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# The Modern European: An Analysis of Ethnic Minority Identity in the Twenty-First Century

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# **THE MODERN EUROPEAN: AN ANALYSIS OF ETHNIC MINORITY IDENTITY IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY**

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in European Studies from the College of William and Mary in Virginia,

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Williamsburg, Virginia  
17 April 2015



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All works accessed in a foreign language were translated by the author.



# Introduction

On 1 January 2014, the United Kingdom opened its borders to Bulgaria and Romania in accordance with recently adopted accession treaties under European Union regulation. This sent Britain into frenzy. Headlines flew across the country like “The Feared Great Invasion” and “Sold Out! Flights and Buses Full of Romanians and Bulgarians Head for the UK.” The media claimed the Gypsies<sup>1</sup> would take over the healthcare and benefits system and ruin the country. Some Britons called for the UK government to set up restrictions; others called for a referendum to leave the EU completely. This predicted meltdown of the British social system, however, did not occur. Romanians and Bulgarians did not flood in in hoards of hundreds or thousands or hundreds of thousands and, although it is not possible to get a precise number, it is estimated that around 30 entered the UK during the first weekend of the open border, many of whom were doctors or other highly educated people simply looking for better opportunities. Over a year later, and still the Romanians and Bulgarians have not managed to destroy Britain or any other member state that opened its borders.

Europe is known as the “solid, occasionally stolid” continent, which can “pride itself in lasting and real achievement” (Wyn Jones and Scully 1). That said, Europe has had a long and tumultuous history and the idea of one group harboring resentment towards another is not a new story. After the vast destruction of the Second World War, European countries feared that future wars on such a scale would lead to a destruction they would not be able to recover from. In particular, France was afraid of Germany, and sought a way to gain

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<sup>1</sup> Because the deep-seated fear is not so much of Romanians and Bulgarians but of the Gypsies, which are commonly made out to be one and the same. (They aren’t.)



control of its militarily erratic neighbor. When countries are tied together economically (and later politically and socially) they are much less likely to go to war. Thus was the birth of the European Union.<sup>2</sup>

The EU is a unique body: it brings 28 completely sovereign nations together under political and economic cooperation. As it grows and matures, it has also begun to try to develop a common sense of European identity and expand beyond its economic treaties into a social union as well, focusing on bringing its people together. The EU hopes to inspire a sense of European-ness that can transcend national borders, while at the same time maintain the diversity of its member states—a tricky balancing act, as it does not seek to undermine the state (Wyn Jones and Scully 2). This is particularly challenging because the EU is often seen as out of touch with its people. The reactions, for example of many Britons, show that this continental identity is not yet in place. Although it started out purely as an economic agreement, the EU has realized that it needs its people on board to maintain peace. It must be a leader in social policy and create an identity not to replace nationality, but to inspire all citizens to find common ground—if countries share a common identity with their neighbors, they are much less likely to destroy each other. This must involve *all* Europeans, including ethnic minority groups like the Roma. There are many benefits to a pan-European identity, but there is also constant push back: alongside the growth of right wing movements due to economic instability over the past several years, citizens are afraid their countries are losing sovereignty, are afraid others will reap benefits that are not theirs to claim, and that the EU is overstepping its bounds. Immigration is at the heart of this debate. It is such that in Britain, if, and most likely when David Cameron wins the

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<sup>2</sup> of what has evolved into today's European Union.

general election in May 2015, he will offer an in-out referendum in 2017. The EU has never had a country formally withdraw its membership and the results could be catastrophic. Therefore, it is vital that all of those interested in Europe's long-term survival address the issue of European identity. In order to continue feelings of goodwill from the people of one country to another, Europe must provide incentives for its people to get along. The success of the EU is dependent on constituent support. But how can this ever be achieved if some groups are ignored, mistreated, and never receive a voice?

This thesis will explore one often-overlooked facet of this debate: the Roma. These are a people that are very much European but have no one nationality. Believed to have originated in India, the Roma travelled through the East and then the West, settling in Europe in the 1400s. They live among those of almost every European nationality. Although perhaps "among" is not the correct word; instead, nearly everywhere, they live on the periphery. They are not refugees; they are not guest workers like the Turks in Germany. But they are outsiders. By examining their case, we can gauge and perhaps gain insight into how European countries see and treat minority groups and perhaps predict the likelihood of Europe expanding European Union relations such that members embrace all European nationalities instead of their own specific one.

The European Union does not have an official Roma policy. It does not provide any direct structure for integrating the Roma. This may be surprising to many. Change, however, is on the horizon. In 2011, the European Commission recognized the need for a comprehensive development of Roma inclusion policy measures across EU member states. It published the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies, giving a broad overview and a tailored approach for each country to create new Roma policy by 2020 and

focus on four key policy areas: education, health, accommodation, and employment (EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies 3). It has divided the time period into two parts—2007-2013 and 2014-2020—with a progress report between the two. In addition, member states received financial encouragement and support from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Social Fund (ESF), and the Rural Development Fund (RDF). As of yet, only 12 member states<sup>3</sup> have dedicated budgetary resources, one of the clearest signs of commitment, towards Roma inclusion. Therefore, it is necessary for the EU to give the rest of Europe a push towards integrating its “disadvantaged people.”<sup>4</sup> Should the EU policy succeed, it will make a “tangible difference” to the lives of Roma across Europe and bring a positive change to their currently substandard status (*European Commission Calls on Member States to Implement National Plans for Roma Integration*, Europa.eu, web).

How are EU member states engaging in the Roma conversation? This thesis will seek to determine the current status of the Roma through national perceptions, as shown through national government policy and national level media. Public opinion is, of course, central because the public is what makes up each member state and the EU. Public policy and media act like mirrors to national opinions. In a democratic government—ideally—citizens elect officials who then represent their constituents’ opinions<sup>5</sup> when writing laws and policy, which means policy should reflect national opinion; in this case, how do they

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<sup>3</sup> Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Greece, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, and Sweden—neither Germany nor the UK (*European Commission Calls on Member States to Implement National Plans for Roma Integration*, europa.eu, web).

<sup>4</sup> “Disadvantaged people” is the official category the Roma fall under in the UK.

<sup>5</sup> We hope so, at least; for further reading, see Aneurin Bevan’s book “Why Not Trust a Tory?”

want the Roma to be legally treated? Similarly, media provides insight into national opinion by weaving past and current events and common opinions along with its own agenda or bias, and then giving a snapshot on a theme. Respected mainstream national media represents national views on issues and generally provides a politically moderate bias, at least compared to more extreme media sources. Because it drives and forms public opinion, media also, if indirectly, influences government policy. In contrast to government policy, however, media is less concerned with diplomacy and may reflect the common opinion more genuinely. Therefore, both are effective ways to measure national attitudes for the purposes of this thesis.

The two countries used as case studies here will be Wales and Germany. Like the EU, neither country has an official Roma policy. Wales, an underdog country in many regards, might be an unexpected choice. According to statistics from the 2011 census, 93.2% of Welsh inhabitants reported as being white British and only 0.1% as Gypsy or Traveller (Office for National Statistics 58). After 15 years of a liberal government, however, Wales looks to be a quiet, yet strong, leader in the development of official Roma policy in the EU and is the first to tackle the project in the UK. Germany, on the other hand, has acted as a leader and role model to many European countries in the past few years. Given its history and commitment to righting the wrongs of the past century, it is proving to be a leader in social change—nationalism is almost illegal and multiculturalism is discussed daily. The Roma, however, seem to be an exception to the rule of an otherwise relatively open culture. By comparing these two very different countries, we can gain insight into the range of attitudes towards the Roma and what it means to be a European minority group. With this knowledge, we will have a better sense of the extent to which the EU can be successful in

bringing its people together and developing itself as an economic, political, and social entity.

## **A Note on Sources**

As readers might notice, many of these sources are accompanied by a URL and were accessed online. This might, at first, seem suspicious for an academic paper, as there is a strong preference to books and other printed works. What one must keep in mind, however, is that this is not a history paper—the events discussed are often happening in real time. For example, the Welsh Government reports do exist in printed form, but may only have one copy each sitting in the third floor library of the National Assembly for Wales, which is not accessible from William and Mary. Similarly, the majority of the listed newspaper articles were at one time in physical print, but not easy to acquire in the US; they have been cited accordingly in MLA format. Thanks technology, however, these sources have been made free and available online in the form of PDFs or published directly on the sources' websites. They are the exact same words and exact same source, simply in a digital format, and should not be discounted.

With specific regard to the media, I examined back issues of all 13 newspapers and journals through at least 2010 and selected those that were most applicable to this project and most clearly represented the views of the papers. Regarding Wales, I was allowed access to David Melding AM's files on the Gypsies and Travellers in Wales and attended the March 2014 Cross Party Group Meeting for Gypsies and Travellers acting as a representative for David Melding AM as well as several of the plenary meetings cited. The

opportunity to be included in these meetings played a significant role in the inspiration and research process for this thesis.

## A Note on Names and Origins

There are many names or terms for the subjects of this investigation, ranging from academic to vulgar, often used interchangeably and incorrectly. The common, umbrella term for these groups of people is, in English, the autonym Roma/Romani or the exonym Gypsy. After consultation with Roma organizations in 2010, the Council of Europe recognized “Roma” as the official name to denote all groups sharing a common Indian origin (*The Correct Terminology About Roma*, web). Naturally, not all are the same, often differing in traditions and dialects. This thesis will compare four groups of peoples: the Gypsies and Travellers<sup>6</sup> in Wales, and the Roma and Sinti in Germany.

The traditionally accepted theory<sup>7</sup> of Roma origin lies in India, from which they began to emigrate between 241-272 AD following a Persian invasion (Kenrick 12). Much of the proof for this lies in linguistics, as Roma languages share many similarities to Hindi and Punjabi (Bhopal and Myers 4). It is likely they travelled through Persia, Constantinople, and the Balkans on the way to Western Europe, arriving in the 1400s (Kenrick vii-viii). Once in Europe, they divided into three main branches: Sinti/Manush in German and French areas; Kale in Spanish areas; and Lom around the Caucasus (*The Correct Terminology about Roma*, web). The name Gypsy appeared in medieval times, when they were incorrectly believed to

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<sup>6</sup> The consistent official terminology of the Welsh government and some Gypsy groups in all of the Welsh material consulted here.

<sup>7</sup> Other theories suggest they are prehistoric Jews or “ordinary citizens who had darkened their skins with walnut oil” (Kenrick 5).

have come from Egypt. Since then, they have lived among and alongside Europeans, in constant struggle to define and maintain an identity.

Welsh Gypsies are primarily members of the Kale families, a group of Romani people. “Traveller” hints at connections with Ireland.<sup>8</sup> It is possible for anyone to register themselves as a Traveller in accordance with the Commission for Racial Equality, regardless of heritage.<sup>9</sup> The official terminology of these two groups in the Welsh Government is Gypsies and Travellers. In Wales, it is important to note that, as was confirmed in the first Welsh plenary session in 2015, the word Roma is not officially included in government policy.<sup>10</sup>

In Germany, the main Roma groups are the Roma and the Sinti. Historically, the Sinti lived in Western and Central Europe, while the Roma settled outside German-speaking areas (*Deutscher Sinti und Roma*, web). Germany combined the groups to Roma and Sinti in the 1980s, likely due to their similarities in historical background and persecution during the Second World War (Roma and Sinti). German Sinti and Roma have shown strong preference towards being called Sinti and Roma, used in official government documents, instead of Gypsy, or the German *Zigeuner*.

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<sup>8</sup> See: Emancipation of the Travelling People: A Report on the Attitudes and Prejudices of the Irish People towards the Travellers Based on a National Social Survey 2007-08 by Micheal Mac Greil (sic).

<sup>9</sup> One notable case of this is David Davies MP of Monmouthshire. As brought to light in the article “Davies, You’re Talking !\*! @” (sic), the MP who had already made flippant remarks regarding travelling communities decided to register himself as a Traveller because 1) He travels “a lot more than these people” 2) His wife is Hungarian 3) Because no one will then “be able to call [him] a racist” that way. This last comment caused him quite a bit of grief, with the chairman of the Gypsy Council calling him a “cretin.” This is not a general view held by the Welsh Conservatives and Davies is by far an exception to the rule.

<sup>10</sup> The Minister for Assembly Business has confirmed that there will be a meeting including the Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty to discuss inclusion of the Roma in government strategy documents. This does seem to be a discrepancy, as the Kale, Gypsies, are a section of the Romani.

# Chapter One: Wales

## Gypsies and Travellers

### HISTORY

Gypsies and Travellers first arrived in the UK at the beginning of the sixteenth century. They did not receive a warm welcome, and King Henry VIII soon passed the Egyptians<sup>11</sup> Act of 1530 forbidding Gypsies to enter England. Scotland, however, showed more leniency and allowed Gypsies to live and abide by their own laws. After not entirely successful attempts to deport Gypsies to Norway, England encouraged the Gypsies to leave by enacting a death penalty for any that would not leave the country within a month in 1554 (Kenrick xxii). This was later expanded to include all people who lived and travelled like Gypsies. Discrimination of the Gypsies and Travellers became the pervasive trend for centuries to come.

The first record of Gypsies (*Sipsiwn*) in Wales was recorded in 1579 in a poem composed by Morris Kyffin set in Radnorshire (Kenrick 289), followed by prison reports and “bawdy” beer hall songs about them (Romani Cymru, web). The main Gypsy group to travel to Wales was the Kale, believed to have journeyed through Spain, France, and Cornwall. When arriving at a new location, Gypsies would often adopt British names in the hopes of escaping prejudice or persecution; popular names include Boswell, Ingram, Lovell, Wood, and Young (Romani Cymru, web). The first family to settle permanently in Wales in

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<sup>11</sup> As they were called at the time, presumed to have come from Egypt.



1730 in Llangernyw was headed by Abraham Wood, a famed musician. Many Gypsies today proudly claim to be descendants of Wood.

Contrary to the pattern in England, the Gypsies began to assimilate into Welsh culture. The first Gypsy character, “Aunt Sal,” palmist and cousin of Abraham Wood, appeared in 1787 “on the Welsh stage in Twm o’r Nant’s play *Pleser a Gofid*<sup>12</sup> (Romani Cymru, web). This began to create a role in society for the Gypsies and Travellers and form their now stereotypical image of theatrics and fortune telling. Additionally, the Kale tribe converted to Christianity and participated in regional and national *Eisteddfodau*.<sup>13</sup> Although it is claimed that “many Welsh farmers and country folk” had “favorable relations” with the Gypsies in their area, media outlets such as the 1820’s *Seren Gomer* magazine encouraged the stereotype that the Gypsies were “everywhere,” had a reputation for “tricking people out of their money,” and were squalid, immoral heretics with no means of making an honest living (Romani Cymru, web), Such publications helped to develop and spread the other, darker side of their stereotype.

The UK government<sup>14</sup> continued to look at deportation as a solution and, in the 1700s, discovered a fondness for shipping Gypsies to the new world. In 1715, in fact, ten Gypsies were deported to Virginia (Timeline of Romany Gypsy History in Britain, web). In the 1900s, the UK government seemed to finally accept that Gypsies would be living in Britain despite previous government efforts, and began to pass Acts requiring education

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<sup>12</sup> Pleasure and Anxiety

<sup>13</sup> A yearly Welsh festival celebrating the literature, music, and culture of Wales

<sup>14</sup> Because the National Assembly for Wales was not founded until 1999, it is necessary to look at UK legislation in order to assess government discrimination before then.

and caravan<sup>15</sup> sites. One last attempt of suppression was made in 1994 when passing the Criminal Justice Act, which repealed the duty of councils “to provide, in or in connection with sites for the accommodation of gipsies (sic), working space and facilities for the carrying on of such activities are normally carried on by them” (Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, web.), which encouraged councils not to provide for Gypsy and Traveller needs, rendering them illegal in caravans. Then, in 2008, England recognized June as National Gypsy Roma Traveller History Month—the first signs of supportive outreach measures. It is only in the past ten years that the Gypsy and Traveller people have begun to be treated kindly by UK government legislation, although by no means are they yet considered of equal standing with the general British populace. At a time when Europe is redefining itself, it is important to see that prejudices surrounding the Gypsy and Traveller people are just beginning to unravel, giving Britain hope it may become more open to other minority groups.

## **GOVERNMENT**

### **Wales, not Westminster: A History of Welsh Governing Powers**

Before getting into the realities of Welsh government policy towards Gypsies and Travellers today, it is important to establish what modern Welsh politics is. Any policies before 1999 were solely from the UK government, colloquially referred to as Westminster, and then implemented across England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland. Before 2011,

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<sup>15</sup> “A covered carriage or cart... usually, a house on wheels, e.g. the travelling house of gipsies...one of the covered vehicles of a travelling menagerie, etc. Now freq. one able to be towed by a motor car and used as a stationary dwelling” (Oxford English Dictionary: caravan).

Wales did not have any legislative powers—again, these were mandated by Westminster. As I examine Welsh politics and policies, I will be focusing on those that are truly Welsh and have come from the National Assembly for Wales or the Welsh Assembly Government since they were granted devolved powers. This section provides a brief history of how Wales came to have its own parliamentary body with legislative powers.

Wales has been tied to English politics for the past 500 years. In 1536, the Acts of Union were passed, which forced Wales into a political assimilation. Although maintaining none of their original political structure, the Welsh continued to keep a separate identity from the English, seen particularly through religion and the Welsh nonconformist Protestantism as well as the Welsh language. The contention of religious differences was brought to its pinnacle in 1914 when the UK Parliament passed the Welsh Church Act. The separation and establishment of the Church in Wales was the beginning of a modern and separate Welsh identity.

Around this time, an up-and-coming political group, *Cymru Fydd*, began to speak out for self-government in Wales. Although this group caught on with the Welsh intellectuals and attempted to establish the importance of their own nationality, they failed to engage the Welsh masses, and never accomplished anything of substantial significance. Any attempts to develop Wales as its own nation were shattered by World War One and the Great Depression, which carried through to the end of World War Two. This is when we begin to see real progress and the birth of modern devolution in Wales.

By the end of the 1970s, the movement for self-government in Wales had gained enough momentum to hold a referendum to push forward the ideas set out in the Wales Act of 1978, which would provide Wales with limited secondary legislative powers and the

establishment of a National Assembly; however, the No campaign won by a great margin, nationalists were so distraught that some refused to even speak for the following weeks, and no new powers were given to Wales. After continued misfortune, anger at Margaret Thatcher's Tory government, and support from Tony Blair's New Labour, a similar referendum was held in 1997, and this time, although there was very little voter participation, the Yes campaign squeaked out a victory. On 12 May 1999, Ty Hywel opened its Siamber in Cardiff Bay and the National Assembly for Wales held its first session.

It was not until the 2011 referendum that the National Assembly gained legislative powers. This time, there was overwhelming support for the Assembly, showing that devolution is here to stay (notably, there is roughly 6% support for independence, 80%+ for devolved powers (ICM Unlimited Feb 2015, web)). Assembly members now have control over 20 devolved areas as defined by the Government of Wales Act 2006, most notably to this project: culture, education and training, economic development, health and health services, housing, and social welfare. In March 2014, the Silk Commission recommended moving from a conferred powers (granted in the Government of Wales Act 2006) to reserved powers system<sup>16</sup> (following in the footsteps of Scotland), which is currently being taken into consideration and should have official support across the Assembly and the Welsh Office by St. David's Day (March 1<sup>st</sup>) 2015.

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<sup>16</sup> Welsh devolution follows a conferred powers system, where the UK Parliament defines law-making areas for the National Assembly for Wales and all the rest are held in Westminster; Scottish devolution follows a reserved powers system, where the Scottish Parliament may legislate on any matter except for those defined to be held by the UK Parliament.

There are four political parties in Wales: Labour, Conservatives, Liberal Democrats, and Plaid Cymru.<sup>17</sup> Wales always has and likely always will be predominantly Labour. This is another separation between Wales and England, since the Tory party will likely govern England for the foreseeable future, especially with the rise of right-wing ideas across Europe. Wales is the poorest region of the United Kingdom, with even some of its own politicians (Mohammed Ashgar AM, 21 May 2014) likening it to a third world country. The Welsh are by and large more in support of a socialized system, completely free and universal healthcare, higher taxes for the rich (not that there are very many), and support for the Welsh language. Currently, the main opposition party is the Conservatives. The name Conservative itself might be a bit misleading—they are not comparable to the average American Republican. Economically, they are conservative (lower taxes), but socially they support the majority of the same public initiatives, at least in spirit if not in detail. There is also a growing divide between the Welsh Conservatives and the UK Tories, the Welsh being the “wetter”<sup>18</sup> of the two. What this means is minority groups like the Roma are going to find a more sympathetic and supportive audience in Wales than in other parts of the UK.

### **The Welsh Government and the Gypsies and Travellers**

The Welsh Labour Government takes equality and fair treatment of all people across Wales very seriously and is actively seeking to eradicate prejudices, but this is not a view shared by all parties in the UK as a whole. A rise in support for the United Kingdom

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<sup>17</sup> Translates to “The Party of Wales,” the current independence party.

<sup>18</sup> A term coined under former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher to call out Conservative politicians that were seen as weaker or more liberal.

Independence Party (UKIP), especially with their better-than-expected results in the May 2014 European elections, indicates that many British citizens are unhappy with the social status quo across the UK. Although not an official segment of their manifesto—the closest it gets is mentioning a stricter border control (UKIP issues, web) —the UKIP party is known for attracting those who would prefer communities that are exclusive to British citizens, particularly those who have had familial roots in Britain for many generations. This rise in support has pressured Prime Minister David Cameron into promising an in-out referendum for European Union membership. This would be the first time a country has left the European Union and would be a huge step back in the process of European integration. Leaving the European Union would also allow Britain to close its borders to other European countries, which, gleefully for them, includes Romania and Bulgaria—countries with large Gypsy and Traveller populations. Such a victory for the UKIP party would be a significant validation for those who do not have pleasant attitudes towards ethnic minorities.

Welsh Labour, which is strongly the majority party of Wales, however, has a much softer, kinder rhetoric towards minority groups, such as the Gypsies and Travellers. There is currently no official Gypsy and Traveller policy in the United Kingdom, and the Welsh Government, with support of the EU, is the first to take on the project of publishing official policy. As was announced in the March 2014 Gypsy and Traveller Cross Party Group Meeting: “We’re all making it up as we go along.” The government has chosen to focus on three key areas: accommodation, education, and health. Although there are many other issues to be addressed, like movement and identity, these three are solid areas where the national government and local councils can work together with Gypsy and Traveller

communities to set goals and measure visible progress. In 2011, the Welsh Government published “Travelling to a Better Future: Gypsy and Traveller Framework for Action and Delivery Plan.” This is no Act or legislation, but this publication documents the research and ideas the government has come up with to improve the lives of Welsh Gypsies and Travellers. This research is an important step towards drafting official policy and legislation.

### **Accommodation**

One of the first problems for the Welsh Government to address is the lack of suitable accommodation for the Gypsies and Travellers. The government’s vision, as laid out in the Framework and Action plan, is the provision of “enough places where Gypsies and Travellers can live” (*Travelling to a Better Future* 21), which it hopes to accommodate through authorized camp sites. Unauthorized sites, however, are a common problem, especially when there are not enough legal housing options available, or those that are available are unlivable. The July 2014 Caravan Count report shows that there are 99 authorized caravan sites across Wales, with 1-95 caravans each (an average increase of two caravans per site over the last year), equating to 1,025 caravans total. Additionally, there are an outstanding 184 caravans on unauthorized sites, or 18% of total caravans (Taylor 1-13). The Welsh Government has been wise to acknowledge that forcing Gypsies and Travellers into houses is not the proper solution, as many strongly prefer living in traditional caravans in their own communities. The Welsh Government has laid out its priorities in the Framework and Action plan, focusing on building and maintaining authorized sites, improving local council response, and explaining the benefits of a well-run caravan site for the rest of the community.

The government's vision, as laid out in the Framework and Action plan, is the provision of "enough places where Gypsies and Travellers can live" (*Travelling to a Better Future* 21), which it hopes to accommodate through authorized camp sites. Unauthorized sites, however, are a common problem, especially when there are not enough legal housing options available, or those that are available are unlivable. On 17 March 2014, the office of the Deputy Presiding Officer David Melding AM submitted a formal Written Question to the Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty, Jeff Cuthbert AM, inquiring as to what measures are being taken to support those Gypsies and Travellers that choose to live in caravans instead of homes. According to the Minister, the Welsh Government has "invested over £4m during the past [three] years" dedicated to "refurbishment projects" because sites are not currently at a "habitable standard" (Cuthbert AM, Written Question 17.03.14). Additionally, one new site has been built in the past seven years. While action is being taken, it is on too small a scale to have a great impact, and no one site can be expected to alleviate the 18% of caravans that are not in an authorized setting. As of September 2014, there is still no clear number of how many new sites are needed, simply a recognition that there is a "shortfall" in the current number of sites (Griffiths AM). To this date, the government still has not collected enough evidence to know what the proper solution is.

Instead of taking on the project directly, the Welsh Government has assigned local councils the task of determining where sites need to be built or renovated. As it notes, "too few of [the local councils] are doing so" (*Travelling to a Better Future* 22). Local councils are legally obligated to "build a new Gypsy and Traveller site if there is a clear need in their area" (*Travelling to a Better Future* 23), but this is not happening. The newly appointed Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty announced during the 24 September 2014



session that, “each local authority is required to undertake a new Gypsy and Traveller accommodation assessment, and that has to be done by February 2016” (Griffiths AM). With the tightening of budgets and the threat of local council mergers as proposed in the Williams Commission 2014, Gypsy and Traveller accommodation is not at the forefront of many local politicians minds. The other problem, a reoccurring theme, is that councils simply do not understand the living situations of the Gypsy and Traveller people, and are very slow in enacting change, if any. More outreach to the local councils will be necessary if any change in their behavior is to be seen.

In addition to highlighting problems, the Framework and Action Plan successfully analyses reasons for why available and sustainable caravan sites will improve circumstances for not only the Gypsies and Travellers themselves, but the rest of the community. If the government provides the initial investment, it costs less overall to maintain a “well-run, well-managed site” than to spend resources “deal[ing]” with unauthorized sites (*Travelling to a Better Future* 31). As a result, other local taxpayers will not have to support the control of unauthorized camps, which has a positive overall effect on the economy, not the least of which an increase in housing prices. As for the Gypsies and Travellers themselves, contending with unstable housing situations is a huge time and energy commitment. When they are able to situate their housing, then they can begin to focus other key areas that may have become secondary problems, such as education and health care. This is one example of how addressing the needs of a minority groups proves beneficial to all.

## **Education**

The second area of policy the Welsh Government must address is Gypsy and Traveller education. The current relationship between Gypsy and Traveller communities and the local schools functions neither properly nor efficiently. With the Gypsy and Traveller children often being on the move and girls pressured by their elders to stay home and attend to family matters at an early age, these students are not receiving what the government would consider a proper education. The largest problems to address are keeping children in school with steady attendance and working with the schools themselves to be more accepting of the demands of a travelling lifestyle. The Welsh Government shows promise by proposing alternative forms of education and an interest in engaging young children in the political sphere, yet lacks the overall vision to include everyone else in the education process.

The Framework and Action Plan states that only 50% of Gypsy and Traveller children attend secondary school (*Travelling to a Better Future* 33).<sup>19</sup> By no standards is this an acceptable figure. The Welsh Government believes this is largely due to parental mistrust in the Welsh schooling system—the parents themselves might have had “bad experiences” during their time in secondary school and do not approve of the “sex education, drugs and the bad behavior of other teenagers” (*Travelling to a Better Future* 32). In order to change negative misconceptions, schools and local councils need to reach out to the parents; however, government reports have found that any contact has been made in the “wrong way” (*Travelling to a Better Future* 32). Another quite obvious consideration is that Gypsy and Traveller children travel, which means they could be in an

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<sup>19</sup> Secondary school is the equivalent of American middle school and high school; education between the ages of 11-16.

entirely different school district between Monday and Wednesday, with no registration at the new local school. Welsh schools are not set up to deal with situations like this.

The Welsh Government recognizes these issues and has set in motion innovative solutions to conform to the needs of Gypsy and Traveller students—it is more important to receive a well-rounded education than to be unsuccessfully forced into a traditional school setting. The Traveller Education Services (TES) has set up an experimental school bus in Swansea, which has been transformed into a portable classroom. With the school coming to them and having Gypsy and Traveller children taught together in a monitored environment, parents are happy for their children to be attending school. The project has been met with such success that the Swansea TES has had to invest in a larger van. The Welsh Government, along with third party groups, is also reaching out to Gypsy and Traveller students, encouraging them to “join in” (*Travelling to a Better Future* 48). Together with 65 responses from Gypsy and Traveller students across the ages of 5-22 and a Questionnaire Research Group of five young people, the Welsh Assembly Government composed the Strategy Draft Report, *Travellers and Gypsies: Generations for the Future*, to outline problems and solutions as defined by the children themselves. Concerns ranged from “teachers not listening,” “bullying and us getting blames (sic),” and “some of us will hit [other students]” (*Generations for the Future* 24), as well as fear of racism and not being understood (*Generations for the Future* 28). By reaching out and listening, the Welsh Government has taken a positive step in understanding the true issues and building a relationship with the children, which has the potential to grow into a more trusting partnership. The Welsh Government is supported by registered charities, such as Save the Children, which has developed a website devoted to educating children on Gypsy and

Traveller history and providing an interactive forum and games where children may express themselves.<sup>20</sup> Showing the children that there is support for them is vital to increasing trust in the system.

In addition to tackling parental fears, the Welsh Government must also insist on a decrease in prejudice from the schools themselves. Schools have shown to be reluctant to accept Gypsy and Traveller children, as they may “bring down the school’s attendance figures and exam results” (*Travelling to a Better Future* 38), which discourages families from seeking out education for their children. The government enacted a new set of attendance rules in 2010, which allows students to be registered at multiple schools and that “as long as the school is trying to get the children to attend more often” the accreditation of the school will not be affected (*Travelling to a Better Future* 38). While this might be appealing to the schools and reduce prejudice in the short term, it also has underlying implications that the Gypsy and Traveller children for whom these exceptions are made do not count or are not as equal, which is not a policy rhetoric the Welsh Government should adopt.

Although the Welsh Government is making positive strides in education for Gypsy and Traveller children, it misses a very large audience: everyone else. In no section of the Framework and Action Plan does it mention Gypsy and Traveller adults or other Welsh children. It is wise to encourage teachers to teach Gypsy and Traveller children about their heritage (*Travelling to a Better Future* 40), but would it not also be wise to teach all other students about their classmates? The Framework and Action Plan notes that a significant factor influencing attendance rates is bullying. Education can be used as an

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<sup>20</sup> [www.travellingahead.org.uk](http://www.travellingahead.org.uk)

incredible soft power, and including other Welsh children in the conversation and encouraging them to have an open mind about other cultures could lead to a significant decrease in prejudice in the future. Along with this, educating older Gypsies and Travellers must also be addressed. As previously mentioned, one of the reasons a family will not fill out a census form is because they cannot read it. It is an oversight of the Welsh Government to not include a section on adult education. There is more work to be done before the Welsh Government can develop a full policy framework on education.

## **Health**

The Welsh National Health Service (NHS) is the most heated political discussion in Wales today. It is commonly compared to a football<sup>21</sup> in a match between Welsh Labour and Welsh opposition parties or Welsh Labour and the UK government. Ambulances consistently fail to meet target response times, nurses are under-staffed and overworked, patients in England are “seven times more likely to gain access to cancer drugs than patients in Wales” (Ramsay AM), and the Welsh government still refuses to run a Keogh style inquiry.<sup>22</sup> The Welsh Health Survey released statistics on September 30 2014, reporting that 58% of Welsh adults are overweight and an increase to 22% of whom are obese (Dixon and Roberts, web). Despite these and other “appalling” statistics that represent Welsh health as a whole (Williams AM, welshlibdems, web), the statistics on health in the Gypsy and Traveller communities are even worse. The average life span of Gypsies and Travellers is 55, as opposed to 80 for other Welsh groups. Women are 17 times more likely to lose a baby during pregnancy. Babies are 12 times more likely to die before reaching their first birthday (*Travelling to a Better Future* 54).

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<sup>21</sup> soccer ball

<sup>22</sup> An NHS report by Sir Bruce Keogh on hospital mortality rates in England

In the Framework and Action Plan, the Welsh Government has taken steps to recognize barriers to Gypsies and Travellers receiving treatment. The report provides a long list of reasons Gypsies and Travellers do not utilize the health services: illiteracy, not keeping appointments, not having access to transport, not taking prescribed medications, having medical records spread across the country, and not understanding the resources that are available to them (*Travelling to a Better Future* 59). It is important to note, however, that there is no evidence of Gypsies and Travellers “resisting accessing mainstream health services” (*Review of Service Provisions* 56). This means that there is work the government can do and that positive outreach will lead to positive results.

As previously discussed, solving accommodation issues will increase good health. Poor sites with run-down services often have “rats and beetles” or the notorious “damp” (*Travelling to a Better Future* 57).<sup>23</sup> Eviction from unauthorized sites creates uncertainty and necessitates families moving, which leads to involuntary exposure to new environments whereby illness follows (*Travelling to a Better Future* 57). One solution the Welsh Government has implemented is a health bus, similar to the mobile health classroom. This bus travelled to a site outside of Wrexham and treated and consulted members of the community. Health care workers were not only able to attend to immediate concerns, but also collect information about long-term problems, such as heart disease (*Travelling to a Better Future* 56). The health bus also solves concerns of trust: these doctors are able to build relationships with members of the Gypsy and Traveller communities, who are then more likely to come forward with medical concerns. At the 18 March 2014 meeting of the Gypsy and Traveller Cross Party Group (CPG), Bev Stephens,

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<sup>23</sup> Humidity and mold found in walls

Head of the Pembrokeshire Gypsy and Traveller Education Project, presented positive results of sending certain doctors to caravan sites. These doctors were trained specifically to handle Gypsy and Traveller concerns, and the more they visit, the more they learn.<sup>24</sup>

Despite these advances in building bridges between Gypsy and Traveller communities and health services, the Welsh Government admits in the Framework and Action Plan that “we do not know much about the health and lifestyle of Gypsy and Traveller people in Wales” (*Travelling to a Better Future* 61), and that more research and communication is necessary before problems can be solved. While the Welsh Government has caught on to the problem that health services are not being utilized, there is no information on what services are used, how and how often services are used, and whether the services used have had a positive effect. Policy cannot be properly written if the background research has not been done. Senior members of the Gypsy and Traveller CPG, such as Julie Morgan AM, must put more pressure on the Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty in order to see this change. Without the research for the policies, Gypsies and Travellers will continue to suffer.

## **Conclusion**

From the facts and figures, it is clear to see that Gypsy and Traveller lifestyle is not up to standards in comparison to the rest of Wales and there is much work for the Welsh Government to do, particularly in areas of accommodation, education, and health. What is important to note is that the government has taken a first step: it is examining Gypsy and Traveller situations and is looking to create a policy that will assist these people with

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<sup>24</sup> Source: notes taken by the author acting as a representative for David Melding AM at this meeting.

building and sustaining communities in Wales. Very few governments in Europe have gone even this far, and the Welsh Government should be commended for their positive attitudes towards minority groups and their willingness to work towards a better future. That said, this is a tedious and oftentimes bureaucratic process—committees must be formed, investigations and reports must be presented and published—all while the Gypsy and Traveller populations continue to face poor housing, education, and health. The Welsh Government must be able to look at a bigger picture and move more swiftly if they hope to begin to see significant change in the realities of Gypsy and Traveller life.

What can the Welsh Government do? Although it has begun to tackle the problem, it sometimes fails to address the larger picture. In terms of housing, it is working to build new caravan sites, but has only created one in the past ten years and no one knows exactly how many should be built. It is easy to say that more are necessary, but no proper action will ever be taken until these figures are known. The government has also pawned off a lot of the responsibility to the local councils to determine accommodation. At the same time, the government is cutting council budgets and backing calls to merge and reduce the number of councils. If councils are focused on their own internal structure, they cannot devote as many resources to community projects. Therefore, if the government is requiring this of them, it must also find a way to make up for time and resources lost in the shuffle. As for education, while it is commendable for the government to promote and improve Gypsy and Traveller youth education, it leaves out everyone else, particularly the Gypsy and Traveller adults and the rest of the Welsh community. If census forms cannot be filled out because the adults cannot read them, there is a clear need for more adult education. If other Welsh institutions (such as the school system) and people harass and show racial prejudice



towards the Gypsies and Travellers, they too must be encouraged if not directly taught about minority issues and rights and the benefits of having a diverse society, instead of soaking up fear-mongering reports on how anyone of a different ethnicity is going to destroy the country. Welsh health needs improvement across the board. The government itself admits that it knows little about the full range of health concerns, for example only recently learning of widespread heart disease, and must dedicate resources towards researching and speaking directly with health care workers and the Gypsies and Travellers themselves to discover the full extent of health issues before it can begin to tackle each one.

Are the Welsh Assembly Government and the National Assembly for Wales doing all that they can do? Britain is facing further measures of austerity from Westminster. What more can be done? The Silk II Commission recommendations state that the number of Assembly Members should be increased from 60 to 80, a proposal which is backed by the First Minister and the Presiding Officer of the Assembly (*Welsh Assembly: Presiding Officer Rosemary Butler Urges 80 AMs*, web). If this should happen, it would relieve the pressure on backbench AMs and allow those who take interested in Gypsy and Traveller affairs more time to hear evidence and draft questions, statements, and policy for the government. If financial resources are of concern, the first problem to be addressed is fair funding for Wales, as (unequally) represented by the standing Barnett Formula, according to which, Wales loses out on approximately £300 million from the British government. Once fair funding is arranged, the Welsh Government can dedicate more towards helping its people. A huge part of the Welsh budget is dedicated towards health and health services, with even more going towards it in the next year, and yet this continues to be one of the worst of the devolved areas. Funneling, or more appropriately, hemorrhaging money is not the solution.

The Welsh Government must be more open to listening to opposition parties as well as doctors across the country, run enquiries to discover where the problems are, and then start fixing them instead of claiming everything is as good as it can be. Once it is able to start clearing up health problems, millions of pounds can be rededicated to other areas of need. There is a lot of work for the Welsh Government to do in order to create a better environment for its Gypsy and Traveller populations, but slowly it is on the right path towards improvement. This is clear proof that Wales does care about its people and is willing to play its part in European-wide initiatives to bring people together. If Wales continues on this trajectory, it could be used as a model of good behavior for Roma policy development. This is a big step in the movement to bring European people together and united under fairness and equality.

## **MEDIA**

### **Introduction**

It is difficult to define national media in Wales. Like every country, it has its own newspapers, television, and radio, but the ones for Wales by the Welsh are few and far between. Many Welsh citizens define themselves as either partially or fully British in compliment to their Welsh postcode and treat communications media such as the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), Independent television (ITV), and Sky as national outlets. Many of these large corporations include a specific Welsh section in addition to their UK-wide front-page news. As it is my goal to determine the position of national news sources in the Roma debate and the effect their stances have on the Welsh population, it would be imprudent to rule out UK-wide news outlets; however, I will concentrate on those

pertaining specifically to Wales when possible. Additionally, there are hundreds of newspapers, television stations, and radio stations across the UK, so in order to limit myself to a reasonable yet politically balanced sample of national media, I sampled articles from:

1. The Western Mail: Wales' only national newspaper, also publishes [www.walesonline.cymru](http://www.walesonline.cymru)
2. Sianel Pedwar Cymru: S4C, Wales' primary Welsh-language public-service television channel
3. The British Broadcasting Corporation: The BBC, UK-wide radio, television, and online news outlet aiming for complete objectivity, yet often accused as slightly liberal-leaning; owned by the British government; runs a regional BBC Wales
4. ITV: UK-wide television and online news outlet, slightly right leaning, runs a regional ITV Wales
5. The Guardian: UK-wide daily newspaper, liberal bias
6. The Telegraph: UK-wide daily newspaper, conservative bias

In an increasingly digital age, it is important to recognize that Welsh citizens are not isolated and can just as easily access and Google translate a news article from Romania or catch up on trending Facebook article collections, as open up a print newspaper. While all of these potentially thousands of sources may have an influence on perspectives and beliefs towards minority groups, I will limit my focus strictly to formal and reputable national

news sources. This will exclude any infamous and sensational tabloids or television stations.<sup>25</sup>

## **Welsh Wales Media**

National level media produced by Wales for a Welsh audience is fairly limited. There is only one national newspaper, *The Western Mail*, and one primary television station, S4C. *The Western Mail* is a daily newspaper circulated throughout Wales, although more often read in the South than the North, and publishes its articles online under the domain [www.walesonline.cymru](http://www.walesonline.cymru). It covers a range of topics—from sport to politics—and is generally a reliable source for what is happening across Wales. S4C, a Welsh-language television station based in Cardiff, is the first television station aimed at a Welsh-speaking audience and has diverse programming, from news to soap operas.

Gypsy and Traveller issues are not necessarily a widely debated topic on a daily basis, but *The Western Mail* reports on stories when they come up—approximately once a month. Social issues are addressed infrequently and generally in passing, combining Gypsies and Travellers with other minority groups that face discrimination. Instead, almost all of the attention Gypsies and Travellers receive in this newspaper is in regards to accommodation. There are, in general, three voices in the debate on Gypsy and Traveller sites: the Gypsies and Travellers themselves; the other residents of the area; and the Welsh Government, which acts as an objective balance between the two. *The Western Mail*

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<sup>25</sup> I mention television stations in order to specifically exclude MTV's Welsh reality show "The Valleys," one of the largest abominations to be introduced to the small screen; the same goes for Channel 4's "My Big Fat Gypsy Wedding."

provides a well-rounded view of the debate of if and where Gypsy and Traveller sites should be built, as it addresses all three views and tends to avoid overly dramatic rhetoric.

The majority of articles in *The Western Mail* about Gypsy and Traveller accommodation are stories on Welsh Government findings, with headlines such as “Cardiff’s search for Gypsy and Traveller Community Pitches Goes City Wide” or “Waterfront Land Near Senedd One of Five Sites Earmarked for Potential Gypsy and Traveller Camps.” These articles remain factual and give no opinion or commentary on how the search for housing is being handled. The former article reports on Cardiff council’s search to find new sites and devotes itself to statistics such as: “80% of respondents [to the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Study] have lived in Cardiff for the past five years or more,” “95% had not travelled in the past 12 months,” and “49% of all household members were aged 16 or under” (Law April 2013, web). It also reports that “an extra 108 pitches are needed up to 2026,” as found in the report (Law April 2013, web). The latter article follows in a similar vein with many facts and figures broken up by statements from government officials who express concern for not being able to “provide enough suitable sites” (Law 19 July 2013, web). When accessed online, these articles do not provide a section for reader commentary, as many online news sites often do, so it is up to the individual reader to draw conclusions from the facts—there is no online commenter<sup>26</sup> bias presented.

Building new Gypsy and Traveller sites has an effect on the rest of the Welsh populous, and the opinions of the constituents also play an important role in the debate, while reporters from *The Western Mail* themselves attempt to retain a neutral rhetoric,

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<sup>26</sup> Many articles allow readers to comment on the online publications which, once posted, are viewable to all other readers alongside the article.

they do not shy away from reporting the frank opinions of Welsh residents. When asked about the plans to withdraw a site proposal on Druidstone Road, Wales' most expensive street, an unnamed homeowner in the area said: "Obviously everyone is going to be pleased" and that such a plan would "devalue our homes" and "tarnish" the village (Hughes 2014, web). Another article, titled "Residents Have Reacted With Anger to a Proposed Permanent Gypsy Site Near Their Homes," reported nearly 400 people turned up to express their "anger and sense of betrayal" at the notion of the Vale of Glamorgan Council leaders' proposal to build a site on the edge of Sully, although many were keen to "stress they were not 'anti-gypsy'" (Collins 2013, web). These articles, while neutral themselves, appeal to the pathos of their audience, the Welsh people, with the use of such antagonistic quotes. In the end, these articles promote reactionary anti-Gypsy and Traveller thinking. Reading what their fellow neighbors think sways those on the fence. For example, if John Davies and Robert Jones down the street do not like the idea, why should I? Only seeing negative views on building more Gypsy and Traveller sites from the common citizen does not encourage any other reader to be more open-minded about the situation.

There is a sense of the other side, however, when *The Western Mail* reaches out to members of Gypsy and Traveller communities and quotes them in articles. In 2013, Cardiff council proposed to close the Rover Way site and all those who live there will be relocated to a new site nearby, the precise location of which is yet to be determined. One article cites Peter McCann, a resident of Rover Way for almost 40 years, who feels "bullied" by the decision (Law 25 July 2013, web). According to him, "[Rover Way] is our home...the council has given us nothing but grief" (Law 25 July 2013, web). The article neither disputes his claims nor provides any commentary. Other residents of Rover Way, such as Sally Price, are

concerned about the disruption forced relocation will cause to the families and how it will break up the relationships the community has built with local physicians. She puts it very directly: “All my family live here and we do not want to be separated.” (Law 25 July 2013, web). The only defense the article makes is ending on a quote by a representative of Cardiff council who believes the site is not sustainable in the long run. It would be interesting to see an article that puts opposing voices in dialogue and makes an attempt to find a resolution that reflects the government reports—this is something *The Western Mail* has not done. The act of singling out each group of people reinforces the us versus them mentality that we are currently seeing. While *The Western Mail* does not do anything to actively promote discrimination towards Gypsies and Travellers, it does little to discourage it either.

In 2012, the Welsh language television station S4C broadcast a short TV series, *Y Sipsiwn*.<sup>27</sup> Broadcast over a week, the series covers the histories, symbols, and stories of the Welsh Gypsies and Travellers. It includes interviews with Welsh Gypsies, as well as those that remember Gypsies and Travellers passing through their towns. Unfortunately, although this may be due in part to poor subtitling, the episodes do not seem to have a particular direction that they go in, making them very hard to understand. Each segment, approximately five minutes long, gives what seems may be an interesting history, ranging from stories about a family that played the harp or a Gypsy man that starred in a film thirty years ago; however, they are strung together in such disarray that it is nearly impossible to follow. It is a pity that the S4C could not arrange for better editing and subtitling so that the show could be more accessible. It is also worth noting that this show is only available to

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<sup>27</sup> The Gypsies

view in the basement of the National Library of Wales in Aberystwyth, a small coastal town. S4C does not even have copies any more. Although it portrays Gypsies and Travellers well and seems to be a form of outreach, it is clearly not highly valued.

*Eldra*, a BAFTA Cymru award-winning Welsh-language film produced by ValleyStream, directed by Iona Wyn Jones, and shown on S4C in 2001, makes up for all that *Y Sipsiwn* lacks. It follows the story of the young Eldra Roberts, a descendant of Abram Wood. By telling the story from a young girl's perspective, viewers are able to experience the beauties and the pains of growing up as a Gypsy. Eldra struggles to find her place between family and friends—especially other Welsh students from her school. She is aware that she is raised differently—not everyone at school has a fox for a pet—but does not fully see herself as different from the other local children. One schoolmate, Robat (sic), shows particular interest in her home and her family and she gladly shows him her lifestyle. Another, a larger boy, bullies the two, not understanding why someone like him could be interested in someone like her and makes a point to exclude her and tell her she is no good. Throughout the film, his voice becomes more haunting in her head and she begins to succumb to the discrimination and define herself more as an outsider than a member of the community, or “Gorja.” It is her friendship with Robat that helps her bridge the gap between the two cultures and remain in school. The film shows that mutual friendship can be found and Gypsies can be accepted into small Welsh communities if both sides are willing to meet each other in the middle with an open mind and an outgoing attitude. It would be an ideal film to show in schools to encourage Welsh children to think well of the Gypsies and Travellers that live around them. Discrimination is possible to overcome. These difficulties are not genetically entrenched and so, with proper education and



exposure to such stories, people will be able to move beyond their differences and find a commonality with their neighbors, just as is needed in the EU today.

## **UK Media**

It would be impossible to get a full view of media targeted towards Welsh audiences by only looking at media produced in Wales, because Wales is part of the United Kingdom and there are many UK-wide media outlets which are accessed by the Welsh just as often if not more than *The Western Mail* or S4C. Although these articles are not targeted towards the Welsh specifically, Welsh identity is closely wrapped up in Britishness,<sup>28</sup> so these UK-wide articles are equally as important. The UK has an extensive range of news outlets, spanning newspapers, radio, television, magazines, and online articles, and although a general attempt is made to remain as objective as possible, there is often a political bias associated with each source. The BBC and *The Guardian* are generally more liberal, whereas ITV and *The Telegraph* have a more conservative point of view. All report on Gypsies and Travellers and with predictable degrees of discrimination. A particularly good case to see this in is the before- and aftermath of the British borders opening to Romania and Bulgaria in January 2014.

The liberal leaning news sources—The BBC and *The Guardian*—are generally more open minded towards Gypsy and Traveller topics and report on a variety of issues. Accommodation, of course, is a large concern, but other social issues are addressed in much greater detail than in *The Western Mail*. The BBC is famed for trying to portray all sides of a debate (the debate here being are Gypsies and Travellers good for British society);

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<sup>28</sup> The majority of Welsh citizens identify as a combination of British and Welsh; few count themselves as fully one or the other

however, the degree to which its tone is antagonizing across its articles towards Gypsies and Travellers is surprisingly high. Articles that could be neutral often paint Gypsies and Travellers in a bad light. For example, one article is titled “One in 20 Inmates ‘From Gypsy, Roma and Traveller backgrounds, ’” which is further described as “strikingly high” (“One in 20 Inmates,” web). Flipped, headlines could read 19 out of 20 Gypsies and Travellers are not incarcerated, which would make them seem a rather decent group. If a reader were skimming the BBC website that day, he or she would likely catch “gypsy” and “inmate” and further associate the two, encouraging him or her to think negatively. A similar effect is created in “How Can Society Accommodate Travellers.” Online news articles often have large or bolded phrases sprinkled throughout to catch the reader’s attention. This article has only one: “hysteria and hatred” (Black 2011, web). Again, should one only glance at the article, these are the words that would be reinforced.

The Guardian, on the other hand, is more unapologetically left wing, and writes in a much more pragmatic style. It published an article the day after the BBC’s inmate story titled “Too Many Gypsies and Travellers End Up in Prison—This Must Be Addressed.” Instead of saying 1 in 20, which seems quite a few, it says 5%, which seems rather small in comparison. Instead of highlighting the growing problems that Gypsies and Travellers bring, it focuses on where the government and other national institutions have let them down. It also recognizes that the majority of Gypsies and Travellers are in fact law abiding and for those that do face incarceration, it is because of a “broken social contract” between them and Britain (Cottrell-Boyce 2014, web). The Guardian also offers hope in articles, for example “End of the Road for Gypsy Stereotypes,” written by a self-identifying Gypsy. This article gives voice to the Gypsy point of view. It allows readers to empathize with the

author. If there were more articles like this, humanizing the voice of a Gypsy instead of presenting cold facts about them or implying an us versus them relationship, more readers could connect with the “other” side, begin to understand it, and work in tandem to level out discrimination.

The conservative news outlets, primarily ITV and The Daily Telegraph, are by no means kind in their rhetoric: Gypsies and Travellers are either a nuisance or a statistic; very clearly a “them,” not like us. It is difficult, at first, to even find articles about Gypsies and Travellers in the ITV news archives, and they are often short and abrupt. One headline reads: “Travellers Set-Up Camp in Welsh Hospital Car Park”<sup>29</sup> which immediately begs the reaction along the lines of “how rude” from the reader. This, as ITV reports, caused “doctors and emergency staff [to] have been turned away from their own hospital” (“Travellers Set-Up Camp,” web). Now the reader is under the impression that not only are the Gypsies and Travellers inappropriate, they are hindering life-saving professionals from completing their job, from which one might jump to the conclusion that because the caravans are parked outside the hospital, innocent patients inside might not receive critical care and could even die. The article gives no context as to why the Gypsies and Travellers set up in the car park or what might have driven them there—this seems to be of no consequence. There is no representation of the Gypsy and Traveller side and the article seems designed to elicit negative feelings towards them.

The Telegraph, too, enjoys publishing articles about how Gypsies and Travellers are found underfoot. One such article claims that one “half-a-mile stretch” of a caravan site is jeopardizing a “new 870-mile walk around the whole of Wales” (“Travellers Block Coastal

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<sup>29</sup> Parking lot

Path,” web). Truly impressive that such a little site could have such a great disturbance. The article discusses a new segment of a coastal path along the Dee estuary in North Wales, which is planned to cut straight through the Rover Way caravan site and the residents are “furious” that this will bring tourists trampling through their community. Towards the end of the article, The Telegraph reveals that Cardiff council and members of the Cardiff Gypsy and Traveller Project are working to find a route around the site—it is unlikely that this will become a serious issue—but readers are not privy to this until after the article stirs a negative sentiment about Gypsies and Travellers. The online article also allows for a reader comment section, where it is clear to see that such an effect has worked. Member “huahinronnie” comments: “Well I bloody well mind. Send them back to the toilets they came from.” Member “clickonme” comments: “Over sensitive pikeys<sup>30</sup> leave me cold. Let them ‘travel’ out of Wales and over to the Irish Republic – and remain there.” The Telegraph is playing to its audience who already carry substantial prejudice against Gypsies and Travellers and encourages them to think in such a manner. The Telegraph continues in a similar manner with articles calling out Gypsies for committing crimes often accompanied by large pictures of people of a suspicious looking nature partaking in suspicious activities and subheads such as “the discrimination suffered by gypsies is no excuse for them to commit burglaries” (“Discrimination is No Excuse,” web). The Telegraph seems to miss the irony in that by the way it presents its articles, it too contributes to the discrimination and, by its own logic, may be encouraging Gypsies to commit crimes. As a whole, articles from conservative news outlets are one sided and encourage discrimination towards Gypsies and Travellers.

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<sup>30</sup> A derogatory term for Gypsies and Travellers

## **Conclusion**

Overall, the Welsh Wales media seems to reflect the tone of the Welsh government and is both accepting of Gypsies and Travellers and recognizes the faults that lie in Welsh society that prevent smooth relations. UK media, on the other hand is more divided. It is of little surprise that conservative media outlets are more critical towards Gypsy and Traveller presences in Wales, while more liberal news sources show sympathy to Gypsy and Traveller relations. To their credit, both sides remain factual and vary in tone instead of painting unrealistic pictures. The media caters to its intended audience—a conservative that needs validation for discrimination against Gypsies and Travellers in his area versus the liberal humanitarian who wishes to better the situation for all those around. While Welsh Wales media presents a liberal attitude across the board, its inaccessibility is a bit suspicious. It may promote good relations, but if such promotion is so few and far between, it is unlikely to make a great effect. Should Welsh media want to effectively play the role in easing the tensions of relationships towards Gypsies and Travellers that it seems to be putting forward, it must double its efforts and make more noise. Calling attention to the matter and continuing the conversation with readers is necessary in promoting Gypsy and Traveller concerns and is not a step that can be skipped on the path to improving their quality of life. If Wales hopes to be successful in this venture, it would be wise to utilize the media in order to get the support of the Welsh people. Be it positive or negative press, there must be more in order to see a real change.

## **Chapter Two: Germany**

# Sinti and Roma

## HISTORY

The first records of German Sinti (masculine singular: Sinto; feminine singular: Sintezza) mark their arrival in 1407 in Hildesheim. Welcoming the new people, Holy Roman Emperor Sigismund von Luxemburg issued a letter in 1423 providing the Sinti with safety from attacks. The Sinti were recognized by nobility for their musical talent and skill in gold and ironwork, musical instruments...and the production of weapons (Weiss, web).<sup>31</sup> This, however, made them enemies of local artisan guilds, and their jealousy caused Sigismund's protection to be abolished by 1498, which then, in a dramatic change, allowed for any who might encounter a "Zigeuner"<sup>32</sup> to henceforth kill with impunity (Weiss, web).<sup>33</sup> Following the common European trend in 1551, the Diet of Augsburg declared that all Sinti must leave the lands of the Holy Roman Empire within three months, and those that chose to stay were persecuted: being captured, sold, beaten, and executed.<sup>34</sup> This drove them to live in remote areas such as forests and the outskirts of towns (Weiss, web).

Between 1551 and 1751, over 120 laws for anti-Gypsy legislation had been passed (Tebbutt 2). One example of this includes Prince Adolph Fredrick of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, who lead the sanction wherein:

...when no criminal charged could be substantiated against Gypsies captured there, older males not capable of being put to work and women over 25 were to be flogged, branded and expelled in small groups by different routes, and executed if they came

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<sup>31</sup> "Gold- und Kunstschmiedarbeit, im Musikinstrumenten...und der Waffenherstellung"

<sup>32</sup> Common German derogatory term for Gypsy

<sup>33</sup> "fortan straflos töten"

<sup>34</sup> "gefangengenommen, vertrieben, erschlagen und hingerichtet."

back; younger females, and youths not fit for heavy work, were similarly to be ejected; while healthy males faced life confinement with forced labour. Children under 10, however, were to be taken away and handed over to good Christian people to be given a proper upbringing (Fraser 150).

By 1783, Holy Roman Emperor Joseph II amended the approach and instead attempted to break the Sinti of their identity and encourage them to assimilate—for, if they no longer had a unique identity, they might not be as much of a threat. This was carried out primarily through the church, which was meant to “convert the supposedly ‘heathen’ Gypsies” and “persuade them of the desirability of leading a sedentary life” through learning to read and write and take up “more socially acceptable” trades (Tebbutt 4). These efforts did not work, as the Sinti had no desire to give up their cultural identity.

It was not until approximately 1850 that the Roma, who had previously lived primarily in Eastern Europe (Romania and Hungary), arrived in Germany and settled in the Ruhr and Westphalia areas. This was the first of three main waves; the second came in 1970 when many arrived seeking employment, and the third in 1980, as they fled from persecution (Tebbutt xv). By the 1900s, Sinti and Roma were categorized together, showing Germany’s disregard for cultural differences.

In 1905, Alfred Dillmann of the Bavarian Police produced a *Zigeuner-Buch*<sup>35</sup> as a directive on Combating the Gypsy Plague.<sup>36</sup> This one enveloping and negative term homogenized the Sinti and Roma. Together, the newly classified “homogenous mass” faced the era of the Second World War, a period of large-scale systematic brutality which the Roma had not seen before. At this time, there were approximately 20,000 Sinti and Roma

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<sup>35</sup> Gypsy Register

<sup>36</sup> “Bekämpfung der Zigeunerplage”

in Germany (Margalit 40). Unlike the Jews, the Sinti and Roma were not seen as a threat to German civilization by the Nazis, but rather asocial mongrels,<sup>37</sup> who Dr. Robert Ritter, head of the Research Unit for Racial Hygiene and Population Biology,<sup>38</sup> deemed “a hopeless case.” According to his highly regarded theory (as he was considered to be the Gypsy expert of the Third Reich,) the decided best way forward would be to “prevent their reproduction” through sterilization (Margalit 36), a part of the wider Nazi eugenics experimentations. What must be noted is there was a divide in opinion of the Sinti and Roma often following political status. Leading historians, like Margalit, believe that higher up Nazi officials, including Hitler and Himmler, romanticized the Gypsy image—a young girl dancing to a violin. For this reason, they may have been less concerned with removing Sinti and Roma from the land and treated them almost as an afterthought, resulting in better conditions for the Sinti and Roma. Adolf Hitler himself was not particularly concerned with Sinti and Roma, never referring to them in public, although he did show disapproval when hearing that some had been conscripted to the Wehrmacht (Margalit 39-40). Lower ranking Nazis, on the other hand, were significantly more discriminatory towards the Sinti and Roma, often killing or imprisoning them without any orders. By 1940, the Sinti and Roma were again officially seen as three groups: 1) The pure race Sinti<sup>39</sup> who were allowed to continue normally with their lives, although there was some talk of running experiments on them.<sup>40</sup> 2) Roma outside of German borders, who were not systematically persecuted, but were to be treated like Jews and killed<sup>41</sup> when they crossed paths with the Einsatzgruppen. 3) The

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<sup>37</sup> “Asoziale Mischlinge”

<sup>38</sup> “Rassenhygienischen und Bevölkerungsbiologischen Forschungsstelle”

<sup>39</sup> “Reinrassigen Sinte-Zigeuner”

<sup>40</sup> This is likely due to the romanticized Gypsy image held by high-ranking officers.

<sup>41</sup> upwards of 33,000 killed (Margalit 54)



impure German Sinti and Roma who, as mandated in a circular produced by Heinrich Himmler in 1943, were to be collected and sent to a “special family camp at Auschwitz-Birkenau” (Margalit 49). This camp was seen as more lenient than Jewish camps, likely due to the opinion that the Sinti and Roma were less of a concern. The police who carried out the orders to imprison this third category, however, did not have any mind to differentiate between pure and impure, taking both to concentration camps. In 1944, the main Zigeuner camp at Auschwitz was closed: most were transported to other camps, the rest<sup>42</sup> sentenced to gas chambers. By the end of the war, it is estimated between 90,000-219,600 Sinti and Roma fell victim to the Third Reich (Margalit 54). Time and time again the experts have concluded that the top leaders of the Third Reich, while not pro Gypsy in any fashion, did not target them for immediate extermination. The fact that many were, at the very end, came down to local initiatives and lower officers’ labeling them as a racial danger or even that they just got caught up in the frenzy.

After the war, the fate of the Sinti and Roma began to look brighter, although this light was still very dim. Those that survived persecution were released, but had lost all livelihoods and became reliant on welfare or theft. Local and state politicians were still suspicious of Sinti and Roma lifestyles, but diplomatically included them in governmental reparations for those that had suffered under the Nazis<sup>43</sup> and allowed them limited protection, “enduring” their presence (Margalit 59). Such action was realized due to American pressure, especially as America has never had such a bias towards the Sinti and Roma. In Eastern Germany, on the other hand, they were seen as “passive” victims, which

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<sup>42</sup> 2,897 people total, primarily the sick, the elderly, and children (Margalit 54)

<sup>43</sup> although few actually received any after bureaucratic sanctions were put in place (Margalit 59)

the GDR used as justification to limit any compensation (Margalit 87.) On both sides of the wall, discrimination was masked by the bureaucratization of compensatory measures, and the Roma and Sinti received little, if anything. By in large, German perceptions did not change substantially during or after the war—they were still highly “antigypsy.” This can be shown by opinion polls beginning in the early 1960s and lasting through the 1990s that “unanimously reveal that Gypsies are the people the Germans most wish to reject” (Margalit 147).

Progress for Roma civil rights in Germany did not occur until 1981, when Göttingen hosted the Third<sup>44</sup> World Romani Congress (Tebutt 54). This brought both positive awareness to the movement and a cause for the Sinti and Roma to rally around. By the 1990s, the Sinti and Roma were uniting across families and speaking out for a recognized status in Germany. Despite their efforts, little has changed today. Germany, a land where racial prejudice is almost all but illegal, still allows for a popular, widespread discriminatory view of the Roma and Sinti.<sup>45</sup> These groups have been left out of the progress towards rebuilding a fair and thoughtful nation since the Second World War.

## GOVERNMENT

The structure of the German federal government is much more comprehensive to an American audience—it is an eagle, not a platypus.<sup>46</sup> In standard federalist structure—more specifically, a parliamentary democracy—government starts at a local level, then statewide

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<sup>44</sup> As in 3<sup>rd</sup>, not Third World

<sup>45</sup> such views will be exemplified in the German Media chapter

<sup>46</sup> Like the platypus, the Welsh political scene is an odd amalgam of devolution, the likes of which “ha[ve] not been seen before and may not be seen again” (*Wales Says Yes*, Wyn Jones and Scully 26); the eagle is the national animal of the German government.

across 16 Bundesländer,<sup>47</sup> and at the top, a bicameral legislation, executive branch, and judicial branch, with a chancellor as the head of state. Although the term devolution is not commonly brought up in relation to the German national and state governments, German states have more power over themselves than the Welsh do in Wales, which is its own nation. Therefore, it is important to remember that public policy can vary significantly from state to state, although the federal government is the most powerful. In contrast to the American federal government which, with the ease of only two major parties, employs a first-past-the-post electoral system, German politicians gain seats through proportional representation, and a German political party must receive a majority of the votes in order to come to full power—if not, they must choose another party to partner with them in a coalition. This has often recently been the case, and in 2009, the Christian Democratic Union (CDU)/Christian Social Union (CSU)<sup>48</sup> were able to pair with their first choice partner, the Free Democratic Party (FDP). In 2013, however, the CDU failed to receive the necessary majority vote and the FDP failed to receive 5% of the vote, which denied them any seats in the Bundestag, forcing the CSU into coalition, a “grand coalition,” with their main opposition, the Social Democratic Party (SPD). Balancing the differences between two very competitive and opposing parties is no small feat, and German politicians must tread lightly on more conflicting issues—such as the Sinti and Roma—in order to avoid rocking the boat. Therefore, it is not a surprise to discover that not much work is being doing on the issue of Sinti and Roma treatment and relations and that it is not a hot topic.

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<sup>47</sup> German states

<sup>48</sup> in Bavaria

Due to this fear of the current black-red coalition,<sup>49</sup> the driving forces in the conversation about Sinti and Roma are the EU and smaller opposition parties. Although these groups are not the federal government,<sup>50</sup> they are the movers and shakers that are beginning to push German legislators on the issue and their voices and arguments are shaping the way the conversation will be held. As said before, Germany has no official Sinti and Roma policy, yet German politics in the twenty-first century are opening up to developing one. Is it, however, actually capable of moving beyond its long-held prejudices? Because this thesis cannot analyze policy that does not exist, it relies on these outside forces and the questions they raise and evidence they present to examine what progress has been made in Germany as of yet and how these groups can shape the course German government will take in the years to come.

Three months after receiving the Framework Strategy from the EU, the German government responded with a report, which outlined how they plan to tackle the problem. The government promised their policy will “extend beyond raising political awareness” by promoting “democracy, freedom, diversity, and tolerance” and assist in access to education, employment, healthcare, and housing in consultation with the Central Council of German Sinti and Roma (Report from the Federal Republic of German to the European Commission 5).<sup>51</sup> The report starts out showing the German government’s support for the policy initiative. After the introduction, however, it becomes self-congratulatory (Germany has

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<sup>49</sup> CSU are the “blacks” and SPD are the “reds.”

<sup>50</sup> Granted, small opposition parties like the Greens are represented in government, but they are not a part of the grand coalition that runs the show.

<sup>51</sup> Zentralrat Deutscher Sinti und Roma e.V.

already accomplished so much)<sup>52</sup> or it is impossible (due to factors beyond the control of the Government, not enough data can be collected so nothing can be done).<sup>53</sup> All of this excuse making seems to be a justification for not actually having accomplished much. Through carefully crafted political smooth talking, the government looks to find a way to get out of drafting policy that would enact any real change to the status quo.

Because the EU is a supranational organization, it is able to hold the German government to account—a luxury not usually able to be mandated to national governments. In addition to political pressures, Germany is receiving financial encouragement and support to the sum of €51.5 billion from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Social Fund (ESF), and the Rural Development Fund (RDF) (European Commission, web). Such a significant sum should produce results. To kick off the second period of funding, the Commission assessed how far Germany (as well as all other member states) has come in developing their policy. The results were not good. Three of the five categories<sup>54</sup> received an “evidence gathering should be developed” (Report on the Implementation of the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies 26). This means that the government has not been gathering sufficient, if any, evidence. If there is no evidence, there is no way to know what actions need to be taken; if there is no knowledge of what needs to be done, there is no way to draft policy; if there is

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<sup>52</sup> It hasn't, but the career politicians would like you to think so.

<sup>53</sup> Such excuses often read like “socio-economic and population statistics data have not been collected on the basis of ethnic origin.” (Report from the Federal Republic of German to the European Commission 12). This excuse is repeated on at least half if not more of the pages in the 52 page document. The government should not claim plausible deniability for factors that are within their control—they write the laws; they could find out if they were determined.

<sup>54</sup> education, employment, health, housing, anti-discrimination (Report on the Implementation of the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies 26)

no way to draft policy, there is no way to publish policy; if no policy is published, there is no way to enact it; if no policy is enacted, nothing changes. Just shy of halfway through the time allotted by the Commission and Germany, one of the great and leading forces of the EU, has not even accomplished step one. This is a marked difference between the Welsh and German governments. The National Assembly is in the process of hearing evidence and is simultaneously working on steps one and two, while Germany lags far behind. The EU might be the most authoritative voice in Germany's development of Roma policy, but clearly it will take more than reports from the Commission every few years to actually get the political ball rolling.

Due to the tenuous relationship between the two parties of the grand coalition currently in power, neither party is keen to take a strong stance on Germany's more controversial issues—tactful diplomacy is key to maintaining a successful relationship and ability to run the country.<sup>55</sup> That said, it is not an excuse. What it does, however, is paves the way for smaller parties to lead the way in pushing agendas like what to do with the Sinti and Roma. In this case, the Green Party and Bündis 90 are the most proactive in holding the government to account.

One of the best means for parties in opposition to gauge the opinions and attitudes of the leading parties is by tabling formal writing questions. On March 3 2015, the Greens/Bündis 90 submitted its most comprehensive and thorough set of 42 not-so-small *Kleine Anfragen*<sup>56</sup> to the Bundestag in relation to Sinti and Roma matters. The questions touch on a variety of matters, for example: 3. "What conclusion and consequences do the federal government take from the criticism of the European Commission, which said that

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<sup>55</sup> America's congress might take note

<sup>56</sup> small requests

the national contact point is not performing its tasks in adequate form?”<sup>57</sup> and 39. “What actions are being carried out by the federal government in order to compensate for the lack of basic data on the Sinti and Roma?”<sup>58</sup> (Arbeit der Nationalen Kontaktstellen Sinti und Roma im Bundesministerium des Innern 3-7). The difficulty with such hot off the press questions is that they have yet to be answered by government officials. What we can take away from it though is that right now, perhaps even this minute, someone in the Bundestag is drafting a response and another office is waiting on an answer. The discussion will be had in the very near future and the government is going to have to set their position. Although it is possible to weasel out of one or two questions, when faced with 42 very direct and specific questions, there is no room for politically pivoting their way out of all of them, which means an answer is on the horizon. Once the government takes a stand and speaks out on the issue, all parties involved (political and otherwise) will know exactly what they are facing and can then determine what steps to take next to either support or oppose Sinti and Roma inclusion.<sup>59</sup>

In addition to supporting new policy measures, the Green Party supported their first Sinti candidate for the Bundestag, Romeo Franz. Franz stood for election in 2013 representing Rheinland-Pfalz ([romeo-franz.de](http://romeo-franz.de), web). In a disappointing blow to his supporters, he lost. His loss, however, has not stopped his interest in politics, and he is currently serving on the Council for the Affairs of Sinti and Roma in Baden-Württemberg

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<sup>57</sup> “Welche Schlussfolgerungen und Konsequenzen zieht die Bundesregierung aus der Kritik der Europäischen Kommission, dass die Nationale Kontaktstelle ihre Aufgaben nicht in ausreichender Form wahrnimmt?” This is in relation to the 2014 Commission report.

<sup>58</sup> “Welche Maßnahmen betreibt die Bundesregierung, um die fehlende Datengrundlage zu Sinti und Roma...zu kompensieren?”

<sup>59</sup> If an answer is published by the time of my defense, I will be sure to update the committee on the results and their implications.

(romeo-franz.de). Had he won, he would have been the first Sinto to be elected to the Bundestag. Although not as powerful a statement as the Greens having a Sinti man in the Bundestag, simply the fact that they supported him and got him as far as a national election shows the dedication of the Green Party to the inclusion of Sinti and Roma in German political spheres. In this way, Franz is a pioneer—he shows the Sinti and Roma that it is possible to engage with German politics and that others could help to pave the way to having an active voice in politics, and shows other Germans that he is to be taken seriously. If he continues in politics, Germany could be looking at its first Sinto member of the Bundestag—this power would bring a strong voice to the Sinti and Roma cause.

In summary, the European Commission has given the German government €51.5 billion<sup>60</sup> to create public policy to support the integration and inclusion of its Sinti and Roma populations by 2020. After a check halfway through the time period, the Commission discovered that Germany has collected barely any evidence and its only publications on the topic are lists of excuses as to why it has not been particularly successful. The Green Party, which does not face the same difficulties as the two largest parties acting in coalition, has, just last month, submitted a long list of written questions to the government on the matter—it has yet to receive a response. Through these measures, the government is being held to account by external and internal forces. The more the government is pressured by both forces, the less likely they will be able to silently sweep the matter under the policy rug and pretend it does not exist. There is, of course, a limit to the amount this can work. Until bodies like the EU and the Greens can inspire the German people to also make noise and hold the government to account, bureaucratic restraints will not be able to fully force

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<sup>60</sup> This is a shockingly high number; to compare, it is 3.4x more than the entire budget for the Welsh government.



the hand of the German government. There are no consequences listed in the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Studies. The EU could likely do no more than deny Germany further funding. Therefore, it is necessary to keep this conversation going and get the CDU and SPD voters to call on their representatives to act. If the matter is kept silent, nothing will be done; if it becomes a prominent issue, politicians will be forced to act and promise a clear commitment to bettering the lives of the Sinti and Roma in Germany. Having this discussion is necessary in the process of achieving Sinti and Roma integration and, in turn, defining European identity. If Germany can accept these people that have been systematically abused for centuries, then it will establish that progress in social justice can be made and Germany will continue its leadership role in Europe. Once Germany accepts and supports all of its people, when the Roma are “treated like any other EU citizen” and have “equal access to all fundamental rights as enshrined in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights” (EU Framework for National Roma Integration Studies 2), Germany will be another step forward in the process of European integration and developing the pan-European identity that is key to the development of a united Europe.

## **MEDIA**

In comparison to what Wales has to offer, German media is much more established and widespread, providing a wide variety of views to a highly diverse audience. Germans have a much greater selection of national news sources,<sup>61</sup> though some are more mainstream than others. With the intent to sample a broad base of commonly accepted

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<sup>61</sup> Than specifically Welsh national media, which is limited to S4C and The Western Mail/Walesonline.

views in order to capture overall national sentiment, I looked at materials from the following:<sup>62</sup>

1. *Der Spiegel*: a center-left leaning weekly journal, often reflecting the views of the Social Democrats
2. *Die Tageszeitung, "taz"*: a left-leaning daily newspaper, often reflecting the views of the Green Party
3. *Die Welt*: a conservative daily paper
4. *Bild*: a daily tabloid with strong right wing views
5. *Deutsche Welle*: Germany's center-left international broadcaster—the face of German media designed for the rest of the world
6. *Arbeitsgemeinschaft der öffentlich-rechtlichen Rundfunkanstalten der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, "ARD"*: the largest public broadcaster. The 8:00pm nightly news is commonly watched in households.
7. *Zweites Deutsches Fernsehen*: the second largest public-service television broadcaster. Slogan: *Mit dem Zweiten sieht man besser*<sup>63</sup>

A special note to the fourth source, the *Bild*: although this thesis is generally not to delve into the smut of tabloids, it would be extremely short-sighted to leave the *Bild* out. Once prescribed the motto of “we form your opinion so you do not have to” by a competing newspaper (“Sex, Smut and Shock,” web), it reaches a daily audience of 2.5

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<sup>62</sup> This very brief overview of sources provides a general background for those not familiar with German media.

<sup>63</sup> The second—in reference to ARD—makes you see better.

million (2013) and has a substantial influence on all Germans, including highly regarded national politicians.

Germany produces hundreds of newspapers and journals—primarily at a regional, but also national level—representing a wide spectrum of views. The national newspapers, both in print and, increasingly, online, tend to be the most commonly read and therefore have the ability to influence the greatest number of people across the country. As a rule, these papers take a center view on politics, with only marginal shift to the left or right. With the exception of *Bild*, more radical political papers are not as popular. Four of the largest publications—*Die Tageszeitung* (supported by the Green Party), *Der Spiegel* (Social Democrats), *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (center-right), and *Bild* (strongly right-wing)—encompass and represent the variety of German attitudes to the Sinti and Roma today. The sampled articles have been selected from the full text online archives of each newspaper from the past ten years to best represent the views they present.

*Die Tageszeitung (taz)*, if and when it reports on the Sinti and Roma, takes a realistic if not sympathetic view towards them. They are typically mentioned weekly or biweekly in the paper either as Roma, Sinti, or Sinti and Roma. This usually places them, however, as part of a laundry list of minorities in Germany, grouped together with Turks, Jews, or homosexuals. The intent is to use them as one of many examples for a political point, but with little regard to their individual identity or situation—this is treated as irrelevant. Every month or two, however, the *taz* will run an article that sheds light on current issues that German Sinti and Roma face.

One such example is an article published on 9 December 2014, titled “*Grün-Rot Schiebt Roma Ab.*”<sup>64</sup> On the Tuesday of that week, the hope for a better life in Germany ended for 83 people, including children,<sup>65</sup> which, according to authorities, is all about Sinti and Roma.<sup>66</sup> The paper reports it to be highly controversial amongst members of the Green Party, as the deportation took place in the middle of winter—this is, to them, inhumane. The Green Party took on negotiations with the interior minister of Baden-Württemberg to initiate a halt of deportation during winter<sup>67</sup> to accommodate humanitarian concerns. At the very end of the article, it is revealed that the majority of the Sinti and Roma are being deported due to lost passports or mental illness.<sup>68</sup> Here the article falls apart and loses what sympathy it might have been building up to. No true humanitarian would physically remove someone from their home and send them off because they are mentally ill. Has the Green Party earned the right to put itself on a humanitarian pedestal simply because it does not want the deportees to get cold in the process? If this is the case, there is no reason for the Green Party would be just as equally inhumane as the rest of the parties as soon as Europe reaches spring. As soon as the temperature is no longer an issue, neither will be the deportation of these people. The article does not go this far in its analysis, instead intending to set up the reader with good feelings about the Green Party in comparison to the CDU. When read critically, however, it fails to achieve its goal. The article is written for political means, not humanitarian ones, implying the Greens may be insincerely using the situation

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<sup>64</sup> Green-Red deports Roma

<sup>65</sup> “endete...für 83 Menschen, darunter auch Kinder, ihre Hoffnung auf ein besseres Leben in Deutschland“

<sup>66</sup> “handelt es sich vor allem um Sinti und Roma“

<sup>67</sup> “Winterabschiebestopp“

<sup>68</sup> “Pässe fehlen” or “psychisch krank“

of the Sinti and Roma for their own political gains instead of truly caring about the issues at hand.

Another article, “*Fast Alle Fühlen Sich Wohl*,” from earlier in December 2014, explores the discrepancies on the opinions of issues of minority treatment between native Germans and the Sinti and Roma themselves. Ethnic Germany, like 98% of those polled in Hamburg, gives a rosy picture<sup>69</sup> and believe integration is good to succeed<sup>70</sup> in comparison to a quarter of minorities polled who do not. The survey found that Sinti and Roma, above all other groups, are the most undesirable as neighbors or marriage partners.<sup>71</sup> An average of 50% of those polled answered somewhat or very/fully<sup>72</sup> when asked if they believed Sinti and Roma are prone to crime. But this is as far as the article goes. There is no analysis; the Sinti and Roma are simply a statistic. The article seems to want to go in the direction of giving voice to the Sinti and Roma, who feel discriminated against, but it does not. Would this be too politically daring? Even if it were well intentioned, all the article does is remind readers that 50% of their fellow citizens openly self-report discriminatory feelings toward the Sinti and Roma. Although the article itself is not blatantly discriminatory, it is certainly not supportive. As this and the previous article show, the *taz*, a fairly liberal newspaper, is not sympathetic to the Sinti and Roma image.

*Der Spiegel*, once famed for strong criticisms of the government, has slid much further into the center of the political spectrum from its earlier place in the left. As such, it seems much fonder of reporting on the situation of the Sinti and Roma in other European countries rather than looking inwards to Germany—pointing out the shortcomings of

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<sup>69</sup> “ergibt ein rosiges Bild”

<sup>70</sup> “gut zu gelingen”

<sup>71</sup> “Nachbarn oder Heiratspartner”

<sup>72</sup> “eher” or “voll und ganz”

France, Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Greece, just to name a few, is a safer move.

Articles published by *Der Spiegel* specifically on the Sinti and Roma in Germany are, like as with *taz*, few and far between. Those that are tend to shy away from addressing Germany's discriminatory views.

In September 2014, *Der Spiegel* published an article titled "*Antiziganismus Studie: Jeder Dritte Deutsche Will Keine Roma als Nachbarn.*"<sup>73</sup> It reported on the findings of a study done by the Anti-Discrimination Agency,<sup>74</sup> which resulted in four major findings:

1. One in three Germans would find Sinti and Roma very or quite unpleasant as neighbors.<sup>75</sup>
2. No other population receives as little sympathy as the Roma and Sinti.<sup>76</sup>
3. Half the population thinks that Sinti and Roma cause hostility through their own behavior.<sup>77</sup>
4. Half believe entry restrictions would be an effective way to reduce problems dealing with Sinti and Roma.<sup>78</sup>

The article then includes a quote from the head of the agency, Christine Lüders, saying this study is a warning signal and that we all need to act in order to better integrate the minority.<sup>79</sup> By publicizing these findings, the article achieves two things: it proves the high

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<sup>73</sup> Antiziganismus Studie: One in three Germans do not want Roma for neighbors

<sup>74</sup> Antidiskriminierungsstelle des Bundes

<sup>75</sup> "Jeder dritte Deutschen fände Sinti und Roma als Nachbarn 'sehr oder eher unangenehm'"

<sup>76</sup> "Keiner Bevölkerungsgruppe wird weniger Sympathie entgegenbracht als Roma und Sinti."

<sup>77</sup> "Die Hälfte der Bevölkerung denkt, dass Sinti und Roma durch ihr eigenes Verhalten Feindseligkeit hervorrufen."

<sup>78</sup> "Jeder Zweite hält Einreisebeschränkungen für probates Mittel, um Probleme im Umgang mit Sinti und Roma zu reduzieren."

<sup>79</sup> "Warnsignal... wir alle müssen handeln, um die Minderheit besser zu integrieren."

percentage of discriminatory attitudes through statistics and highlights the mindset that the Sinti and Roma are newcomers and outsiders. By printing the statistical discrimination, *Der Spiegel* shows it is not afraid to call Germany out on their attitudes. It takes the extra step that the *taz* would not by including Lüders' quote and showing that there will be a problem, if there is not one already. Including this quote subtly and indirectly condemns Germany for these views. What is curious is the popular opinion that entry restrictions will help reduce Sinti and Roma problems. Although the article does not go into the issue, its presence raises an important point. It would seem Germans have forgotten their history lessons—stricter border control might reduce the number of Roma entering Germany today, but the Sinti and Roma are not a new presence. It is quite possible to end up with a Sinti neighbor whose family has lived in Germany for centuries. Either Germans are blinded by their discrimination and miss obvious realities or there is some distinction between new and old Sinti and Roma that is not defined.

However progressive this article might have been, *Der Spiegel* followed it up a month later with one that backpedaled on the idea that Germans are actually discriminatory in an article under the heading "*Politische Wissenschaft*."<sup>80</sup> It accuses Lüders of being a woman who cannot immediately bring the colorful world of the rich and beautiful into connection.<sup>81</sup> In less poetic terms, this article accuses her survey of being a fear-mongering scam. Surely Germans could not be so discriminatory. What did she do wrong? The article claims her findings cannot be valid because the social sciences are no exact science<sup>82</sup> and therefore answers were the results of moods and settings<sup>83</sup> instead of

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<sup>80</sup> Political Science

<sup>81</sup> "mit der bunten Welt der Reichen und Schönen nicht auf Anhieb in Verbindung bringt"

<sup>82</sup> "keine exacte Wissenschaft"

cold hard fact. This is an argument that could be made for any opinion poll. Questions and numbers can be manipulated and humans can be affected by outside factors. As it would follow from their argument, however, every opinion poll ever should be discredited, which is absurd and unproductive. The article attempts to discredit Lüders, but more effectively discredits itself by taking such an offensive yet empty stance. Instead of adding constructively to the conversation, it appears that *Der Spiegel* published a poorly constructed article in order to defend itself from looking sympathetic to the Sinti and Roma cause. Although this journal likes to present itself as liberal and forward thinking, it shies away from full support of minority groups and is instead taking a one step forward, one step back approach to Sinti and Roma issues.

*Die Welt*, a daily newspaper, is considered a conservative source. Like *taz* and *Der Spiegel*, the Sinti and Roma are not a common topic, but they are written about when newsworthy stories arrive. Surprisingly, however, *Die Welt* is significantly more liberal than the liberal news outlets are.

Around the same time as *Der Spiegel*, *Die Welt* published an article, “*Erhebliche Verhalte Gegen Sinti und Roma*,”<sup>84</sup> on the result of the survey from the Antidiskriminierungsstelle des Bundes, listing the exact same statistics. Unlike *Der Spiegel*, *Die Welt* does not call into question the validity of the survey. Instead, it presents Director Lüders’ assessment of the results as fact: indifference, ignorance and rejection together form a fatal mixture.<sup>85</sup> The article interprets this to mean that there is therefore much to be

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<sup>83</sup> “Stimmungen und Einstellungen”

<sup>84</sup> serious reservations against Sinti and Roma

<sup>85</sup> “Gleichgültigkeit, Unwissenheit und Ablehnung bilden zusammen eine fatale Mischung”



done in politics and society.<sup>86</sup> This is a call to action. It recognizes that Germany is at fault in its views and treatment of Sinti and Roma and that something must be done. This is the view that a conservative newspaper presents to its audience. It is as if *Die Welt* and *Der Spiegel* have swapped sides on the political spectrum. And then the article becomes even more progressive—it includes a quote from an actual Romani person. Romani Rose, the Chairman of the Central Council of German Sinti and Roma,<sup>87</sup> remarks on the deep-seated prejudices that can be reactivated again and again.<sup>88</sup> Again, the article shows no fear in stating point blank that these prejudices do exist. It is said the first step to curing a problem is to admit the existence of one, and it is the conservative newspaper that makes this bold step.

The article “*Kinder der Sinti und Roma Gehören in die Schule*” asks the same questions as this thesis. It begins by skirting a fine line between diplomacy and stereotypes when it implies that Germany and Europe should be responsible for looking after children because their parents have historically done a poor job of it.<sup>89</sup> This is how it is able to put a conservative perspective on what would otherwise be a liberal view. Nonetheless, it places Germany in a European context and states that there is no sustained and thoughtful immigration and integration concept in Germany and for Europe.”<sup>90</sup> It then presents its readers with the fundamental questions: Why do people come to Germany? And how does

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<sup>86</sup> “es bestehe daher erheblicher Handlungsbedarf in Politik und Gesellschaft.”

<sup>87</sup> “Vorsitzende des Zentralrats Deutscher Sinti und Roma”

<sup>88</sup> “tief sitzende Vorurteile that immer wieder reaktiviert werden können.”

<sup>89</sup> For example, sending their children to beg on the street instead of going to school.

<sup>90</sup> “Es gibt kein nachhaltiges und durchdachtes Einwanderungs- und Integrationskonzept in Deutschland und für Europa.”

society deal with the people who come?<sup>91</sup> The article does not provide any answers. This means that it is up to the readers to form their own opinions and potential solutions to the problem at hand. The article engages with its audience and makes them think instead of forcing its own opinion on them. Regardless of one's political views, the article makes it clear that the current situation—and that yes, there is a situation—must be addressed. *Die Welt* is different than its more liberal counterparts in that it does not deny the fact that Sinti and Roma face discrimination and that this much be changed. Although it does not propose any characteristically liberal solutions, the act of asking questions in itself makes it the most liberal of the newspapers.

In stark contrast to the previous three newspapers and journals, there is the *Bild*. Filthy and smut-ridden as it is, its presence in Germany is so great that its influence cannot be overlooked. What is most surprising is that articles on the Sinti and Roma are, by this paper that seems to delight in racial condemnation and senseless fear mongering, very rare. One might think the Sinti and Roma are sitting ducks for discriminatory slander, but perhaps they are simply irrelevant and worthless to the paper's time. When articles are written, however, they are the exact nonsense and dreck one might expect.

When one opens a reputable newspaper, they might expect to see political analysis and factual reports on current events. This is not so in the *Bild*. Instead, its audience is treated to articles that address like this burning question of the day—“*Heißt Zigeunersauce Bald Nicht Mehr Zigeunersauce?*”<sup>92</sup> The article attempts to make satire out of political correctness. It establishes that Sinti and Roma populations take offense to the term

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<sup>91</sup> “Warum kommen die Menschen nach Deutschland?” and “Wie geht die Gesellschaft mit den Menschen um, die kommen?”

<sup>92</sup> Is “Gypsy sauce”—a type of mushroom-tomato sauce—soon to longer be called Gypsy sauce?

Zigeuner and that one Romani man, Regardo Rose, would like the manufacturer to change the name to an alternative “Pikante-Sauce” or “Paprika-Sauce”—as it turns out, the sauce is not even related to Sinti and Roma cuisine. As the *Bild* can only find one source for the complaint, which it labels as pointless and ridiculous,<sup>93</sup> it positions itself to attempt to make light of that which is already a non-issue, rendering itself the pointless and ridiculous one. This is no legitimate journalism—the *Bild* has indulged in a sensationalist story to push its own antizyganistic agenda.

This agenda is made even clearer in the article “*Roma-Nachbarin Zeigt die Schlimmsten Ecken.*”<sup>94</sup> Here, the readers get to learn the story of Sabine Kessler<sup>95</sup> who may in no way be racist<sup>96</sup> but cannot wait to live away from these people who have impinged upon her former quality of life.<sup>97</sup> The article is filled with pictures of trash and rotten food, as well as an image of poor Kessler who, as the caption reads, suffers due to her Roma neighbors.<sup>98</sup> It is an expository piece that further encourages whatever stereotypes its readers might have had about the Sinti and Roma. By no means does it bring a constructive argument to the table. Should one make it past the hypocritical condemnation of the Roma who lifted a skirt and showed a derriere<sup>99</sup> some of the points that indicate that Sinti and Roma populations lower housing prices are a legitimate concern, a similar point that is often brought up in British articles. If Germans find living near Sinti and Roma undesirable, it will drive down housing prices, which will have negative effects for both groups in the

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<sup>93</sup> “unsinnig” and “lächerliche”

<sup>94</sup> A Neighbour of the Roma Shows the Worst Corners

<sup>95</sup> ethnically German

<sup>96</sup> “sei auf keinen Fall rassistisch”

<sup>97</sup> “diesen Menschen... ihre frühere Lebensqualität”

<sup>98</sup> “leidet unter ihren Roma-Nachbarn “suffers due to her Roma neighbors

<sup>99</sup> “Röcke gehoben und einem Hinterteil gezeigt”; surely this would be pleasing to *Bild* readers as such graphic images are littered across its front page.

long run. It would be interesting if a more reputable newspaper were to run a more intellectually stimulating article on the subject. *Bild* prefers to discuss socially unproductive issues on the rare occasion it writes about Sinti and Roma. As tempting as it is to ignore these articles in academic debates, the popularity of them cannot be overlooked. Issues like racist tomato sauce and piles of garbage are the issues the average German is taught to associate with the Sinti and Roma through articles like these. These are the stories that sell the best, and until papers like the *Bild* change, which is unlikely to happen, it will remain this way.

Another way national news sources reach a large audience is through television. Germany's public stations are funded by a television license tax. While this does make it less appealing for the younger generation, who often chose online sources over owning a physical television to bypass the tax, their accessibility can be compensated for by the popular broadcasts being made available online by the station or other third party sources after they have aired and ready access to public televisions, from restaurants and bars to hotel rooms. The two largest of these stations are the *Arbeitsgemeinschaft der öffentlich-rechtlichen Rundfunkanstalten der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (ARD) and the *Zweites Deutsches Fernsehen* (ZDF). These stations provide a variety of programs addressing the Sinti and Roma, from short news clips, to documentaries and talk shows, all of which add an element the newspapers do not have: visual aids. The programs can use both words and pictures to their favor, which when combined together can have a strong impact on the way the audience sees the issues brought forth.

The ARD is German's largest public broadcaster, which it accomplishes through joint broadcasting on regional channels and its own free-to-air channels. Given its wide range

and large budget of €6.3 million (ARD Organisation, web), it has the flexibility to provide a wide variety of programs, ranging from movies and children's shows to news and documentaries. Because it is a public broadcasting service and collects the majority of its funding from its viewers, it is expected to have a more moderate bias and reflect the ideals of its viewers more accurately than a privately funded station, as the latter is in the control of its patron. The Sinti and Roma are no unfamiliar topic to the station, and it broadcasts different programs on them.

In December 2014, ARD ran a short (5:37 minute) news clip on what the Sinti and Roma are named—are they “Sinti” and “Roma”, or still “Zigeuner,” like they are called in Poland, Russia, and Hungary? The presenter established that this is a minority group that hardly anyone really knows.<sup>100</sup> The rest of the program is designed to help viewers understand them a little bit better. It gives a bit of background to the Sinti and Roma history, focusing on their journey to Europe and difficulties during WWII. It then interviews a Roma woman, Dotschy Reinhart, having her explain who she really is.<sup>101</sup> By broadcasting her first person account, the program delivers the ability for viewers to educate themselves on Sinti and Roma issues from the comfort of their own home. As she is interviewed, we can see that she is an attractive, well-dressed woman with a trustworthy face and a sympathetic story, in addition to speaking perfect German. This allows viewers to connect with her in a way that printed text does not and become emotionally involved in her story. This then encourages political correctness, as she says that the name Zigeuner for her carries only negative clichés while Sinti and Roma shows no evidence of racist

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<sup>100</sup>“kaum jemand kennt wirklich”

<sup>101</sup> “erklären wer sie wirklich ist”

implications.<sup>102</sup> The program encourages its audience to continue to look into the issue and treat the Sinti and Roma with the respect for which they ask. It takes a positive step in building relations.

On the other side of the debate, the ARD airs the talk show of Günther Jauch, who dedicated one of his episodes to crime, specifically that of the Sinti and Roma. Its title, “*Albtraum Einbruch*,”<sup>103</sup> sets the audience up for 45 minutes of fear. Although it hardly mentions the Sinti and Roma by name—they are referred to most commonly as travelling southeastern European gangs<sup>104</sup>—it is very clear these are the people the show is referring to, as if they are not even deserving of a name. The first third<sup>105</sup> of the program is dedicated to scary statistics about theft: there are 50,000 apartment burglars per year, €500 Million is stolen per year, the police are very lucky<sup>106</sup> if even 15.5% of the cases are solved—in Köln only 6.9% are. To further inspire fear, it shows an acted stimulation of how easy it is for criminals to break into a locked apartment in less than three seconds. It then delves into a story where a criminal nicknamed “Milo” reveals himself to the police and explains his belonging to a Roma gang, which has committed dozens of burglaries.<sup>107</sup> The screen shifts to a dramatic black and white with only the words *Bande von Roma* highlighted in red. The very clear, though indirect, implication is that it is the Roma that are committing these crimes and viewers should fear and blame the Roma. As the *Bildungsverein der Roma*

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<sup>102</sup> “negativ Klichees... kein Bewei”s

<sup>103</sup> The Bildungsverein der Roma zu Hamburg e.V. cheekily extended it to “Albtraum Einbruch – Antiziganismus, Kriminalisierung von Roma, Kein Minderheitenschutz” - Nightmare Slump – Antiziganism, Criminilization of Roma, No Protection of Minorities

<sup>104</sup> “reisenden südosteuropäischen Banden”

<sup>105</sup> c. 15 minutes

<sup>106</sup> “sehr glücklich”

<sup>107</sup>“einer Bande von Roma, die Dutzende Einbrüche beging”

rightly claims, this is a criminalization<sup>108</sup> of the Roma with public funds. Programs like this show the ARD's multi-faceted views on the Sinti and Roma—in some programs, it encourages good relations with them; in others, it sneakily implies that they are behind Germany's rise in burglaries. With indirect accusations such as these, it is clear to see that discriminatory attitudes are still at large. These must be dealt with before hoping to achieve progress in building bridges between the two groups.

Similar to the ARD, the ZDF is a large public broadcasting station, although it is a channel, not a network. It also collects revenue through public funds (the GEZ tax) so is held to the same standard as ARD in that it is accountable to the public, not a private owner. It also runs a range of programs that address the Sinti and Roma, showing a mix of feelings towards them.

ZDF has recently run a short news clip documentary on the Sinti and Roma much like the one from the ARD, titled "*Sinti und Roma in Duisburg Umgesiedelt*."<sup>109</sup> This segment, however, portrays the Sinti and Roma in a much more negative light. It opens with a panorama of a former Sinti and Roma neighborhood full of trash and graffiti which presenter Lothar Becker describes as looking like an abandoned ghetto.<sup>110</sup> He asks one of the German residents about the infamous survey<sup>111</sup> claiming that one in three Germans would not like to live near Sinti and Roma, to which she replies: I can definitely comprehend why.<sup>112</sup> Becker then describes the Sinti and Roma having moved out as the

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<sup>108</sup> "Kriminalisierung"

<sup>109</sup> Sinti and Roma resettled in Duisburg

<sup>110</sup> "verlassenes Ghetto"

<sup>111</sup> as discussed earlier

<sup>112</sup> "Kann ich sehr nachvollziehen."

problem having been resolved.<sup>113</sup> Again, we see a case of the Sinti and Roma not deserving a name and instead being referred to as “*das Problem*”—his phrasing is loaded with contempt. Becker moves on to interview Rolf, a German member of the community that knows a few Roma families. Although Rolf is a low-end shopkeeper, he speaks much more eloquently than the reporter and tells him the problem is not the Roma, it is that no one speaks with the Roma.<sup>114</sup> According to Rolf, once a dialogue is opened, then integration is possible.<sup>115</sup> In the final part of the segment, Becker half-heartedly goes to interview an actual Roma girl. In stark contrast to Dotschy Reinhart from ARD, she is young, no more than 20 years old, has at least three children, and lives in a dilapidated apartment, which the camera focuses on more than it does her. She cannot speak in German and when the dubbing kicks in, she is discussing the recent cockroach invasion in her apartment. This is not a face that will bring any faith to viewers that the Sinti and Roma are a minority group worth their time. It perpetuates stereotypes and seems to want to contradict Rolf’s message of beginning a positive dialogue by reinforcing the images of the Sinti and Roma being uneducated, trashy people.

In 2007, ZDF aired a documentary, “*Ausgegrenzt (sic) Zigeunerleben in Deutschland*,” which provides a well-rounded examination of the Roma<sup>116</sup> in Germany. In order to minimize bias, it interviews experts working in non-profits, strongly antiziganistic Germans off the street, well-educated Roma, and those with minimal schooling. Are they people that steal everything and should go back to their homeland or should they be taken

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<sup>113</sup> “das Problem ausgeräumt wurde”

<sup>114</sup> “keiner spricht mit dem Roma”

<sup>115</sup> “dann ist Integration möglich”

<sup>116</sup> in this case, only the Roma, not the Sinti



seriously and valued?<sup>117</sup> Either way, the main messages of the film are clear: not enough is known about the Roma to make a fair judgment of them and not enough will be known until Germany makes a better effort at outreach. This documentary is a start. If people watch it, it will put the issue (even if temporarily) at the front of their minds and hopefully inspire some reflection of how much they (do not) know about Roma in their communities. This is a good way for media to start fostering positive relations. It does not have strong political agenda or bias and it has segments that anyone watching can relate to. If everyone in Germany watched this and even a small fraction of viewers were inspired to act, relations with the Roma would see a clear, positive change.

Additionally, it is interesting to look at Germany's international broadcaster, Deutsche Welle, or the face Germany likes to put out to the world. The majority of German news is only printed in German and intended for a German audience, but Deutsche Welle is there to give good diplomatic impressions and details the way Germany would like to be seen. Unsurprisingly, it is the most sympathetic to the Sinti and Roma, but sometimes in an almost old world, romanticized way. Its web article "The lives of the Sinti and Roma in Germany" paints this romantic picture: the "children play...on the street" while the "women prepare food," "people here speak the language of their elders," and members of the community claim, "we want to be called Gypsies" instead of the politically correct Sinti and Roma. While this all sounds lovely and peaceful, a more critical reader will realize it is far from the truth. An international audience not familiar with the Sinti and Roma in Germany, however, is unlikely to be this critical reader, and will be left with the impression that things are quite nice for German Sinti and Roma. By painting such an unrealistic

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<sup>117</sup> "die Leute, [die] alles klauen... zurück ins Heimat... ernst genommen... geschätzt"

picture for a foreign audience, Germany covers up its shame in how the Sinti and Roma are actually treated.

German media is a mixed bag when it comes to writing and producing news about the German Sinti and Roma, but it more often than not uses discriminatory imagery and rhetoric to condemn these people and show that they do not have an equal standing in German society. It is caught up in a snowball effect—the greater the number of people that feel negatively towards the Sinti and Roma, the more the media will report it; the more the media reports it, the greater the influence it will have on its audience, perpetuating more and more hatred and stereotypes. The only way to end this cycle, or at least slow its growth, is to publish the unpopular opinions that do not sell as well calling for better communication between Germany and its minority populations, learning about these people that are unknown, and making a genuine effort to reach out to them. Germany has made so many strides in the last 50 years to become a land free of prejudice and hatred; there is no reason for the Sinti and Roma to continue to be excluded in this. Germany must, certainly through media, find a way to address all social issues concerning minority populations if it hopes to proceed in developing positive relations amongst its various groups.

## **CONCLUSION**

The European Union is not a static economic or political entity. Despite the many trials and setbacks it has faced in the last century, it continues to evolve and grow into a more powerful presence across Europe. It is an incredible democratic experiment and has

learned many lessons through trial and error. In the face of its current economic difficulties and precarious balances of power, the member states that comprise the EU must go back to its roots and remember why they joined such an arrangement and the importance of working together. If they fail to do so, they could risk a return to inter-continental fighting, which holds even higher stakes considering 21<sup>st</sup> century military technology. And it cannot just be politicians and economists that are reminded of this union—it must be the people, the 503 million people living in the borders of the EU (*Living in the EU*, Europa.eu, web), and they are the voices that this union represents.

In order to keep this complex system running, it is necessary for the EU and its member states to define who is European and include them all in the conversation. This thesis argues that the Roma are just as European any other EU citizen. Overlooking groups such as the Roma sets the EU up for failure from the start, as these are a people that make up the greater picture. Once individuals are able to accept these “outsiders” (who are actually about as European as you can get) into their countries, it shows that there is a fighting chance for them to also accept their national-level neighbors. The future success of the EU is dependent on member states reaching out across national borders and working with and supporting each other. But how are they to be held to such a request when they cannot even support the people they see as outsiders living amongst themselves?

The European Commission’s Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies is the driving force behind countries beginning to develop public policy supporting the Roma within their borders. The plan gives a broad overview of the goals—primarily to decrease discrimination and improve the lives of the Roma—and also tailors its report to each

country's needs, along with a substantial financial incentive. To what extent, then, are European countries working towards achieving this goal?

Wales is a small nation, both in size and population, and has only had legislative powers since 2011. Because many issues are still within the realm of Westminster, the Welsh government has more time and resources to devote to social issues. Its Labour-led government is dedicated to fairness and equality to all those living in Wales, including the Roma. The Labour party stands with no clear opposition, so it is not afraid to work on issues other governments might shy away from. The National Assembly for Wales is hearing evidence and supporting experimental projects like school and health buses to try to meet the Gypsies and Travellers on a middle ground. The Welsh media is also generally supportive, and the more the Welsh read good stories about Gypsies and Travellers, the more likely they will be to realize that the Roma are not always the unpleasant people they were previously made out to be. UK media, on the other hand, is generally more cynical towards the Gypsies and Travellers, frequently supporting their negative stereotypes. This is counterproductive, as they rarely add anything insightful to the discussion and are often downright insulting. Subjects of the articles and readers alike should be treated respectfully. So, although the work the Welsh Government and Welsh media is doing is generally good—and of course this means they *are* doing work—it is on a very small scale. The government is still trying to get on its feet and balance unfair funding and a very challenging healthcare system, so has little time to concern itself with its Gypsies and Travellers. The media may write an article every month, but these papers are often quickly lost in the archives. Until more is done—until the government devotes more time to research and programs and the media starts the conversation going on a daily basis—the

status quo will remain, relations will be left static, and Welsh heads will stay buried under the bureaucratic sand.

Germany, on the other hand, is no stranger to the European stage and is often a role model for good European behavior. That said, it seems to make a special exception when it comes to the Roma. Instead of collecting evidence and starting programs for the Roma like the WAG, the federal government sends out excuses as to why it is not acting. What these rather transparent excuses translate to is that because it is trying to balance a grand coalition of the two major opposition parties, it does not want to address such loaded issues. It is therefore up to smaller parties like the Greens and Bündis 90 to hold their government to account. It will be interesting to follow the German government's response throughout the year. Its media is comparable to UK media—with the exception that there was not a massive panic the week the borders opened in January 2014. Overall, the conservative sources are less in favor of supporting the Sinti and Roma and portray them poorly, while more liberal sources are sympathetic to their cause. In comparison to Wales, Germany is far less progressive in its treatment of its Sinti and Roma populations.

When put side by side, it is clear to see that Wales, despite size and small presence in the European context, is a leader in addressing the very European problem of how to include the Roma in society. Other countries should take note of their hard work regarding the Roma. Germany, in particular, must move beyond its internal political difference if it hopes to continue to be a leading force in Europe on social policy and attitudes towards minorities. Once governments prove their dedication to the project, they can begin to write the policy the EU requires of them to better the situation of their respective Roma populations. Once the Roma have access to better accommodation, health, and education,

they will begin to lose their stigma of being uncouth thieves. National media can pick up on this and assist every day readers to see that the Roma are not the despised people they think, but instead Europeans with a different culture. When Europeans can normalize and accept their Roma neighbors, the way is set for Europeans to embrace neighbors in their next-door countries. Despite their differences, they also share a common identity. Once this identity is established, the EU may move forward in building and maintaining lasting peace and prosperity across Europe.

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