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“WE: WOR(L)DS WHICH EXCLUDE”

WS 1 - INTRODUCTION TO THE NATIONAL REPORTS

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1. The WE research: stereotypes in action

The project WE stems from the empirical experience and studies of the seven involved institutional partners¹, as well as, from evidences, emerging from research at European level, on housing conditions of Roma people, and on housing and settling policies, related to them².

The focus of the research is on Institutions and its aim is to analyse the language and the proposed measures in the documents produced by national and local institutions (laws, statutes, regulations, plans, acts, resolutions, etc.), in the last ten years (2003 - 2012), concerning Roma people, in the area of Housing Policies.

On the basis of common features, arising from the European context, we have asked ourselves about the existence and characteristics of a stereotyped social description of the Roma people, which has historically become a common element, in the public and political discourse in Europe. It would act as a cognitive “core” and it would then take local forms, linked to their specific contexts and to the relationship between Roma groups and the territory, where they live. The deep-rooted stereotypes in the culture of the majority society, also existing in policy-makers’ mind, become the foundations, on which projects and policies are created.

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² I.e. The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), 2009.

Although social sciences use to study the gap between ideology and practice, in this research, the focus is on how the ideology (as a set of ideas) becomes practice, through institutional documents. Neither the gap or between ideology and practice or the practice itself are analyzed. We are asked to analyze "words in action" and their hidden meanings, trying to find out stereotypes at work in official documents endowed with administrative power. Juridically, this kind of documents have, by their very nature, the quality of enforceability, that means they can produce direct effects in practice, without the need of a preliminary decision, rendered by a court. This feature is the key-function for this work, focused on the actual, asymmetric relations, between local institutions and Roma communities.

The administrative documents have a bureaucratic style that implies that they can say only certain things and not others. They want to show the objectives, authority and objectivity. It is, therefore, important to consider the various formats through which they are written. These documents may, for example, contain scientific contents, formulated by scholars or by scientific advisors, used to legitimate certain decisions and discourses and to defend implicit ideas, or contents of common sense, more or less "disguised", including stereotypes, of popular, political or scientific origin that do not need explanations for being deemed obvious.

An example of a scientific stereotype is that Roma people are a minority at all territory levels and so they are considered a minority for all the Institutions. But if it's true at a national level, it's not the same at the European level. Indeed, the European average estimate indicates that there are over 11 million people, or 1, 3% of the European population: hypothetically, if all Roma people gather in one nation, this nation would be in twelfth place (before Portugal, Hungary, etc.). Instead, what is true is that, in every State, they are a minority, because their internal social organization is based on the dispersion and not on the concentration. The fact that States consider Roma people as a minority has several repercussions on European policies. If institutions were, however, conscious of having to do with a majority, with a power, they probably would assume a different behaviour (see Piasere 2012).

The analysis of documents includes a retroactive lecture of the administrative law genesis. This implies an historical perspective, combined with an actualized exegesis of concepts, coming from both ordinary and specific languages (such as those of social sciences). In

this way, the analysis of documents is also based on the theoretical and methodological approach of the Pragmatics (a subfield of linguistics): these documents are considered as “speech act”, and so are the semantics aspects, because meanings are the focus of the research.

At a first glance, the first issue and problem, emerging from the recollection of documents, appears to be of methodological nature: in several countries any term related to ethnic identity of the target population appears and policies, from national to local level, are not directed to any specific ethnic minority or group. This is the case of Spain and Portugal, in Western Europe, and of Romania and Hungary, in the East Europe. In the United Kingdom, specific mentions to ethnically defined minorities are more frequent and clear, even in Italy, but in the two countries the discourse is deeply different.

As previously explained, the main object of interest of our analysis is not the action, but just the discourse, the text. In a certain sense, our analysis stops, when the word is converted into action. Nevertheless, if we would strictly apply this criteria in the recollection of documents, stating, for example, that “when Roma people, gypsy, or any other term, does not appear, the document is not of our interest”, we would really fall in the situation that the great part, even the totality, of housing-related documentation from Romania, Hungary, Spain and Portugal would be discarded. Anyway, this is not the case, for two interconnected reasons. The first one is that reality bites: in all of these countries, Romani populations, suffering conditions of exclusion from a decent housing, or living in ghettoizing situations or territorial segregation, is evidently overrepresented. One of the criteria to select local official documentation is exactly its reference to this kind of conditions, even when the same documents do not mention Romani population, at all. So, real condition and local cases do enter as a criterion for searching, selecting and analyzing related documents, even when they don’t make and mention to their target population, as gypsy, romani, or other ethnic term. This is directly related to the second reason, for not discarding these documents: in a discourse, silence, omission, avoidance can tell a lot.

This “silence” or “omission” dimension – i.e., all that does not explicitly appear in institutional documents, but remains unsaid – seems to play a fundamental role: a “taken for granted” data, to which the administrators consciously or unconsciously refer. These “hidden passages” in discourses, can be retrieved both in institutional documents, where the provided actions are directly against to Roma people (i.e. an order of eviction), and in institutional documents, “in favour” of Roma people. In fact, institutional documents are often written, on the basis of principles of democracy, but, in this general frame - just as

often - these documents do not match democratic actions. So, there is a gap from principles to practice: it is in this gap that we can identify those stereotypes, hidden by democratic rhetoric, stereotypes that produce non-democratic actions.

In Italy, for example, regional legislation often prescribes, explicitly, that camps and transit areas should facilitate access to education, health and social services, as well as, participation in the area's social life. However - as we will see later on – the starting point of these policies founded on the conflation of Romani identity with nomadic lifestyle, leading to the construction of differential treatment towards Romani groups, in particular, in relation to housing policies and to the spread of “nomad camps”.

1.1. Territories

The territorial scale for each partner of the project is both national and local level according to their political organization. The research considers the three levels of sources that correspond to the three administrative level of a state: national, regional and local (municipal administrative acts) one³. The selection criteria of the Municipalities/local territories for each country will be in particular:

- Size and population of the municipality
- presence (quantitative and qualitative) of Roma/Gitanos/Gypsy groups
- projects implemented by local administrations

The communitarian level (European Union law) is also considered for a full frame of reference. The total of documents collected is indicated in Table 1 and 2.

Italy: The study has been directed four regional contexts choices: Tuscany Region (in the cities and provinces of Florence and Viareggio), Campania (the Municipality and the Province of Naples), Liguria (in the cities and provinces of Savona and Genova) and Veneto Region (Municipalities of Venezia, Legnago and Cerea).

United Kingdom: 2 Regional counties have been selected, The South East and the East Midlands. At the local level: Kent and Leicester.

³ In Portugal there are just two levels of analysis: national and local. There is no regional level, if understood as a level of local power. However, there are regions, as geographical and social spaces, that are more relevant than others, for example, the south of Portugal, all the border line, the biggest cities and their surroundings (like Oporto and Lisbon). In Romania there are the Regional authorities, but in our research there is no regional level policy for housing of Roma because of Regional level administration has not competencies in this.

Spain: The Autonomous Community of Andalusia, the Municipality of Seville (the slum settlement known as El Vacie), the Municipality of Granada (Sacromonte neighborhood), the Municipality of Malaga (Los Asperones neighborhood). Depending on the access to primary sources, from September Madrid will also be considered as a target territory.

Hungary: The towns of Pécs and Miskolc, and the county Gordisa in South-Transdanubia; Miskolc, Edelény/Encs, Szakácsi/Szendrő in Northern Hungary.

Romania: The urban ghetto that has taken shape during the first decade of post-socialism near the landfill of Cluj, and Sfântu Gheorghe.

Portugal: Lisbon, Beja and Vidigueira.

Here we can have a general view about the distribution of the territories in Europe⁴:

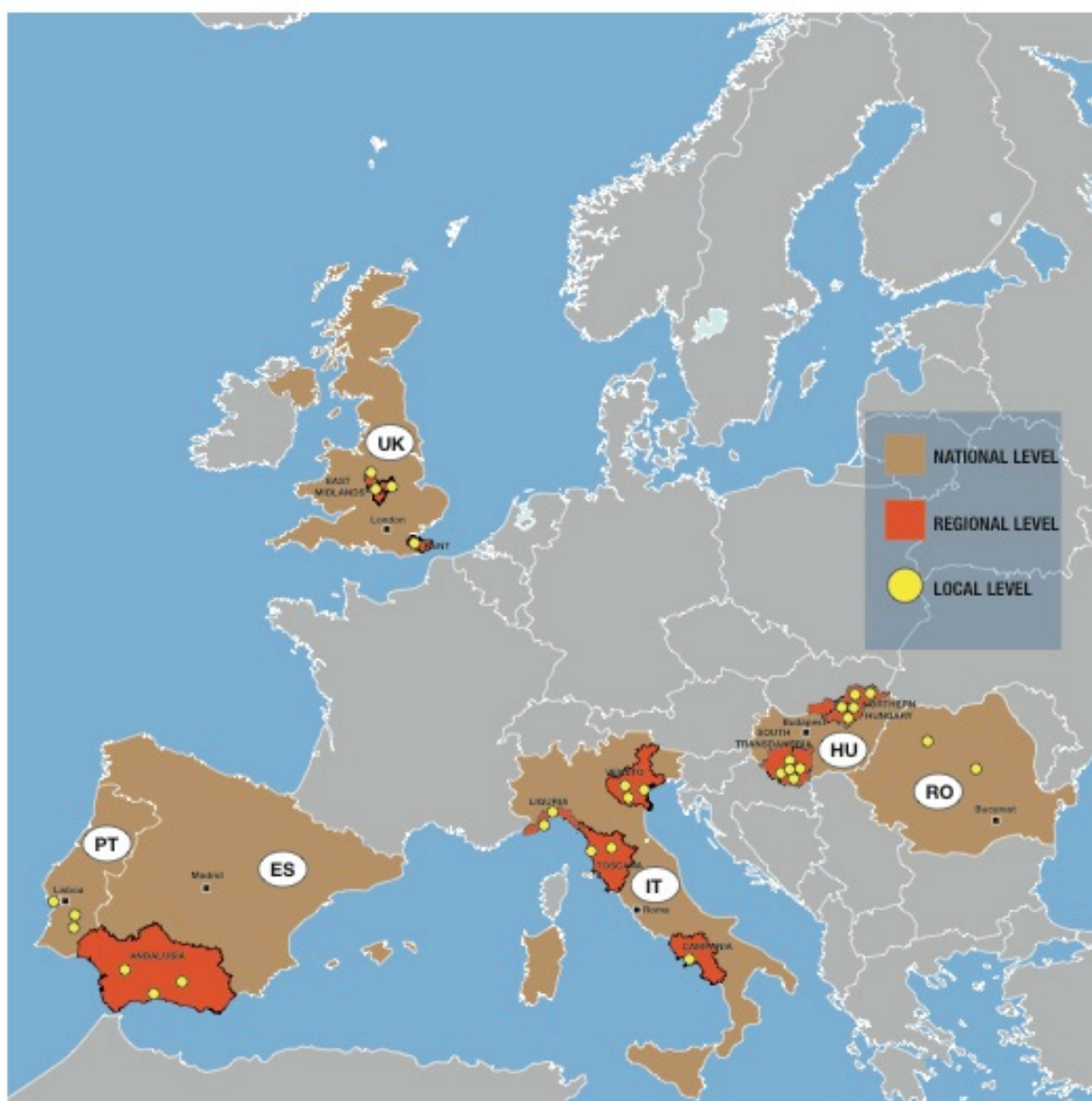


Fig. 1. European territories of the research

⁴ In attachment the maps of the local level in each Country

It's useful, also, give a general view about the number of the documents collected in each Country involved in the research:

Tab. 1 Documents collected: National, Regional and Local level

National Level	Regional Level	N. Docs	Local Level	N. Docs
ITALY 13	Liguria	4	Genova	45
			Savona	3
	Veneto	5	Legnago*	36
			Cerea*	9
			Venezia Mestre	9
	Tuscany	59	Florence	387
			Viareggio	28
	Campania	11	Napoli	82
			Provincia e Prefettura di Napoli	3 + 8
UK 49	South East		Kent	33
	East Midlands		Leicester	18
HUNGARY 32	South-Transdanubia	5	Pécs	122
			Siklós/Sásd	6
			Gordisa/Mágocs	2
	Northern Hungary	1	Miskolc	54
			Edelény/Encs	11
			Szakácsi/Szendrőlád	3
PORTUGAL 14	-		Lisbon	7
			Beja	34
			Vidigueira	7
SPAIN 9	Andalusia	12	Sevilla	40
			Málaga	44
			Granada	42
ROMANIA	-		Cluj Napoca	43
			Sfântu Gheorghe	19

* 11 documents are before the period of the research because of the case study (see Italian National Report, paragraph 7.2).

Tab. 2. Resume of documents collected (total number of documents collected: 1348)

	National level	Regional level	Local level	Tot
Italy	13	68	621	702
United Kingdom	49	2	51	102
Hungary	32	6	198	236
Portugal	14	-	48	62
Spain	9	12	126	147
Romania	37	-	62	99
Tot	154	88	1106	1348

2. Theoretical framework and Methodological tools to analyze data collected

With reference to methodology, the study of the languages used in the Institutional Public documents, of the stereotypes and the patterns of representation of Roma culture requires a synergy between methodologies from various disciplines, each one of which contributes its own set of data gathering tools and techniques.

The WE Project has been designed on this interdisciplinary structure, and uses cross-methodology, since a large number of disciplines are involved. The methodologies used in the study come from the epistemological links between anthropology and the disciplines that have studied the social political and cultural outputs of individuals formed in societies: linguistic (semantics and pragmatics), sociology, education, history, law, and city planning. With reference to current legislation on Roma we adoptet the 'method of legal interpretation' that concerns the relationship between law-makers and legislative texts to analyse the relation between legislation and the applicability of the law. This cross-methodology is a rigorous tool with which to break down the wall of 'common sense' that has been erected around the Roma cultures.

A relevant role in the analysis of legislative and administrative texts was played by the suggestions, deriving from recent developments of textual linguistics and linguistic pragmatics, right because these texts' words have a strong performative impact on reality and on people's lives, which they are addressed to. In particular, the Italian team, as leading and/or members of the scientific committee of project, developed a text analysis path that went beyond the input coming from semantics and from pragmalinguistics, sharing it with the other European partners. Giuseppe Faso, in his chapter in the Italian National Teport, highlights this hermeneutical process, during which, researchers considered these juridical and administrative texts, within a specific "typology" of linguistic texts, i.e. the "regulative texts".

The chapter's elaboration of every national report shows a first part with a background on the juridical framework and an overview on social housing, as well as, the selected territories. A second part deals with a quantitative presentation on the developed work. Then, a wide analysis of texts follows, by the exploration of: explicit topics and keywords/phrases; used metaphors; adopted decisions by the documents: order, advice, "taking time", delegate to other (instruments/practices/apparatus in Foucault way) and

discussion of some case studies (i.e. a bureaucratic history of a settlement and the Roma families living there).

It is now important to introduce the central issue of metaphors and the importance of their emersion and analysis.

2.1. Excursus: Stereotypes and Metaphors⁵

According to Herzfeld (1997), stereotypes can be used for trade or in situations of conflict in which questions of identity are played out. Individuals and social groups appropriate these collective imaginations and use them to reify their sense of collective self.

It is well-known, from Tajfel's works onwards, that people's categorization in a simple "we/them" bipolarisation produces an intragroup favouritism and, at the same time, an intergroup discrimination. It is also renowned that, if the two groups can be easily identified in a majority group and a minority one, the problem of stereotypes gets some connotations, having to do with the imbalance of social, public and political power. This also means that the relation between Roma and non-Roma people develops within a social, cultural and cognitive framework, structuring it, since the very beginning: it is not a naive relation.

Through stereotypes – intended as mental patterns and representations – we can decode the reality, interpreting it, we can create own expectations, we "produce" a reality through an inferential process, based on events. Stereotypes take part in the whole cognitive process – included memorisation and information retrieval – followed by a performative action: we perform behaviour, or – like in our case – we write certain things instead of others. This is a crucial passage, because power relations and the defining power of the one over the other take a concrete shape, with direct and concrete consequences on people.

Metaphors and stereotypes are closely interconnected.

Since the '70s, cognitive sciences demonstrate that metaphors are a cognitive phenomenon (non-linguistic: metaphoric expression, Aristotele: linguistic-literary artifice).

The metaphor is the way we conceptualise a mental domain in terms of another; it is a

"mapping" from a starting domain to an arrival domain (cfr. Lakoff and Johnson 16

1998).

⁵ The main sources used for the writing of these paragraph are: Lakoff and Johnson 1998, Piasere 2002 and Tosi Cambini 2008.

According to Lakoff, these mappings are not simple mental mechanisms, but a fundamental process (of knowledge) of human mind.

Metaphor= knowledge tool tending to the understanding of world's facts.

This is because knowledge seems to develop, through mapping an unknown cognitive domain by a known one. This opens to two questions:

- The issue of similarity
- The issue of categorisation

What does it mean "similar"?

According to some authors (among them Collins and Burtstein), similarity has to be framed in the comparison process area, "which is central to all forms of human inference". If two entities "correspond" in something, they are similar (it is identified a global similarity and a similarity of traits).

The correspondence is done, starting by a known element, also said source domain, to another, which is the one to be associated (to be "interpreted"), called target domain:

S □ B

Why do I decide that a thing is similar to the one I call A and I decide to place it among all things I call A?

This opens to the issue of categorical judgement = that process for which, having applied a correspondence between two domains, they have a certain grade of similarity to be considered part of the same category.

Let's postulate three terms: A, B, C.

Let's, then, postulate that A is similar to B and B is similar to C, so that: is A similar to C? Not necessarily. It can be so or not (in the first case, it is a matter of symmetric relation). Who decides it?

The system of categorisation, inside which the relation acts. About categories, an immense literature exists.

We can distinguish
between:

1. Perceptive categories
2. Conceptual/interpreting categories

1. = According to some authors (among them, Umberto Eco), they depend on the senses, “naturally” operating in similitude, i.e. judgements based on perceptive similarity are, in fact, innate (Eco talks about “primary iconicity”). According to other authors (on the basis of neuropsychological experiments), a categorising judgement is present in perceptive categories, too.

In this game of categorisation and similarity, another concept comes useful, the one of prototype = member of a category, better representing it, it is the best specimen. It is the one having all traits, or the majority of them, building the category (for example sparrow/penguin, both belong to birds, but...)

□ This shows that a category is made up by members that are more part of it (those who are central, typical, prototypic) and by members that are less part of it (the marginal ones)

□ Therefore, the belonging to a category is not of an “everything or nothing” kind, but it has nuances (everything and nothing). Intermediate situations can be, thus, foreseen: A can be “a bit” not A; the intermediate members are those members (or quality) that, being shared by more categories, render the borders of the latter imprecise and with several nuances. They allow “passing” from one category to another, they build “bridges” and “shift channels”, between one category and the other one.

In order to do a similarity operation, it is necessary to find this “medium” of correspondence (the inventio medii of medieval philosophers).

Thanks to these “bridges”, concepts become fluid.

“Bridges” giving shape to analogies are also fundamental. Analogies can be of different kind.

The prototype: the similarity judgement is applied to two relations (instead of two things or

two events) (4 lists, combining 2 to 2)

$$\begin{array}{l} a:b = \\ c:d \end{array}$$

(Mathematic
proportion)

The analogical reasoning involves the transfer of relational information from a domain, already existing in memory (source domain or basis) to the domain to be explained (target- domain).

We can talk of “intra-domain analogy”, when the elements belong to the same domain or to very close conceptual domains. Otherwise, we will talk of “inter-domain analogy”:

when, the analogically associated elements come from domains, which are conceptually different or remote”.

Cognitive psychologists prefer to talk about analogy and consider metaphors as a particular kind of analogy.

Cognitive linguists (as Lakoff) prefer to use the concept of conceptual metaphor = a projection from a departure domain (source) to a destination domain (target).

Foucault writes that changes of similarity and difference concepts (not of the process, but of the mechanism) depend on historical and social contexts that build the appropriate criteria of association (for ex. of the classifications).

Let's go back, now, to the issue of "nuances" in categories. Waismann talks about "families of concepts". He says: "we can say that the family of concepts, which are centred on a basic notion, is a sphere expanding itself in a conceptual space (shared by many individuals)". It is a very fundamental aspect of daily thoughts and, according to Waismann, it constitutes the essence of common sense.

We have already seen two modalities of expansion of a conceptual sphere: similarity and analogy.

It exists a third one: pattern sharing, intended as a conceptual flexible and holistic (because it has a cinestic and not mono-sensorial structure) network (or a structure or a configuration), rendering possible the identification of present things and events, through an association with experiences of the past, in view of a future expectation.

They have different complexities (hierarchical structure). They also acquire the term of frame or script, translated in Italian by "copione" o "scenario", emphasising the drama metaphor.

Most complex patterns, in fact, can characterise the visual representation of an events' sequence, foreseeing some actions and an order and that incorporates time (for ex. I wash my hair).

We already said that analogies are fundamental to shift from one concept to another, but not only "we, as human beings, have a strong "meta-analogical" sense, i.e. the skill of seeing analogies among analogies". Hofstadter insists on the fact that the "substratum of awareness is independent from culture".

- ☐ Mechanisms used by people, while building analogies in domains and situations, which are familiar to them, are the same
- ☐ People, thus, are all similar, because everybody elaborates analogies; at the same time, they are all different, because if analogies depend on experience, then, nobody in this world has a totally identical experience, like anybody else.

(We might say that every person has his/her “analogical style”, but what is interesting for us is our above-mentioned reference to Foucault).

The analogy is a very creative cognitive process; allowing knowing what is new, by doing new associations, among far cognitive domains.

In the analogy (as a matter of fact, many problems related to anthropological interpretation and to anthropological comparison are of analogical order), some dangerousness can be embedded: the flattening of two elements. Academics demonstrate that the applicability of an analogy is never total: only some aspects of the source domain can be transferred into the target- domain. Then, the analogy will enlighten certain traits of the target-domain, but will darken other ones.



The risk is the one of reductionism (analogies always exercise a reductive force), then, one can talk of “hyper-simplified knowledge”.

Often, it is not enough reflected on the existence of this variance and the analogy is taken for complete (Ulf Hannerz affirms that it is necessary to ride the metaphor).

Scientific language is full of metaphors, heavily conditioning knowledge. Spiro et alii (1989) write: “although single analogies rarely, maybe never, constitute the base for a total understanding of a new just-met concept, there is anyway a powerful trend among learners to keep on limiting comprehension only to those aspects of this new concept, covered by his/her mapping, deriving from the old concept (Spiro also lists eight types of misunderstandings, caused by analogy, ibidem).

Metaphors can
be:

- Deep-rooted metaphors
- Informed metaphors

In this knowledge process, the source domain becomes fundamental, because it is the one to be used, while mapping the unknown field. Through the study of metaphors, it is possible to demonstrate, how they can impact on the way of thinking (ex. channel metaphor, where ideas=objects; trap of the essentialising of concepts).

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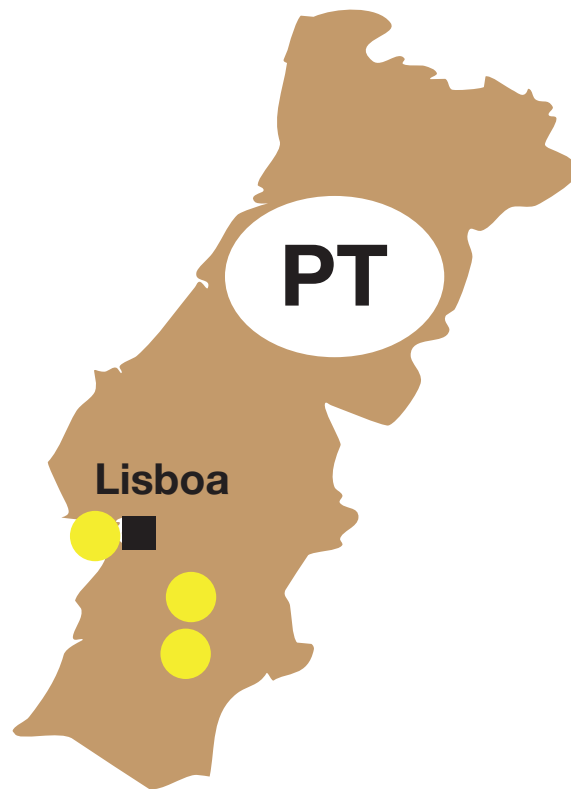
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Annex: Maps of the territories

ITALY LOCAL LEVEL



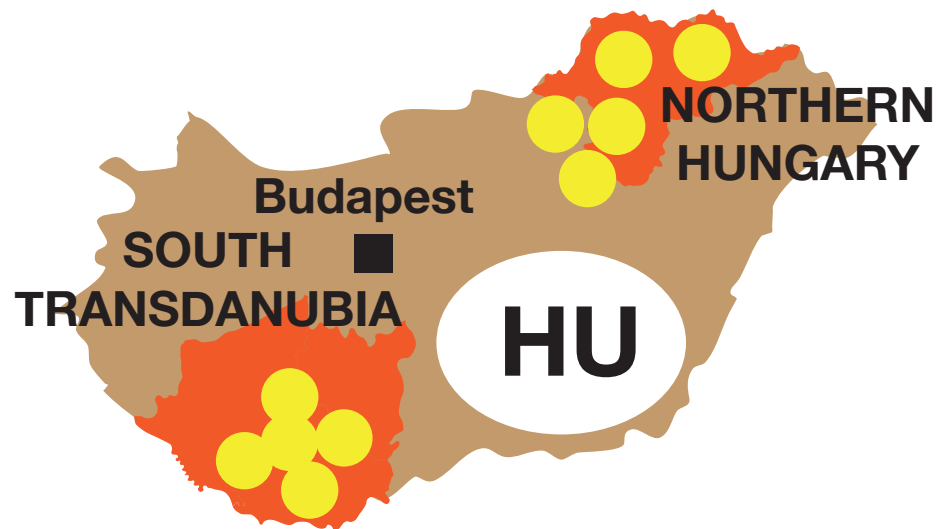
PORTUGAL LOCAL LEVEL



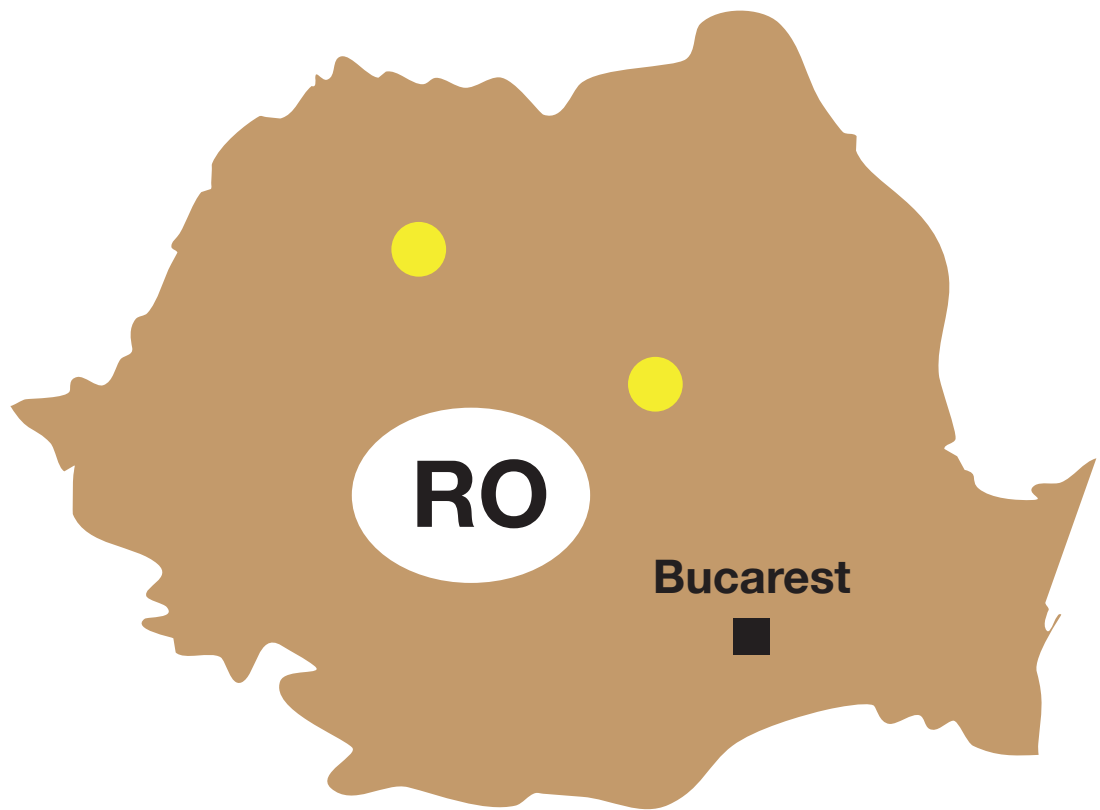
SPAIN - ANDALUSIA LOCAL LEVEL



HUNGARY: LOCAL
LEVEL



ROMANIA: LOCAL
LEVEL



UNITED KINGDOM:LOCAL LEVEL

