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# ROMA YOUTH TOGETHER 2026

**celebration 🌸 pride 🌸 contribution**

A seminar on celebration and pride for Roma youth participation on the occasion of the International Roma Day

**8-10 April 2026**

European Youth Centre, Strasbourg



**CALL FOR PARTICIPANTS**

Deadline: **16 February 2026**

**ERIAN**  
EUROPEAN ROMA  
INSTITUTE FOR ARTS  
AND CULTURE



**ternype**  
International Roma Youth Network



This initiative is a contribution towards the  
**New Democratic Pact for Europe**

## BACKGROUND

The [Youth Sector Strategy 2030](#) of the Council of Europe aims to create spaces for young people to live together in peaceful and inclusive societies, with special emphasis on allowing young people, including those experiencing any form of discrimination and exclusion, to benefit from opportunities that develop their commitment to and exercise of democratic citizenship. It also emphasises the interest of the Council of Europe youth sector to develop a stronger profile regarding the inclusion of inter alia minorities and vulnerable groups, intersectionality, and inclusiveness across its programming

The Council of Europe new [Strategy for Roma<sup>1</sup> and Traveller Inclusion \(2026-2030\)](#) concurs in this priority by noting that:

The prevalent invisibility of Roma and Travellers in the political arena can lead to the isolation of communities, making them easy targets for vote-buying, tokenism, exploitation or neglect, which further undermines their ability to advocate for their rights and interests. Respecting the dignity and agency of Roma and Travellers, as a strategic imperative for democratic integrity, societal cohesion, and peace, is often overlooked. By addressing these challenges, mobilising relevant stakeholders and providing space for the empowerment of all Roma and Travellers, member States can achieve progress in advancing the inclusion of Roma and Travellers and strengthen democracy and human rights protection.

The Council of Europe Strategy for Roma and Traveller Inclusion contributes to implement the Organisation's core mandate of protecting human rights, promoting democracy, and upholding the rule of law for all Europeans. Its priorities and objectives directly stem from the evaluation of the Council of Europe's previous strategic documents on Roma and Traveller inclusion and the recommendations addressed to the member States by the Council of Europe monitoring bodies and Roma and Traveller civil society organisations.

In their [Youth Statement](#) issued on the occasion of 8 April 2021, the participants of the first Roma Youth Together seminar call on the Council of Europe member States to seek active dialogue with Roma youth organisations and to ensure lasting mechanisms of empowerment and participation of young Roma. These calls result from the fact that many Roma youth continue experiencing multiple discrimination, or live in specific situations of vulnerability, with impact on their social inclusion and lower levels of participation in society.

On 5 April 2023, the Committee of Ministers adopted the [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2023\)4 on Roma Youth Participation](#), urging Member States of the Council of Europe to prioritise the substantive, fair, and systematic involvement of young Roma individuals in various societal aspects and decision-making processes. The recommendation emphasises the need to integrate the expressed needs and priorities of young Roma people into all relevant policies and programs, assess existing policies for potential redesigning to enhance Roma youth participation, combat

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<sup>1</sup> 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. The present is an explanatory footnote, not a definition of Roma and/or Travellers.

structural anti-Roma racism, ensure the full realisation of fundamental human rights for young Roma, support Roma youth-led organisations and initiatives, and more.

The Recommendation was adopted because young Roma people face systematic discrimination in their access to social, economic, cultural, political and civil rights, and that structural racism negatively impacts Roma youth's participation in civic and political processes and structures, self-esteem, pride and well-being, their transition to adulthood, their trust in the fairness of institutions, and their readiness to embrace their roots and cultures.

Following the adoption of [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2023\)](#), the Youth Department moved from policy adoption to concrete implementation. In January 2024, a consultative meeting "[Realising the potential of Roma Youth Participation](#)" was held at the European Youth Centre in Strasbourg to begin preparing a roadmap for putting the Recommendation into practice. This meeting brought together representatives of Roma youth organisations, national youth councils and experts to identify needs and propose concrete steps for implementation in the years ahead. Building on that work, the Joint Council on Youth adopted a Roadmap in 2024 outlining roles and responsibilities for national authorities, civil society, Roma youth organisations, and the Council of Europe itself to strengthen substantive, fair and systematic Roma youth engagement in public life and decision-making processes. In accordance with the roadmap, [the first meeting of Coordination and Support Group](#) to support participation, representation and inclusion of Roma young people took place in January of 2025. In January 2026, another [Coordination and Support Group meeting](#) at the European Youth Centre brought together Roma youth representatives, youth organisations and authorities to review obstacles like structural discrimination, strengthen synergies across Council of Europe programmes, and prepare concrete actions feeding into the new Council of Europe Strategy for Roma and Traveller Inclusion (2026–2030), which continues to emphasise youth participation as a core component of inclusion policy.

## **ROMA YOUTH TOGETHER – 8 APRIL**

The Council of Europe ([Youth Department](#) and [Roma and Travellers Division](#)) has been marking the International Roma Day by, inter alia, bringing together Roma youth organisations and young people at the European Youth Centre to celebrate and put together their concerns and aspirations about their present and future.

In 2026 this will continue by focusing on youth participation and empowerment of Roma youth, including Roma girls and women, young Roma LGBTI and Roma migrants. As in previous years, the activity will be co-organised with the International Roma Youth Network - [TernYpe](#) and the European Roma Grassroots Organisations ([ERGO](#)) Network, [Phiren Amenca](#) and [European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture \(ERIANC\)](#)

The seminar will play a pivotal role in advancing the process towards a "[New Democratic Pact for Europe](#)" by bringing forward the perspectives and ideas of young Roma on the current state of democracy and the shaping of future commitments. Aligned with the Pact's ambition to foster a collective and inclusive process, not to reinvent democracy, but to reinforce its foundations, amplify its benefits, and innovate its form to make democracy a lived reality for everyone, especially younger generations. The strategic directions established during the consultation phase, which runs through 2026 and includes the Roma Youth Together seminar, will shape the subsequent work to ensure meaningful and lasting impact.

The seminar Roma Youth Together 2026 will bring together young people who are youth leaders and/or youth workers in Roma and Travellers communities and organisations across Europe. The seminar will be part of the [OPRE! Roma Month: Celebrating Roma History, Language and Culture](#).

## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The Roma Youth Together 2026 seminar should highlight the contemporary contributions of Roma youth in Europe, emphasising Roma celebration, pride and contribution.

The seminar aims at strengthening the confidence of Roma youth leaders from across Europe by celebrating the sense of Roma identity and belonging and developing their skills as agents of change. Its specific objectives are:

1. to share experiences and realities of Roma youth across Europe, especially in relation to meaningful youth participation;
2. to empower Roma youth and Roma civil society to act as agents of change and multipliers in their communities;
3. to support participants' potential for leadership, advocacy and action for human rights and the fight against antigypsyism;
4. To associate young Roma in the Council of Europe's work on Roma youth participation, especially in relation to the New Democratic Pact for Europe;
5. to celebrate the International Roma Day with Roma youth;
6. to strengthen the sense of Roma youth community and connect with European youth organisations and networks in the field of Roma participation.

## PROGRAMME AND METHODOLOGY

The methodology of the seminar will be based on the principles of human rights education particularly to address antigypsyism, peer to peer learning, exchange of practices and dialogue among participants by using the participatory methods of learning, such as working groups, creative workshops and facilitated discussions. It will be structured in connection to the previous work done by the Council of Europe in the area of Roma youth participation emphasising the [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2023\)4](#) and its friendly-for Roma youth version.

Specific of the 2026 event is the focus on **celebration, pride** and **contribution** which will kick-off with the International Roma Day. These three interconnected phases of the programme emphasise the following:

1. **Celebration:** Celebrating International Roma Day on 8 April as well as discussing achievements and good practices from the Roma youth communities across Europe and the related approaches of the Council of Europe and priorities of Roma youth organisations which support Roma youth participation.
2. **Pride:** joining resources, skills, and knowledge to co-create narratives and content that promote Roma identity, heritage, and culture, and establishing working groups focussing on strategies to address anti-discrimination online and offline, advocacy and leadership.
3. **Contribution:** enabling discussions on current state of democracy and the role of young people as a direct contribution to the process towards a "New Democratic Pact for Europe".

## PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS

The seminar is designed for Roma young people, youth leaders or youth workers in Roma communities, representatives of organisations and networks working with Roma communities from across Europe. Participants should also be:

- Aged between 18 and 30;
- Motivated to meet and develop cooperation with other Roma youth;
- Active within a Roma organisation or a (Roma) youth organisation or community or informal group;
- Committed to act as multipliers for empowerment of Roma youth;
- Motivated to share experiences and engage in dialogue and cooperation with other participants in the seminar;
- Able to attend the whole seminar and all its programme elements;
- Able to work/communicate in English.

Priority will be given to participants who **have not attended** previous editions of Roma Youth Together seminars or similar activities of the Council of Europe.

The Council of Europe and its partners welcome applications from all candidates who fulfil the above-mentioned competences profile, irrespective of gender, disability, marital or parental status, racial, ethnic, or social origin, colour, religion, belief or sexual orientation.

## FINANCIAL AND PRACTICAL CONDITIONS

### Travel expenses

Travel expenses and visa fees for travelling to Strasbourg will be reimbursed according to the rules of the Council of Europe; the Council of Europe can also provide pre-paid tickets. Only the participants who attend the entire seminar will be reimbursed.

### Accommodation and meals

Board and lodging for the seminar will be provided and paid for by the Council of Europe at the European Youth Centre in Strasbourg. The venue is accessible to people with disabilities and can take measures to accommodate for specific needs of participants in this respect.

### Working languages

The main working language of the programme will be English with the possibility for usage of Romani if needed.

## FURTHER INQUIRIES

For more information and for technical assistance with the application form uploaded at the Council of Europe Youth Department platform, please address: [eyc.programme@coe.int](mailto:eyc.programme@coe.int).

## PROCEDURE FOR APPLYING FOR PARTICIPATION

Applications must be submitted by **Monday, 16 February 2026**, 23:59 CET by completing the online application form available at: <https://forms.office.com/e/115Pn0pPPQ>

### Interested in other activities of the Youth Department of the Council of Europe?...

The Youth Department of the Council of Europe organises other study sessions, seminars, and training courses with and for young people. For more details, please consult our webpage [www.coe.int/youth](http://www.coe.int/youth) or contact the European Youth Centre in Strasbourg or Budapest.