Covering the hard to sample and reach populations in conventional sample surveys – case of Roma, group defined by ethnicity

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1. **Why Roma – hard to reach and to survey?**

Selected approaches in the EU countries:

2. **Sampling frames exist – FRA's EU-MIDIS II**

3. **Sampling frames do not exist – FRA's RTS**

4. **Standard survey implemented on a special sample – Slovak Statistical Office's EU SILC MRK**

5. **Special survey implemented on standard sample – Bulgarian National Statistical Institute**

- ➢ 10-12 million Roma and Travellers* in Europe
- ➢ **Defining the universe**
  - Apparently simple question but the answer differs depending on the approach one takes
    - Research (historical or ethnological)
    - Pragmatic (policy-driven)
- ➢ **Defining the population**
  - Self-identification (asking people are you Roma)
    - Convenient and politically safe (nothing is imposed on the respondent)…
    - …but doesn't yield relevant data because of the vagueness of the question triggering additional ones in respondents' minds, like
      - If yes, does it mean I am not Romanian, Bulgarian, Slovak?
      - Why do they ask – maybe to frame me?
  - External ('imposed') identification
    - By non-Roma – verges on segregationist attitudes
    - By Roma – "you may not know who we are – but we do"
  - Combined (multi-stage approach)

- ➢ **Accessibility**
  - Long years of exclusion, discrimination, extinction (e.g. Porajmos)
  - => Mistrust, closure, avoidance

The term "Roma and Travellers" is used at the Council of Europe to encompass the wide diversity of the groups covered by the work of the Council of Europe in this field: on the one hand a) Roma, Sinti/Manush, Calé, Kaale, Romanichals, Boyash/Rudari; b) Balkan Egyptians (Egyptians and Ashkali); c) Eastern groups (Dom, Lom and Abdal); and, on the other hand, groups such as Travellers, Yenish, and the populations designated under the administrative term "Gens du voyage", as well as persons who identify themselves as Gypsies.

2. Sampling frames exist – FRA's EU Minorities and Discrimination Survey 2016

- 9 countries: BG, CZ, EL, ES, HR, HU, PT, RO, SK; based on **self-identification** as Roma

1. Sampling frame:
   - Census 2011 – ethnicity question(s) – BG, CZ, HR, HU, RO
   - National Roma mappings – SK, ES
   - Expert estimates – EL, PT

2. Sampling approach
   - Multi-stage – random selection of PSUs -> identification of area populated by TG -> random selection of SSUs -> selection of household (random walk / Adaptive Cluster Sampling) -> selection of respondent (random)

Experts from target population at local level (PSU mapping)

Mediators and interviewers from target population
- Real situation
- Access
- Trust

FRA (2017). Second European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey - Technical report.

4

> ➢ 6 countries: BE, FR, NL, IE, SE, UK; based on **self-identification** as Roma or Traveller

1. Establishing a sampling frame:

   ➢ Desk research – existing studies and expert estimates

   ➢ Stakeholder consultations – experts and targe populations representative organisations (protocols, meeting guides, documentation templates)

2. Sampling approach

   ➢ Single-stage – when using quota sampling for the respondent selection

   ➢ Multi-stage – random selection of PSUs -> mapping of selected PSUs -> random selection of SSUs -> selection of household (random walk) -> selection of respondent (random)

Experts from target population at national level

Experts from target population at local level (PSU mapping)

Mediators and interviewers from target population
- Real situation
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FRA (2021). Roma and Travellers in Six Countries. Technical report (forthcoming)

- ➢ Cooperation SK Statistical Office and Office of the Government Commissionaire for Roma Communities + FRA (2020)
- ➢ Territory based sample, not ethnicity based

1. Sampling frame:

- ➢ Atlas of Roma communities 2013, 2019 – expert estimates on the localities where Roma live using socio-graphic mapping

2. Sampling approach

- ➢ Multi-stage – random selection of PSUs (proportional, stratified) -> selection of household (random walk) -> respondents - all HH members 15+

Experts from target population or working with target population
- at national level
- at local level

➢ Cooperation BG National Statistical Institute and FRA – [Novel Approaches to Generating Data on hard-to-reach populations at risk of violation of their rights](#) (EEA/Norway Grants)

1. Sampling frame:

   ➢ Census 2011

2. Sampling approach

   ➢ Two stage stratified random sampling with probabilities proportional-to-size -> selection of household (Census addresses) -> respondents - all HH members 15+

Experts from target population or working with target population at national level – preparation of the survey

Local (pro)Roma organizations – implementation of the survey under COVID

What can be done in practice to improve coverage for groups, which are difficult to reach through a conventional sample survey?

Participation of the target population throughout the survey:

- ❑ Preparation

- ❑ Interviewers, Mediators

- ❑

- ❑ ... also in data validation and policy response formulations

Thank you!

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See also Chapter 3 in Poverty Measurement: Guide to Data Disaggregation | UNECE (2020)