

The Socio-Economic and Ecological Subordination of Roma in Slovakia

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Who are the Roma?

Most distinctive, yet diverse, ethnic group in Central and Eastern Europe (Crowe 1996) facing systematic discrimination (Szelényi and Ladányi 2005)

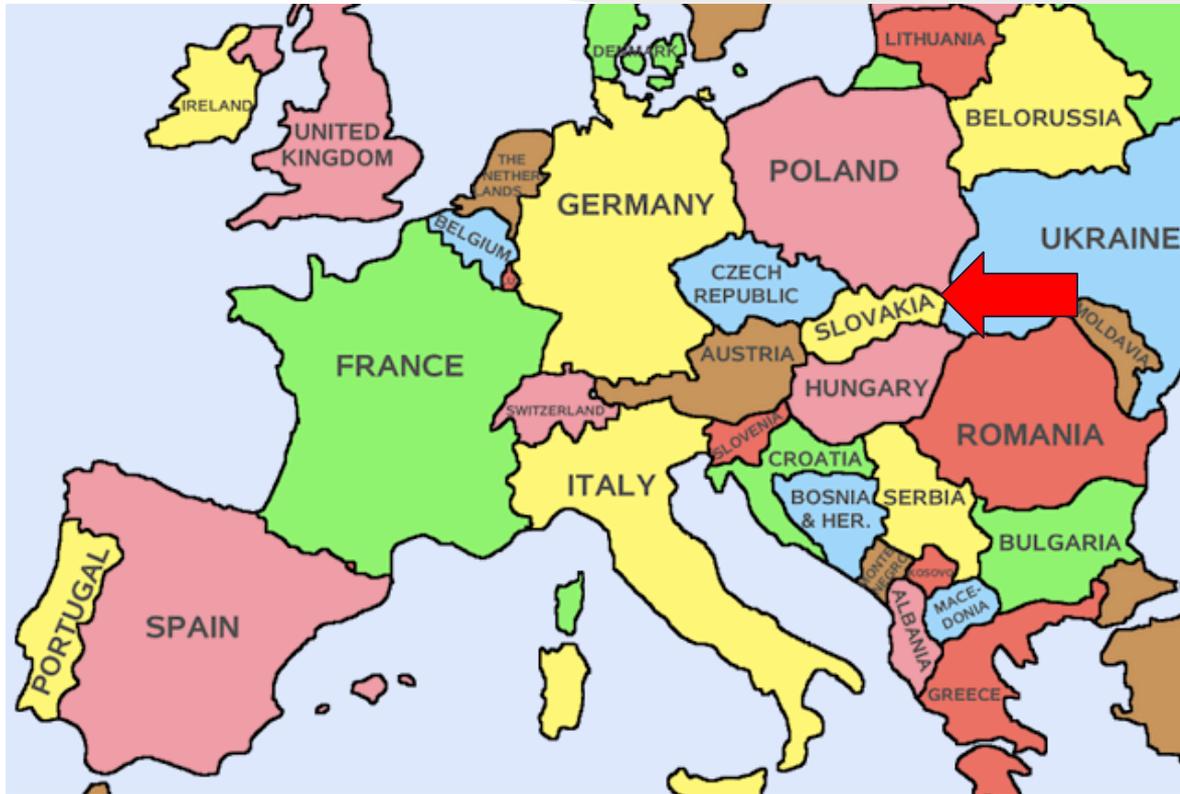
Migrated from India to Europe six centuries ago (?).

Central and Eastern Europe

Political Map of the World, January 2015



Slovakia



Source:
<http://www.welcometobratislava.eu/frequently-asked-questions-bratislava/>

Transition

Centralized economy >>> Free market

Single party socialist regime (“communism”)

>>> multi-party parliamentary regimes

Privatization and liberalization

Slovakia joined European Union in 2004

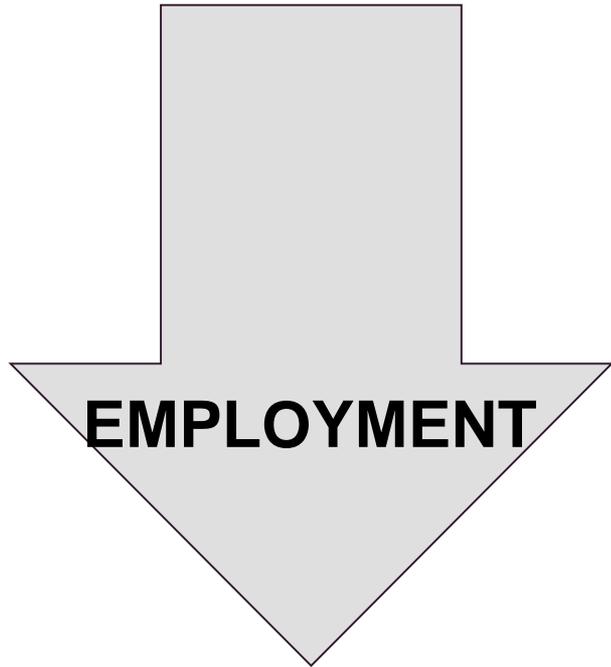
Rise in Prices (everyday living)



- Rent
- Utilities
- Water

(Eyal et al 1998, Greskovits 1998, Hamm et al 2012)

Decrease in Employment



Unemployment rates are three times higher among Roma compared to non-Roma (EU Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2014) (and higher still in segregated areas) (UNDP, 2006).

Analytical Framework: Hyper-Ghetto

“a novel, decentered territorial and organizational configuration characterized by conjugated segregation on the basis of race and class in the context of the double retrenchment of the labour market and the welfare state from the urban core...” (Wacquant, 2008:3)

Four main elements

stigma

constraint

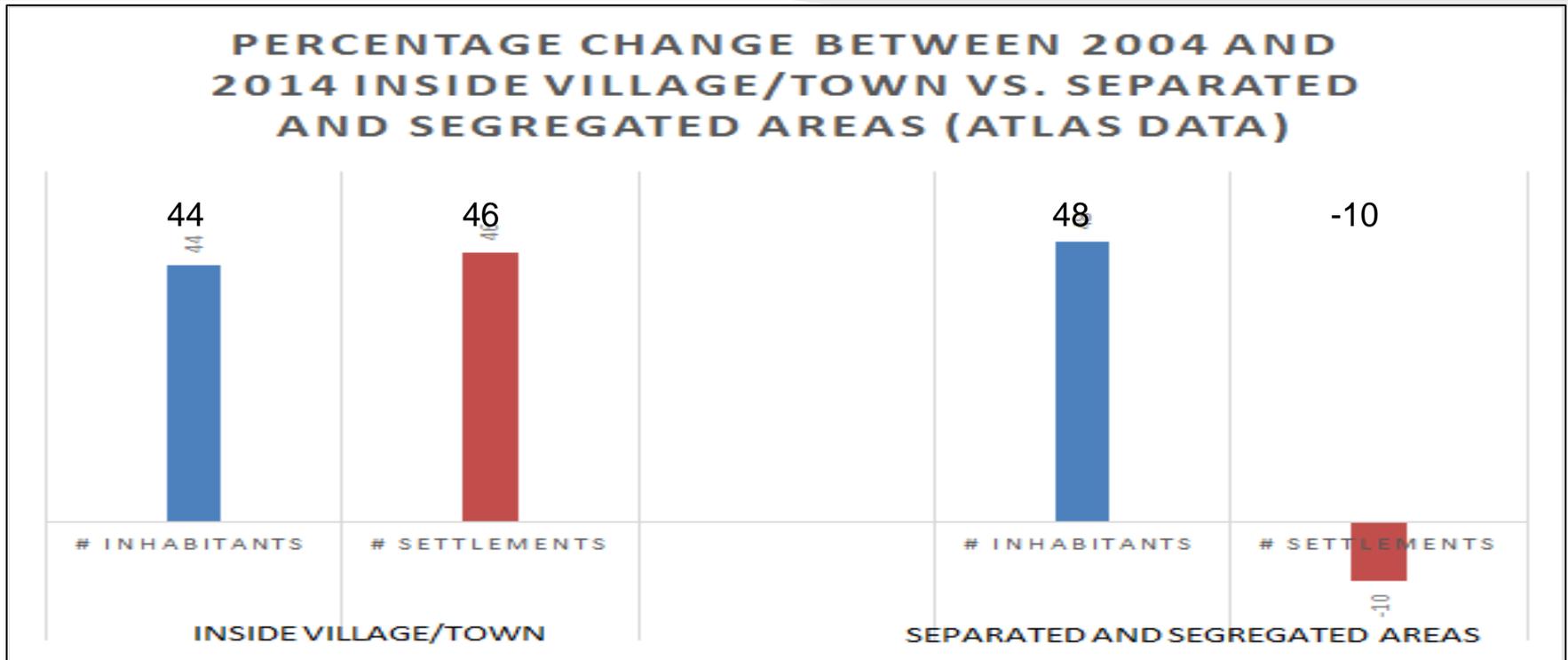
spatial confinement

institutional encasement

Separated and Segregated

**53% of Roma in Slovakia
are separated (outskirts)
or segregated (barriers)
from non-Roma.**

Trend in Roma Settlements



Source: Based on data from comprehensive surveys of the Roma population (ATLAS 2004, 2014).

Segregation: Walls

Walls built between Roma and non-Roma
in Košice, Lomnička, Michalovec, Ostrovany,
Šečovc:

“promotion of security”

“creation of a noise barrier”

“minimization of vandalism and theft”

“hygienic reasons”

Michalovec,
Slovakia



Ostrovany,
Slovakia



Social Function of Segregation

“to maximize the material profits extracted out of a group deemed defiled and defiling; and to minimize intimate contact with its members so as to avert the threat of symbolic corrosion and contagion they carry” (Wacquant, 2004:2)

“Ecological Subordination”

People and the place they occupy come together in a defined socio-spatial category in which people and the land are mutually subordinated; and considered “polluted,” “ecologically inferior,” and “hazardous” (Wacquant, 2000; Di Chiro, 1998).

Public Water Access

	Roma	Non-Roma
Public Water Access in the Home	51.9%	76%

(UNDP, 2011)

Water from streams



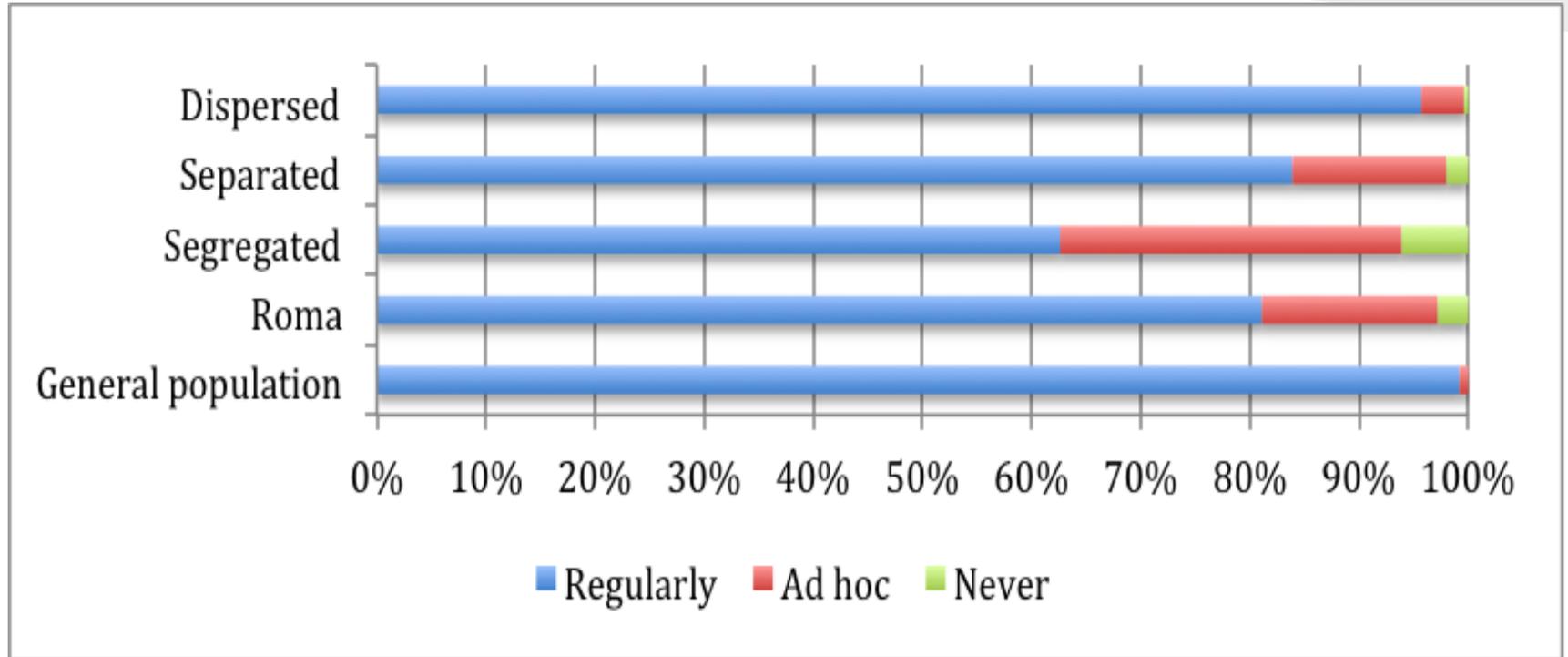
Well water



Water from pumps



Segregation and Waste Collection



Waste Collection



Roma Subordination

A socio-economic process propagated through segregation highlighted by the differential access to basic environmental goods.

Understanding Segregation

Generated and reinforced through open and discrete social processes and measures largely orchestrated by local governments;

Enabled by an ineffective state; and

Reinforced by the general socio-economic policy framework.