

## TB in Roma Communities in Europe

Title: **Tuberculosis in Rroma communities in Europe**  
Session: **Tackling tuberculosis in high tuberculosis burden and resource poor European settings**  
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Given their number (an estimated 4 to 9 million), their extreme poverty and severe marginalization the Roma/gypsy community is one of the most serious social problem in Europe. Research conducted in some marginalized ethnic groups suggests that being a member of a minority ethnic group can be an independent risk factor for TB: being poor increases the risk of TB, but being poor and a member of an ethnic minority increases the risk even further. In general, Roma people are different from poor people of the major ethnic groups because they are more likely to remain poor, often live in ghetto-like settlements of cramped housing far from health services, and routinely experience discrimination from the healthcare system and other state services. Being a group with high risk for tuberculosis, the gypsy population needs targeted measures for discovering the disease and prophylaxis. A retrospective study in Ciurea commune (13 km<sup>2</sup>, 8978 inhabitants, Iasi county, Romania) of a compact, homogenous and relatively stable gypsy community - Zanea village revealed that primary tuberculosis was responsible for 55.5% of all cases as compared to 4.7% in the general population! This surprising aspect endorses the conclusion of the authors that various segments of the Roma population evolve independently. Being a group with high risk for tuberculosis, the gypsy population needs targeted measures for discovering the disease and prophylaxis. The roms are on their way to become a modern ethnic minority and is our moral duty to support them!