



**Study session**  
**“Youth Ambassadors of the Decade against Antigypsyism”**

**10 – 17 September 2023, Budapest**

**FINAL REPORT**

**The session was organised and implemented by the ERGO Network and TernYpe in cooperation with the Youth Department of the Council of Europe**



*This report gives an account of various aspects of the study session. It has been produced by and is the responsibility of the educational team of the study session. It does not represent the official point of view of the Council of Europe.*

## Implementing organisations

**ERGO Network** - the network of European Roma Grassroots Organisations was founded in 2008, nowadays it brings together more than 30 Roma and pro-Roma organisations from all over Europe. Founded on the philosophy of active citizenship, shared responsibility, and grassroots empowerment, ERGO Network members aim to convince policy makers that positive change for Roma is possible when antigypsyism is recognized and tackled as the root cause for inequality and exclusion and when Roma can take part in civic life as equal stakeholders. To achieve this, we bridge the gap between grassroots realities and policymaking. Each year we have implemented a Summer Academy for young people to nurture a new generation of Roma and pro-Roma leaders and share our experiences with them.

**ternYpe - International Roma Youth Network** was founded in 2010 and unites different Roma youth organisations from Albania, Bulgaria, Germany, Hungary, Italy, North Macedonia, Slovakia, Spain and Poland. We are a network of youth and youth associations, which creates space for young people to become active citizens through empowerment, mobilization, self-organisation and participation. We believe in the common efforts by creating trust, and mutual respect between Roma and non-Roma youth.

The study session was implemented in partnership with the **Youth Department** of the Council of Europe.

## Introduction

In the last years, ERGO Network, ternype and other partners in the “Alliance against Antigypsyism” have achieved great progress in the recognition of antigypsyism on the European political level. Thanks to our advocacy work, the fight against antigypsyism is firmly established in the EU Strategic Framework for Roma Equality, Inclusion and Participation and in the Council of Europe Strategic Action Plan for Roma and Traveller Inclusion.

Also in the Roma civil society movement, the concept of antigypsyism and the need to fight antigypsyism to achieve equality of Roma, has become consensus. This is also thanks to the development of the Reference Paper on Antigypsyism and continuous work on building understanding in the Roma and anti-racism movement around it. Also our common study session in 2018, in which we developed a youth-friendly version of the reference paper, contributed to this achievement.

In 2022, ERGO Network together with the Alliance against Antigypsyism has kicked off the “Decade to counter antigypsyism”, to create greater momentum for raising awareness of antigypsyism and ways to combat it across Europe. We see Roma youth at the forefront of this Decade.

By this study session we wanted to empower Roma and non-Roma youth activists as nonformal educators and familiarize them with tools such as Mirrors, Right to Remember, Compass and the youth-friendly version of the reference paper on antigypsyism. After the study session, they will be able to conduct human rights education on antigypsyism with

groups of young people, colleagues and other non-Roma target groups defined by participants. They will be Ambassadors of the Decade against Antigypsyism.

Objectives of the study session:

- To strengthen participants' understanding of key concepts of human rights and antigypsyism
- To create a safe space for participants to share their personal experiences related to antigypsyism and collaboratively identify practical solutions to address this issue.
- To explore successful approaches and best practices for challenging antigypsyism, including advocacy, education, and community engagement
- To equip participants with strategies and tools to effectively raise awareness about antigypsyism within their networks.

## Preparation

The team - two trainers represented ERGO Network (Martina Horváthová, Annamaria Pšenková) and two trainers represented TernYpe (Marius Lüdicke, Ioana Spataru). Three of the trainers were of Roma origin and females, one non-Roma and male. This dynamic team met several times during the prep period to discuss the outreach, calls for participants, the programme, desired educational outcomes and other crucial topics. In this team there were plenty of experiences with organizing such training but also with the topics of Human Rights and activism. We all were once participants of many such events, but afterwards we started to be trainers and use all the experiences and knowledge we have gained for nurturing next generations of Human Rights defenders and youth work trainers.

All the time we were accompanied by Ida Kreutzman, the Educational Advisor of the CoE, and this was really amazing. It made us more confident with our plans and activities. Because you may have long term experience and be a professional but working with people is always kind of challenging and demands big effort from the team of trainers.

And we need to mention Gigi, the little sheep as well! During the study session this imaginary character happened to be with us constantly thanks to one of our participants who shared a story from his childhood. Gigi became the mascot of this study session.

The preparatory meeting took place in EYCB during April 2023. Because each of us lives in a different country (CZ, B, DE, A), this was a great opportunity to put all the trainers at one table and to discuss step by step each aspect of the study session. The prep-meeting was productive and effective.

The call for participants was published during May 2023 in accordance with the plan set up by the team during the prep-meeting. As the outreach was done mainly by social networks, we also created visuals for Instagram and Facebook. We also addressed our member organisations in our networks to spread the information among their target audience. We got 30 applications eventually. In the application applicants were asked to share their motivations and also to answer some questions on previous trainings on this topic they have participated in.

Selection was done by the whole trainer's team according to criteria set up: Youth, Roma and non-Roma, 18-27 years, passionate about human rights and committed to fighting antigypsyism, irrespective of gender, disability, marital or parental status, racial-ethnic or social origin, religious belief or sexual orientation.

In this selection round, 20 applicants were selected to be invited as participants with respect to regional, age and gender diversity. We prioritised candidates with lower levels of experience in the topic of the study session. All selected participants got an acceptance email during the first week of June 2023.



## Programme of the study session

### Sunday, 10 September 2023

- 19:00 Dinner
- 21:00 Welcome Evening

### Monday, 11 September 2023 – Setting the Scene Day

- 09:30 Opening with Introduction to Study Session, Welcome by **Marcos Andrade**, EYCB deputy director, Intro to context and organisations, intro of aims & objectives of the study session / Expectations & programme - *to build a common understanding of the main concepts A,B,C of the study session*
- 11:00 Coffee & Tea Break
- 11:30 Group rules, Get to know each other
- 13:00 Lunch
- 14:30 Team Building activity - *build trust and understanding among participants and with the team*
- 16:00 Coffee, Cookies & Tea Break
- 16:30 Treasure hunt in the EYCB – *get to know the youth centre and the Council of Europe*
- 19:00 Dinner
- 21:00 Disco

TIME	DAY 1-MONDAY (10.09.2023)	DAY 2-TUESDAY (11.09.2023)	DAY 3-WEDNESDAY (12.09.2023)	DAY 4-THURSDAY (13.09.2023)	DAY 5-FRIDAY (14.09.2023)	DAY 6-SATURDAY (15.09.2023)
08:00	BREAKFAST	BREAKFAST	BREAKFAST	BREAKFAST	BREAKFAST	BREAKFAST
09:30	SESSION 1 OPENING BC ROOM (1st part)	SESSIONS GET TO KNOW HUMAN RIGHTS BC ROOM	SESSION BYSTANDERS BC ROOM	WORKSHOP HOW STRATEGIES TO COMBAT ANTISemitism BC ROOM	FREE EVENING	SESSION ANTISemitism BC ROOM
11:00	COFFEE BREAK	COFFEE BREAK	COFFEE BREAK	COFFEE BREAK	COFFEE BREAK	COFFEE BREAK
11:30	SESSION 2 GET TO KNOW DATA STRONG BC ROOM (1st part)	SESSION 1 ME & MY HUMAN RIGHTS BC ROOM	SESSION IN EYES BC ROOM	WORKSHOP HOW STRATEGIES TO COMBAT ANTISemitism BC ROOM	SESSION ANTISemitism BC ROOM	SESSION ANTISemitism BC ROOM
13:00	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH
14:30	SESSION 3 TEAM BUILDING ACTIVITIES BC ROOM (1st part)	SESSION 2 ANTISemitism AND HUMAN RIGHTS BC ROOM	FREE AFTERNOON	WORKSHOP HOW STRATEGIES TO COMBAT ANTISemitism BC ROOM	SESSION ANTISemitism BC ROOM	SESSION ANTISemitism BC ROOM
16:00	COFFEE BREAK	COFFEE BREAK	COFFEE BREAK	COFFEE BREAK	COFFEE BREAK	COFFEE BREAK
16:30	SESSION 4 TREASURE HUNT BC ROOM (1st part)	SESSION 3 ANTISemitism AND HUMAN RIGHTS BC ROOM	FREE AFTERNOON	SESSION ANTISemitism BC ROOM	SESSION ANTISemitism BC ROOM	SESSION ANTISemitism BC ROOM
19:00	DINNER	DINNER	DINNER OUT	DINNER	DINNER	DINNER
21:00		GAME NIGHT BC ROOM	FREE EVENING	MOVIE NIGHT BC ROOM	SESSION ANTISemitism BC ROOM	SESSION ANTISemitism BC ROOM

## Tuesday, 12 September 2023 – Human Rights Day

- 09:30 Me & My Human Rights - *familiarise with the concept of Human Rights*
- 11:00 Coffee & Tea Break
- 11:30 Get to know Human Rights in context with Racism and Discrimination – *participants understand the underlying importance of HR for the concepts of racism and discrimination*
- 13:00 Lunch break
- 14:30 Intersection between Human Rights and Antigypsyism - *participants can connect their prior knowledge about antigypsyism to the concept of HR*
- 16:00 Coffee, Cookies & Tea Break
- 16:30 Youth-friendly Reference Paper on Antigypsyism I – *connect lessons learned on HR and antigypsyism with European activism and advocacy*
- 18:00 Reflection in Groups
- 19:00 Dinner
- 21:00 Game Night

## Wednesday, 13 September 2023 – Empowerment Day

- 09:30 Emotional realities of Antigypsyism – *connect personal experiences to the concept of antigypsyism*
- 11:00 Coffee & Tea Break
- 11:30 Expert session on Empowerment with **Elena Gorolova** and **Gwendolyn Albert** – *learn from activists about an important case in the Czech Republic and how to react to antigypsyism*
- 13:00 Lunch break
- Free Afternoon in the City
- 19:00 Dinner out in the city

## Thursday, 14 September 2023 – Strategy Day

- 09:30 World Café on Strategies to Combat Antigypsyism
  - Table 1 - Manuals by the Youth Department (Compass, Mirrors) (Ida Kreutzman, Youth Department)
  - Table 2 - Hate Speech Online Spaces/Online-Activism (Marietta Herfort & Anna Daroczi, Phiren Amenca)
  - Table 3 - Being active on a political level, advocacy (Gabi Hrabaňová, ERGO Network)
- 11:00 Coffee & Tea Break
- 11:30 Continue World Café
- 13:00 Lunch
- 14:30 Council of Europe work on Roma inclusion with **Marcos Andrade**  
Getting familiar with Recommendation CM/Rec(2023)4 on Roma Youth Participation
- 16:00 Coffee, Cookies & Tea Break
- 16:30 Youth-friendly Reference Paper on Antigypsyism II – *transfer knowledge on the paper in an artistic way*
- 18:00 Reflection in Groups
- 19:00 Dinner
- 21:00 Movie Night

## Friday, 15 September 2023 – Action Day

- 09:30 Free Morning
- 11:00 Coffee & Tea Break
- 11:30 Steps to Action I: project logic I
- 13:00 Lunch
- 14:30 Steps to Action II: project logic
- 16:00 Coffee, Cookies & Tea Break
- 16:30 Open Space - participants share their knowledge (positive affirmations, international Roma students)
- 19:00 Dinner
- 21:00 Self-organised Evening

## Saturday 16 September 2023 – Evaluation Day

- 09:30 Steps to Action III - my project after I am back home
- 11:00 Break
- 11:30 Steps to Action IV - my project after I am back home  
Debriefing and presentation of projects
- 13:00 Lunch
- 14:30 Evaluation in the group
- 16:00 Coffee & Tea Break
- 16:30 Closing
- 19:00 Dinner
- 21:00 Goodbye Party - visiting concert on the Danube

## Sunday, 17 September 2023

Departure of participants

## Pictures





## Highlights

Experts - for this study session we wanted to present role models of Human Rights defenders to our participants. As both our organisations are always eager to support women, we have chosen Ms. Elena Gorolová and Ms. Gwendolyn Albert from the Czech Republic. Elena is a human rights activist from the Czech Republic, the leader of the initiative of Roma forcibly sterilised women. She is an example of a well-known and widely acknowledged human rights activist coming from grassroots. She is recognised by Amnesty International, she represented Roma sterilised women in the United Nations, the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) included her among the world's 100 most inspiring women in 2018, etc. Gwendolyn is a long-term human rights activist, originally coming from the US, but living in the Czech Republic for 30 years. For her longtime activity defending human rights, especially with respect to the forced sterilisation of Romani women, Gwen received the award "For Humanity" from the Committee for the Redress of the Romani Holocaust.

Next day we had contributions on how to fight against antigypsyism and our guests introduced different methods to participants:

- Gabriela Hrabanova, Be/CZ - director of the ERGO Network, long term Roma advocate
- Marieta Herfort, HU - Managing director of Phiren Amenca, youth worker
- Anna Daroczi, HU - Coordinator of the Voluntary Service Program at Phiren Amenca, youth worker, Roma gender equality expert

All these guests were appreciated very much by participants as role models and good examples of long-term determination to counter such important issues as antigypsyism and remembrance is.

Documentary screening - we watched together a movie called How I Became a Partisan depicting the journey of young Roma film maker Vera Lackova from Slovakia exploring more about the role of Roma partisans in the Slovak National Uprising in World War II. The movie itself describes how the contemporary Slovak society observes the role of Roma in the society then and now and how deep the antigypsyism is rooted in the people's minds. Although it was an evening programme our participants developed a discussion after watching the film. They discussed the role of historians and arts in combating antigypsyism.

### **Results of the study session**

We built the program also on the expertise of the Council of Europe in human rights education and drew on its existing educational tools to combat racism and antigypsyism (Compass, Compasito, ADAE, Mirrors, Right to Remember) and reflected on the recommendations in the new Council of Europe Recommendation on Roma Youth Participation, especially the part that speaks about antigypsyism and its connection to participation.

Participants increased their understanding of antigypsyism and how to recognise its manifestations in a human rights framework. The study session improved Roma youth participation and the participants became empowered to stand up for their rights as well as to educate others on the systemic racism faced by their communities and what non-Roma can do to counter this racism.

Participants from different countries planned their projects which they would like to implement after they returned home. This generation uses social media on a daily basis, as an integral part of their lives, and thus some of these projects were aimed at using podcasts to speak up on Roma and their culture or using quizzes or infographics to inform about Roma. There was an interesting idea for a city tour with QR codes on topics related to Roma history and life today.

All participants pledged to stay Decade against Antigypsyism Youth Ambassadors, using their social capital and other resources to raise awareness on Roma issues, culture, history and presence. The team will stay in contact with participants in order to support them in their follow-up activities. Disseminating these results will be part of the campaign "Decade to counter antigypsyism" in order to bring the fight against antigypsyism to the national level.

In a nutshell:

- motivated 15 young people - Youth Ambassadors of the Decade against Antigypsyism





## Participants and feedback from participants

Although we had 15 participants instead of planned 20 eventually, the final group of participants was well motivated and interested in the topic. We are happy there were also non-Roma youth represented and thus the mutual learning was even more enriching.

Participants came from following countries:

Austria - 1  
Bulgaria - 1  
Czech Republic - 1  
Georgia - 1  
Germany - 2  
Greece - 2  
Hungary - 1  
The Netherlands - 1  
Slovak Republic - 3  
North Macedonia - 1  
Kosovo<sup>1</sup> - 1

The participants claimed in the evaluation form:

- high level of satisfaction with the program, trainers and other participants/ low level of satisfaction with the food
- strong contacts and relationships with other participants were created
- participants got motivation to work further and use their role of Youth Ambassadors in their realities

3-4 months after the study session we would like to organise a ZOOM call to check how much participants are into their projects they prepared during the study session. The participants developed their own activities as part of the programme and the follow-up meeting will address their process to implement these activities and support them with problems that might occur.

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<sup>1</sup> All references to Kosovo, whether the territory, institutions or population, in this text shall be understood in full compliance with United Nations' Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.

As the Decade against Antigypsyism will continue for some years, we will reconnect with the participants of this study session again for our next projects.



### **Contribution of the study session to the CoE Youth Sector priorities**

We believe our study session contributed to the following strategic priorities for 2022-25:

- Young people's access to rights
- Living together in peaceful and inclusive societies
- Youth work

Thanks to our study session, young people from different European societies (Roma and non-Roma from different countries) are empowered to participate in pluralistic democracy and to promote human rights in order to promote and build inclusive societies based on being equal in dignity and rights.

We informed participants about the work of the Council of Europe several times. The deputy director of the EYCB, Marcos Andrade joined twice to introduce the position of COE on fighting antigypsyism and also recently adopted Recommendation on Roma Youth Participation. Sul Khan Chargeishvili, educational advisor at the EYCB, presented the Council of Europe Youth Work Portfolio and current efforts to adapt it to the needs of youth workers.



## Appendix: List of participants

Austria

**Marina Stoilova**

Bulgaria

**Dimitar Dimitrov**

Czech Republic

**Petr Banda**

Georgia

**Mimoza Tielidze**

Germany

**Leah Rajchlin**

**Lea Lemke**

Greece

**Peter Filippidis**

**Emmanouela Polykandrioti**

Hungary

**Dezdemóna Kovács**

Kosovo<sup>2</sup>

**Rubija Redzeqi**

Netherlands

**Rosalie Levenslicht**

North Macedonia

**Ragmi Asanovski**

Slovak Republic

**Michal Žiga**

**Richard Mako**

**Oliver Mako**

### ***Preparatory team***

Martina Horvathova

Annamaria Psenkova

Marius Lüdicke

Ioana Spataru

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***Lecturers***

Gwendolyn Albert

Elena Gorolova

Gabi Hrabáňová, ERGO Network

***Guests***

Marietta Herfort & Anna Daroczi, Phiren Amenca

***Council of Europe***

Marcos Andrade, Deputy Director EYCB

Ida Kreutzman, Educational Advisor

Katalin Gelencsér, Programme Assistant