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**Negotiating Social (De-)Protection:
The case of transnationally mobile 'Roma Beggars' from Southeastern Europe in Austria**

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Traditionally, social security is understood in terms of systems, policies and (public) actions undertaken or initiated by states, international bodies or transnational NGOs and directed towards individuals and their households, shaped to meet their fundamental requirements in times of need. "Migrants" can enter these state-based social security systems and mechanisms, if they acquire some sort of predominantly state-based social citizenship, e.g. through employment with corresponding entitlements towards health insurance. Nevertheless, economic globalization and the breakdown of markets, accompanied by political expansion of the EU, have caused problems in social security for highly marginalized groups, e.g. those labelled as "Roma". Many of them use the right of free movement to commute permanently between their home countries in Eastern and Southeastern Europe and Western and Northern European countries. They are in search of social protection through different economic activities, including "begging", thus amending to a poverty-driven, border crossing mobility of people. However, many of them have no access to core (state-based) security mechanisms, neither "at home" nor "abroad".

Deviating from mainstream perspectives on social security, the paper looks at the complex interrelationships of (im)mobilities and social (de-)protection for these "groups". It starts from an agency- and mobilities-oriented approach to ask how social protection is brought about, challenged, negated, negotiated, fostered, shaped etc.. It shows how related social protection arrangements encompass different actors (including state actors), and how they relate to diverse social spaces which partly span national borders. The paper presents preliminary results from an ongoing, multi-sited and ethnographic research project on the transnational mobility of people who are commonly identified as "Roma".

