

ADVISORY COUNCIL ON YOUTH (CCJ)

8 April 2023

English only

Celebrating International Roma¹ Day: A Call for Inclusion, Equality, and Empowerment

The Council of Europe's Advisory Council on Youth is honoured to commemorate International Roma Day. This day marks the celebration of the rich and diverse culture, history, and contributions of the Roma people throughout Europe and beyond. We take this opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to promoting the inclusion, equality, and empowerment of Roma youth in all aspects of life.

The Roma community has faced centuries of discrimination, marginalisation, and exclusion, which have led to disparities in education, healthcare, housing, and employment. Situations such as the Covid-19 pandemic or the war in Ukraine only intensify these challenges. Today, we call upon the Council of Europe member states and all stakeholders to take urgent action to address these disparities and work towards creating an equitable and inclusive society for all.

The Advisory Council on Youth urges governments, civil society, and the private sector to collaborate and invest in initiatives aimed at:

1. improving access to quality education for Roma children and youth by eliminating segregation, combating stereotypes, and promoting intercultural understanding;
2. supporting the economic empowerment of Roma youth through vocational training, apprenticeships, and mentorship programmes that facilitate their integration into the labour market;
3. enhancing the participation of Roma youth in political and decision-making processes by creating platforms for their voices to be heard and encouraging their involvement in civic, social, and political life.

The opinions expressed in this statement are those of the Advisory Council on Youth and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the Council of Europe or its member states.

¹ The term "Roma and Travellers" is used at the Council of Europe to encompass the wide diversity of the groups covered by the work of the Council of Europe in this field: on the one hand a) Roma, Sinti/Manush, Calé, Kaale, Romanichals, Boyash/Rudari; b) Balkan Egyptians (Egyptians and Ashkali); c) Eastern groups (Dom, Lom and Abdal); and, on the other hand, groups such as Travellers, Yenish, and the populations designated under the administrative term "*Gens du voyage*", as well as persons who identify themselves as Gypsies.