploitation, their statelessness also makes it impossible for them to find legal employment.⁹⁶

Statistical data on employment

The requested statistical data are unavailable due to limitations contained in the Dutch Data Protection Act. Some outdated data are provided.

⁹¹ Jennissen, R. (eds) (2011), *De Nederlandse migratiekaart, Achtergronden en ontwikkelingen van verschillende internationale migratietypen*. Den Haag, Boom pp. 7-8.

⁹² Cebeon (2002) *Monitor maatschappelijke en economische positie woonwageneigenaren: tweede meting*, Amsterdam, Cebeon, p. 24

⁹³ Rodrigues, P. and Matelski, M. (2004) *Monitor racism and the extreme right: Roma and Sinti*. Amsterdam, Anne Frank Stichting

⁹⁴ Van de Veen, C. et al (2012) *Roma en schoolverzuim: de situatie (waar, waarom en wat te doen) van schoolverzuim en –uitval bij Roma-meisjes in het voortgezet onderwijs in Nederland*, Utrecht, Trimbos Instituut p. 50.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

⁹⁶ Rodrigues, P. en van Donselaar, J., *Negende Rapportage*, 2010, Paragraph 8: ‘Anti-Ziganism’ (p. 153-179).

4 Housing and neighbourhood

a) Quality and affordability of housing

The majority of Roma in the Netherlands live in regular housing. Due to a lack of data regarding this group, this chapter will focus mainly on the housing conditions of Roma living in mobile homes.

The last systematic inventory on the housing situation of Roma, Sinti and Travellers was the 2009 study of the RAXEN network on housing conditions of Roma and Travellers.⁹⁷ According to the study, housing is a social right. The provision of adequate housing is a government responsibility, stipulated in Article 22 of the Dutch constitution.⁹⁸ With the repeal of the Caravan Act in 1999, Roma and Traveller groups lost their status as a minority. Local and national authorities no longer consider it their duty to provide other means of housing.⁹⁹

The study reports that there is no recent data on the housing situation of Roma and Travellers, as most of the data dates back to the 2002 monitoring study based on the official statistical data. In that study, municipalities were asked to provide information on the number of sites, including illegal and unofficial sites. In total, there were 1764 sites for mobile homes in 2001.¹⁰⁰ On average, 26% of the mobile homes were rented, which is considered low when compared to the average of rental flats and houses (52% rental), and even more so amongst low-income groups (70% rental). No data on the quality of the rental and owned mobile homes was available.¹⁰¹ In 1999, Statistics Netherlands reported that, on average, 2.8 persons lived in one mobile home.¹⁰²

Regarding qualitative data on the quality of housing available to Roma, the RAXEN study reports on the basis of qualitative interviews with stakeholders and individual Roma that both the quantity and quality of mobile homes is insufficient. Respondents in this study state that the legislative framework relating to building norms does not guarantee the quality of mobile homes being built. In addition, it appears that mobile homes are not renovated to a sufficient degree so that especially the elderly frequently live in low-quality mobile homes.¹⁰³ The interviews carried out for that study also confirm that as a result of the shortage of sites, overcrowding and illegal residency lead to a lower quality of housing, which can also pose a fire hazard.¹⁰⁴

According to a recent Eurofound report based on collated survey data, the general housing situation in the Netherlands is good and the level of sub-standard housing is low, when compared to other countries.¹⁰⁵ Shortage of space is the main problem, but the quality of housing is reasonable.¹⁰⁶

⁹⁷ Schriemer, R. (2009) *Thematic study. The housing condition of Roma and Travellers*, The Netherlands: RAXEN National Focal Point.

⁹⁸ Rodrigues, P. and Matelski, M. (2004) *Monitor racism and the extreme right: Roma and Sinti*. Amsterdam, Anne Frank Stichting p. 27.

⁹⁹ FRA/RAXEN/ Schriemer (2009) *Thematic study Housing Conditions of Roma and travellers*. P.4

¹⁰⁰ Cebeon (2002) *Monitor maatschappelijke en economische positie woonwageneigenaren: tweede meting*, Amsterdam, Cebeon

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Statistics Netherlands (*Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek*) (1999) 'Wonen op wielen of op water', Web site, accessed on 4 October 2012 at <http://www.cbs.nl/nl-NL/menu/themas/bevolking/publicaties/artikelen/archief/1999/1999-0202-wm.htm>

¹⁰³ Schriemer, R. (2009) *Thematic study. The housing condition of Roma and Travellers*, The Netherlands: RAXEN National Focal Point

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, p. 30

¹⁰⁵ Eurofound (2012) *Living conditions of the Roma: substandard housing and health*, Dublin, Eurofound.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 15.

Unfortunately, the more detailed statistical information provided by the report only describes the situation in Romania, Slovakia, Bulgaria and Hungary.¹⁰⁷

As noted in a letter by the Minister of Interior,¹⁰⁸ municipalities were already working towards the ‘normalisation’ and ‘decentralisation’ of Roma and Traveller encampments, replacing large encampments with smaller ones. After the Caravan Act was abolished, municipalities no longer felt responsible for providing sites.¹⁰⁹

b) Access to social or private housing

Municipalities are responsible for housing. Due to the growth of the Roma, Sinti and Traveller population and the closure of (parts of) some sites, more people are directed towards regular social housing each year. Nonetheless, there is little information available on the actual use of social and private housing by the Roma population.¹¹⁰

In 2009, Forum estimated the shortage of sites in the Netherlands to be around 3,000.¹¹¹ Since then, the Roma, Sinti and Traveller community has grown while the number of sites has shrunk. Only a few sites become available each year when the elderly pass away or move into institutional care. When a site becomes available, there are numerous applicants from within the family.¹¹² The lack of sites threatens an important aspect of Roma family life and culture – of members of the extended family living together. It forces the younger generation to find accommodation on other sites or in regular housing. Some choose the option of ‘illegally’ settling on the sites by adding small mobile homes or extensions.¹¹³

80% of the Dutch municipalities have one or more sites of various sizes. According to the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment, there are around 8,000 individual/family sites in the country and demand for at least 2,000 more.¹¹⁴ The ministry also states that since the repeal of the Caravan Act, municipalities can formulate their own policies on sites. This can be formulated in a separate section in their housing strategy or contained within general regulations on housing, environment, parking, etc.¹¹⁵ The relocation of sites is frequently met with protests from local communities,¹¹⁶ often based on prejudice towards Roma, Sinti and Travellers.

According to an article published in Roma Rights Quarterly and based on qualitative interviews, in recent years the management of mobile home sites has been delegated by municipalities to private companies. According to information from the interviews, around 60% of the rental mobile homes belong to private owners, i.e. not to the municipality.¹¹⁷

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 195.

¹⁰⁸ Netherlands, Minister of the Interior (*Minister van Binnenlandse zaken*) (1996) letter to the House of Representatives (*Tweede Kamer der Staten Generaal*), 21 March.

¹⁰⁹ Rodrigues, P.R. (2006) Few and neglected: Roma and Sinti in the Netherlands, in: *Roma Rights Quarterly*. vol 1, pp. 31-38.

¹¹⁰ Schriemer, R. (2009). *Housing Conditions of Roma and Travellers*. Amsterdam: DUMC p. 17

¹¹¹ Jorna, P. (2009) *Education and training for Roma and Sinti in the Netherlands*, Utrecht, Forum.

¹¹² Schriemer (2009) *Thematic study Housing Conditions of Roma and travellers* p. 32.

¹¹³ Ibid., p. 4.

¹¹⁴ VROM (2006) *Werken aan woonwagenlocaties: handreiking voor gemeenten; over beleid en handhaven*, The Hague, VROM, p. 5.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., p. 7

¹¹⁶ VROM (2009) *Eigentijds omgaan met woonwagenbewoners: opmaat naar normalisatie*, The Hague, VROM, p. 14.

¹¹⁷ Rodrigues, P.R. (2006) Few and neglected: Roma and Sinti in the Netherlands, in: *Roma Rights Quarterly*. vol 1, pp. 31-38

c) Location and access to public utilities and infrastructure

In general, the last decades of Roma housing policies was targeted at decentralisation of Roma housing, i.e. integrating Roma into mainstream housing or moving mobile home sites into cities and towns instead of placing them in the outskirts. This should also improve the access to public utilities and infrastructure.¹¹⁸ However, this has often caused local resistance against the establishment of a new mobile home site. According to the article mentioned above, there have also been court cases in which locals were awarded damages because new mobile homes were located near their homes. As a result, the mobile home sites are still rather often located in isolated "unpleasant at best and at times downright dangerous" locations.¹¹⁹

d) Security of tenure (including forced evictions and expulsions)

Local and national authorities began implementing policies based on the principles of 'normalisation'¹²⁰ and decentralisation before the repeal of the Caravan Act in 1999. This meant that communities in large encampments were split and dispersed over smaller sites. More Roma and Traveller communities moved into regular housing, through lack of choice and lack of space on available sites. It was thought that this would aid the integration of the Traveller communities into mainstream society.¹²¹ The policy has led to resistance on several larger sites such as the Escamplaan in The Hague where a long-lasting legal conflict regarding the dismantling of a well-established mobile home site arose.¹²² The plight of one Roma family in Utrecht was widely discussed in politics and the media. The family had a thirty year history of being offered accommodation options, including houses and mobile homes by the municipality, being evicted due to nuisance complaints and being offered alternative accommodation. The case served as an example of the tension that existed between the municipality and the Roma and of the way in which the municipality attempted to find an effective way to regulate the housing situation of the Roma.¹²³

e) Residential segregation

As mentioned before, mobile home sites are often located in isolated areas, despite efforts to integrate them more centrally into towns and cities.¹²⁴ According to a quantitative assessment of the location of sites from 2006, 49% of the sites were located at the periphery, 12% in the outskirts of the city and 38% in the centre. It is not clear what the absolute number of sites was according to this measurement.¹²⁵

The Equal Treatment Commission began a study on discrimination based on postal codes in 2006. It confirmed that banks ask additional requirements from mortgage-seekers in certain city districts.¹²⁶

¹¹⁸ Matelski, M. and Rodrigues, P. (2005) *Monitor racism and the extreme right. Sinti and Roma*. Amsterdam/Leiden: Anne Frank House (2005, English Edition), p. 27

¹¹⁹ Rodrigues, P.R. (2006) Few and neglected: Roma and Sinti in the Netherlands, in: *Roma Rights Quarterly*. vol 1, pp. 31-38

¹²⁰ Netherlands, (2009) Ministry of Infrastructure and the environment *Eigentijds omgaan met Woonwagenbewoners: Opmaat naar normalisatie*. Den Haag, Ministerie van Volkshuisvesting Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieu p.17

¹²¹ NFP The Netherlands (2012) Ad Hoc Information request on issues concerning Roma, the Netherlands.

¹²² AD/Den Haag (2009) "Woonwagenbewoners blijven strijden.", newspaper website, 12.07.2009, retrieved 3 October 2012 at <http://www.ad.nl/ad/nl/1040/Den-Haag/article/detail/2053342/2009/07/12/Woonwagenbewoners-blijven-strijden.dhtml>

¹²³ NRC 19.05.2012. Utrecht bood Romafamilie dertien keer huisvesting aan. Volkskrant 11/04/2012. Utrecht zet laatste Romagezin op straat Telegraaf 25/09/2010. Romafamilie nog 2 jaar in villa.

¹²⁴ Rodrigues, P.R. (2006) Few and neglected: Roma and Sinti in the Netherlands, in: *Roma Rights Quarterly*. vol 1, pp. 31-38

¹²⁵ S. Dekkers et al (2006) *Feitenonderzoek vrijplaatsen op woonwagenlocaties*, Amsterdam:Regioplan, p. 10

¹²⁶ Netherlands (2006) *Risicoselectie op grond van postcode en verblijfsstatus*, Utrecht, Commissie Gelijke Behandeling.

According to the report of the study, Roma and Traveller communities experience problems obtaining mortgages. This is due less to postal codes than to the nature of housing (non-permanent fixtures such as mobile homes).

The study was carried out by the University of Amsterdam and focused on the situation in the three cities of Arnhem, The Hague and Rotterdam. It was based on 27 semi-structured interviews with estate agents and mortgage consultants. Different kinds of estate agents were interviewed, including both agents working for large companies covering a whole city as well as smaller estate agents active in a specific neighbourhood. In Rotterdam, five estate agents and four mortgage consultants were interviewed, in The Hague seven estate agents and three mortgage consultants were interviewed while in Arnhem five estate agents and three mortgage consultants were interviewed. This group included several respondents with a Turkish and Surinamese ethnic backgrounds. In addition, interviews were carried out with representatives of the city council and with municipal officers.¹²⁷

f) Experiences and perceptions of racial/ethnic discrimination

As sites are identifiable by their distinct postal codes, Roma, Sintian and Travellers are vulnerable to redlining (discrimination based on postal code) from service providers. Financial and commercial firms use this information in their risk assessments and duly adapt their services and conditions. This form of discrimination has been contested and has resulted in several opinions by the Equal Treatment Commission. One case illustrated how an insurance company did not provide house insurance to people living on sites.¹²⁸ Another case concerned a company that did not deliver goods to addresses on sites due to past problems which resulted in risks to the safety of its employees. The company had not reviewed or evaluated this policy in 15 years.¹²⁹ In both cases the Commission ruled that the companies adopted discriminatory policies.

Discrimination remains a problem for those members of the community who are able to obtain and own their own site and mobile home.¹³⁰ Mortgages are hard to be obtained since lenders have specific requirements for mortgages on mobile homes. Since it is a niche market, banks are not legally required to provide financing. This results in a disadvantaged position on the housing market. An Equal Treatment Commission (ETC) opinion confirmed the existence of such procedures.¹³¹ Although the ETC did not find discrimination or unlawful behaviour, it advised insurance companies to offer insurances for mobile homes on conditions equal to those for houses and to evaluate and update their risk assessments for mobile homes.¹³²

This situation was confirmed in the interviews carried out for the RAXEN study in 2009. It was stated that mortgage companies do not consider mobile homes regular housing, so that it is more difficult to get a mortgage for a mobile home than for a house. Thus, mobile homes are seen as 'recreational housing' rather than as regular housing.¹³³

Major projects or initiatives

¹²⁷ Aalbers, M.B. (2006) *Direct en indirect onderscheid op de hypotheekmarkt in Arnhem, Den Haag en Rotterdam*, Amsterdam: Universiteit van Amsterdam

¹²⁸ Netherlands, Equal Treatment Commission (2006) Opinion number 2006-5.

¹²⁹ Netherlands, Equal Treatment Commission (2007) Opinion number 2007-109.

¹³⁰ Schriemer, R. (2009). *Housing Conditions of Roma and Travellers*. Amsterdam: DUMC

¹³¹ Netherlands, Equal Treatment Commission (2007). Opinion number 2007-157

¹³² Netherlands, Equal Treatment Commission (2006) Opinion number 2006-5.

¹³³ Schriemer, R. (2009) *Thematic study. The housing condition of Roma and Travellers*, The Netherlands: RAXEN National Focal Point

No projects addressing the housing situation of Roma, Sinti and Travellers are known.

Statistical data on the housing situation of Roma

No recent statistical data are available pertaining to the requested information. Some outdated data is provided in Annex 2.

5 Health

a) Health status/limitations in daily activities/disability

There is no statistical information available on the health of Roma, and qualitative information is very limited or outdated. While government letters and documents have mentioned improving healthcare for Roma, it has not been addressed in policy. Thus, the letter of the Minister for Immigration, Integration and Asylum on the measures taken in the context of the European Council agreements, health is one of the areas mentioned in the introduction, but not tackled in the actual policy plans.¹³⁴

A Dutch publication by Dokters van de Wereld (Doctors of the World) states that many Roma in the Netherlands face health problems, but it does not provide more information on the nature of these health problems.¹³⁵ The report is based on experiences made in the context of a special project targeted at improving the health situation of Roma. Stress due to their excluded situation and limited awareness of the health care system in the Netherlands are cited as aspects influencing the health status of Roma. This finding was repeated in a study commissioned by the European Commission, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion.¹³⁶ The Shadow Report on the Ratification by the Netherlands of the Framework Convention on the Protection of National Minorities refers to a 2005 study by Dokters van de Wereld, which suggests that the life expectancy of Roma is 15% lower than the Dutch national average, and child mortality twice as high.¹³⁷

Based on interviews with municipal representatives, the 2012 study on truancy amongst Roma girls also cites different health problems that are associated with Roma. These include the following: obesity, bad teeth, unhealthy life style, high levels of smoking, psychological and psychosocial problems such as tensions, anxiety, migraine and depression.¹³⁸

b) Unmet needs in the area of health

There is a gap between Roma and Sinti and official and healthcare organisations. The lack of understanding of the Roma culture and of Roma's needs fuels frequent miscommunication.¹³⁹ Doctors of the World stresses that health concerns and questions are not always adequately addressed by Roma, partly due to certain problems being shrouded in taboos.¹⁴⁰ Thus, they may not wish to talk about some of their health problems. On the other hand, many Roma are not fully aware of their (medical) rights and where to turn for assistance.¹⁴¹ On the side of health service providers, Doctors of the World has identified a lack of knowledge and understanding of the Roma culture and of the specific problems that Roma are struggling with, including their income situation, debts, discrimination and language barriers. As a result, they may frequently not offer the care or support

¹³⁴ Netherlands, Minister for Immigration, Integration and Asylum (2011), 'Aanpak voor Roma in Nederland', Letter to the House of Representatives (*Tweede kamer der Staten Generaal*) 21501-20-599.

¹³⁵ Dokters van de Wereld. *Roma en Sinti op weg ... naar een beter welzijn*. (2010) p.5.

¹³⁶ Van der Welle, I. and Blommesteijn, M. (2011) *The Netherlands: Promoting Social Inclusion of Roma Social Inclusion: A study of national policies*. Amsterdam: Regioplan. p. 5.

¹³⁷ Jorna, P. (2009) *Shadow report on the ratification by the Netherlands of the Framework Convention for the protection of National Minorities*.

¹³⁸ Van de Veen, C. et al. (2012) *Roma en schoolverzuim: de situatie (waar, waarom en wat te doen) van schoolverzuim en –uitval bij Roma-meisjes in het voortgezet onderwijs in Nederland*, Utrecht, Trimbos Instituut

¹³⁹ Dokters van de Wereld (2010) *Roma en Sinti op weg ... naar een beter welzijn*. p. 5.

¹⁴⁰ Dokters van de Wereld (2010) *Roma en Sinti op weg naar een beter welzijn*. Amsterdam: Dokters van de Wereld p. 5.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*

that is necessary in certain situations. These findings are of a general nature and do not relate to specific health problems.¹⁴²

According to a Council of Europe report,¹⁴³ NGOs mediating between healthcare institutions and Roma patients trace the challenges some Roma face in accessing healthcare to their lack of personal identification documents.¹⁴⁴ Although mainstream organisations can provide assistance to, for example, people with learning difficulties and many Sinti would qualify for such assistance, they are not (yet) reached by these organisations.¹⁴⁵

In order to improve this situation, the Doctors of the World have carried out a project to train so-called intermediaries, meaning people from inside the Roma and Sinti communities who can inform and mediate between their own population and official health bodies and institutions. From 2005 to 2009, a group of female Roma and Sinti were trained to fulfil this role. According to the organisation, often the most basic factors are the ones limiting the access of Roma to health care, such as the lack of a passport or ID (and thus no medical insurance), the lack of employment resulting in unpaid hospital bills which again result in no access to further operations or treatment.¹⁴⁶

c) Medical insurance coverage

Roma who are stateless or who lack the adequate documentation face serious difficulties in accessing healthcare.¹⁴⁷ People without papers who claim to be legal residents cannot make use of the Dutch healthcare system as they cannot get medical insurance, as a result of the so-called *Koppelingswet* (Linking Act). For the stateless Roma population in the Netherlands, which may amount to around 1,000 persons, this means that they cannot get access to medical care, unless they pay for it themselves. Even then, they may however be turned away by care professionals.¹⁴⁸ The problem of statelessness has been highlighted by the Advisory Committee on The Framework Convention of National Minorities.¹⁴⁹

d) Circumstances around giving birth

There is no information, neither quantitative or qualitative, on specific issues concerning circumstances around giving birth amongst Roma. In general, it is observed that Roma girls are likely to have children at a relatively young age.¹⁵⁰

e) Experiences and perceptions of racial/ethnic discrimination

Roma and Sinti are vulnerable to discrimination, also in the area of health.¹⁵¹ According to the Doctors of the World project, Roma experience significant barriers – including racial discrimination –

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Council of Europe (2012) *Human rights of Roma and Travellers in Europe*. p. 172.

¹⁴⁴ Advisory Committee of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, *Opinion on the Netherlands*, adopted on 25 June 2009, p. 15.

¹⁴⁵ *De onderkant* (Notitie stand van zaken Sinti Werkgelegenheid en Armoede) (unpublished).

¹⁴⁶ Dokters van de Wereld. *Roma en Sinti op weg ... naar een beter welzijn*. (2010) p.6

¹⁴⁷ Eurofound (2012) *Living conditions of the Roma: substandard housing and health*, Dublin, Eurofound p. 172.

¹⁴⁸ Dokters van de Wereld (2010) *Roma en Sinti op weg ... naar een beter welzijn*. p. 6-7.

¹⁴⁹ Council of Europe (2012) *Human rights of Roma and Travellers in Europe*.

¹⁵⁰ Van de Veen, C. et al. (2012) *Roma en schoolverzuim: de situatie (waar, waarom en wat te doen) van schoolverzuim en – uitval bij Roma-meisjes in het voortgezet onderwijs in Nederland*, Utrecht, Trimbos Instituut

¹⁵¹ Dokters van de Wereld (2009). *Roma en Sinti op weg naar een beter welzijn*. Amsterdam: Dokters van de Wereld, p. 14.

when they try to access mainstream healthcare services. The demand for individual support by Roma trying to seek health care has increased in recent years according to Doctors of the World.¹⁵²

Major projects or initiatives

As has already been mentioned, Doctors of the World (*Dokters van de Wereld*) carried out the project 'Roma and city on the road... to a better welfare' (*Roma and Sinti op weg... naar een beter welzijn*) between 2005 and 2009, with financial support by Cordaid and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. The project was targeted at capacity building within the Roma and Sinti communities themselves by training intermediaries who on their part organised information meetings in their communities. In total, around 900 Roma and Sinti took part in information activities related to all kinds of health issues.¹⁵³

Based on the experiences, the project formulated a number of recommendations for the area of health care and Roma and Sinti: more investment is needed in tailor-made projects which take into account the context and the specificity of the problems; more use needs to be made of lessons learnt and best practices; Roma and Sinti and stakeholders need to pay more attention to non-discrimination and non-stigmatisation; more attention needs to be paid to data collection and information exchange.¹⁵⁴

Statistical data on the health of Roma

No statistical data are available pertaining to the requested information. Also, not outdated data is available on the health situation of Roma.

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ Dokters van de Wereld (2009). *Roma en Sinti op weg naar een beter welzijn*. Amsterdam: Dokters van de Wereld

¹⁵⁴ Ibid. p. 15

6 Poverty / economic situation

a) Households at-risk-of-poverty

There are no reliable data on income and poverty among Roma, Sinti and Travellers in the Netherlands. The latest report containing reliable data is from 2002 and is quoted in the study commissioned by the European Commission in 2011. When compared to the general population, Roma and Travellers have lower income and are less often employed, and more likely to be among the long-term unemployed.¹⁵⁵ Although many Roma are self-employed, traditional trades are now less profitable; their businesses go bankrupt due to the many rules and regulations for private enterprises.¹⁵⁶

As has already been described, many Roma do not master the Dutch language and have poor qualifications, further limiting their employment opportunities. The position of the Roma, Sinti and Travellers in the Netherlands is characterised by poverty and discrimination, illegitimate and low-level employment, and dependency on benefits, as reported in the study on truancy and school dropout amongst Roma girls. In all of the thirteen municipalities surveyed in this study, poverty (and debt) is seen as one of the problems faced by the Roma community.¹⁵⁷ Nonetheless, municipalities have no insight into the economic position of Roma and Sinti who claim benefits and assume that their income is generated by (international) trade.¹⁵⁸

According to Dokters van de Wereld, Roma are the largest, poorest and fastest growing minority in Europe.¹⁵⁹ Their vulnerable socio-economic position has been highlighted in the Shadow Report on the Ratification of the Framework Convention for National Minorities.¹⁶⁰

b) Income/expenditure

The only data available on the income of Roma dates back to 2002. The income of Roma was found to be significantly lower than that of the general population in the municipalities studied. Roma and Travellers had, on average, an annual income of 18,500 guilder (€7,960) which was 1.5 times as low as the average income of the general population in the municipalities studied. The difference was stable across the years, i.e. the gap did not grow but did also not shrink.¹⁶¹

There is no exact information on the level of expenditure for Roma. According to the Minister of Immigration, Integration and Asylum, Roma are used to excessive spending which is not in any

¹⁵⁵ Van der Welle, I. and Blommensteijn, M. (2011) *The Netherlands: Promoting Social Inclusion of Roma Social Inclusion: A study of national policies*. p. 4.

¹⁵⁶ Jorna, P (2009) *Shadow report on the ratification by the Netherlands of the Framework Convention on the Protection of National Minorities*. p. 22

¹⁵⁷ Van de Veen, C. et al. (2012) *Roma en schoolverzuim: de situatie (waar, waarom en wat te doen) van schoolverzuim en –uitval bij Roma-meisjes in het voortgezet onderwijs in Nederland*, Utrecht, Trimbos Instituut p. 18.

¹⁵⁸ St Zet/Stichting Rechtsherstel Sinti en Roma (2007). *Sinti en Roma in Nederland; een inventarisatie*.

Tilburg/Brabant:Stichting Zet/Stichting Rechtsherstel Sinti en Roma, p. 17.

¹⁵⁹ Dokters van de Wereld (2009) *Roma en Sinti op weg ... naar een beter welzijn*. p. 8.

¹⁶⁰ Jorna, P (2009). *Shadow report on the ratification by the Netherlands of the Framework Convention on the Protection of National Minorities*.

¹⁶¹ Cebeon (2002) *Monitor maatschappelijke en economische positie woonwagenebewoners: tweede meting*, Amsterdam, Cebeon

relation to their income level and can therefore lead to debt. This in turn can be a cause for criminality.¹⁶² It is not apparent on what data this impression is based.

c) Financial situation/social transfers/debts/borrowing

The national Travellers' pastoral care organisation and the reintegration/employment agency WSD expressed their concerns about Sinti marginalisation in a letter to the directors of social services in the Dutch municipalities and House of Representatives.¹⁶³ Although low income groups can apply for additional benefits such as allowances for housing and medical care, very few Sinti make use of them, being either unaware of their existence or how to apply for them. Many Sinti are functionally illiterate and the complexity of (digital) applications and procedures work as deterrents.¹⁶⁴

Many Sinti are not only struggling to make ends meet but are also in debt. Arrears in payment lead to households being cut off from gas and electricity as well as medical care.¹⁶⁵ The authors of the above-mentioned letter stress that Sinti urgently need assistance with their welfare and administrative affairs. Although mainstream organisations provide assistance to (for instance) people with learning difficulties and many Sinti would qualify for such assistance, they are not reached by such organisations.¹⁶⁶

The fear that austerity measures and budget cuts will first impact the most vulnerable, that job centres will primarily assist the most capable among the unemployed in order to maintain their targets was also expressed in the aforementioned letter. Custom-made approaches that have proved successful for Roma, Sinti and Travellers are under threat. Combined with the low educational attainment of these groups, their future prospects in the labour market are uncertain.¹⁶⁷

d) Malnutrition/hunger

There is no information, qualitative or quantitative, available on the topics of malnutrition or hunger. As mentioned in the chapter on health, obesity is reported to be a problem, as a result of an unhealthy diet. It is not clear whether this is due to poverty.¹⁶⁸

e) Material deprivation and/or other non-income poverty indicators

No information other than that provided is available in this area.

Major projects or initiatives

No major national or local projects or initiatives address the economic position of Roma in the Netherlands.

Statistical data on economic position of Roma

¹⁶² Netherlands, Minister for Immigration, Integration and Asylum (2011), 'Aanpak voor Roma in Nederland', Letter to the House of Representatives (*Tweede kamer der Staten Generaal*) 21501-20-599

¹⁶³ WSD Groep (2006): 'De onderkant (Notitie stand van zaken Sinti Werkgelegenheid en Armoede)', Letter to the House of Representatives (*Tweede kamer der Staten Generaal*), unpublished

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ Van de Veen, C. et al. (2012) *Roma en schoolverzuim: de situatie (waar, waarom en wat te doen) van schoolverzuim en –uitval bij Roma-meisjes in het voortgezet onderwijs in Nederland*, Utrecht, Trimbos Instituut

No statistical data are available pertaining to the requested information. Please refer to the information provided in the Employment chapter.

7 Active citizenship / rights awareness¹⁶⁹

a) Awareness of the existence of representative Roma organisations, other civil society organisations, anti-discrimination legislation and equality bodies

There is no statistical information of Roma's awareness of representative organisations and their participation in such organisations. Therefore, the following section will present the developments in Roma policy and discussions in the last few years and specify the ways in which the Roma community has sought to be represented in the policy discussions and developments.

The well-attended Public Hearing on Education and Site Visit on Housing/Campsites in The Hague (5-7 November 2008) was a milestone for growing awareness among Sinti and Roma representatives, civil society organisations and the media.¹⁷⁰ Participants discussed good practices and policy and project bottlenecks in front of a mixed (inter)national audience. Public hearings and site visits are common practice when a Council of Europe Member State hosts the Committee of Experts on Roma and Travellers (MG-S-ROM) for its yearly meetings outside Strasbourg.

The visit to the Netherlands (26 February 2009) of the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM), another Council of Europe instrument, was also considered significant. In a meeting additional to the one with institutions and scientists, Roma spokespersons presented to independent experts their vision on recognition as it related to housing, education, employment and statelessness.¹⁷¹

Regarding the policy plan on "The Roma Approach in the Netherlands", more evidence of direct Roma involvement can be found. The ministerial letter to Parliament entitled 'The Roma Approach in the Netherlands' (26 June 2009) presented the policy plan, implementing an earlier amendment by the Social Democrats in the Parliament (4 December 2008).¹⁷² Roma spokespersons immediately criticized it as discriminatory, attracting the attention of a national daily newspaper.¹⁷³ On the background of increasing tension, a Roma delegation was invited (for the first time) to present its concerns.

The ministerial letter resulted in a joint meeting of ministers, the State Secretary and the parliamentary committees for Integration, Youth, and Education on "Roma children" (8 October 2009). It was attended by stakeholders including Roma and attracted media attention. Roma spokespersons, experts and mayors (of for example Nieuwegein) were interviewed about their thoughts on the municipal allocation of funds (€600,000 for education and €60,000 in order to meet and exchange views).¹⁷⁴

Roma are also represented in some international initiatives. Roma, Sinti and Travellers participated in media training (FORUM/Miramedia) in November and December 2009. Four participants attended

¹⁶⁹ This chapter was written by Peter Jorna, expert consultant on Roma issues.

¹⁷⁰ Report of the meeting available at:

<http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/romatravellers/archive/vdocumentation/mgsrom/Abridged%20Report%2027th%20Meeting.pdf>, accessed at 1 October 2012

¹⁷¹ Advisory Committee of the FCNM (2009), *Opinion on the Dutch implementation*, accessed online on 4 October 2012 at http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/minorities/3_FCNMdocs/PDF_1st_OP_TheNetherlands_en.pdf

¹⁷² FORUM (2009), 'File on Roma and Sinti issues', web page, accessed on 4 October 2012 at

http://www.forum.nl/international/Archive/Projects/Roma_and_Sinti

¹⁷³ Trouw (2009) 'Roma woedend op Van der Laan', newspaper article, 26 August 2009

¹⁷⁴ Among others: daily newspapers de Volkskrant and Trouw; online magazine Wereldjournalisten.

the 2nd Romani Women Conference, facilitated by the Council of Europe (Athens, 11-12 January 2010). The conference (both the plenary and the Dutch Roma spokesperson) addressed sensitive topics such as school dropout among girls, early marriage and human trafficking. At home, the Roma Platform Netherlands was invited for the first time by its counterpart the Platform Roma Municipalities (Association of Dutch Municipalities), shortly before both chairs would meet as invited experts in Strasbourg, to speak about Dutch good practises and bottlenecks during the 29th MG-S-ROM session (25-26 March 2010).¹⁷⁵

Starting in 2010, the Netherlands had to re-think the Roma issue at home and develop a national strategy or an integrated set of policy measures within the EU Framework for Roma Inclusion up to 2020, adopted by the Council of the EU at its June 2012 summit.¹⁷⁶ Authorities responsible for its design had to publicly defend it to all stakeholders including Sinti and Roma. Initiated by scientific experts and NGOs such as Amnesty International Amsterdam and the European Roma Grassroots Organisation ERGO Utrecht (Leiden/Amsterdam/Utrecht, 30 May 2011), a call for dialogue to improve the position of Sinti and Roma targeted national and local public authorities (ministries and Platform Roma Municipalities). The first occasion was the Clingendael Conference in The Hague (14 June 2011) organised by the Hungarian Embassy, with (Roma) MEP Livia Jaróka as keynote speaker. In front of a mixed audience, the Dutch Human Rights Ambassador explained the government's position. The director of the new Netherlands Institute Sinti and Roma presented its activities and projects. The responsible Alderman from the leading Roma municipality of Nieuwegein presented the municipality's flagship project *Wisselgeld* ("Pin money"). Finally, the Roma Foundation Triana Utrecht outlined its grassroots focus.¹⁷⁷

Meanwhile, an informal support group initiated by Sinti and Roma key persons and joined by the invited professionals sought to counter the official policy with a critical document and recommendations. The critical position paper, accompanied by a press release, was distributed at the Mayors Summit on Roma in Strasbourg (22 September 2011) to European institutions such as the Council of Europe (the Human Rights Commissioner and the Special Representative to the Secretary General on Roma Issues) and to key Dutch participants including the chair of the Platform Roma Municipalities and its staff.¹⁷⁸

Criticism focused on the Netherlands Institute Sinti and Roma (NISR), the Platform Roma Municipalities (VNG) and a key pilot project, the *Wisselgeld*. Grievances centred on the role of the NISR (an extension of government policy), the municipal focus on law enforcement, and the possible influence of this particular pilot project on Sinti and Roma policies in general.¹⁷⁹ Shortly after, the two

¹⁷⁵ Committee of experts on Roma and Travellers (2010) *29th meeting, List of Decisions*, 31 March 2010, accessed online on 4 October at http://hub.coe.int/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=8e86da1a-d358-409d-a4a5-30db40dd02d9&groupId=10227

¹⁷⁶ Jorna, P. (2011) *Reflections on the Position of the Netherlands Concerning a European Roma Integration Strategy*, 16 June 2011

¹⁷⁷ Gyula Sümeghy, Ambassador of the Republic of Hungary to the Netherlands (2011), Summary of the Roma Conference 'Social inclusion of the Roma in Europe - challenges and solutions'. 14 June 2011.

¹⁷⁸ The paper was titled: 'The Netherlands: Sinti and Roma are fed up with patronizing and top-down-approach. National Travellers, Sinti and Roma Pastoral Care and Outreach of the Catholic Church'. See Idea Roma Buzz Monitor, October 2011.

¹⁷⁹ Two Sinti and Roma spokespersons expressed this concern at a meeting upon their request with the European Commission Roma Section staff (Justice) in Brussels (6 October 2011, in presence of the author). The same day, both presented this concern in a meeting with a Finnish delegation in Brussels and delivered the European Roma Information Office (ERIO) more information at its request. This resulted in a written request by the ERIO direction, addressed to the Mayor of Nieuwegein (also chairing the Platform Roma Municipalities), for major amendments in the *Wisselgeld* project, in line with the 10 Common Basic Principles on Roma Inclusion: to create a 'genuine dialogue' with Roma communities (ERIO Brussels, 24 October 2011).

leading Sinti and Roma spokespersons received a request from the Ministry of Integration and NISR to submit “some points” for the Dutch submission to the EU.¹⁸⁰

The NISR had been referring to this “national meeting” for some time. Commissioned by the Ministry of Home Affairs (Integration), the NISR organised in the centre of the country a full day of debate and exchange (Utrecht, 27 November 2011) for all stakeholders to generate input for the integrated set of Dutch policy measures.¹⁸¹ With high-level ministry and municipal officials as well as all Sinti and Roma (sub)groups present, the conference addressed the four pillars of the EU framework: housing, education, employment and healthcare.¹⁸²

The Roma Platform met in Utrecht in January 2012, where it decided to participate in the initiative of key international Roma and support NGOs united in the European Roma Policy Coalition (ERPC) to survey national plans in Member States. At least one joint response was submitted, criticising in detail the process of consultation as well as its results.¹⁸³ The European Commission department responsible for coordinating Roma policy assessed the Dutch national plan, identifying major gaps in all of its key elements (education, housing, employment, healthcare, structural requirements and funding), among others. For all of these areas, it found that “measuring the impact of the equal treatment approach on the situation of Roma people is necessary.”¹⁸⁴ The Netherlands is currently reconsidering the “identified gaps” in its first plan and is considering the use of a “qualitative” monitor.¹⁸⁵

The Dutch flagship project (NISR) was audited shortly after the national conference. Its board concluded on 9 March 2012 to stop the experiment immediately or as soon as was practically possible (1 October 2012).¹⁸⁶ Despite its disputed reputation and functioning, the decision came as a surprise. Newspaper coverage led to questions and answers between the Parliament and the ministries – in March/April, May/June and July/August.¹⁸⁷ The 4.5 million euro from the Compensation Fund for World War Two remains still to be decided upon.¹⁸⁸

The remaining earmarked funds will call forth new structures and (self) organisations. The ECRI country visit will take place on 24 September 2012.¹⁸⁹ The results of investigative journalism will lead to a radio program (Argos VPRO on 28 September 2012) and a book on Roma and Sinti (12 October 2012). After the national elections on 12 September 2012, the Parliament will probably take up the issue.

¹⁸⁰ Roma and Sinti support group correspondence between 7-11 November.

¹⁸¹ Trouw, 27 November 2011, newspaper article

¹⁸² Steungroep Sinti en Roma (2011), ‘Minimum pakket voor een Nationaal Plan Sinti en Roma plan voor het EU-Framework 2020’; NISR (2011) ‘Bevindingen van de Conferentie Roma Beleid’, 19 December 2011.

¹⁸³ Sinti and Roma support Group, Ms. Kalishaj Basali, and Roma Platform Netherlands, Ms. Kostana Jovanovic, 27 January 2012, (5 pages) to ENAR Brussels. In its analysis ERPC mentioned four Dutch entities responded to the Survey (Analysis of the National Roma Integration Strategies. ERPC, 21 March 2012).

¹⁸⁴ Jorna, P (2012) *Europese Commissie zet vraagtekens bij plannen Nederland*, P. published in *Tijdschrift Woonwagennieuws Het Wiel*, 24th volume, number 4-2012, p. 24.

¹⁸⁵ State Secretary of Foreign Affairs (2012), ‘Nieuwe Commissie voorstellen en initiatieven van de lidstaten van de EU’, Letter number 1423 (22112).

¹⁸⁶ Boer & Croon (2012) *Evaluatie Nederlands Instituut voor Sinti en Roma*, Amsterdam: Boer & Croon

¹⁸⁷ Netherlands, House of Representatives (2012), *Written Q-A’s between parliament and the Minister regarding the liquidation of NISR* (reference number AH-TK-20112012-2761), and reference number AH-TK-20112012-3192

¹⁸⁸ An informal working group called “Stock-taking”, installed in August by the Ministry of Welfare, is currently approaching municipalities, Sinti and Roma, and companies to map ‘experiences and activities’ (e-mail correspondence, 16 August 2012).

¹⁸⁹ Earlier this year, Sinti and Roma delegations participated in Council of Europe consultations in The Hague, on the occasion of the country monitor for the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages (25 January 2012, Advisory Committee to the CoE) and Roma policies in general (31 January, Special Representative for the Secretary General of the CoE).

b) Participation in elections and political representation

There are no available data on the electoral participation or political representation of Roma in the Netherlands. Research on these themes has been carried out for a long time, but based on data disaggregated by gender, age, lifestyle and (former) nationality of the larger minority groups. Nevertheless, we can reasonably assume a high percentage of ‘no show’ among Sinti, Roma and Travellers when it comes to voting – which is a right and not an obligation in the Netherlands. Without referring to any direct causal relationship, estimates of ‘no show’ may come close to the high (estimated) unemployment rates among these populations. Political representation yields the same picture. Although there are no ethnic political parties in the Netherlands, other minorities or descendants of migrants increasingly participate in, for example, local politics (73 municipal councillors in 1993, 303 in 2010).¹⁹⁰

c) Participation and representation in non-governmental organisations

It is often said that the relationship between Roma and public authorities/civil society institutions is fraught, marked by long-lasting mutual distrust.¹⁹¹ Representation – which may be differently interpreted in family-based Sinti, Roma and Travellers cultures – is complicated, even more so when non-governmental social structures such as foundations and associations have only recently been born under the star of Dutch minority or integration policy.

Although the Netherlands has experimented with several national non-governmental self-organisations, including the Platform Travellers and Gypsies (1981-1998), the Sinti and Roma Organisation (1989-2000) and the Roma Emancipation Organisation (1993-2009), public authorities have been unable to maintain sustainable relationships based on structured dialogue, consultation and mutual understanding. The FORUM Institute for Multicultural Affairs has repeatedly pointed to the fragile advocacy position of Roma (Sinti and Travellers) communities compared to other minorities and the lack of a national stage, structured agenda-setting or meeting with government representatives.¹⁹² Various Council of Europe country reports have drawn attention to this gap and called for improvements as well.¹⁹³

The Compensation Fund Sinti and Roma (*Stichting Rechtsherstel Sinti en Roma*) allowed for individual claims (2000-2004) by victims then living in the Netherlands and their descendants. The Fund contained collective incentives as well through possible projects on education, employment, social participation and culture. The responsible department – the Ministry of Welfare – finally decided in 2006 to set up a special infrastructure to improve the position of Roma and Sinti in Dutch society. The Netherlands Institute for Sinti and Roma (NISR), founded in 2010, sought to work with municipalities, institutions and all Sinti and Roma legally residing in the Netherlands.¹⁹⁴ Originated

¹⁹⁰ FORUM (2012) *Inventarisatie Onderzoek Politieke Participatie Etnische minderheden in Nederland*, Utrecht: Forum, p. 17

¹⁹¹ Matelski, M. and Rodrigues, P. (2005), *Monitor racism and the extreme right. Sinti and Roma Cahier*. Amsterdam/Leiden: Anne Frank Foundation (English Edition).

¹⁹² See H. Emaar (2008) *Public Hearing with the Council of Europe Committee of Experts on Roma and Travellers in The Hague* and Jorna, P. et al (2009) *Shadow report on the Ratification by the Netherlands of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities*.

¹⁹³ See as well the Recommendations adopted by the Committee of Ministers (European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages 2008, RecChL (2008)4), and the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities 2011, Resolution CM/ResCMN(2011)3, those put forward by the ECRI in 2008, CRI(2008)3 and the Human Rights Commissioner, CommDH(2009)2, 2010 CommDH/Speech (2010)3 and the Human Rights of Roma and Travellers in Europe Report, February 2012.

¹⁹⁴ Nijst, R. 2010, SARSR

from the World War Two compensation fund, the NISR employed several Sinti and Roma mediators as front workers in addition to its back office staff.

The NISR ceased to exist in March 2012 as a result of an independent audit. The institute was “not functioning properly and lacking knowledge and support both from municipalities and Sinti and Roma.”¹⁹⁵ There was severe criticism from Roma and Sinti communities in the Netherlands as well. Neither the institute nor the people in charge of it were considered representative or even attached to the communities.

d) Awareness and use of complaints procedures

Roma and other Sinti and Traveller groups are generally aware of complaints procedures but rarely make use of them.¹⁹⁶ This remains the case, notwithstanding the developments recounted above. Policies and practices leave room for improvement, witnessed in useful recommendations dating back to 2004 and recently repeated in the (ninth) periodic monitor on racism and extremism.¹⁹⁷

The Police Reporting on Discrimination has tracked complaints on ethnic discrimination made by Roma since 2008 – although these are very few (none in 2008, one in 2009 and four in 2010) compared to complaints made by ethnic Turks (130 in 2008, 115 in 2009 and 110 in 2010) and ethnic Moroccans in the Netherlands (88 in 2008, 103 in 2009 and 124 in 2010).¹⁹⁸ The Public Prosecutor, which has tracked incidences of discrimination through the National Expertise Centre on Diversity for many years, referred to “Roma” for the first time in 2009 (1% of the filed complaints).¹⁹⁹

Another point of reference is the Complaints Point Discrimination Internet (MDI) of the Magenta Foundation Amsterdam, supported by the Ministry of Justice. Discriminatory statements referring to Roma, Sinti and/or “gypsies” reached a peak in 2010, the year of Roma expulsions in France and discussions in the Dutch media on the “expulsion” and “registration” of Roma in the Netherlands. Of the 30 examined expressions of discrimination, 13 were found to be penal (for statements targeting “Turks”, 14 out of 22 were found penal, and for “Moroccans”, 123 out of 210). In 2008, when media attention focused on Roma fingerprinting in Italy, MDI recorded 16 statements of which 15 were considered penal.²⁰⁰ In 2007 and 2009, two statements were recorded.

Provisions to file complaints are obligatory under the 2009 Municipal Anti-discrimination Provisions Act. Municipalities as well as existing and newly created complaints offices in principle do not record the ethnic background of claimants, except for Art. 1 Midden Nederland (based in the city of Utrecht but covering all municipalities in Utrecht province). This office added the category “Roma” to its claimant backgrounds, filing 11 such cases in 2009, three in 2010, and seven in 2011.²⁰¹

¹⁹⁵ Boer & Croon (2012) *Evaluatie Nederlands Instituut voor Sinti en Roma*, Amsterdam: Boer & Croon.

¹⁹⁶ Matelski, M. and Rodrigues, P.R. (2004). *Monitor racism and the extreme right*. Amsterdam/Leiden: Anne Frank House (p.34).

¹⁹⁷ Davidović, M. and Rodrigues, P. (2010) Antiziganisme, in: *Monitor racisme en extremisme, negende editie*. Rodrigues, P. and van Donselaar, J. (eds.) Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, pp. 153-179

¹⁹⁸ Tierolf, B. and Hermens, N. (2011) *Poldis rapportage 2011*, Utrecht, Verwey-Jonker Instituut

¹⁹⁹ LECD-OM (2010). *Cijfers in Beeld: Discriminatiecijfers 2009* (not online available); cf. Davidović, M. and Rodrigues, P. (2010) Antiziganisme, in: *Monitor racisme en extremisme, negende editie*. Rodrigues, P. and van Donselaar, J. (eds.) Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, pp. 153-179.

²⁰⁰ MDI 2011, p. 7, Amsterdam: 2011. ‘Race’ is interpreted here according to the International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination (UN, 1969) and encompasses skin-color and (national or ethnic) descent.

²⁰¹ Art.1 Midden Nederland, Utrecht, 2011, 2010 and 2009 (written data and confirmed by telephone 2012)

The implementation of certain recommendations from the 2004 and 2010 editions of *Monitor racism en extremisme* provides a more complete local picture with more data and readiness from all parties to get involved. In Utrecht, a Roma grassroots organisation (Triana Roma Foundation) functioned through the years (2005–2012) as an outpost for community members and a bridge to the schools, police, municipality and researchers. The main issues through the years were statelessness or irregular status, school performance and dropout, access to employment, better access to healthcare and health awareness, and the recognition of Roma as a national minority and partner to be consulted, both locally and nationally.²⁰²

Roma Toekomst Libertá filed a complaint on 9 March 2009 at the Art.1 MN office against the municipality of Nieuwegein for its Wisselgeld pilot project. The project targeted “multi-problem families with a Roma background” with intensive supervision and guidance (“pressure and coercion”). Art. 1 MN submitted the case to the Equal Treatment Commission, which began its inquiry in March 2009, the first time it was requested to study the alleged discrimination of Roma in the implementation of social security legislation.²⁰³ The Central Office of Art.1 and all local anti-discrimination offices were informed about the ensuing judgement: the municipality did not discriminate (that is, breach equality legislation) in implementing this project. The Equal Treatment Commission did, however, recommend the municipality to involve Roma organisations in the development and implementation of policies specifically concerning them.²⁰⁴

In 2009 and 2010, a public awareness campaign was implemented by the Ministry of Interior Affairs to increase the willingness to report experiences of discrimination and to enhance better understanding of the nature and extent of discrimination in society. This campaign was not targeted specifically at Roma, but had wider scope addressing the general population. The message 'Do you need to leave yourself/your identity at home?' was disseminated through radio and television spots, posters in bus shelters, banners on websites and advertisements in several newspapers as well as through the campaign's website www.discriminatie.nl.²⁰⁵

e) Experiences and perceptions of racial/ethnic discrimination

The annual reports on the discrimination complaints received by anti-discrimination bureaus do not structurally report the number of complaints received from Roma, Sinti or Travellers, despite the existence of this category in the registration system as a sub-category of the discrimination ground of race. Thus, the national report on discrimination complaints shows that in 2009, 17 complaints were filed by Roma/Sinti/Travellers, which represents 1% of the total number of complaints on the ground of race.²⁰⁶ The 2008 report mentions the difficulties Roma face with regard to obtaining a mortgage.²⁰⁷ The preceding and succeeding national reports of the anti-discrimination bureaus do not mention the Roma group. The local anti-discrimination bureau in the region of *Midden Nederland* reports that in the year 2011, 7 of the 596 complaints received were filed by Roma complainants.²⁰⁸

²⁰² Van Burik, M.M. (2010), *5 Jaar Triana*. Utrecht: Concreat.

²⁰³ Equal Treatment Commission (CGB) (2009) *Memo aan Art.1 Centraal Bureau en alle lokale meldpunten discriminatie*, Utrecht: CGB; CGB judgments 2009-112 and 2009-113, inzake Roma en Sociale Zekerheid, 1 December 2009

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

²⁰⁵ See the European website on Integration, 'Anti-discrimination campaign 'Don't leave yourself at home', available at http://ec.europa.eu/ewsi/en/practice/details.cfm?ID_ITEMS=19545

²⁰⁶ Dinsbach, W. et al (2010) *Kerncijfers 2009*, Rotterdam: Art.1.

²⁰⁷ Dinsbach, W. et al (2010) *Kerncijfers 2008*, Rotterdam: Art.1.

²⁰⁸ Art.1 Midden Nederland (2012) *Jaarcijfers 2011*, Utrecht, Art.1 Midden Nederland.

As mentioned in the previous section, the Public Prosecutors National Expertise Centre on Diversity referred to “Roma” for the first time in 2009, attributing 1% of racial discrimination cases to the Roma target group.²⁰⁹ The Complaints Point Discrimination Internet (MDI) recorded 30 counts of discriminatory expressions against Roma on the internet in 2010 and 10 counts of such expressions in 2011.²¹⁰ The Annual Reports of the Equal Treatment Commission do not provide specific information on the number of complaints filed by Roma people. A search of the opinions database of the Commission for the term “Roma” reveals three cases, one in 2006 and two in 2009.²¹¹

In 2004, the Anne Frank Foundation and Leiden University recommended in their joint research that antidiscrimination organisations should improve their categorisation of discrimination complaints made by Roma. Their recommendations remain pertinent.²¹² Already in his 2009 letter to the Parliament, the Minister for Integration wrote that “there are indications that part of the Roma population face social problems such as poverty, illegitimacy, low employment figures, a large benefit dependency and discrimination.”²¹³ In the absence of registration and detailed documentation, there is no reliable data on discrimination experienced by Roma and the discussion will revolve around the subjectivity of (‘perceived’) discrimination.

The 26 September 2007 Muntplein riots in Nieuwegein involving Roma youths, local shopkeepers and bartenders prompted local and central governments to grasp the urgency of the issue.²¹⁴ The fact that a house, however exceptionally, was defaced with slogans such as “Zigeuners weg, anders dood” (“Gypsies out, otherwise dead”) required investigation.²¹⁵ Other probable examples of discrimination are more complex and harder to detect, including the (indirectly or directly) discriminatory aspects of access to key elements of modern civil society. According to the Commissioner of Human Rights talking to the Dutch Senate on 28 September 2010: “The question is pertinent, but I think we have to realize that it is a huge task to establish trust.”²¹⁶

Major projects or initiatives

There are no other projects or initiatives that have not been addressed in the previous sections.

²⁰⁹ Landelijk Expertise Centrum Discriminatie (2011) *Cijfers in Beeld; Discriminatiecijfers*, Amsterdam: LECD.

²¹⁰ MDI (2012) *Jaarverslag 2011*, Amsterdam: Magenta/MDI.

²¹¹ Website, available at:

http://www.mensenrechten.nl/publicaties/oordelen?trefwoord=&tekst=Roma&oordeelnummer_year=&oordeelnummer_nummer=&wet=&artikel=&dictum=&lid=&search=Zoek+%E2%96%B8

²¹² Davidović, M. and Rodrigues, P. (2010) Antiziganisme, in: *Monitor racisme en extremisme, negende editie*. Rodrigues, P. and van Donselaar, J. (eds.) Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, pp. 153-179.

²¹³ Netherlands, Minister for Immigration, Integration and Asylum (2011), 'Aanpak voor Roma in Nederland', Letter to the House of Representatives (Tweede kamer der Staten Generaal) 21501-20-599

²¹⁴ AD/Utrecht (2007) 'Eén vonkje genoeg op Muntplein', newspaper article, 26 September 2007

²¹⁵ AD, 'Bekladding nieuw huis schokt Roma familie', newspaper article, 20 January 2012

²¹⁶ Netherlands (2010). "Report of a meeting between the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe, the Chairman of the Dutch Standing Committee on Justice and the Clerk of the Standing Committee on Justice", Senate (Eerste kamer der Staten Generaal nr 32 500) (p.11)..

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2. Statistical tables

Estimated Roma population

Municipality	Households	Persons
Amsterdam	51	400
Lelystad	50	300
Utrecht	54	400
Nieuwegein	50	400
Ede	28	168
Oldenzaal	14	50
Enschede	100	400
Den Bosch	35	150
Tilburg	40	200
Berkel-Enschot	10	50
Breda	10	50
Gilze- Rijen	8	42
Capelle a/d IJssel	17	90
Spijkenisse	6	30
Total, 1978	469	2710
Veldhoven, 1900	59	335
Groningen, 1978	10	50
Groningen, 1900	9	45

Source: FORUM (2008) Roma in Nederland, Utrecht, Forum, p. 61.

1) Education

Participation in primary education according to type of education, 2000/2001 compared to 1996/1997

Tabel 3.4. Deelname aan primair onderwijs naar onderwijstype, 2000/2001 vergeleken met 1996/1997 (%)

onderwijstype	wowaleerlingen 4 regio's	wowaleerlingen 4 regio's	wowaleerlingen Nederland	alle leerlingen Nederland
	1996/1997	2000/2001	2000/2001	2000/2001
regulier basisonderwijs	83	84	84	95
speciaal onderwijs	16	15	14	5
onbekend	1	0	1	-
totaal	100	100	100	100
totaal abs	1050	1025	2701	1,6 mln

Bronnen: KPC Groep; CBS.

Source: Cebeon (2002) Monitor maatschappelijke en economische positie woonwagenebewoners: tweede meting, Amsterdam, Cebeon

Participation in the first phase of secondary education according to type of education, 2000/2001 compared to 1996/1997

Tabel 3.5. Deelname aan eerste fase voortgezet onderwijs naar onderwijstype, 2000/2001 vergeleken met 1996/1997 (%)

onderwijstype	wowaleerlingen Nederland	wowaleerlingen Nederland	wowaleerlingen 4 regio's	allen Nederland
	1996/1997	2000/2001	2000/2001	2000/2001
Vbo		62	56	
Mavo/havo/vwo	71	8	6	95
Overig/onbekend/brugklas		9	1	
Geen onderwijs			3	-
Speciaal vo	19	21	34	5
totaal	100	100	100	100
totaal abs		1.299	383	910.000

Bronnen: KPC Groep; CBS.

Source: Cebeon (2002) Monitor maatschappelijke en economische positie woonwagenebewoners: tweede meting, Amsterdam, Cebeon

Levels of truancy by traveller children, 2000/2001 (% pupils), compared to 1995/1996

Tabel 3.7. Mate van schoolverzuim door woonwagenleerlingen, 2000/2001 (% leerlingen), vergeleken met 1995/1996

verzuimdagen /maand	primaire onderwijs			voortgezet onderwijs		
	3 regio's (1995/1996)	2 regio's (2000/2001)	Nederland (1999/2000)	3 regio's (1995/1996)	2 regio's (2000/2001)	Nederland (1999/2000)
geen verzuim	12	24	35	12	22	33
1-2 dagen	30	17	42	33	33	27
2-4 dagen	25	18	14	36	11	14
5-10 dagen	11	11	3	11	6	7
> 10 dagen	21	30	5	8	28	18
totaal	100	100	100	100	100	100
totaal abs	300	217	405	90	46	150
aandeel ongeoorloofd in het verzuim (%)	41	48	68	16	22	68

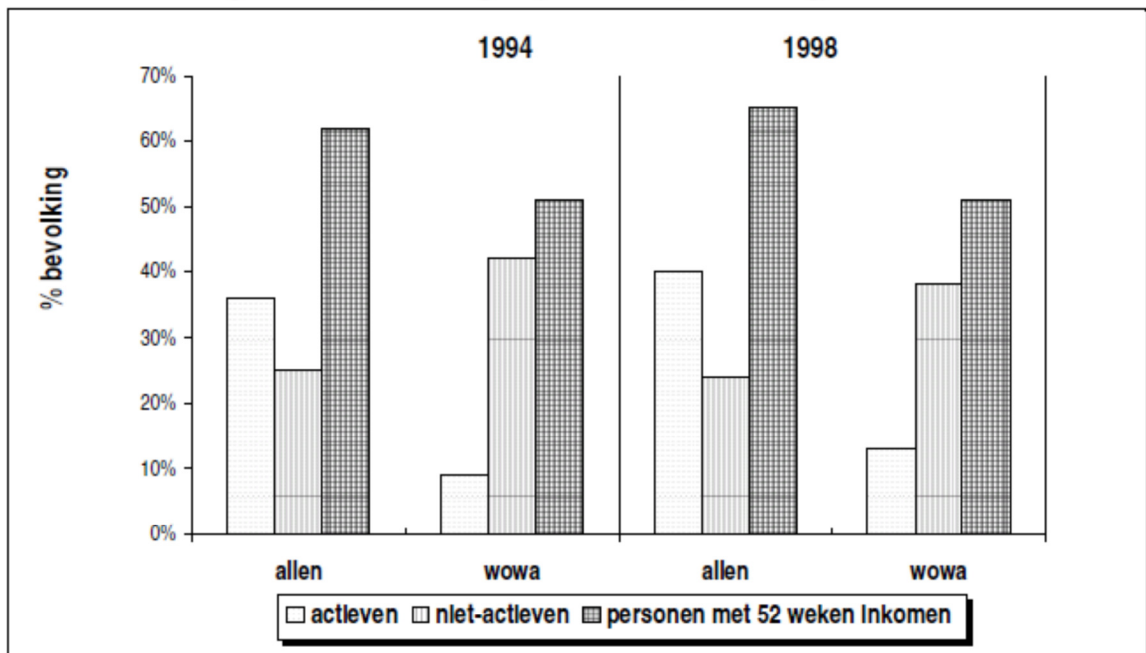
Bron: KPC Groep.

Source: Cebeon (2002) Monitor maatschappelijke en economische positie woonwagbewoners: tweede meting, Amsterdam, Cebeon

2) Employment

Income recipients, active and non-active amongst all inhabitants and amongst travellers respectively, in the four regions (1994 and 1998, % population)

Figuur 3.2. Inkomensontvangers, actieven en niet-actieven onder alle inwoners respectievelijk onder woonwagbewoners, in de 4 regio's (1994 en 1998; % bevolking)

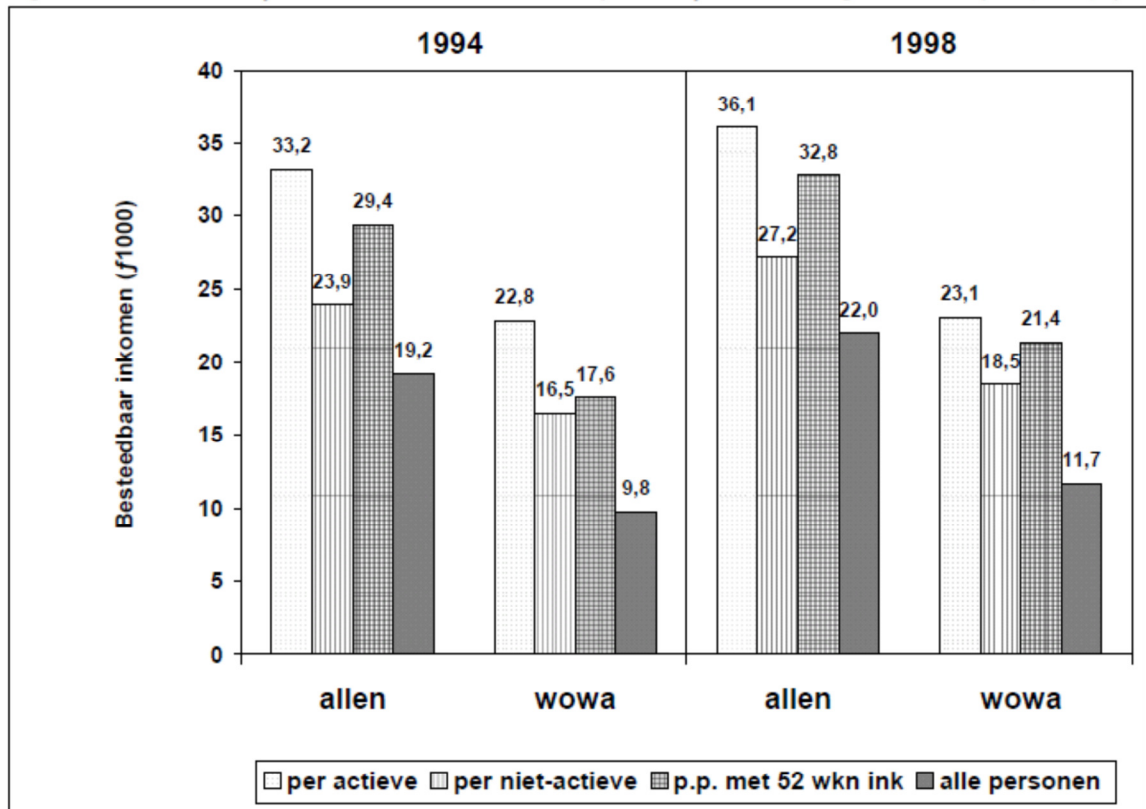


Bron: CBS.

Source: Cebeon (2002) Monitor maatschappelijke en economische positie woonwagenbewoners: tweede meting, Amsterdam, Cebeon

Available annual income of all inhabitants and travellers respectively (1994, 1998; in guilder)

Figuur 3.3. Besteedbaar jaarinkomen van alle Inwoners respectievelijk van woonwagenbewoners (1994, 1998; f)

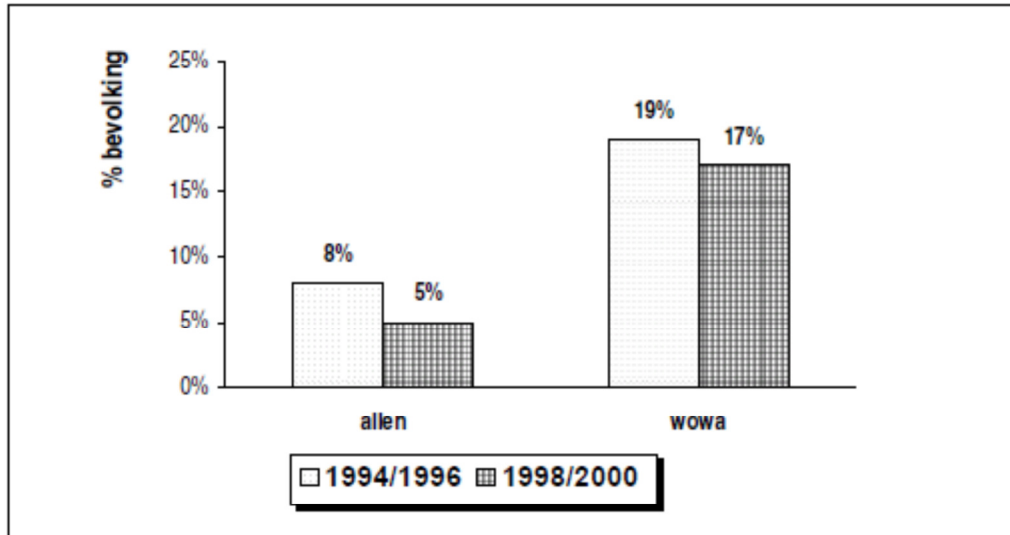


Bron: CBS>

Source: Cebeon (2002) Monitor maatschappelijke en economische positie woonwagenbewoners: tweede meting, Amsterdam, Cebeon

Registered job-seekers amongst all inhabitants and amongst travelers respectively (3-year average 1994/1996 and 1998/2000; %)

Figuur 3.4. Ingeschreven werkzoekenden onder alle inwoners respectievelijk onder woonwagenbewoners (3-jaarsgemiddelde 1994/1996 en 1998/2000; %)

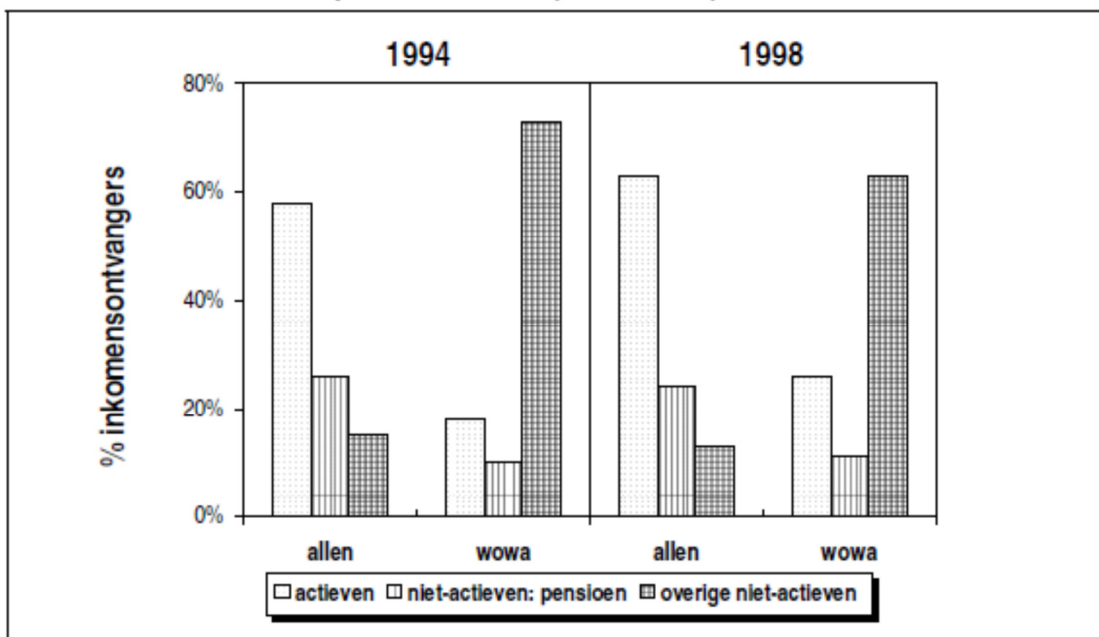


Bron: Arbeidsvoorziening Nederland.

Source: Cebeon (2002) Monitor maatschappelijke en economische positie woonwagenbewoners: tweede meting, Amsterdam, Cebeon

Income recipients amongst all inhabitants and amongst travelers respectively (1994 and 1998)

Figuur 3.6. Inkomensontvangers onder alle inwoners respectievelijk woonwagenbewoners, naar activiteit op de arbeidsmarkt (1994 en 1998)

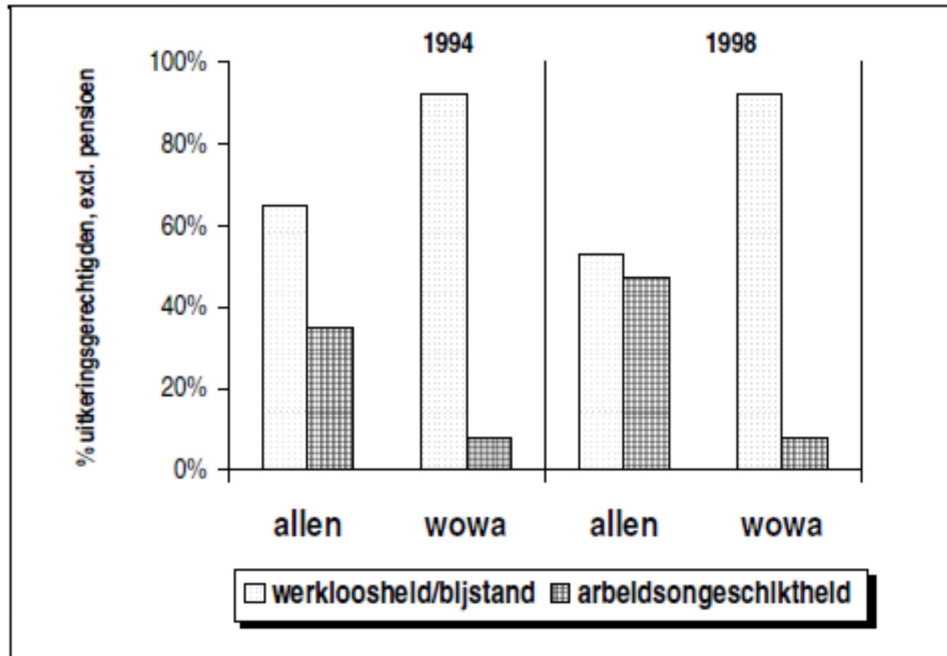


Bron: CBS.

Source: Cebeon (2002) Monitor maatschappelijke en economische positie woonwagenbewoners: tweede meting, Amsterdam, Cebeon

Benefit recipients (excluding pensioners) amongst all inhabitants and amongst travelers respectively, according to type of benefit

Figuur 3.7. Uitkeringsontvangers (exclusief pensioengerechtigden) onder alle inwoners respectievelijk woonwagenbewoners, naar type uitkering (1994 en 1998)



Bron: CBS.

Source: Cebeon (2002) Monitor maatschappelijke en economische positie woonwagenbewoners: tweede meting, Amsterdam, Cebeon

3) Housing

Position of mobile home sites in the region of Amsterdam

- Table 3. Position of Caravan Sites

• periphery	• 49%
• centre	• 38%
• outskirts	• 12%

Source: S. Dekkers et al Feitenonderzoek vrijplaatsen op woonwagenlocaties Regioplan Amsterdam 2006 p. 10.

Source: Schriemer, R. (2009) Thematic study. The housing condition of Roma and Travellers, The Netherlands: RAXEN National Focal Point

Number of mobile homes in The Netherlands

• Table 4. No. of caravans in The Netherlands

• Caravans	• Number	• Owned by residents	• Owned and let by municipality	• Owned by municipality, managed by corporation	• Owned and managed by corporation
• 2000	• 8947	• 5714 (64%)	• 1764 (20%)	• 532 (6%)	• 658 (7%)
• 2001	• -	• -	• -	• -	• 689
• 2002	• -	• -	• -	• -	• 703
• 2003	• -	• -	• -	• -	• 706
• 2004	• -	• -	• -	• 259	• 687
• 2005	• -	• -	• -	• 227	• 79069

Source: Landelijk Overleg Steunfuncties Woonwagenwerk

Source: Schriemer, R. (2009) *Thematic study. The housing condition of Roma and Travellers, The Netherlands: RAXEN National Focal Point*

4) Health

No statistical information is available in this area, neither recent nor outdated data.

5) Poverty/Economic situation

No additional statistical information is available in this area, see area 2) Employment for overlapping information.

3. Table of complaints

Grounds upon which people were discriminated against

Grounds for discrimination	2008	2009	2010
Roma/Sinti	0	1	4
Total	2,238	2,212	2,538

Source: De Wit, W. and Sombekke, E. (2011) *Poldis 2010 criminaliteitsbeeld discriminatie*, Nijmegen, ITS, p. 9.

Table 2. Grounds upon which people were discriminated against

	2010		2011	
	Counts	Penal	Counts	Penal
Discrimination against Roma and Sinti	30	13	10	6

Source: MDI (2012) *Jaarverslag 2011*, Amsterdam, Magenta/MDI, p. 7.

Table 3. Ethnic background of persons lodging complaints at Art 1 Midden Nederland

	Year
Background	2011
Roma	7
Total	596

Source: Art 1 Midden Nederland (2012) *Jaarcijfers 2011*, Utrecht, Art 1 Midden Nederland.

Table 4. Grounds of discrimination (Public Prosecution)

Racial discrimination	2007	2008	2009	2010
Roma/Sinti	0%	0%	1%	0%

Source: Landelijk Expertise Centrum Discriminatie (2011) *Cijfers in Beeld; Discriminatiecijfers*, Amsterdam, LECD.

4. Table of sources (reports and studies on Roma)

	Title, author, source	Roma en schoolverzuim: De situatie (waar, waarom en wat te doen) van schoolverzuim en -uitval bij Roma-meisjes in het voortgezet onderwijs in Nederland, Utrecht, C. van der Veen, Utrecht: Trimbos Instituut, 2012
	Source and type	Non-governmental report
Thematic area	Education	✓
	Housing	
	Employment	
	Health	
	Poverty	
	Migration	
	Active citizenship	
	Sample	27 interviews with Roma girls and their parents; 20 interviews with civil servants from 11 municipalities
	Location	11 municipalities in the Netherlands
	Target population	Roma in the Netherlands
	Key findings	The study outlines factors determining poor school attendance such as language and learning deficiencies, emotional well-being and (lack of) self-confidence among Roma pupils. Other circumstantial factors are related to pupils' socio-economic surroundings, the influence of peers and support from families.
	Methodology	Interviews
	Representativeness, transferability of findings	Generally for Roma in the Netherlands

	Title, author, source	Human rights of Roma and Travellers in Europe. Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing, 2012
	Source and type	Governmental report
Thematic area	Education	✓
	Housing	✓
	Employment	✓
	Health	✓
	Poverty	✓
	Migration	✓
	Active citizenship	✓
	Sample	-
	Location	47 Member States of the Council of Europe (including the

		Netherlands)
	Target population	Roma and Travellers in Europe
	Key findings	The following findings were highlighted for the Netherlands. Roma and Sinti disproportionately attend schools for vocational training as opposed to upper secondary schools. Roma and Sinti have been excluded from the National Ethnic Minority Consultative Committee though their representatives have asked for direct dialogue with national authorities.
	Methodology	Desk research
	Representativeness, transferability of findings	Generally for Roma and Sinti in the Netherlands

	Title, author, source	Living conditions of the Roma: substandard housing and health, Dublin: Eurofound, 2012
	Source and type	Non-governmental report
Thematic area	Education	
	Housing	✓
	Employment	
	Health	
	Poverty	
	Migration	
	Active citizenship	
	Sample	-
	Location	Europe
	Target population	Roma in Europe
	Key findings	Compared to other European countries, the housing situation of Roma in the Netherlands is good. Lack of space is the main problem. The quality of housing is reasonable.
	Methodology	Analysis of quantitative data
	Representativeness, transferability of findings	-

	Title, author, source	Promoting social inclusion of Roma: A study of national policies. The Netherlands, I. van der Welle & M. Blommesteijn. Brussels: European Commission, 2011
	Source and type	-
Thematic area	Education	
	Housing	
	Employment	
	Health	
	Poverty	

	Migration	
	Active citizenship	✓
	Sample	-
	Location	The Netherlands
	Target population	Roma, Sinti and Travellers in the Netherlands
	Key findings	The available data yields a clear picture of Roma, Sinti and Travellers as groups at risk of poverty and social exclusion: high levels of illiteracy, low educational levels, dependency on social benefits and poor living conditions. However, Roma, Sinti and Travellers are not homogeneous communities. The Dutch government has abandoned target group policies in favour of general policies. Local authorities are responsible for finding solutions for the problems of and with Roma, Sinti and Traveller communities by making full use of the possibilities of general policies and programmes.
	Methodology	Desk research
	Representativeness, transferability of findings	Generally for Roma, Sinti and Travellers in the Netherlands

	Title, author, source	Ethnic minority and Roma women in Europe: A case for gender equality? Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2010
	Source and type	Governmental report
Thematic area	Education	✓
	Housing	✓
	Employment	✓
	Health	✓
	Poverty	✓
	Migration	✓
	Active citizenship	✓
	Sample	30 key informants from 30 European countries (including the Netherlands)
	Location	Europe
	Target population	Romani women in Europe
	Key findings	Findings on the Netherlands include: there are an estimated 6,000 Roma and Sinti persons in the Netherlands, or 0.01% of the Dutch population. Most Roma in the Netherlands now have Dutch nationality. Roma and Sinti have no specific legal status in the Netherlands. The community can be divided into five groups: Dutch nationals (the majority); stateless people; political refugees; non-Dutch EU citizens; non-EU citizens.
	Methodology	Desk research
	Representativeness, transferability of findings	-

	findings	
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	Title, author, source	Roma en Sinti op weg – naar een beter welzijn. Amsterdam: Dokters van de Wereld, 2010
	Source and type	Non- governmental report
Thematic area	Education	
	Housing	
	Employment	
	Health	✓
	Poverty	
	Migration	
	Active citizenship	
	Sample	-
	Location	The Netherlands
	Target population	Roma and Sinti in the Netherlands
	Key findings	Many Roma face health problems. Health concerns and questions are not always adequately addressed by Roma, partly due to certain problems being shrouded in taboo. Many Roma are not fully aware of their (medical) rights or where to go for assistance, and experience racial discrimination when trying to access healthcare. In addition, many live uncertain lives in marginalized areas with limited facilities.
	Methodology	Desk research
	Representativeness, transferability of findings	Generally for Roma

	Title, author, source	Antiziganisme, M. Davidovic & P.R. Rodrigues, in J. van Donselaar & P.R. Rodrigues, Monitor racisme en extremisme: Negende rapportage, Amsterdam / Leiden: Anne Frank Stichting / Universiteit Leiden, 2010
	Source and type	Non-governmental report
Thematic area	Education	✓
	Housing	✓
	Employment	✓
	Health	✓
	Poverty	✓
	Migration	
	Active citizenship	
	Sample	-
	Location	The Netherlands
	Target population	-
	Key findings	There is a lack of data on Roma in the Netherlands, including

		statistics on discrimination. Available data show that Roma lag behind the rest of society in education and housing. There is much distrust between Roma/Sinti and Dutch society (including the authorities). This reinforces prejudices and fuels discrimination.
	Methodology	Desk research
	Representativeness, transferability of findings	Generally for Roma in the Netherlands

	Title, author, source	Housing conditions of Roma and Travellers, thematic study, S.L.: The Netherlands RAXEN National Focal Point, 2009
	Source and type	Non-governmental report
Thematic area	Education	
	Housing	✓
	Employment	
	Health	
	Poverty	
	Migration	
	Active citizenship	
	Sample	-
	Location	The Netherlands
	Target population	Roma and Travellers in the Netherlands
	Key findings	The system of housing allocation is subject to strict government regulation. There is a lack of sites. With the demand for sites much larger than the supply, more and more people are either forced to move into regular housing or to live illegally in smaller mobile homes placed next to the designated sites. Approximately 80% of Dutch municipalities have one or more sites. Studies and publications primarily address the shortage of sites and the attitude and policy of national and local governments.
	Methodology	Desk research
	Representativeness, transferability of findings	Generally for Roma in the Netherlands

	Title, author, source	Shadow report on the ratification by the Netherlands of the Framework Convention on the Protection of National Minorities, P. Jorna, S.L.: Committee of Experts on Roma and Travellers (MG-S-ROM) for the Netherlands, 2009
	Source and type	Non-governmental report
The	Education	✓
	Housing	✓

	Employment	✓
	Health	✓
	Poverty	✓
	Migration	✓
	Active citizenship	✓
	Sample	-
	Location	The Netherlands
	Target population	Roma and Travellers in the Netherlands
	Key findings	In many respects, the situation of Sinti and Roma in the Netherlands does not comply with the Framework Convention on the Protection of National Minorities. Health indicators (including life expectancy and child mortality) are worse than the rest of the population. Sinti and Roma have lower educational levels, are over-represented in vocational training and special education, and suffer weak positions on the labour market. They barely participate in Dutch cultural, social and economic life, and have no influence in public or political life, even when it concerns the group itself.
	Methodology	Desk research
	Representativeness, transferability of findings	Generally for Roma and Sinti in the Netherlands

	Title, author, source	Roma in Nederland: Onderzoek ten behoeve van het bestuurlijk overleg lokaal Integratiebeleid Roma, Utrecht: Forum, 2008
	Source and type	Non-governmental report
Thematic area	Education	✓
	Housing	✓
	Employment	✓
	Health	
	Poverty	
	Migration	
	Active citizenship	✓
	Sample	Panel discussions with 16 municipal civil servants; interviews with police officers from 15 municipalities
	Location	15 municipalities in the Netherlands
	Target population	-
	Key findings	Roma are poorly organised and face many social problems. The Roma population is heavily involved in criminal activity. Each municipality has its own stance towards solving these problems.
	Methodology	Panel discussion, interviews, analysis of quantitative data
	Representativeness, transferability of findings	Generally for Roma in the Netherlands

	Title, author, source	Nationaal dreigingsbeeld, Zoetermeer: Korps Landelijke Politiediensten (KLPD), 2008
	Source and type	Governmental report
Thematic area	Education	
	Housing	
	Employment	
	Health	
	Poverty	
	Migration	
	Active citizenship	
	Sample	-
	Location	The Netherlands
	Target population	Criminals in the Netherlands
	Key findings	This study draws a connection between Travellers (including Roma) and the drug trade, the illegal car trade, illegal gambling and robbery. According to this study, criminal Roma are operating in close family networks. There have also been counts of young Roma girls being forced into prostitution in the Netherlands.
	Methodology	Analysis of quantitative data
	Representativeness, transferability of findings	Generally for Roma in the Netherlands

	Title, author, source	Sinti en Roma: Een inventarisatie, Tilburg: Stichting Zet / Stichting Rechtsherstel Sinti en Roma, 2007
	Source and type	Non-governmental report
Thematic area	Education	✓
	Housing	✓
	Employment	✓
	Health	✓
	Poverty	✓
	Migration	
	Active citizenship	
	Sample	80 interviews with key informants from municipalities with a substantial Roma and/or Sinti population (more than 15 households)
	Location	All municipalities with a substantial Roma and/or Sinti population in the Netherlands
	Target population	Roma and Sinti in the Netherlands
	Key findings	Roma and Sinti are concentrated in a small number of municipalities, in the south of the country in particular. The social position (on the labour market and in education) of Roma and Sinti

		who have been in the Netherlands since 1900 is better than that of Roma who arrived in the 1980s. Authorities in municipalities with a substantial Roma and/or Sinti population show decreased commitment to special policies targeting Roma and Sinti.
	Methodology	Interviews
	Representativeness, transferability of findings	Generally for Roma and Sinti in the Netherlands

	Title, author, source	Roma, Sinti en woonwagenbewoners: succesfactoren en knelpunten op het gebied van arbeidstoeleiding. 's-Hertogenbosh: KPC Groep, 2006.
	Source and type	Non-governmental report
Thematic area	Education	
	Housing	
	Employment	✓
	Health	
	Poverty	
	Migration	
	Active citizenship	
	Sample	Interviews with 8 key informants
	Location	Several municipalities in the Netherlands
	Target population	Roma and Sinti in the Netherlands
	Key findings	Roma and Sinti prefer working for smaller local companies where they feel more at ease, and which require less travelling. Negative stereotypes about Roma, Sinti and Travellers hinder their employment opportunities.
	Methodology	Desk research and interviews
	Representativeness, transferability of findings	-

	Title, author, source	Speciale doelgroepen in het basisonderwijs: Schooljaar 2002/2003, M. Hulsen & L. Mulder, Nijmegen: ITS, 2005
	Source and type	Non-governmental report
Thematic area	Education	✓
	Housing	
	Employment	
	Health	
	Poverty	
	Migration	
	Active citizenship	
	Sample	-
	Location	The Netherlands

	Target population	Special groups in the Dutch educational system including Travellers, Roma and Sinti
	Key findings	In the school year 2002–03, Roma, Sinti and Traveller primary school pupils had lower scores than native Dutch children and other minority groups including refugee children.
	Methodology	Analysis of quantitative data
	Representativeness, transferability of findings	Generally for Roma and Sinti in the Netherlands

	Title, author, source	Monitor racism en extreem-rechts: Roma en Sinti. Vijfde rapportage, M. Matelski & P.R. Rodrigues, Amsterdam: Anne Frank Stichting / Universiteit Leiden, 2004
	Source and type	Non-governmental report
Thematic area	Education	✓
	Housing	✓
	Employment	✓
	Health	
	Poverty	✓
	Migration	
	Active citizenship	✓
	Sample	19 interviews with key informants
	Location	The Netherlands
	Target population	Roma and Sinti in the Netherlands
	Key findings	Roma and Sinti have a disadvantaged position in Dutch society. There is a lot of mutual distrust between Roma and Sinti on the one hand and Dutch society (including authorities) on the other. This distrust reinforces prejudice and fuels discrimination.
	Methodology	-
	Representativeness, transferability of findings	Generally for Roma and Sinti in the Netherlands

	Title, author, source	Onderwijsdeelname van woonwagen- en zigeurnerkinderen in twintigste eeuw, R. Tommermans & A. van den Hurk, 's-Hertogenbosch: KPC, 2002
	Source and type	Non-governmental report
Thematic area	Education	✓
	Housing	
	Employment	
	Health	
	Poverty	
	Migration	

	Active citizenship	
	Sample	
	Location	The Netherlands
	Target population	Travellers, Sinti and Roma in the Netherlands
	Key findings	90% of Roma and Traveller children are attending (secondary) school. A relatively large percentage is enrolled in special needs education or vocational training.
	Methodology	Analysis of quantitative data
	Representativeness, transferability of findings	Generally for Roma and Sinti in the Netherlands

	Title, author, source	Monitor maatschappelijke en economische positie woonwagenbewoners: tweede meting, Amsterdam: Cebeon, 2002
	Source and type	-
Thematic area	Education	✓
	Housing	
	Employment	✓
	Health	
	Poverty	
	Migration	
	Active citizenship	
	Sample	-
	Location	The Netherlands
	Target population	Travellers, Sinti and Roma in the Netherlands
	Key findings	Relatively few Roma and Traveller children meet the educational requirements needed to find work. Unemployment among Roma and Travellers is higher than the rest of the population. They also remain unemployed over longer periods.
	Methodology	Analysis of quantitative data
	Representativeness, transferability of findings	-

5. Roma networks

Type of Associations, Organisations, NGOs	Name of Organisation	Email/Website	Roma involvement	Main area of expertise
NGO	Nederlands Instituut voor Sinti en Roma	info@nistr.nl	NISR is the national body for Sinti and Roma aiming to work with local authorities and Roma and Sinti groups towards better participation and integration within Dutch society.	Education Welfare Culture Employment
NGO	Forum	Info@forum.nl	FORUM, Institute for Multicultural Affairs, works as an independent think tank for Dutch society as a whole, for residents and newcomers alike, without ties to formal supporters. It does not represent specific interests. FORUM's mission is to contribute to social stability in the Netherlands on the basis of knowledge (facts, figures and developments). One of its staff works on Roma issues.	FORUM focuses on promoting social cohesion, shared citizenship and a multi-ethnic society of equal citizens.
NGO	KPC groep: Onderwijs aan Woonwagen-, Roma- en Sintikinderen	http://www.owrs.nl/contact.html	A special team within the KPC group supports professionals involved in the education of children from Roma, Sinti and Traveller communities at local and national levels. It offers support and mediation between teachers/schools and pupils from Roma, Sinti and Traveller communities.	OWRS encourages the participation of pupils from Roma, Sinti and Traveller communities and assists parents and children in finding opportunities for further (vocational) education. OWRS also assists schools that experience problems in dealing with pupils and parents from these communities.