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ENIKŐ VINCZE \*

Adverse Incorporation of the Roma and the Formation  
of Capitalism in Romania

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\* [eniko\_vincze@euro.ubbcluj.ro] (Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj,  
Romania)

**Abstract**

Empirically rooted in the findings of a research conducted between 2012-2014 in localities of Romania under the umbrella of a larger contextual inquiry concerning faces and causes of marginalisation of the Roma, the approach of this article is informed by critical urban theory's understanding of the political economy of space and development, and their role in the formation of capitalism. My study argues: the way how marginalised Roma are included into the mainstream society while pushed into and kept in its dispossessed spatial and social peripheries, is a manifestation of the adverse incorporation of a precariatized and racialised working class into the capitalist system. In Chapters 2 and 3 the article describes how, on the one hand, the politics of socio-spatial marginalisation and, on the other hand, the politics of entrepreneurial development creates the Roma as adversely incorporated (dispossessed and racialised) subject. Furthermore, Chapters 4 and 5 of the analysis conclude that nowadays capitalism (in Romania) is (also) formed through the politics of socio-spatial exclusion and racialisation of the working class (Roma), and as well as through the politics of entrepreneurial development conceived via neoliberal governance that exclude them from development resources. Therefore the article proposes to use the analysis of the adverse incorporation of the Roma as a critique of capitalism.

*Keywords:* Adverse incorporation, socio-spatial marginalisation, entrepreneurial development, racialisation, formation of capitalism.

## 1. *Empirical foundation and theoretical background*

My article is based on the findings of field-research conducted between 2012-2014 in localities of Romania within the umbrella of the qualitative contextual inquiry *Faces and Causes of Marginalization of the Roma in Local Settings: Hungary - Romania - Serbia*.<sup>1</sup> By and large, the aim of that investigation was to map the differing conditions in the domains of education, employment and work, housing and infrastructure, and representation and participation in local policy-making and politics and to reveal differences in access and provisions in the aforementioned areas that the aggregate (average) indicators for the communities-at-large may hide (Szalai and Zentai, 2014). The fieldwork-based contextual inquiry unfolded through two major phases. Between October 2012 and June 2013 we identified and described several economic, social and policy-related factors that reproduced social and territorial marginalisation of the Roma in local contexts - in Romania we have 'scanned' 25 localities (five small cities and 20 nearby villages) with this aim.<sup>2</sup> The next step of research (*Causes and Faces of Exclusion of the Roma in Local Communities*) was conducted in Romania between October 2013 and July 2014 in three localities (two small cities, and one commune comprising three villages) selected out of the 25 settlements addressed during the prior phase:<sup>3</sup> the general frame of this part of the investigation was designed for all the three countries to identify and describe the dimensions and mechanisms of exclusion and inclusion as processes affected by ethnic relations.

The present analysis makes appeal to the empirical material resulted from the contextual inquiry conducted in Romania, but addresses it from a more radical critical angle than the approach initially inspiring the investigation as a whole.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Faces and Causes of Marginalization of the Roma in Local Settings: Hungary - Romania - Serbia*. Contextual inquiry to the UNDP/World Bank/EC Regional Roma Survey 2011. A joint initiative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Open Society Foundation's Roma Initiatives Office (RIO) and the Making the Most of EU Funds for Roma Inclusion programme, and the Central European University/Center for Policy Studies (CEU CPS). October 2012 - June 2014. <<http://cps.ceu.hu/research/roma-marginalization>>

<sup>2</sup> The outcomes of the Phase entitled *Faces and Causes of Roma Marginalization: Tools and methods for evaluation and data collection* were published for the Romanian audience in the volume *Marginalizarea socio-teritorială a comunităților de romi din România. Studii de caz în județele Alba, Arad, Călărași, Dolj și Iași* (Socio-territorial Marginalization of Roma Communities from Romania. Case studies in Alba, Arad, Călărași, Dolj and Iași Counties), edited by Enikő Vincze and Iulia-Elena Hossu, Cluj: EFES, 2014, available here: <[http://www.desire-ro.eu/wp-content/uploads/Marginalizarea-socio-teritoriala-romi-Romania\\_2014.pdf](http://www.desire-ro.eu/wp-content/uploads/Marginalizarea-socio-teritoriala-romi-Romania_2014.pdf)>. On the other hand, in the chapter discussing experiences from Romania (Vincze 2014), they were presented in a synthetic report prepared for publication in 2014 by CPS/CEU together with the other three country reports and a comparative report (Szalai and Zentai 2014).

<sup>3</sup> I am grateful to my colleagues who conducted fieldwork in these settlements: Rafaela Maria Muraru and Florina Pop in Aiud, Adrian-Nicolae Furtună and Mihaela Preda in Calafat, and Cătălin Dirțu and Bogdan Herțanu in Lungani.

<sup>4</sup> This article is among the first publications that make use of the empirical material collected during the last phase of the mentioned contextual inquiry, respectively of the information generated by the investigation as a whole. Since at this stage I feel the need to elaborate a new approach towards the addressed issue, it makes sense to test it now only in relation with the empirical knowledge gained in the

Nevertheless, continuing to tackle inclusion and exclusion, the article highlights: the way how marginalised Roma are included into the mainstream society while pushed into and kept in its dispossessed peripheries (spaces and class positions), is a manifestation of adverse incorporation of a precariatized and racialised working class faced with insecurity in several or all domains of life. The latter is portrayed as redundant for nowadays capitalism, but in fact it is needed by the system as a reserve army and/or as a cheap, easily exploitable labour force both in the formal and informal economy. At its turn the process of precariatization and racialisation of the working class (Roma) and their adverse incorporation are sustained by a political economy of space and development that are among the productive forces of the formation of capitalism in Romania after the demise of the actually existing socialism. Therefore, the case of adverse incorporation of the Roma is a question through which one may critically address the large issue of the formation of capitalism. The successive chapters of the article will demonstrate this via the empirical material generated by the contextual inquiry on faces and causes of marginalisation of the Roma, in particular by stressing that precariatization and racialisation as forms of dispossession are leading to the creation of deprived housing areas and to the exclusion of the most marginalised from development as far as they are politics that serve directly or indirectly the interests of capital accumulation.

The concept of adverse incorporation highlights instances when 'inclusion' is disempowering or inequitable, and it is used to make an explicit focus on power relations, history, social dynamics, and political economy (Hickey and du Toit 2007).<sup>5</sup> My analysis proposes to use it in order to make a step further from the inclusion/exclusion perspective towards a political economy approach,<sup>6</sup> which highlights that the precariatization of the working class (Roma) is a result of how they are adversely incorporated into the system as an easily exploitable labour force or a reserve army of capitalist economy and of how they are pushed into or kept in deprived residential territories. By introducing the concept of precariatization into the analysis, I am not stating that the precariat is a distinct social class separate from other (more privileged) workers (as Standing thought about it in 2011, criticised by Bailey 2012, and Breman 2013), but I am describing some of the transformations that the working class (Roma) went through under the formation of capitalism marked by de-industrialisation and shaped by neoliberal governance.

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Romanian localities and perhaps later use it for a comparative endeavour referring to all the countries caged through this ambitious contextual inquiry.

<sup>5</sup> These authors argue for the adverse incorporation approach on the base of the criticism of importing the term of social exclusion from European countries (where it describes the exclusion of minority groups from the mainstream of civic life) to the contexts where poverty is the mainstream, and where it ensures the denial of the social rights of citizenship to the majority of people.

<sup>6</sup> Discussions with Norbert Petrovici, Cristina Raț and Anca Simionca linked to the research Spatialization and racialization of Roma exclusion. The social and cultural formation of 'Gypsy ghettos' in Romania in a European context (SPAREX) that paralleled the writing of the present article, informed my new insight towards the old empirical material collected under the contextual inquiry on faces and causes of marginalization of the Roma in local settings. SPAREX is supported by a grant of the Romanian National Authority for Scientific Research, CNCS -UEFISCDI, project number PN-II-ID-PCE-2011-3-0354.

The general theoretical frame, which enlightens this article is rooted in critical urban theory (as discussed in Smith 2002; Brenner and Theodor 2002; Brenner 2009; Marcuse et al 2010; Brenner, Marcuse and Mayer 2012; etc.), which addresses the role of 'urban question' and more broadly of the politics of space in the history and geography of capitalist development, or in creating, solving and recreating the contradictions and crises of capitalism. My understanding of the relationship between the spatial and the social (and in particular of the process of socio-spatial marginalisation of the Roma discussed in Chapter 2) is shaped by inquires about the production of space as foundational for the growth and survival of capitalism (Lefebvre 1968, 1974); about the spatial specificity of the reproduction of labour (Castells 1972); about the urbanisation of capital and of consciousness (Harvey 1985) or about the process of accumulation by dispossession through urban redevelopment (Harvey 2008); and last, but not least, about the spatialisation of political economy (Brenner 2000, 2009). This approach also informs my analysis in Chapter 4 on how is the formation of capitalism sustained by the politics of socio-spatial exclusion and racialisation of the working class (Roma).

Furthermore, addressing in Chapter 3 how is the entrepreneurial model of development functioning as an exclusionary politics towards the precariatized working class (Roma) at local levels while playing a role in the formation of the larger political and economic system, I need to make reference to neoliberal governance (already analysed in relation to the Roma by van Baar 2011), respectively to rely on the critical analysis of neoliberalism (Brenner and Theodore 2002; Jessop 2002; Brenner 2004; Brenner, Peck and Theodore 2010, 2013; Harvey 2006; Morange and Fol 2014). Last, but not least, my study highlights in Chapter 5 how a global model of neoliberal governance is localised by state actors who, while reconfiguring the role of the state, are making efforts to justify privatisation, marketisation and to support foreign investment in order to contribute to the formation of capitalism that at its turn produces uneven development and leads to the precariatization of the dispossessed working class (Roma).

Chapter 6 (the conclusion) of the article briefly summarises its core idea that the politics of socio-spatial marginalisation and the politics of entrepreneurial development, both justified by racialisation do not only create Roma as dispossessed and racialised subjects adversely incorporated into the system, but they are also constituting forces of capitalism.

## ***2. The creation of the adversely incorporated Roma through the politics of socio-spatial marginalisation***

The adoption of theoretical approaches as discussed above, enables me to talk about the usual topic of Roma inclusion and exclusion in a more unusual, i.e. political manner. Consequently, I am addressing how marginalised Roma are included into the mainstream society while being pushed into and/or kept in underdeveloped housing areas (discussed in paragraph 2.1) and in a precariatized working class position from where their labour force is easily exploited (tackled in paragraph 2.2). By adverse incorporation the working class Roma are integrated into the local

capitalist economy in a way that serves the interests of capital: they are pushed to the social and spatial margins of the local societies, i.e. into position of unemployed on the formal labour market, and/or towards housing areas that do not benefit of developmental investments. From these positions their labour force is easily exploited, since people are kept (both materially, territorially and discursively) under insecurity, dependence and control by powerful actors (public administration, private investors, non-governmental organisations etc.) who are in command of the distribution of resources at the local level. As I will demonstrate in paragraph 2.3, such processes are justified by the racialisation of the Roma, and they are more effective if the perception of their supposed 'inferiority' and subordination is interiorised and accepted as normal by the Roma themselves. It is to be observed that racialisation associates precarious life with 'Gypsiness' and it extends the negative stereotypes associated with precariousness towards all the Roma regardless of their class position, while considering that someone who transcends his/her precarious position actually leaves his/her Gypsy identity behind (Vincze 2015b).

### *2.1. The placement of marginalised Roma into underdeveloped housing areas*

Adverse incorporation functions as an outcome of both inclusionary and exclusionary trends that mingle in different arrangements affecting unevenly the various local Roma groups who self-identify themselves by the crafts practised by their ancestors. Addressing socio-spatial marginalisation as adverse incorporation, one may emphasise how the working of society, economy, or how development and growth produce marginality, or how the latter is caused by social relations of production and reproduction, of property and power, which characterise certain forms of development (Hickey and du Toit 2007: 5). The selected cities of Aiud and Calafat as well as the commune Lungani (found in three different development regions of Romania), to which I am referring below, embody local stages where several Roma groups are incorporated into the life of the larger local society, while being exploited, kept on the peripheries, or transformed into objects of technical or de-politicised 'inclusion policies', and racialised as inferior subjects.

These localities differ from each other in population size and ratio of self-identified ethnic Roma in the total population. They are also different according to the proportion of self-identified Roma who state that they speak the Romani language. Table 1 synthesises these differences. Moreover, these three localities are found in different development regions where the risk of poverty displays regional inequalities, as Table 2 shows.<sup>7</sup> They exhibit different institutional arrangements, which translate the legal measures provided by the Romanian policies for Roma into local practices. The local councils of Aiud and Lungani included Roma councillors (elected from the list of the majority political parties), the City Hall of Calafat and Lungani hired a Roma health mediator, the local school system employed a Roma school mediator in Aiud and in Calafat, and a Romani language teacher and another

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<sup>7</sup> Data for 2011, offered by the Romanian National Institute of Statistics using a EUROSTAT composite indicator that reflects the share of people who are in one of the following situations: under the at-risk-of-poverty threshold, in severe material deprivation, or living in households with very low work intensity.

school teacher of Roma origin in Lungani, while in each locality the mayor used to consult more or less officially with the informal Roma community leaders.

Despite of their differences signalled above, all of these localities display cases of social and territorial marginalisation of the Roma. In all of these cases, the local historical divisions within the localities intersect with current unequal territorial development, which increase the disadvantages of Roma living in isolated neighbourhoods of a city or in the poorest village of the larger commune. Besides suffering the effects of economic scarcity, the impoverished are also restricted to the underdeveloped margins of a city or to a less developed village of a commune because of housing and school policies. However, in all of these localities the local Roma population is divided internally, too, both on socio-economic lines and according to the intra-ethnic distinctions sustained among different Roma 'nations' (neamuri).

(1) In the city of Aiud (Map 1),<sup>8</sup> a town in Alba County (Transylvania) the areas called Bufa and Poligon are inhabited mainly by impoverished Roma. People from Poligon know the most severe degree of precariatization, as in the last six years they experienced an enforced eviction and relocation to a deprived periphery characterised by ethno-residential segregation. The Feleud area has grown from a former village, nowadays a neighbourhood included within the administrative boundaries of the city. Otherwise ethnically mixed, it still has a few streets where Roma live compactly and which did not benefit from infrastructural development, however, they are connected to the city with public transport. Feleud people try improving their living conditions by seasonal labour migration to Switzerland, France and Spain.

(2) In the city of Calafat (Map 2) in Dolj County (Muntenia/Oltenia) the so-called Dunării area benefits from its proximity to the urban centre. Better-off Spoitori or Cositorari Roma inhabit a part of this district, which as a larger neighbourhood also hosts Romanians. They practice seasonal migration to Spain, France and Italy. However, not all the Spoitori Roma are better-off. Rudărie area is situated at the margins of Calafat and is populated exclusively by Rudari Roma. They suffer the most because of material deprivations connected to their residential segregation in a disadvantaged urban area. Regardless of the historical crafts of their ancestors or of their participation on the city's socialist industry before 1990, nowadays people from both groups are taking part in the local economy via its informal sector. However, even before 1990, despite being employed workers, some of them practised in-country migration for seasonal agricultural work and augmented their salaries with income from informal labour.

(3) Lungani commune (Map 3) in Iași County (Moldova) displays how the spatial division of its composing villages is overlapping with the economic disparities

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<sup>8</sup> At a very early stage of our research, with the occasion of our socio-tours by which we identified the core institutional actors from public administration, schooling, healthcare, local economy, politics etc., we asked representatives of these institutions to mark on the city map the vicinities where, according to their knowledge, ethnic Roma persons/groups, respectively the impoverished people of the locality lived. Out of this exercise several 'social maps' of the localities resulted - we use some of them here to illustrate the spatial divisions within the localities on ethnic and economic lines.

of the locality. Zmeu village is a better-off composing village populated by Ursari Roma, who from the beginning of the 1990s have started to migrate for seasonal work to Italy and Spain. On the other side, Crucea village is inhabited by Lăieși Roma, whose great majority lives in extreme poverty. All of them are lacking property documents for their houses or the land on which they are placed. Before 1990 the agricultural work was strongly feminised in the village since the men migrated to cities offering employment opportunities in industries.

## *2.2. The exploitation of labour force of the Roma*

The local histories of Roma presence in the settlement (reconstructed from the conducted family interviews) suggest that regardless of the political regimes, the living conditions and the socio-geographic placement of Roma groups on the localities' map were firmly connected both to their economic activities through which they could integrate into the larger local communities, and to their social and cultural status associated with their ethnicity (Vincze 2015b). Due to all these they were placed in marginal residential areas and subordinated class positions of the local hierarchies and power structures, even if they may have known different degrees of participation in the economic life of the larger settlements during different periods. As a result of the conjunctures of these factors, Roma in Feleud (Aiud), Spoitori Roma in Calafat, and Ursari Roma in Zmeu/Lungani usually had social, economic, and cultural resources that provided them with better living conditions and more access to social goods compared to Roma in Bufa and mostly to Roma in Poligon (Aiud), to Rudari Roma in Calafat, or to the Lăieși Roma in the Crucea village of Lungani. We could observe that the better-off Roma might inhabit residential spaces that are differentiated from the rest of the locality as so-called 'compact Roma communities', but their tendencies to move out and mingle with the majority are not necessarily refused or made impossible by the latter and it mostly happens on the base of informal economic exchanges, but within unequal power relations. In the case of Roma belonging to the most precarious working class, the ethnic enclave overlaps with a condition of territorial segregation that is hardly permeable, and usually they are the categories who are subjected to forced evictions and relocations to areas that are harshly separated from the rest of the local society.

The labour force market has dramatically changed in all of the three localities after 1990, since all their industries were basically dismantled. Nowadays they do not provide sufficient jobs in industry or agriculture, so Roma who practice transnational labour migration are those who can secure a relatively better-off living condition (Roma in Feleud/Aiud, Spoitori Roma in Calafat, and Ursari Roma in Lungani). Material resources gained through working abroad allow them to buy houses near Romanians and thus they enjoy a better residential integration, however, seasonal labour migration offers only insecure resources and exposes the migrants to several risks. The most precarious Roma of these settlements remain segregated in disadvantaged areas; they do not benefit from resources and networks assuring mobility; and local entrepreneurs and mayors exploit their poverty and dependence on social welfare or on underpaid day labouring.

### *2.3. Socio-spatial marginalisation and racialisation of the Roma*

The most direct and severe form of Roma exclusion was practised by the municipality of Aiud. This took the shape of forced evictions of impoverished families from the city centre and their transformation into homeless ('allowing' them to settle on the urban peripheries in homes improvised by themselves). Yet, we should also notice that other, more indirect forms of housing exclusion were also practised in Calafat towards the Rudari Roma, or in Lungani toward Roma from Crucea, who were entrapped into sub-standard housing conditions, hardly having access to water or electricity or paved roads, and were under-served or totally neglected by local investments in terms of housing infrastructure.

In each of the above-mentioned cases, material deprivation (class-based inequality) and cultural stigmatisation (ethnic-identity based mis-recognition) are juxtaposed to different degrees, and racialisation (dehumanisation and denial of personhood) 'justifies' the differential and unfair treatment of the Roma. Together these factors produce and maintain different forms of socio-spatial divisions. Moreover, such forms are also created and/or reinforced by unequal territorial development. The latter are linked to the general deregulation policies practised at national level as a result of which some territories are totally neglected by authorities, while they are not of interest either to any of the local political actors looking for their direct economic profit. At the local level, the attention of policy-makers towards the territories that should be developed and those that should not benefit from infrastructural or human resource-related investments are also shaped by racist conceptions. These 'justify' the neglect of the residential areas inhabited by 'undeserving Roma' who supposedly 'like living in poverty' (without water, electricity etc.) or in 'dangerous areas' (such as landfills, polluted environments, water treatment plants).

Despite its internal differentiations, the inferiorisation of Roma as a racialised ethnic group has a great role to play in their collective exclusion and marginalisation both in social and spatial terms. In this process 'The Roma' are associated with the 'cultural behaviour' or 'physiological essence' of the 'socially assisted' or of the individual who is incapable of living otherwise but only in a precarious way. That is how they are transformed into an 'inferior' kind of people, or even a 'sub-human species' who are purportedly unable - due to their 'non-modern culture' or 'blood' - to fit into the new social order and to qualify not only as worthy citizens, but also as persons. The practice of coupling 'The Roma' perceived as the 'racial other' with 'The poor', is even stronger in cases when a distinction is made among the poor themselves, between the poor who 'deserve' and the poor who 'do not deserve' social protection (respectively the ethnic majority on the one hand and Roma on the other). Or put differently, between the poor who deserve to live in poverty (like Roma who supposedly 'do not like to work') and the poor who became poor through no fault of their own (the non-Roma who 'are victims of economic restructuring or of the financial crisis'). On the other hand, the racialization/inferiorisation of Roma means the displacement of poor Roma from the inner cities and of entrapping them into segregated and dehumanising marginal/deprived spaces. The latter usually lack proper infrastructure, are polluted and isolated and of course stigmatised, so that the

disgrace attached to the space becomes the dishonour projected on people and interiorised by them, and eventually leads to further dehumanisation.

### *3. The creation of the adversely incorporated Roma through the politics of entrepreneurial development*

The analysis we made about the development programmes in Aiud and Calafat shows that these are also ways of adversely incorporating the precariatized working class Roma into the system. This is so because these programmes (as described in sub-chapter 3.1), while defining the Roma as beneficiaries of inclusion measures, reproduce their social exclusion by promoting the enterprise-based development agenda, on which they cannot be 'competitive' due to the structural inequalities that they are subjected to. We could observe that the discursive frames of local development plans are strongly shaped by the ideologies of the European Commission and the World Bank, which underlie the interests related to the post-socialist economic reconstruction of a country such as Romania. In addition, we could note (as expressed in sub-chapter 3.2) that the directions of local development are defined according to the logic of the Structural Funds schemes, and projects for Roma are also conceived as a potential route for attracting external funds to the localities. Paragraph 3.3 at the end of this chapter interprets all these trends as ways how precariatized working class Roma are created as subjects who are excluded from development due to the fact that the latter is shaped by an entrepreneurial approach and development is transformed into business.

#### *3.1. Projects for Roma in Aiud (2009-2013): poverty reduction through community development*

The municipality of Aiud implemented two projects on behalf of the local Roma communities, both of them instrumented by the Romanian Fund for Social Development (RFSD).<sup>9</sup> On the base of a loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development given to the Romanian Government in 2006, the RFSD was designated as implementing agency of the Social Inclusion Project (SIP) across the country. Its effective implementation started in 2009. The Social Inclusion Project was conceived 'to help the Government of Romania implement the Joint Inclusion Memorandum through assistance given to the existing, or emerging programmes that address the needs of the vulnerable/disadvantaged groups of Roma, persons with disabilities, youth at risk, and victims of domestic violence.'<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> The RFSD was established by the Law 129/1998 as a Bucharest-based organisation through which the Romanian Government aimed at implementing projects for poverty reduction. Since its establishment the RFSD has acted as implementation agent for several Ministries of the Romanian Government (administration and interior, finances, economy and commerce, regional development), but it also implemented projects with the support of the European Social Fund, the Making the Most of EU funding for Roma inclusion/ OSI (Project Generation Initiative), and others.

<sup>10</sup> More information available:

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One of the four components of the Social Inclusion Project was the Priority Interventions Programme (PIP), which between 2011 and 2013 ran 133 integrated projects on behalf of poor Roma communities across Romania using a total budget of circa 18 million euros. In each and every locality where it was implemented, the Priority Interventions Programme included a component to improve small infrastructure (roads, water and sanitation, and basic housing), and a component addressing community-based social services (education, health, advocacy and social support), while targeting the increased participation of Roma communities in local decision making processes. The RFSD required a precise procedure regarding the legal establishment and functioning of the Local Initiative Groups consisting of Roma community members, which were supposed to implement the Priority Intervention Programme at local levels in a partnership with the City Halls (that had to provide modest co-funding). According to the philosophy of PIP, the Roma beneficiaries of such projects were expected to participate on a voluntary base in the mutually agreed activities, for example by labouring on the small infrastructure works. Through the PIP the RFSD implemented a particular view about poverty reduction ‘through the mobilization and accountability of Roma communities.’ Its operational Manual stated that ‘through the PIP the RFSD offers the opportunity to poor communities constituted mainly by ethnic Roma, to improve their capability to solve their problems through learning by doing, through their involvement into the identification of their needs and hierarchising their priorities, and through participation on decision-making regarding the elaboration, implementation and monitoring the projects.’ Defining such projects as community development, the expectation of the funding bodies was to also prepare the local communities for accessing the foreseen European Funds: through PIP the RFSD aimed both to ‘assure funds for improving the life condition of the Roma population, and to offer technical assistance and training of local actors with the aim to increase the capacity of communities with Roma population to self-organise and to manage to solve their problems by their own efforts.’ The selection of the beneficiaries was facilitated by the National Agency for Roma (NAR) that transmitted to RFSD a list of Roma communities proposed to benefit from PIP, and also a description of their situation. On the base of the NAR proposals, the RFSD experts visited the targeted locations, informed the population about the opportunity to participate on this programme, verified if the communities would be eligible and offered assistance for the elaboration of the integrated projects. Eventually the applications were submitted to RFSD by the City Hall with the condition of partnering with the local initiative groups of the Roma communities or with non-governmental organisations. Furthermore, the City Halls were administering the funds and were responsible for the efficient implementation of the projects, including contracting the works, goods and services.

No wonder that the two projects for Roma communities in Aiud funded by the RFSD were strictly following the model from above, which actually generated them, motivated the City Hall to get involved, and facilitated the creation of a local initiative group composed of Roma community members. The beneficiaries of both projects were people living in one particular area of Aiud, Feleud (targeting two of its

component zones, Pășunii street and Budu), while the other disadvantaged areas of the city were not included. Regarding the project and its objectives, the project manager stated:

‘We wanted the project to contribute to reduce poverty and social exclusion through mobilisation and responsibility of the Roma community, offering the population from this community the opportunity to improve their problem solving skills.’

The group interview made with the Roma people living on Pășunii street revealed that despite the implementation of this project, the most serious problem they still face today is the lack of drinking water. They said that before the project through which the City Hall installed water pipes in their street, there was already a water pump on Pășunii street, brought by a non-governmental organisation through foreign sponsors. The community members stated that the City Hall came to the spot and found that the water system had to be restored as it had not been done properly. Then they made lists and came and laid the water pipes. The interviewees brought into the discussion the fact that even after finishing the installation work the water pipes, only six families out of 30 had running water in their house: those who could afford it. Regarding participation in the project implementation in the other part of Feleud (Budu), the informal Roma representative mentioned the participation of Roma in ecological campaigns and a waste collection action, but less so at meetings. He thinks this is one of the reasons why the initiative group no longer functioned after the lifetime of the project, nevertheless during the project it was important because it gave him access to the City Hall for representing the community. With regards to the results of this project, the two interviewees stated that the objectives were achieved, namely, paving the streets and strengthening the river banks. But they affirmed that there is more work to be done on the social component. The Roma representative believed that the local initiative group should continue its work after the project is finished and the City Hall representative considered that Roma should be more involved in these actions to ensure the continuation of the works or for monitoring the project.

### *3.2. Projects for Roma in Calafat (2010-2012): pursuing of funds without strategy*

Between 2010-2012 the public authorities conceived project proposals on behalf of Roma communities, or they wanted to be partners in such initiatives, but they did not get any financing. One of these failed projects was intended to develop a social enterprise generating income for the Roma.

At the City Hall there was a consensus about the positive message of having ethnic Roma persons on the boards of projects, but we could also learn that the formation of Roma initiative groups were very superficial and were only related to some particular project proposals without a sustainable impact on Roma participation on decision-making. On the other hand we could note that the Roma representative bodies had no qualified personnel who would be able to write project proposals and/or to conceive programmes. Another aspect worth mentioning is that even if the local government has made a number of important steps to have an income

generating project for Roma, such an action on the behalf of the Roma community was not mentioned anywhere in the Sustainable Development Strategy of the city. The Roma were not mentioned in any section as a distinct target group of this strategy. This made us supposing that the local government acted as a 'funding hunter,' and it did not conceive projects on the base of a well defined intervention strategy. Under these conditions, even if the City Hall could have received financial support for projects dedicated for Roma, its interventions could be only sporadic, unstructured and without lasting results.

Referring to the general difficulties of elaborating projects for the Roma, the City Hall expert on European programmes emphasised that the biggest obstacle of such endeavours is the lack of data on the situation of the local Roma communities. Moreover, he admitted that the development strategy of the city was elaborated by a private firm from Craiova (the administrative centre of Dolj county) to whom they sub-contracted this work on the base of their offers:

'They developed the strategy from the bottom up, they held meetings with the business people, with NGOs and the citizens of the city. There were three meetings, I think. Each of them proposed various projects, so this strategy includes projects in various areas, on various topics, which we have included in project files that are attached to this strategy. no Roma or any representative of theirs attended these meetings, nobody came to tell us "we want this or that". The informal community leader was on holiday, he was not active, he was in a difficult period of his life.... Now, honestly, whom should we have addressed? Which representative? I can say that Roma representatives should be more active.'

### *3.3. From enterprise-based development to development as business*

In the case of Aiud, our analysis identified the links between the two projects dedicated for the social inclusion of the local Roma communities and the development model promoted by the World Bank in Romania (through governmental actions often mediated by some big NGOs, such as the Romanian Fund for Social Development, RFSD). Moreover, we could also note how the ideology of projects for Roma is related to the general local development strategy of the city, in its turn informed by the regulations of the European Commission regarding the use of EU funds in Romania for infrastructural and human resources development. On the base of this we may conclude that the view on how community development à-la World Bank (and the RFSD as its national intermediary) is supposed to solve the problems of the disadvantaged (promising to empower them to tackle their issues) is related to the view of the EU (and of Romania as Member State) regarding the role of local authorities in directly supporting private investors on the one hand, and in promoting the active inclusion of vulnerable groups viewed as potential labour force or as a source of development on the other hand. Furthermore, in the case of Aiud we could arrive at the conclusion that the presence of the RFSD in the locality, later followed by the ROMACT and ROMED programmes of the Council of Europe was crucial in the appearance of a moment when the elected Roma local councillor could promote a brief plan for the improvement of the condition of Roma successfully, which was adopted by the Local

Council as an official statement of the municipality. Procedurally speaking, this was an important development at the local level, however one may continue to be critical about how far the defined provisions could serve the assurance of social justice for the Roma subjected to intersectional forms of exclusion (including housing, labour, educational marginalisation). As far as these are produced by structural factors, they can hardly be overcome by vocational courses or by small steps towards procedural justice.

In the case of Calafat, the lack of local policies and projects targeting impoverished Roma is also linked to how the municipality planned to adapt its development strategies to the provisions of the European Union regarding its rural policies and development models. On another occasion (Vincze 2015a) I described how, as a result of this, the city of Calafat was introduced into a larger rural territory chosen by the government, besides other several similar areas in Romania, as a beneficiary of the LEADER programme. The LEADER development approach addressing disadvantaged micro-regions did not pay attention to internal inequalities or to the particular situation of impoverished ethnic Roma, and there was no other major impetus either coming from outside that could have motivated the local authorities to implement projects for Roma. Under these conditions, the City Hall did not make any effort either to elaborate a local policy for Roma inclusion or to implement individual projects. Generally speaking, the direct link between envisioning local development and between the funding opportunities was explicitly stated by one of our interviewees, the representative of the Calafat City Hall. The formation of the Local Action Group (GAL) 'Calafat' and its underlying conceptions reveal how the predominant development models are, at best, replacing the ideal of social justice with the ideal of procedural justice. Most importantly, due to this case one may comprehend how a limited understanding of participation is at risk of recreating local power structures and re-assuring the control of the local powerful on development priorities and financial resources, without assuring larger citizen participation.

In due course, the idea of the need to cultivate the entrepreneurial spirit not only guides the discursive construction of development visions, but the elaboration of development plans itself also becomes an enterprise or a business. The City Halls are outsourcing this activity to private companies, while the national non-governmental organisations enjoying governmental or presidential support are ensuring their existence by administering EU or WB or other foreign funds, and local non-governmental organisations are created in order to attract these funds usually with the help of consultancy firms specialised on project applications and project management. Within this system, the capacity to attract these funds becomes a feature of a desirable, i.e. entrepreneurial self (both in the cases of persons and institutions), and those who cannot fulfil this requirement might be stigmatised as subjects unworthy for development. Under these conditions, the local development strategies, otherwise very ambitious in terms of projected programmes, are in danger of not being translated into effective interventions as far as the local actors (not to speak about disadvantaged groups) are not capable, due to several structural reasons, to elaborate projects that could be competitive on the market of funding.

#### *4. The formation of capitalism through the politics of socio-spatial exclusion and racialisation*

In Romania today, the politics of socio-spatial exclusion and the transformation of Roma into a racialised subject is a foundational element of capitalism. This politics, in the broadest sense of the term, is an outcome of several factors and processes that are not necessarily coordinated and targeted against Roma by one or another actor. However, the implemented economic and social policies are developed to serve the interests of profit over people (Chomsky 1999; Brenner, Marcuse and Mayer 2011) and altogether these factors and processes systemically correlate producing effects as a whole that consist of growing social divisions and inequalities. Moreover, the functioning of such a politics is sustained by ideologies actively developed and promoted to carry on the visions of the 'good society' that serve the economic and political interests of those who have access to define these visions and explain the created inequalities not by exclusionary mechanisms but by the characteristics of the excluded. As a result, the politics of socio-spatial marginalisation dispossesses the persons and families subjected to such processes of the resources and capabilities to overcome the effects of marketisation, while it also deprives them of means of participation on decision-making. Consequently, this politics concludes in the precariatization of the working class whose livelihood today cumulates all the effects of past and present structural disadvantages.

In the case of Roma from our selected localities this precarious class position overlaps with an ethnic status ranked as inferior by the power arrangements of all political regimes (including pre- and post-socialist, and socialist as well). Enslaved till the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in the Romanian Kingdoms (Wallachia and Moldova), subjected to assimilation in Transylvania, adversely incorporated into the Romanian socialist economic, civic and ethnic order, and severely pushed to the margins as redundant by the emergent capitalism, different groups organised in extended families converged by kinship and economic lineages and envisaged as 'Gypsies' or 'Roma' could only find niches of fitting into the larger society that were prescribed by the majority. Besides, they always lacked genuine instruments of participation on an equal base on the political negotiations regarding distribution and recognition.

Our research demonstrated that Roma of the scrutinised communities underwent during their histories a process of downwards mobility or, at the best, known the reproduction of prior standards both regarding school participation and labour opportunities. This is underscored or aggravated by the effects of current structural processes of housing/residential exclusion and segregation, while the latter is also enforced by this educational and occupational downwards mobility and at its turn induces severe deprivations in all domains of life. The formation of segregated, materially deprived and culturally stigmatised territories is not a contingency, but stays at the very core of post-socialist capitalism. These areas are populated mostly by ethnic Roma deprived of other livelihood opportunities and/or cast out by authorities in the name of 'law, order and civilisation', and are very often stigmatised as 'Gypsy neighbourhoods' (țigănie). The Romanian Explicative Dictionary defines 'țigănie' as a slum populated by 'țigani' (Gypsies) or as a reprehensible and scandalous misbehaviour characterised by excessive bargaining.

In the light of the rich empirical material collected in the three selected localities, our analysis has the potential to contribute to the understanding of how capitalism and racism are functioning today in Romania through one another while creating and justifying a racialising capitalist political economy. This deprives the socially and spatially excluded not only of economic (and housing) means needed for living a decent human life, but also of personhood. Moreover, neoliberal governance extends the principles of the 'free market' to all domains of life and politics (including housing), and it disseminates an enterprise model over the entire social body (van Baar 2011), as a result of which 'competitiveness' is celebrated as the core quality of personhood. By this it creates a regime of economic domination where the privatising classes accumulate wealth and the dispossessed are experiencing advanced marginality and not due to their inborn differences regarding 'competitiveness' (or individual ability to qualify on the 'free market'), but due to how the state enforces this two-directional process and makes the fiction of markets real (Wacquant 2012). Moreover - through (housing) policies as technologies of governmentality (Foucault 1982, 1991; van Baar 2011; Shore and Write 1997, 2011) - this regime also fabricates the subjects that act and speak and perceive themselves as 'naturally' belonging to positions into which they are placed by the system.

The formation of capitalism shaped by privatisation and marketisation is enacted among others by racism. In this process racism functions not only as a cultural system justifying the created socio-economic inequalities, but most importantly it also works as an institutionalised arrangement producing material effects in the form of accumulation on the one side, and of dispossessions on the other side (Harvey 2006). The interplay of capitalism and racism materially produces the dispossessed by pushing some people into structurally disadvantaged conditions, and it also racialises them discursively by asserting that they are 'sub-human' or 'non-person' since they cannot fit into the ideal-type subject position prescribed by the neoliberal order.

While the politics of socio-spatial exclusion creates 'The Roma' as racialised (sub-human) subjects by placing disadvantaged ethnic Roma into dehumanising structural positions, racism justifies their dehumanisation by making an appeal to the marketising ideologies of capitalism. Paradoxically, the impoverished Roma ending up in the particular neighbourhoods of the selected localities on the one hand proved to be redundant or useless on the formal labour markets of the larger settlements (this being the reason of their dislocation from 'civilised territories'), but on the other hand they, as people kept in total economic dependence and under control could be always abused as a cheap labour force ensuring that they would never resist their exploitation. This re-demonstrates how the interplay of capitalism and racism privileges the winners of marketisation and it is inclusive of people, places, and societal areas that might be better included into the profit-oriented political economy of capitalism (as a labour force, as geographical zones worthy of investment, as domains which deserve development). But it is exclusive towards those who became redundant and were rendered 'surplus' and 'needless' from the point of view of capital, and most importantly towards the racialised, dehumanised subjects whose labour might be exploited due to its socio-spatial location placed at the edge of legality and human dignity (Vincze 2014).

### *5. The formation of capitalism through the politics of entrepreneurial development*

A core idea of the new development visions promoted in and for Romania that, as a general trend, are also manifested and (re)produced locally in Aiud and Calafat, is the reconfiguration of the role of the state in its relation, on the one hand, with the market, and on the other hand with the citizens or with the society. The way local authorities are defining themselves at the same time as powerful agents that fully support the private economic investors, and as weak actors that cannot (and should not) tackle the social consequences of economic restructuring, is a symptom of the broader tendency that shapes the post-socialist reconstruction of Romania in a neoliberal tone. On a more general level we may conclude that this development model is sustaining the neoliberalisation process in Romania, too, as it does globally. It is promoting and reproducing the idea according to which 'human wellbeing can be best achieved by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterised by strong private property rights, free markets and free trade' (Harvey 2005: 2).

Under the conditions of the dismissal of actually existing socialism, arguments for this model of organising and developing the economy and society are strongly relying on the criticism of the socialist past, including its development paradigm. This criticism also informs the endeavour to reconfigure the role of the state so that the latter is expected to create and preserve an institutional framework that spreads the competitive and market principles to all spheres of life, including development strategies. The cost of this change is dismantling public agencies for the provision of social services, a phenomenon that is conceived not as something that (re)produces social injustice, but as a new (desirable) mode of governance. Such processes are also going on at the local level, as the cases of our cities showed, and are resulting in the fact that cities cease to be a space of social reproduction to become a space of competition (Jessop 2002).

One should note that in Romania the neoliberal practices of governance became predominant and more visible with the austerity measures of the government imposed on the population starting in 2010 (as part of the structural adjustment programme enforced in the country by the International Monetary Fund), which were sold to the public opinion as the one and only possible way to handle the economic crises. Moreover, we also need to observe that this paradigm was explicitly recalled in the 'competitive cities' development model recommended to Romania by the World Bank at the end of 2013, which defines competitive cities as engines of development.<sup>11</sup> Parallel with this report, in its capacity of advisor to the Government of Romania, in April 2014 the World Bank released another report including the

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<sup>11</sup> The Report *Competitive Cities. Reshaping the Economic Geography of Romania* is available here: <[http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2014/02/20/000456286\\_20140220151016/Rendered/PDF/843240v10Full00s0Box382123B00OUO070.pdf](http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2014/02/20/000456286_20140220151016/Rendered/PDF/843240v10Full00s0Box382123B00OUO070.pdf)>. The proposals of this World Bank Report were also fundamental in the elaboration of the *EU-Romania Partnership Agreement for 2014-2020*.

results of its investigations conducted on urban marginalised communities<sup>12</sup> and a related practical handbook on the ‘Elaboration of Integration Strategies for Urban Marginalized Communities in Romania.’<sup>13</sup> The latter discusses the development approach suggested to Romania by the European Commission called Community-Led Local Development (CLLD). Briefly put, this model promises social change by increasing community participation in local governance.

One may explain the parallel existence of the two views with reference to Romania (the competition-based development and the inclusive development model) by using the interpretation of Morange and Fol (2014) about how, in several parts of the world, neoliberalisation functions on the continuum of the roll-out and roll-back sequences of redistributive and procedural justice. According to the authors, after the roll-back phase of neoliberalism, consisting of structural adjustment policies severely affecting social and redistributive justice, this capitalist system attempts to correct the social consequences of the previous period by roll-out measures, which usually consist of the introduction of greater participation and procedural justice. That is why, the authors observe, ‘it is true that neoliberalization is often accompanied by the reformulation of discourses on justice, because in even the most aggressive projects the objectives of social and spatial justice are rarely entirely disregarded’ (Morange and Fol 2014:16). Under these conditions the main question to ask is whether procedural justice (participation) can or cannot produce corrective social outcomes. This is a phenomenon that might be studied in time in Romania, too, by addressing how the CLLD development model solves the problem of social marginalisation (of Roma) that it promises to handle successfully. According to the experiences learned in other cases, greater participation may lead to forms of power sharing while still remaining compatible with a neoliberal system of management (Bacque and Biewener 2013), i.e. with the delegation of traditional public service roles to the ‘community’. Or, differently put, the great expectations towards this development model might mask how ‘the rhetoric of social inclusion can be twisted in favour of material exclusion’, or how ‘the underpaid labour force can be exploited in the name of equity’ (Morange and Fol 2014: 17).

Through the analysis of the development visions of the two cities under our scrutiny, one may depict some signs of such evolutions hidden in their logic. The judgement according to which, on the one hand, development rests on the attraction of private investors into the city, and on the other hand the competitive advantage of the locality rests on the reduced cost of labour, transforms the latter into a factor that increases and serves capital. As a result, the enterprise-based development model, without safeguarding measures regarding the socio-economic rights of the workers and generally speaking of citizens, cannot really provide a development assuring social equity, but only one that incorporates the working class in an adverse manner and therefore leads to its precariatization.

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<sup>12</sup> The report entitled *The Atlas of Urban Marginalized Areas in Romania* is accessible here: <[http://backend.elard.eu/uploads/wb-project-in-ro/atlas\\_24april\\_en.pdf](http://backend.elard.eu/uploads/wb-project-in-ro/atlas_24april_en.pdf)>

<sup>13</sup> The handbook is available at: <[http://backend.elard.eu/uploads/wb-project-in-ro/integration\\_strategies\\_a4\\_en\\_print.pdf](http://backend.elard.eu/uploads/wb-project-in-ro/integration_strategies_a4_en_print.pdf)>

## ***6. Conclusions***

According to the assumed critical urban theory's understanding of the political economy of space and development, and their role in the formation of capitalism, my study demonstrated that the politics of socio-spatial marginalisation justified by racialisation and the politics of entrepreneurial development not only create Roma as dispossessed and racialised subjects adversely incorporated into the system, but are also constituents of capitalism.

We could see that the Roma pushed into the conditions of a precariatized working class are classified like redundant social categories, but actually they are marginalised at the edge of society from where their labour force is easily exploited without a consistent investment into its reproduction. The formation of capitalism informed by neoliberal governance is held up by a state that withdraws from its role sustaining collective consumption; for example, instead of financing adequate public housing for its citizens, the state supports a type of urban development that serves the interests of real estate investors and developers. But, as described in chapters 2 and 4, it is also sustained by racism, therefore racialisation functions as a further constitutive element of capitalism. The uneven development of the localities, within which the precariatized working class Roma are forced to live in the most deprived and isolated housing areas, whose underdevelopment is also a result of local investment and redistribution policies, is used discursively not only to deny the accountability of the state towards its citizens, but also to associate the negative connotations of underdeveloped territories with the (allegedly biological or cultural) features of people inhabiting them.

Furthermore, as described in chapters 3 and 5, the politics of entrepreneurial development practised in relation to impoverished Roma communities, also contributes to the justification of the withdrawal of the state from its role as a developer and of conceiving development as merit. This merit, supposedly, should be won through a competition for projects. The vision behind such projects (promoted at different scales by several organisations, from transnational, through national and to the local ones) places the responsibility of 'poverty eradication' on the shoulders of the impoverished community itself while supporting already powerful local actors in their capacity to practice development as a profitable business.

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***Tables and Figures***

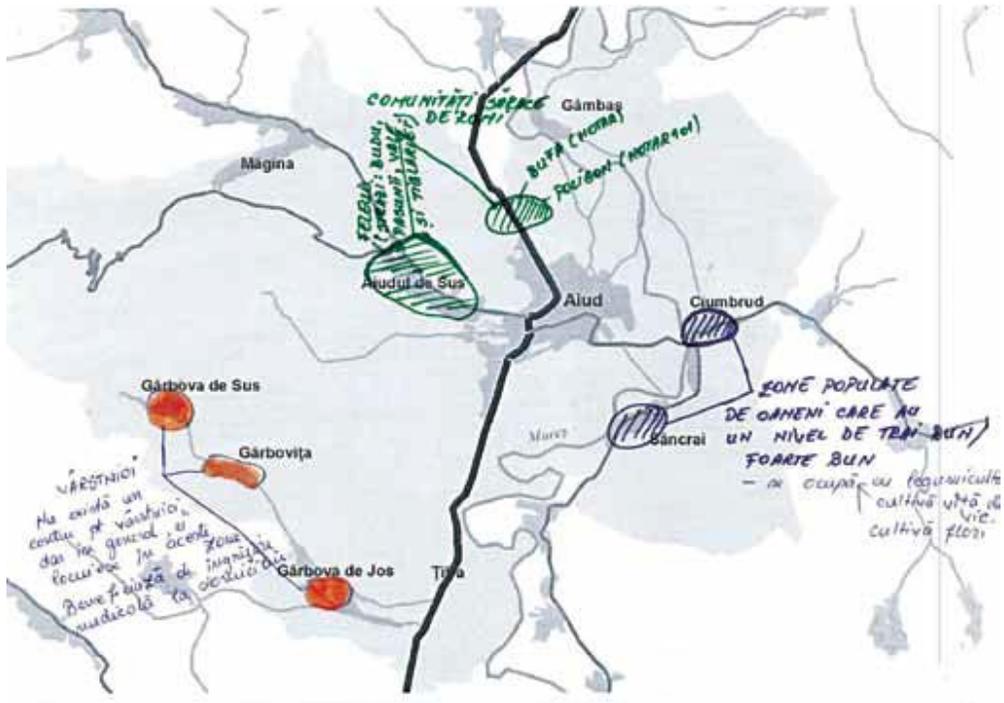
Table 1. The population of the selected localities and % of ethnic Roma, Census 2011

Locality	Total population	Ethnic Roma	Percentage of ethnic Roma	Romani speakers	Percentage of Romani speakers
Aiud	22495	1450	6.45	729	50
Calafat	16247	750	4.62	359	48
Lungani	5574	1887	33.85	1734	92

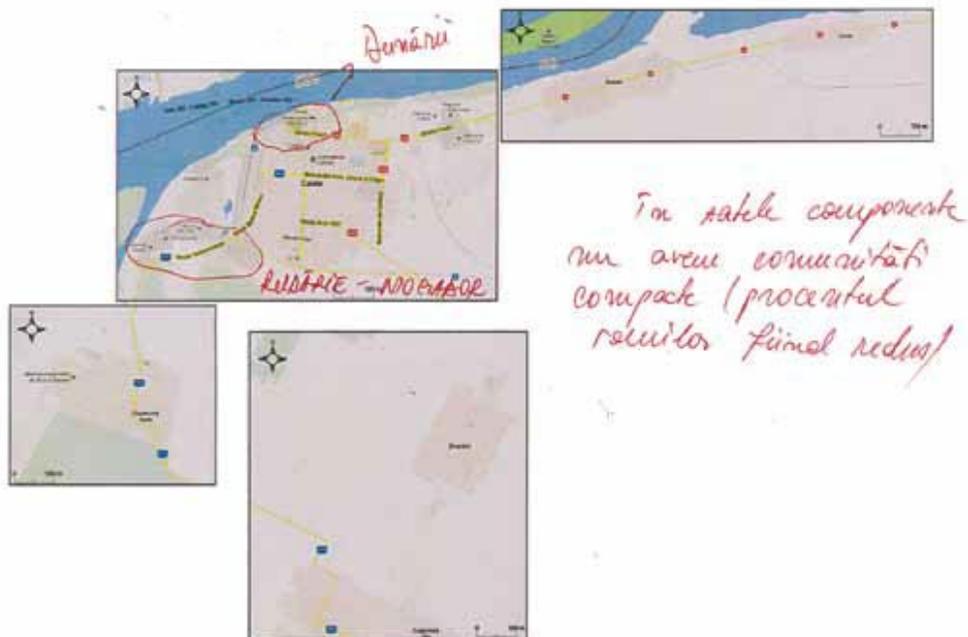
Table 2. Selected localities in the context of regional rate of risk of poverty

Locality	Development Region	Rate of risk of poverty
Aiud	Centre	28.5%
Calafat	South-Vest Oltenia	44.8%
Lungani	North-East	51.2%

Map 1. Aiud socio-map (green areas populated by 'poor Roma communities')



Map 2. Calafat socio-map (red areas marked as zones inhabited by 'compact Roma communities')



Map 3. Lungani socio-map (territories marked by red line: 'Roma area'; marked by blue line: 'poor areas')

