

Call for Papers

Special Section of the Comparative Education Review Journal (CER)

Internationalisation and transnationalisation of 'Roma education'

Guest Editors of the CER Special Section:

Dr. **Christian Brüggeman** (Hochschule für Soziale Arbeit und Pädagogik, Berlin)

Dr. **Simona Szakács-Behling** (Helmut-Schmidt-University, Hamburg)

CER Co-Editors:

Dr. **tavis d. jules**, Loyola University Chicago, USA

Dr. **Florin D. Salajan**, North Dakota State University, USA

CER is sponsored by the [Comparative and International Education Society](#)

I. Background

Research on Roma (and) education has increased significantly in recent decades. Since the first internationally comparative report on the school provision for Roma children, commissioned by the Commission of the European Union and published in 1987, a field of research often referred to as 'Roma education' has emerged.¹ When we speak of a field of research, we refer to a significant body of work that primarily (although not exclusively) attempts to assess the extent of educational inequality between Roma and non-Roma, to understand and explain its causes and possibly to suggest ways forward. International household surveys have repeatedly documented striking educational disparities between Roma and non-Roma populations, as well as significant differences between countries. Most studies seek to assess and understand educational inequalities and the underlying phenomena such as poverty, discrimination, and segregation, or look at related aspects such as teacher competencies, peer dynamics, and parental attitudes.² The field also includes a growing body of research that examines educational success against the odds, focusing mainly on Roma university graduates.³ Some studies also focus on how antigypsyism - a specific form of racism and hostility towards Roma and other groups - is reflected in classroom practices, curricula and textbooks.⁴ Another line of research looks at educational policies and programs and their (unintended) impact on the educational participation of Roma pupils.⁵

However, Roma (and) education is not only a vibrant research field. Roma are the focus of European policy attention more than any other minority group. Since the 1990s Roma are on the European agenda of international organizations with education being a priority. The Decade of Roma Inclusion (2005-2015) pushed countries to develop action plans and sought to establish an international monitoring and evaluation system - an approach that has been adopted by the EU Roma policy framework since 2011. Defining Roma as the explicit target group for policy action carries however the risk of downplaying their extreme diversity and might come along with high costs such as stigmatization and local

¹ The widely used term 'Roma education' is itself problematic, as it may suggest that Roma need or should receive a different education from the majority population. There is a long history of discriminatory characterizations of Roma, particularly in relation to educational values and essentialist views of Romani culture are still prominent educational research (e. g. Lauritzen, 2018) as well as in local educational policies and practices addressing 'Roma education' (e.g. Matras et al 2015).

² See e. g. the contributions in Mendes et al. (2021) or Óhidy & Forray (2019, 2020).

³ See e. g. Bereményi & Durst (2021), Gallego-Noche & Goenechea-Permisán (2024), Garaz & Torotcoi (2017), or Morley et al. (2022).

⁴ See e. g. Dragos (2021), Dunajeva (2017); Pecak et al. (2022); Reuter, (2024), or Spielhaus et al. (2020).

⁵ See. e. g. Alexiadou (2019), Neumann (2017), Ram (2016).

resistance while approaches that target marginalized communities in general may exclude Roma as beneficiaries. Moreover, the ways in which policy frameworks define Roma education as “the problem” to be addressed, often play a role in (re)producing deficit-oriented and discriminatory practices regarding Roma education in a variety of European contexts.⁶

Although the vast majority of studies frame Roma educational inequality as a matter of international concern little research has been done on the internationalisation, and especially the transnationalisation, of policies and practices related to Roma education⁷. Collections of single country studies are widespread but few studies are designed to be comparative and even fewer studies have examined the processes by which policies and practices diffuse across regions and borders, let alone processes of policy-making or the discrimination experienced by Roma learners in *non-European* spaces. Why do some educational policies and practices such as scholarship programs, Roma school mediators or education for remembrance initiatives spread cross-nationally while others do not? Who is involved in policy transfer and implementation? Who are the actors influencing both institutionally discriminating policies and antidiscrimination efforts? What interregional and supranational effects are visible? How does the (Western)Eurocentrism of knowledge production in the field of ‘Roma education’ influence these processes at both policy and practice levels? And what is missing from these discussions altogether?

II. Contributions Sought

This special section welcomes papers that critically and comparatively look at international and transnational aspects of Roma education including questions of knowledge production, educational transfer and borrowing/lending across various (types of) borders, both empirical and scientific, and across actor groups, from international organizations to states and non-governmental Roma activists and organizations, both in Europe and worldwide. We encourage contributions from emerging and established scholars (as well as graduate students) studying these questions in any context where these questions are relevant. All papers will be expected to adopt a comparative approach and contribute to the field of comparative and international education.

Researchers submitting contributions for this special issue might for example:

- examine educational activities/projects/policy initiatives and/or hegemonic discourses related to or facilitated through international Roma policies, including questions of problem-definition and representation;
- investigate unintended effects of international education policy, question how transnational education initiatives have been ignored, re-framed or misused at the local level and/or compare different contextualizations of educational initiatives and interventions including interventions targeting non-Roma (e.g. education against antigypsyism);
- critically look at international and transnational aspects of Roma education including educational transfer and borrowing/lending, circulation of ideas, discourses, and/or forms of organization, cross-border discriminatory and anti-discriminatory practices, grassroots mobilization, and Roma activism – as well as constructions thereof;
- illuminate the dynamics of knowledge production regarding ‘Roma education’ policies and practices Roma education *beyond* Europe.

⁶ See e. g. Dragos (2020); Timmer (2010); Miškolci, (2017) and Bacchi (2012) on the “What is the problem represented to be” approach.

⁷ By internationalisation we mean a process that takes place across national borders and is led mainly by states or governments, whereas by transnationalisation we mean a cross-border process that goes beyond interstate linkages and takes place primarily between non-state actors such as individuals and organisations (Szakács-Behling 2022).

III. Submission Procedures

Expressions of interest should be sent to CER_SpecialSection@luc.edu by **April 1st, 2025** in the form of an outline of approximately 1,000 - 1,200 words, including 1) a tentative title of the paper; 2) the paper's key argument(s); 3) theoretical and conceptual grounding of the paper; and, 4) methodology. Authors' Details: Along with the abstracts, please submit: 1) the names of the proposed paper author(s); 2) full institutional affiliations of author(s); and 3) email addresses of all contributing authors. All abstract submissions are expected to follow the **CER style guide** and **Chicago Citation Style (5th Edition)**. For more details, please feel free to visit the instructions for authors page on the CER website: <https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/journals/cer/instruct>

IV. Timeline

April 1, 2025	Deadline to submit abstracts. <i>All abstracts will be closely reviewed by the three guest editors. The CER co-editors will also be consulted throughout the selection process.</i>
May 1, 2025	Authors of accepted and rejected abstracts to be notified of the editors' decision. <i>All abstracts will be closely reviewed by the guest editors. The CER co-editors will also be consulted throughout the selection process.</i>
October 15, 2025	Authors of accepted abstracts expected to submit their full articles for review, no later than October 2025.
March 15, 2026	Submitted papers will undergo blind peer review and will be selected on the basis of academic merit. Resubmissions are due by March 2026.
Winter 2026	Special Section of the Comparative Education Review to be published (tentatively by the end of 2026).

V. References

- Bacchi, C. (2012). Introducing the 'What's the Problem Represented to be?' approach. *Engaging with Carol Bacchi: Strategic interventions and exchanges*, 21–24.
- Bereményi, B. Á., & Durst, J. (2021). Meaning-making and resilience among academically high-achieving Roma graduate women. *SZOCIOLÓGIAI SZEMLE*, 31(3).
- Dragos, S. (2021). Romani Students' Responses to Antigypsyist Schooling in a Segregated School in Romania. *Critical Romani Studies*, 4(2), Article 2. <https://doi.org/10.29098/crs.v4i2.95>
- Dunajeva, J. (2017). Education of Roma Youth in Hungary: Schools, Identities and Belonging. *European Education*, 49(1), 56–70. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10564934.2017.1280332>
- Gallego-Noche, B., & Goenechea-Permisán, C. (2024). What makes them thrive? Protective factors for the academic success of Roma university students: A case study. *Education, Citizenship and Social Justice*, 19(1), 95–109. <https://doi.org/10.1177/17461979221123009>
- Garaz, S., & Torotcoi, S. (2017). Increasing Access to Higher Education and the Reproduction of Social Inequalities: The Case of Roma University Students in Eastern and Southeastern Europe. *European Education*, 49(1), 10–35. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10564934.2017.1280334>
- Kertesi, G., & Kézdi, G. (2016). On the test score gap between Roma and non-Roma students in Hungary and its potential causes. *Economics of Transition*, 24(1), 135–162. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ecot.12076>
- Lauritzen, S. M. (18). Nomadism in Research on Roma Education. *Critical Romani Studies*, 1(2), 58–75. <https://doi.org/10.29098/crs.v1i2.2>
- Matras, Y., Leggio, D. V., & Steel, M. (2015). 'Roma education' as a lucrative niche. Ideologies and representations. *ZEP: Zeitschrift für internationale Bildungsforschung und Entwicklungspädagogik*, 38(1), 11–17.
- Mendes, M. M., Magano, O., & Toma, S. (2021a). *Social and Economic Vulnerability of Roma People: Key Factors for the Success and Continuity of Schooling Levels*. Springer.
- Miškolci, J., Kováčová, L., & Kubánová, M. (2017). Trying to Include but Supporting Exclusion Instead? Constructing the Roma in Slovak Educational Policies. *European Education*, 49(1), 71–88. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10564934.2017.1280337>

- Morley, L., Mirga, A., & Redzepi, N. (Hrsg.). (2020). *The Roma in European higher education: Recasting identities, re-imagining futures*. Bloomsbury Academic.
- Neumann, E. (2017). 'Fast and violent integration': School desegregation in a Hungarian town. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 20(5), 579–594. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13613324.2016.1191696>
- Óhidy, A., & Forray, R. K. (2019). *Lifelong learning and the Roma minority in Central and Eastern Europe*. Emerald publishing limited.
- Óhidy, A., & Forray, R. K. (2020). *Lifelong learning and the Roma minority in Western and Southern Europe* (First edition). Emerald Publishing Limited.
- Pecak, M., Spielhaus, R., & Szakács-Behling, S. (2021). Between Antigypsyism and Human Rights Education: A Critical Discourse Analysis of the Representations of the Roma Holocaust in European Textbooks. *Critical Romani Studies*, 4(2), Article 2. <https://doi.org/10.29098/crs.v4i2.96>
- Ram, M. H. (2016). International Policy and Roma Education in Europe: Essential Inputs or Centralized Distractions? *Alberta Journal of Educational Research*, 465-483 Pages. <https://doi.org/10.11575/AJER.V6114.56097>
- Reuter, F. (2024). Antigypsyism and Educational History. In D. Strauß (Hrsg.), *RomnoKher Study 2021: Unequal Participation. On the Situation of the Sinti and Roma in Germany* (S. 65–89). Springer Fachmedien. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-44650-5_2
- Rostas, I., & Kostka, J. (2014). Structural Dimensions of Roma School Desegregation Policies in Central and Eastern Europe. *European Educational Research Journal*, 13(3), 268–281. <https://doi.org/10.2304/eej.2014.13.3.268>
- Szakács-Behling, S. (2022). Inter or Trans-nationalisation in, or of, schooling? A critical overview of conflating terminologies, empirical foci, and suggested definitions. In S. Hornberg, & M. Buddeberg (Eds.), *Schule als Ort gesellschaftlicher Teilhabe* (pp.17-40). Waxmann.
- Spielhaus, R., Szakács, S., Ailincăi, A., Hopson, V., Pecak, M., & Georg-Eckert-Institut. (2020). The Representation of Roma in European Curricula and Textbooks: Analytical Report. *The Representation of Roma in European Curricula and Textbooks*.
- Timmer, A. D. (2010). Constructing the "Needy Subject": NGO Discourses of Roma Need. *PoLAR: Political and Legal Anthropology Review*, 33(2), 264–281. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1555-2934.2010.01114.x>