



Election for Representatives of Associated Members in the Scientific Committee

Statements of the Candidates

(20 November 2012)

42 associated members were nominated for the Scientific Committee during the nomination process of the November 2012 election. 14 nominees responded positively to their nomination and submitted their statements of candidates. Voting for the two positions of representatives is open between 20 and 25 November 2012.

The final list of candidates is the following:

1. Mr David Berna Serna
2. Mr Juraj Buzalka
3. Mr Régis Guyon
4. Mr Elias Hemelsoet
5. Mr Daniele Viktor Leggio
6. Ms Anna Mirga
7. Mr Ciprian Necula
8. Mr Gergő Pulay
9. Mr Rumyan Russinov
10. Mr Orhan Kemryan Tahir
11. Ms Catalina Tesar
12. Mr Georgi Tsvetkov
13. Mr Ciprian Tudor
14. Ms Elisabetta Vivaldi



The candidate statements are listed below in alphabetical order of the surnames.

1. Mr David Berna Serna,

Researcher and lecturer at the Faculty of Political Sciences at Complutense University of Madrid

Currently I work as a Researcher and lecturer at the Faculty of Political Sciences at Complutense University of Madrid (UCM). I have participated in several research projects, like “European Hermes Project: Linking Network to Fight Sexual and Gender Stigma” or “Sex, Gender and Body on Spanish LGTBIQ Gypsies” at the UCM. At the same time I am finishing my PhD in Anthropology entitled “Power, Body and Sexuality in Spanish Gypsy people”.

Talking about my academic training, I have a Degree in Social and Cultural Anthropology, a Degree in Social Work and a M.A. Degree in Social Anthropology at Autonomous University of Madrid (UAM).

In the past, I have participated as main researcher in several scientific researches among which I emphasize: “Historical reconstruction of Gypsies in Alicante” (2005), “Romanian Roma in Alicante” (2006), “The ‘Parque Ansaldo’ Ghetto in Alicante Gypsies and Exclusion” (2002-2004) and another researches in Paraguay. These researches have resulted in several articles in national and international scientific journals, book chapters and in one book in progress.

As Awards and Grants highlight: “Research Award of Juan Gil-Albert Cultural Institute” (Alicante Government), “1st National Anthropology Prize of Paraguay Republic: ‘Branislava Susnik’” and Grant “MAE-Mutis” (Spanish International Cooperation Agency) in Asuncion Paraguay (2003).

Since 2001 I have worked in several public and private institutions with Spanish and Romanian gypsy people, among which I emphasize my work at La Fundación Secretariado Gitano, Médicos del Mundo and Alicante local Government. These works have always intersected with my research work, which has meant to me a very special knowledge about gypsy people, where the theory and real life have been under dialogue all the time.

In all these years, my research work, field-work research and theoretical reflection, have covered from poverty, social exclusion and racism among gypsies to body, gender and sexuality among LGTB Gypsies the last five years. At a theoretical level, my approach is characterized by influences of poststructuralism, postmodernism and queer theory. Influences that led me to look and think not “truths” in gypsy history but construction processes of discourses of truth about Gypsies and its impact among them.

My interest in body, gender and sexuality among Gypsies has allowed me to approach the topic of identity constructions and power, both inside and outside the Gypsies. The importance of this research line rests in the centrality that these processes have for Roma, as they occupy the central issues of the body and sexuality in everyday life. My special interest in studying gender, practices and interactions between gay, lesbian and trans Gypsies is directed to the internal social processes in the gypsies; we are talking about domination and resistance practices within the group and not only from gadjes.

Therefore, my contribution would be in the line of promoting research on body, identity, gender and sex especially in LGTB gypsy people, always linked to other issues such as poverty, ethnicity and identity.

This research line represents an opportunity to approach the processes and realities that do not exist in nowadays’ research.



The reality of LGTB gypsies is rarely easy and often filled with problems and violence as well as among non-gypsies, but the specific realities of gypsies as an ethnic minority gives the issue specificity really relevant.

The study of this question allow us approaching the processes of change and resistance of Gypsies, the influences and dialogues with the majority society. And hence to Gypsies as a social live group, heterogeneous and in dialogue with their surrounding reality.

2. Mr Juraj Buzalka

Lecturer in social anthropology at Institute of Social Anthropology, Faculty of Social and Economic Sciences, Comenius University, Bratislava

In the last census in 2011 I declared myself being Roma. I decided to do it in order to make the number of people declaring Roma nationality growing. The idea behind my decision was that only those who belong to the recognized and institutionalised group -- usually based on ethnic or national groupness -- can claim any right to culture in Eastern Europe. My pragmatic decision to become official Roma was obviously not in line with my deep conviction -- supported by the scientific evidence -- that none of us has consciously chosen his or her nationality or was born Slovak, Hungarian, Roma, and so on. I hold that our identification changes over time and the real questions of the day have been to discover what lies behind, beyond and bellow this first-hand ethnic identification. This is why I have been focusing on social transformations.

Currently I am working on the book project on the increasing success of various forms of illiberal protest in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). In 2009 – 2012 I lead the Slovak team of the EU 7th Framework Program for a project named Models and their Effects on Development Paths: an Ethnographic and comparative Approach to knowledge transmission and livelihood strategies (MEDEA), focusing on steel workers (www.medeasteelproject.org). Despite the fact that the position of workers has been constantly undermined since 1989 and that this has sharply contrasted with the period of socialism, only a low-level intensity of political action has been recorded since then. Instead of trade union movements we found increasing support for populist and nationalist parties as well an accord with radical 'solutions' for the social problems among workers. The Roma have been the principal target of everyday intolerance as well as populist discourses on the level of society and I directly link this process to economic changes. Building upon my earlier work on populism as well as lengthy periods of fieldwork in various regions of CEE (among steel workers, Catholic activists, right-wing extremists, border peddlers, Roma, young generation of managers and intellectuals) I would like to offer my competence in uncovering the effects of the social organization of economy on political mobilisations.

In addition to my scientific career, since 2010 I have been serving as an editor in chief of the leading intellectual journal in Slovakia OS – občianska spoločnosť (www.magazinos.sk). We have widely focused on the issues of human rights and warned about the ongoing success of nationalism. In addition to scientific monograph on Nation and Religion: the Politics of Commemoration in South-East Poland (Berlin: Lit: 2009), I have published a successful book of essays Slovenská ideológia a kríza (Slovak ideology and crisis, Bratislava: Kalligram 2012) as well as numerous articles in press and popular journals in my native Slovakia as well as in neighboring Poland, Czech Republic and Hungary.

Since 1997 I have been collaborating with the Research Center of the Slovak Foreign Policy Association on various applied projects dealing with tolerance and coexistence, co-organized conferences with civil society actors all around Slovakia and carried out fieldwork. In 2010 – 2012 I



have also worked closely with the Vice Prime Minister of the Government of Slovak Republic for Human Rights, National Minorities, and Gender Equality Rudolf Chmel and continue cooperation with him while he is the chairman of the Committee for Human Rights and National Minorities at the Slovak Parliament.

In 2009 I have discovered passion for film production after realizing that my academic career did not allow me to develop such an influential social critique that the talented film makers could develop. Because of my poor artistic skills I decided to become a film producer. In this way I aim to fit to the criteria of an engaged anthropologist. The first feature of the successful director Mira Fornay Foxes dealing with au pairs in Ireland was premiered in the International Critic's Week competition during the 2009 Venice Film Festival. We are currently completing Mira's second film My Dog Killer dealing with the controversial issue of racism.

Entering the senior level of my academic career at the Comenius University in Bratislava and considering my academic credentials as well as public activities up to date I consider myself to be fully capable to stand for the candidacy for the Scientific Committee of the European Academic Network on Romani Studies and successfully hold the position of the member of the Committee if elected.

3. Mr Régis Guyon

Head of the department Ville-Ecole-Integration (VEI) of the Centre National de Documentation Pédagogique (CNDP), France

Poitiers, November 18, 2012

I am glad to present my candidature as representative of the associated members for the Scientific Committee of the European Academic Network on Romani Studies.

After having studied history at Grenoble's University, I joined in 1997 the secondary education to teach history and geography in establishments of Priority Education Zone (ZEP). Working in the difficult districts of the city of Troyes, I was very fast confronted with the question of the integration of the migrant students, and in particular with the Rom pupils from Kosovo who arrived in this city in the late 90's. In 2007, I joined the Academic Center for the Schooling of the New Arrived Migrant Students and for the Traveller's pupils ([CASNAV](#)) of the Academy (regional education authority) of Rheims, service in which he is in charge of the "Education of Roma, Gypsies and Travellers".

I am besides member of the editorial committee of the review [Les Cahiers pédagogiques](#) for which he managed an entitled file « [Children from abroad, Students in France](#) » (May, 2009) and “[At school with Roma, Gypsies and Travellers pupils](#)” (May, 2011).

In September 2011, I became head of the [department Ville-Ecole-Integration](#) (VEI) of the CNDP (Centre National de Documentation Pédagogique), publisher of the Ministry of Education in France, and also became head editor of the review [Diversité](#), published by the CNDP.

The department VEI offers over 40 years expertise and support to educational drivers of public policy and professionals dealing with publics and areas in difficulty (especially areas concerned by the "politique de la ville"). With his team, I coordinate the publication of resources (print and online), manage a documentation service and training conception. As such, I regularly organize, with the support of local providers, trainings and seminars, which purpose is to cross the professional practices and to create a better (inter)understanding with sometimes complex subjects. Through these actions, we allow the value of work of the research, and meeting between national and local actors.



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I propose first to share with the European Academic Network on Romani Studies my knowledge on education issues. Beyond that, my involvement is in line with my commitment as a professional and as an editor: create resources, allowing actors and researchers to meet, compare their results and constraints, and allow the emergence of a professionalism that recognizes and accepts its dilemmas and controversies.

4. Mr Elias Hemelsoet

Researcher at the Department of Social Welfare Studies at Ghent University, Belgium

Bio:

Elias Hemelsoet is researcher at the Department of Social Welfare Studies at Ghent University, Belgium. The focus of his research project is (the meaning of) the right to education within the social inclusion and integration process of Roma. Moreover, he is co-founder of *Opre Roma*, one of the very few existing self-organisations of Roma in Flanders, Belgium. He is involved in numerous local and supra-local networks on Roma.

Publications:

<https://biblio.ugent.be/person/802000246879?sort=year.desc&limit=10&start=0>

Candidate statement:

Combining scientific and advocacy work, I think it is of crucial importance to reflect on how research within Romani studies, advocacy work and the social inclusion of Roma in Europe can be further realised. One of the major challenges in this process is the interrelationship between various policy levels, which deserves all attention in the current state of affairs. Lots of good work is done at the grassroots level, and efforts are made by local, federal and the European political level but too often there seems to be a gap between each of these levels. I therefore plea for (action) research focussing on vertical coherence between various policy levels.

Doing research in Western Europe, I think it is important to further stimulate research on Roma in these countries as well. Although most Roma live in Eastern Europe, intra-European migrations influence the living circumstances of Roma to an increasing extent. From a policy perspective, research on migration patterns, living circumstances and integration processes of recently migrated Roma and possible collaboration over countries (e.g. by different local municipalities) is of crucial importance to understand the current situation properly and to be able to develop European strategies adapted to the heterogeneity not only of the Roma population, but as well of varying social conditions and living circumstances over countries.

Last but not least, the question how Roma inclusion can be realised in practice, draws my attention. Although space for further development of a self-defined identity of Roma should be warranted (in a socio-cultural context), I think a more inclusive (rather than targeting) approach is desirable for social policy focusing on problems. A targeted approach in problem-solving policy implies a dangerous risk to identify the Roma with these problems and thus to stigmatize them with all due consequences. In my opinion, an intercultural relational perspective offers more opportunities here: social problems are not a characteristic of people nor an ethnic group, but rather social constructs in an interrelational context of various actors.



5. Mr Daniele Viktor Leggio

PhD candidate, School of Arts, Languages and Cultures/Research Institute for Cosmopolitan Cultures, University of Manchester

I have conducted research among and with Roma immigrant from Kosovo since my BA dissertation for the Degree in Cultural Heritage Studies at the University of Palermo, Italy (2006). My involvement with Kosovo Roma in Palermo was not limited to research as I also participated in schooling and mediation activities. My academic engagement with the same community continued during my Master in Linguistics at the University of Manchester, UK (2007-2009). My PhD research focuses on Romani language codification on Romani media and through Romani on-line communication. Its conclusions might have direct applications in cultural rights policies aimed at the Roma. With the Romani Project at the University of Manchester I participated in consultations with Manchester City Council about the Romanian Roma community and in the setting up of training activities for its younger members (see <http://romani.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/atmanchester/projects/gorton.shtml>). I have been working as editorial assistant for the cross-disciplinary academic journal Romani Studies for over a year now.

As a young researcher moving between disciplines (linguistics, social anthropology, cultural studies) I strongly believe an interdisciplinary approach is crucial when working with populations like the Roma. In order to foster interdisciplinarity, and following the positive experience of the past years, I intend to encourage the Network in continuing support for the Summer School at CEU. I also strongly believe in a continuous dialogue between researchers and institutions and will propose the creation of a space on the Network website for members to publish their work in progress (field notes, article drafts, etc.). Such a facility will allow members to discuss their on-going work and receive feedback and suggestions from fellow members. It will also make our research, and our discussions around it, accessible to any interested institution or individual prior to publication but within an appropriate context. To improve the visibility of the Network members I will also propose to make the member list searchable for more criteria (i.e.: keywords, actually not available as a search option). I will also lend my support to proposals for more sustained interactions with institutions and the public (both Roma and non-Roma) through seminars, conferences and other suitable events. Finally, I will make sure that any reasonable proposal or complaint coming from the associate members will be discussed at the Scientific Committee meetings. In order to do that I will need your co-operation and openness in thoroughly discussing any issue you might have in an on-going process of open consultation.

6. Ms Anna Mirga

PhD candidate in Social and Cultural Anthropology at the Autonomous University of Barcelona

My name is Anna Mirga, I'm M.A. in Comparative Studies of Civilizations by the Jagiellonian University in Cracow, Poland and in European Integration by the Autonomous University in Barcelona. Currently I am a **PhD candidate** in Social and Cultural Anthropology at the UAB under the direction of Dr. Silvia Carrasco Pons. Academically, I am interested in the strategies of civic and political mobilization among Roma communities, as well as the dynamics of representation and participation of Roma. Additionally, I am interested in Roma youth participation and the impact of the Roma-related policies and public discourse on Roma communities. In the framework of these academic interests, I have conducted research among Roma associations in Catalonia as part of my M.A. thesis "Birth, evolution and future of Roma associative movement in Catalonia". Recently, I have co-directed an evaluation project financed by the Roma Initiatives of the Open Society



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Foundations which aimed at the in-depth analysis of the Comprehensive Plan for the Roma Population in Catalonia (soon-to-be-published). My PhD project proposes to look closely into the **strategies of ethnic mobilization** among Roma communities in **diverse cultural and socio-economic context** in order to identify favorable “ingredients” which contribute to the emergence and greater success of ethnic-based social movements. In the framework of my PhD work I am currently conducting field work in Mexico. Apart from my academic interests, I have also been actively involved in Roma advocacy activities, through various Roma NGOs (I am a co-founding member of the Roma Educational Association "Harangos" (Poland) and the Roma Youth Organization "Ternikalo XXI" (Spain) - both active members of the European Roma Youth Network TernYpe.).

As a potential member of the Scientific Committee of the European Academic Network on Romani Studies, I would like to **reinforce the link between scholars and policy-makers**, in order to effectively influence the Roma-related policies throughout Europe. Too often has the Roma-related policies been influenced by the political agenda, disregarding of the body of academic literature and evidence-based data available. Therefore, the Network should be involved in policy-making processes, providing input, methodological guidelines and evidence-based data, and becoming an academic point of reference for legislators throughout Europe. Additionally, I believe in **strengthening the link between the scholars and activists**, in order to provide the advocacy world with necessary capacity and data. In this regard, the Network can provide necessary guidance on advocacy tools such as shadow reporting, policy monitoring and evidence-based watchdog activities.

In my opinion, the Network should increasingly become a **tool for academic development for its members** – therefore, the Network should serve as a platform for academic collaboration and exchange of findings and ideas, provide its members with regular notifications of academic opportunities (such as calls for papers and articles, conferences and congresses, scholarship opportunities etc.), seeking growth and development not only of its members, but also of the Network as such.

The Network should become a forum of open and independent exchange of ideas, **creating a vibrant space for intellectual debate**, also on those topics which are often neglected by the policy-makers or activists. In this context, the Network has a potential of acquiring **think-tank qualities**, reinforcing the links of the academic world with a variety of relevant stakeholders (policy-makers, activists, media etc.). Nonetheless, despite its necessary links with activists and policy-makers, the Network should be an autonomous body consecrated by the **principle of academic rigor and intellectual independency**.

Additionally, I believe in trying to **reach beyond the scholastic and theoretical framework of “Romani studies”**, filling the gap which separates it from other branches of social and political science.

Lastly, in my opinion the Network should be based on the principle of **equality between its Roma and non-Roma members**, however promoting the increasing presence of Roma scholars within the Network should be considered a priority.

7. Mr Ciprian Necula

PhD candidate at the National School of Political and Administrative Studies (SNSPA), Bucharest

I have decided to accept the nominations of some of you, for the forthcoming elections of two of us as members of the Scientific Committee of the network, for three main reasons:



1. I took part in some debates related to the fact that Roma members have not been included in this committee until now. I strongly believe that this is not nor acceptable nor recommendable. There is a credibility issue for the network and as a more direct matter of fact I wonder if there is someone able to imagine a network that study Women, without women members? I do not! Now, having this opportunity of the inclusion of two more members in the committee, I have the responsibility to accept the nominations and run for the elections – as a Roma!

2. I have been dedicated for over 15 years to the improvement of the Roma image in Romania and most of the other European countries. For this reason, I used various studies on Roma communities, sharing with common people what most of you do, and I have promoted an equidistant approach to research and promotion of the findings. This is how I understand the value of a research and therefore of the researcher. The researcher should not target a library, but rather provide objective support for social change. Therefore, I have to accept the nominations and run for elections – as an activist!

3. I am still an young academic. I am studying social anthropology at the SNSPA University in Bucharest and my PhD coordinator is one of the most appreciated anthropologist from Romania, Professor Vintilă Mihăilescu. I am writing a thesis about the impact of the Romanian communism on the Roma identity. Slavery of Roma in the Romanian Principalities was another topic of interest on which I have already sent for publishing some articles with new perspectives on this subject. I have participated in various conferences giving presentations and lectures on Roma identity, Roma image, Roma diversity, ethnicity and social classes, etc. As a PhD student, I have the responsibility to develop further the knowledge about Roma. For this reason, I must accept the nominations being aware of the standards and research needs – as a researcher!

In this way, having in mind the objectives of our network “to facilitate intercultural dialogue and support efforts towards the social inclusion of Romani citizens in Europe”, I strongly believe that being a member of the Scientific Committee implies an enormous responsibility to all the members of our group. It should be an **intercultural environment, inclusive not exclusive**. Roma scholars have to be represented, but they are not the only one. Women academics and researchers from the countries with a large Roma population should be also represented within the Scientific Committee.

Ethics in the presentations about Roma is another idea that I intend to bring into debate within the Scientific Committee and, extended, to all network members. (...) I strongly support the idea that a researcher, member of the network, cannot be an expert on everything related to Roma groups and should focus on his/her own **field of expertise**. Ethics, beside the ones of our professions, are related also to the **responsibility** that we have toward the communities that we are talking about. Moreover, I strongly support the idea of developing and promoting an **ethic code** of our network, not only related to our disciplines but moreover to the responsibility to the communities that we study.

Communication, while we are in a network, should be the feeding channel. So far, I must say, I did not really feel that I am in a communication **network**, except the physical meeting from CEU SUN, in Budapest. From my membership acceptance, December 2011, I received 11 emails, one confirmation of membership, one on New Year greetings, two messages related to the SUN, three messages on the current elections (nominations, etc.) and another three messages with direct relevance for my academic interest. In my opinion, members of the network should benefit of **information** on how they can share and develop their work; on Scientific Committee decision, meetings and strategy. Communication, indeed, should not be only one way, members should have the opportunity in giving their **inputs** for the network **outputs**, as all of us are, at some extends, represented by this network.

Transparency is another key issue to be address. What is the **budget** for the network? Who are the donors? How this budget is spent? How does the Scientific Committee decide on what is the **priority** of the network? Who is the **audience** of the network, in the sense of who is informed on our



activities? How many of you can answer to these questions? I strongly believe that the network members should have access to all of this information as they are part of a family and **trust** and transference should be part of our **culture**.

Therefore, dear friends and colleagues, these are my reasons to accept your nominations, to write this letter and, as well, to stand as a candidate for the Scientific Committee. I hope that most of you will find himself/herself within the principles presented above. Moreover, the elections are organized for two seats and I would strongly recommend to those convinced by my principles, to support Elisabetta Vivaldi, a Roma, an activist and a scholar with similar views and a lot of positive energy. Thank you!

But baxt thaj sastipen!

8. Mr Gergő Pulay

PhD candidate at the Central European University, Budapest

I am a doctoral candidate in Sociology and Social Anthropology, currently writing up my dissertation which is based on a long term fieldwork in a mixed Roma and non-Roma Romanian poor neighborhood of Bucharest. The thesis provides an ethnography of street-life, focusing on ideas of value and practices of exchange in conditions characterized by territorial stigmatization, weakness of the local state, and a highly informalized local economy. In order to be efficient in these circumstances, one has to attend the "school of life" which is defined in opposition to the realm of formal education, and it can be associated with Roma dominance. The main protagonists of my work are members of male-dominated hang-out groups, who are relying on the symbolic and material resources offered by public space in order to generate income, and to define their personhood. They are traders who maintain parallel interests in the surrounding open-air markets as well as in the purchase and sale of scrap metal, which is the dominant mode of involving the area's drug-addicts into the local economy. Before my doctoral project, I had been researching the cultural politics of Roma music making in Hungary, the role of Gypsy musicians in the Roma movement as well as in the emerging world music industry. Apart from writing up my PhD-dissertation, currently I am working as an academic tutor in the Roma Access Program at the Central European University, where I am leading a preparatory class in Sociology and Nationalism Studies for Roma students who wish to continue their studies at MA level.

As a nominee for the title of a representative of associated members in the Scientific Committee of the European Academic Network on Romani Studies, my goal is to represent the voices and interests of members who are in the early phase of their careers. I believe that a major task for this new generation of scholars is to rethink the academic as well as public duties of Roma research in an era when precarious life-conditions – that had been well-researched amongst Roma as well as other peoples living at the margins of their societies – is shared by a growing part of majority populations. Such trends of current social change require new theoretical insights in Roma research, while they also necessitate the collaboration with researchers from different academic fields. Studies of Roma sometimes tended to reproduce exclusion on an analytic level as they represented the social worlds of the marginalized as being separate and fully secluded from the more respectable domains of society. In order to counter this tendency, and especially to take a powerful stance in a period of growing anti-Gypsism throughout Europe, academic scholars need to enhance their dialogue with activists, opinion leaders and policy makers. We are witnessing an expansion of Roma-related discourses and practices at a European scale. This process runs the risk of expanding only confusions regarding the Roma or



the issues of marginality. The primary asset of scholars to handle this situation is provided by their rigorous adherence to their theories and methodological tools.

9. Mr Rumyan Russinov

Director of the Public Policy Advocacy Centre, Sofia

I am an active participant in the Roma movement since 1992. I have substantive practical experience in the field of Roma integration policies in Bulgaria and internationally in a period of very dynamic political and social developments in Europe – the period after 1989. For seven years I worked with a Roma rights advocacy organization based in Bulgaria which launched key policy discussions on the integration of Roma. As a senior manager in the Open Society Foundations and the Roma Education Fund I promoted good NGO practice that has influenced Roma integration policies in Europe. I have had personal contacts with individuals who shaped the profile of the Roma movement and Roma policies and I was participant in events and initiatives that defined the international agenda for Roma integration in the past twenty years. This background gives a rich content for my current and future academic endeavors focused on the Roma movement and state policies for Roma integration in the transition period in CEE.

In my practical and academic experience so far I have promoted the vision of Roma as a community that aspires to integrate in the macro society. My essential position is that Roma in Europe share a unique and diverse culture which enriches European cultures and is not antithetical to the European values. Many examples of successful integration of Roma in society at different historic periods prove that Roma culture is not a barrier to integration, on the contrary it is a tool for it. My goal is to develop the academic studies in this direction. I believe this analysis is a very important contribution of science to everyday practice, especially at a time of serious challenges facing European governments in their efforts to find solutions for Roma integration.

10. Mr Orhan Kemryan Tahir

Research fellow with the Open Society Roma Initiatives Program

I would like to confirm my interest in taking part in the elections for representatives of the associate members in the Scientific Committee of European Academic Network on Romani Studies.

I am 35-years-old Bulgarian citizen of Romani origin, speaking Bulgarian, Romanes, Turkish, English and some Russian, Macedonian and German. I hold a Master's degree in Law from the Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski, Bulgaria.

I have been involved in the Roma rights movement in Bulgaria since my students' years at the University. Upon graduating from the University in 2002, I have held number of positions in non-governmental organizations and public institutions, which allowed me to gain valuable experience, considering the Romani issue from multiple perspectives.

Currently, I am working as a research fellow with the Open Society Roma Initiatives Program, based in Budapest, Hungary, on a self-designed project I entitled "Centralized Control or Local Democracy: Roma Neighborhoods in the Context of Bulgarian Local Government Reform". The overall purpose of the research is to determine what should be the power balance between the central level (government), local level (municipality) and sub-local level (neighborhood) with special focus on the large urban ghettos in Bulgaria; what issues should remain in the sphere of control of the central government and what issues can be successfully settled by the local communities, if they are



empowered with the necessary authority, responsibility, and decision-making mechanisms. If we presume that problems of the ghettos are part of the problems caused by the weaknesses of the post-communist political model, then this research should answer the primary question: Can problems of democracy be solved with more democracy or is more state control needed as a remedy against the social ills, emblemized by the “Gypsy Ghetto”. The research is interdisciplinary and involves different academic fields such as constitutional law, administrative law, politics, economics, urban studies, anthropology, sociology, ethnology, etc.

Considering my own research interests, I think that the creation of the European Academic Network on Romani Studies was a positive step towards further development of the interdisciplinary approach to the Romani issues. I am glad to see among the members of the network researchers with broad academic background coming both from Europe and America, as well as some younger people bringing sharp minds to that field.

I believe that the European Academic Network on Romani Studies can link the academics with the policymakers, and thus influence the decision-making process at European, as well as at national and local level. For this reason I think that my expertise would be an asset for the Scientific Committee of the network, and I hope that my nomination can gain support among the other associate members of the network.

11. Ms Catalina Tesar

PhD candidate in Social Anthropology at the University College London

I have just completed and submitted my PhD thesis in Social Anthropology at University College London. For my PhD thesis I carried out two year fieldwork among a Romanian Romany speaking population from Transylvania, Cortorari with whom I had been acquainted for more than 10 years now. My dissertation focuses on issues of gender, body, kinship and wealth. It unpacks the sexual, political and economic dimensions of the controversial so called „early age marriages”. Throughout my academic career I also worked on Romanian Romany mobilities in Europe. In 2009-2010 I was a Marie Curie fellow researcher at FIERI Torino, Italy, where I conducted research on Romanian Roma „campi nomadi”. I published an article on Cortorari’s representations of gender in Romani Studies. I also published a paper about Cortorari’s involvement in transnational mobility and their begging activities in Western Europe, in a Romanian edited volume. I am expected to defend my PhD thesis in January 2013. Currently I work as a researcher at the Museum of the Romanian Peasant, Bucharest. I am also an associate lecturer at SNSPA, Bucharest, where I shall be teaching a kinship course. In Bucharest I work closely with a group of young PhD candidates of Romany background on whose research I offer counselling.

I feel honoured for having been nominated for the elections of the representative of associated members for the Scientific Committee. I believe that the European Academic Network should enhance high standard academic research, which I see as imperative in any policy making and social activism-orientated projects. In this sense, European Academic Network should provide to its associate members opportunities for improving and publicizing their research, for collaborating with full senior members, and for networking. It should also encourage young scholars in broadening their research interests beyond the circumscribed field of Romany studies. Researchers of Roma populations the same as the people they study find themselves in a marginalized position, the former in the academic field and the latter in the structural social reality. I believe that bringing our research in a comparative perspective would help researchers enter main stream academic field and would enhance understanding of the populations of our study. Therefore, affiliate members should be encouraged to



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participa in international conferences in their fields. Affiliate members from former communist European countries should be encouraged in pursuing academic exchanges in Western European countries. The European Academic Network should encourage young scholars in canalizing their interests in issues of contemporary interests such as mobility, gender and ethnic discrimination, (un)employment, social and economic inequalities, citizenship, Roma activism and Romany politics. Visibility of the Network and of its members should be promoted.

12. Mr Georgi Tsvetkov

Senior researcher in the Russian Center of Romani Studies, Russian Culturologic Institute, Moscow

I am a senior researcher in the Russian Center of the Romani Studies in the Russian Culturologic Institute (Moscow, Russia); and a senior researcher in the Center of socialization in the Federal Institute of the educational development (Moscow, Russia),

2011 – doctor of philology, thesis on Romani language and culture

Publications:

Articles and books on the Romani culture and language, education, literary texts in Russian and Romani (dialects Lovara and Russkoromani). Publications in Russia, Ukraine, Bulgaria, Czech Republic.

Webpage: www.kulturom.ru – site of the Russian Center of the Romani Studies with e-library

PROPOSITIONS

In case of my electing my activity will assist a mutual aid in scientific researches and mutual distribution of information about the results of the advanced studies of colleagues.

In particular, I offer:

1. Organization of the mutual aid for the interconversions of romologic articles of colleagues in the different languages (on Russian, English, French and other) for further publications.
2. Organization of mutual publications of romologic articles of colleagues in the scientific magazines. We can publish the articles of colleagues in the Russian scientific magazines.

13. Mr Ciprian Tudor

PhD candidate at the National School of Political and Administrative Studies (SNSPA), Bucharest

I would like to begin this Statement by placing my current involvement in Romani Studies issues within the larger framework of my personal academic background and achievements. My academic interests in the last 15 years encompassed moral philosophy, the history of political ideas and European cultural history, with special emphasis on modern European thinking. Within the scope of these interests, my academic activity consisted of teaching at a university level (University of Bucharest, Polytechnic University of Bucharest, “Ion Mincu” University of Architecture and Urbanism) and participating in conferences and collective research projects as part of research centers and groups such as: Foundation of Modern Thought Research Center, (University of Bucharest, Romania), Early Modern Thought Research Group (New Europe College, Bucharest, Romania), Association des Chercheurs Francophones en Sciences Humaines (Cluj&Bucharest, Romania),



Permanent International Altaic Conference (Huhot University, R.P.China, University of St. Petersburg, Russian Federation, Indiana University, Bloomington, U.S.), Romanian Society for Social and Cultural Anthropology, (Bucharest, Romania).

Since 2010, my older interest in the issues of the modern political construction of identity, as well as my interest in the history of cultures, have guided me towards the study of one of the most controversial European populations, both politically and anthropologically, namely the Roma. In particular, my current doctoral research (PhD expected December 2013) focuses on the issue of constructing and representing Roma identity. The topic of this research is a draft project for a Roma museum in Romania. I attempt to contrast a few sociological, anthropological and political approaches to the many shapes of Roma identity, as part of an open museum project designed to be a civic, educational and research platform.

The research agenda that I would like to promote within the Network includes: a better understanding of social, political and cultural processes that shape the Romani identity today, with a special emphasis on the plurality of ways in which it is constructed theoretically and negotiated at the various group levels. I also believe that the adoption of this agenda has to be grounded in scientific and academic values, which should govern any research endeavor, and that it should be carried out in the name of the moral and political values, which urge us to give voice and a social recognition to what might be called one of the European populations most wounded by history.

14. Ms Elisabetta Vivaldi

PhD candidate at the Bucks New University/Coventry, UK

I am hereby proposing my candidacy agenda and thanking, at the same time, all the ones that pointed out my name as possible contender to this sit and therefore believed in me.

What I bring to the table?

I am a PhD student, on health and wellbeing and interested in inter-institutional discrimination, society and public servants intolerance towards the Roma, inter-communities relationships. About my research I can say that I am not studying the Roma, I am studying the non Roma approach towards the Roma and I am paying full attention to the unheard contribution provided by Roma in order to bring it up from the ashes to light.

Personally, I hold a LLM in Human Rights and I am familiar with International Human Rights and Refugee Laws, War and Human Rights, Business and Human Rights.

My previous experiences include working at the Italian Embassy in BiH (2004) as assistant to the Cultural Attaché and to First Secretary with their cultural and diplomatic post Dayton Agreements agenda. I have also supported, with my expertise, a political party (ALDE group) and time collaborated with an MEP (Mohacsi) at the European Parliament in Brussels during 2008. One of my contributions regarded the ratification of the EP resolution 31/01/2008 European Strategy on the Roma but also the coordination on the MEP parliamentary agenda in reference to the facts involving Roma in Italy during that year (eg. Nomad Emergency Decrees, Angelika's case, the fingerprints & the repatriation of EU citizens, etc). I organized several evaluation missions and protests -also joint with other institutions and agencies. Furthermore, I took care of issues and cases concerning other EU Member States (eg. Romania, Hungary etc). I briefly worked for the ERTF in Strasbourg, as Assistant to the Secretariat, where I took care of the organization of the plenary sessions 2008, as I am a certified meeting planner and event organizer.



romanistudies.eu

European Academic Network on Romani Studies

My academic accomplishments include a double LM degree (110/100 cum laude) in Philology and History of Oriental Europe (Serbo-Croatian) comparative studies in Anglo-American Languages and Literatures and two different high school diplomas (Scientific Lyceum and Teachers Training High School- QTS qualified teacher status for primary school). I could also teach inferior and superior high or adult-learning programs and I have been trained by COE-EC as Trainer of Roma Mediators. My main interest is Roma communities, specifically (but not exclusively) inhabiting camp-settlements, their personal and communities self reliance, the struggle to reach equality and the very consistent effort to protect themselves from Roma-phobia, general discriminative practices, common stereotypes and false expectations, impacting on them at every level.

I have published few articles in different fields: rights, history, education, advocacy and I have joined several national and international conferences, also as panelist, but also refused many when the invitation did not fully comply with my ethic standards. I have participated to several events as an observer.

Who am I?

I could be defined as a people's person with a deep sense of humanity and compassion, I am also a volunteer and a grass root activist, not only an academic. My personal qualities: I am determined, direct, attentive and supportive. Unfortunately, I also have some fragile points but I am often ready to accept suggestions and discuss, in a reasonable and educated way, in order to better things and to find suitable solutions as long full respect is granted and maintained always.

My general ideas for the Network:

1. Equality - I believe that Roma and non Roma are equal and there are valid candidates to run for this position but the European Roma Academic Network on Romani Studies is -and should be- dedicated to RGTs, therefore promoting their full inclusion and concrete role, played by direct and not mediated participation.
2. Romanipe - As candidate of mixed roots, I believe that I can contribute with my experience to the development of an inclusion process that underlines the importance of: being in part Romani by heritage, a European citizen by birth, a woman by fortune, and an academic by choice, but also, the most significant element, not having to hide one self's roots in order to be accepted as a good scholar.
3. Trust - I believe who supports my statement supports me, trusts me and my potential, not exclusively because of my origins. Basically, sustaining my candidacy should not be merely an act of mercy because I declare myself to be Romani in order to sit the Board, but because I am and I can cover the vacant position and leave a positive mark, ensuring to bring together Roma and non Roma young scholars to better the Network in favor of the entire society, through the diffusion of knowledge and in accordance with strict ethical protocols.
4. Enlargement - I think that it is important enlarging the Network and favoring knowledge exchange between scholars. Knowledge transfer promotes the abrogation of prejudices and it works in academic context but also outside. Researchers can spread the gospel of knowledge in civil society and in their national and local networks, therefore they are messengers and their role is fundamental. A proficient communication and giving space to different geographic areas is essential because, with time, many more communities will benefit of this work that we are starting now. We need thorough opinion exchanges and consistent feedback to empower ourselves, our work and to grow stronger as Network-group. There is a responsibility behind this process and it is enormous!
5. Ethics - In view of previous debates between some of the scholars-participants to the summer courses, I would suggest and put forward motions to fulfill ethic compliance to the highest standards,



in accordance with the UK -but also US fieldwork guidelines such, as the ones proposed by the International Anthropological Societies and by the organizations and agencies working with vulnerable participants. I would recommend an ethical approval procedure to be fulfilled in front of an external board to avoid “exploitation. I also would make sure- at the best of my possibilities- that no other scholar, especially of Romani origins, goes through an internal conflict while visiting communities. Finally, I would do my best to promote a correct procedure, on how to enter and encounter Roma families and individuals, without having the feeling that newcomer-fellow scholars can learn (and perhaps repeat) a methodology of fieldwork that it is consider improper or unacceptable. I, in fact, trust the Board that bad practices will be eliminated in the future in favor of the best ad hoc solution to leave a positive mark in the hosting communities and within the researchers learning new methods.

6. Par condicio - To ensure that if other scholars are indirectly mentioned during public lessons, their right to rebut is fully respected. Equal opportunities- To ensure an equal number of RGT lecturers if Summer school, courses or other activities will be organized and that the selection process and criteria will be transparent.

7. Transparency - I would require transparency and clearness so to ensure that decisions can be widely discussed in advance and taken democratically together.

8. Funding - I would also make sure to discuss the role played by funding for participants (eg. pre-paid tickets and bursaries) not to inconvenience or diminish those individuals that cannot afford participation and do not feel to publicly explain their financial distress creating personal embarrassment and provoking differences and division between people (eg. Lack of participation to collateral activities on the base of resource deficiency).

I decided to run together with Ciprian Necula I would strongly recommend to those convinced by my principles to support him also.