

**A Way Out?**  
**Initial Steps Towards Addressing Romani Issues in Georgia**

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## **A Way Out?**

### **Initial Steps Towards Addressing Romani Issues in Georgia**

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#### **Introduction**

The Romani community are one of the least studied ethnic minorities in Georgia and issues such as their history, daily life, relations with other ethnic groups and the problems they face remain virtually unexplored. Unlike many European countries where over the past decade the protection of Romani rights and promotion of their integration into society has become systematic, in Georgia the facilitation of equal possibilities for Roms and protection of their rights exists only at a rudimentary level. One of the main reasons for this is undoubtedly the limited information on Roms and their conditions, both among the authorities and in society as a whole.

The first systematic research on Roms in Georgia was conducted in 2007 and later published by the European Centre for Minority Issues.<sup>1</sup> This initial publication provided a brief introduction to the history of the settlement of Roms in Georgia, their dwelling places, demographical data, social structure of the community and the economic, social and other problems facing the community.

As a result of this research, the following main problems of the Romani community were revealed: extreme poverty, unemployment, poor access to education and health care, isolation from the larger population of the country and lack of official documentation. Following this initial research, the European Centre for Minority Issues has continued to study the Romani community, which has helped to provide a fuller demographic profile of the Roms, a more thorough understanding of their problems, and the collection of additional information about the community's ethnic and cultural characteristics. At the same time, a survey—conducted with

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<sup>1</sup> See David Szakonyi, “No Way Out: An Assessment of the Romani Community in Georgia”, European Centre for Minority Issues, Working Paper #39, February 2008.

the help of questionnaires—has provided documentation on the Romani social problems, enabling us to obtain a more accurate picture of the situation of the Romani community settlements. It has also helped to identify precisely those Roms who suffer from lack of documents and what type of documents they need, and also provided us with a more comprehensive understanding of the scope of the problem of non-enrollment of Romani children in the education system.

This research was conducted from mid 2008 to early 2009.<sup>2</sup> Hence, in supplementing the data provided in ECMI Working Paper #39, this Issue Brief provides a set of additional findings relating to the demography and status of the Romani community in Georgia. With the publication of this data, we hope to provide a further impetus to Georgian policy makers and civil society organizations in addressing some of the acute problems faced by the Roms in the country and offer insights that can be helpful to this end.

### **Romani Settlement Area and Demographic Data**

The Romani community of Georgia numbers approximately 1000 persons<sup>3</sup>—this data includes a Moldovan settlement in Tbilisi and people living near Chavchavadze bridge in Kutaisi, both groups of which follow the Romani way of life (see footnotes 5 and 6). The total does not include Roms in Abkhazia. The migration of Roms to Georgia began at the turn of the twentieth century; this process accelerated during the Soviet period, especially from around 1930 to 1970, most of whom came from Russia and Ukraine.<sup>4</sup> Currently the Roms reside in several smaller groups in Georgia, as outlined below.

#### *Tbilisi, Samgori district*

This is a compact settlement near the Navtlughi farmers market where 17 Romani families (196 persons) reside. The large majority of the Samgori Roms live in rented private houses and earn their living by trade in Navtlughi and Lilo markets, with a small number involved in begging. The Roms settled in Samgori comparatively recently, migrating here since the end of the 1980s from Kutaisi, where many are still registered and have their official place of residence. The

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<sup>2</sup> This research has been made possible through ECMI's programme "Enhancing Minority Governance and Developing Civil Society in Minority Regions" funded by the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

<sup>3</sup> For detailed statistical data on number of population in different Romani settlements see appendix A.

<sup>4</sup> For more detail on the settlement of Roms in Georgia, their life during the Soviet period and after Georgian independence, see David Szakonyi "No Way Out: An Assessment of the Romani Community in Georgia", European Centre for Minority Issues Working Paper #39, February 2008.

Roms themselves identify the difficult economic situation in Kutaisi in the late 1980s as the principal reason for migration. Notwithstanding the resettlement, they have remained in close connection with Kutaisi, have maintained trade relations and often visit their relatives in the region.<sup>5</sup>

#### *Kutaisi, Avangard district*

During the Soviet period, the Romani community in Kutaisi was one of the most numerous, where Roms lived scattered throughout the entire city. However, in recent times their number has considerably decreased due to outer migration, mainly to Russia, as well as the resettlement of one group to Tbilisi, Samgori district in the 1980s (see above). The Roms currently living in Kutaisi dwell in two small settlements in the Avangard district and consists of six families (42 persons). One consists of private houses at the outskirts of the district where two big Romani families live, and the other settlement is in a nine-storey building in the central part of the district, where only three Romani families remain. Roms living in the private houses to an extent preserve their traditional lifestyle, which can be immediately recognized by their traditional clothes, while Roms living in the multi-storey building do not differ in lifestyle from other dwellers due to the influence of urbanization.<sup>6</sup>

#### *Kobuleti, Gilauri district*

Like the Samgori settlement, Kobuleti is also one of the most numerous Romani communities in Georgia. Their number equals seventeen families (85 persons), who reside near the town centre, to the east of the railway in the Gilauri district. They live in self-owned houses scattered in various places throughout the district. The living conditions in Kobuleti are comparatively better than elsewhere, with permanent power supply and running water. They are involved in trade and also produce handmade items for sale, while some are employed as drivers and in fishery.

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<sup>5</sup> There is another, quite large settlement in Tbilisi, in the Lotkini district, which is called a "Romani settlement" by the nearby population. This group, consisting of approximately 300 persons, has almost the same lifestyle as the Roms proper, and are involved in trade at the Tbilisi Central Railway Station, while some of the children beg. For this reason, most dwellers in the neighbourhood perceive them as Roms, though the group members do not identify as such and are often angered when labeled as Roms. They identify themselves as Moldavan, are Moldovan speakers, and according to their own narratives they arrived from Moldova and different regions of Western Ukraine in the 1930s.

<sup>6</sup> In Kutaisi, another group, who call themselves Roms consisting of five families (approximately 50 persons), lives on the left embankment of the River, residing in primitive shelters near Chavchavadze bridge, who call themselves Romani. Other Roms living in Kutaisi deny their Romani origin and even express enmity towards them. The mentioned group differs considerably from other Romani settlements, are Muslims, and have only a vague idea about their origin. They have presumably come from Azerbaijan or Central Asia and speak a language completely different from Romani, namely a Kurmanji (Kurdish) dialect.

*Batumi, Besiki street*

Only a very small group of Roms are present in Batumi, consisting of three small families (fourteen persons), who live in rented houses in Besiki street. This group also originates from Kutaisi and claim to be in Batumi only on a temporary basis. They mainly make their living from begging.

*Dedoplistskaro district, Leninovka village*

A comparatively large number of Roms reside in this district, with eleven families, numbering a total of 73 persons. This village is also inhabited by six Russian and two Georgian families. The Roms have self-owned houses with yards that are used for agricultural activities. The village has an uninterrupted power supply but there is no water pipeline or sewage system. However, there are several wells in the centre of the village where the population can get potable water. Notwithstanding the existing conditions for agriculture, the village is impoverished. The majority of the population is unemployed, while the remainder is involved in trade, mostly in the town of Dedoplistskaro, at Lilo market near Tbilisi and in the territory of Tbilisi Central Railway Station. The Leninovka Roms are also known to partake in begging.<sup>7</sup>

*Gardabani district, Gachiani village*

This is a physically small settlement, yet quite compact and numerous. There are sixteen Romani families in the village, a total of 122 persons. Ten families compactly reside on the outskirts of the village, while six families live dispersed among the otherwise Azeri population.

Notwithstanding the fact that the population in Gachiani lives in self-owned houses, living conditions in the village are much worse than in Leninovka or Samgori. Half of the houses are substantially constructed, while the others resemble shanty-town shelters. There are small plots of land near the houses but they are not suitable for agricultural activities. The inhabitants also have problems with relation to access to potable water, with the nearest water pipeline being 200 meters from the settlement. The village has a power supply but the voltage is so low that it

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<sup>7</sup> I am grateful to the students of the University of Georgia (UG) Salome Alania and Saba Gvetadze, who voluntarily participated in assessment trips to Leninovka village and contributed in gathering information and interviewing local Roms.

is not sufficient for television sets or for refrigerators. The population is involved in trade, particularly at the Lilo market and Tbilisi Central Railway Station, while begging is also common.

#### *Tbilisi, Lilo settlement*

The Lilo settlement is located near Tbilisi airport, where 3 Romani families with a total of 31 individuals permanently reside. Two families are next-door to each other, while the third family lives at a distance. This Romani settlement is relatively new, created approximately ten years ago. One family consists of internally displaced persons from Abkhazia, one has resettled from Kutaisi, while the third came from Mtskheta district. There is another dwelling in the settlement, a tent, sometimes inhabited by Roms from Leninovka, who come to Tbilisi occasionally for trade.

All three families live in hastily constructed small houses and have no registration or official permission and only one family has property ownership. There are different industries near their settlement, namely a lemonade factory and a scrap-metal processing factory. The Roms have been allowed by the owners of these factories to stay there in exchange for work.

#### *Telavi*

The Romani community used to be present in large numbers in Telavi and Gurjaani districts, particularly in Mukuzani village. However, from the 1990s significant migration has taken place, with some resettling to Leninovka and Gachiani, while a portion went to Russia in search of employment. Due to this migration process, the Romani settlement in Mukuzani village of Gurjaani district, once considered as main area of concentration of Roms in Kakheti, was completely abandoned. The last Romani family left the settlement in December 2008. Presently, there are three families residing in the town of Telavi (24 persons), settled in the vicinity of the main farmers market, in the territory of a gas station, where they dwell in special carriages in which they have installed power cables. The owners of the gas supply station have temporarily allowed the Roms to use the territory for their dwelling in exchange for certain services, in particular some Roms work as a night-watchmen. Apart from this, the main source of income for Telavi Roms is begging.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> For detailed statistical data on number of population in different Romani settlements, see appendix A.

## Origin, Clans and Social Structure

Following the interviews with Roms, it has been determined that the Romani community in Georgia belongs to two kindred branches, differing in terms of cultural tradition and religious belief, as well as language peculiarities. To identify these two branches, the Roms living in Georgia use the terms of *Krim* (Crimean) and *Vlakh*. The first term is used to define Muslim Roms who originate from Crimea, South Ukraine as well as South Russia, while the latter is used to identify Christian Roms, having arrived largely from elsewhere in Ukraine and Russia.

Practically all Roms from Kutaisi, Samgori, Kobuleti and Batumi, as well as one Romani family in Lilo belong to the *Krim* branch, while all Roms living in Gachiani, Leninovka and Telavi, as well as two families in Lilo consider themselves as belonging to the *Vlakh* branch.

The members of the *Krim* branch are traditionally Islamic and the majority of their surnames have Muslim roots with Russian endings. As a result of living in Georgia, Islam has gradually been lost, with only a small number of mainly elderly people having preserved their traditional faith. Today the majority of the *Krim* branch are Orthodox Christians, although religion does not play a major role. The exception is the Kobuleti Roms, a large number of whom converted to Evangelical Christianity over the past 20 years, exercising Pentecostalism in a hastily constructed chapel.

The members of the *Vlakh* branch have Ukrainian and Russian surnames and are pious Orthodox. Both branches identify each other as Roms but due to the notable differences, the relationship between the two groups is often kept at a distance and mixed marriage rarely occurs. Further impeding the relationship between the two branches is the difference in the two dialects of Romani used, which in some cases can render communication impossible.

It must be noted that the abovementioned branches can both be subdivided into smaller clans. For example, the *Krim* branch is divided into the following clans: *Chorodaes*, *Petalidis*, *Jujukea* and *Bubuliades*. All four clans are present in most *Krim* settlements in Georgia. The *Vlakh* branch is divided into the following clans in Gachiani: *Butka*, *Plashun*, *Melenki*, *Manki* and *Temryuk*. In Leninovka there are the *Harbuz*, *Nalihachi*, *Palenki* and *Mekoria* clans, while the *Kalashi* clan is found in Lilo and Gachiani. Each of these clans unites several family names. The members of the clans are considered as close relatives, and everybody in the community, both in



*Krim* and *Vlakh* branches are aware of their clan membership, which is an important feature of Romani ethno-cultural self-identification. According to tradition, marriage within one's own clan is forbidden.

It must also be noted that both the *Krim* and *Vlakh* branches have preserved connections with their relative communities in Russia, where they travel with a certain frequency. According to Roms in Georgia, in Russia they are referred to as 'Georgian Roms' by Roms living in Russia, thus distinguishing them from other Roms.

Romani communities are traditionally characterized with a caste structure and hierarchic leadership. The community leaders, the so-called barons, used to have indisputable authority to resolve disputes and make important decisions for the community. With time, mostly due to urbanization, the internal organizational structure of the community has undergone changes and gradually the institute of baron has lost its previous influence. Presently, especially since the late Soviet period, barons continue to exist formally, but without the authority that they previously enjoyed and they are now largely unable to make important decisions in place of other community members. The breakdown of this traditional system has brought the importance of the family and the influence of the head of the family to light. The head of the family is considered the main decision-maker, though his influence does not go beyond his family. He supervises the moral upbringing of the family and prevents unacceptable social and cultural practices from taking place. One such responsibility of the head of the family in the *Vlakh* branch and probably the most important one is to prevent mixed marriages with Muslims, including Muslims representing the *Krim* branch, as this is considered culturally unacceptable. The family traditionally does not approve of marriage between e.g. ethnic Georgians or Armenians either, though this formal prohibition today has only limited force. This is evident in the increased number of mixed Romani-Georgian and Romani-Armenian marriages in recent years. A slightly different situation prevails in the Muslim *Krim* community, where marriages with persons belonging to other groups do not seem to be prohibited by cultural traditions.

### **Language and Culture**

The mother tongue for Roms living in Georgia is Romani, spoken in two main dialects—*Krim* and *Vlakh* (see above). Roms of both branches speak Russian fluently and Russian also serves as the means of communication between the *Krim* and *Vlakh* branches. The level of knowledge of the Georgian language among Roms is also high, though not as high as Russian. Knowledge

of Georgian depends on the dwelling area. For example, Roms living in Kutaisi and Samgori mostly speak Georgian fluently, and as a result of active communication with the surrounding society, they have even acquired the regional (Imeretian) dialect. A similar situation exists in Kobuleti, though unlike most of the Kutaisi Roms, the Kobuleti community members mostly cannot read and write in Georgian. The situation among members of the *Vlakh* branch in eastern Georgia is much more difficult. For example, in the two main *Vlakh* settlements—Gachiani and Leninovka—only representatives of the younger generation speak Georgian, and even then it is not spoken fluently. The main reason for this is the isolated geographical location of these settlements.

Although the Romani community in Georgia has almost completely preserved one of the most important features of their ethno-cultural identity— the language; this cannot be said about other traditions and Romani cultural features. The traditional clothing style is gradually being lost and a beautifully decorated woman's dress is hard to find, while the cultural features of Romani singing and dancing are also vanishing. During the Soviet period, Romani street festivals were often conducted, especially in Kutaisi and Kobuleti. During such festivals, the entire Romani community would take to the streets and perform traditional Romani songs and dances. The Georgian Roms have preserved their musical traditions and almost all Roms, especially in Kobuleti, can play various musical instruments. However, they no longer organize public concerts and festivals nor do they perform as musicians at non-Romani weddings, as was common in Soviet times. The only exception is the Romani wedding ritual, which is a good opportunity to exhibit traditional Romani art. Weddings are also used for gathering close relatives and these celebrations traditionally continue for several days accompanied with improvised songs and dances. However, in recent times the tendency to celebrate weddings in restaurants has increased, resulting in much shorter celebrations, thus having an unfavorable effect on preserving Romani traditions.

### **Access to Education**

The level of school enrollment among Roms is extremely low, being one of the most acute problems of the Romani community. In any Romani settlement on the territory of Georgia only a few children are registered in schools, while in some settlements, for example in Lilo, Samgori and Batumi, none of the children attend school. There are several reasons for this. Parents send children to trade or beg, this being an additional source of income for the family. In some cases parents are out at work during the whole day and prefer their children to stay at home and

perform household duties. A considerable obstacle is the absence of birth certificates among a portion of the children (see below). Another, probably the most important reason for the low number of school enrollment among Roms, is that parents do not realize the necessity and priority of receiving education. The majority of parents have not received primary education: this particularly concerns East Georgian Roms. The majority of the parental generation of Kutaisi and Kobuleti Roms have received some school education, due to the urbanization of these settlements and the policy of the Soviet authorities, which prioritized enrolment in public education, including among the most marginalized groups. From this point of view, the Romani communities in Gachiani and Leninovka, living in the outskirts, are lagging behind and have a significantly higher rate of illiteracy.

Notwithstanding the abovementioned obstacles coupled with parent's skepticism towards education in general, they are not utterly against their children receiving education; on the contrary, in some cases parents have a considerable desire for this and worry that they can not provide education to their children. Throughout the research, it appeared that with proper preparation of the parents and through provision of adequate information on the benefits of education, it is perfectly possible, in many cases, to convince Romani parents to send their children to school. From mid to late 2008, the European Centre for Minority Issues conducted a small information campaign in the Romani community of Leninovka, where only one child attended school. As a result of the campaign, nine more children have now been enrolled in the nearest public school in Dedoplistskaro.

### **Documentation and Registration**

A lack of relevant identification documents and the issue of residential registration is one of the most important problems for the Roms living in Georgia. In recent times, this problem has been more or less resolved among the Leninovka, Samgori, Kutaisi and Kobuleti Roms, where adults and the majority of underage Roms do possess the necessary documents (ID cards and birth certificates), and are registered at the place of their permanent residence. The exception is Roms living in Samgori who largely have Kutaisi registration (see above).

However, the situation is deplorable in Gachiani, Lilo and Telavi, where approximately half of the Romani population have no documents<sup>9</sup> due to the passive attitude of Roms on the one

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<sup>9</sup> See appendix A.

hand, who avoid application procedures with the corresponding official bodies, and on the other hand, the low attention of the mentioned official structures to the problems in Romani settlements. Throughout the research for this paper, we collected detailed statistical data on the documentation of Gachiani Roms, which was provided to the passport issuing authorities of Gardabani district. Besides the mentioned data, collective applications for Gachiani Roms for receiving corresponding documents were submitted. As a result, the officials of the passport issuing authorities actually visited the settlement. However, notwithstanding the promises made by the local authorities, the problem remains unsolved and ID documents are yet to be issued.

### **Relations with the Surrounding Population**

Almost all Romani settlements in Georgia are located in a multiethnic environment, where Roms maintain permanent relations with persons belonging to various ethnic groups, for example; with Georgians and Russians in Leninovka; with Azeris in Gachiani; with Georgians, Armenians and Azeris in Samgori; and mostly with Georgians in Kutaisi and Kobuleti. According to the Roms themselves, they do not have any major problems with persons belonging to any of these ethnic groups. The Roms have not confirmed facts of clear discrimination, though stereotypes formed about Roms are still solid throughout society, particularly among ethnic Georgians. The wider society often conceives Roms as a dirty and uneducated mass of people who can only beg and trade in the streets. These stereotypes are powered by the existence of wandering and begging children in the streets of big cities, who in many cases, in fact, are not Romani at all, but have received the label of “Gypsies” (or “tsigan” in Russian) from society. The term “Gypsy” has become a collective name to define children wandering in the streets or a roaming pauper population, irrespective of their ethnic background.

### **Needs Assessment and Action of the European Centre for Minority Issues**

During the research, a number of needs were revealed for the Romani community, which can help in addressing the problems the community faces. Four main spheres can be identified:

- There is a need to rehabilitate trust among Roms towards society and especially towards state structures and various organizations functioning in the country. This trust was mainly lost in the period following the break-up of the Soviet Union, due to the fact that various state, non-governmental and international organizations on several occasions

expressed their interest in the problems of Roms but limited their interest to single visits providing no active support. As a result, Roms often suffer from “charity fatigue”, and show no interest or friendly attitudes towards representatives of various humanitarian organizations visiting them;

- Need to consolidate the Romani community of Georgia. Notwithstanding the fact that Roms are not settled in Georgia in particularly large numbers, the community is fragmented. They have no community based organizations that would act to address the problems the community faces or present these problems to the relevant state structures;
- Need to provide access to social, economical and educational facilities available in the country. The absolute majority of Roms living in Georgia do not have information about the available social benefits, educational possibilities or existing pension or health care foundations;
- Need to change attitudes and the prejudices in society against Roms.

In July 2008, the European Centre for Minority Issues with the support of the Norwegian Government launched an initiative with the aim of providing assistance to address some of these needs.<sup>10</sup> At the initial stage, a young and motivated representative of the Romani community was identified and engaged as an intern in the European Centre for Minority Issues. She actively participated in the assessment research, which helped us to establish a good-natured relationship with the Roms as well as forming long-term trust.

With the aim of filling the information vacuum among Roms and helping them to better understand their civil rights, it was decided to conduct a specialized training with potential leaders of the community. With this goal, in March 2009 nine representatives were identified from all Romani settlements in the country to participate in the training. Training was conducted in Tbilisi in partnership with the Training Centre of the Ministry of Justice. Issues such as civil rights, health care, education and specifically relations with state bodies and the absence of non-governmental organizations were reviewed during the training.

The training turned out to be a good possibility for brainstorming concerning the future development of the Romani community, where the Roms themselves expressed the desire to establish their own non-governmental organizations that would work for the defense and

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<sup>10</sup> The initiative is part of ECMI’s programme “Enhancing Minority Governance and Developing Civil Society in Minority Regions”, funded by the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

development of Romani rights. The decision was made to establish three Romani organizations, respectively in Leninovka, Kutaisi and Kobuleti, with the following goals:

- Protection of Romani rights and facilitation of their integration into the wider society;
- Enhancing civil consciousness within the Romani community in Georgia;
- Preservation and development of Romani cultural heritage in Georgia;
- Supporting cultural exchange and relations between Roms and other ethnic groups represented in Georgia;
- Enhancing cultural and ethnic consolidation of Roms living in different parts of Georgia;
- Encouragement of access to education by Roms;
- Establishment of links between Roms of Georgia and Romani organizations abroad;
- Filling the information gap concerning Romani life in Georgia and proliferation of knowledge on Romani culture and traditions.

In a parallel development, due to the fact that education is one of the most acute problems for Roms, the European Centre for Minority Issues assisted in providing a transportation service to children living in the village of Leninovka to go to the nearest school in the town of Dedoplistskaro, located five km from the village. A small information campaign convinced school-teachers together with the Romani parents for the necessity of their children to attend school. As a result, nine children now attend school with great motivation (see also above).

The outcome of the work in Leninovka is a good example of how attitudes of the population can positively change towards the issue of education and how a process of integration can be developed in practical terms. One can also mention that the organized group enrollment of children in school also started the development of friendship between the Romani and Georgian school-children and fostered closer contacts between their parents.

Notwithstanding the fact that problems in the Romani community as a whole have remained unchanged over the past several years, such as access to education, health care and social services, problems with documentation and registration and utmost poverty, the results of the mentioned initiative are promising and show that a change of attitude towards education and community mobilization amongst the Romani population is indeed possible. Efforts to address the complex problem of the community have just begun. ECMI hopes that this and earlier background material on the Roms in Georgia can help to trigger additional interest among relevant government and civil society actors in addressing Romani issues in the coming years.

## Appendix A. Romani Assessment Sheet

	Gachiani - Gardabani district	Leninovka - Dedoplistskaro district	Lilo settlement - Near Tbilisi	Samgori district - Tbilisi	Kutaisi	Kobuleti	Batumi	Telavi
Number of families	16	11	3	17	6	17	3	3
Number of individuals	122	73	31	196	45	85	14	24
Number of adults	45	29	14	138	18	25	5	4
Number of children	77	44	17	58	27	60	9	20
Number of adults with documents	23	29	9	138	18	21	2	0
Number of children with documents	29	41	9	58	27	59	0	0
Number of school age children	18	16	12	15	10	14	5	15
Number of children attending school	5	9	0	0	10	3	0	0
Type of income	Begging, petty trading	Agriculture, begging, petty trading	Petty trading	Petty trading, begging	Petty trading, begging	Petty trading	Petty trading, begging	Begging
Housing type	Self-owned houses	Self-owned houses	Temporary shelters and tents	Rented houses and apartments	Self-owned houses and apartments	Self-owned houses	Rented houses	Temporary shelters
Electricity	Yes, low voltage	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Running water	No, source 200m away	No, source in village	No, source in settlement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Branch affiliation	Vlakh	Vlakh	Vlakh, Krim	Krim	Krim	Krim	Krim	Vlakh
Clan affiliation	Butka, Plashun, Melenki, Manki, Temriuk	Harbuz, Nalihach, Palenki	Mekoria, Kalachi	Choradaes, Petalidis, Jujukea, Bubuliades	Choradaes, Petalidis, Jujukea, Bubuliades	Choradaes, Petalidis, Jujukea, Bubuliades	N/A	N/A
Origin	Ukrain, Russia	Ukrain, Russia	Ukrain, Russia	Ukrain, Russia	Russia and Ukrain	Russia	Russia	Ukrain
Religion	Orthodox	Orthodox	Orthodox, Muslim	Muslim, Orthodox	Orthodox, Muslim	Evangelical, Orthodox, Muslim	Muslim	Orthodox
Native language	Romani	Romani	Romani	Romani	Romani	Romani	Romani	Romani
Second language	Russian	Russian	Russian, Georgian	Russian, Georgian	Russian Georgian	Russian, Georgian	Russian	Russian
Areas of movement and trading	Gachiani-Lilo-Samgori-Dedoplistskaro	Dedoplistskaro-Lilo-Gachiani	Lilo-Samgori-Dedoplistskaro	Samgori-Kutaisi-Telavi	Kutaisi-Samgori-Kobuleti	Kobuleti-Batumi-Kutaisi	Batumi-Kutaisi	Telavi-Dedoplistskaro