Elena Marushiakova and Vesselin Popov are the two most prominent scholars of Gypsy/Roma groups in the former Soviet bloc countries. Their talk centers on the multidimensional identity structure of the Gypsies, Characteristics of Gypsy communities, and Mosaic of Gypsy groups in the region. The talk includes visual illustrations of various Gypsy/Roma groups and examples of their musical traditions.

Elena Marushiakova obtained her doctorate at Bratislava University, Slovakia. Vesselin Popov obtained his doctorate at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. They both studied at Sofia University in Bulgaria. Both are currently researchers at the Ethnographic Institute and Museum of the Bulgarian Academy of Science.

Elena Marushiakova and Vesselin Popov are joint authors of the standard work on the Gypsies of Bulgaria and editors of the collection of books about Roma folklore, Studii Romani, as well as Gypsies in the Ottoman Empire (published by Centre de recherches tsiganes, University of Hertfordshire Press). They have also published numerous articles in the Romani Studies Journal.