



Access to Land and Legal Rights on Land and the Housing Aspects of the Greek Roma



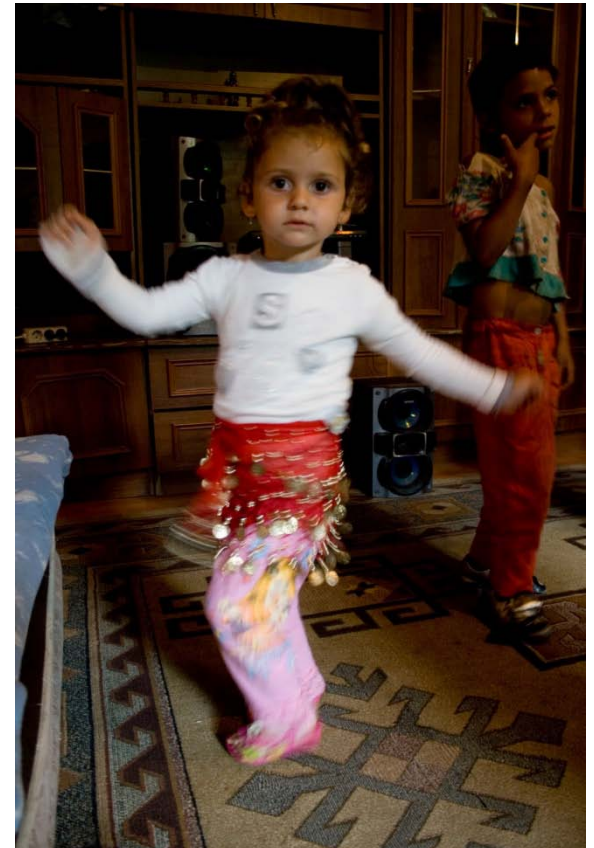
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- UN and E U policies to improve the legality of land tenure and infrastructure of Roma settlements
- The Greek Roma: general statistics, legislation & policies
- Roma's land tenure
- Roma's housing aspects & statistics
- Roma's housing conditions
- Case study
- Proposals



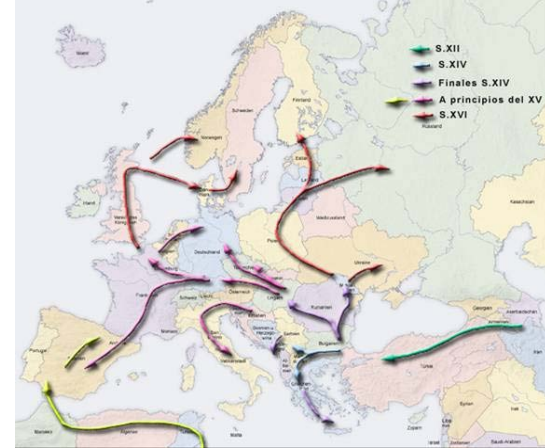
Roma within Europe

Roma came to Europe from India through the Ottoman Empire & the Balkans since the beginning of the 13th century :

- Carefree nomads; no significant worries; freedom loving and easy going; living in tents and informal settlements and dancing around campfires every night!
- This very romantic picture of Roma life is far from reality: only 20% of the European Roma population today is still nomadic.

Nomadism was not always a free choice but a result of persecution and continuous expulsion:

- Wallachia + Moldavia for centuries in slavery up to 1855
- Spain in 1749
- Austro-Hungarian Empire during the 18th century
- Italy in 1926
- Romania in 1942
- Germany in 1930 and 1940s



Increasing intolerance and violence against Roma settlements in Europe

10-12M population in Europe

70% in central + eastern Europe + ex-Soviet



During communism Roma were forced to move in one-room social housing apartments

- Break-out of former Yugoslavia and former Czechoslovakia
- Kosovo conflict —————> Serbia, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Montenegro, FY Republic of Macedonia, even Italy, Greece, ...
- EU membership of Romania and Bulgaria



Many Roma have fallen victims to new eviction measures (Slovakia, France, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovenia, ...)

Germany, Austria, Sweden and Switzerland now spend considerable funds to enable the return of the Roma to their countries of origin. Many plan to come back



How open the EU's "open borders" are (or can be)?



Discrimination based on **ethnic origin** is seen by 62 % of respondents to be the most widespread form of discrimination in the European Union



Respect for equality in diversity is a central premise for building democratic and inclusive societies



"Notwithstanding the type of tenure, all persons should possess a degree of security of tenure which guarantees legal protection against forced eviction, harassment and other threats. States parties should consequently take immediate measures aimed at conferring legal security of tenure upon those persons and households currently lacking such protection, in genuine consultation with affected persons and groups"... "adequate housing" should have sustainable access to natural and common resources, clean drinking water, energy for cooking, heating and lighting, sanitation and washing facilities, food storage facilities, refuse disposal, site drainage and emergency services. ...should be made affordable and habitable

Typology of land tenure can be still noted in the various European countries

- Roma who legally own the house and the land, or the apartment they live in
- Roma who legally own plots of land but are not allowed either to build their houses (or they have build illegally without a permit), or to park their caravan and be connected to the public facilities networks
- Roma who live on plots of land that belong to private individuals
- Roma squatting on municipal or state owned land
- Roma squatting on private land (usually rural land) causing problems to the land owners
- Roma squatting on state or private land that present special health considerations (e.g., industrial areas, landfills, etc)
- Roma who still ascribe to a nomadic lifestyle.

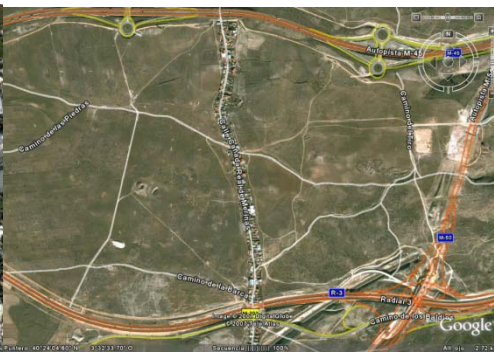


Any examples of good practice?

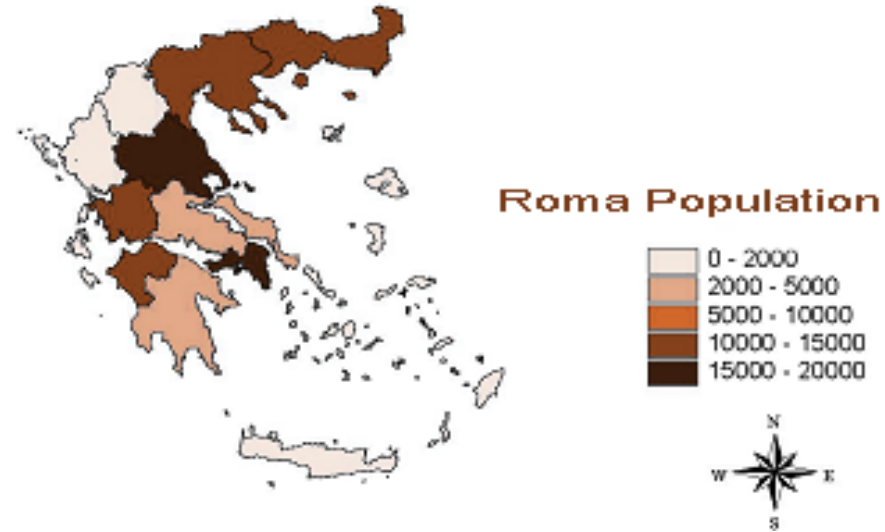
The municipalities of France have expanded their Urban Plans to include and upgrade Roma settlements and to provide **special planning zones where the Roma can station their caravans**

The Spanish Housing Program for Social Integration (HPSI) in 2008, which promoted **home-ownership through state-subsidies** in preference to the provision of rented social housing

The municipalities of Gorica in Sarajevo, of Kraljevo in Serbia and in Gjilan in Kosovo where Roma were included in **social housing programs funded by foreign agencies**



The Greek Roma



- 15th century , 1922, Greek citizen enjoying equal rights, Orthodox Christians, occupied in “roving trade”
- 40% is employed in the informal market; 77% health insurance
- Recognized Muslim Roma minority which settled the Anatolian and East Thracian regions in 1923
- Roma newcomers: Albania & Former Yugoslavia, still at the first steps of their urbanization process; Greek Roma community discourage the newcomers to settle permanently as they create environmental damage and increased criminality

The Greek Roma are faced with a triple social problem:

- (a) the conflict with the main body of the Greek society as their legal job abilities are mainly restricted to roving trade,
- (b) there is an inner-neighbourhood conflict with the other poor and marginalised minorities, and
- (c) there is conflict with the Roma newcomers.

Legal & Social aspects & adopted policies

Legislative Decree 3370/1955: Greek nationality

1996: the “Frame of National Policy for the Greek Roma”

2005 Greece has harmonised its legislation in terms of equal treatment of citizen

No social housing

MD (GG 412/B/29.03.2000) provision of individual housing loans to the Greek Roma for purchase or construction of new housing

~9,000 housing loans (for first residence) of 60,000 Euros each through national funds and with the guarantee of the Greek state, 22 years duration

Questionable ability to repay the loans and to maintain the real estate



Legal & Social aspects & adopted policies

Micro-financing policy has also been implemented for the period 2007-2013

5.5% not registered in the registry office

10% no identity card or any other certificate

25% no voting booklet

50% not registered in the municipality records

The “housing-loans” project was a good motive for the registration of the Roma in the registry municipal offices

Emphasis on education & medical treatment:

2,500 travelling Roma students were provided with special student cards for state schools

students who drop out was decreased from 75% in 1997 to 24% in 2010



Greek Roma Access to Land and Property Rights

General Statistics

- 66% legally own the land, building without a permit (no compensation in case of land takings)
- 45% live in privately owned land
- 21% land plot has been conceded by the municipality or the prefecture
- 11% land plot has been conceded by relatives
- Only those who have legal titles on the plot they are accepted to register to the Hellenic Cadastre (flexibility in the deadlines is tolerated)



The case of Zefyri

Population: 3,500 Roma inhabitants (1/3 of the total) (2010)

1960-1974: Roma were evicted by the police and resettled again

1975 -1977: urban regeneration project (local planners); 1986 sewerage system

1995: infrastructure improvements

Tenure: Low-interest housing loans, they bought the occupied land & built;
“adverse possession”

Housing: live in self-owned modern, 1 or 2 story houses of good construction

2004 Athens Olympics Closing Ceremony



Housing Aspects

DEPOS research (1999):

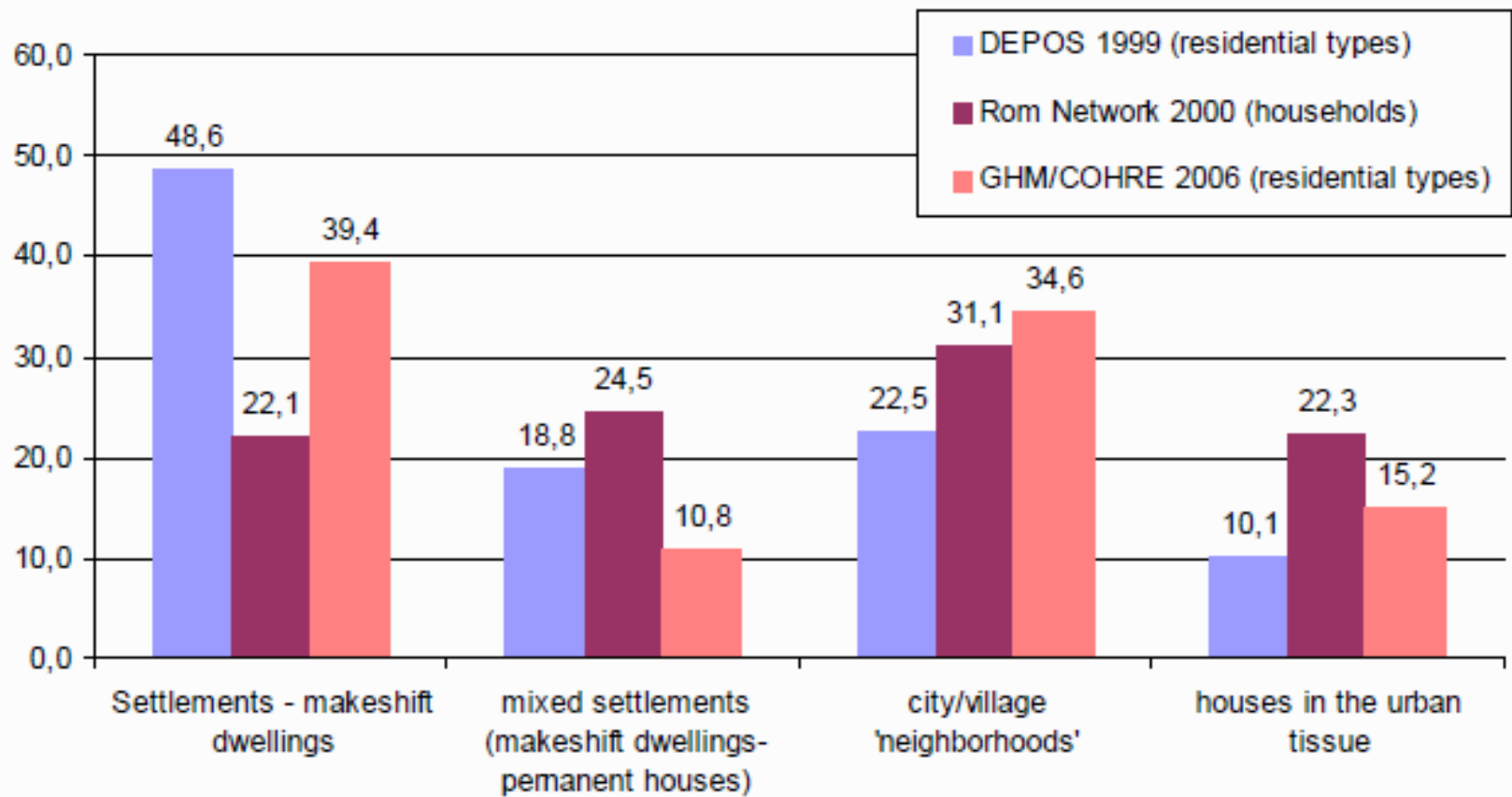
“genuine” settlements where all living quarters are makeshift (48.6% of the total),

“mixed” settlements containing both makeshift dwellings and permanent houses (18.8%),

“neighbourhoods” which are part of a city or a village (22.5%)
and

houses within the **urban tissue** (10.1%).





Types of Roma Settlements in Greece

pure settlements with makeshift shells at permanent sites or at sites that move within a broader region ,

mixed settlements consisting of both houses and makeshift constructs,

neighbourhoods with houses for permanent use in deteriorated districts,

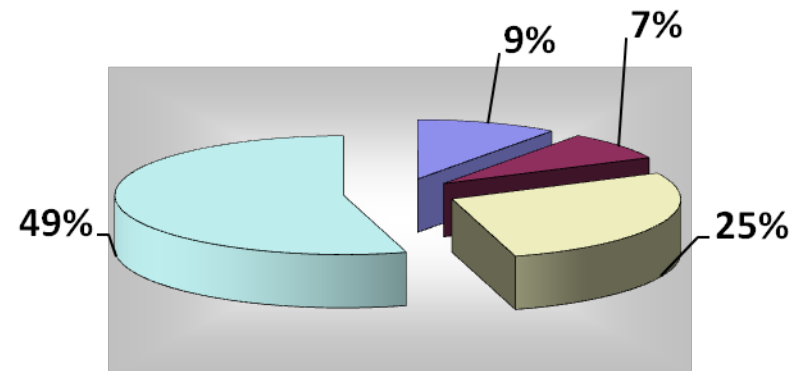
conventional residences or ***apartments*** within the urban web,

prefab hamlets ceded by the Ministry for the Environment, Physical Planning & the Environment within the framework of the Integrated Action Plan,

organised construction (at Sofades, constructed by the Workers' Housing Organisation) and

mixed prefab reservations with both small prefabricated houses and makeshift constructions.

- neighbourhoods
- mixed reservations
- pure reservations
- interspersed residences

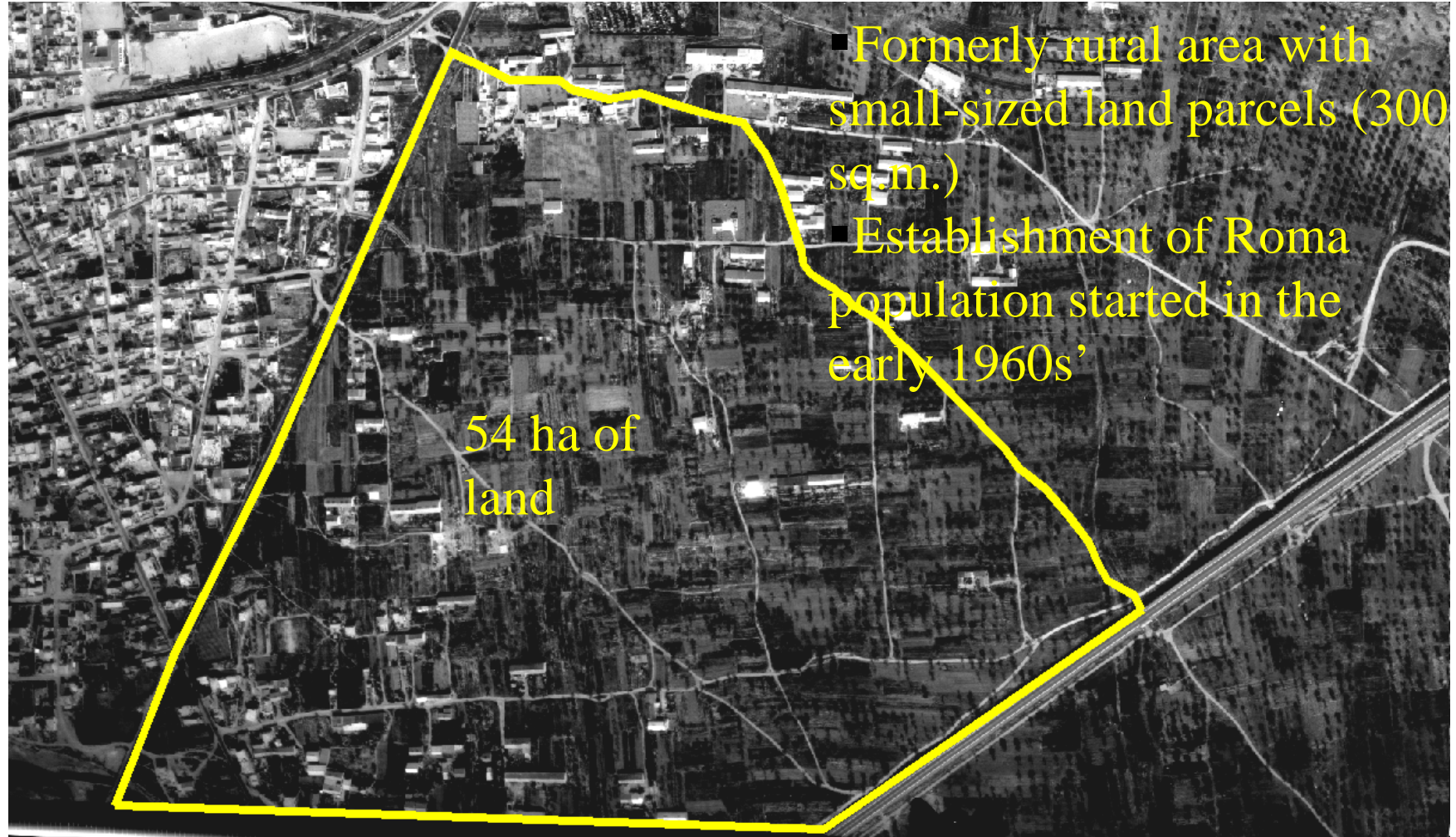


- Pure Reservations
- Interspersed Residences
- Mixed Reservations
- Neighbourhoods

Region of Attica: Roma Residential Areas

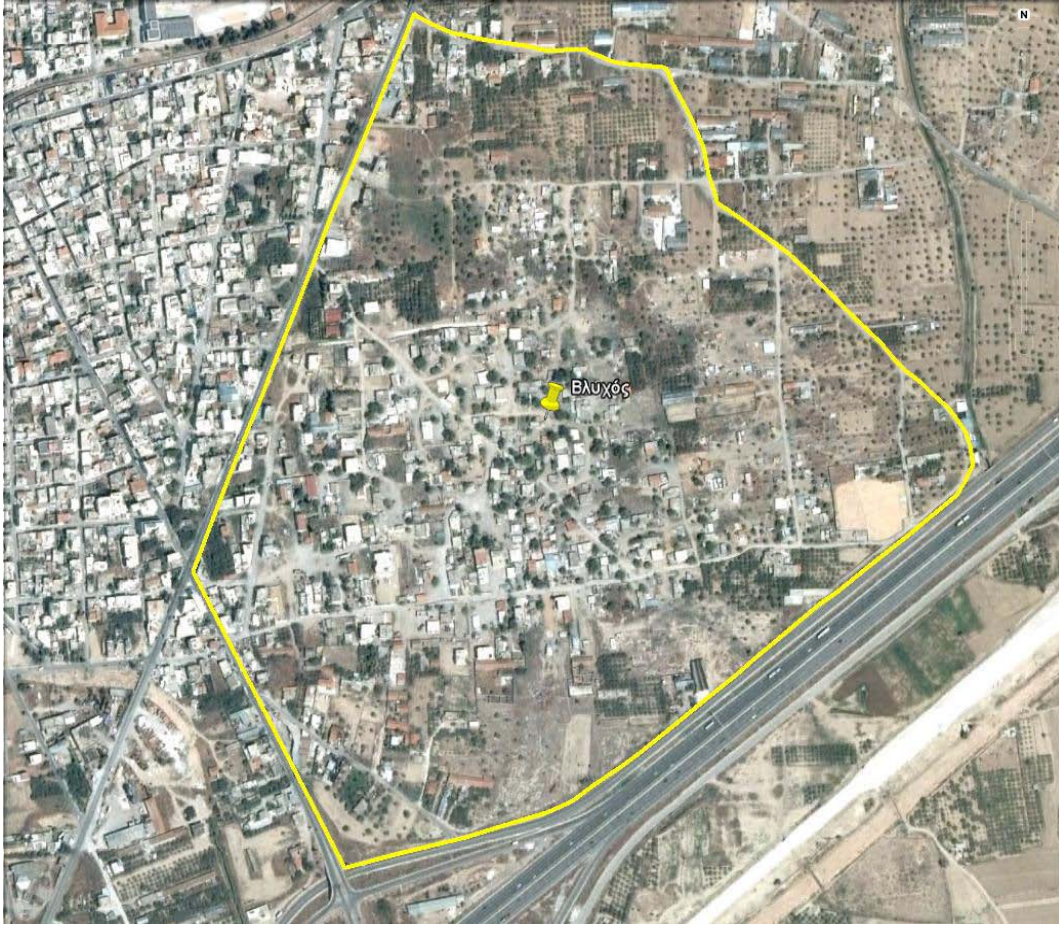


A relatively new Roma settlement in *Aspropyrgos* outside the city plan, comprises tents and shacks accommodating 700-800 people under the worst conditions, constituting undeveloped parcels south of Attiki Odos together with Spata settlement the most degraded camps. In *Nomismatiokopio*, a same type of residences is formed by one-level 1-2 storey houses, shoddy construction and shacks live under substandard conditions in an area designated as industrial zone and highly degraded. A redevelopment plan has been decided for requiring the relocation of Roma to another



- Formerly rural area with small-sized land parcels (300 sq.m.)
- Establishment of Roma population started in the early 1960s'

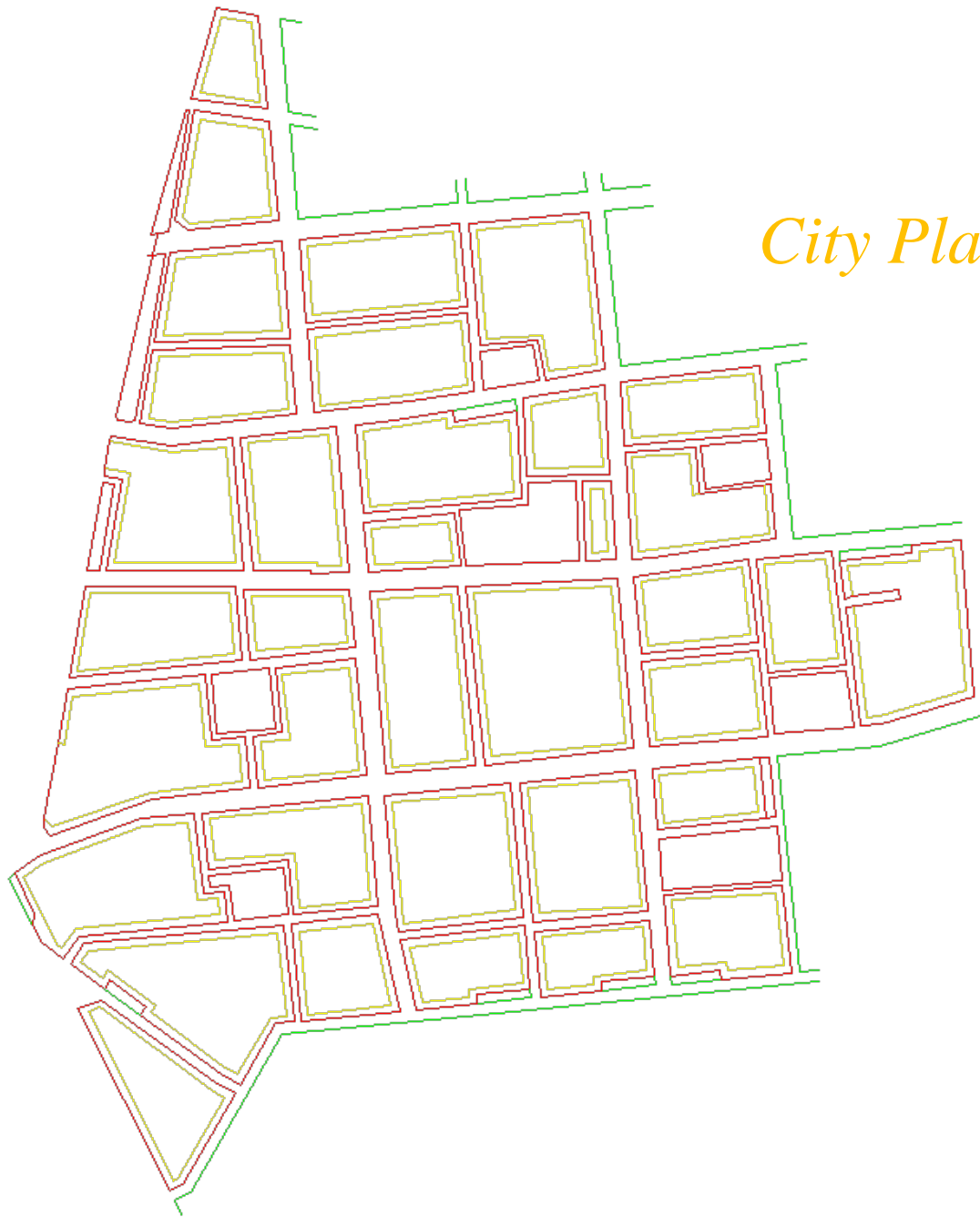
54 ha of land



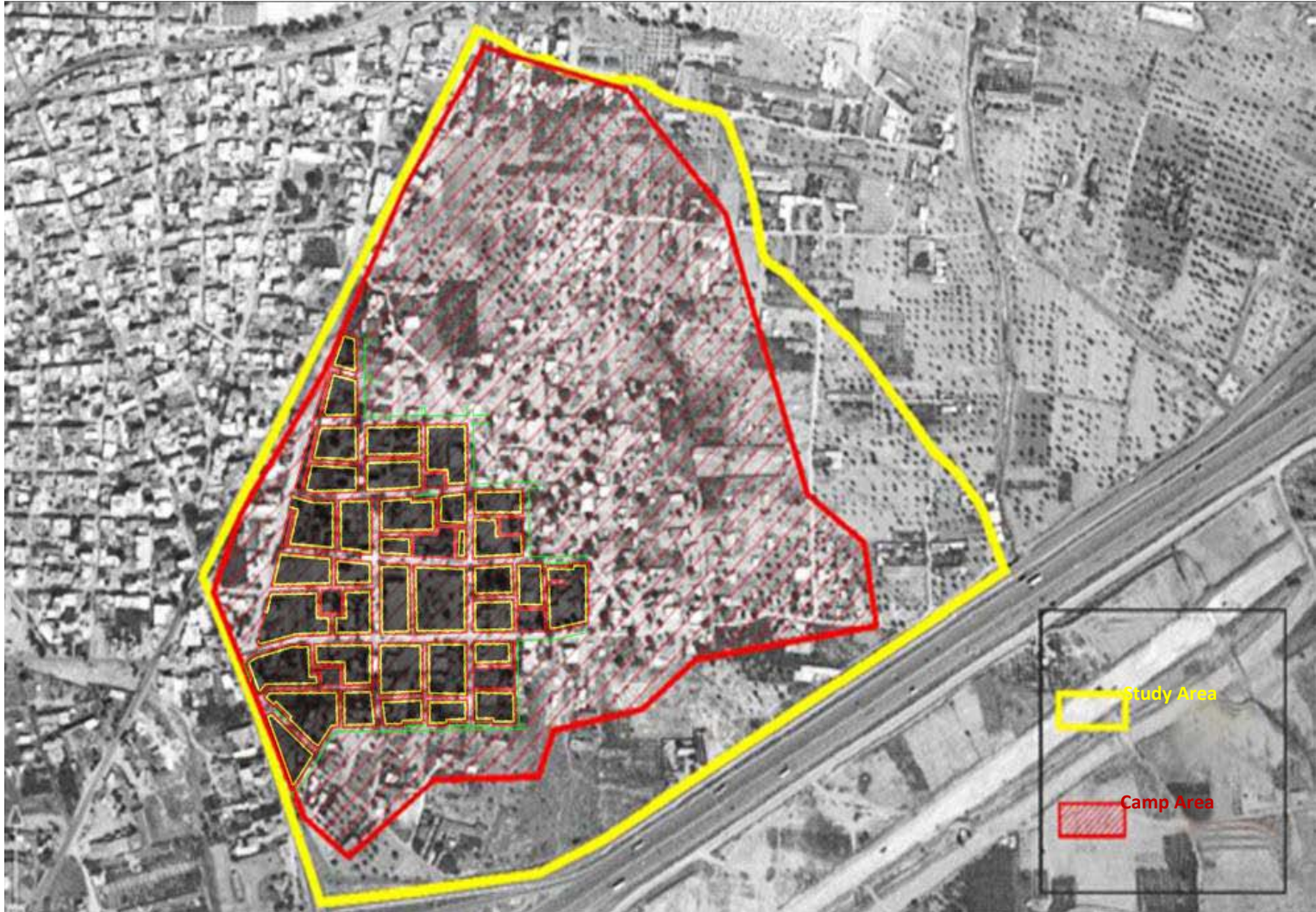
■ Roma: 1323

■ Non Roma: 111

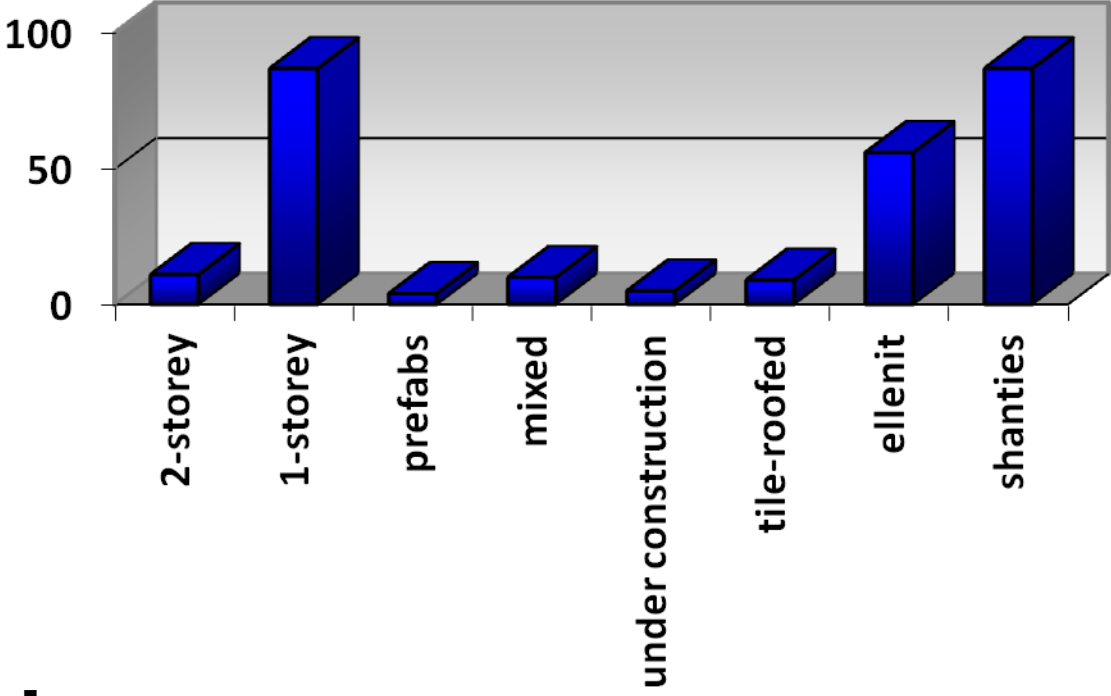




City Plan



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- purchased land
- preliminary contract
- conceded or rent land
- illegally seized
- no data

	Inside the City Plan		Outside the City Plan		Total	
Purchased-Land	65%	145	34%	33	56%	178
Preliminary Contract	9%	19	19%	18	12%	37
Concessed/	9%	19	15%	14	10%	33
Seized Land	3%	6	25%	24	9%	30
No Answer	15%	34	7%	7	13%	41
Total	100%	223	100%	96	100%	319

-
- 50% of them could not provide evidence
-

➤ deficiency in accessing the government's housing policy.



➤ temporary constructions and shacks, violating the building rules

CONCLUSIONS – PROPOSALS



Thank you for your attention