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REGARD - REMembering Genocide Against Roma Discrimination

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The current report is part of the REGARD project and of the participatory processes foreseen within the project.

The report is divided in three chapters:

- The first chapter introduces briefly the REGARD project;
- The second chapter illustrates the methodology used;
- The third chapter analyses the findings of the listening process organised between the 15th and 29th of September 2023.



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1 Introduction to the REGARD project

REGARD is an EU project funded by the CERV Programme and implemented by a partnership managed by CNR-IRPPS and composed of three Roma associations: Croatian Romani Union "Kali Sara" (Croatia); Association "Thèm Romano Onlus" (Italy); and Asociation "Centrul de Cultura al Romilor Dolj" (Romania).

Following the anniversaries of the Roma calendar, REGARD aims at preserving and transmitting the memory of Roma genocide and resistance by considering its root causes and consequences, and the implications for today.

As an integrated action model, the project plans to implement in Croatia, Romania and Italy a set of activities:

1. Surveys on the knowledge of Roma genocide and Roma culture and on antigypsyism;
2. Training modules for schools on Roma genocide, Roma resistance and Roma history and culture for students and teachers supporting the remembrance of Samudaripen in textbooks;
3. Participatory processes with institutions and civil society to foster a common culture of remembrance and mutual understanding between Roma and non-Roma, men and women, and develop shared intervention strategies for fighting antigypsyism;
4. Cultural events and artistic expressions of Roma created during and after Samudaripen, remembering the Holocaust including three international conferences open to the public and attended by Romani scholars of Roma culture scholars to sustain the EU goal of integrating the historical narrative of the Roma into the national and European one for both target groups.

2 Methodological approach

The participatory process foresees two stages:

- Semi-structured individual and anonymous interviews with local stakeholders that represent a wide variety of perspectives and resources on the project topics. The interviews were carried out between the 15th and 29th of September and involved 24 stakeholders. The results of the interviews are going to be used in the second phase of the participatory process to design a participatory able to respond to local needs.

- The organization of a participatory event to Lanciano, which will adopt the Future Search Conference method. The Future Search Conference (FSC) is a participatory planning tool aimed at engaging key stakeholders of a certain territory in the creation of a shared vision of change. The event will take place on the 12th of October and is expected to involve around 50 representatives of civil society, universities and institutions.

Overall, 24 interviews were carried out between the 15th and 29th of September 2023 for the preparation of the FSC.

The interviewed people are:

1. Santino Spinelli, President of the association Them Romanò
2. Daniela de Rentiis, Association Them Romanò
3. Gennaro Spinelli, President of the Union of Romanés communities in Italy (UCRI)
4. Domiziana Cuonzo, Joseph cultural and social association
5. Luigi Cuonzo, Joseph cultural and social association
6. Alessio di Meco, Association CAL (Artistic Committee of Lanciano)
7. Franco Mastrangelo, Association A thousand of Trees of Lanciano
8. Giovanni de Nobile, writer and ex assessor
9. Giulia Napolitano, president of the association Logos Abile of Lanciano and lawyer
10. Gianni Orecchioni, past president of a local school, manager of the Publishing House Carabba e historian
11. Valeria de Rentiis, local police representative of the Municipality of Fossacesia
12. Giuseppe De Pasqua, Publishing Housing Nuova Gutenberg of Lanciano
13. Anonymous interview, representative of an association of Lanciano
14. Anonymous interview, journalist of Lanciano
15. Anonymous interview, teacher to Lanciano
16. Anonymous interview, member of the Roma community and social worker
17. Anonymous interview, citizen representing the historic memory of Lanciano
18. Anonymous interview, representative of the cultural environment of Lanciano
19. Anonymous interview, young member of the Roma community
20. Anonymous interview, young member of the Roma community
21. Anonymous interview, member of the Roma community
22. Anonymous interview, employee within a municipality near Lanciano
23. Anonymous interview, school manager of a school of Lanciano
24. Anonymous interview, local entrepreneur of Lanciano

3 Results of the listening process

The present chapter analyses the main findings of the listening process focusing on the following issues:

- Difficulties faced by Roma and Sinti of Lanciano;
- Knowledge about Samudaripen within and outside the Roma and Sinti community;
- Effectiveness of measures implemented and suggestions for their improvement;
- Purpose of and potential participants in the Future Search Conference set for the 12th of October 2023.

3.1 The Roma community of Lanciano

The interviews conducted highlight that the Roma and Sinti community present in Lanciano has been rooted in Lanciano for a long time. As reported by the interviewees, the Roma and Sinti settled in Lanciano around the year 1400. Before that, Roma and Sinti, who were often employed as blacksmiths and herders, were nomadic, because they travelled jointly with their families to participate in fairs where they traded. According to the interviewees, the settlement of the Roma and Sinti in the Abruzzo region around 1400 is linked to the demand for work that had arisen at that time in the specific fields in which Roma people was specialized.

Interviewees point out that nowadays the Roma and Sinti community of Lanciano includes 200 people and is primarily composed of 5 Roma families.

3.2 Difficulties faced by Roma and Sinti

The present chapter focuses on the analysis of evidences provided by the semi-structured interviews on the main difficulties faced by Roma and Sinti community.

3.2.1 Discrimination against Roma and Sinti

Interviews shed light on different perspectives regarding the discrimination faced by Roma and Sinti in the context of Lanciano. Most of the interviewees sustain that one of the main issues that Roma and Sinti face in Lanciano is **discrimination**, both in the public and private spheres. However, according to **a limited number of interviewees, the Roma and Sinti community of Lanciano is not subject to discrimination.**

The interviews emphasise that discrimination against Roma and Sinti occurs in various aspects of their private and public life, originating from prejudices against the Roma community and from a stereotyped image of this community.

a. Discrimination in the private sphere

Almost all the interviewees conclude that Roma people are seen as **nomadic people, living in camps, having large families and children at a young age**, whose main occupation is **theft**. According to some testimonies collected during the listening phase, when Roma individuals

are not perceived as belonging to the above-mentioned categories, they are not considered Roma.

Several interviewees highlight that in the private sphere, **discrimination** occurs through **social isolation**, a **feeling of fear of Roma people**, and the **protection of personal belongings** when Roma people are around. According to the interviewees, in some cases, discrimination also surfaces through inappropriate questions about the intimate life of Roma people.

b. Discrimination in the public sphere

Discrimination against Roma people occurs in particular in three areas:

- **Labour market.** Several interviewees have highlighted that often Roma people don't pass the CV selection phase as discrimination begins with their name and surname. According to the interviewees, some Roma people lost their jobs or were demoted due to their ethnic origin.
- **Housing.** According to the interviewees, in the context of housing, discrimination occurs through the stereotyped image of Roma families choosing to have many children to gain access to public housing or to avoid eviction. The interviewees also mention instances of disputes regarding the allocation of public housing to Roma families.
- **Education.** The interviews conducted have highlighted that the school is one of the main areas where discrimination occurs. In this context, discrimination is exercised by school institution representatives (see the following paragraph on institutional discrimination), by non-Roma children, and their families. As confirmed by the interviewees, discrimination by non-Roma children and families consists in particular of social isolation (e.g., Roma children are not invited to classmates' parties, are excluded from playing with other children, are not readily accepted as colleagues, etc.). According to the interviewees, these behaviours stem from non-Roma families. Regarding the non-Roma families, some interviewees have pointed out the existence of a limited number of cases where parents refused to enrol their children in certain schools due to the high presence of Roma children.
- **Traditional mass media and social media.** The interviews underline that, in this context, discrimination occurs through the narration of a stereotyped image of the Roma community. A recurring issue in the interviews carried out concerns the description of crimes. According to the interviewees, the media attributes the crimes committed by some Roma people to the entire Roma community, while individual responsibility for the crime should be individual and not collective. Furthermore, according to the interviewees, articles related to crimes committed by Roma people are highlighted for an extended period. Almost all interviewees agree that such a representation of crimes contributes to fuelling stereotypes on Roma people, with particular reference to the perception that all Roma people are thieves/criminals. The

negative representation of the Roma community is also fuelled by social media, which amplifies illegal/damaging acts committed by Roma and favours the spread of hate speech against Roma.

c. Institutional discrimination

Regarding institutional discrimination, interviewees have **different perceptions**: some pinpoint that discrimination is not only a matter of the overall citizens but that it also involves institutions and politicians, while others consider that the institutional context in Lanciano is not discriminatory towards Roma.

Interviews point out **two areas** where institutional **discrimination occurs**:

- **Education.** According to the interviewees, some teachers show limited interest in addressing the educational gaps of Roma children. This translates into a lack of specific measures to prevent/mitigate the risk of school dropout or dispersion and the adoption of punitive measures.

Interviewees argue that often, in the case of Roma children who do not study, teachers resort to punitive measures (such as school failure) without taking the time to understand the underlying causes of the limited or lack of commitment to studying of Roma children. According to the interviewees, addressing this issue would require a shift away from the current school model, which is based on completing the school curriculum and focusing on school time, while disregarding non-school time.

Other interviewees believe that, after children with disabilities, Roma children are those most frequently pushed away from the classroom due to being perceived as problematic or unmanageable.

Some interviewees underline that teachers' punitive attitudes often originate from the inability of the current education system to address the social problems that children bring into the school environment. Therefore, several interviewees emphasize that removing obstacles to ensure equal access to education remains a largely unaccomplished goal due to the limited capacity or interest of the current education system.

School-based discrimination not only leads to dispersion or school dropout but also increases the risk of illegal or bullying behaviours among Roma students. According to several interviewees, being discriminated against in school reinforces the belief among Roma students that they are different and somehow justified in engaging in illicit behaviour as they would not be accepted by society even if they followed the social norms.

However, interviews also point out that there are teachers and schools that pay particular attention to the prevention of school dispersion or dropout among Roma

children by adopting specific measures (e.g., dialogue with the family and students to understand the causes of their absences, after-school workshops and homework spaces, etc.). Furthermore, some interviewees argue that once with the intergenerational change in teachers, their attitudes towards Roma children are evolving, and more and more teachers are interested in ensuring the right to education of Roma children and youth.

- **Social services.** In this context discrimination occurs through the lack of interventions in particularly complex situations regarding Roma people or, on the contrary, through merely social assistance measures.

Discrimination of Roma and Sinti does not occur only at the institutional level, but also at the political one. Interviewees point out various ways in which it occurs:

- **Discriminatory discourse** against the Roma community.
- **Limited interest in publicly addressing the issues that affect the Roma community.** Several interviewees underline that addressing social inclusion of Roma population is considered an uncomfortable issue by both right and left-wing politicians. As confirmed by various interviewees, when not explicitly subject to political discrimination, the Roma community is entirely ignored by politicians.
- **Lack of or limited adoption of specific measures aimed at the social inclusion and active participation in the public life of Roma**, such as: missing recognition of the Roma language as a minority language, the absence of Roma cultural mediators, limited involvement of Roma in politics, etc.

According to some interviewees, in some regions (Abruzzo and Calabria), laws have been enacted to recognize the Roma language, but they are not always enforced.

Some interviewees sustain that the current proposal of UCRI for a law recognizing the Roma community as a linguistic minority has not received political support from major parties.

d. Intersectionality

As noted by various interviewees, some Roma categories face double discrimination:

- **Women.** According to the interviewees, women face discrimination both within and outside the Roma community. Within the Roma community, particularly in “traditional” families, discrimination relates to inequalities in care work (for the elderly, household care, etc.) and in opportunities for education and employment, gender-based violence, and their inability to exercise their reproductive rights (e.g., deciding whether or not to use contraception, etc.). Some interviewees point out that

Roma women face more discrimination in southern Italy, where patriarchal culture remains strong, compared to other Italian regions.

Outside the Roma community, discrimination against Roma women regards both their personal features (e.g., dress code) and their participation in public life (e.g., facing double discrimination on the job market).

- **LGBTQIA+ people.** According to the interviewees, Roma LGBTQIA+ people experience discrimination both within and outside their community. However, some interviewees specify that these individuals do not face greater discrimination than the non-Roma people.
- **Children.** Interviews point out that children are a specific category at risk of discrimination in particular outside the Roma community in the school context (see previous paragraph for further details).

e. Causes of discrimination

Interviewees identify **various causes of discrimination** against Roma and Sinti:

- **Lack of knowledge of the Roma history and culture.** Interviewees consider that the lack of knowledge about the Roma population is **the main cause** of discrimination. Several interviewees argue that this is favoured by the limited interaction between Roma and non-Roma population, which is not a recent feature of the nowadays society but a long-standing condition, including in the Lanciano community. While most interviewees believe that limited interaction is caused by prejudices against the Roma, some interviewees also consider that it is favoured by the design of public spaces, especially in certain neighbourhoods (e.g., Civitanova), which do not create opportunities for spontaneous interaction.
- **Differentiated classes in schools.** According to the interviewees, these classes existed until the 1980s, and in some cases even later and were limited to Roma children and to children with disabilities. The interviewees believe that the existence of these separated classes not only limited the personal development of Roma population but also the opportunities for interaction between Roma and non-Roma children and families.
- **Lack of real openness to dialogue and mutual knowledge.** Some interviewees point out that the Italian society is more and more polarized and less interested in a positive and constructive dialogue aimed at mutual knowledge.
- **Criminal behaviours of certain members of the Roma community.** Various interviewees specify that, in a context where the public opinion attributes negative behaviours/crimes to the entire Romani community rather than to the individual who commits them, this impacts negatively even on Roma people who are well integrated into the social fabric of Lanciano. Furthermore, according to some interviewees, in a

small context like Lanciano, where almost everyone knows the others, this effect is amplified.

The small context has led interviewees to reflect on this aspect based on a concrete case existing in Lanciano. Here, we provide the example as food for thought that may be useful for other similar contexts.

In the context of Lanciano, many crimes are committed by a extremely vulnerable Roma family. Various interviews point out that, through its behaviour, this family, reinforces the prejudices against Roma (large family having many children to access subsidies and social housing; Roma people being thieves; Roma people marrying young and not attending school, etc.).

After several unsuccessful attempts of dialogue with this family by the other members of the Roma community, they have been isolated by both the Roma community and the overall community of Lanciano. Although this family has been isolated by the Roma community, some interviewees argue that prejudices against Roma people in Lanciano are also fuelled by the fact that the Roma elite does not take a clear public stance of disowning this family. However, other interviewees mention that the isolation and further marginalization of this family both within and outside the Roma community is not the right solution to reduce prejudices against Roma people. On the contrary, according to these interviewees, by its further marginalization, additional barriers are created that will strengthen their sense of ghettoization and their legitimacy to intervene forcefully and violently. These interviewees consider that the community as a whole should take care of this family because if they are currently in a condition of marginalization, it is also the result of the behaviour that citizens and institutions have had towards them over time.

According to some interviewees, to these causes, the **small territorial dimension of Lanciano** adds. In fact, some interviewees believe that a small territorial context, like Lanciano, further amplifies the marginalization of Roma. On the contrary, other interviewees consider that the small territorial dimension is a factor that can favour integration rather than discrimination precisely because everyone knows each other, and integrating into the social fabric is easier when social norms are respected.

3.2.2 Other difficulties of Roma and Sinti

Besides discrimination interviews reveal also other difficulties faced by Roma and Sinti of Lanciano:

- **Social and economic marginalization.** Despite several Roma people in Lanciano having overcome the condition of social and economic marginalization, according to the interviewees, some Romani families still remain in a situation of marginality. Interviews point out that the condition of socio-economic marginalization poses various risks for Roma people:

- School dropout among boys and girls due to the need to work to contribute to the family's support.
- Illegal behaviour resulting from a condition of economic and educational poverty.
- Lack of tools to understand reality and know how to fit within it.
- **Paternalistic attitude towards Roma people** (see chapter 3.4).
- **Lack of recognition of one's identity.** It originates from the discrimination faced by the Roma community. In a discriminatory context, many Roma people choose not to disclose their identity to avoid being discriminated against. These are often Roma individuals who are well integrated into the community, who have a professional career, and who could serve as positive examples for both the Roma and non-Roma communities, but have chosen to hide their origins.

Despite the various challenges faced by the Roma community of Lanciano, interviews have emphasised that many Roma are well integrated into the community of Lanciano. According to the interviewees, the Roma community of Lanciano has produced one of the greatest Italian artists. Additionally, some Roma people are involved in associations and politics, although they are still limited.

The interviewees believe that integration of Roma into the Lanciano community has been facilitated by the historical roots of the Roma community of Lanciano and by the numerous cultural initiatives carried out over the years by the Them Romanò Association.

3.3 Knowledge of Samudaripen

a. Knowledge of Samudaripen of Roma and Sinti of Lanciano

Interviews underline that in Lanciano **knowledge of Samudaripen is higher among the Roma population than among the non-Roma one**. According to the interviewees, knowledge of this topic has grown significantly over the years thanks to the various educational and awareness initiatives promoted by the Thèm Romanó association.

The interviewees believe that, in recent years, **knowledge of Samudaripen has become an element of identity** for the Roma community because, as confirmed by several interviewees, the lack of knowledge of one's own history jeopardizes one's identity. Interviewees point out that this has made the Roma community aware of the need to create an archive of this historical memory to pass it on to the new generations. In this perspective, interviewees consider that the books of Santino Spinelli are a significant contribution to this archive.

b. Knowledge of Samudaripen outside the Roma community

All the interviewees agree that, in Lanciano, Samudaripen is **still a historical fact relatively unknown** to the wide public. According to many interviewees, Samudaripen is known primarily among those who come into contact with the Roma and Sinti community, especially

through the Thèm Romanó association. In fact, many of the interviewees claim to have learned about Samudaripen only after having met with members of the Roma and Sinti community in Lanciano.

However, some of the interviewees consider that, although knowledge of Samudaripen is still significantly lower than that of the Holocaust, **in recent years, the number of people aware of it has grown**. This is mostly the case among young people and those who have come into contact with the Roma and Sinti population in Lanciano.

Some interviewees note that there is a transition from a historically ignored event to one that is starting to be discussed within the Lanciano community and, to a limited extent, beyond it. In Lanciano, this transition is also evident from the fact that, since several years, during the Heroes of October (“Eroi Ottobrini”) celebrations, ANPI (the National Association of Italian Partisans) has been publicly mentioning Samudaripen.

According to several interviewees, the limited knowledge of Samudaripen, especially outside the Roma community, results in ongoing discrimination against Roma and Sinti.

c. Factors favouring knowledge of Samudaripen

Interviews pointed out several **factors** that have **favoured the dissemination of knowledge of Samudaripen** in Lanciano:

- **The presence of a well-known Roma artist in Lanciano.** All the interviewees agree that Lanciano is a privileged context because it can count on the presence of a recognized Roma, who is strongly committed to promoting the history and culture of its people, which facilitates the widespread dissemination of knowledge about Samudaripen. All the interviewees confirm that knowledge of Samudaripen is much more limited in other territories.
- **Information/training initiatives about the history and culture of Roma and Sinti promoted** by the Thèm Romanó association. All the interviewees agree that knowledge of Samudaripen within the non-Roma population of Lanciano has been favoured by initiatives promoting awareness of the Roma history and culture implemented by the Thèm Romanó association (e.g., books, shows, the “Amico Rom” festival, the “cultural gathering” of the Lanciano elite, book presentations on the topic of Samudaripen, etc.), which have featured the participation of Santino Spinelli. Interviews reveal that, among these initiatives, the unveiling of the Samudaripen monument in 2018 and the commemoration of Roma victims of Samudaripen, during the Heroes of October (“Eroi Ottobrini”) days, have been particularly significant for the dissemination of knowledge about Samudaripen among the non-Roma population of Lanciano.
- **Teaching Samudaripen in schools.** The interviews reveal that some teachers include Samudaripen in their lessons to enhance knowledge of that historical period.

Additionally, it's worth noting that some textbooks have started to speak about Samudaripen.

d. Factors hindering knowledge of Samudaripen

Interviews reveal that the main causes of the limited knowledge of Samudaripen of Lanciano community, in particular the non-Roma one, are:

- **Discrimination against Roma people.** According to some interviewees, the general population is less interested in Samudaripen than in the Holocaust. The interviewees believe that this is primarily due to the deeply rooted prejudices against Roma. As underlined by the interviewees, Gianni Orecchioni's research on the deportation of Roma has revealed that Roma were considered inferior to the other citizens long before the racial laws. Interviewees sustain that this is also shown by the fact that the deportation of Roma began long before the adoption of the racial laws through administrative measures.
- **Difficulty to surface memories of Samudaripen within the Roma community.** Interviewees point out that this difficulty stems primarily from the fact that the ongoing discrimination against Roma has exacerbated the collective trauma experienced by the community during Second World War. Additionally, obtaining official documents related to Samudaripen is also a challenge.
- **Limited teaching of Samudaripen in schools.** Interviews reveal that the teaching of Samudaripen in schools is left to the initiative of individual teachers. Furthermore, Samudaripen is not included in all textbooks. These challenges do not allow for its structured and systematic teaching, limiting students' awareness of it. Some interviewees underline that knowledge of Roma history is even more challenging when it is not recognized within the educational context.
- **Limited relations between Roma and non-Roma people.** As previously mentioned, contact between non-Roma and Roma facilitates the awareness of Samudaripen. However, as confirmed by the interviewees, in Lanciano, interactions between the Roma and non-Roma population are still limited.
- **Limited interest of institutions and politicians** to promote knowledge of Samudaripen.

3.4 Effectiveness of measures implemented and improvement suggestions

As revealed by the interviews, Lanciano is a very dynamic city in terms of initiatives promoting Roma culture and history, thanks to the Thèm Romanó association. Local initiatives are complemented by initiatives delivered within the National Strategy for the Equality, Inclusion, and Participation of Roma and Sinti.

Despite the numerous local and national initiatives, interviews with local stakeholders¹ and the context analysis included in the 2021-2030 National Strategy for the Equality, Inclusion, and Participation of Roma and Sinti² point out that **Roma and Sinti still face discrimination, hate speech, violence, social and economic marginalization and limited political participation**. In the absence of statistics regarding the Lanciano context, we will refer to the data reported by the 2021-2030 National Strategy for the Equality, Inclusion, and Participation of Roma and Sinti in order to provide a quantitative picture of critical issues that remain unsolved:

- In 2019, one out of two Italians believed that society did not benefit in any way from reducing discrimination against Roma and Sinti. Moreover, six out of ten Italians claimed to feel uncomfortable having a Roma colleague. UNAR confirms that these negative perceptions of Roma foster discrimination against them.
- According to the UNAR data from 2019, the Roma minority is among the most exposed to online hate speech. Monitoring conducted by UNAR over a month in 2019 detected 779 conversations/posts on major social media platforms (Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram) that included discriminatory content against Roma and Sinti. UNAR sustains that the monitoring of online hate speech shows that "(...) the fluid and dynamic world of the web and social media confirms an already noticeable trend: anti-Romani racism and intolerance are not limited to the most extremist and intolerant fringes of our society but permeate across citizens (in urban and rural areas, across different age groups, genders, economic and social conditions) and in a wide range of discussion spaces."³
- The public sphere, particularly social media and political discourse, is characterized by a widespread presence of anti-Roma feelings.
- According to the ISTAT (Italian National Institute of Statistics) survey "Living in Transition: A Study on Housing Transition Projects Targeted at Roma, Sinti, and

1 See previous sections.

2

https://www.unar.it/portale/documents/20125/113907/Strategia_Nazionale_di_uguaglianza_inclusion_e_partecipazione_di_Rom_e_Sinti_2021-2030+%28ITA%29.pdf/1e4ccc9c-aeba-e7b2-864d-ee1eced7e4df?t=1653399043993

3 UNAR, 2021-2030 2021-2030 National Strategy for the Equality, Inclusion, and Participation of Roma and Sinti page 33, https://www.unar.it/portale/documents/20125/113907/Strategia_Nazionale_di_uguaglianza_inclusion_e_partecipazione_di_Rom_e_Sinti_2021-2030+%28ITA%29.pdf/1e4ccc9c-aeba-e7b2-864d-ee1eced7e4df?t=1653399043993

Travelers.”⁴, 20 out of 96 analysed projects report contestations against Roma housing settlement.⁵

- According to UNAR, women, youth, children, LGBTI+ people, the elderly, individuals with disabilities, third-country nationals or stateless persons, and Roma people with non-Italian citizenship are the main categories of Roma people facing double discrimination ⁶.

These data confirm the challenges observed in the Lanciano context.

As reported by several interviewees, the implementation of **actions** regarding the social inclusion of Roma and Sinti that are **exclusively welfare-oriented** and consider Roma as passive beneficiaries of economic and social assistance, add to these challenges. Numerous interviewees emphasize that the welfare-oriented attitude towards Roma is one of the causes of their difficulty in actively participating in the public life. Some interviewees point out that Roma have often waited passively for the others to help them without taking responsibility for their own life. One of the interviewees reveals that not only is the culture of active participation in public life limited among Roma, but it also leads to a lack of recognition of those promoting it.

The **ineffectiveness of measures** taken so far is also confirmed by the fact that some interviewees believe that **moving out of socio-economic marginalization** is the **result of individual actions** characterized by **many sacrifices**. According to these interviewees, this is also the reason why some Roma, who are well integrated into the Lanciano social context, are not willing to help their original community and may even try to hide their Roma identity.

Interviewees provide various **suggestions for increasing awareness about the history and culture of Roma**, with particular regards to Samudaripen, whose lack of knowledge is one of the main causes of discrimination:

- Promotion of **school textbooks** that address this historical period.
- **Structured and systematic inclusion of Samudaripen in history lessons.**

⁴ <https://www.istat.it/it/files//2021/03/Abitare-in-transizione-F.pdf>

⁵ UNAR, UNAR, 2021-2030 2021-2030 National Strategy for the Equality, Inclusion, and Participation of Roma and Sinti, [https://www.unar.it/portale/documents/20125/113907/Strategia Nazionale di uguaglianza inclusion e partecipazione di Rom e Sinti 2021-2030+%28ITA%29.pdf/1e4ccc9c-aeba-e7b2-864d-ee1eced7e4df?t=1653399043993](https://www.unar.it/portale/documents/20125/113907/Strategia+Nazionale+di+uguaglianza+inclusion+e+partecipazione+di+Rom+e+Sinti+2021-2030+%28ITA%29.pdf/1e4ccc9c-aeba-e7b2-864d-ee1eced7e4df?t=1653399043993)

⁶ UNAR, UNAR, 2021-2030 2021-2030 National Strategy for the Equality, Inclusion, and Participation of Roma and Sinti, [https://www.unar.it/portale/documents/20125/113907/Strategia Nazionale di uguaglianza inclusion e partecipazione di Rom e Sinti 2021-2030+%28ITA%29.pdf/1e4ccc9c-aeba-e7b2-864d-ee1eced7e4df?t=1653399043993](https://www.unar.it/portale/documents/20125/113907/Strategia+Nazionale+di+uguaglianza+inclusion+e+partecipazione+di+Rom+e+Sinti+2021-2030+%28ITA%29.pdf/1e4ccc9c-aeba-e7b2-864d-ee1eced7e4df?t=1653399043993)

- **Promotion of cultural initiatives** to disseminate knowledge of Samudaripen and, more broadly, Roma history and culture, such as the “Amico Rom” festival.
- **Promotion of educational initiatives**, especially within schools, to learn about Roma history.
- Promotion of **public initiatives commemorating the Roma victims of Samudaripen**, such as the Samudaripen monument, stumbling stones, celebrations organized during Heroes of October (“Eroi Ottobrini”) days, etc.
- Promotion of **opportunities for interaction between Roma and non-Roma** and the sharing of their history and culture.
- **Embracing one's own identity and history**. Some interviewees note that knowledge of Samudaripen also implies the Roma community embraces its own identity and history.
- **Narrating the Samudaripen** and, more broadly, the **Roma history** in its complexity. One of the interviewees emphasizes that sharing only fragments of Roma history risks creating effects opposed to those desired, such as victimization that often results in either a welfare-oriented view of Roma or their discrimination. Sharing the full Roma history with all its contradictions can contribute to fostering mutual solidarity and a sense of recognition as individuals belonging to the same history.

3.5 Objectives of the Future Search Conference

All the interviewees consider that the FSC can represent an **opportunity to create constructive dialogue between Roma and non-Roma**. Almost all interviewees point out that overcoming prejudices occurs only through mutual understanding and "real" dialogue between Roma and non-Roma. Therefore, according to the interviewees, it is necessary to create opportunities where Roma and non-Roma share their stories and understand that differences can be opportunities for connection rather than for conflict. Therefore, interviewees consider that every event/initiative promoting dialogue, mutual understanding, and the dissemination of Roma culture, traditions, and history is positive.

Some interviewees believe that, for this dialogue to be constructive, the necessary conditions, such as protected spaces guided by experts, should be established first.

Furthermore, several interviewees emphasize that such an event **should not remain isolated** (a one-time event), but should be **part of an ongoing series of initiatives implemented throughout the year** and spanning over various fields (culture, education, active participation, environment, etc.).

Some interviewees point out that initiatives for dialogue and mutual understanding between the Roma and non-Roma should **start in schools and then be extend to the whole Lanciano society**.

Others highlight that dialogue and mutual understanding between Roma and non-Roma can also be favoured by the implementation of active participation tools available in Lanciano, such as Agreements for the management of common goods (“Patti per la gestione dei beni comuni”). According to some interviewees, there is already a positive example of such an agreement in a neighbouring municipality that involves a Roma citizen. Interviewees believe this example can be replicated in the municipality of Lanciano.

3.6 Actors to be involved in the Future Search Conference

Several interviewees emphasize the need to involve "**ordinary**" citizens, who are often bearers of prejudices. Other interviewees consider a priority engaging representatives of civil society and institutions who, through their actions and decisions, can positively influence the social context in which they operate. Some interviewees also point out the need to involve politicians of Lanciano.

The main actors that interviewees consider should be involved in the FSC are:

- UNAR
- Abruzzo Region – president
- Province of Chieti - president
- Local and national police
- Municipality of Lanciano – mayor, municipal counsellors, assessors, administrative staff, social workers, manager of the Social Plan
- Schools – manager, teachers, in particular De Laurentis teacher within Palizi school and the president of the D’Annunzio school, other school workers
- Guidance service
- Catholic church – Don Michelino (he is responsible for youth), don Alessio Primante
- ANPI – Maria Saveria Borelli
- “Altra Italia”
- Josef association
- Okay Lanciano association
- Roma and non-Roma youth associations
- Journalists
- Historian who is part of the Publishing House Nuova Gutenberg
- Roberto Colacioppo – photographer of Lanciano
- Roma and non-Roma citizens, namely “ordinary” people that can speak about their daily lives
- Women, in particular Roma women
- Roma and non-Roma youth
- Osvaldo di Rocco.