

## Tool 1

# The representation of Roma and/or Travellers in school curricula and teaching materials

Mapping study identifying good practices in Council of Europe member states



## Recommendations for ensuring the full participation of Roma and Travellers in the process of developing school curricula and teaching materials

## Tool 2



## TOOLKIT FOR TEACHING ROMA AND/OR TRAVELLER HISTORY



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**TOOLKIT FOR TEACHING ROMA AND/OR TRAVELLER HISTORY**

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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.

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# Tool 1

## **The representation of Roma and/or Travellers in school curricula and teaching materials**

### Mapping study identifying good practices in Council of Europe member states

**Delia Grigore**



# Introduction

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The Council of Europe is currently implementing the Council of Europe's Strategic Action Plan for Roma and Travellers Inclusion (2020-2025). Within the framework of priority area 5.3 ("Supporting access to inclusive equality education and training") and under its mandate for the years 2024-27, the Committee of Experts on Roma and Travellers Issues (ADI-ROM) is developing a capacity-building programme and tools to support the implementation of Recommendation CM/Rec(2020)2 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the inclusion of the history of Roma and/or Travellers in school curricula and teaching materials at the national level.

The programme and tools aim to assist member states in the implementation of Recommendation CM/Rec(2020)2 at the national level by building the capacities of member state institutions to design or adapt curricula and textbooks according to the guidelines of the recommendation. Member states can use this mapping study when designing programmes, policies and initiatives.

Data reflecting the state of play in member states were collected through a questionnaire to members of the Steering Committee on Anti-discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion (CDADI) and the ADI-ROM. Existing good practices in the representation of Roma in school curricula and teaching materials were identified in member states; these complement the data from the study "The representation of Roma in European curricula and textbooks".<sup>1</sup>

Other resources used in the research were:

- ▶ Georg Eckert Institute (GEI) online research infrastructure "Curricula workstation",<sup>2</sup>
- ▶ GEI online catalogue Textbook-Cat;<sup>3</sup>
- ▶ Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) overview on Roma Holocaust remembrance based on responses from Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) participating states;<sup>4</sup>
- ▶ Observatory on History Teaching in Europe (OHTE) *General report on the state of history teaching in Europe*.<sup>5</sup>

This mapping study aims to provide an overview and to depict the representation of Roma history and culture in school curricula and textbooks in member states given the limitations outlined below. The study forms the basis for data analysis and interpretation, with most data presented at aggregated level for all Council of Europe member states.

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1. Council of Europe, "The representation of Roma in European curricula and textbooks", a joint report commissioned by the Council of Europe to the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research in partnership with the Roma Education Fund, Council of Europe, Strasbourg, 2020, <https://repository.gei.de/server/api/core/bitstreams/ba4f051f-eafa-4b73-98d6-eab3957d17c6/content>.
2. Georg Eckert Institute Curricula Workstation, <http://curricula-workstation.edumeres.net/lehrplaene>.
3. Georg Eckert Institute Educational media research catalogue, <http://itbc.gei.de>.
4. OSCE/ODIHR (2024), *Holocaust memorial days: An overview of remembrance and education in the OSCE region*, Warsaw.
5. Observatory on History Teaching in Europe, *OHTE General report on the state of history teaching in Europe*, Council of Europe Publishing, Strasbourg, 2023, [www.coe.int/en/web/observatory-history-teaching/general-report](http://www.coe.int/en/web/observatory-history-teaching/general-report).

This study builds on the results of the 2020 report commissioned by the Council of Europe to the Georg Eckert Institute in partnership with the Roma Education Fund, "The representation of Roma in European curricula and textbooks". The main conclusions of this report are:

► **Limited representation in terms of range of topics**

When the Roma are mentioned in textbooks, the text is usually placed in text boxes or in the margins, or is presented as a case study. Very few references to discrimination against the Roma, or to tools aimed at preventing anti-Roma sentiment, can be found. Roma people are often referred to as a homogeneous group and not as individuals, and little information is provided about them or their culture in contemporary society.

► **Misrepresentation of Roma in textbooks**

Where information about the Roma in textbooks goes beyond a mere description of national demographics, the Roma are predominantly portrayed as victims or in a stereotypical way. Even some of the attempts to present Roma culture tend to reinforce stereotypes of the Roma as dancers and musicians dressed in colourful traditional clothing.

► **Role in society**

When the Roma are mentioned as members of society, it is mostly in lists of the respective country's demographics, with no description of the community's history, culture or contribution to society.

► **Recognition of contributions by the Roma**

Very few textbooks portray prominent or remarkable Roma individuals. With rare exceptions, there are only fleeting references to historical episodes of Roma resisting persecution in the past and to Roma activists fighting against current discrimination and for equal rights in the present day.

► **Challenging prejudice**

When they refer to stereotypes to challenge them, some textbooks actually perpetuate or even aggravate them.

The conclusions of the Georg Eckert Institute study – that there is insufficient and inaccurate information about the Roma in curricula and textbooks – also indicate a lack of credible source material available on the Roma. This has led to ministries, curricula designers and textbook publishers excluding the Roma from the curriculum and from textbooks, or including only material based on social values that risk fostering prejudice and misconceptions, and that display an ignorance of the Roma.

The main recommendations of the study of the Georg Eckert Institute for all stakeholders relate to the need to revise school curricula and textbooks to provide a more accurate and informed representation of the Roma, to counter discrimination and stereotypes, and to promote equality as follows:

► **National ministries of education** should ensure that the Roma are included in an appropriate way in the development of curricula for history, geography, languages and literature, social sciences and other relevant subjects. Curricular working groups should include experts in Roma representation and representatives from Roma civil society, and provide adequate training for teachers.

► **Textbook authors and publishing houses** should include Roma organisations and authors in their authorship groups and networks; increase the number of references to the Roma across different subjects, chapters and topics to encourage more diverse references to Roma across a broader range of thematic fields, textbooks and curricula; and refer to individuals with Roma heritage or identity, to Roma initiatives for rights and against discrimination, and to the history of Roma communities in Europe and their contribution to arts, culture, science and politics.

► **Civil society organisations** should provide a list of experts in Roma history, geography and demographics, culture and other topics; establish a relationship with publishing houses and authors and enter into agreements to provide them with, and to help them locate, sources and images that accurately represent the Roma; and organise teacher training.

► **Academia** should develop research on Roma history, culture and contribution to society, and increase the presence of authors, historians and experts in Roma history, culture and contemporary social topics in existing European and national researchers' networks and authors' associations.

- The Council of Europe should support member states in implementing Recommendation CM/Rec(2009)4 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the education of the Roma and Travellers in Europe, especially Section III of the recommendation; advise and guide member states in the revision and/ or replacement of schoolbooks that portray the Roma negatively or reinforce stereotypes, alongside more progressive representation of the Roma in textbooks and curricula; reinforce the implementation of the relevant legal texts and their monitoring, focusing on the representation of the Roma in the education curricula and textbooks, as well as on the education system in general.

## Survey among member states

This mapping study is also based on the responses to a questionnaire in the member states on the study *Holocaust memorial days: An overview of remembrance and education in the OSCE region*,<sup>6</sup> the “Analysis of the representation of topics from Roma history and culture in teaching and learning programmes in primary and secondary schools in the Republic of Serbia” (2023)<sup>7</sup> conducted in partnership with the European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture (ERIAC), and the study of Imke Rath and Riem Spielhaus from the Leibniz Institute for International Research on Textbooks for Schools (2021).<sup>8</sup>

A total of 22 member states responded to the questionnaire: Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Cyprus, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Romania, Slovak Republic, Spain, Switzerland, Türkiye and the United Kingdom.

The analysis follows the structure of the questionnaire, using the information provided by member states that can qualify as good or promising practices and that answers the questions and clearly addresses the issues raised.

## Research limitations

The research limitations are as follows.

- The response rate for the questionnaire was relatively low.
- The study is the result of exclusive desk research, as no resources were available for travel to the countries to conduct fieldwork.
- Limited resources also affected the points of view of Roma or pro-Roma civil society organisations (CSOs) that are not strongly reflected in the study. The only input collected was from an observer to the ADI-ROM, the European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture, in view of their expertise on the topic and their membership across several member states.
- The initiatives, projects and programmes reported by member states are included in the study as “good practices” or “promising practices”. Some of the practices are still ongoing or there is no available information stemming from evaluations that indicates whether they are indeed “good practices”. Therefore the study also mentions those practices that are “promising”.
- The current study maps the representation of Roma history and culture in school curricula and textbooks in the member states only where online access to these materials was provided. Language limitations did not enable a comprehensive and exhaustive analysis of textbooks and curricula. In view of these limitations, content or discourse analysis aimed at assessing the quality of the representation of Roma and Traveller history and culture in school curricula and textbooks was not conducted.

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6. OSCE/ODIHR (2024), op. cit.

7. Council of Europe and ERIAC (2023), “Analysis of the representation of topics from Roma history and culture in teaching and learning programmes in primary and secondary schools in the Republic of Serbia” (Serbian only), <https://rm.coe.int/analiza-zastupljenosti-tema-iz-istorije-i-kulture-roma-u-programima-na/1680ada1ca>.

8. Rath I. and Spielhaus R. (2021), *Schulbücher und Antiziganismus: Zur Darstellung von Sinti und Roma in aktuellen deutschen Lehrplänen und Schulbüchern* [Textbooks and antigypsyism: The portrayal of Sinti and Roma in current German curricula and textbooks] (German only), [www.gei.de/en/research/publications/details/imke-rath-and-riem-spielhaus-schulbuecher-und-antiziganismus-zur-darstellung-von-sinti-und-roma-in-aktuellen-deutschen-lehrplaenen-und-schulbuechern](http://www.gei.de/en/research/publications/details/imke-rath-and-riem-spielhaus-schulbuecher-und-antiziganismus-zur-darstellung-von-sinti-und-roma-in-aktuellen-deutschen-lehrplaenen-und-schulbuechern).

## **Legal framework for educational reform and the inclusion of new topics in the national curricula and textbooks**

Most member states have a clear legal framework to initiate educational reform and to include new curricular elements in their schools. In most member states, for this process to be implemented, the education law needs to be changed. This can be initiated by the ministry of education at a national level, by the national parliament, by a large group of citizens or by competent bodies at regional or cantonal levels in the case of federal countries (such as Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Germany and Switzerland). The draft law then goes to parliament or the national assemblies where it is debated, changed, voted on, officially issued and published. The new curricula are drafted by experts and approved by the ministry of education or its subordinated specialised bodies.

In Germany school education is organised according to a federal system; curricula differ between the 16 *Länder* of Germany and textbooks are usually provided by commercial publishing houses, which integrate the different curricular topics with their material.

The same applies in Switzerland, where the school system is organised at the cantonal rather than at a national level, that is, education is primarily the responsibility of the cantons.

The constitutions of mainly the member states that recognise national minorities include the principle of preserving diversity, the aim of respecting the ethnic identity of every citizen and the right of national minorities to preserve and develop their cultural identity. In some member states (e.g. Bulgaria), intercultural education is regulated by governmental ordinances, and is included as a topic whose aim is to provide specific competencies to students, or is integrated into the framework of general education subjects through the improvement of acquired competences in optional study hours.

In some member states (e.g. the United Kingdom, in England), even though teachers must follow the national curriculum for all disciplines, they have a degree of flexibility in the classroom to adapt the content of the national curriculum to the needs of their pupils, and academies have the freedom to innovate within their curriculum.

In some member states (e.g. the United Kingdom, in Northern Ireland), non-governmental organisations, including Roma and Traveller support organisations, can request amendments to both the national curriculum and the mandatory training requirements for current or newly qualified teachers. The lead government agency, the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) in Northern Ireland, will consider any content for inclusion in reviews of the current curriculum.

## **Conclusions**

In countries where there are easier and faster ways to change education legislation and to reform the school curricula, there are better opportunities to include new themes and subjects (e.g. Roma and Traveller history, culture and contributions to national values) in school education, curricula, textbooks/manuals and other teaching materials. In member states with robust consultation processes on educational reforms that involve all the relevant stakeholders (parents, teachers, students, researchers, representatives of CSOs, especially Roma/Traveller), there is a greater likelihood that Roma and Traveller history and culture will be included in educational materials.

# Teaching of Roma and/or Traveller history and its inclusion in national school curricula and teaching materials

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## Good and promising practices in member states

While there are few confirmed good practices in member states on teaching the history of the Roma and/or Travellers and its inclusion in national school curricula and teaching materials, some promising practices can be followed by other member states.

### Austria

In Austria, an extensive range of teaching materials is available.

- ▶ With the project Romane Thana,<sup>9</sup> the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research, in co-operation with the Romano Centro Association, provides an impetus to increase insight at Austrian schools into the situation of the Roma and Sinti and their history and stories. These aim to raise awareness of centuries of discrimination against the Roma and Sinti and to contribute to a reduction in prejudice. The teaching material was developed for use from the fifth grade onwards, especially for history and social studies/political education, geography, economics and German. The *Polis* Centre for teaching politics in schools, on behalf of the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research, offers teaching and learning materials on the topic of the social exclusion of the Roma and Sinti in Austria and Europe.<sup>10</sup>
- ▶ The booklet “Roma in Austria: Emancipation of an ethnic group”,<sup>11</sup> published by the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research, introduces the history of the Austrian Roma ethnic group – from its arrival in Austria to the National Socialist extermination policy, to its recognition as an ethnic group and the Oberwart assassination. The focus is on the ethnic group of the Roma (the so-called autochthonous Roma), the immigration movements of the last decade and the current situation of the so-called migrant (allochthonous) Roma, taken up on a case-by-case basis. The chapter “Memorial work for the Austrian Roma victims of National Socialism” provides information on commemoration days and days of remembrance. The culture and religion of the Austrian Roma are presented. A short chapter broadens the view and looks at the current situation of the Roma in Europe. A teaching project on the life story of a Holocaust survivor is provided for use in school practice, as are links and tips on materials for dealing with the topic in the classroom.

### Bosnia and Herzegovina

The inclusion of Roma history and culture in existing curricula and textbooks, and of the Romani language in schools as an optional subject or through alternative solutions, is one of the sub-goals in the education-related objectives of the 2021-2025 Bosnia and Herzegovina Action Plan for Social Inclusion of Roma Men and Women<sup>12</sup> adopted by the Council of Ministers on 20 April 2022.

In the Republika Srpska of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the primary school curricula for history and the Serbian language include the history of the Roma.

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9. For more information on the project, see [www.romane-thana.at](http://www.romane-thana.at).

10. Learning materials offered by the *Polis* Centre (available in German only), [www.politik-lernen.at/tipp14\\_romaineuropa](http://www.politik-lernen.at/tipp14_romaineuropa).

11. Austrian Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research, booklet “Roma in Austria: Emancipation of an ethnic group” (only in German), [www.politik-lernen.at/pa\\_romainoesterreich1](http://www.politik-lernen.at/pa_romainoesterreich1).

12. Bosnia and Herzegovina Action Plan for Social Inclusion of Roma Men and Women (2021-2025), <https://www.rcc.int/romaintegration2020/participants/2/bosnia-and-herzegovina>.

## Bulgaria

In Bulgaria, the curriculum for the subject of Bulgarian language and literature in the third grade includes the Roma folk tale "The good Roma".

## Croatia

In 2020, the Republic of Croatia's Ministry of Science and Education adopted the curriculum of the Roma national minority for the optional subject of "Language and culture" in primary and secondary schools. The aim was to develop communication and intercultural and civic competences to help students belonging to the Roma national minority to become aware of their own identity in a multicultural environment by learning their first language and history and by nurturing culture as a dynamic concept.

## Finland

Finland's National Roma Policy (ROMPO) 2023–2030 is based on the EU Roma Strategic Framework for Equality, Inclusion and Participation.<sup>13</sup> It contains two measures that directly touch on the learning materials and contents, action proposals 34 and 35:

- ▶ ROMPO 3, action proposal 34: Implementing a project to review the sections on Roma in basic education and vocational education materials and making proposals for improving these contents;
- ▶ ROMPO 3, action proposal 35: Based on the review of study materials, increasing the awareness of producers of study materials of Roma-related issues and, where possible, taking account of the improvements and additions concerning study material covering Roma proposed by the review report.

In themes related to human rights and discrimination, the Roma are mentioned depending on the teacher's competence and knowledge. For example, the Roma are also mentioned in relation to traditional national minorities in the theme of education.

The national core curriculum for general upper secondary education intended for young people (2004)<sup>14</sup> includes six pages on Roma culture and history detailing the objectives of instruction. It includes the Romani language, oral and written Roma traditions, the history and spread of the Romani language and culture, Romani literature and other arts, and Romani language and culture in modern society.

## Germany

In Germany, the Independent Commission on Antigypsyism, which worked on behalf of the German Federal Ministry of the Interior from 2019 to 2021, requested the Leibniz Institute for International Research on Textbooks for Schools (Leibniz-Institut für Internationale Schulbuchforschung) to conduct a thorough analysis of the representation of the Sinti and Roma in current curricula and textbooks for schools. Its findings include the following.

- ▶ Baden-Württemberg and North Rhine-Westphalia not only mention Sinti and Roma most frequently in curricula, but also in the textbooks of the two federal states. The anchoring of the topic in the curricula therefore has an effect on the state-specific textbook editions.
- ▶ Although this is not encouraged or required in the curricula, textbooks for states such as Saxony-Anhalt, Schleswig-Holstein and Thuringia also address Sinti and Roma.

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13. Finland's National Roma Policy (ROMPO) 2023-2030, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Helsinki, [Finland's National Roma Policy \(ROMPO\) 2023–2030 - Valto](#).

14. Finland national core curriculum for general upper secondary education intended for young people, <https://www.oph.fi/en/education-system/general-upper-secondary-education>.

- ▶ The curriculum and textbook analysis identified a total of six subject areas within which Sinti and Roma are dealt with: crimes of the Nazi dictatorship (including the related culture of remembrance); persecution in the Middle Ages; migration (especially to Germany); human rights/basic rights/protection of minorities; social diversity; and extremism/racism as a threat to democracy. In some cases, they are mentioned in connection with the development of the European Union.

At the national level, the Standing Conference of Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the *Länder* has been working together with the Central Council of German Sinti and Roma and the Alliance for Solidarity with the Sinti and Roma of Europe.<sup>15</sup> On 8 December 2022 they made a joint declaration on the inclusion of the history and present situation of the Sinti and Roma in school education.<sup>16</sup>

The aim of this joint declaration is to ensure that information on Sinti and Roma as members of German and European societies, as citizens of Germany and other European states, and as an integral part of German and European history and cultural history is included and addressed in school lessons. Pupils should be given an authentic and differentiated picture of the multi-layered realities of life of the members of the minority. This includes the Holocaust of the European Sinti and Roma. However, school education must not be limited to this issue.

To achieve this goal, the following principles must be observed.

- ▶ An essential prerequisite is the communication of authentic information and knowledge about the history and present of Sinti and Roma. This is an important step towards correcting prejudiced everyday knowledge and would contribute to fulfilling the historical-political and human rights-oriented educational mandate of schools.
- ▶ Dealing with minorities is a benchmark for democratic understanding in politics and society as well as for the observance of human rights. Due to its history, Germany bears a great responsibility. Its educational institutions should name antigypsyism as a phenomenon in society, sensitise young people to its various forms, teach them to recognise antigypsyist structures and empower them to oppose discrimination and exclusion. This is also of great importance for teacher training.

The competent authorities in ministries and school administrations shall ensure that:

- ▶ the teaching of knowledge about the history and present of Sinti and Roma from an antigypsyism-critical perspective is given adequate space in the training and further education of teachers;
- ▶ school headmasters be made aware of the importance of this issue.

Anchoring this in the programmes of state training institutes, also in co-operation with training programmes of civil society and universities, has proven effective. Existing training programmes on democracy, human rights, or on prevention of and intervention against discrimination could be used and expanded as needed. This applies equally to the training of teachers and other educational professionals.

Textbook publishers and authors of other educational media should be persuaded to critically analyse their previous contributions on the topic of Sinti and Roma, to review their quantity and quality, and to edit them accordingly for new editions. Sinti and Roma should be represented as a natural part of German society in textbooks and other materials across all subjects and grades.

## Brandenburg

Common textbooks and teaching materials for the social sciences (for grades 5 and 6) in Brandenburg mention the Roma and Travellers. The manual *Deutsche Sinti und Roma* (German Sinti and Roma) from the University of Potsdam is dedicated to engaging with the target group as a minority in Brandenburg in the classroom. Among other things, the handout contains materials and tips for extracurricular learning.

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15. Tackling antigypsyism, ensuring participation: National strategic framework to implement the EU Roma Strategic Framework in Germany, Bundesministerium des Innern und für Heimat, 2022.
16. Joint Declaration of the Standing Conference of Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs with the Central Council of German Sinti and Roma and the Alliance for Solidarity with the Sinti and Roma of Europe to convey the history and present of Sinti and Roma in schools, 8 December 2022, <https://zentralrat.sintiundroma.de/en/joint-declaration-more-history-and-culture-of-the-sinti-and-roma-to-be-taught-in-schools/>.

## Free Hanseatic City of Bremen

Current educational plans in the state of Bremen are formulated in a competency-oriented way, which is why topics and content are not listed in full or in detail. Standards and learning targets that provide flexibility for accommodating "Roma and/or Travellers' history" can therefore be found in several subjects. In particular, the subjects society and politics, history, politics and world environmental science, shaped by the historical, geographical and socio-political or economic-political dimensions, religion, German, foreign languages and music offer relevant starting points. In topics such as "Rules for living together", "Living together in communities and groups" and "One's own and foreign values and traditions", and in the discussion of human and children's rights, the educational plans of the social science subjects offer a variety of opportunities to deal with national minorities in historical, socio-political and cultural terms in the classroom.

In the 2023 final exams (*Abitur*), the focus is on antiziganism ("Sinti and Roma in the German Empire"). In preparation for this, several online training courses were offered to teachers in 2021-22. In addition, the cross-disciplinary learning area of Global Development teaches core competencies and a variety of topics that offer an interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary opportunity to address Roma and/or Traveller history, for example, diversity of values, cultures and living conditions, diversity and inclusion, demographic structures and developments, political rule, democracy and human rights.

The textbook *Zeitreise*, Volume 3 (2014), is used in Bremen/Niedersachsen, while Volume 3 (2015) is used in Niedersachsen. In the chapters on National Socialism, the textbook addresses the persecution of various minorities in addition to the genocide of the Jews. The section "Persecution of Sinti and Roma" refers to the long history of exclusion. The term *Zigeuner*, a derogatory external designation and exclusionary insult, is enclosed within quotation marks.

The Sinti and Roma people immigrated from India in the Middle Ages. Many sovereigns did not give them a residence permit, so they were forced to "travel". The Sinti and Roma earned their money as traders, craftsmen, musicians or artists. The Sinti and Roma never found a home: they were expelled, imprisoned or killed. Since around 1900, the police in Germany systematically monitored Sinti and Roma.<sup>17</sup>

## Hesse

Usually, the cultural contributions of the Sinti and Roma are taught in middle and upper school in the subjects of history, politics and economics, social sciences, ethics, religion, German and art. In a large-scale study conducted by the Leibniz Institute for Educational Media Georg Eckert Institute (GEI) in 2021 entitled *Textbooks and antigypsyism: On the representation of Sinti and Roma in current German curricula and textbooks*,<sup>18</sup> the current curricula and textbooks used for teaching history, politics, social studies and geography, and civics and social studies at secondary levels I and II in Germany were analysed. The study provides an overview of the portrayal of the Sinti and Roma in the curricula current in Germany in 2019 and in the textbooks of the federal states. For Hesse, 56 references were found in 11 textbooks.

## Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania

The curricular subjects where the Roma are mostly represented are:

- ▶ History, 12th grade: exclusion, disenfranchisement and destruction of dissidents and minorities;
- ▶ Philosophy, classes 8/9: self-image and external image as aspects of self-knowledge. Could I imagine how I would live as a member of the Sinti or Roma?

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17. Rath I and Spielhaus R (2021), op. cit.

18. Ibid.

## Greece

In Greece, the Roma are represented in the first grade history textbook of the *epangelmatiko lykeio* (vocational upper secondary school): *History of the modern and contemporary world from 1453 CE to the present day*, in the context of the Holocaust. One of the expected learning outcomes of the new curriculum of third-grade history of the *geniko lykeio* (general upper secondary school) is that students should understand “that, apart from the case of the Jews, the same methods of extermination, in the same places (concentration camps) and at exactly the same time, were applied against other population groups (e.g. Roma, Soviet prisoners of war, intellectuals, homosexuals)”.<sup>19</sup> Finally, one of the illustrative activities is “to study the decisions of the Nazi government to exterminate Jews and other minority groups through the analysis of archival sources”.<sup>20</sup> Additionally, the Institute of Educational Policy recommends that the Roma Holocaust be mentioned in the teacher’s guide for the same course as an integral part of what is taught about the Holocaust.<sup>21</sup>

Roma are mentioned in the textbooks for language/literature and for social and civic education. Relevant literary texts are found in the anthologies of literary texts for the fifth and sixth grades of primary school and in the Modern Greek language textbook for the fifth grade of primary school, which are aimed at countering racist views about Roma and at promoting respect for diversity and the value of friendship.<sup>22</sup> In the language/literature books at secondary level, Roma appear, alongside various symbols, in the works of well-known poets such as Kostis Palamas and Angelos Sikelianos and writers such as Dimitrios Hatzis in the Modern Greek literature texts of the first<sup>23</sup> and third grades of *geniko lykeio* (general upper secondary school), highlighting prejudices against the Roma.<sup>24</sup>

Finally, in the textbook for social and civic education for the sixth grade of primary school,<sup>25</sup> the difficulties for Roma children of attending school as a result of their frequent travels, and the supporting role of the reception classes in dealing with this problem, are highlighted,<sup>26</sup> while issues of prejudice against the Roma, and of their social exclusion, are addressed in the textbook for social and civic education for the third grade of *gymnasio* (lower secondary school).<sup>27</sup>

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19. Greece, history textbook of the Epangelmatiko Lykeio (Vocational upper secondary school), *History of the Modern and Contemporary World from 1453 CE to the present day*, pp. 122-123.
20. Ibid.
21. Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs (Greece), Act No. 57/10-12-2020.
22. Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs (Greece), “With reason and with dream: An anthology of literary texts for fifth and sixth grades”, Anta Katsiki-Givalou, Tina Kalogirou, Yannis S. Papadatos, Stella Protonotariou, Theodosis Pylarinos, [http://ebooks.edu.gr/ebooks/v/html/8547/2003/Anthologio\\_E-ST-Dimotikou\\_html-empl/](http://ebooks.edu.gr/ebooks/v/html/8547/2003/Anthologio_E-ST-Dimotikou_html-empl/).
23. Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs (Greece), “Modern Greek literature texts – Issue A, First grade of high school”, a textbook edited by N. Grigoriadis, D. Karvelis, Ch. Milionis, K. Balaskas, G. Paganos, and G. Papakostas, published by the Institute of Computer Technology and Publications ‘Diophantus’, Athens, n.d., [http://ebooks.edu.gr/ebooks/v/html/8547/2700/Keimena-Neoellinikis-Logotechnias\\_A-Lykeiou\\_html-empl](http://ebooks.edu.gr/ebooks/v/html/8547/2700/Keimena-Neoellinikis-Logotechnias_A-Lykeiou_html-empl).
24. Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs (Greece), “Texts of Modern Greek literature – Volume C, third grade of high school”, a textbook edited by N. Grigoriadis, D. Karvelis, Ch. Milionis, K. Balaskas, G. Paganos, and G. Papakostas, published by the Institute of Computer Technology and Publications ‘Diophantus’, Athens, n.d., [http://ebooks.edu.gr/ebooks/v/html/8547/2710/Keimena-Neoellinikis-Logotechnias\\_G-Lykeiou\\_html-empl/index\\_b\\_03\\_01.html](http://ebooks.edu.gr/ebooks/v/html/8547/2710/Keimena-Neoellinikis-Logotechnias_G-Lykeiou_html-empl/index_b_03_01.html).
25. Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs (Greece), “Social and political education – Sixth grade of primary school”, a textbook authored by Souzanna-Maria Nikolaou, Asimina Vatsitsi, Daizi-Margarita Daniilidou, and Vasiliki Paschaliori, published by the Organismos Ekdoseos Didaktikon Vivlion, Athens, n.d., pp. 21-22, [https://ebooks.edu.gr/ebooks/v/html/8547/2348/Koinoniki-kai-Politiki-Agogi\\_ST-Dimotikou\\_html-apli/index.html](https://ebooks.edu.gr/ebooks/v/html/8547/2348/Koinoniki-kai-Politiki-Agogi_ST-Dimotikou_html-apli/index.html).
26. See [http://ebooks.edu.gr/ebooks/v/html/8547/2348/Koinoniki-kai-Politiki-Agogi\\_ST-Dimotikou\\_html-apli/index.html](http://ebooks.edu.gr/ebooks/v/html/8547/2348/Koinoniki-kai-Politiki-Agogi_ST-Dimotikou_html-apli/index.html).
27. Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs (Greece), “Texts of Modern Greek literature – Volume C, third grade of *gymnasio*”, a textbook edited by N. Grigoriadis, D. Karvelis, Ch. Milionis, K. Balaskas, G. Paganos and G. Papakostas, published by the Organismos Ekdoseos Didaktikon Vivlion, Athens, n.d., [https://ebooks.edu.gr/ebooks/v/html/8547/2710/Keimena-Neoellinikis-Logotechnias\\_G-Lykeiou\\_html-empl/index\\_b\\_03\\_01.html](https://ebooks.edu.gr/ebooks/v/html/8547/2710/Keimena-Neoellinikis-Logotechnias_G-Lykeiou_html-empl/index_b_03_01.html).

The most important education programmes linked to the Roma that have been implemented in Greece are:

- ▶ "The role of Romani language in the educational integration of Roma children and young people: from policy to practice",<sup>28</sup>
- ▶ Skills Labs: In the thematic section "I care and act: Social empathy and responsibility", subsection "Inclusion: Mutual respect, diversity", 33 relevant educational programmes are offered, including a programme for the development of mutual respect and diversity in preschool and early school age children by the Department of Early Childhood Education, University of Crete;
- ▶ A new curriculum for preschool education<sup>29</sup>, which refers explicitly to differentiated and inclusive education practices aimed at the inclusion of all students, including Roma early childhood children, and provides for the inclusion of Roma children and the use of their language and other cultural elements.

Positive practices in the inclusion of Roma and Traveller history in textbooks or teaching materials are:

- ▶ school textbooks' effort to eliminate racist attitudes and integrate Roma children in education (the references are sometimes accompanied by relevant visual material); and
- ▶ provision in the new secondary school history curricula to include teaching about the Roma Holocaust in school history textbooks.

## Ireland

In March 2017, the Traveller community was recognised as a distinct ethnic group in Ireland, the only group with this recognition domestically. Following a request from the Ministry of Education, the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) published in 2019 a curriculum audit on Traveller history and culture across early years, primary and post-primary education.<sup>30</sup> The audit identifies areas across the curriculum where teachers could teach about aspects of Traveller history and culture, including a dedicated chapter on the subject.<sup>31</sup>

The audit acknowledges that the general population, including teachers and/or early childhood practitioners, have limited knowledge and understanding about Traveller culture and history. Given the strong disparities between the social, linguistic and cultural environments of home and school, many students from the Traveller community can feel alienated and find it difficult to engage with school. Unconscious or conscious biases affect how children perceive Travellers. The audit concludes that, in this context, it is important to reflect on how to increase the visibility of Traveller culture and history in the curriculum so as to promote respect, recognition, broad integration, relationship-building and inclusion. Celebrating Traveller culture and history in the curriculum increases its visibility in schools, as well as in early childhood settings, and can discourage biases.

Taking into account that curricula are reviewed and developed within a larger framework, the curriculum audit seeks to identify current opportunities to introduce aspects of Traveller culture and history across the early childhood, primary and post-primary curricula for children and young people.

Another conclusion of the NCCA's curriculum audit is that the gap between policy and practice should be closed, through measures such as teacher training and professional development, school inspection activities, and the development of more accessible teaching resources.

The Traveller Culture and History in Education Bill 2018 was introduced to amend the Education Act 1998. It sought to include Traveller culture and history in the school curriculum in Ireland. This follows the official recognition of the Traveller community in March 2017.

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- 28. Experimental pilot policy programme of the Council of Europe, "The role of the Romani language in the educational inclusion of Roma children and youth: from policy to practice in primary schools of the country" during the school years 2021-2025 (Ministerial Decision 34031/16-09-2021), implemented in Greece by the Greek Institute of Educational Policy.
- 29. Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs (Greece), "Ministerial Decision 13646/Δ1", Government Gazette (ΦΕΚ) 687/B/10-02-2023, Athens, 2023.
- 30. NCCA, "Traveller culture and history in the curriculum: A curriculum audit", November 2019.
- 31. The Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities Fifth Periodic Report of Ireland, 2023.

Ireland's National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy 2017-2021 (NTRIS) proposes 149 actions on the following topics: cultural identity, education, employment, children and youth, health, gender equality, anti-discrimination and equality, accommodation and public services. Key education-related actions proposed include the development of educational resources on Traveller and Roma culture and history for use in primary, post-primary and adult education settings.

The Framework for Junior Cycle (2015) in Ireland identifies opportunities to integrate Traveller culture and history into various subjects, such as communication, literacy, English, history, geography, home economics, business studies, music, visual arts, religious education, engineering and science. The framework highlights specific learning outcomes that can be used to explore aspects of Traveller culture and history, including language, oral traditions, cultural heritage, family, nomadism, crafts, traditions and animal care.

The Yellow Flag programme, developed by the Irish Traveller Movement (ITM) in 2008, is a schools-based programme designed to promote inclusivity of all cultures and ethnicities, to celebrate diversity and to challenge racism and discrimination. It works with students, staff, management, parents and the wider community to ensure that issues of diversity and equality are not only addressed in the formal curriculum but also understood in everyday life outside the school setting. As part of the programme, participating schools provide teachers with access to the NCCA Intercultural Guidelines<sup>32</sup> to ensure the implementation of the guidelines in Yellow Flag schools.

In 2005 the NCCA published the "Guidelines on intercultural education in the primary school".<sup>33</sup> The guidelines supported the primary school curriculum (1999), highlighting how intercultural education can be integrated into the curriculum. It aims to raise awareness among educators of the challenges arising from Ireland's growing linguistic, cultural and ethnic diversity and to address the curriculum needs of all children, from both minority and majority ethnic groups.

In 2002, the Irish Department of Education and Science (DES) published "Guidelines on Traveller education for primary schools"<sup>34</sup> and "Guidelines on Traveller education in second level schools"<sup>35</sup> as part of its strategies on social inclusion, to end poverty, to promote equality and to tackle educational disadvantage. It aimed to provide practical guidance to teachers, schools, parents and management on implementing the DES policy on Traveller education, which holds that Travellers should be fully integrated into mainstream schools.

Opportunities to integrate Traveller culture and history into the educational curricula are:

- ▶ Aistear, the early childhood curriculum framework, highlights learning experiences that include references to Traveller children, including by building partnerships with parents ("do you understand my culture and traditions?");
- ▶ the primary school curriculum (1999), through stories, in the education areas of social, environmental and scientific education (SESE) and social, personal and health education (SPHE), and the curricula for history, geography and arts education: visual arts;
- ▶ the senior cycle framework (2010) in various subjects, including social education; history, politics and society; music; geography; and business enterprise. These subjects offer substantial scope to integrate aspects of Traveller culture (particularly family, nomadism, crafts, clothing and economic activity) into classroom teaching and learning.

All of these are promising practices, highlighting opportunities and allowing scope for addressing Traveller and Roma history and culture in school curricula and textbooks. This is, however, not mandatory and depends on teachers' experience, knowledge and will to overcome prejudice and stereotypes linked to Travellers and the Roma.

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32. National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA Ireland) (2005), "Intercultural education in the primary school: Guidelines for schools" and "Intercultural education in the post-primary school: Guidelines for schools", Dublin, [https://ncca.ie/en/resources/intercultural\\_ed\\_pri/](https://ncca.ie/en/resources/intercultural_ed_pri/) and [https://ncca.ie/en/resources/interc\\_guide\\_pp\\_eng/](https://ncca.ie/en/resources/interc_guide_pp_eng/).

33. Ibid.

34. Irish Department of Education and Science (2002), "Guidelines on Traveller education for primary schools".

35. Irish Department of Education and Science (2002), "Guidelines on Traveller education in second level schools", [www.gov.ie/en/department-of-education/policy-information/co-ordination-of-traveller-education/](http://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-education/policy-information/co-ordination-of-traveller-education/).

## Italy

The 2022 high school history textbook *Guerra e pace: Dal novecento a oggi*<sup>36</sup> covers the genocide of the Roma and Sinti and the *Zigeunerlager* of Birkenau.<sup>37</sup>

## Lithuania

From 2024, the history of the Roma has been taught in the sixth grade and the Roma genocide in the 10th grade.

## North Macedonia

Students in North Macedonia are given the option to learn the second official language of the municipality where their school is situated, including Romani. Roma pupils can learn their mother tongue through the elective subject Romani language and culture from the third to the ninth grades.

As part of the “Free textbooks for all” initiative, the Ministry of Education and Science took a significant step in the 2010-11 school year by providing Romani-language textbooks for the elective subject Romani language and culture for students in the third, fourth and fifth grades. This offer is open to over 2 500 Roma students in Shuto Orizari, Chair, Shtip, Kumanovo, Kichevo and Karpoch.

## Romania

The Romanian national school history programmes contain several references to the Roma minority: Roma are mentioned as among the national minorities (sixth grade); as victims of the Holocaust (seventh grade); as present in the Middle Ages, including the abolition of slavery (eighth grade); in the Holocaust (eighth and 11th grades); and in historical contexts relating to the evolution of Romanian society (12th grade).

Approximately 3 500 sixth and seventh grade students who study the Romani language optionally also study the history and traditions of the Roma.

The working group for designing the school programme for the subject “history, slavery and deportation of the Roma” was set up following the adoption of the Pre-University Education Law 198/2023.

The school curriculum, textbooks, teaching materials and specific methodologies for this discipline will be drafted by the Ministry of Education in co-operation with, among others, the National Centre for Roma Culture – Romano Kher, the minority organisation member of the Council of National Minorities; the National Centre for Policies and Evaluation in Education; the Romanian Academy; the University of Bucharest; the Institute for Investigating the Crimes of Communism and the Memory of the Romanian Exile; the Romane Rodimata Cultural and Social Research Centre; and Roma teaching staff.

In the school curricula for Romanian history, the lessons about Roma history are case studies and so are not mandatory.

## Serbia

In 2022 the Council of Europe joined the European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture (ERIAC) and the Roma Education Fund (REF) in initiating the inclusion of Roma history and culture in school curricula in Serbia, in close co-operation with the working group of prominent Roma experts and the Institute for Advancement of Knowledge and Upbringing. The Council of Europe commissioned the “Analysis of the representation of topics from Roma history and culture in teaching and learning programmes in primary and secondary schools in the Republic of Serbia”<sup>38</sup> as a mapping study for further steps in revising the school curricula

36. Laterza Publishers (2022), *Guerra e pace: Dal novecento a oggi*, [www.libraccio.it/libro/9788842117339/caterina-ciccopiedi-valentina-colombi-carlo-greppi/trame-del-tempo.-per-le-scuole-superiori.-con-e\\_book..-vol.-3..-guerra-e-pace.-dal-novecento-a-oggi.html](http://www.libraccio.it/libro/9788842117339/caterina-ciccopiedi-valentina-colombi-carlo-greppi/trame-del-tempo.-per-le-scuole-superiori.-con-e_book..-vol.-3..-guerra-e-pace.-dal-novecento-a-oggi.html).

37. Ibid.

38. Op. cit.

in Serbia; it was published in 2023. The following information is collected from this analysis. During the curricular reform launched in 2017, the teaching and learning programmes for all grades of elementary school for the optional programme “Romani language with elements of national culture” were also reformed.<sup>39</sup> The teaching and learning programme for this elective programme introduces educational content that stems from the culture of the Roma people, based on oral literature and traditions that have been enriched by the traditions and culture of other peoples with whom the Roma have lived for centuries. The National Council of the Roma National Minority has launched the printing of textbooks in Romani that have been approved by the Institute for the Improvement of Education and Training. The catalogue of textbooks in the languages of national minorities for the 2023-24 school year features textbooks for the first six grades of elementary school, all of which include elements of Roma culture. Textbooks for the seventh and eighth grades of elementary school are underway. The Civic Education elective schools programme includes references to antigypsyism. The history programmes of all three high school majors feature content that is directly and indirectly related to the history of the Roma and the situation of the Roma national minority in different historical periods, especially about the Roma Holocaust.

The history textbooks for the seventh and eighth grades mention the Roma in connection with the Roma Holocaust in the Second World War, with the racial laws and as victims of fascists, Nazis and their collaborators. The trumpeter Fejat Sejdić and the singer Šaban Bajramović also feature, as does the song “Ederlezi” (Saint George’s Day) and the fact that the actor Yul Brynner was the president of the World Roma Congress.

### **Slovak Republic**

The Ministry of Education works with the Council of Europe on the joint project “Romani/plurilingual policy experimentation – Inclusion of Roma children in education – Plurilingual approach” (2022-25). The project aims to, among other things, create opportunities for the development of awareness among Roma and non-Roma pupils about the Roma language, culture and history.

### **Spain**

The Ministry of Education, Vocational Training and Sports regulated the basic curriculum in 2020. The main difference in the new curricular proposal is that it is based on the development of competences, using as its framework the Recommendation of the Council of the European Union of 22 May 2018 on key competences for lifelong learning. Among these competences, those most directly linked to the subject matter are “personal, social and learning to learn competence”, “citizenship competence” and “competence in cultural awareness and expression”.

For the subjects “knowledge of the natural, social and cultural environment” in primary education and “geography and history” in secondary education, the specific competences and basic knowledge of other areas and subjects allow for the development of aspects of the history and culture of the Roma population.

In this regard, the Ministry of Education, Vocational Training and Sports is working on a guide for the development of Roma history and culture in the curriculum framework, reflecting Recommendation CM/Rec(2020)2 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the inclusion of the history of Roma and/or Travellers in curricular and teaching materials.

### **Switzerland**

Specific educational material on the history and culture of the Yenish, Sinti, Manouche and Roma has long been a desire of these groups and of the federal government and various NGOs. In 2017, the Federal Council emphasised the importance of integrating these subjects into curricular and teaching materials. Through the Federal Office of Culture, the federal government is therefore supporting the development of teaching materials that take account of the present and the historical experience of these groups in Switzerland. Particular attention is paid to the past, including experiences of discrimination and violence.

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39. The “Romani language with elements of national culture” programme has been implemented in schools in the territory of Vojvodina since 1995, and in schools throughout the territory of the Republic of Serbia from 2025.

A working group has been set up, bringing together representatives from these minority groups, the Zurich University of Teacher Education and the Foundation for Education in Tolerance, with the support of the Federal Office of Culture, and has produced a teaching material entitled *Jenische, Sinti, Roma – Zuwenig bekannte Minderheiten in der Schweiz* (SET).<sup>40</sup> This material offers learning activities used in primary schools in German-speaking Switzerland, aimed at fostering skills in the areas of "nature, man, society" and "education for sustainable development". The focus is on the life stories of members of the three minorities, covering both the lived present and the historical dimension. The nine biographies included in the teaching materials are also available in an abridged version to facilitate access for all pupils. The material is available in German and an Italian version is being developed.

## United Kingdom

In the United Kingdom, the Welsh Government's Anti-racist Wales Action Plan,<sup>41</sup> first published in 2022, includes a commitment to "publish Gypsies, Roma and Travellers guidance to support educational outcomes, ensuring that championing antiracist practice is at the centre".

Examples of the methods schools and Traveller education services are employing in Wales to boost awareness of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller lifestyle and culture include the following activities:<sup>42</sup>

- ▶ participating in the annual Gypsy, Roma and Traveller History Month, which takes place every June and includes displays of cultural information and materials created by learners in primary and secondary schools;
- ▶ raising awareness in school of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller culture and dispelling myths surrounding it;
- ▶ ensuring that learning and teaching in history includes the persecution of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities during the Second World War (some schools have organised Holocaust memorial projects linked to local churches; these projects commemorate the hundreds of thousands of Gypsies, Roma and Travellers killed as a consequence of Nazi ideology and racial policies that led to persecution and genocide);
- ▶ exploring Gypsy, Roma and Traveller culture and artists as part of learning in the "expressive arts area of learning and experience", which includes art, dance, drama, film and digital media and music;
- ▶ discussing the different kinds of homes people can live in, with the help of Traveller education service resources, during primary school lessons;
- ▶ inviting grandparents and community elders to discuss their heritage and culture with the class as part of a wider ancestry project;
- ▶ enabling parents from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities to share their culture through cooking sessions with learners.

## Other countries

### Other school curricula and textbooks that mention Roma, for instance in Hungary, Norway, Sweden and Kosovo<sup>\*43</sup>

- ▶ The *Romani cultural studies textbook for grades 7-12, on Romani culture, language, history and identity* is an official school textbook in Hungary.<sup>44</sup>

40. Stiftung SET (Stiftung Erziehung zur Toleranz) (2023), *Jenische, Sinti, Roma – Zuwenig bekannte Minderheiten in der Schweiz*, [www.set.ch/jenische-sinti-roma/](http://www.set.ch/jenische-sinti-roma/).

41. Welsh Government (2022), Anti-racist Wales Action Plan, [www.gov.wales/anti-racist-wales-action-plan-2022](http://www.gov.wales/anti-racist-wales-action-plan-2022).

42. Welsh Government (2023), "Celebrate and participate: Education guidance to support Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children and young people", [www.gov.wales/celebrate-and-participate-education-guidance-support-gypsy-roma-and-traveller-children-and-young](http://www.gov.wales/celebrate-and-participate-education-guidance-support-gypsy-roma-and-traveller-children-and-young).

43. \*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.

44. Hungarian official textbook, *Romani cultural studies textbook for grades 7-12*, Ligeti György, 2012 (only in Hungarian), [Calameo - KT-0612 Cigány népismereti tankönyv a 7-12. osztály számára](http://calameo.com/read/0612cigany-nepismereti-tankonyv-a-7-12-osztaly-szamara).

- ▶ An educational resource used mainly in pilot programmes, teacher training and civil society educational initiatives is the publication *The Roma people during the Second World War (1939–1945): School reader about coexistence and persecution*, published in 2008 in Hungary.<sup>45</sup>
- ▶ Norway has issued “Core curriculum – values and principles for primary and secondary education”,<sup>46</sup> mentioning Roma as one of the national minorities in Norway that have contributed to the Norwegian cultural heritage. It is requested that teaching and training imparts knowledge about Roma.
- ▶ Sweden has revised its “Curriculum for compulsory school, preschool class and school-age educate”,<sup>47</sup> currently having as one of the objectives that pupils acquire knowledge of the culture, language, religion and history of national minorities, including Roma. Romani language as a mother tongue is also introduced in the curricula.
- ▶ In 2015, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology in Kosovo\* co-operated with the Council of Europe to develop a “Curriculum<sup>48</sup> for the in-service training of teachers in Kosovo”, particularly those supporting inclusive education for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities”.
- ▶ In 2011, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology in Kosovo\* issued a “Teaching plan and curriculum for the Romani language and culture”.<sup>49</sup>

### European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture (ERIAC)

A very important education source for Roma history, culture and language is ERIAC’s Barvalipe Roma Online University, which includes two full curricula, masterclasses and a digital library.<sup>50</sup>

### Observatory on History Teaching in Europe (OHTE)

#### OHTE General report on the state of history teaching in Europe, 2023

Nine of the 16 OHTE member states include the history of Roma and/or Travellers in their history curricula.<sup>51</sup> While this is encouraging, further research is needed to assess how the inclusion of Roma and/or Traveller history aligns with the principles outlined in the “Recommendation CM/Rec(2020)2 of the Committee of Ministers on the inclusion of the history of Roma and/or Travellers in school curricula and teaching materials”. The number of countries where the Roma and/or Travellers are mentioned in the history curriculum is, notably, lower compared to the inclusion of cultural, ethnic, linguistic, national or religious minority groups more generally (14 out of 16 OHTE member states).

The OHTE member states in which the Roma and Travellers are included in the curricula are Albania, Cyprus, France, Ireland, Luxembourg, North Macedonia, Portugal, Serbia and Spain.

In countries where the Roma or Travellers are mentioned in the curriculum, these references relate mostly to the events of the Second World War, particularly the Roma Holocaust or genocide, which features in the history curricula of Albania, Cyprus, France, Luxembourg, Portugal and Serbia.

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45. Sándor Szita, *The Roma people during the Second World War (1939–1945): School reader about coexistence and persecution*, Velcsov, Budapest, 2001.
46. Norway Ministry of Education and Research (2017), “Core curriculum – values and principles for primary and secondary education”, [Core curriculum – values and principles for primary and secondary education - regjeringen.no](https://www.regjeringen.no).
47. Swedish National Agency for Education (2024), “Curriculum for compulsory school, preschool class and school-age educate”, [www.skolverket.se/sok-publikationer/publikationsserier/styrdokument/2024/curriculum-for-compulsory-school-preschool-class-and-school-age-educate--lgr22](https://www.skolverket.se/sok-publikationer/publikationsserier/styrdokument/2024/curriculum-for-compulsory-school-preschool-class-and-school-age-educate--lgr22).
48. Kosovo\* Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, “Curriculum for the in-service training of teachers in Kosovo”, particularly those supporting inclusive education for Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities” (only in Albanian), <https://rm.coe.int/168069576e>.
49. Kosovo\* Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (2011), “Teaching plan and curriculum for the Romani language and culture”.
50. ERIAC Barvalipe Roma Online University, <https://eriac.org/barvalipe-roma-online-university/>.
51. See Table 4.6 in OHTE, *General report on the state of history teaching in Europe, Volume 1 – Comparative Analysis*, <https://rm.coe.int/2023-coe-ohte-general-report-en-volume-1/1680b17530>.

Spanish education authorities report that the history of Roma people and other ethnic minority groups in Spain is taught to students at secondary level, and is aimed at combating stereotypes and showing the value of cultural differences. In Portugal, the Romano Atmo Pedagogical Kit is intended for use by teachers of history and other subjects at different levels to valorise and disseminate Roma culture, to preserve identity and promote greater inclusion, and to increase understanding of the similarities and differences between the Roma and the majority culture. In Albania, Roma history and culture are covered in several topics in primary education.

## Conclusions

- ▶ In most member states, the inclusion of Roma/Traveller history, culture and contribution to national values in school curricula and textbooks is possible, or even advised or recommended, but it is almost never mandatory or put into practice. For teachers to do this, their knowledge and skills in this area need to be improved. The inclusion in education of Roma/Traveller history, culture and contribution to national values depends to a large extent on teachers' interests, competence and knowledge.
- ▶ Some member states do not prioritise the inclusion of Roma/Traveller history, culture and contribution to national values in school curricula and textbooks, stating that these can be learned within families and ensembles supported by various NGOs.
- ▶ Some member states consider that they have met the objective of inclusion of Roma/Traveller history and culture if these are included in the learning outcomes on topics such as justice, friendship, solidarity and responsibility.
- ▶ Some member states consider that they have met the objective of inclusion of Roma/Traveller history and culture if the term "Roma" is used in the textbooks or manuals of subjects such as philosophy, history, language and literature.
- ▶ Member states that have adopted national strategies or national action plans on Roma inclusion have foreseen the inclusion of Roma topics in school curricula and textbooks (through law reform or governmental decisions) as a measure. This is foreseen, however, mainly for optional subjects to be taught mostly to Roma students.

On the basis of analysis of the school curricula and textbooks, the following is apparent.

- ▶ The Roma/Travellers, if mentioned at all, are included mainly in primary and secondary school curricula and manuals.
- ▶ Many practices to address Roma/Traveller history and culture in school curricula and textbooks are promising but need concrete shaping to become good practices. Not being mandatory, and framed as "highlighting opportunities to ...", "giving scope for ...", "having potential to ..." or "offering possibilities to...", they depend for their realisation on teachers' experience, knowledge and, more than anything, will, to overcome prejudice and stereotypes linked to the Roma.
- ▶ The Roma/Travellers are mentioned mainly in the history or civic/social education school curricula and textbooks, but they are enumerated among the national minorities only in those member states where the Roma are recognised as a national minority or numbered among the victims of the Roma Holocaust during the Second World War as a result of Nazi policies against the Jews and Roma.
- ▶ In some instances, the Roma/Travellers are included mainly in the history school curricula and textbooks as optional lessons or as case studies about different events in Roma history.
- ▶ Roma/Traveller history is not necessarily treated as an integral part of a country's national history.
- ▶ Roma history and culture are accurately presented in school curricula and textbooks only when they are taught as a separate school subject, such as in Romania.

# Teaching about the Roma Holocaust and other historical persecutions

## Good and promising practices in member states

### **Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)**

The OSCE has analysed states' initiatives to commemorate the Roma and Sinti genocide, including the designation of 2 August as a day of remembrance for Roma and Sinti victims of the Holocaust. These statistics may also help us to understand the level of Roma Holocaust recognition and the degree to which it is taught in schools.

	<b>OSCE participating states</b>
Commemoration of the Roma and Sinti genocide, officially or unofficially.	Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Republic of Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Türkiye and United Kingdom.
2 August established as an official day to commemorate the Roma and Sinti genocide.	Croatia, North Macedonia, Poland and Romania.
Research conducted on the topic of Roma and Sinti.	Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Denmark, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Luxembourg, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Spain, Switzerland and Ukraine.
Secondary and upper-secondary schools teach about the Roma and Sinti genocide.	Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Republic of Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Türkiye, Ukraine and United Kingdom.
Colleges and universities teach about the Roma and Sinti genocide.	Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Republic of Moldova, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Türkiye and Ukraine.
Teachers are trained to teach about the Roma and Sinti genocide.	Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cyprus, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Republic of Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland and Ukraine.
Information about the Roma and Sinti genocide is included in textbooks.	Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Estonia, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Luxembourg, Republic of Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Switzerland, Türkiye and Ukraine.
Memorial sites for victims of the Roma and Sinti genocide.	Austria, Belgium, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Switzerland, Ukraine and United Kingdom.
State-funded memorial sites for victims of the Roma and Sinti genocide.	Austria, Belgium, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Switzerland, Ukraine and United Kingdom.

## Austria

- ▶ ERINNERN:AT/OeAD, Austria's Holocaust education programme, offers an overview website with many educational resources.<sup>52</sup>
- ▶ The oral history website of ERINNERN:AT/OeAD,<sup>53</sup> Austria's Holocaust education programme of the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research, offers more than 230 videotaped interviews with victims of National Socialist persecution related to Austria. The growing archive is freely available to schools, researchers and the public, and new interviews with survivors are regularly added. There are currently 15 interviews with survivors of the Roma genocide available.
- ▶ Teaching materials to prepare students for school visits to the Auschwitz memorial include a learning module on the Roma genocide.<sup>54</sup>
- ▶ ERINNERN:AT/OeAD has annual focus topics, and the focus topic for 2024 is the Roma genocide. New teaching materials are being developed, and teacher training on the Roma genocide took place in 2024.

Austrian schools regularly participate in the commemoration ceremony to mark the Roma genocide at Lakenbach, the site of the largest National Socialist camp for the Roma.<sup>55</sup>

## Germany

### Free State of Bavaria

The curriculum for the 12th grade of the *Gymnasium* (high school) provides an in-depth examination of the "disenfranchisement, persecution and murder of the Jewish population and other victim groups, especially the genocide of the Sinti and Roma" in the subject of history within the framework of the topic "failure of the Weimar Republic – Nazi dictatorship and genocide".

Bavarian teachers have access to numerous materials on the history of the Sinti and Roma and on the prevention of antiziganism, especially online; for example, the online portals of the State Institute for School Quality and Educational Research (ISB) each offer extensive resources.<sup>56</sup> Other resources include the publication *Sinti und Roma – Eine deutsche Minderheit zwischen Diskriminierung und Emanzipation* (Sinti and Roma: A German minority between discrimination and emancipation);<sup>57</sup> the websites of the Documentation and Cultural Centre of German Sinti and Roma in Heidelberg;<sup>58</sup> the digital exhibition "The forgotten genocide: the fate of the Sinti and Roma".<sup>59</sup>

### Baden-Württemberg

At secondary level I, the history curriculum provides for an examination of the ideological foundations of National Socialism as well as everyday life under the Nazi dictatorship between consent, oppression and resistance. This also includes the portrayal of those persecuted for ideological reasons, including the ethnic groups of the Sinti and Roma. The topic is continued at upper secondary level in the subject of history by examining racism as part of the ideology of National Socialism.

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52. Austrian educational initiative supported by the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research, [www.erinnern.at/lernmaterialien/lernmaterialien/ueber-den-genozid-an-den-roma-und-sinti-unterrichten](http://www.erinnern.at/lernmaterialien/lernmaterialien/ueber-den-genozid-an-den-roma-und-sinti-unterrichten) (only in German).
53. Digital archive and educational platform, [www.weitererzaehlen.at](http://www.weitererzaehlen.at) (only in German).
54. Teaching materials, [Unterrichtsmaterialien zum Besuch der Gedenkstaette Auschwitz-Birkenau und der österreichischen Länderausstellung – ERINNERN: NATIONALSOZIALISMUS UND HOLOCAUST](http://Unterrichtsmaterialien-zum-Besuch-der-Gedenkstaette-Auschwitz-Birkenau-und-der-oesterreichischen-Laenderausstellung-ERINNERN-NATIONALSOZIALISMUS-UND-HOLOCAUST) (only in German).
55. More information about the commemorative event, [www.erinnern.at/bundeslaender/burgenland/schulprojekte/gedenken-an-den-genozid-an-den-roma-und-sinti-schuelerinnen-beteiligen-sich-an-der-gedenkveranstaltung-in-lackenbach](http://www.erinnern.at/bundeslaender/burgenland/schulprojekte/gedenken-an-den-genozid-an-den-roma-und-sinti-schuelerinnen-beteiligen-sich-an-der-gedenkveranstaltung-in-lackenbach) (only in German).
56. Resources, [www.politischesbildung.schule.bayern.de/praeventionsarbeit/antiziganismuspraevention/](http://www.politischesbildung.schule.bayern.de/praeventionsarbeit/antiziganismuspraevention/) and [www.historisches-forum.bayern.de/historisch-politische-themen/geschichte-der-sinti-und-roma/](http://www.historisches-forum.bayern.de/historisch-politische-themen/geschichte-der-sinti-und-roma/) (both only in German).
57. von Mengersen O. (2015), *Sinti und Roma – Eine deutsche Minderheit zwischen Diskriminierung und Emanzipation* [Sinti and Roma: A German minority between discrimination and emancipation], *Sinti and Roma: A German minority between discrimination and emancipation*.
58. See <https://dokuzentrum.sintiundroma.de/en>.
59. Digital exhibition, *Sinti & Roma*.

## Brandenburg

The subject section of the framework curriculum for grades 1-10, *Gesellschaftswissenschaften* (social science) grades 5-6, applies the specific topic “Dealing with the marginalised in earlier times” – for example, in antiquity, foreign workers in ancient Egypt, gladiators in Rome; in the Middle Ages, Jews, jugglers and executioners; under National Socialism, Jews, Sinti and Roma, people with disabilities – based on real-life stories and experiences within the section on “Diversity in society”. In the history framework curriculum for grades 1-10, the content is found in the basic module for grades 9-10: Second World War and Holocaust/genocide/murder (perpetrators; victim groups: Jews, Sinti and Roma, disabled, homosexuals, member of political resistance movements, etc.).

Examples of the persecution of Sinti and Roma as taught in school lessons are published online on the Bildungsserver Berlin-Brandenburg resource.<sup>60</sup> These include workshops offered by the Landesverband Deutscher Sinti und Roma Berlin-Brandenburg, the Forced Camp Memorial Berlin-Marzahn and a visit to the Memorial to the Murdered Sinti and Roma of Europe.

## Greece

Roma and/or Traveller history is not taught as a separate subject but is included under other subjects in the context of teaching about the Holocaust and the crimes of Nazi Germany during the Second World War.

## Romania

According to school programmes and manuals, the following topics are covered in lessons: characteristics of the organisation of Romanian feudal society from the perspective of national minorities in Romania; hundreds of years of Roma slavery contributing to the formation of negative stereotypes towards the Roma; the abolition of slavery; a case study on the Holocaust and the deportation of Roma during the Second World War, a tragedy that has marked the collective mentality of the Roma and the Jews to this day.

A series of extracurricular activities are organised with Roma students, aimed at keeping the memory of these historical events alive, on the following days: 20 February, Abolition of Roma Slavery Day in Romanian Principalities; 2 August, European Roma Holocaust Memorial Day; and 16 May, Roma Resistance Day.

## European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture

The educational resources of ERIAC focus not only on the Roma Holocaust (e.g. multiple lectures on this topic are available in the Barvalipe Roma Online University<sup>61</sup> on the ERIAC website and YouTube Channel) but also on the history of Roma resistance.<sup>62</sup>

## Conclusions

- ▶ While extensive information about the Holocaust is generally taught in schools, the same cannot be said about the Roma Holocaust.
- ▶ In member states where there was no Holocaust, information about the Holocaust is not taught in schools.
- ▶ In most school curricula and manuals there is almost no information about other historical persecutions against the Roma/Travellers or about Roma resistance to the Holocaust or to other persecutions.

60. For more information, see [https://bildungsserver.berlinbrandenburg.de/sinti\\_und\\_roma](https://bildungsserver.berlinbrandenburg.de/sinti_und_roma).

61. See [Barvalipe Roma Online University lectures and masterclasses](#).

62. For more information, see <https://eriac.org/re-thinking-roma-resistance/>.



# Training activities

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## Good and promising practices in member states

### **Austria**

In Austria, teaching materials were developed and teacher training on the Roma genocide was offered in 2024. Many teacher training seminars have been organised in the last 10 years to train teachers on how to use the European learning website [romasintigenocide.eu](http://romasintigenocide.eu) and/or how to use videotaped testimonies of Holocaust and Roma genocide survivors in their teaching.

### **Czech Republic**

The Czech Republic reported that the Museum of Romani Culture is regularly approached by schools and NGOs to organise both lectures and workshops on Roma history and culture, and that it organises 50 such events yearly. Schola Fidentiae, an NGO, organises seminars for teachers twice a year,<sup>63</sup> and R-MOSTY organises a seminar on the sociocultural aspects related to the Roma people.<sup>64</sup>

### **Germany**

#### **Free State of Bavaria**

Two workshops were held in the Faculty of Education at the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg in January and July 2023 on the history and present situation of the Sinti and Roma. Topics discussed included intercultural learning and the National Socialist genocide. The participants also had a meeting with members of the Sinti community.

#### **Hesse**

Voluntary and additional funding for a half-time teaching position at the University of Technology Darmstadt was secured for the 2023-24 school year. In the pilot project "Strong teachers – Strong students" – carried out by the University of Marburg with the Hessian Teachers' Academy and funded by the Robert Bosch Foundation and the Federal Agency for Civic Education – teachers at vocational schools in Hesse acquired and/or deepened their knowledge of forms of group-based hostility such as antisemitism, antigypsyism and racism.

Since January 2018, teachers in Hesse have been offered 16 accredited training courses in accordance with the core curriculum for teacher training, designed to deal with minority groups and to develop intercultural competencies.

A new modular training course based on the handout "Sinti and Roma in Germany and the role of antigypsyism" is in the making, in co-operation with the Hessian Teachers' Academy and in coordination with the Council of German Sinti and Roma Hesse. The aim of the training is to enable teachers to expand their knowledge of Sinti and Roma culture and the historical continuity of antigypsyism, to become familiar with proven teaching methods and materials, and to develop their own teaching concepts for lower secondary schools.

#### **Rhineland-Palatinate**

The Rhineland-Palatinate State Pedagogical Institute offers training in the field of antigypsyism and the history and present situation of the Sinti and Roma, for example, the training event "Antiziganism and the persecution of Sinti and Roma: Making regional history under National Socialism tangible through local

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63. For more about the project and events, see [www.livingmemory.lv/](http://www.livingmemory.lv/).

64. For more about the seminar, see <https://www.r-mosty.cz/akr-sem>.

history of the Rhine-Neckar region". In previous years, the further training course "Sinti and Roma in history and the present" was held in co-operation with the Fridtjof Nansen Academy at the Continuing Education Centre in Ingelheim with the State Pedagogical Institute, the Landesverband RLP and the Documentation and Cultural Centre of German Sinti and Roma (Berlin Office).

## Latvia

In 2017, the Latvian NGO Roma Cultural Centre participated in the Roma history remembrance project "Living Memory"<sup>65</sup> together with partners from Croatia, Poland, Lithuania and Estonia. This included seminars on the Roma Holocaust for secondary school history teachers. The aim was to raise the awareness of the younger generation about the local and global historical presence of Roma in their history and culture.

## Romania

In July 2023 the Ministry of Education organised a summer course on the Romani language and the history and traditions of the Roma for 35 students, inspectors for minority groups including the Roma, teachers, teaching assistants, educators who teach the language/in the Romani language/classes on the history and traditions of the Roma.

In November 2022, Yahad-In Unum, Roma Dignity, the Centre for Cultural and Social Research "Romane Rodimata", in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, organised the training seminar "80 years after – How to teach the Roma Holocaust!" for 40 minority or Roma school inspectors.

## France

The French Government has adopted a new plan for 2023-26 to combat racism, antisemitism and discrimination linked to origin, which prioritises the fight against antigypsyism. Two major measures relating to the education system will be implemented in 2025. The first is to organise a memorial or historical visit for every child during their schooling; it is clearly specified that this place of remembrance may concern the history of the Roma and Travellers. The second measure is to organise mandatory training days for all teachers and educational staff, with an emphasis on combating antigypsyism.

Before these measures were carried out, the French Ministry of Education organised a three-day training seminar in February 2024 for inspectors, school heads and *Valeurs de la République* (Values of the Republic) referees. The seminar focused on the history of the Roma and Travellers, with several presentations including one on the creation of an exhibition space and interpretation trail at Montreuil-Bellay, the main place of internment for Travellers during the Second World War.

The Montreuil-Bellay site welcomes several hundred pupils each year for educational visits, which are led by the descendant of a victim and organised by the Centre Régional Résistance & Liberté de Thouars. The opening of the interpretation trail will help to develop these educational practices, which could also be extended to other departments where there are also memorial sites linked to this historical event. A case in point is an exhibition entitled: "Le Camp des familles. Persecution of Nomads at Rivesaltes 1941-1942" at the Camp of Rivesaltes Memorial in the Eastern Pyrenees, which offers educational activities and visits for school groups.

The Ministry of Education will organise thematic workshops with specialists (e.g. academics, national education staff) to identify and disseminate local experiences and develop the cross-disciplinary and interdisciplinary dimension of teaching (history, literature, arts, moral and civic education). At the same time, cross-disciplinary training courses will be offered to staff in academies and schools to ensure that issues relating to the history of the Roma and antigypsyism are properly considered in teaching. To this end, the Ministry of Education will provide them with documentary resources on the digital continuing education platform M@gistère.<sup>66</sup>

These two major measures will contribute to linking the past to the present to better combat contemporary antigypsyism.

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65. For more about the project and events, see [www.livingmemory.lv/](http://www.livingmemory.lv/).

66. E-learning platform M@gistère, French Ministry of National Education, [magistere.education.fr](http://magistere.education.fr).

## Serbia

The Centre for Continuing Education and Evaluation of the Faculty of Philology of the University of Belgrade and the National Council of the Roma National Minority created a month-long course for Romani language teachers. The Institute for the Advancement of Education created a professional development programme “Training for teachers of the Romani language with elements of national culture” in co-operation with the Centre for the Education of Roma and Ethnic Communities in the school year 2023-24. In 2016, there were 60 teachers for the subject of the Romani language with elements of national culture.

## Slovak Republic

The Ministry of Education’s project “Innovative teacher education with the aim of increasing their intercultural competence in the educational process of Roma pupils” aims to develop teaching materials with a focus on the Romani language, culture and history, as well as methodologies and publications to support intercultural and inclusive education in schools with Roma pupils.

## Spain

Since 2020, the Ministry of Education has included the course “Educational support to the Roma school population” in the online training offered in collaboration with the Education Group of the School Council of the Roma People. It is structured according to the blocks “See the reality of the Roma people”, “Analyse the situation of the Roma people” and “Act by transforming the reality of the Roma people”, and includes a section on the study of the history and culture of the Romani population in the curriculum.<sup>67</sup>

## United Kingdom

In Northern Ireland, Roma and Traveller cultural heritage is included in cultural competence training for school-based and non-school-based teachers, youth workers and educators, as well as being part of the Certificate in Intercultural Education, which is jointly provided by the Education Authority and Queen’s University Belfast.

## European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture

ERIAC offers a training course on Roma culture and history entitled “Roma(ni) past – Europe’s future: Why embracing the EU’s largest ethnic minority matters”, which provides a brief overview of Roma history and culture.<sup>68</sup>

## HISTOLAB

Specific resources for teacher training include two video tutorials produced as part of the joint project between the Council of Europe and the European Union, HISTOLAB, together with ERIAC: “Introduction to Roma History” and “Roma Holocaust”. They aim to introduce the topic to teachers and to offer hands-on guidance in finding materials and suitable pedagogical approaches. They hope to improve teaching practice on the job for interested teachers without the need for them to invest too much time and effort to familiarise themselves with new topics and approaches, and thus help teachers get to grips with hitherto unknown topics and approaches.<sup>69</sup>

67. For more information about the training course, see Alcalde A., Eugenio J., Aranda M., García Espinel F. (2021), “Atención educativa a la población escolar gitana” (Educational attention to the Roma school population), (in Spanish only), [https://intef.es/blog\\_aprendiario/atencion-educativa-a-la-poblacion-escolar-gitana/](https://intef.es/blog_aprendiario/atencion-educativa-a-la-poblacion-escolar-gitana/).

68. See <https://eriac.org/romani-past-europe-s-future-why-embracing-eus-largest-ethnic-minority-matters>.

69. HISTOLAB, “Histolab tutorial series - How to teach about Roma history and culture”, <https://histolab.coe.int/activities/tutorials>.

A toolkit to debunk fake news in history classes was launched.<sup>70</sup> It offers concrete learning activities, including one to debunk Nazi propaganda against Roma people from 1938 as well as current forms of hate speech against the Roma.

## Conclusions

There are teacher training initiatives in most member states that qualify as good practices. Many of these are organised and conducted by NGOs with private funding, and only occasionally financially supported or co-financed by the public educational authorities such as the Ministry of Education. Sometimes NGOs initiate partnership with state institutions, including with schools. However, there are several limitations to teacher training initiatives.

- ▶ The training courses are not mandatory and are sometimes informal or non-formal, and therefore do not offer enough incentives for most teachers to enrol and participate.
- ▶ The training is in service and is not included in the compulsory university education, where it would be more sustainable.
- ▶ There is no systemic monitoring of the training follow-up to identify how teachers use the acquired knowledge and skills in school teaching or to measure the impact of such training.
- ▶ There are training courses on Roma history and culture aimed at students and mainly engaged in as extracurricular activities. These are usually organised and financially supported by NGOs or by NGOs in partnership with schools, which is not sustainable in the long run.

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70. HISTOLAB (2024), *Toolkit for History Classes – Debunking fake news and fostering critical thinking*, <https://rm.coe.int/histolab-toolkit-for-history-classes-web-pdf/1680b22b08>.

# Extracurricular and research activities

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## Good and promising practices in member states

### **Bosnia and Herzegovina**

The Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees allocated 40 000 Bosnia-Herzegovina Convertible Marka (BAM) to the Republika Srpska Ministry of Education, ministries of education in the Una-Sana, Tuzla, Zenica-Doboj, Central Bosnia, Herzegovina-Neretva and Sarajevo cantons and the competent department in Brčko District. The funding is allocated to financing and co-financing projects that implement measures and accompany activities from the 2021-25 Action Plan for Roma with regard to the following:

- ▶ reviewing current curricula and textbooks in national subjects to assess content related to Roma history and culture, and remove any prejudices and stereotypes from textbooks and teaching materials;
- ▶ improving curricula and textbooks through the creation of themes and content relating to Roma history and culture, free of stereotypes;
- ▶ initiating the adoption of and support for education authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina in developing action plans for Roma education;
- ▶ providing support to local self-government for programmes involving the improvement of education of Roma children;
- ▶ preparation of a guidebook for school administrators, teachers, kindergarten staff, parents and children to inform them about the tradition, culture and customs of the Roma people.

### **Bulgaria**

The Centre for Educational Integration of Children and Students from Ethnic Minorities (CEICSEM), established under the authority of the Ministry of Education and Science, supports the activities of the Ministry in implementing the policy for educational integration and the intercultural education of children and students from ethnic minority groups.

For the period 2019-21, some 218 project proposals were financed, including:

- ▶ more than 150 programmes developed and implemented for educational activity in the funded kindergartens and schools, tailored to the cultures of the various ethnic minority groups, including the Roma;
- ▶ 350 forms of intercultural education implemented in kindergartens and schools;
- ▶ over 3 000 parents participating in various forms of intercultural competence together with children, students and pedagogical specialists: exhibitions, cultural programmes, thematic meetings on the topic "Life, culture and traditions of ethnic minorities in Bulgaria".

The National Council for Co-operation on Ethnic and Integration Issues supports the activities of CSOs that aim to preserve and develop the culture and traditions of ethnic minority groups: organising events to commemorate historical events, International Roma Day, festivals, conferences and the publication of books and other printed information.

The National Culture Fund of Bulgaria supports creative projects under its programme Socially Engaged Arts. The following are examples of projects that present the historical presence of the Roma and their contribution to local and national history and culture.

- ▶ A project by the Roma Academy for Culture and Education examining the development of Roma culture in the city of Sliven and its contribution to the cultural heritage of Bulgaria, and showing its role in history and its positive influence on the Roma community. The aim is to change society's attitudes towards the contribution of Roma culture to the national cultural treasury, as well as to help the Roma's social integration and success in various professional spheres through their participation in cultural activities.
- ▶ The project Roma Women of the Holocaust by Art Workshop Rote aims to create and spread its message through theatre and drama, focusing on the social problems facing the Roma community and the public's lack of knowledge about the Roma and their cultural and social life, both now and historically. The highlight of the project is the role of the Roma during the Holocaust in the Second World War.

## Croatia

The Alliance of Roma in the Republic of Croatia "Kali Sara", an umbrella association, organises numerous activities, from school visits to expert conferences, to construction of the Roma Memorial Centre in Uštice, the site of the most notorious concentration camp during the Second World War.<sup>71</sup>

The Ministry of Science and Education co-financed the Ivo Pilar Institute of Social Sciences in 2020, for several research studies, as part of the scientific research project on the history of the Roma national minority in the Republic of Croatia, namely: "The suffering of the Roma in the Independent State of Croatia 1941-1945", "Research on the suffering of the Roma population in Dalmatia", "The Croatian coast and Istria during the Second World War".

## Czech Republic

As part of the activities they organise for National Museum Day, the Museum of Romani Culture presents Roma history and culture free of charge, and participates in festivals such as Ghettofest (a street festival in its vicinity), Babylonfest (a festival of minority and ethical minority groups), the celebration of International Roma Day, Brno Art Week and Speak Dating Day (where a range of different languages, including Romani, are presented). The museum runs over 100 workshops with a Roma theme for schools each year.

The project "Lety u Písku – Memorial to the Holocaust of the Roma and Sinti in Bohemia" follows decades of efforts by survivors, activists and representatives in public and political life to honour the memory of the victims of the so-called Gypsy camp.<sup>72</sup> It links the existing Lety Cultural Monument with the site of the former camp. A modern exhibition will be installed in the visitor centre, mapping the history of the camp at Lety u Písku (started as disciplinary labour camp, later re-classified as "Gypsy camp") up to the present day. The project includes educational activities for both youth and adults, and an interactive website. The project will include an international expert conference and other cultural events. The project is supported by a grant from Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, and is also supported by the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic and the Ministry of Finance of the Czech Republic.

## Finland

In 2012, the Finnish Literature Society published an important book<sup>73</sup> on the 500-year history of the Roma in Finland, with contributions from many academic researchers and actors, both Roma and non-Roma. It was initiated by the Advisory Board on Romani Affairs and funded by the Ministry of Education.

71. For more information, see [Međunarodni dan sjećanja na romske žrtve genocida u Drugom svjetskom ratu / Samudaripen | Kalisara](#).

72. For more information, see [www.rommuz.cz/en/lety-u-pisku/present-days/lety-u-pisku-memorial-to-the-holocaust-of-the-roma-and-sinti-in-bohemia/](http://www.rommuz.cz/en/lety-u-pisku/present-days/lety-u-pisku-memorial-to-the-holocaust-of-the-roma-and-sinti-in-bohemia/).

73. Airi Markkanen and Kai Åberg, *The Culture of the Finnish Roma*, Finnish Literature Society, 2011, [The Culture of the Finnish Roma | Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura](#).

## Germany

### RomArchive

The RomArchive digital archive of the Roma makes the arts and cultures of the Roma visible, illustrating their contribution to European cultural history.<sup>74</sup> Through narratives told by Roma people themselves, RomArchive is a reliable source of knowledge that counters stereotypes and prejudices with facts. The project was funded by the public funds of the German Federal Cultural Foundation.

### Baden-Württemberg

The RomnoKher Cultural Center, which is visited by numerous school classes and youth groups every year, holds exhibitions and offers educational activities. RomnoKher is a place of encounter, remembrance and learning about the genocide of Europe's Sinti and Roma communities as part of the Youth Remembers funding programme, where the creative examination of new perspectives on the history and present of the minority becomes an extracurricular educational experience. Young people with a Roma background are involved both as participants and as instructors. The training and co-ordination of an encounter programme at schools is offered by the State Association of Sinti and Roma.

Important institutions:

- ▶ Antiziganism Research Centre at the University of Heidelberg;
- ▶ Antiziganism Prevention Office at the Heidelberg University of Education.

### Brandenburg

The Forced Camp Memorial Berlin-Marzahn is a place of learning that can be used for extracurricular activities, such as guided tours of the open-air exhibition.<sup>75</sup> Teaching materials are available as well as readings, for example, of the book *Brennglas* by Otto Rosenberg, which tells of his childhood and youth during the Nazi regime and as a survivor of the Auschwitz concentration camp. Petra Rosenberg, chair of the Berlin-Brandenburg State Association of German Sinti and Roma, leads tours upon request.

### Berlin

The Memorial to Europe's Sinti and Roma murdered under Nazism opened in 2012.

### Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania

Publications with statal grants include the following.

- ▶ *Franz und Alex aus Satow*, which is a graphic novel that tells the moving story of two Sinti boys during the Nazi era in northern Germany.<sup>76</sup>
- ▶ *Sinti und Roma in Mecklenburg und Vorpommern*, which includes biographical accounts of Sinti and Roma individuals and families. The historian Natalja Jeske talks about the life of the Sinti and Roma in north-eastern Germany. Using numerous sources and contemporary witness statements, she reports on their struggle for self-assertion as citizens of German society as well as their dramatic history of persecution during the National Socialist era. She follows the few survivors into the post-war period.<sup>77</sup>

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74. The RomArchive database is available at [www.romarchive.eu/en/](http://www.romarchive.eu/en/).

75. For more information on this memorial site, see [www.gedenkstaette-zwangslager-marzahn.de/](http://www.gedenkstaette-zwangslager-marzahn.de/).

76. Pösche A.-F., *Franz und Alex aus Satow*, "Die Geschichte von Franz und Alex aus Satow" von Anna-Friederike C. Pöschel | Zeitlupe (in German only).

77. Jeske N. (2023), *Sinti und Roma in Mecklenburg und Vorpommern*, Waren (Müritz) (eds.) RAA / Demokratie und Bildung Mecklenburg-Vorpommern e., "Sinti und Roma in Mecklenburg und Vorpommern – Eine Geschichte in Biografien" von Dr. Natalja Jeske » RAA MV (in German only).

## Free State of Saxony

The project "State-wide Professional Network – Antiziganism" was launched in January 2023 by Weiterdenken – Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung Sachsen in co-operation with Romano Sumnal. The project is funded for three years by the Free State of Saxony, with an annual budget of €150 000. The project has opened the Information and Cultural Centre (IKS) of the Roma and Sinti in Saxony, which provides a space for networking, information and further education, and offers events and exhibitions.

The digital knowledge platform RomaRespekt of Weiterdenken – Heinrich Böll Stiftung Sachsen<sup>78</sup> on the history and situation of the Roma and Sinti in Saxony operates as a knowledge and networking platform, offering information on the Roma and Sinti in Saxony, offering reading and audio materials for private and professional use, including for schools, extracurricular places of learning, sociocultural institutions, sports clubs, universities, colleges and administration.

## Free State of Bavaria

The Bavarian Centre for Political Education offers, on behalf of the Bavarian State Ministry for Education and Cultural Affairs, many publications and materials on the history and culture of the Sinti and Roma, including:

- ▶ "ismus.elementar: 12 methods for teaching on extremism", including a suggestion on how to successfully teach against antigypsyism;<sup>79</sup>
- ▶ "erinnern.elementar: 12 methods and ideas for teaching the topic of remembrance culture, including the genocide of the Sinti and Roma";
- ▶ the biography *Death was my constant companion – Life, survival and the living on of the Sinto Franz Rosenbach*;<sup>80</sup>
- ▶ the essay collection *Sinti and Roma – A German minority between discrimination and emancipation*.<sup>81</sup>

The Bavarian universities define their research priorities independently. Examples include:

- ▶ the project: "Learning with digital testimonies – Sinti and Roma of the second generation in Germany";<sup>82</sup>
- ▶ the conference: "Sinti and Roma in history and memory – European and regional perspectives", Institute for Franconian History of the Universities of Bamberg and Bayreuth, 28-30 September 2023.<sup>83</sup>

## Free Hanseatic City of Bremen

The documentary musical theatre piece *Blumen an der Karlsburg*, with music by Dardo Balke and directed by Ralf Lorenzen, was performed in May 2023 at the Stadttheater Bremerhaven. This event commemorated the deportation of Bremerhaven Sinti and Roma in 1940 and was organised by the Sintiverein Bremerhaven with the participation of students from the Geschwister-Scholl-School.<sup>84</sup>

"From the files to the stage" is a historical theatre project from the University of Bremen. The 16th project in this series, "And where to now? Staged Reading about Discrimination against Roma and Sinti", took place in June 2021 at the Theater am Leibnizplatz, Bremen. It had been developed in collaboration with

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78. Platform available at [RomaRespekt - Digitale Wissensplattform zu Geschichte und Gegenwart von Rom\\*nja und Sint\\*ezze in Sachsen | Weiterdenken | Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung Sachsen](https://www.blz.bayern.de/romarespekt-digitele-wissensplattform-zu-geschichte-und-gegenwart-von-rom-nja-und-sint-ezze-in-sachsen).

79. Bavarian State Centre for Political Education (2020), "ismuselementar: A Teaching Kit on Extremism for Elementary Education", 2020, [www.blz.bayern.de/materialschuber-ismuselementar\\_p\\_76.html](https://www.blz.bayern.de/materialschuber-ismuselementar_p_76.html) (in German only).

80. Bavarian State Centre for Political Education (2005), *Death was my constant companion*, [www.blz.bayern.de/der-tod-war-mein-standiger-begleiter\\_p\\_313.html](https://www.blz.bayern.de/der-tod-war-mein-standiger-begleiter_p_313.html) (in German only).

81. Bavarian State Centre for Political Education (2015), *Sinti and Roma – A German minority between discrimination and emancipation*, [www.blz.bayern.de/sinti-und-roma-eine-deutsche-minderheit-zwischen-diskriminierung-und-emmanzipation\\_p\\_163.html](https://www.blz.bayern.de/sinti-und-roma-eine-deutsche-minderheit-zwischen-diskriminierung-und-emmanzipation_p_163.html) (in German only).

82. For more information, see [Sinti und Roma der zweiten Generation in Deutschland - Lernen mit digitalen Zeugnissen \(LediZ\) - LMU München](https://www.blz.bayern.de/sinti-und-roma-der-zweiten-generation-in-deutschland-lernen-mit-digitalen-zeugnissen-lediz-lmu-munchen) (in German only).

83. For more information on the conference, see [Scientific conference on Sinti and Roma at the University of Bayreuth](https://www.blz.bayern.de/sinti-und-roma-der-zweiten-generation-in-deutschland-lernen-mit-digitalen-zeugnissen-lediz-lmu-munchen).

84. For more information, see [Blumen an der Karlsburg Designbüro Möhlenkamp und Schuldt](https://www.blz.bayern.de/sinti-und-roma-der-zweiten-generation-in-deutschland-lernen-mit-digitalen-zeugnissen-lediz-lmu-munchen).

the scholars of the HERA project “Beyond stereotypes: Cultural exchanges and the Romani contribution to European public spaces” (BESTROM) at the universities of Seville, Liverpool, Helsinki and Kraków. It tells the stories of families in search of a life free from state persecution and social exclusion.

In preparation of the central school-leaving examination (*Abitur*) in history on the topic “Minorities in the German Empire”, the Landesinstitut für Schule (State Institute for Schools) offered a workshop for teachers to discuss, among other things, the legal basis and view of the police; the “Gypsy invasion” from Russia via Hamburg to Great Britain, as reported by the British press and letters to the editor and as they were discussed at that time in the British and German Parliaments and the expulsion of the Hartmann family from Bremen.

In September 2022, the exhibition “Racial diagnosis: Gypsies – The genocide of the Sinti and Roma and the long struggle for recognition” from the Documentation and Cultural Centre of German Sinti and Roma opened in Bremen. It was visited by the public and school classes.<sup>85</sup>

## **Hesse**

The Hessian state government, in co-operation with the Hesse regional association of German Sinti and Roma, is financing the establishment of a centre in Darmstadt with a permanent exhibition about the fate of the Sinti and Roma. The centre is scheduled to open in 2025. A permanent exhibition and temporary exhibitions will provide information about the life and history of the Sinti and Roma.

## **Rhineland-Palatinate**

Since 2023, funding has been available to associations, universities, non-profit legal entities under private law, parishes, parishes and organisations under church sponsorship or the sponsorship of a religious community in Rhineland-Palatinate for projects that aim to promote the Romani language and the culture of the German Sinti and Roma. One example of such projects included various cultural events. Further, projects ensured knowledge transfer about the Roma culture, the Romani language, the history of the minority and its consequences for the present in relation to the majority society, or through projects in the field of commemorative work.

## **North Rhine-Westphalia**

The state of North Rhine-Westphalia has introduced a programme called “Vast vasteste – Hand in Hand in NRW” to promote the recognition of Roma culture and language in schools. The overall goal of the programme is to create the best learning environment for children from the Roma community who have recently immigrated. School staff are provided with information about Roma heritage and the challenges facing Roma families both in their countries of origin and after their arrival in Germany. These measures are aimed at enhancing teachers’ knowledge and cultural awareness. As part of the programme, schools engage in various cultural activities. For example, with school mediators, children learn to play drums, sew traditional clothing and, in some schools, engage in theatrical performances. Some schools also participate in municipal cultural events such as the festival Djelem Djelem in Dortmund.

## **Saarland**

With the support of the Saarbrücken City Archives and the State Centre for Political Education, the State Association of German Sinti and Roma Saarland is currently conducting research into the deportations of Sinti and Roma people from Saarland during the Nazi era, as well as their resistance and acts of courage. In this context, the state association aims to create a study of the fates of individual Holocaust victims from the national minority of Sinti and Roma from Saarland. The close collaboration between the state association and the Saarbrücken City Archives is reflected in the Saarbrücken City Archives hosting the exhibition “45 years of civil rights work by Sinti and Roma” in 2019.<sup>86</sup>

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85. For more information, see <https://dokuzentrum.sintiundroma.de/en/education/exhibitions/portable-exhibition-racial-diagnosis-gypsy/>.

86. Dokumentations- und Kulturzentrum Deutscher Sinti und Roma (Documentation and Cultural Centre of German Sinti and Roma) Portable Exhibition: Racial diagnosis: Gypsy – The Nazi genocide of the Sinti and Roma and the long struggle for recognition, 2017, <https://dokuzentrum.sintiundroma.de/en/education/exhibitions/portable-exhibition-racial-diagnosis-gypsy/>.

In co-operation with the state capital Saarbrücken, the state association has created a memorial at a historically significant location in Saarbrücken, in Echelmeyerpark near St Michael's Catholic Parish Church.<sup>87</sup> This is to commemorate the Sinti and Roma who were persecuted and murdered during the Nazi era, honour the victims and deepen the historical understanding of the fate of this minority group. It will also serve as a memorial for annual commemorative events and as an educational resource for school classes.

## Latvia

The Roma History and Art Museum<sup>88</sup> currently has a wide-ranging exhibition on Roma history, culture and traditions that schools can use in the learning process.

## Romania

The Roma Culture Virtual Museum,<sup>89</sup> the only one of its kind in the world, offers a journey through the cultural memory of the Roma from Romania. Created by the Association Rroma Center Amare Rromentza, co-financed by the EEA Grants (Norway, Liechtenstein and Iceland) and implemented between 2021 and 2023 within the project "We can do more together", co-ordinated by the "Together" Community Development Agency, this museum aims not only to offer its visitors knowledge, but to also foster empathy with the Roma identity, through emotional immersion in images, films, sounds and thematic animations, all brought together through virtual reality, the keystone of the museum's creation. The Roma Culture Virtual Museum is widely used as a tool for extracurricular education, being presented in high schools, UNESCO schools and the University of Bucharest, all within the project "Amaro Museo – Amaro Ceacipe – Promotion of the Roma Culture Virtual Museum" (2024), co-financed by the European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture from Berlin.

## Spain

The Ministry of Education has supported several research activities on Roma history and culture including the following.

- ▶ The study "La cultura del pueblo gitano en el currículo de la educación obligatoria, a través de su presencia, ausencia y percepción en los libros de texto",<sup>90</sup> which addresses the presence of Roma culture in textbooks through a quantitative and qualitative approach based on a sample of 221 books from different publishers for the main subjects of both primary and secondary schools.
- ▶ A protocol developed to raise awareness and guide educational administrations, teachers and publishers on how to include and address Roma history and culture in the school curriculum and teaching practice. The material contextualises a brief overview of Roma history before delving into one of the problems facing the Roma community in many areas – antigypsyism – and proposes some general recommendations and the use of concepts about the Roma people in the academic sphere.<sup>91</sup>
- ▶ Resources and teaching materials that facilitate the incorporation of Roma history and culture content in teaching: didactic materials on the Romani language for the subject Spanish language; didactic

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87. See [Memorial Place Sinti and Roma | Erinnerungskultur](#).

88. See <https://romucentrsen.weebly.com/museum.html>.

89. See <https://romanomuseum.com/en/>.

90. Spanish Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport (2017), "The culture of the Roma people in the compulsory education curriculum: Through Its presence, absence, and perception in textbooks", [www.libreria.educacion.gob.es/libro/la-cultura-del-pueblo-gitano-en-el-curriculo-de-la-educacion-obligatoria-a-traves-de-su-presencia-ausencia-y-percepcion-en-los-libros-de-texto\\_175742/](http://www.libreria.educacion.gob.es/libro/la-cultura-del-pueblo-gitano-en-el-curriculo-de-la-educacion-obligatoria-a-traves-de-su-presencia-ausencia-y-percepcion-en-los-libros-de-texto_175742/) (in Spanish only).

91. Spanish Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, National Centre for Educational Innovation and Research (2019), "Guidance protocol for the inclusion of Roma history and culture in the school curriculum and practice", [www.libreria.educacion.gob.es/libro/protocolo-orientativo-para-la-inclusion-de-la-historia-y-la-cultura-gitana-en-el-curriculo-escolar-y-la-practica-docente\\_183548/](http://www.libreria.educacion.gob.es/libro/protocolo-orientativo-para-la-inclusion-de-la-historia-y-la-cultura-gitana-en-el-curriculo-escolar-y-la-practica-docente_183548/) (in Spanish only).

materials on the history of the Roma people for the subject social sciences; and a third proposal called "Romani diversity", which can be developed in the subject of social and civic values.<sup>92</sup>

- ▶ A publication structured in three parts: "The history of the Roma people in Spain – Between extermination and social exclusion"; "Contributions of the Roma people to culture and the arts"; and "Educating against antigypsyism – An unpostponable contribution to justice and integral education" and the annex "Guide to web, educational and audiovisual resources", produced by the MEFP.<sup>93</sup>

## Conclusions

Extracurricular activities dedicated to Roma/Traveller history and culture are often conducted, conceptualised and funded through the initiatives of civil society organisations, especially Roma ones.

The provision of equal and non-discriminatory access to extracurricular activities for all students whatever their ethnicity has sometimes been reported as a good practice. Students' participation in these activities is usually voluntary.

Research activities are localised and follow the decision of individual researchers of research institutions, but no member state can show a national systemic and publicly financed research programme focused on Roma history, culture and contribution to society.

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92. Spanish Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (2020), María del Carmen Filigrana García and others, "Teaching materials on the Roma people for primary education", [www.libreria.educacion.gob.es/libro/materiales-didacticos-sobre-el-pueblo-gitano-para-educacion-primaria\\_180997/](http://www.libreria.educacion.gob.es/libro/materiales-didacticos-sobre-el-pueblo-gitano-para-educacion-primaria_180997/) (in Spanish only).
93. Spanish Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (2021), Manuel Martínez Martínez and others, "Teaching materials on the history and culture of the Roma people for secondary education: Educating against antigypsyism", 2021, [www.libreria.educacion.gob.es/libro/materiales-sobre-historia-y-cultura-del-pueblo-gitano-para-educacion-secundaria-educar-frente-al-antigitanismo\\_175184/](http://www.libreria.educacion.gob.es/libro/materiales-sobre-historia-y-cultura-del-pueblo-gitano-para-educacion-secundaria-educar-frente-al-antigitanismo_175184/) (in Spanish only).



## Conclusions

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Data collected included information from 22 countries, based on responses received to the questionnaire, and on reports and studies by the Council of Europe and the OSCE.

The general conclusions so far show that the inclusion of Roma and/or Traveller history in the national school curricula and teaching materials is not among the top priorities of many member states.

In some situations, there have been fewer positive practices to report on, and thus some of the information provided in the replies to the questionnaire was not directly relevant to the analysed topics.

It was suggested that the responses to the questionnaire be provided through inter-institutional co-operation between relevant persons from ministries of education, national Roma contact points or similar public entities with a mandate for education, Roma inclusion and so on. This was possible in only a few instances, where the names of the institutions consulted were specified in the replies.

It is not clear from the replies to the questionnaire whether Roma and Traveller CSOs were consulted about the questionnaire to some extent or not at all, and yet many of the reported good practices were designed and implemented by Roma/Traveller CSOs especially in relation to teacher training, Roma Holocaust remembrance and extracurricular activities.

The information provided is sometimes incomplete and lacks evidence-based support.

While some local pilot practices are presented as good practices, there is no information provided to confirm whether they have inspired similar actions elsewhere or wider replication. However, these can still be regarded as “promising practices” and scaled up by their promoters or by other member states.

Topics relating to Roma and Travellers are often not specifically targeted, but are briefly mentioned among other, broader topics. For instance, the Roma are numbered among different national minority groups. In the Holocaust context, the Roma are mentioned as victims alongside the Jewish people, without any additional descriptive or contextualised information.

Member states that adopted national strategies or national action plans on Roma inclusion have adopted, through law reform or governmental decision, as one of their measures in the education field the inclusion of Roma/Traveller topics in school curricula and textbooks.

The existence of strong Roma/Traveller movements makes a difference in some member states. They advocate for the inclusion of Roma/Traveller-related topics in school curricula and textbooks, and often co-operate with institutions for improvement in this field, designing and implementing good practices.

The data also show clearly that member states that recognise the Roma and/or Travellers as national minority groups are more engaged with the inclusion of Roma in the national school curricula, textbooks and teaching materials according to European legislation and standards on the protection of national minority groups.



# Compilation of good practices on teaching Roma and/or Traveller history and culture that can be scaled up in member states

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The recommendations formulated in the report “The representation of Roma in European curricula and textbooks” (2020),<sup>94</sup> which was co-commissioned by the Council of Europe, remain valid.

The following promising and good practices were identified in the study:

- ▶ in Romania, the teaching of Romani language, history and culture as separate subjects in schools; inclusion of information about Roma history, culture and contribution in secondary schools’ mainstream history lessons; introduction of the optional subject “History, slavery and deportation of the Roma” through a new education law;
- ▶ regular and official consultative frameworks, such as partnership agreements, consultation mechanisms with Roma/Traveller civil society, and the employment of Roma/Traveller scholars to design, implement and monitor educational policies for Roma people;
- ▶ national legislation and public national policies that directly and clearly address the inclusion of Roma/Traveller topics in school curricula and textbooks as separate subjects and as topics/lessons in mainstream school curricula;
- ▶ teacher training, and the incorporation of Roma/Traveller history and culture into curricula in pedagogical universities;
- ▶ the establishment of public cultural, educational and research institutions at national level addressing Roma/Traveller issues (e.g. Roma/Traveller national centres; Roma/Traveller regional centres; schools specialising in Roma/Traveller culture, history and language; Roma and/or Traveller museums; Roma/Traveller research institutes), with Roma/Travellers playing leadership/co-ordination roles in their establishment and operation; the incorporation of Roma/Traveller topics into mainstream public institutions (e.g. archives, museums of national history);
- ▶ promoting the presence of Roma history in public spaces through the establishment of Roma memorials and commemoration sites of Roma history (e.g. Roma Holocaust memorials, Roma slavery memorials, memorial plaques);
- ▶ national programmes of Roma/Traveller culture and history research financed by public funds.

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94. Council of Europe (2020), “The representation of Roma in European curricula and textbooks”.



# Appendix

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## Questionnaire – Capacity-building programme and tools for Roma history teaching

### I. Legal framework for educational reform and inclusion of new topics in the national curricula and textbooks

1. What is the roadmap for initiating educational reform in your member state?
2. Could you elaborate on the process of requesting the inclusion of new curricula elements in your member state?

### II. Good practices in member states on teaching of the history of Roma and/or Travellers and its inclusion in national school curricula and teaching materials

1. What are the curricula subjects where Roma and/or Travellers are mostly represented? Is Roma and/or Traveller history incorporated in other school subjects, such as economics, civic or social education, literature, religion or ethics, arts, music or languages (NB this can include subjects such as human rights, equality and/or anti-discrimination)?
2. Is Roma and/or Traveller history taught as a separate subject?
3. Describe initiatives, if any, where schools and/or Roma and/or Traveller organisations and communities have hosted cultural events, such as exhibitions or performances by Roma and/or Travellers.
4. Please list any positive practices of the inclusion of Roma and Traveller history in textbooks or teaching materials.

### III. Good practices in member states on teaching about the Roma Holocaust and other historical persecutions

1. Give examples where the Roma Holocaust and other historical persecutions (such as anti-vagrancy policies, violations of parental and children's rights, forced assimilation, forced sedentarisation, forced sterilisation, internment and deportation policies, etc.) form an integral part of teaching and learning about the Holocaust committed by the Nazi regime and its allies, as well as other acts committed against Roma and Travellers across Europe.
2. Give examples where positive narratives about Roma and/or Traveller history are included in teaching, such as their contribution to the local, national and European cultural heritage, and the active role of Roma and/or Travellers in anti-Nazi and anti-Fascist resistance movements.
3. Give examples where member states and/or civil society organisations have integrated activities related to the remembrance of the Roma Holocaust into formal and non-formal education, in connection with 2 August (European Roma Holocaust Memorial Day), 16 May (Romani Resistance Day), or a date more adapted to the historical context of the country concerned.

### IV. Training activities

- Give examples of relevant training involving experts and academics on Roma history and culture to teachers, educators, school directors, staff of the Ministries of Education and other pedagogical staff to provide them with knowledge about the history of Roma and/or Travellers.

## **V. Extracurricular activities and research activities**

1. Give examples of activities conducted by member states to raise the awareness of the general population, and the younger generation in particular, about the historical presence of Roma and/or Travellers in Europe and their contributions to local, national and European history and culture.
2. Give examples of support given by member states by means of grants or other incentives, for the academic community, research centres and cultural institutions, including to Roma and/or Traveller civil society organisations and academics, to advance research on Roma and/or Traveller history.

## **VI. Relevant stakeholders**

1. If a national co-ordination group should be established for the inclusion of Roma and/or Traveller history in school curricula and teaching materials in the member states, could you please elaborate on the list of relevant institutional stakeholders that could contribute to the work of such a group?
2. If a national co-ordination group should be established for the inclusion of Roma and/or Traveller history in school curricula and teaching materials in the member states, could you please suggest any other relevant stakeholders – Roma and Travellers or pro-Roma and Travellers civil society organisations, that could contribute to the work of such group?

## **VII. Usage of the capacity-building programme and tools in the member state**

1. What would be the implementation modality of the capacity-building programme and tools for the inclusion of Roma and/or Traveller history in the school curricula in your member state?
2. Would you anticipate any potential challenges in this process?<sup>95</sup>

### **About the author**

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95. Assessing potential challenges at this incipient phase enables ADI-ROM and its secretariat to prepare further support to address these.

## Tool 2

### **Recommendations for ensuring the full participation of Roma and Travellers in the process of developing school curricula and teaching materials**



# Recommendations for ensuring the full participation of Roma and Travellers in the process of developing school curricula and teaching materials

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The Council of Europe is currently implementing the Council of Europe's Strategic Action Plan for Roma and Traveller Inclusion (2020-2025).<sup>96</sup> In the framework of the priority area 5.3 (Supporting access to inclusive equality education and training) and under its mandate for the years 2024-27, the Committee of Experts on Roma and Travellers Issues (ADI-ROM) is developing a capacity-building programme and tools to support the implementation of Recommendation CM/Rec(2020)2 on the inclusion of the history of Roma and/or Travellers in school curricula and teaching materials at a national level.

The following recommendations build on previous studies and handbooks, such as *The representation of Roma in European curricula and textbooks*,<sup>97</sup> *Mirrors – Manual on combating antigypsyism through human rights education*,<sup>98</sup> *The right to remember – A handbook for education with young people on the Roma genocide*,<sup>99</sup> the "Mapping study identifying good practices in Council of Europe member states – The representation of Roma and/or Travellers in school curricula and teaching materials"<sup>100</sup> and several studies from the Council of Europe's focus on education of Roma children.

It can further be seen as building on recommendations of the Committee of Ministers to member states that already exist, such as Recommendation CM/Rec(2009)4 on the education of Roma and Travellers in Europe, Recommendation CM/Rec(2001)15 on history teaching in twenty-first-century Europe and Recommendation CM/Rec(2020)2 on the inclusion of the history of Roma and/or Travellers in school curricula and teaching materials.

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96. Council of Europe Strategic Action Plan for Roma and Traveller Inclusion (2020-2025), <https://rm.coe.int/coe-strategic-action-plan-for-roma-and-traveller-inclusion-en/16809fe0d0>.
97. Council of Europe, *The representation of Roma in European curricula and textbooks: analytical report*, a joint report commissioned by the Council of Europe to the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research in partnership with the Roma Education Fund, Council of Europe, Strasbourg, 2020, <https://repository.gei.de/server/api/core/bitstreams/ba4f051f-eafa-4b73-98d6-eab3957d17c6/content>.
98. Council of Europe, "Mirrors - Manual on combating antigypsyism through human rights education", 2015.
99. Council of Europe, *Right to remember - A handbook for education with young people on the Roma genocide (second edition)*, 2017, <https://rm.coe.int/168008b633>.
100. Council of Europe, "Mapping study identifying good practices in Council of Europe member states – The representation of Roma and/or Travellers in school curricula and teaching materials", 2025.

These previous recommendations stress the importance of:

- ▶ guaranteeing access to quality education with dignity and respect, based on the principles of human rights and on the rights of the child. Existing educational policies need to be reviewed to identify actual and potential hindrances preventing Roma and Traveller children from enjoying full rights in the field of education;<sup>101</sup>
- ▶ assessing procedures that do not result in risks of enrolling children in special-education institutions based on linguistic, ethnic, cultural or social differences but facilitate access to schooling. Roma and Traveller representatives should be involved in defining and monitoring these procedures;<sup>102</sup>
- ▶ explicitly recognising intercultural learning and combating racism and discrimination as priorities of the education process and integrating them as a key element of school ethos. Curriculum, textbooks and other support materials should promote intercultural dialogue and raise awareness of stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination in general, including against Roma and Travellers;<sup>103</sup>
- ▶ critically studying the misuses of history, whether these stem from denials of historical facts, falsification, omission, ignorance or re-appropriation to ideological ends;<sup>104</sup>
- ▶ setting up resource banks which specify not only the documents and sites available, but also the validity of the information derived from the said documents and sites;<sup>105</sup>
- ▶ developing and implementing flexible curricula and interactive pedagogies which acknowledge cultural differences, promote diversity and include a multiperspective approach to showing the full complexity of history and to ensuring a shared history approach;<sup>106</sup>
- ▶ ensuring opportunities for the inclusion of Roma and Traveller history in teaching and training, updating and customising them to particular national contexts; and preparing a road map for implementing the revised teaching materials and training methods in co-operation with Roma and/or Traveller communities and civil society, academics, teacher-training institutes and professional teachers' organisations;<sup>107</sup>
- ▶ promoting positive narratives about Roma and/or Traveller history, such as their contribution to the local, national and European cultural heritage, and the active role of Roma, Sinti and Yenish in anti-Nazi and anti-Fascist resistance movements.<sup>108</sup>

It should therefore be understood as part of a greater, more complex, context of ensuring inclusion, participation and equality for marginalised groups, particularly the Roma and Traveller communities, in formal education across Council of Europe member states. However, as discrimination, xenophobia, racism and exclusion are all significant societal problems that affect not only Roma and Traveller communities, a broader and more intersectional approach will be applied in these recommendations.

The first set of recommendations focuses on acknowledging the complex and interrelated cultural and historical contexts as a prerequisite to understanding the suppressions and marginalisation many communities, in addition to Roma and Travellers experience throughout Europe today, including Muslim communities, Jewish communities, Black communities, as well as other communities of colour and indigenous peoples.

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101. Council of Europe Committee of Ministers, Recommendation CM/Rec(2009)4 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the education of Roma and Travellers in Europe, adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 17 June 2009 at the 1061st meeting of the Ministers' Deputies.

102. Ibid.

103. Ibid.

104. Council of Europe Committee of Ministers, Recommendation CM/Rec(2001)15 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on history teaching in twenty-first-century Europe, adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 31 October 2001 at the 771st meeting of the Ministers' Deputies.

105. Ibid.

106. Council of Europe Committee of Ministers, Recommendation CM/Rec(2020)2 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the inclusion of the history of Roma and/or Travellers in school curricula and teaching materials, adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 1 July 2020 at the 1380th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies.

107. Ibid.

108. Ibid.

The first set of recommendations is directed at a diverse group of actors, including national ministries of education, textbook authors and publishing houses, and teacher-training institutions, because it is essential for everyone involved in the educational field to develop this awareness.

### **Raise awareness of interconnectivity, historical ties and present-day societies**

The purpose of this set of recommendations is to counter historical distortion, the lack of diverse historical accounts and extremist ideologies through awareness of different historical events, how they have played out, what they have in common and how they still affect peoples and societies today. Curricula, textbooks and teacher training should include:

- ▶ information about Europe practising enslavement of different peoples, including Roma as well as people of African descent, with a focus on both how the local communities were affected and the resistance of the people enslaved, which has always been present;
- ▶ information on the colonisation of different parts of the world by the nation-states of Europe, with a focus on past and present consequences, neo-colonialism and migration patterns, both from Europe to other parts of the world and from other parts of the world to Europe;
- ▶ information on how genocide and ethnic cleansing are an escalation of the hate rhetoric and vilification that are found in propaganda and in the dehumanisation and demonisation of the “other”, and that cannot be regarded as isolated events specific to a geographical area, but are linked to the historical processes of colonisation and capitalism;
- ▶ information on how European societies today are affected by past legacies, for example, involvement in enslavement, colonisation and migration, particularly of Roma and Travellers, with a broad focus and including economic, cultural, industrial, scientific and social influences on society.

It is recommended that academics, civil society organisations, think tanks and other relevant parties with expertise in fields such as Roma history, the transatlantic slave trade, anti-Muslim racism and anti-Black racism, be consulted and involved in the processes of curriculum development, textbook production and teacher training.

### **Enhance justice, equity, diversity, inclusion and belonging**

The purpose of these recommendations is to offer an education free of discrimination, xenophobia, racism and exclusion, and to create learning environments where all pupils and students see themselves as validated and represented as equal members of society. This will encourage them to participate and engage in learning in all subjects. Therefore, curricula should:

- ▶ emphasise the need to develop the critical thinking competencies of all pupils and students, including a specific focus on mastering critical discourse analysis, asking critical and reflective questions of the perspectives presented, and recognising disinformation (“fake news”) and propaganda;
- ▶ highlight the need for social justice education to actively engage pupils and students in becoming responsible citizens in inclusive democratic societies, nationally, across Europe and in the world at large;
- ▶ highlight the need for anti-racism education in all educational practices across the entire educational environment, among all educational staff and settings, to counter and confront exoticism, linguicism, orientalism, antigypsyism, anti-Blackness, anti-Muslim racism and antisemitism;
- ▶ highlight the importance of culturally responsive teaching so that all students see themselves, their heritage, their language, their culture and their religion reflected in the curricula – this is important for all students, as seeing perspectives different from their own helps build empathy and solidarity;
- ▶ highlight the importance of redirecting the focus from the marginalised groups as objects to be studied to the dominant societal structures that give rise to the oppression and marginalisation of specific groups;

- ▶ ensure a focus that is informed by intersectionality and feminist theory,<sup>109</sup> and that acknowledges the complex and overlapping ways in which marginalisation works. The most marginalised people hold several identity markers that expose them to discrimination, oppression and exclusion from society. Feminist organising theory allows for a more reflexive approach to knowledge production and challenges stereotypical and reductionistic understandings of objectivity and neutrality, revealing how power dynamics produce and reproduce marginalisation.

It is recommended that civil society organisations such as Roma, Muslim, Jewish and Black organisations, and other relevant interest groups, practitioners and consultants with expertise in creating just and inclusive learning environments, be consulted and involved in curriculum development processes.

### **Inclusive school policies, cultural exchanges and sharing of good practices within and across intersections**

The purpose of this final set of recommendations is to bring together people with lived experience and experts in the field of antigypsyism, anti-discrimination and anti-racism to create just and equal learning processes in the field of education. Therefore, the curricula should:

- ▶ integrate the knowledge of different relevant actors with lived experience of belonging to a marginalised community, expert knowledge on antigypsyism, anti-discrimination and anti-racism, and practical and pedagogical expertise and experience in facilitating culturally responsive and socially just learning processes;
- ▶ support and encourage collaborations between educational institutions and external partners, such as relevant civil society organisations, academics, artists, professionals in a diverse range of professions to enhance all pupils' and students' civic engagement, so that they understand themselves and others to be part of a diverse society, where people from different communities hold a broad range of diverse positions;
- ▶ promote cross-European exchanges to share knowledge and good practices between pupils, students and teachers from different countries, which is essential to develop their understanding of broader European history and cultural contexts; to enhance understanding of marginalised communities, sentiments of superiority that have created, and continue to create, discrimination, xenophobia, racism and exclusion; and to enhance and improve the intercultural competencies of pupils, students and teachers.

It is recommended that civil society communities with lived experience, practitioners such as teachers and pedagogues with examples of good practices, and consultants with experience and expertise in creating just and inclusive learning environments, be consulted and involved in curriculum development processes.

In conclusion, curriculum development processes should include the voices of hitherto marginalised peoples in European history, including but not limited to Roma and/or Travellers. Representatives of such groups should be consulted and involved in the curriculum development processes. Consultative frameworks should be set up for curriculum or textbook development that involve educators or civil society representatives from these groups, including Roma and/or Travellers. Given that a common concern among many teachers is curricular overload, previous recommendations encouraging flexible curricula are crucial in order to bring about actual change in history classrooms and ensure greater attention is given to an inclusive teaching of history, including the specific experiences of Roma and/or Travellers.<sup>110</sup>

109. Benschop Y. (2021), "Grand challenges, feminist answers", *Organization Theory* Vol. 2, No. 3, <https://doi.org/10.1177/26317877211020323>.

110. For findings on curricular overload, see Council of Europe Observatory on History Teaching in Europe (2023), *OHTE General report on the state of history teaching in Europe*, [www.coe.int/en/web/observatory-history-teaching/general-report](http://www.coe.int/en/web/observatory-history-teaching/general-report).

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The European Association of History Educators was established in 1992 with the support of the Council of Europe. It started as an annual gathering of National History Teachers Associations but soon also ran its own projects and organised more activities. The mission of EuroClio is to inspire and support educators to engage learners in innovative and responsible history and citizenship education.

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