



INCLUSION PROCESSES OF ROMA COMMUNITIES LIVING IN ROME'S
SLUMS AND CAMPS :
THE ROMA INCLUSION PLAN IN THE PANDEMIC YEARS

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1. BACKGROUND

Italy is one of the few European countries which still has encampments established by the institutions and mainly inhabited by former Yugoslavian citizens who declared themselves as Roma. The first Regional Laws to create them were issued in the 1980's: through that 11 Italian Regions promulgated Laws dedicated to the "protection and defence of Roma culture". Based on the assumption that Roma were traditionally nomads and were not suited to live in normal houses and apartments, the various local administrations implemented the encampments. Placed inside tents, mobile homes and containers provided by the Municipality or self built.

The supposed "respect" for a nomadic Roma culture brought the administrators of Rome City Council administrators to build new camps over the past few decades, although Roma were long time ago became sedentary it actually, creating and consolidating one of Europe's largest ghetto systems, which came to host, at its peak, almost 6000 persons, half of which minors.

Nel 2016 the city of Rome had 4503 individuals were living in "nomad encampments" and in degraded conditions. In December 2020 the presences recorded were 2652: in less than 4 years the number of individuals who left the camps were 1851, bringing the total number to a decrease in presences of the 41%. For what concern the presences in squatted buildings and self built camps, in 2017 there were 2.144 persons in 175 dwellings, while in 2021 1395 persons were counted in a total of 130 places, with another decrease of 749 units, equal to -34,9%. A similar decrease was also recorded along the banks of the Tiber and Aniene rivers where informal unauthorized settlements are observed (-34.9%).

The marked reduction in the presence of residents in the camps can be attributed to two drivers that acted simultaneously in the period between 2016 and 2020/2021 :

- The interventions included in the Roma Inclusion Plan developed by the Municipality of Rome between 2016 and 2017 and operational until the end of 2021 (end of the council term) and explicitly aimed at reducing the presence in the camps by offering a composite set of tools dedicated to the gradual exit from the camps of the resident population
- The outbreak in Europe of the Covid-19 epidemic that had Italy as its epicenter in 2020, with the health risk and virus containment measures starting with repeated lockdowns. These dynamics have had a strong impact on the informal and subsistence economy systems of the camps, so much so that many residents of foreign nationality have moved from the camps to Rome and Italy to return to their countries of origin or to move away from the camp to settle in less exposed locations

Table 1 : Number of presences for authorised and acknowledged encampment in Rome per year since 2016 to 2020

Encampment	Roma Plan data baseline Local Metropolitan Police data SPE 2016	2017 (Revised Data new Census Roma Plan)	2018	2019	2020	Variation % 2020 from the Roma Plan data	Variation % 2020 from Local Metropolitan Police data SPE
Barbuta	656	568	444	336	231	-64,8	-59,3
Candoni	747	961	764	795	795	6,4	-17,3
Castel Romano	1062	1.016	743	538	580	-45,4	-42,9
Cesare Lombroso	227	220	180	147	97	-57,3	-55,9
Monachina	115	124	98	65	65	-43,5	-47,6
Salone	607	637	476	447	217	-64,3	-65,9
Salviati	429	550	419	238	379	-11,7	-31,1
via dei Gordiani	240	288	<i>nd</i>	<i>Nd</i>	288	20,0	0,0
River	420	407	0	0	0	-100,0	-100,0
Total	4.503	4.771	3.124	2.566	2.652	-41,1	-44,4

Sources: Digivis elaborations on data Municipality of Rome, SPE, Ufficio RSC, 2021

1. CHARACTERISTICS AND LIVING CONDITIONS OF ROMA GROUPS RESIDING IN CAMPS IN ROME

2.1 Main socio-demographic variables

A large majority of the people in the camps in Rome as of 2020 were referable to the Roma origin population groups. No data was collected on an ethnic basis but membership was attributed by the surveys on the basis of the self-declaration of the residents themselves with the large majority of the camp inhabitants self declared themselves as "Roma."

That being said, the Roma population in 2020 in encampments in Rome was composed for two third of individuals born in Italy (67%) with a 57% born in Rome. In respect to 2017 the number of those born in Italy has increased by 3% (it was 63%). In 2017 the most frequent nation was Romania (14%), which in 2020 decreased up to 10% of the total. Since 2018 the first nation of origin of the encampments' residents is Bosnia and Herzegovina (12%). Among the other nations we find Serbia (5%), Albania and Montenegro (1%).

Table 2: Place of birth of the population present in the camps in Rome for year Val.%

Place	2017	2018	2019	2020*
Italy	63	68	67	67
<i>Of which: Rome</i>	55	58	58	57
<i>Of which: other municipalities</i>	8	10	9	10
Romania	14	10	11	10
Bosnia-Erzegovina	10	12	12	12
Serbia	4	2	2	5
Albania	3	2	2	1
Montenegro	1	1	1	1
Other nations	4	4	4	4
Total	100	100	100	100

Sources: Digivis elaborations on data Municipality of Rome, SPE, Ufficio RSC, 2021

* data takes into account the most recent Census.

Table 3: Roma presences in informal or unregistered dwellings - 2021

Dwelling	Registered sites	Estimated Roma presences	
		Total	Of which underage
Micro dwellings on roads or fields	67	416	76
Dwellings on river shores	55	259	71
Squatted buildings	8	710	199
Total	130	1.395	346

Sources: Digivis elaborations on data Municipality of Rome, SPE, Ufficio RSC, 2021

Table 4: Nation of birth of the population present in the camps in Rome for year Val.%

Nation of birth	2017	2018	2019	2020*
Italy	63	68	67	67
<i>Of which: Rome</i>	55	58	58	57
<i>Of which: other municipalities</i>	8	10	9	10
Romania	14	10	11	10
Bosnia-Erzegovina	10	12	12	12
Serbia	4	2	2	5
Albania	3	2	2	1
Montenegro	1	1	1	1
Other nations	4	4	4	4
Total	100	100	100	100

Sources: Digivis elaborations on data Municipality of Rome, SPE, Ufficio RSC, 2021

* data takes into account the most recent Census.

In the camps surveyed, the gender distribution saw a slight majority of women overall, with 50.8 percent compared to 49.2 percent of men. Women were in the majority overall, but not in all camps. In the settlements of Salone, Barbuta and Salviati, men weighed in at 51.6 percent, 51.5 percent and 50.9 percent, respectively. In contrast, the strongest presence of women was reported in the camps of Lombroso (55.7 percent), Gordiani (52.4 percent) and Castel Romano (51.4 percent)

Table 5. Resident population in the camps by gender per Camp (2020)

Encampment	Male	Val.%	Female	Val.%	Total
Barbuta	119	51,5	112	48,5	231
Candoni	387	48,7	408	51,3	795
Castel Romano	282	48,6	298	51,4	580
Cesare Lombroso	43	44,3	54	55,7	97
Monachina	32	49,2	33	50,8	65
Salone	112	51,6	105	48,4	217
Salviati	193	50,9	186	49,1	379
via dei Gordiani	137	47,6	151	52,4	288
Total	1305	49,2	1347	50,8	2652

Sources: Digivis elaborations on data Municipality of Rome, SPE, Ufficio RSC, 2021

Table 6 Resident population in encampments in Rome by Age groups (year 2020).

Age	A.v.	%
0-16	1042	39,3
17-25	438	16,5
25-34	452	17,0
35-44	274	10,3
45-54	233	8,8
55-64	117	4,4
65 and more	96	3,6
Total	2652	100,0

Sources: Digivis elaborations on data Municipality of Rome, SPE, Ufficio RSC, 2021

The age analysis of the population considering the three age groups of youth 0-14 years, adults 15-64 years and elderly 65 years and over indicates a strongly progressive population structure. The weight of the younger component is, in fact, much greater than that of the older component: 38.2 percent versus 2.9 percent. The structure of the population belonging to the Roma groups settled in the capital's camps under analysis is, therefore, strongly differentiated from the figure for the Italian population as a whole, where the weight of the elderly component (23.5 percent) formed by people over 65 is almost double that of the

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population up to 14 years of age (12.8 percent), denoting a structural picture, on the contrary, decidedly regressive.

Table 7: Age structure of the population related to the Roma group and comparison with Italian population - 2020/2021

Age Groups	Roma (val.%)	Italian Population (val.%)
65 and over	2,9	23,5
15-64	58,9	63,7
0-14	38,2	12,8
Totale	100,0	100,0

Source: Digivis elaboration on surveys and data from RSC Office - Social Capital Map Sheet and Istat Demo Data

Looking at the group of minors reveals the large presence of children. Sixty-six percent of minors (accounting for 29% of the total population) were under the age of 10. Youth under 16 (within the minimum age of compulsory schooling) accounted for 42.2% of the total. In contrast, the youth and young adult component, those between the ages of 18 and 29, accounted for a smaller portion of 12.7% of the total.

The middle age groups (ages 30 to 54) comprised a larger share of residents: amounting to 34.7 percent of the total. The mature and elderly population was in a clear minority, with a share of individuals characterized by an age of 55 years and older amounting to 7.8 percent of the total. The gender distribution appears to be balanced for all age groups (Tab.23). Some exceptions were in the 15-19 and 65-74 age groups, in which men were in the majority (56.8 percent and 57.7 percent, respectively) as well as in the 75-and-over age group where women were in the vast majority.

Tab.8: Age distribution of RSC population in Rome camps - 2020/2021

Age Groups	Val. %
0-5	15,1
6-10	14,0
11-14	9,2
15-19	9,8
20-24	8,7
25-29	9,4
30-34	8,8
35-44	9,9
45-54	7,5
55-64	4,8
65-74	2,5
75 e più	0,5
Totale	100,0

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Tab.9: Distribution by gender and age groups of the RSC population in the Rome camps - 2020/2021

Age groups	Male	Female
	Val. %	Val. %
0-5	51,1	48,9
6-10	50,3	49,7
11-14	49,7	50,3
15-19	56,8	43,2
20-24	46,4	53,6
25-29	51,3	48,7
30-34	49,7	50,3
35-44	47,4	52,6
45-54	48,4	51,6
55-64	49,5	50,5
65-74	57,7	42,3
75 e più	30,0	70,0
Totale	50,3	49,7

Source: Digivis elaboration on surveys and data from RSC Office - Social Capital Map Sheet and Istat Demo Data

The very flattened age pyramid on the lower age groups equates to very low aging indices (determined by the percentage ratio of the number of over-65s to the number of young people up to age 14). In the RSC group examined, the index was 7.5 : that is, 7.5 elderly for every 100 young people. The very strong imbalance in favor of the very young observed in the camps emerges from a comparison with the same index calculated on the entire Italian population. The national figure was 184.1 in 2021 indicating that there were in Italy in 2021, 184.1 elderly for every 100 young people. This value naturally also stems from reduced life expectancy: as the value of this indicator decreases, so does the aging index. There are very few elderly people over the age of 65 in the Roma group examined.

2.2 Structural school deficits exacerbated by the crisis COVID-19

A large proportion of minors in the camps, based on statements made by their parents and collected by the Roma Capitale RSC Office as part of the activities under the Roma Plan (Social Capital Mapping) were in a

condition of absolute school evasion between 2020 and 2021. To the usual factors of extreme marginality of the Roma's social condition, housing segregation, lack of basic services, and status deficits with respect to citizenship as well as residency, which prevent full access to social protection systems and services for the right to study, the extraordinary problems related to the Covid emergency have been added since 2020.

Lockdowns and the use of Distance Learning have severely penalized the already weak school participation processes of Roma children, amplifying dropouts and ramping up school dropout and evasion.

Attendance of RSC children and youths continues to be monitored by the school system, but different parameters are used in assessing attendance than for all other students (a kind of "tolerability" is provided that justifies discontinuity by attributing it to belonging to particular socio-environmental contexts).

Data from the Covid period regarding school dropout have not yet been published, but data collected by the RSC Office through the Social Capital Map offer a picture of very severe marginalization of Roma children with respect to school.

Tab.10: School participation of RSC children (6-11 years old) in Rome - 2020/2021 - 2020/2021

School participation and success	Val.%
Are attending Elementary school	27,7
<i>Of which.</i>	
<i>First grade</i>	7,8
<i>Second grade</i>	7,2
<i>Third grade</i>	5,5
<i>Fourth grade</i>	4,0
<i>Fifth grade</i>	3,2
Have obtained an elementary school license	3,2
Do not know or do not report class and attendance	69,1
Total	100

Source: Digivis elaboration on surveys and data from RSC Office - Social Capital Map and Istat Demo Data

Tab.10 collects data on school attendance. Only 27.7 percent of children up to age 11 are attending a school class (based on what their parents reported), and only 19.6 percent of 11-year-olds have acquired an elementary school license.

The vast majority of respondents (69.1%) do not indicate for their children between the ages of 6 and 11 that they have acquired an elementary license or are attending any elementary class.

The enrollment data alone detect a large schooling deficit, but the prolonged pandemic phase of 2020 and 2021 has reduced the opportunities and quality of learning, creating the conditions for an aggravation of school dropout. As research on the entire student population in Italy shows, dropout rates during Covid-19 were particularly high in precisely those disadvantaged contexts where learning outcomes were lowest.

Tab.11: School participation of RSC children (12-14 years old) in Rome - 2020/2021

School participation and success	Val.%
They still attend an elementary class	17,7
Have obtained an elementary license but are not attending middle school	34,8
Have obtained an elementary license and are attending middle school:	18,4
Have obtained a middle school license	0,7
Do not know or do not declare either class or attendance	28,4
Totale	100

Source: Digivis elaboration on surveys and data from RSC Office - Social Capital Map

Looking at the school participation of 12- to 14-year-olds, (Tab.28) a picture emerges of further extensive school evasion, with only 18.4 percent of the total number of young people in this age group having obtained an elementary school license and continuing their studies in middle school. Among the remaining youngsters those who have obtained the elementary license but are no longer attending compulsory school are 34.8 percent, those who report still attending an elementary class are 17.7 percent, and those who are not reported to be in any school setting without even having acquired the elementary license are 28.4 percent. Only 0.7 percent of children regularly completed the school cycle by obtaining a lower secondary school license

Tab.12: Distribution of the Roma population aged 15-62 years by educational qualification - 2020/2021

Title of study	Val.%
No title	39,1
Elementary school diploma	28,8
Lower secondary school license	29,1
High school diploma, 2/3 years (vocational qualification)	1,9
Higher secondary education diploma that allows access to university, 4-5 years	0,6
Bachelor's degree and postgraduate degree	0,1
Other	0,5
Total	100

Source: Digivis elaboration on surveys and data from RSC Office - Social Capital Map

The distribution by educational qualification (Tab.29) shows very low levels of higher education. Considering people aged 15 to 62, those with a vocational qualification or upper secondary school diploma account for only 2.6 percent of the total.

2.3 Labor market exclusion at highs due to pandemic crisis

Employment data collected by the RSC Office of Roma Capitale as part of social capital mapping activities describe a situation of absolute marginality and exclusion of the RSC population, from legally and contractually recognized forms of employment.

The very low levels of education with a large presence of completely illiterate people and the conditions of social and housing exclusion in a context of status deficit (which prevents obtaining residence permits or residency) are profound conditioning factors with respect to employment outcomes.

The structural factors of disadvantage combined with the severe limitations imposed by Covid-19 (with the impossibility of carrying out, during prolonged lockdowns, many work activities starting with those that are less skilled, manual or of contact and proximity with other people, such as for domestic work or street work such as street vending), have led to a further worsening of the already serious employment situation of the RSC population present in Rome and settled in the camps.

For many camp residents, the lack of any form of employment, regular or otherwise, has forced the choice to leave the camps and where possible, as in the case of seasonal Romanian Roma, to return to the country of Origin

Tab.13: RSC population aged 15-64 by employment status, inactivity or study - 2020/2021

Status	Val.%
Employed	22,5
School or college student	8,6
Seeking employment	34,7
Not engaged in study or training, not working and not seeking employment	34,2
Total	100,0

Source: Digivis elaboration on surveys and data from RSC Office - Social Capital Map

Employed people out of the total active Roma population aged 15-64 (Employed, Seeking Employment, Non-labor force aged 15 and older) turned out to be only 22.5 percent of the census population in 2020/2021 (Tab 31). The component still engaged in study weighed only 8.5 percent, while the remaining share consisted of job seekers (34.7 percent) or people not studying, not working and not seeking employment (34.2 percent).

The share of people who reported being employed in the total working population indicates the employment rate, which is one of the main indicators of labor inclusion.

Tab.14 shows the values of the Roma group of 22.5% and the comparison with the national average figure (referring to the entire Italian population), which in 2020 was 58.1% showing a really high distance .

Tab.14: Main labor market indicators Comparison between Roma group and national data - 2020/2021

Rate	Roma Group	Italy*
Employment rate (Val.%)	22,5	58,1
Unemployment rate (Val.%)	60,6	9,2
Activity rate (Val.%)	57,3	64,1

Source: Digivis elaboration on surveys and data from RSC Office - Social Capital Map and Istat Demo Data *Average 2020

All labor market indicators referring to the Roma Groups residing in the camps in Rome, highlight the picture of profound employment disadvantage and lack of social inclusion that characterizes this population group. The unemployment rate given by the ratio of people seeking employment to the labor force (people employed and people unemployed i.e., looking for work) referring to all age groups of the Roma population is 60.6 percent, with a value more than 6 times higher than the national average level detected in 2020 (9.2 percent).

Tab.15: RSC population of Rome employed , by declared profession - 2020/2021

Occupation/Profile	Val.%
Street vendor	47.7
Unskilled personnel moving and delivering goods	8.2
Unskilled construction and related personnel (construction laborer, construction loading/unloading)	3.6
Unskilled domestic service personnel (domestic helpers, housework)	3.2
Unskilled manufacturing personnel (workshop/industrial laborer, demolition)	2.5
Unskilled personnel cleaning services offices, hotels, ships, restaurants, public areas, and vehicles	1.8
Unskilled personnel agriculture and grounds maintenance (laborers, gardeners)	0.4
Other	8.2
Don't know/No answer	24.4
Totale	100,0

Source: Digivis elaboration on surveys and data from RSC Office - Social Capital Map

An examination of the occupations indicated by those who declared themselves employed (included in Tab.15) clearly reflect the very low levels of education and reduced skills that characterize the Roma population surveyed by the RSC Office in Rome's capital city. In fact, the occupations that emerged (retrained on the basis of Eurostat/ISCO taxonomies) are almost exclusively those belonging to the group of elementary occupations. This category represents the vast majority of the labor supply of the Roma group, as attested by the figure of 67.4 percent of the total employed, to which can also be added those who did not specify the type of profession they held and who also constitute a large group of respondents (24.4 percent). If only those who still indicated a specific occupational profile are considered, unskilled occupations even account for nearly 90 percent of the occupations in which RSC population groups are engaged.

These are occupations that involve the performance of simple and repetitive activities, for which the completion of a particular education is not required and which may involve the use of hand tools and the use

of physical force, providing for imitated autonomy of judgment and initiative in the execution of tasks. Workers in these categories perform itinerant or unskilled manual labor in agriculture, construction, and industrial production or executive support in office work, production services, education, health, cleaning, and janitorial services. To understand the distance from the rest of the population present in Italy, it should be noted that less-skilled profiles in the Italian national labor market account for just over 10 percent of the labor supply as a whole.

The specific unskilled occupations that emerge among the Roma groups primarily include work as street vendors of objects and articles of various kinds, on the street or in public places and in non-fixed locations. This is by far the most practiced activity, with 47.7 percent of employed respondents engaged in these jobs. This group of occupations is followed at a distance by unskilled profiles of moving and delivering goods, unskilled personnel in manufacturing and construction, and unskilled domestic service workers (COLF, housework)

urce : Digivis elaboration on surveys and data from RSC Office - Social Capital Map

Only 8 percent of total respondents say they are employed in other occupations attributable to more skilled occupational groups, particularly the two groups of artisans or skilled laborers and skilled occupations in trade and services.

Tab.16: Other than unskilled occupations observed in Roma groups - 2020/2021

Educator
Call center worker
Musician
Tailor
Hairdresser
Driver
Bartender
Ironer

So

However, these are residual figures compared to the majority of very basic profiles highlighted. Even rarer are the figures that assume an upper secondary or even tertiary degree such as the professions of cultural mediators, educators or call center workers: these are figures that appear individually.

1.4 Health services and health conditions of RSC groups

In the context of the Covid 19 crisis, Roma groups were penalized with respect to the possibility of accessing the National Health Service and making full use of the services offered. In fact, only 45.3 percent of Roma households were associated with the National Health System through at least one member. The difficulty in accessing health services based on what the surveyed Roma stated depended on "Documentary problems related to status." The possibility of enrolling in the National Health System is in fact tied to the possession

of documents proving residency or by a Residence Permit or a Work Contract. "Difficulty in dealing with bureaucratic paperwork" continues to appear to be a sometimes insurmountable obstacle even when it comes to renewing expired or invalid documents, sometimes even lost or never collected.

The difficulty that the RSC population experiences in meeting the necessary requirements for enrollment in the SSN is thus not always directly attributable to status-related problems, but very often from the inability to independently deal with the administrative process at the counter for obtaining certain documentation.

Some of the residents interviewed thus tend to rely on temporary solutions to emerging health problems (relying on NGOs), either by getting STP health cards provided for Temporarily Resident Foreigners granted in any case by the national health system to non-EU citizens not in good standing with entry and stay in Italy, who are nevertheless assured urgent, essential and continuous care, or alternatively by getting an ENI health card, which ensures health care to nonresident EU citizens who are not assisted in their countries of origin.

The portion of the RSC population on disability is 2.9%. This is significantly better than the national figure where disability pension recipients are instead 5.0 percent of the total population. The age distribution of the RSC population sees the very young and adolescents representing a proportionally much higher fraction of the total than the national equivalent, and this explains at least in part the lower level with regard to the presence of disability. Many among the residents of Rome's camps and informal settlements may not be aware, however, with respect to the exact parameters denoting a recognized disability condition for employment, pension or tax purposes. In addition, the process for the recognition of such a condition is still contingent on citizenship and residency, while the process envisaged with medical examinations and health checks, in addition to a verification of socio-economic and income data for the purpose of obtaining economic benefits, may represent an obstacle that is not easily surmountable for individuals with very low levels of education who find themselves in situations of social exclusion.

In addition, 8.9 percent of residents belonging to the RSC population report that they are being treated at a health facility.

Tab.17: General information on SSN enrollment and health status of RSC population in Rome camps - 2020/2021

Health status and SSN enrollment	Val. %
Enrollment in the National Health Service (SSN) family share*	45,3
Entitlement to exemption from co-payment per household share*	28,8
Disabled subjects out of the total population	2,9
Subjects currently being treated at a health facility	8,9

Source : Digivis elaboration on surveys and data from RSC Office - Social Capital Map

* This value was derived using the reference persons for each household as a proxy.

Tab.18: Reasons given regarding non-enrollment in the SSN by the RSC population in the Rome camps - 2020/2021

Reason	Val. %
Documentary problems related to status	47,1
Difficulty in dealing with bureaucratic paperwork	30,6
Availability STP or ENI card	22,4
Total	100,0

Source : Digivis elaboration on surveys and data from RSC Office - Social Capital Map

3 THE ROMA PLAN OF ROMA CAPITALE

The Roma Plan of Roma Capitale 2016-2021 was an policy integrated tool for the realization of the goal of the progressive closure of the large formal and informal, authorized and tolerated settlements that had been established in Rome over the previous 30 years as places to house individuals and families who self-declared themselves as belonging to Roma or Sinti groups

The Plan represented the first structured intervention at the municipal level aimed explicitly at closing all camps. The encampment closure was much needed because the prolonged permanence in the mono ethnic shanty town environment prevented an entire group of de facto Roman residents from being included and enjoy all the citizenship's rights

The camps isolated structure, and the imposed (and self imposed) segregation from the wider social context, hindered for decades any possible inclusion project. Social anomie, deviance and criminality and the practice of illegal discharge of poisonous and hazardous materials have in the course of the decades, polluted a vast number of areas, with serious consequences on the health and wellbeing of both the shanty towns inhabitants, the neighbourhood residents and the surrounding wildlife and environment.

Therefore, the Plan has envisaged a gradual mode of exit from the camps, both to provide adequate accommodation for households and individuals who are in a state of actual and documented housing need, and to help numerous users overcome documentary and residency problems (an obstacle to inclusion processes) and to develop personalized orientation and training paths to increase the very low level of employability of camp residents. In this regard, the Plan also included financial contributions to start self-employment initiatives.

Explicit goals of the plan were thus :

- To close down the shanty towns and to offer to residents an integrated, tailored plan for the access to documental regularisation, decent houses and to training and occupation.
- The second, but not less important reason, was to give back the territories to the neighbourhoods: they were all heavily polluted both by the residents' activities of illegal waste discharge, or due to the frequent fires, which produced poisonous fumes affecting the health of everyone, Roma and non Roma.

The policy was directed to everyone that at the time of the last shanty town census (2016) was registered as present in one of the Roman camps; although the large majority of the camp inhabitants self declared themselves as “Roma”, (an unrecognized minority), the Inclusion Plan did not had any ethnic or racial connotations, it was based on a universalistic approach, including in the inclusion plan every individual residing in the camps.

In pursuit of the plan, a multilevel strategy was adopted: first the **administrative level**, which brought to a full reassessment of the actions previously financed. The first step was the withdrawal of the public procurements issued from the previous administration and dedicated to bring services inside the camps and transform these financial allocations from support to the camp system to direct support to inclusion. Public procurements were issued for each camp earmarking up to 10.000 euro for family or individuals, for the support to rent and housing expenses and/or to access professional training. This was extremely important as never before a consistent part of the resources were given directly to the beneficiaries and not to intermediaries through the stipulation of a mutual pact between the family or the individual and the Municipality, stating the reciprocal duties and rights.

The second key element was **legislative**. Access to social housing is regulated by each Municipality by a number of criteria, to each of these criteria, different scores are assigned (income, family members, presence of disabled persons, previous evictions). The eviction from a camp however (18 points), was not considered as equal to the one from a normal house, which left many Roma lagging behind. A city deliberation equalised the eviction from a normal house to the eviction from a shanty town, thus giving the inhabitants the much needed 18 points in the house waiting lists.

3.1 Program implementation

The program was designed within the temporal frame of 5 years. Steps were the following:

- Create an ad hoc, temporary office¹ with the task of coordinating all the Departments, Offices and Agencies involved (see here Plan Governance) and to deal with the governmental level.
- Withdraw all the previous public procurements dedicated to the mantainment of the encampment system and issue of new ones to support the Office in the Inclusion Plan. Consistent part of the budget (up to 10.000 euro) invested **directly** allocated to end users and not to intermediations.
- Agreement with the Financial Police in order to run patrimonial checks among the residents (800 persons left the camps before these controls were made, thus indicating that the camps were not only inhabited by fragile and poor people, but also by a number of individuals who used and exploited the “no man’s land” of the camp to conduct every kind of informal and or illegal business. As it was to be discovered before the illegal discharge of wastes within the camps was one of the main activities
- Create a database with the residents social map needed for inclusion, a follow up of activities and actions (training proposals, support in the house and job search, documental regularisation,

¹ Mayor Ordenance n. 102 of 4th July 2017, <https://www.comune.roma.it/web/it/scheda-servizi.page?contentId=INF38622>

assessment of disabilities, social security income, COVID Help Packages etc.). Before that, no one had ever recorded the intervention made, so that for example, one family may have had repeated help and support, while others had nothing. It was also useful to assess the resources and the degree of independence and autonomous capacity of a group used since decades to depend from the city or the NGOs help, and that had somehow lost the capacity to self organize and to deal autonomously with common aspects of everyday life (from paying bills, to common living rules etc.).

- Design of the individual inclusion plan together with the Roma clients and with a specific, dedicated support to housing and occupation : Instead of consulting the self appointed “community leaders”, the Municipality Social Services were instructed to work on a one to one, an enormous effort, which guaranteed that each member of the group was consulted, allowing us to hear all voices, including that of women and young adults. The effect was that we broke up the system of power that silently governed the shanty towns and that was in the hand of the most powerful families and was composed almost exclusively of male representatives. It was instead important to empower every single component of this group
- Strong adherence from both the Office and the NGO entrusted of the implementation, to the Plan methodology, based on stimulating personal commitment and active action toward autonomy, with the Municipality support, in order to guarantee also to Roma living in camps, the full access to all citizenship rights.

3.2 Activities

For the implementation of the Plan, the administration chose the path of one-to-one interlocution with all the referents of each family, thus following the approach of individualized intervention. Taking charge and individualized planning took the form of a process that, starting from the assessment of the person's conditions and needs (to be carried out with the person himself), provided for an articulated set of differentiated interventions to be implemented jointly. The model of intervention is one that can be traced back to the case management approach: that is, the administration's action has taken the form of a collaborative process of assessing, planning, implementing, coordinating, and monitoring the necessary options and services that, in a context of complex and fragmented services among institutions/service providers, private entities, also includes methods and strategies for linking and coordinating the various aspects of care provided by different institutional and non-institutional systems/actors. The ultimate goal is to provide support and targeted solutions to meet the social welfare, health, housing, education/training, and job placement needs of people and households in the camps.

The empowerment of the users (called to sign a covenant of adherence to the program) completes the design of the intervention, with the aim of fostering the achievement of lasting and quality results, guaranteeing effectiveness and efficiency also with respect to cost control.

On the basis of the personalized methodology of intervention envisaged by the Plan , based as noted above on a process of individual activation and empowerment, the Administration's referents (Officials and social workers of the RSC Office of Roma Capitale and of the managing bodies called to intervene through public tenders in support of the Administration's inclusion projects) developed within the various camps an intense

activity of individual contact, family by family and individual by individual, in order to promote and make people understand the scope of the interventions in place and the active role that each person was called to play. The ongoing contact was further fueled by the need to develop the Social Capital Map: the in-depth master data sheet aimed at drafting individual work plans, also with a view to increasing the employability of the people involved. The 1:1 approach produced **6997** meetings for the Plan implementation Equivalent to an average number of 5 contacts per adult person residing in the camps: **1.507** interventions were directed to support the documental regularisation as many Roma although born in Italy, never completed the necessary procedures for the regularisation or to obtain the Italian citizenship. Since the law 390 of 1992, many remained in a documental limbo. This activity needed a lot of time and efforts on behalf of the Office and of the implementing NGO's, which had to offer legal assistance for many cases, complicated by the lack of documents or by the difficulty of obtaining documents from the states of origins (namely former Yugoslavia), **3665** were in the field of health.

Table 19: Interventions of the Roma office and of the NGO entrusted of the implementation 2018/2021

Encampment	Implementer	Year	Number of meetings for the presentation of the Roma Plan, and gather information for the social capital map and the individual inclusion plan	Number of social interventions (support to documental and administrative regularisation)	Number of social health interventions	Number of beneficiaries of economic food support (including Covid)	Covid interventions
Lombroso	NGO implementing	2020	98	44	15		3
Lombroso	NGO implementing	2021	130	24	30		
Lombroso	Roma Office	20/21	140	10	5	133	0
Gordiani	Roma Office	2020	0	20	2	67	3
Gordiani	Roma Office	2021	120		2		
Salone	Roma Office	2020	46	0	0	181	2
Salone	Roma Office	2021	79	2	4	0	0
Salone	NGO implementing	2018	63				
Salone	NGO implementing	2019	3				
Salone	NGO implementing	2020	0			25	

Salone	NGO implementing	2021	436	62	26	15	4
Salone	Roma Office	2020/2021	120	20	20	25	
Barbuta	NGO implementing	2018	157	150	373		
Barbuta	NGO implementing	2019	56	165	668		
Barbuta	NGO implementing	2020	121	181	1568		
Barbuta	Roma Office	2020/2021	140	10	10	127	
Candoni	NGO implementing	2021	404	44	48	0	0
Candoni	Roma Office	2021	40	8			
Castel R.	NGO implementing	2020	2980	135	384	189	10
Castel R.	NGO implementing	2021	1005	86	111	0	25
Salviati	NGO implementing	2020/2021	239	446	369	146	36
Salviati	Roma Office	2020/2021	250	100	30	234	0
Monachina	Roma Office / NGO implementing	2020/2021	370			10	
All	Total	All years	6997	1507	3665	1152	83

Source: Municipality of Rome, Roma Special Office, Digivis 2021

Table 20: Social housing (ERP) assigned to families residing in the encampments, and total incidences on the total of social housing assigned in Rome from 2017 to 2021 (first 6 months), absolute val. and % val.

Year	Absolute value residents	Absolute value Roma	val. %
2017	10	434	2,3
2018	13	418	3,1
2019	75	346	21,7
2020	25	122	20,5
2021	25	89	28,0
Total	148	1409	10,5

Source: Municipality of Rome, Roma Special Office, Digivis 2021

The access to social housing is regulated by a number of criteria (income, number of children, presence of disabled persons, elders, previous evictions etc.). Before the Roma Plan the eviction from a camp was not considered equal to the eviction from a house. For this reason the roma inhabitants of the camps could only rarely succeed in accessing the social housing services. The administration therefore, made a legislative modification which equalised the eviction from a camp to the eviction from a home. This and the inclusion efforts of the Special Roma Office and the Social Housing Department Social have provided a housing accommodation to **295 families**. Since 2017 1100 individuals have been involved, it is a data that covers 60% of the exit from the camps.

Table 21: Interventions to promote other housing solutions: contribution to rent (up to 10.000 euro), co-housing, private rent

Encampment	Implementer	Year	Number of meetings for the presentation of the Roma Plan, and to gather information for the social capital map and the individual inclusion plan	Number of social interventions (support to documental and administrative regularisation)	Number of social health interventions	Number of beneficiaries of economic food support (including Covid)	Covid interventions
Lombroso	NGO implementing	2020	98	44	15		3
Lombroso	NGO implementing	2021	130	24	30		
Lombroso	Roma Office	20/21	140	10	5	133	0
Gordiani	Roma Office	2020	0	20	2	67	3
Gordiani	Roma Office	2021	120		2		
Salone	Roma Office	2020	46	0	0	181	2
Salone	Roma Office	2021	79	2	4	0	0
Salone	NGO implementing	2018	63				
Salone	NGO implementing	2019	3				
Salone	NGO implementing	2020	0			25	

Salone	NGO implementing	2021	436	62	26	15	4
Salone	Roma Office	2020/2021	120	20	20	25	
Barbuta	NGO implementing	2018	157	150	373		
Barbuta	NGO implementing	2019	56	165	668		
Barbuta	NGO implementing	2020	121	181	1568		
Barbuta	Roma Office	2020/2021	140	10	10	127	
Candoni	NGO implementing	2021	404	44	48	0	0
Candoni	Roma Office	2021	40	8			
Castel R.	NGO implementing	2020	2980	135	384	189	10
Castel R.	NGO implementing	2021	1005	86	111	0	25
Salviati	NGO implementing	2020/2021	239	446	369	146	36
Salviati	Roma Office	2020/2021	250	100	30	234	0
Monachina	Roma Office / NGO implementing	2020/2021	370			10	
All	Total	All years	6997	1507	3665	1152	83

Source: Municipality of Rome, Roma Special Office, Digivis 2021

Regarding households and individuals who found housing solutions other than ERP (Public Residential Housing) from the plan review, 56 rental subsidies and 23 co-housing subsidies were provided. Data monitoring also notes 65 households that found housing independently, for a total of 144 households with housing solutions outside the ERP system

Another important issue brought on by the encampments' existence, was the environmental one. For decades, the encampments inhabitants had used the camp as places to release every kind of waste, from the ones obtained through the discarding of objects collected during the "searches" in rubbish bins. This activity, mainly practised by woman and youngsters regard mainly second hand objects and tools to be resold; then there is the larger activity of metal gathering, and also in this case, after the needed metal has been extracted, the refusals were abandoned in the camps or in abandoned areas. But most worrying, was the presence of a number of extremely polluting materials, discarded without any care and seriously dangerous for health (car carcasses, washing machines, refrigerators, TVs, etc.). The expenses for the cleaning were enormous (in some cases one million euro per year), and the contamination of water and soil was massive.

To quote an example, the encampment of “La Barbuta” lies over two underground sources that in Roman times were the sacred homes of the two water deities from which they take their names: Appia and Egeria, now polluted and undrinkable. To make things worse, often the piles of rubbish were set on fire, thus making even more difficult the place sanitation: a burnt refusal has to be analysed in order to be correctly disposed of, and these kinds of services are extremely expensive. Moreover, the smoke originated from the combustion of these mixed materials posed a continuous and serious threat both to the encampments’ inhabitants and to the neighbourhood residents.

The diminution of the population residing in the camps, and their access to a decent home, translated into a sensible decrease in the number of these so called: “toxic fires”, bringing a decisive improvement to the collective health.

Table 22: Unauthorised burning of mixed toxic wastes in the authorised and tolerated encampments in Rome, 2017-2021, absolute val. and val. % for each year

Encampment	2021 (Jan-May)		2020		2019		2018		2017	
	a.v.	val.%	a.v.	val.%	a.v.	val.%	a.v.	val.%	a.v.	val.%
Barbuta	3	15,0	48	30,6	119	63,3	131	68,9	91	42,1
Salone	4	20,0	43	27,4	37	19,7	21	11,1	52	24,1
Salviati	1	5,0	1	0,6	7	3,7	20	10,5	26	12,0
C. Romano	6	30,0	37	23,6	12	6,4	2	1,1	24	11,1
Candoni	0	0,0	6	3,8	1	0,5	5	2,6	4	1,9
Lombroso	6	30,0	16	10,2	7	3,7	7	3,7	19	8,8
Monachina	0	0,0	4	2,5	4	2,1	1	0,5	nd	0,0
Other	0	0,0	0	0,0	1	0,5	3	1,6	0	0,0
Total	20	100,0	157	100,0	188	100,0	190	100,0	216	100,0

Source: Municipality of Rome, Roma Special Office and Local Police, Digivis 2021

4 COVID-19 EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT IN RSC CAMPS

During the COVID19 emergency, the City of Rome, through its Social Services and its Special Office for Roma and Sinti has kept a constant contact with the encampment inhabitants both via phone and in person.

Applications have been gathered through various ways: online, via the Municipality App, directly at the District Municipal offices, at any newspaper kiosks, and for those who were not residents, to the Department of Social Policies). Moreover, the Special Office has also an outreach equipe, active five days a week with 4 vehicles and eight Social Workers monitoring both the authorised and the informal encampments offering assistance and orientation to the inhabitants, and support to the Special Roma Office.

A list was compiled of all those involved by a number of criteria (income, number of children, number of elder, presence of disabled persons and other indicators).

Thus, 629 households totaling 3072 people were identified by the Office in this first phase.

Tab 23 First list of RSC households receiving Food Vouchers 04/2020

Encampements	N° Households	People involved
Castel Romano	142	664
Candoni	139	802
Barbuta	61	244
Monachina	13	41
Gordiani	57	228
Lombroso	41	172
Salviati	91	510
Salone	85	411
Foro italico	Nd	Nd
Spontaneous settlements	0	0
Various addresses	0	0
TOTAL	629	3072

The lists sent to the Office in charge of food stamp disbursement were subsequently processed and the distribution of Spending Vouchers to eligible persons directly at the various settlements as follows :

- on 17/04/2020 - Monachina Tolerated Village and Lombroso Equipped Village
- on 20/04/2020 - Barbuta and Gordiani equipped villages
- on 22/04/2020 - Villages equipped Salone and Salviati
- on 23/04/2020 - Equipped village of Castel Romano

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- on 24/04/2020 - Equipped village Candoni (suspended delivery for assemblages)
- on 04/05/2020 - Equipped village Candoni conclusion of delivery

Roma Capitale staff from the Roma Office for the disbursement of food vouchers went to each camp flanked by Roma Capitale Local Police personnel. In some camps the value of the vouchers was more than €20,000.00 as in Castel Romano, where in one single day, April 23, 2020, 44 households were reached with packages ranging from 1 block equal to €100.00 to 5 blocks equal to €500.00.

During the period April 17-May 4, 2020, Spending Vouchers were distributed to 245 households with a total number of 1267 people within the Camps. An additional 58 RSC families totaling 158 people scattered in spontaneous settlements within the city were also reached.

Tab 24 Food vouchers disbursed - First distribution 17-24 Avr. 2020

Encampements	N° Households	People involved
Castel Romano	44	220
Candoni	46	305
Barbuta	29	127
Monachina	8	25
Gordiani	16	53
Lombroso	30	122
Salviati	39	234
Salone	33	181
Foro italico	0	0
Spontaneous settlements	55	158
Various addresses	0	0
TOTAL	300	1425

The action of distributing spending vouchers directly on the camps was carried out by personally meeting at the delivery each family and without referring to self-styled spokespersons or representatives accredited at the former "nomads" office, but having with each an individualized and personal relationship.

The presence of the operators at the Roma camps despite the Covid emergency highlighted the closeness of the operators directly involved but also has the willingness on the part of the city administration need to continue with the implementation of the Roma Plan (the programming tool adopted by the city council for the period 2016-2021 to support the exit from the camp for a housing and employment inclusion of the same). Operators involved in managing food assistance to cope with the Covid crisis in the camps have had to deal with the typical problems encountered in these settings :

- the difficulty in intervening on a population with a high degree of mobility. This is particularly true for Romanian citizens who do not abide to the registration procedures required by EU Directive 38/2004, but rather practice a welfare migration with high peaks of returns during holiday season or traditional.
- Opposition to safety measures: The same phenomenon has been registered in migrant welcoming centres and in the various illegal occupations in Rome. In many cases residents who tested positive refused to undergo the quarantine regime and in some cases have escaped.

In addition, the acquisition of Spending Vouchers entailed a commitment to possess adequate personal documentation in order to get out of the state of invisibility in which many residents were living. Based on the indications of the Local Police, the Spending Vouchers were in fact handed out only in case of a valid identity document no invalid, expired or deteriorated.

As a result of this, given the emergency nature of the benefit, for those households excluded for issues related to invalid identity documents, an alternative household member in possession of regular documentation and a second file of reports was compiled. This second set of reports was sent on 04/30/2020 and distribution was started directly by the Local Police to small groups of families.

Tab 25 Second list of RSC households receiving Food Vouchers

Encampements	N° Households	People involved
Castel Romano	13	67
Candoni	0	0
Barbuta	0	0
Monachina	4	11
Gordiani	6	35
Lombroso	4	16
Salviati	1	12
Salone	5	19
Foro italico	0	0
Spontaneous settlements	0	0
Various addresses	0	0
TOTAL	33	160

During the distribution of the Spending Vouchers, based on the declarations of the beneficiary persons, it was updated the Citizenship Income figure, which, if higher than €300 per month, determined exclusion from the distribution of the Vouchers.

Based on the findings, the following were found to be beneficiaries of Citizenship Income, and therefore excluded from the distribution of Spending Vouchers, 153 households for a total of 735 people.

Tab 26 RSC households excluded from the distribution of Food Vouchers

Encampements	N° Households	People involved
Castel Romano	26	143
Candoni	36	179
Barbuta	23	88
Monachina	1	5
Gordiani	29	112
Lombroso	4	9
Salviati	21	127
Salone	13	72
Foro italico	nd	nd
Spontaneous settlements*	nd	nd
Various addresses	nd	nd
TOTAL	153	735

It is estimated that as of 4/05/2020 about 65 percent of the people reported and present in the camps had some form of public support (spending vouchers or RoC) available.

An additional significant group between families in the camps and families living in private homes or in social housing social housing, people who were more embedded in society, independently applied and were reached through the app on their smartphones or were able to collect the spending vouchers through the postal Italy.

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 emergency, very intense exchange of information has taken place, with respect to Roma households in difficulty present in both formal and tolerated settlements as well as informal ones, with the different realities of the third sector and in particular with associations.

Again, efforts were made to consider as many households as possible, which, based on the information provided by the associations, were included in a third list, after timely verification that they were not already on the previous ones.

The list sent in May 2020 included, in addition to residual households from the formal and tolerated settlements, households placed at the various informal settlements for a total of 95 households and 293 people.

For those households that could not be reached with food vouchers, the supply system was supplemented by initiating a public tender, by the Administration to identify an additional service provider Able to offer food parcels supplementing this specific type of aid implemented by the Church of Rome and NGOs since the first month of the covid emergency

Tab 27 Households receiving food parcels

Encampements	N° Households	People involved
Castel Romano	63	278
Candoni	32	168
Barbuta	5	15
Monachina	3	11
Gordiani	9	30
Lombroso	3	12
Salviati	15	81
Salone	23	75
Foro italico	0	0
Spontaneous settlements*	14	36
Various addresses	0	0
TOT	167	706

It should be noted that the effort directed toward the groups present in the camps is only a small part of the effort put in place by the Department of Social Policies of Roma Capitale which coordinated the distribution of 44760 food parcels of which 8436 were distributed to citizens directly by the staff of the Department in collaboration with the Civil Defense Associations, Unitalsi and the Parishes. The Department also coordinated the distribution of 7000 parcels to the Vicariate of Rome, another 7000 to the Third Sector Forum and 19825 directly to the UCLs of the Municipalities for widespread distribution in the territories to all people in need in the city during lockdown periods.