

How disadvantaged are Roma and Travellers in Europe in terms of life expectancy? Indirect estimations with the Orphanhood Method*

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Abstract

According to the most widely cited and generally accepted data from the Council of Europe, life expectancy (LE) of the population of Roma and Travellers (RT) is between 10 and 15 years lower than that of the general population. However, all existing reports about levels and trends of RT's LE are substantially limited in the comprehensiveness and quality of the available data. As a consequence, it is not clear whether the disadvantage in the number of life years is actually that high. The aim of this paper is therefore to provide additional estimates for subpopulations of RT for which no such estimates exist so far. We used the 2019 Roma and Travellers Survey (conducted in six western-European countries) which allows the estimation of LE with the indirect "Orphanhood Method". The results confirm previous estimates regarding the extent of differences in LE between RT and the national populations. In line with previous reports, the estimated extent of RT's disadvantage varies between countries. The estimated differences in LE at birth to the national populations lies between 7.1 years for female Gypsies and Travellers in the UK and 14.2 years for male Roma and Caravan Dwellers in Belgium.

* The presented study has been published in: European Union Agency for Fundamental Human Rights: *Roma and Travellers in six countries*. Technical Report. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union 2021, pp. 114-139. Online available at:

https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra-2021-roma-travellers-survey-technical-report_en.pdf