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**Rethinking (In)Security in the European Union: Migration –
Identity –Security Nexus.
Case study: “L’Affaire des Roms” between political stake and social issue,
France 2007-2012**

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Key notes: *minority, migration, societal security, identity, Roma issue, social integration, insecurity, inter-ethnic relations, European integration process.*

Following the end of the Cold War, the state ceased to be the only security actor, given that the non-military issues began to gain ground on the international agenda. Security was no longer exclusively identified with military issues and the use of force. New problems, determined by the changes in the international arena, such as the inter-ethnic relations, migrations, economy, cultural identity, the environment, gained ground against the traditional security challenges. In this context, the migration-identity-security triumvirate imposed on the international agenda a modern approach to the political-security relationship, with direct consequences upon the European integration process (in which the EU plays the role of desecuritization actor).

In the context of globalization, the relationship migration-security takes on new dimensions with ample reverberations in the economic, political, social, demographic and societal fields.

The East-West migration and the ethnic minorities' movement became ampler and highly mediatized due to unfortunate events between the immigrant and the majority population within destination countries (for example: the Mailat case in Italy, the situation of the Roma in France 2010-2012, North Ireland 2009, the Hungarians in southern Slovakia, the Turks in Germany, etc.). Policymakers have used these incidents in their struggle for power and financial resources, turning the migration (legal and illegal), refugees and asylum seekers' issue into a meta-issue, a game of power with comprehensive economic, social and societal reverberations.

After the 2001 terrorist attacks in the U.S. and the aftermaths in Europe (Madrid, 2004 and London, 2005), the securitization of migration was achieved at an accelerated pace, being connected to certain recurrent themes on the international agenda: organized crime, illegal

activities, terrorism, threats to identity and economic development. Security specialists strive to create an artificial connection between different activity sectors and uncontrolled migrations to justify the need for state intervention.

Amid the economic crisis and political instability, this situation generated an efficient political instrument, “the fear of immigrants”. In political discourses, through amalgamation and contextualization, themes such as immigration, foreigners, asylum seekers, are identified as the cause of several internal socio-economic and security-related issues, in an attempt to cover the policymakers’ failure in identifying viable measures for the economic, social or political problems.

The purpose of this research aims to demonstrate the fact that, in the context of the new European security agenda following the 9/11 events, immigrants, in general and the Roma, in particular, found themselves trapped in a spiral of insecurity through which migration has been raised to the level of meta-problem and they have become scapegoats, in various degrees, of this transformation’s consequences. To prove this hypothesis, we resorted to two levels of analysis: a general one, in the European Union, in which our attention was retained by how the migration-identity-(in)security relationship appears on the extended EU security agenda, and a particular one, with focus on the Roma issue and the manner in which it appears on the spiral of insecurity, analyzing several case studies, with special attention to the case of France. In the case of France, our attention is drawn upon the manner in which the Roma issue is nationally used as a campaign theme, while locally, the public authorities, concurrently with the actions of eviction and expulsion, seek/experiment, away from the media, various solutions to achieve the social inclusion of the Roma, both in the host and especially in the origin state.

It is argued in this thesis that the migration file, in general and the Roma issue, in particular, in the context of the enlargement vs. EU integration debate reflects a broader political discussion on EU’s identity and social policy. The lack of a common social policy, the democratic deficit, the failure of past years’ reform process, emphasize the existence of an identity crisis in the EU. The socio-economic and security dimension of the “Roms dossier” is a case that may determine policymakers in Brussels to rethink the EU’s social responsibilities towards its citizens, thus giving up the ambiguous attitude regarding migration.

The new dynamic of the European integration process, following the signing of the Maastricht Treaty, has determined the euro-skeptics to express their apprehension regarding the enlargement of the EU towards Eastern Europe (2004-2007), perceived as a threat to the

“Western identity”¹. In this context, “culture becomes a security policy”², imposing the societal security issue on the extended security agenda. Security has always been the goal behind the integration process, which is why the European theorists’ propensity for a diversified security agenda, with focus on the issues affecting existence and development, is understandable.

The European integration process worked in this case as a security system, leading to a re-setting of the role of the state in terms of identity, security and cooperation. Within the ample debate of enlargement vs. European integration in the recent years, European identity and security are at the heart of the European integration process. Security has always been the purpose behind the European integration process, in the states’ attempt to secure the mistakes of the 20th century, while identity was the element that revolutionized the causality relationship migration-(in)security, conferring it flexibility and referential value, both at a sub- and at a supra-national level, determining the emergence of a trans-disciplinary research agenda.

A numerically significant minority but also European citizens, the estimated 10 to 12 million Roma scattered all over the European countries have definitively assessed themselves in the public and political agenda of Western Europe in the debate context regarding European enlargement vs. integration. The fall of communist regimes in Central Eastern Europe and the violent attacks on Roma during the transition period, led many Roma ethnics to seek asylum in Western European states. After 2004 and 2007 enlargements, their mobility was further enhanced, this time as EU citizens. Even so, high profile cases, like Italy (2008) or France (2010-2012) provide evidence of increased tensions within host communities and heightened levels of general intolerance towards migrant populations³.

Since the 2007 enlargement, however, the Roma are more clearly than ever a subject of EU policy. Although there is still concern about the Roma as immigrants, they are now

¹ Branka Panic, Branka Panic, „Societal security-Security and Identity”, *Western Balkans Security Observer*, No.13, April-June 2009, p. 33.

² Ole Waever, “Securitization and Desecuritization”, in Lipschutz, Ronnie D. (ed.), *On Security*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1995, p. 68.

³ Laura Cashman, E. Butler “Romani mobilities in the context of the new EU - what could or should the EU be doing?”, *Romani Mobilities in Europe: Multidisciplinary Perspectives*, International Conference, Refugee Studies Centre, University of Oxford, 14-14 January 2010, p.7.

primarily viewed as Europe's largest transnational minority (largest visible minority) faced with the problem of socio-economic exclusion – a problem that, according to the emerging consensus (of different origin and destination states), the EU should help to address.

The desire to solve the Roma issue has become the top or zero priority on the European agenda, given that following the Grenoble speech and the launch of the “fight against illegal immigration”, the discourses and debates on social exclusion, discrimination, violation of rights and liberties, together with images of excavators demolishing illegal camps, women with children in their arms kept making headlines around the world.

We choose to analyze the Roma issue in France do to its complexity, stakeholders, social and political stakes that surround it but also because the subject is apparently an exotic one, unique, in fact, extremely useful for understanding the process of social integration in a multicultural society. Migration is a phenomenon that cannot be fully controlled and the “zero migration”⁴, at least among the Roma population, is neither a feasible, not a desirable project.

From a historical point of view, the control over the immigration phenomenon is practically impossible in a European Union based on free movement of persons, goods, products and services, European identity, economic single market liberalization, which requires friendly borders.

The fact that *l'affaire des roms* is so easily associated to France's security agenda through the discursive practice, given that it is a primarily a socio-economic issue, shows the vulnerability of this ethnic group. Amid the election battle, in a time of economic crisis with extensive social and identity reverberations, through the contextualization of the events at Grenoble and Saint-Aignan (2010), President N. Sarkozy brings again into discussion the *immigration dossier* on the French security agenda, an important aspect being the visibility of illegal Roma camps.

The problem of Romanian Roma in France is in the attention of the two states since the 90's, however, the large number of voluntary repatriations and excessive coverage of expulsions in the last five years have turned this issue into a European scandal under the Presidency of N. Sarkozy, who, through politico-electoral instrumentalization raised it to a “national program level” (of identity securitization).

⁴*Ibidem*, p.5.

After France managed to resolve the situation of the slums (created by the immigrants who came after the Second World War), it did not expect to end up dealing with the illegal Roma camps (after actively supporting Romania's EU accession).

The failure of multiculturalism management in the welfare states, amid economic recession, must force analysts to rethink the European integration issue on new socio-economic-identity grounds, in the context of an ongoing process of enlargement to South-Eastern countries (see the case of Croatia).

The paper is structured in seven chapters, including a chapter for conclusions and references. The chapters are divided into two parts according to the paper's objectives and the method of analysis.

Part I comprises the first three chapters and analyses the new extended EU security agenda, with focus on the interdependence relationship migration-identity-(in)security. In the context of the changes which accompany the end of the Cold War such as the collapse of communism and the onset of new regional conflicts (see the Western Balkans), the purpose of the first chapter is to emphasize the (r)evolution of security as it appears after moving the analysis centre from the traditional (politico-military) security to the modern, individual-oriented security, where the concept of *identity*, in the broad sense of the word plays an essential role. Our attention is drawn upon the new perception of "security" as it appears in the interpretation of the Copenhagen and Paris Schools, with a special focus on the French geopolitical school.

The chapter is divided into two parts: the first highlights the historical evolution of security studies, and the second focuses on the new analytical framework of "security", a brief overview of the French geopolitical analysis and the societal security sector, respectively the tackling of securitization as an act of speech by the theorists of the Copenhagen School and the criticism of its main objectors: the second generation of securitization theorists and the Paris School. This first chapter is intended to formulate an opinion on the new analytical framework of security, certain research concepts and instruments with which we will work throughout our analysis.

In the first phase, we conducted a brief review of the first four periods in the history of security studies and then our attention was drawn upon the new perception on "security" as it appears in the interpretation of the Copenhagen and Paris Schools, with focus on the security practices. The formulation of an exhaustive answer to the simple question *What is Security?*

proved to be practically impossible given that theorists report to it differently, both in terms of an objective (real) and of a subjective dimension (social construct) depending on the purpose of research. For the present paper its subjective nature is important, in the context of the migration-identity-security nexus.

The second chapter analyzes the migration-identity-security interdependence relationship with focus on its effects upon the European integration process. This nexus will be reviewed under a triple aspect of its effects on: security, welfare state and identity construction within the EU. This analysis aims at demonstrating that the migration security goes beyond Weaver's discursive practices, being an integral part of a complex construct, called by Claudia Arădău "security continuum". In this analysis, migration must be understood and regarded as a spill-over effect, bringing together previous analysis sectors that were studied separately. In the current context, marked by an economic crisis, migration has been elevated to the level of meta-issue⁵, the boundaries between threats to internal and external politics becoming more ambiguous.

EU's integration capacity was put to the test regarding the last two waves of accession, with states that presented a considerable number of Roma population living in precarious conditions (we refer to the enlargements of 2004 and 2007, our analysis does not tackle the case of Croatia, which joined recently as the effects of this accession will only be seen in about 5 years). These two enlargements were different from the previous ones, both in terms of the large number of solicitants, historic past, population size or conflicts between the minority and majority population. *In this context the question is what type of stability and security is suitable for such a Union? How important is the political identity project against economic liberalization, given that, after the Maastricht Treaty, the primarily economic European Community entered the path of a political union?* Interesting to see is the way in which the European integration process works as a security system, determining a relocation of the state's role in terms of identity (to be understood as nationality) and (societal) security within the same system. Security has always been the purpose behind the European integration process, in an attempt of the states to avoid repeating the 20th century atrocities.

⁵Dider Bigo, „Migration and Security” in Virginie Guiraudon, Christian Joppke, eds., *Controlling a New Migration World*, London: Routledge, 2001, pp. 121-122.

The chapter is divided into three parts, each addressing a component of the insecurity spiral created by the migration-identity-security triumvirate. First of all, we will analyze the migration-security relationship within the extended security agenda, and further, our attention will be retained by the identity-security relationship in which security is the purpose behind the European integration process. The migration-identity-security relationship is to be analyzed from a double perspective: identity and migration both as cause and effect of insecurity.

The second generation of securitization theorists and representatives of the Paris School emphasized the role of images and the media in the securitization process, which is why, in the last part of this chapter, our attention will be retained by the role of the media in the society, within the securitization/desecuritization process.

This chapter aims to provide a better understanding of the manner in which the migration-identity-security-triumvirate imposed on the European agenda a modern approach of the politics-security relationship, of the way in which it influenced the European integration process (in which EU plays the role of desecuritization actor) and at the same time the detection of a way to address the consequences arising from this triumvirate.

The third chapter resumes and fathoms the identity-security relationship, having the “Rom identity political project” in the centre of the analysis. Our attention is retained by the elements comprising the Roma identity: history, culture and traditions, in our attempt to separate the myth and folklore from the historical reality. The analysis is not intended to be exhaustive, as it rather reviews key moments and controversial issues in the Roma history and culture which in time, caused real disputes between the Roma activists/leaders (the constructivist approach) and researchers (the deconstructionist approach).

Gradually, our attention is retained by the first certifications on the Roma presence in Europe, the importance and role of nomadism in the history of this group, the Rom vs. Gypsy debate or the role of the Roma organizations in the shaping and international assertion of the Rom identity project.

The second part of the thesis contains the following two chapters and is dedicated to the analysis of the situation of the Roma in several EU states, using the instruments and theories discussed in the chapters of the first part of the paper, with special focus on the situation of the Roma in France.

In the fourth chapter, we intend to illustrate and analyze the relation of interdependence between two components: *identity* and *security*, focusing on international

legislation, on the potential inter-ethnic conflict, the way in which different aspects of the legislative approach regarding human rights and protection of national and ethnic minorities influenced the relation between state (majority) and minority (Roma population, considered here as a non-popular minority) in several Central and South-Eastern EU countries. The research questions are related to the impact of the accession criteria on policies for Roma population. *How did the accession process influenced the legislation on minorities, in general, and the relation between state (majority) and the minority (we consider here the Roma population), in particular? Was there any important change in the process of social integration made by these countries due to the fact that they joined the EU? What was the impact of Roma migration (coming from the new EU countries) on the countries from the Western Europe? How did the western countries react?*

The first part of the research is focusing on the international legislation on minority. Simultaneously, our attention will be drawn on the examples given by several Central and South-Eastern European countries on the ground of minority's legislation. In this context, the Copenhagen criteria of national minority protection as a condition for candidate states from Central Eastern Europe, can represent an opportunity for redrawing the political approach towards the Roma issue in this region, implementing new policies before and mostly after they joined the European Union. One can imagine that the constrains (conditionality) imposed by EU to the candidate countries from Central and South-Eastern Europe, in our case in the field of minorities issue are the *sticks* and the financial stimuli (pre-accession funds, European Social Fund) the *carrots*.

With regard to the Western European states, our attention shall be drawn upon the manner in which they managed to cope with the waves of Roma immigrants from the new Member states. Measures taken vary from state to state, depending on the extent of the phenomenon, the relationship immigration-security, the effects on the majority population-immigrants relation and its media coverage.

The purpose of this analysis is to establish the overall action framework in the EU regarding the management of the Roma issue, whether we consider the origin or the host states.

The fifth chapter analyzes the Romanian Roma's situation in France, between 2007 and 2012. Our purpose is to complete a complex analysis of the situation in the context of the new European security agenda, transcending the strictly theoretical framework of the spiral of

insecurity, with focus on the poverty – migration – security relationship (through social integration). The question that arises here is *Should social integration be encouraged/supported within the host or the origin state?*

Our main objective is to achieve a coherent outline to facilitate the understanding of the characteristics individualizing the Roma's situation in various illegal camps in France, their relationships with the majority population, the profile NGOs, as well as their future prospects between repatriation/expulsion and social integration.

This chapter has three main sections and one for conclusions and testimonies of certain Roma living in France and of some NGOs representatives working to integrate them, while formulating a few future directions of intervention and research. The first section of this chapter is devoted to a brief history of the immigration phenomenon in France, following the Second World War with emphasis on evolution, impact upon the French society and policies applied to reduce and control it. In the second section, our attention will be drawn upon the situation of the Roma in the Hexagon, with focus on the last waves from Romania and Bulgaria, to broadly establish the lines for the general analysis framework, namely the societal security operated by the French authorities and the international reaction to these actions. These actions have reached apogee in the summer and autumn of 2010 (the triggering element being the speech of the president in function at the time, Nicolas Sarkozy, at Grenoble). For political and electoral reasons, amid an amalgamation of events and isolated events between the majority population and immigrants from different parts of the state, while also exploiting the French electorate's state of discontent with the constant increase in the number and visibility of immigrants, through a securitization discourse, the president turned the issue of the immigrants in the Hexagon into a meta-problem. In this part of the analysis, our interest is retained by the manner in which the Roma ethnics became an integral part of the societal securitization process and the program of exceptional measures (especially expulsions and evictions) implemented by the French policymakers.

The last part of the study is devoted to the situation of the Roma in the Rhone-Alpes Region, specifically the situation of the Romanian Roma in Lyon between 2007 and 2012, from evictions and voluntary repatriation to coherent measures of social integration, both locally and through transnational cooperation with the authorities of the origin state. (here our attention will be retained by a bilateral project initiated by the City Hall of Lyon together with

the Town Hall in Tinca, county of Bihor, Romania to boost the social reintegration of the Roma).

The conclusions chapter summarizes the main results obtained in the analysis and draws new lines for research, potential scenarios to solve the Roma issue, also taking into consideration the actors involved, the extent of the phenomenon and the severity of this ethnic group representatives' situation both in the states of origin and destination.

The references include primary official sources and reports of the European Commission, as well as secondary sources: books, specialized articles, periodicals, conference papers, journal articles and electronic sources. The breakdown of references on the various sources used aims at emphasizing their role in the execution of this paper.