

CDADI(2024)15  
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# Teaching about the Roma Holocaust and other historical persecutions of Roma and Travellers from a human rights perspective

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## Introduction

Embedded within the tapestry of European history lies a narrative often overlooked and underestimated - the rich and complex story of the Roma and Traveller communities. For centuries, diverse and resilient groups of people have left significant marks on European societies, cultures, languages and traditions. Yet, their contributions remain obscured by a veil of prejudice and discrimination. Moreover, the history of discrimination, persecution, systemic violence and genocide inflicted upon Roma communities in various parts of Europe remain largely unrecognised and often distorted in the mainstream discourse.

Recognising the imperative to confront this historical erasure and promote comprehensive education on the Roma Holocaust and other historical persecutions of Roma and Travellers is an important step in combating historical injustices. This tool, in conjunction with other resources developed by the Council of Europe, emerges in response to a critical need for accurate, accessible and inclusive educational resources for teachers throughout Europe. By equipping educators with comprehensive knowledge, pedagogical strategies and concrete educational activities, this handbook seeks to empower them to effectively address historical persecutions of Roma and Travellers, fostering empathy, critical thinking, and solidarity among the students.

This practical tool builds upon the Council of Europe's longstanding commitment to advancing the rights and dignity of Roma and Traveller communities. It complements existing initiatives, particularly the Recommendation CM/Rec (2020)2 on the inclusion of the history of Roma and/or Travellers in school curricula and teaching materials, adopted on 1 July 2020. The tool also builds upon materials developed by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), particularly the Recommendations for Teaching and Learning about the Persecution and Genocide of the Roma during the Nazi Era. Furthermore, it aligns with broader efforts to combat antigypsyism and foster intercultural dialogue, contributing to the Council of Europe's vision of a Europe where diversity is celebrated and human rights are upheld for all.

At the heart of this handbook lies a commitment to education as a tool for empowerment and social change. By seeking to challenge stereotypes, combat antigypsyism and foster greater understanding and empathy among students, it highlights the interconnectedness of European societies and the richness of cultural diversity.

The author would like to thank the ADI-ROM Working Group in charge of preparing a Capacity building programme and tools supporting the implementation of Recommendation CM/Rec(2020) for their review and extend her appreciation to the following people for their feedback and contributions: Anna Mirga-Kruszelnicka, ERIAC; Karola Fings, Heidelberg University and IHRA Committee on the Genocide of the Roma; Oana Bajka and Tena Bajeglav, TOLI - The Olga Lengyel Institute for Holocaust Studies and Human Rights; and the HISTOLAB team.

### *Structure of the handbook*

This resource, tailored for educators in high school and middle school settings, adopts an interdisciplinary approach that integrates history education, human rights education, and intercultural education. It offers educational activities aimed at actively engaging students in learning experiences while enhancing their competencies for democratic culture<sup>1</sup>. Every activity is accompanied by a detailed walkthrough of the learning process and provides recommendations for teachers to implement and adjust the activity to suit the specific context of their teaching environment. In the final chapter, recommendations are offered for supplementary resources that educators can explore and incorporate into their teaching practice.

### *Note on terminology*

The terminology used by the Council of Europe to refer to the mass murder of the Roma carried out by the Nazi regime and its collaborators alternates between the “Roma Holocaust” and the “Roma Genocide/Genocide of the Roma”, including in official documents, such as Recommendations of the Committee of Ministers. Other international organisations use the term “Roma Genocide” or “Genocide of the Roma”.

This practical tool is developed as part of the “Capacity building programme and tools supporting the implementation of Recommendation CM/Rec(2020)2 at national level”. In the 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, the term used is “Roma Holocaust”. In this context, this material will use the same term, while teachers can choose between “Roma Holocaust”, “Roma Genocide”, or “Samudaripe(n)” or use them interchangeably.

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<sup>1</sup> See Council of Europe’s Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture:  
<https://www.coe.int/en/web/reference-framework-of-competences-for-democratic-culture/rfcdc>

## Pedagogical Approach

Teaching about the Roma Holocaust and other historical persecutions of Roma and Travellers is not only an act of historical remembrance, but also a crucial step in challenging discrimination and advancing human rights. Educating students about these historical events empowers them to champion democracy and human rights. Thus, the educational endeavour should aim not only to impart knowledge but also to cultivate empathy, awareness, and a dedication to combatting prejudice and discrimination in contemporary society.

This aim can only be achieved through an interdisciplinary approach, which combines the tools of Holocaust education with human rights education and intercultural education<sup>2</sup>. By exploring the historical injustices faced by Roma communities and the ongoing challenges they encounter today through the lens of human rights, students can develop a nuanced understanding of the core democratic values, thereby fostering a sense of civic responsibility and a commitment to promoting and protecting human rights. The tools of intercultural education, such as exploring one's own stereotypes and identity, as well as the role played by stereotypes and identity in the past and in the present in shaping anti-Roma racism, provide another layer of analysis for a more nuanced understanding of this phenomenon that was present throughout centuries in Europe and is still prevalent today.

The 20 competences that young people need to live in democratic societies – compiled in the Council of Europe's Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture – can be developed through this interdisciplinary approach, especially the three values of the model: valuing human dignity and human rights; valuing cultural diversity; and valuing democracy, justice, fairness, equality and the rule of law.

Teaching about the historical persecutions of Roma and Travellers is a sensitive and important topic. Here are some general methodological recommendations for teachers:

- Ensure that students learn about the persecutions of Roma and the Roma Holocaust in connection to the broader historical context of the Holocaust and European history;
- Discuss common stereotypes and misconceptions about Roma communities and challenge them with historical facts and personal narratives;
- Create a classroom environment where students feel comfortable discussing sensitive topics. Encourage open dialogue and the sharing of opinions;
- Allocate time for students to reflect on what they have learned, their emotional responses, and how this knowledge can inform their actions in promoting tolerance and social justice;
- Tailor the activities to the students' age, maturity, and cultural background to ensure the topic is handled with care and sensitivity;

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<sup>2</sup> For more details about the interdisciplinary approach please consult *Learning from the Past, Acting for the Future – An Interdisciplinary Approach to Holocaust, Human Rights and Intercultural Education* (2022): <https://www.toli.us/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Handbook-Learning-from-the-Past-Acting-for-the-Future.pdf>

- Incorporate primary sources such as survivor testimonies, photographs, and official documents to make the history more tangible and relatable;
- Emphasise the human stories behind the statistics. Encourage students to empathise with the experiences of Roma survivors and their descendants;
- Give students opportunities to explore Romani culture in the present and to learn about the Roma communities in their area;
- Promote critical thinking by discussing the reasons behind the lack of acknowledgment and recognition of the Roma Holocaust. Encourage students to question and analyse historical narratives;
- Encourage students to conduct their own research, enabling them to explore specific aspects of the Roma Holocaust that interest them;
- Connect the historical events to contemporary issues of discrimination, racism, and prejudice. Encourage students to consider the lessons that can be learned from the past;
- Inspire students to become advocates for acknowledging the Roma Holocaust and fighting against discrimination in all forms. Discuss ways in which they can take meaningful action;
- Consider seeking professional development or training in teaching about sensitive historical topics to enhance your skills and approach.

## Educational Activities

These activities are designed to empower educators to facilitate interdisciplinary learning experiences centred around the historical persecutions of the Roma.

The proposed activities are primarily intended for high school students, but many of them can be adapted for middle school students with appropriate modifications. While the activities provide significant historical information, students should have a foundational understanding of the Holocaust and inter-war period, including its historical context and significance. While they do not need to be experts, a basic knowledge of this part of history is essential. These activities can be seamlessly integrated into the regular teaching process, complementing traditional history lessons. They encourage students to engage in deeper reflection and connect historical events with contemporary issues.

These activities aim to inspire teachers to foster interactive and engaging teaching methods, even when conveying historical knowledge and information. They encourage students to actively participate and make meaningful connections with the subject matter. It is important to ensure that students have sufficient background information to actively participate in the activities and avoid teaching about the Roma Holocaust in isolation.

The suggested activities are easily customisable to suit various educational settings and student needs. Educators are invited to tailor these activities to fit the local context and specific requirements of their students. This may involve integrating regional history or personal narratives of individuals directly impacted. However, this flexibility does not imply confining the content solely to the students' immediate surroundings. By exploring other regions of Europe, students have the opportunity to cultivate global citizenship. Therefore, educators are encouraged to facilitate their students' exploration of Roma history as an inseparable component of European history.

The educational activities include a step-by-step description of the learning process, including handouts and videos to be used, additional information for teachers on how to conduct or adapt the lesson, further resources to consult, as well as a list of competences that can be developed by the students who engage in that activity. The activities are presented in a logical order, but each activity can be used as stand-alone, incorporated in the regular teaching process, or in school projects or non-formal education activities.

The methodologies used in the design of these educational activities are student-centred, based on the principles of experiential learning and a human rights-based approach. They include individual, collaborative and peer learning processes. Students are challenged to learn not only about history, but also from history, to reflect upon their own biases and “unlearn” them by using the lens of human rights in analysing historical facts, human behaviour and present-day discrimination.

## Roma History and Antigypsyism

### Overview

This activity engages students in a process of critical analysis of past persecutions of Roma from the perspective of antigypsyism.

### Competences for democratic culture addressed:

- Valuing human dignity and human rights
- Valuing cultural diversity
- Analytical and critical thinking skills
- Civic-mindedness
- Knowledge and critical understanding of the world

**Number of participants:** 10-30

**Resources and materials:** Handout 1 – one copy per student.

**Duration:** one hour

### Information for teachers:

It is probable that students know very little about Roma history. Moreover, some students might harbour prejudices against Roma. Teachers should be mindful of the potentially sensitive nature of the topic. They should not expect Roma students to know more about Roma history than other students. However, if Roma students want to contribute with certain information and details they should be encouraged to do so. It is advised to assign groups with a mix of both Roma and non-Roma students, if possible, to encourage diverse perspectives and ensure that everyone's voice is heard. Nevertheless, Roma students should not be asked to give “the Roma perspective” or act as ambassadors of Roma culture. The history of Roma is an integral part of general history and culture. They do not stand side by side, but are interwoven.

It is important to encourage students to approach the learning process with empathy and an open mind, with cultural sensitivity and respect. Moreover, willingness to identify blind spots and biases is needed in order to avoid perpetuating stereotypes or biases.

The terms *antigypsyism* and *anti-Roma racism* are both used refer to the racism and discrimination against Roma, which is a dominant characteristic of many societies and has severe negative effects. Experts in the field have strong arguments for the use of one or the other. This topic might be too complex to discuss with the students, but if teachers are interested to learn more about this, as well as about the causes, prevalence and possible responses to antigypsyism/anti-Roma racism, they can consult the 2021 Report of the Committee of Experts on Roma and Travellers Issues (ADI-ROM)<sup>3</sup>.

At the end of the activity, the students are encouraged to continue learning about Roma history and culture outside of the classroom, and to engage in further discussions with family and friends.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://rm.coe.int/adi-rom-2020-27-final-antigypsyism-causes-prevalence-consequences-poss/1680a6d053>



The teacher should be ready to offer some guidance for students in this process and to recommend sources of information. For example, RomArchive<sup>4</sup> is an international digital archive that focuses on self-representation. While traditional archives often portray Roma in stereotypical ways, RomArchive offers content created by Roma themselves, leading to the emergence of new narratives, reflecting the diversity of identities, realities of life and self-positioning of Roma. Moreover, the Barvalipe Roma Online University<sup>5</sup> offers online courses and masterclasses on Roma history and culture in various languages.

### Description of the activity:

1. The students are informed that in this activity they will learn some facts about the discrimination and persecutions that Roma have endured in Europe throughout history. Each student receives a copy of Handout 1 and is invited to read it and underline the main idea presented in the text.
2. The students are invited to work in groups of 4-5 people and to discuss the following:
  - a. What information from this text was new to you?
  - b. What information from this text did you already know?
  - c. What other information do you know about Roma history?
3. The teacher invites all the students back together and conducts a debriefing discussion based on the following questions:
  - a. What aspects from the text or from the discussions with your colleagues were most interesting to you?
  - b. Did anything surprise you?
  - c. To what extent were you aware of the discrimination and persecution of Roma in Europe?
4. The teacher explains to the students that anti-Roma racism/antigypsyism is a phenomenon that has been present throughout our history until today. The teacher shares with the students the definition used by the European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance<sup>6</sup> for anti-Roma racism/antigypsyism:

*A specific form of racism, an ideology founded on racial superiority, a form of dehumanization and institutional racism nurtured by historical discrimination, which is expressed, among others, by violence, hate speech, exploitation, stigmatization and the most blatant kind of discrimination.*

5. The teacher briefly discusses the definition with the students, to make sure it is clearly understood by everyone and invites the students to look at the text in Handout 1 again, and identify examples of antigypsyism. The teacher or a volunteer student writes down on the board the identified examples.
6. The teacher asks the students to look at the list and mentions that this is only an overview of the discrimination and persecutions suffered by Roma in Europe. He/she/they tell the

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<sup>4</sup> RomArchive: <https://www.romarchive.eu/en/>

<sup>5</sup> Barvalipe Roma Online University: <https://eriac.org/barvalipe-roma-online-university/>

<sup>6</sup> ECRI General Policy Recommendation No.13 On Combating Antigypsyism And Discrimination Against Roma (2011): <https://rm.coe.int/ecri-general-policy-recommendation-no-13-on-combating-anti-gypsyism-an/16808b5aee>



students that Roma history has not been sufficiently studied and learned, even though it is an important part of European history. In the next activities, the students will have the opportunity to learn more about Roma history and culture, the particular focus being on the Roma Holocaust.

7. The students are invited to discuss with their friends and family in order to find out what they know about Roma history and where they have learned this information (school, TV, books, social media, online courses, etc.)

## Handout 1

### Roma in Europe<sup>7</sup>

Roma emigrated from India to Europe throughout several centuries. The Romani language belongs to the Indo-Aryan language group and was influenced by other languages from the areas in which Roma lived for a certain period.

In Wallachia and Moldavia (historical regions which are part of present-day Romania and Republic of Moldova), Roma were enslaved for five centuries by the state, the Orthodox Church, and boyars (landowners, members of the nobility). In the 19<sup>th</sup> century an abolitionist movement, influenced by European revolutions, emerged and Roma were liberated. Most of the slave owners received compensation for liberating their slaves, but the Roma themselves did not receive any support for their integration into society.

In Central Europe, the fate of Roma was determined by political changes and by wars with the Ottoman Empire. Roma were often forced to live at the edge of towns or evicted, even though they paid taxes and fought in the army. Spain pursued coercive measures of assimilation, while Portugal and later on the United Kingdom deported Roma to the Americas. In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, more and more regulations were issued by the German and Austro-Hungarian Empire in order to restrict opportunities for Roma to earn a living, including banning them from certain professions.

Since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, racially motivated police checks on Roma were conducted in Germany and Austria. Nazi propaganda contributed to spreading the existing stereotypes and prejudices. In 1936 a central agency was formed to combat the “Gypsy problem” in Vienna. The Nuremberg laws of 1935 classified Roma as “foreign race” and stripped them of their German citizenship. Similar laws were passed in other European countries, especially after the outbreak of the Second World War. In Germany, German-occupied countries and collaborating countries Roma were deported to concentration and extermination camps, subjected to forced labour and dehumanisation. They were killed in ravines, forests, left to die in camps like the ones in

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<sup>7</sup> This text is an adaptation of the article published by Nicoleta Bitu on RomArchive: <https://www.romarchive.eu/en/about/context-project/>. The adapted version is used with permission from Learning from the Past, Acting for the Future – An Interdisciplinary Approach to Holocaust, Human Rights and Intercultural Education (2022): <https://www.toli.us/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Handbook-Learning-from-the-Past-Acting-for-the-Future.pdf>

Transnistria or gassed in extermination camps like Auschwitz-Birkenau. Despite brave attempts to resist the perpetrators – uprisings, escapes, rescue cases, participation in partisan troops, legal complaints, etc. – a significant number of Roma perished in the Holocaust. The exact number is unknown, but most estimates count around 500 000 people.

Antigypsyism did not end with the Second World War. After the war, there was no public interest in the fate of the Roma. Restitution or compensation payments for the Holocaust were issued very late, if at all. For many years, Roma were not considered victims of the Holocaust. Despite persecution, discrimination and marginalisation, Roma contributed significantly to the development of the cultural heritage of Europe.

## Stereotypes and Prejudices against Roma

### Overview

In this activity the students are engaged in a reflection process about the complexity of one's identity and the dangers of stereotypical views on Roma identities.

### Competences for democratic culture addressed:

- Valuing human dignity and human rights
- Valuing cultural diversity
- Analytical and critical thinking skills
- Skills of listening and observing
- Empathy
- Co-operation skills
- Tolerance of ambiguity
- Knowledge and critical understanding of the self
- Knowledge and critical understanding of the world

**Number of participants:** 10-30

**Resources and materials:** Handout – one copy per student.

**Duration:** one hour

### Information for teachers:

Ideally, more time should be dedicated to ensuring that students understand the concept of stereotypes and the ways in which stereotypes affect our understanding of the world. Two short but impactful activities are described in the Intercultural Learning T-kit published by the Council of Europe<sup>8</sup>: *Do you see what I see* and *Find your group*.

The teachers should be mindful when conducting these activities – if the participants have experienced discrimination and abuse in their own lives, the activity might affect them

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<sup>8</sup> T-kit 4 Intercultural Learning (2018): <https://pip-eu.coe.int/documents/42128013/47262514/PREMS+042218+T-kit4+WEB.pdf/>

emotionally. The teacher should be available to offer additional support for the students during and after the educational activity.

When discussing where students learned “single stories” about Roma, the teacher should emphasise the importance of critically evaluating information sources for accuracy and bias. Often people from dominant groups are not overtly racist or do not intend to judge unfairly the behaviours of others, but stereotypes create blind spots in their understanding and, even if they have good intentions, their actions and beliefs create hierarchies between “us” and “them”, seeing the others in an overgeneralised negative light.

### **Description of the activity:**

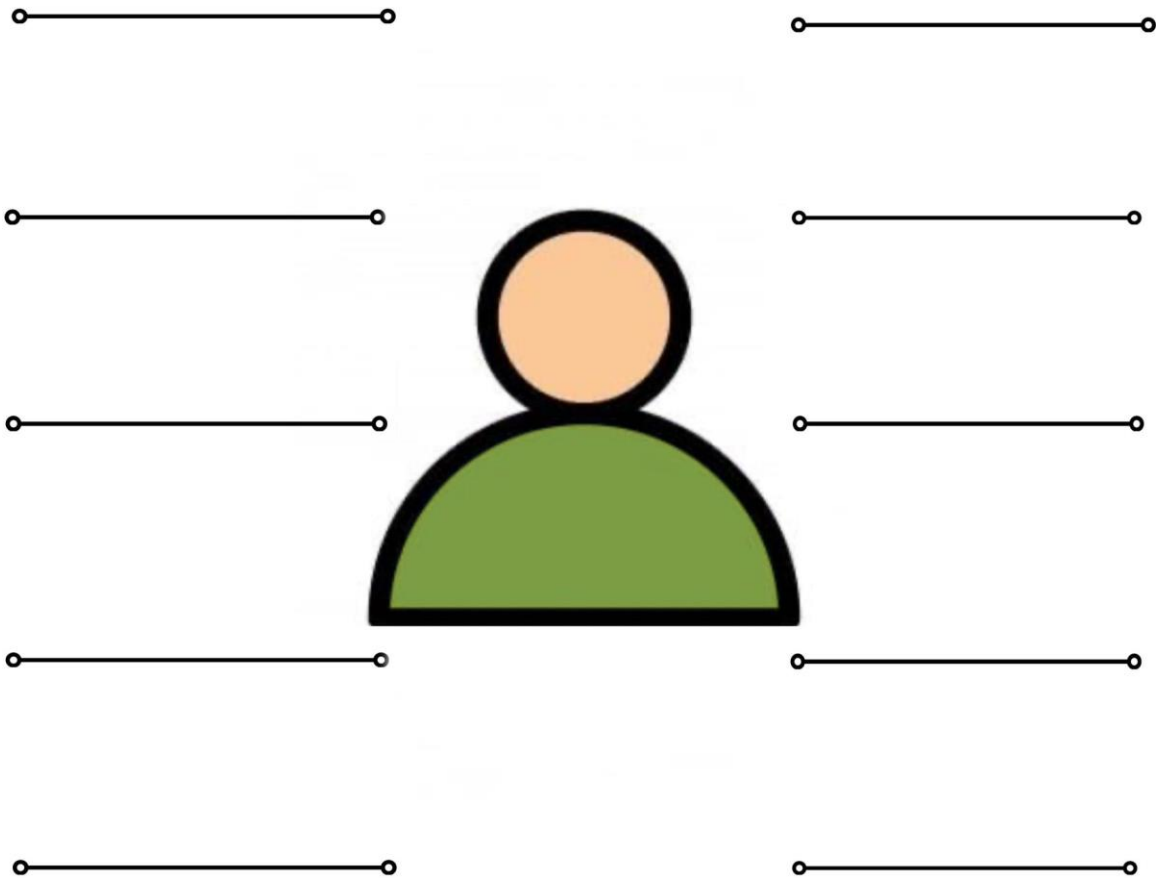
1. The students are informed that in this activity they will explore their identities and the ways in which people in our society view one another's identities.
2. Each student receives a copy of Handout 1 and is invited to write down 10 aspects of his/her/their own identity. They can refer to what defines them as a person, what values guide their decisions, what they like, what they dislike, their moral/spiritual beliefs, etc.
3. The students are invited to form groups of four people and to share what they wrote. Then, they should try to identify what they have in common and: a) circle the identity aspects that all four people in the group have in common; b) with a different colour they should circle the aspects that only three people in the group have in common.
4. The teacher engages the class in a debriefing discussion based on the following questions:
  - a. How did you feel during this activity?
  - b. How many aspects did all the members of your group have in common?
  - c. Were you surprised by the things that were common/different?
5. The teacher shares with the students the following: we as individuals have the tendency to put people into boxes based on a certain aspect of our identity and to believe that all the people in one group are the same. Now, think about the fact that if four students in one class could not completely overlap their identity, how could we expect an entire people to do it?
6. The students are invited to do a little experiment. They are asked to look around the room for ten seconds and identify all the red objects in the room. After the ten seconds have passed, the teacher asks the students to close their eyes and name all the blue objects in the room. The teacher discusses with the students about the fact that we see only what we want to see. We are often oblivious to aspects that are not interesting for us and we tend to see what we are searching for and what re-enforces our beliefs.
7. The teacher shares with the students the concept of stereotypes: an assumption about what someone will do or how they will behave based on the groups to which they belong (or are perceived to belong): ethnic group, gender, religion, sexual orientation, ability, etc. Stereotypes act like a lens that makes us pass judgment on people without actually knowing them. Stereotypes are based on a “single story” about a group of people. Our stereotypes make us put labels on people, according to the group (we think) they belong to and limit our understanding of the complexity of a person's identity.

8. The teacher shares that, just like the focus on red objects prevented the students from seeing the blue objects, the stereotypes prevent us from seeing what is in front of us and manipulate our perceptions so that we can only see what validates our stereotype.
9. The students are invited to work again in groups of 4-5, but the composition of the groups should be different from the previous part of the activity.
  - What is the “single story” that you heard about Roma from your family, from the media or from other sources?
  - Have you encountered people or have you been in situations that challenged those who promote such an image of Roma? What did you think about this?
  - Why do you think people have stereotypes about Roma?
  - If there are Roma students in the class: As a Roma person, how do you feel when you hear all these stereotypes?
  - If there are no Roma students in the class: How would you feel if such stereotypes were said about your culture?
  - Did you ever realise that these images are overgeneralised and they cannot be true for an entire cultural group?
10. The students are invited back from the group work and engaged in a discussion based on the following questions:
  - a. What is the main thing you have learned from this activity?
  - b. What can we do in order to not fall prey to stereotypical images about Roma and other people?
11. The teacher explains that stereotypes are based on a very limited and biased understanding of the world and are prevalent in our societies. They are transmitted to us from our parents, teachers, books, movies, music, etc. It is not our fault that we have these stereotypes, but it is our responsibility to try to understand them, to challenge them, to stop acting based on them and to stop perpetuating them.
12. As a follow-up of this activity, the students can watch a TED Talk such as:
  - Romani or Gypsies by Dijana Pavlovic:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gTlQM0deW\\_8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gTlQM0deW_8)
  - The Danger of A Single Story, by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie<sup>9</sup>:  
[https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda\\_ngozi\\_adichie\\_the\\_danger\\_of\\_a\\_single\\_story](https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_ngozi_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story)

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<sup>9</sup> Subtitles in several languages are available.

## Handout – My Identity



A handout template for 'My Identity'. In the center is a stylized person icon with an orange head and a green body. Surrounding the icon are ten horizontal lines for writing, five on each side. Each line starts and ends with a small circle.

## Persecutions of Roma and Travellers before the 20<sup>th</sup> Century

### Persecution of Roma and Travellers in England and Scotland

#### Overview

In this activity, starting from 16<sup>th</sup> century legislation against Roma and Travellers, students research historical persecution of these groups in England and Scotland, reflecting upon their resilience and the ways in which this history must be commemorated.

#### Competences for democratic culture addressed:

- Valuing human dignity and human rights
- Valuing cultural diversity
- Valuing democracy, justice, fairness, equality and the rule of law
- Openness to cultural otherness and to other beliefs, worldviews and practices
- Respect
- Civic mindedness
- Tolerance of ambiguity
- Autonomous learning skills
- Analytical and critical thinking skills
- Empathy
- Linguistic, communicative and plurilingual skills
- Cooperation skills
- Knowledge and critical understanding of the world

**Number of participants:** 10-30

#### Resources and materials:

- Two handouts: Handout for groups A and B; Handout for groups C and D.
- Access to the Internet, archives, libraries

**Duration:** 2-3 hours. The activity is divided in three parts of one hour each and includes an assignment between the first and the second part with an estimated duration of 30-120 minutes, depending on the interest and the age of the students.

#### Information for teachers

This educational activity invites students to research the history of Roma and Travellers in England and Scotland. Based on this model, similar activities can be developed for other parts of Europe. It is important to acknowledge and even discuss with the students that information on this topic is not easily available or sometimes the sources are not trustworthy. History is often written from the perspective of the dominant groups, which can lead to biased interpretation of facts.

The teachers are encouraged to discuss with the students the fact that, when information is lacking, it is important to acknowledge this fact and to resist the temptation to come up with a narrative that fills the blanks without solid evidence. When information is lacking assumptions can be made,

but it should be clear that these are just assumptions, not evidence-based information, and that even assumptions need to ensure respect for human dignity and cultural diversity.

Should teachers consider that students might have difficulties conducting the research on the Internet, they might choose to prepare some materials beforehand, to make the research easier or more focused on certain aspects. Alternatively, the teachers can invite experts and members of Roma and/or Traveller organisations to provide students with the information they need.

Additional resources on Roma and Traveller history in the UK:

- The Traveller Movement – Gypsy, Roma and Traveller History and Culture:  
<https://travellermovement.org.uk/gypsy-roma-and-traveller-history-and-culture#>
- Historic Environment Scotland – The persecution of Gypsy Travellers in Scotland, a timeline: <https://blog.historicenvironment.scot/2023/06/persecution-of-gypsy-travellers-in-scotland/>
- Historical Association – Teaching Gypsy, Roma and Traveller History:  
<https://www.history.org.uk/secondary/resource/10115/teaching-gypsy-roma-and-traveller-history>

### Description of the activities

1. The teacher informs students that in 2008 the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller History Month was established in Britain, to raise awareness of these communities, highlight their contributions to society, and to combat negative stereotyping and prejudices. Due to various reasons, the history of Roma and Travellers in the UK is not well-known and researched. Due to their mainly nomadic lifestyle, oral culture and systemic persecution they endured throughout the centuries, their history has been written by scholars of the dominant group, whose interpretations lack insider knowledge.
2. The teacher invites the students to watch this video, which explains the three terms: <https://travellermovement.org.uk/gypsy-roma-and-traveller-history-and-culture>
3. The teacher informs the students that in this lesson they will act as historians, trying to piece together information regarding the persecution of Roma and Travellers in Britain and to link the past with the present, through the lens of human rights.
4. The students are split in four groups: groups A and B will focus on the Roma and Travellers in England and groups C and D on the Roma and Travellers in Scotland. They receive the handout which includes information about 16<sup>th</sup> century persecutions and a list of research questions for each group. Their task is to come back with informed answers to the questions in the handout. Groups A and C will focus on the legislation and actions against Roma and Travellers in England and in Scotland respectively, while groups B and D will focus on the ways in which Roma and Travellers were able to overcome the persecution in England and Scotland respectively.
5. The students can start this research in class and continue at home.
6. Each group presents their main findings and the teacher engages the class in a debriefing discussion based on the following questions:
  - Was it difficult to find the information required?
  - Why do you think so little attention is paid to the history of Roma and Travellers?



- What can be done to ensure that this part of British history is appropriately remembered?
- What can we learn from the resilience of Roma and Travellers who, despite facing grave human rights violations, were able to survive and to maintain their culture and identity?

## HANDOUT – Groups A and B

### 16<sup>th</sup> century legislation against Roma and Travellers in England

- The Egyptians Act of 1530

King Henry VIII had ordered all the people referred to as “Egyptians” to be forced out of England.

“The Egyptians now being in this realm, have monition to depart within sixteen days.... from henceforth no such person be suffered to come within this the King’s realm and if they do, they [...] shall forfeit to the King our Sovereign Lord all their goods and titles and then to be commanded to avoid the realm within fifteen days under pain of imprisonment”.

- The Egyptians Act of 1554

The 1530 Act was not successful in its aim of expelling all Roma and Travellers. Queen Mary complained that “Egyptians” were plying their “devilish and naughty practices and devices”. The 1554 Act punished Roma and Travellers with deportation on pain of execution, but did not impose prosecution of those who gave up their nomadic lifestyle, which was described in the act as their “naughty, idle and ungodly life and company”.

- In 1562, legislation was enacted granting Roma born in England and Wales the possibility to become English subjects, with the condition that they fully assimilated into the local population. However, they were forced into a marginal lifestyle and discriminated by the authorities and by the general population. Those who refused this, were punished by death.
- There is evidence that over the next 100 years, hundreds of Roma and Travellers were hanged for being who they were. Further acts enforced banishment, fines, servitude or death.

### Tasks

Group A	Group B
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What further legislation was enacted in England to persecute Roma and Travellers throughout the centuries?</li> <li>- What do you think motivated the authorities to pass legislation against Roma and Travellers?</li> <li>- When did the legislation start to change in order to ensure respect for human dignity of Roma and Travellers in the UK?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What did Roma and Travellers do in the face of legislation that forbade their presence and their lifestyle: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Where did they go?</li> <li>o How did the ones who remained survive?</li> </ul> </li> <li>- How is Gypsy, Roma and Traveller History Month celebrated /commemorated throughout the UK?</li> </ul>

HANDOUT – Groups C and D

**16<sup>th</sup> century legislation against Roma and Travellers in Scotland**

- In 1541 an Order in Council ordered “Egyptians” to leave Scotland within 30 days, on pain of death.
- In 1571 the legislation heightened the punishment for anyone convicted of being “Egyptian”. It became legal to hang or drown people.
- In 1579 reprisals intensified, with legislation stating that “the idle people calling themselves Egyptians are to be nailed to a tree by the ears and, thereafter, the said ears cut off” as punishment for their offence (the offence being their identity).
- In the following years, large numbers of people were burned, hanged, shipped to the Caribbean as slaves and deported to the American colonies.

**Tasks**

<b>Group A</b>	<b>Group B</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- What further legislation was enacted in Scotland to persecute Roma and Travellers throughout the centuries?</li><li>- What do you think motivated the authorities to pass legislation against Roma and Travellers?</li><li>- When did the legislation start to change in order to ensure respect for human dignity of Roma and Travellers in the UK?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- What did Roma and Travellers do in the face of legislation that forbade their presence and their lifestyle:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Where did they go?</li><li>○ How did the ones who remained survive?</li></ul></li><li>- How is Gypsy, Roma and Traveller History Month celebrated /commemorated throughout the UK?</li></ul>

## The Great Round-Up of Roma in Spain

### Overview

In this activity the students learn about persecutions carried out against the Roma in Spain since the first *Pragmática* until the Great Round-Up, as well as about forms of resistance employed by Roma in the face of unfair treatment and harsh living conditions arbitrarily imposed on them.

### Competences for democratic culture addressed:

- Valuing human dignity and human rights
- Valuing cultural diversity
- Valuing democracy, justice, fairness, equality and the rule of law
- Autonomous learning skills
- Analytical and critical thinking skills
- Skills of listening and observing
- Empathy
- Knowledge and critical understanding of the world

**Number of participants:** 10-30

**Resources and materials:** Handout 1 – one copy per student; Handout 2 – copies for half of the class; Handout 3 – copies for the other half of the class.

**Duration:** One hour

### Information for teachers:

The Great Round-Up was a historical event to which little interest has been paid in historiography. Only recently has it started to be studied and brought to the forefront of general awareness. This educational activity starts from information about the Great Round-Up and then the class is divided into two groups. One half of the class studies the enabling factors which led to the Great Round-Up – the hundreds of *Pragmáticas* issued throughout centuries. This process will show students that the persecution of Roma in Spain was a long process aimed at forced assimilation and/or extermination, and that the Round-Up was not an isolated event. The other half of the class studies the resistance of Roma during the Round-Up. This process will show them that Roma had agency, they were not willing to be imprisoned and found various ways to resist the dehumanisation to which they were subjected. At the end of the activity the two groups reunite, share their new findings and discuss the importance of human rights.

The Handouts in this lesson plan are based on two articles published on the RomArchive: Anti-Gypsy Legislation in Spain from the Catholic Kings to the Great Raid, by Araceli Cañadas Ortega, <https://www.romarchive.eu/rom/flamenco/antigypsy-legislation-spain/> and Forms of Resistance during the Great Round-up (Spain, 1749-1763), by Nicolás Jiménez González, <https://eriac.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Jimenez-2020-Forms-of-resistance-during-the-Great-Round-up-Spain-1749-1763.pdf>.

**Description of the activity:**

1. The teacher shares with the students that the first document mentioning Roma in Spain dates from 1425, when Alfonso V of Aragon granted a letter of passage to Don Juan of Egypt Minor. The number of Roma that entered Spain in the 15<sup>th</sup> century is estimated at 3 000 individuals. They earned a living with itinerant trades, travelling in groups of around 100 people, led by a man.
2. The teacher then shares that between 1749 and 1763 an event called The Great Round-Up of the Roma took place in Spain. Each student receives a copy of Handout 1 and, in groups of four, they discuss the following questions:
  - a. What motivated the Spanish authorities to engage in such an action?
  - b. Why were Roma targeted?
  - c. How was it possible to arrest so many people without trial or formal conviction, including children?
  - d. What were the long-term consequences of these actions?
3. The teacher invites the students to share the main aspects of what they discussed. It is quite possible that many students will not know how to answer these questions. The teacher can help them with further questions such as: Do you think there were economic reasons for these actions? Do you think there were racist reasons? Do you think that Roma ever gained back their trust in the Spanish authorities? Alternatively, the teacher can provide some of the answers.
4. The students are divided in two groups. One group studies the enabling factors of the Great Round-Up (Handout 2) and the other group studies the resistance actions during the Great Round-Up (Handout 3). Depending on the class's interest and time available, the students can limit their reading to the handouts or can further research information available online about these topics. Each group discusses the reflection questions available at the end of their handout.
5. The groups are invited to present to each other what they learned, starting with the enabling factors.
6. The teacher conducts a debriefing discussion based on the following questions:
  - a. What can we learn from this lesson about the power of the state?
  - b. What can we learn from this lesson about Roma history?
  - c. What can we learn from this lesson about human rights and the importance of mechanisms to promote and protect human rights?

## Handout 1

### The Great Round-Up of the Roma

In 1749 the Spanish authority, the Monarchy and the Catholic Church attempted the extermination of Roma. Known as the Great Round-Up or General Imprisonment of the Roma, this action took place across Spain on July 30, 1749, and was aimed at capturing all Roma in the Spanish territory and confiscating their assets. It is estimated that between 9 000 and 12 000 people were arrested and used for slave labour.

Men and children aged seven and older were forced to work in arsenals, mines and rebuilding the Spanish navy, while women, girls and boys younger than seven were imprisoned in hospitals – where they were made to look after contagious patients – and “houses of mercy” – where they were made to do textile work. Their properties were confiscated and auctioned to finance the operation itself.

Although the objective of the Great Round-Up was to capture all Roma residing in Spain, some people managed to escape, especially nomadic families, and those who, for various reasons, were absent from their usual places of residence. On 12 August 1749 an additional raid was carried out in order to capture all Roma, as was the intent of the Round-Up.

Given the disorder in the classification of ethnicity, some people who were old castellanos (people of Roma origin who were not residing in Roma neighbourhoods, who were not meeting other Roma families in public or private, who were mingling with and marrying non-Roma and fulfilled the obligations of being Catholic, and thus were not viewed as Roma by the authorities) were also imprisoned. In September 1749, it was decided that the old castellanos should be released. Through this partial pardon many people were released, but several thousand remained imprisoned and subjected to forced labour.

The General Imprisonment of Roma lasted for 14 years until 1763 when the general pardon was decreed. Many people died as a result of the inhumane conditions in which they were forced to live and work.

## Handout 2 – Enabling Factors of the Great Round-Up

The 1749 mass imprisonment of Roma in Spain did not appear out of anywhere; on the contrary, over two centuries of anti-Roma legislation provided the social and legal foundation for the Great Round-Up to happen. The first anti-Roma legislation was issued in 1499. Between 1499 and 1783 more than 250 laws were issued with the intention of eradicating Roma as a distinct ethnic group.

The Catholic Monarchs issued the first *Pragmática* (a law issuing sanctions) against Roma in 1499. Roma (called *gitanos*) were given two months to assimilate – to abandon their itinerant trades, their customs, traditions, way of dressing and instead to live at a fixed address and take on known trades. Failure to do so would result in expulsion or slavery. At the same time, Roma were defined as inherently dangerous and criminals, an example of “what not to be”. It is worth mentioning that a similar process happened with other communities who were forced to assimilate or be expelled (Muslims, Jews and Moors). This *Pragmática* served as basis for future provisions promulgated by the monarchs.

Charles I re-issued the Pragmatic Sanction of 1499 in 1525, 1528, 1534 and 1539. Philip II (1560, 1566, 1586) revised and elaborated upon the existing points, ordering that Roma be condemned to serve in the galleys to cover the Spanish Navy’s rowing requirements. He equated the Roma with vagabonds and forbade them to go to or live in the Indies.

Philip III (1611, 1619) prohibited all signs of Roma identity - name, language, clothes and customs - in an attempt at forced assimilation. Roma were forced to leave Spain in a period of six months or to live in places with over 1 000 inhabitants. They were not allowed to buy or sell livestock. , The expulsion of the Moors, Jews and Muslims, as well as wars, plagues, famine and emigration to the American colonies, led to a serious decrease of the population. In this context, Philip IV (1633) abolished the expulsion decree, and allowed Roma to be “kingdom’s subjects”, not foreigners, with several conditions: prohibition of the term *gitano* or *gitana*; prohibition of organising celebrations such as dances or plays,; prohibition of living in a community such as the *gitanerías* (Roma neighbourhoods)..

Charles II introduced the censuses (1692, 1693, 1695, 1699) that collected information on name, residence, civil status, number of children, trades, weapons, property, horses and mules owned, etc. It also prohibited Roma from working as blacksmiths and introduced harsh penalties for *encubridores* (anybody who helped or protected the Roma). Philip V (1717) allowed Roma families to settle in one of only 41 cities, chosen because they had police resources and infrastructure considered necessary to “monitor and control the Roma population”.

### Questions for reflection:

- How have the previous *Pragmáticas* contributed to the Great Round-Up?
- What other factors contributed to taking such major actions against the Roma for a period of 14 years?
- Why do you think this part of Spanish and Roma history is not well known?



### **Annex 3 – Roma Resistance during the Great Round-Up**

Roma were not willing to be captured and resisted as much as they could. They rebelled against the Great Round-Up from its start until the end, through various means, despite the great challenges of facing state authorities and professional armies. Here are some forms of resistance:

#### **Association**

In 1753, during the Great Round-up, a group of Roma from Triana (Sevilla) led by Sebastián Miguel de Varas y Miranda, established the first brotherhood of Roma in Spain - Hermandad de Señor de la Salud and María Santísima de las Angustias, also known as *Los Gitanos*. These were one of the not many Roma who managed not to get imprisoned. This religious organisation was created with the aim to improve the social image of Roma, to highlight their genuine faith and religious devotion through involvement in ecclesiastical acts. This approach did not enable Roma to avoid prison but showed that Roma families were respectable and integrated into society.

#### **Escape**

Their eagerness to regain lost freedom prompted many Roma to engage in continuous escape attempts, in order to return to where they were coming from and to search for their families, particularly wives and children. Between 1752 and 1765, a total of 335 escape attempts were recorded and an estimated 85% of these attempts were successful.

Roma women also rebelled against their imprisonment. In January 1753, 52 Romani women, led by Rosa Cortés, fled from the Royal House of Mercy in Saragossa by breaking a wall using nails from the rooftop beams. Likewise, in August 1753, 40 women escaped, helping each other climb the four and a half meter-high wall and in June 1758, and 12 imprisoned Roma women organised a riot.

#### **Confrontation**

During the period of imprisonment, organised armed resistance also took place. In the first days of the Round-Up, in August 1749, in the hermitage of San Andrés (El Viso del Marqués, Ciudad Real), more than 40 Roma managed to resist arrest by the authorities, until the intervention of the Army and justices was employed. Similarly, a group of 13 Roma took refuge in the Monastery of Santa María de la Victoria where they resisted for two weeks. Finally, on August 12, 1749, they were captured when the ecclesiastical authority authorised the Army to enter the Monastery.

#### **Legal resistance**

Roma used legal means to resist unjust treatment during the Great Round-Up. Many Roma knew the law and used the legal tools with such frequency that in November 1751 the Madrid Chamber of Mayors ordered that all Roma who approached the Court with the request of freeing their relatives be sent to prison.

#### *Questions for reflection*

- Why do you think people chose to resist the actions of the so-called Great Round-Up?
- Why is it important to learn about the resistance in the face of oppression?

- Are you aware of other forms of resistance (during the Great Round-Up or other oppressive actions?)

## Roma Slavery in Romanian Principalities

### Overview

In this activity the students learn about the enslaving of Roma in the Romanian Principalities and analyse it by exploring primary sources. They reflect upon the abolition process and its aftermath.

### Competences for democratic culture addressed:

- Valuing human dignity and human rights
- Valuing democracy, justice, fairness, equality and the rule of law
- Respect
- Civic mindedness
- Autonomous learning skills
- Analytical and critical thinking skills
- Skills of listening and observing
- Empathy
- Cooperation skills
- Knowledge and critical understanding of the world

**Number of participants:** 10-30

**Resources and materials:** The activity includes two videos and an online publication, as well as an assignment for students to research information, all of which require access to the internet.

**Duration:** 2-3 hours

### Information for teachers

This activity has two parts. In the first part the students learn about Roma slavery by exploring primary sources – documents that attest the selling or exchange of slaves – and in the second part they learn about the abolition of slavery. This topic is connected from the beginning with the concept of human dignity. This will offer students a lens through which they can view the historical events, as well as to reflect upon them through an essay writing assignment.

### Description of the activity:

1. The students are informed that in this lesson they will discuss Roma slavery in Romania. First, the students are invited to make word associations with the word *slavery*. Then, they are invited to reflect upon the opposite of slavery. After the students express their ideas, the teacher presents (or reminds) students about the concept of human dignity<sup>10</sup> and explains that slavery was an infringement of human dignity.

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<sup>10</sup> See more details in the activity Roma Holocaust through the lens of human dignity.

2. The teacher asks the students if they are aware of situations in which people have been held as slaves, in any part of the world. Afterwards, the teacher shares that in the Romanian principalities, Roma were held as slaves for five centuries. However, this is a little-known part of European history both in and out of Romania. The teachers can present the information below – ideally in an interactive and engaging format – to the students, in order to offer them a general overview of this part of history<sup>11</sup>:

The origins of slavery in the Romanian Principalities – Wallachia and Moldova – are still under debate. Some historians think that Roma were brought as slaves by the Ottoman army, while others think they were enslaved for economic reasons, after having initially lived as free people. The enslaved people were classified in three groups, based on who “owned” them: slaves of the state; slaves of the Orthodox monasteries; and slaves of the boyars (aristocrats).

Roma had no legal status as a person and were considered property. The “owner” had the right to sell them or exchange them for various goods, as well as to exert physical violence and torture on them, but had no right to kill them. Enslaved people were not allowed to marry without the consent of the “owner” and marriages could not be organised between free people and enslaved people. The estimated number of Roma when slavery was abolished, in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, is around 250 000 people, approximately 7% of the population.

3. The students are invited to work in groups of 4-5 people to study archival documents. They can use documents collected and translated into English (or translate them into other languages) in the *Roma Slavery and the Places of Memory – Album on Social History*, which is available online.<sup>12</sup>

Each group will receive one of the following documents to read and discuss:

- a. 1648 August 10 – *The ban Radu Buzescu and his wife Mailina donate the Patriarchate of Alexandria a clan of Gypsies, namely Radu and his wife Carsitna and his son Nicula* (page 7)
- b. 1668 March 15 – *Selling deed by which Nica, son of Gligore from Sateni sells to captain Stoian a Gypsy girl, Pauna, for 19 golden coins* (page 9)
- c. 1682 October 15 – *Ianache, the son of sluger Nica from Purani, sells to Voivode Serban Cantacuzino and to Cotroceni Monastery a Gypsy clan, namely Gypsy Ion with his wife Stanca and their children Stanciul, Petru, Stan and Neagoe for 125 thalers* (page 13)
- d. 1701 June 6 – *John, the archimandrite of the Hurezi Monastery, exchanges with the Stanesti Monastery two Gypsies for a bigger Gypsy woman, Chita, which he then gave to the Dobrusa Monastery* (page 19)

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<sup>11</sup> The historical information presented in this section is based on the Council of Europe’s Roma History Factsheets – Wallachia and Moldavia: <https://rm.coe.int/wallachia-and-moldavia-factsheets-on-romani-history/16808b19be>

<sup>12</sup> See: <https://eriac.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Furtuna-Adrian-Nicolae-Turcitu-Victor-Claudiu-2021-Roma-Slavery-and-the-Places-of-Memory-Album-of-Social-History.-Dykhta-Publishing-House-107-pp..pdf>

- e. *1738 April 14 – Anica Constantin, hatman and Dumitru, former great chamberlain, founders of Ramnic Monastery, donate to Ramnic Monastery and to Simeon, the hegumen of the monastery, a Gypsy girl Safta, daughter of Maria the Gypsy (page 40)*
4. The teacher conducts a debriefing discussion based on the following questions:
  - a. What did you learn from these documents?
  - b. What surprised you when reading these documents?
  - c. Do you think that the slave “owners” cared about human dignity?
  - d. What do you think motivated them to engage in such practices?
5. At the end of the lesson the students watch this short video about Roma slavery, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rwjJuZcpbCo>, which also touches upon the topic of the Roma Holocaust, as well as on the long-term consequences of these historical persecutions. The teacher assigns students an essay with their reflections about human dignity and Roma slavery.

## Part II

1. This activity is dedicated to the abolition of slavery. The teacher informs the students that after more than five centuries Roma were emancipated gradually, starting in 1843 with the abolition of slavery for Roma “owned” by the state and ending with the bill on the emancipation of Roma “owned” by private individuals in 1856. February 20 is marked in Romania as the day for the commemoration of the abolition of slavery. However, the emancipation completely neglected the economic and moral aspects. The “owners” who had to free their slaves were compensated financially for their loss, while the Roma received no compensation and no support to integrate in a society that continued to stigmatise them and view them as inferior.
2. The class is invited to watch a short film portraying the struggles of a freed Roma woman, Ioana Tinculeasa, to get official recognition of her status. The film is called Ioana’s Truths (original title: Adevarurile Ioanei): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Do8mLLdeqGM>
3. The students are invited to work in groups of 4-5 people and each group has the task to research one of the following aspects<sup>13</sup>:
  - a. What motivated the authorities to issue legislation for the emancipation of the slaves?
  - b. What were the long-term effects of slavery upon Roma communities and the Romanian society in general?
  - c. What kind of reparations were offered (or should be offered) to Roma for the atrocities they their families had to endure?
  - d. How is (or should be) Roma slavery commemorated in Romania and in Europe?

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<sup>13</sup> The teachers might want to share with the students an additional resource about Ioana Tinculeasa’s case: <https://eriac.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/IOANA-TINCULEASA-RUDAREASA.pdf>

4. Each group presents the results of their research and the teacher engages the students in a debriefing discussion based on the following questions:
  - a. What are the main things you learned from these lessons about Roma slavery?
  - b. Why do you think it is important to learn about this part of European history?
  - c. What could we as students, teachers, the school community do to raise more awareness about this topic and its long-term consequences?
5. The teacher invites the students to re-visit the essay they wrote after Part I of this activity and update it in light of the new information. A group reading of the essays can be organised afterwards, in a separate meeting.

## Roma Holocaust through the Lens of Human Dignity

### Overview

In this activity the students learn about the atrocities carried out against the Roma during the Holocaust and analyse them from the perspective of human dignity.

### Competences for democratic culture addressed:

- Valuing human dignity and human rights
- Autonomous learning
- Analytical and critical thinking skills
- Empathy
- Linguistic, communicative and plurilingual skills
- Respect
- Responsibility
- Self-efficacy
- Knowledge and critical understanding of the world

**Number of participants:** 10-30

**Resources and materials:** Handout 1 – one copy per student.

**Duration:** The activity has two parts, each with a duration of one hour. If time is limited, it is possible to do only the first part.

### Information for teachers:

Recognition of human dignity is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world, as stated in the preamble of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). This activity starts by unpacking the first article of the UDHR, as a way of deepening students' understanding of human dignity and of the ways in which the action taken by the perpetrators of the Roma Holocaust conflict with human dignity.

The concept of human dignity refers to the belief that all people hold a special value that is intrinsic to their humanity and has no connection with gender, religion, ethnicity, abilities, sexual orientation or any other factor, other than being human. The interpretation given to human dignity

in the UDHR differs from its prior meaning, which was in fact, connected to someone's class, perceived race, lifelong achievements or other advantages. Human dignity was something that people earned, due to their status. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights clearly states in its preamble that "... these rights derive from the inherent dignity of the human person." However, this understanding did not start with the modern framework of human rights. For centuries, religions around the world and philosophers have promoted the idea of human dignity and equality. Nevertheless, most people are not able to clearly express what human dignity means for them – or they have never been asked to think about this.

Understanding the Roma Holocaust through the lens of human dignity helps students connect with this part of history (which might seem remote to them) from a human perspective, in order to understand its impact individuals and their families and to go beyond the geopolitical aspects.

### **Description of the activity:**

#### *Part I*

1. The teacher informs the students that in this activity they will learn more facts about the Roma Holocaust and reflect upon them from the perspective of human dignity. The first article of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is made visible to the participants (on a screen, flipchart or handout).

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

2. The teacher shares with the students that human rights are defined as a set of minimum standards which allow us to live a life of dignity. The teacher writes the concept of human dignity in the centre of a board or a shared document and invites the students to make free associations, to share how they understand the concept of human dignity. The ideas expressed by the students are noted around *human dignity*. If students need help in coming up with ideas, the teacher can guide them by asking them to think of situations in which they or other people have been treated as less than humans, were discriminated, abused or treated unfairly.
3. The teacher summarises the ideas expressed by the students and, if needed, adds some information, in order to ensure a clear understanding of the concept.
4. Each student receives a copy of Handout 1 and has the task to read it and underline the aspects that conflict with the concept of human dignity. While reading the text, the students are encouraged to think how they would feel if such actions were taken against them. While reading each paragraph they can try to answer the questions: Would I still feel like a person in such a situation? Would I be motivated to act for the common good?
5. After individual reading and underlining, the students work in groups of 4 people to discuss the following:
  - What infringements on human dignity did you identify in the text?
  - How did each action/ideology contribute to the genocide?

6. The students are invited all back together and a debriefing discussion is conducted, based on the following questions:
  - a. Was there something you did not understand from the text that you read?
  - b. What kind of actions were committed against the Roma during the Holocaust?
  - c. What were the intentions of those who committed these actions?
  - d. Based on what did the Nazis and their collaborators decide to murder Roma?
  - e. Why do you think there was not significant resistance from other citizens to the plan to exterminate Roma?
  - f. What do you think we can do today, to ensure there are no more infringements to human dignity for anyone?
7. The students are invited to write an essay with their reflections about human dignity and the treatment of Roma during the Holocaust. This activity can be done as homework.

## *Part II*

8. The teacher invites a few volunteer students to read their essays. Afterwards, a debriefing discussion is conducted, based on the following questions:
  - a. How did you experience the task of writing this essay?
  - b. Did you feel you needed more information that what was provided to you? If so, were you able to find that information?
  - c. What else would you like to learn about the Roma Holocaust?
  - d. Why is it important to ensure respect for human dignity for all people?
  - e. What are the lessons we can learn from this atrocity, which we can apply today, in order to build a better world?



## Handout – A brief overview of the persecutions against the Roma in Germany<sup>14</sup>

The Roma Holocaust was made possible by a historical and political context that promoted a negative image of Roma. The negative assertions were presented as scientifically based, but they were, in fact, based on nothing more than speculation filled with hatred and the need to prove the superiority of the so-called “Aryan” race.

In 1876, Cesare Lombroso published “The Criminal Man”, which contained a lengthy chapter on the genetically criminal character of Roma, whom he described as “a living example of a whole race of criminals.” His work was translated into German and had a profound influence on German public attitudes and laws.

In 1899, the police in the German state of Bavaria founded the Central Office for Gypsy Affairs (*Zigeunerzentralle*) to coordinate police action against Roma. After the Nazis came to power in 1933, the police in Germany began to enforce the pre-Nazi laws more rigorously against Roma. One of the Nazis’ main concerns was the systematic identification of all Roma, whom they labelled as having “alien blood” and therefore racially “undesirable”. Because they allegedly represented a danger, the German eugenicists recommended that Roma be forcibly sterilised.

The Nuremberg Race Laws passed by the Nazis in September 1935, which forbade intermarriage or sexual relationships between so-called “Aryan” and “non-Aryan” people, also affected Roma.

In 1936, Heinrich Himmler founded in Berlin the “Reich Central Office for Combating the Gypsy Plague”. This agency took over and expanded the bureaucratic measures for the systematic persecution of Roma. At the Olympic Games which took place in Berlin that same year, Roma were not allowed to appear in public. They were arrested and forced to relocate to Marzahn, an open field near a garbage dump.

All over Germany, local authorities began forcing Roma into municipal camps. Later, these camps evolved into forced labour camps for Roma. Roma were interned in almost every concentration camp in Germany and later sent to various extermination camps such as Auschwitz-Birkenau, where Section BIIe was reserved for Roma from February 1943 to August 1944. Of the 23 000 Sinti and Roma who were deported there, 21 000 were murdered.

Roma were also killed in mass executions by SS *Einsatzgruppen* (paramilitary death squads), who murdered them with the help of the army behind the front lines. In 1943, some Roma were still in the army, although it was precisely this army that was involved in the Holocaust of the Roma, and thousands of Roma had already been killed in concentration camps.

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<sup>14</sup> Based on the timeline of Anti-Roma laws and policies in Germany: a brief history (1890-1992) published in *Right to Remember – A Handbook for Education with Young People on the Roma Genocide*: <https://rm.coe.int/168070309f>, on the article *O Porrajmos: The Romani Holocaust*, by Ian Hancock: <http://www.presenciagitana.org/OPRORRAJMOS-ian-hancock.pdf> and on USHMM article Persecution of Roma in Prewar Germany (1933-1939) <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/persecution-of-roma-gypsies-in-prewar-germany-1933-1939>

At the Nuremberg Trials, which took place in October 1945 against the Nazis, not a single Roma was called as a witness.

## Genocidal Actions throughout Europe

### Overview:

In this activity, the students will learn about genocidal actions against Roma taken by different governments throughout Europe, nuancing their understanding of the Roma Holocaust.

### Competences for democratic culture addressed:

- Valuing human dignity and human rights
- Valuing cultural diversity
- Respect
- Empathy
- Civic mindedness
- Self-efficacy
- Autonomous learning skills
- Analytical and critical thinking skills
- Skills of listening and observing
- Cooperation skills
- Knowledge and critical understanding of the world.

**Number of participants:** 10-30

**Resources and materials:** Handouts 1 and 2

**Duration:** 3 hours. The activity is divided in three parts of 1 hour each and includes an assignment between the first and the second part with an estimated duration of 30-120 minutes, depending on the interest and the age of the students.

### Information for teachers

Approaching the multitude of forms of persecution against Roma during the Holocaust may seem like a daunting task, because of the complexity of the topic and also because of the limited sources of information. With scarce research in the field even now, eighty years after the events happened, certain aspects remain unclear, especially when it comes to the number of people who were persecuted and murdered. There are various sources offering different estimates and teachers are encouraged to explain to the students that significant evidence has been destroyed – or never documented and limited research has been conducted. Nevertheless, there is irrefutable evidence of the genocidal actions carried out against Roma, not only by Nazi Germany, but also by its allies.

When students find out details about violent actions against human beings, it is important to take into account the emotional toll it takes on them. Their emotions need to be addressed, acknowledged and validated. It is recommended that teachers avoid provoking strong emotional reactions among students by showing explicit violent pictures and videos. However, when emotional reactions appear, they should be validated. At the same time, students might come across

violent content when conducting their own research. Teachers should warn them about this possibility and advise them to avoid including such content in their presentations, reminding them that we do not need sensationalist content in order to be able to understand the gravity of the situation. Moreover, by not copying the violent content, we show respect towards the dignity of the victims.

One of the topics addressed in this activity is forced sterilisation. Teachers are encouraged to listen to the testimony of Rita Prigmore, telling the story of her mother who faced forced sterilisation<sup>15</sup>, and share it with the group which will focus on this topic.

This activity has three parts and includes a research activity conducted by the students. After the students learn about persecutions and murder of Roma in different parts of Europe, they are invited to conduct further research on sub-topics of their interest. The last part of the activity includes a meeting with an expert on the Roma Holocaust, who can further clarify certain aspects that the students could not research on their own. The teachers are encouraged to invite a Roma researcher. This will ensure representativity and will also contribute to countering stereotypes that students might have regarding the competences and professions of Roma.

### **Description of the activity:**

#### **Part I – Introduction**

1. The teacher gives a short introduction about the ways in which Roma were persecuted during the Holocaust. The information in the Handout of the activity Roma Holocaust through the Lens of Human Dignity can be used for this purpose.
2. The students are invited to form five groups and each group is given one of the texts in Handout 1. They are invited to read the text and prepare a presentation of the main ideas for their colleagues.
3. Each group presents and the teacher conducts a discussion with the class based on the following questions:
  - a. Were there pieces of information that you already knew, from what was presented?
  - b. What new information have you learned in this process?
  - c. Were there things that surprised you?
  - d. Are there any other pieces of information that you know that were not shared yet?
  - e. What other groups of people were targeted by similar forms of persecution?
  - f. What aspect(s) would you like to know more about?
4. The teacher writes on the board the aspects that the students are interested to learn more about and organises them into sub-topics. Each student is invited to choose a sub-topic and all the students interested in the same sub-topic form a study group. If there are more than five students in a study group, some students are invited to find another interesting sub-topic, or there can be two study groups with the same topic but focusing on two different geographical areas for example, or on two different periods of time.
5. Each study group is invited to make a research plan in order to learn more about their sub-topic. The teacher invites the groups to create a list of questions to which they want to find

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<sup>15</sup> An interview with Rita Prigmore was published by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum:  
<https://collections.ushmm.org/search/catalog/irn60517>

answers, and indicates a list of websites where the students can start their research. The teacher encourages the students to search for testimonies of Roma connected to their sub-topic. The groups have until the next class meeting the task of doing their research and preparing a presentation of 5-10 minutes' duration for their colleagues (depending on the number of groups, all the presentations should take maximum one hour, including a Q&A part). The teacher encourages the students to be creative in their presentations and at the same time not to lose focus on the content of their presentation. If time allows, the presentations can be longer.

## **Part II – Presentations**

1. The students present their research to their colleagues. After all the presentations, students are invited to ask questions or make comments and connections to what they themselves have researched. The teacher can ask questions or make comments too, in the spirit of helping the class to get a better understanding of the presentations. If students present incorrect information, the teacher provides the correct information or, if she/he is not sure, raises the question about the sources of information and makes a note to research until the next meeting.
2. After the Q&A session, the teacher checks the emotional state of the students to ensure that any heavy emotions are expressed and acknowledged.
3. The teacher concludes that the persecution of Roma in Europe was a complex system of measures taken in various countries and was often relative to the local authorities who either acted autonomously or collaborated with Nazi Germany in carrying out various forms of persecution.
4. The teacher distributes a reflection questionnaire (or the link to one), that the students are asked to complete by the next class meeting, based on the following questions:
  - a. What are three main things that you learned from doing this research and from listening to your colleagues regarding the Roma Holocaust?
  - b. What were the aspects that surprised you or provoked an emotional reaction?
  - c. What question(s) do you still have? The teacher collects the questions and informs the students, that in the next class, they will have the opportunity meet an expert on the Roma Holocaust and discuss these questions with her/him/them.
  - d. Do you feel that your perception of Roma people has changed now that you have learned so much about their history?
  - e. How was the process of working with your colleagues on this topic?

## **Part III – Meeting an expert**

1. A meeting with a guest researcher, historian or expert on the Roma Holocaust is carefully planned. The teacher shares with the guest, in advance, the research conducted by the students and the questions they still had after presenting their research. The guest prepares a presentation complementary to the information already obtained by the students and discusses with them the questions already expressed, as well as new questions they might have.

## Handout 1 – Texts for group work

### 1. Extermination Camps

On December 16, 1942, Heinrich Himmler gave out the directive that all “Gypsies” still living in the “German Reich” were to be deported to Auschwitz.

More than 20 000 Roma were interned in Auschwitz, mostly coming from detention or transit camps in Germany, Austria, German-occupied Poland, Belgium, the Netherlands and the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. Hundreds of Roma died from malnutrition, epidemics and forced labour in the first few months upon their arrival. Of all the sections of Auschwitz-Birkenau, the Camp Section BIle, where Roma were incarcerated, had the highest mortality rate: over 19 300 people lost their lives there; 7 000 were gassed, 13,700 died from hunger, lack of medical care, catastrophic sanitary facilities, brutal violence from SS guards and medical experiments.<sup>16</sup> Towards the end of July 1944, all Roma inmates from Auschwitz-Birkenau who were still thought to be able to work were transferred to other concentration camps. On 2 August 1944, all remaining Roma prisoners were murdered in the gas chambers.<sup>17</sup>

The second largest centre of the extermination of Roma was the Jasenovac camp, set up by the Croatian government allied with Nazi Germany. The killing of Roma in Jasenovac was exceptionally cruel. It is estimated that approximately 16 000 people (almost all Roma in the Independent State of Croatia) were murdered.<sup>18</sup> In July 1942, when the number of Roma arriving in the camp was at its highest, they were separated into two groups. The older men, women and children were separated from the younger men and immediately sent to be killed in Donja Gradina. The younger men were kept outdoors in Camp III C, where many died of hunger, dehydration, exhaustion and physical abuse. Some Roma were housed in the village of Uštica, in the abandoned houses of murdered Serbian families. Almost no Roma who entered the camp, regardless of age or gender, survived.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> <https://rm.coe.int/holocaust-factsheets-on-romani-history/16808b1ab0>

<sup>17</sup> <https://rm.coe.int/concentration-camps-factsheets-on-romani-history/16808b1ab9>

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.roma-sinti-holocaust-memorial-day.eu/history/the-genesis-and-course-of-the-nazi-persecution-of-roma-and-sinti/>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.jusp-jasenovac.hr/Default.aspx?sid=9823#breadCrumbs>

## 2. Concentration and Detention Camps

In **Germany**, shortly before the opening of the 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin, the police forcibly relocated all Roma in Greater Berlin to Marzahn, an open field located near a cemetery and sewage dump in eastern Berlin. In 1938 and 1939, the “Reich Office of the Criminal Police” ordered about 3 000 Roma men and women, who were capable of carrying out hard physical labour, to be deported to concentration camps. In 1940 Himmler ordered another group of about 2 500 Roma (mainly Sinti) from the territory of the German Reich to be deported to the General Protectorate in today’s Poland. Nearly every concentration camp in Germany and occupied territories had Roma prisoners.

In **Italy**, following the directive of the Italian Ministry of Interior from September 1940, Roma were interned in various camps. In some camps, particularly Boiano, Agnola and Tossicia, they were the majority of prisoners. At Boiano prisoners were housed in the sheds of an old tobacco factory, in conditions so inhumane that even the fascists sought to move them to other premises. However, they were only moved when the camp closed down in August 1941. In Tossicia, one of the worst camps in Central Italy, Roma lived crowded together in barracks where conditions were intolerable: there were no windows, no water, and the sewers constantly overflowed.<sup>20</sup>

In **France**, about half of the pre-war Roma population, approximately 13 000 people, were interned in special camps throughout the country, where they suffered diseases and hunger and, in many cases, were recruited for forced labour. In Alsace-Lorraine, Roma were expelled to the unoccupied zone and interned in camps originally built to house Spanish republicans. In the rest of the unoccupied zone, the fate of Roma depended on the goodwill of the prefects, who could intern any “nomads” they judged undesirable. In the occupied zone, on October 4, 1940, the German High Command in France ordered the transfer of Roma to camps under French police guard. The camp system was constantly re-organised and the prisoners were moved many times, as the French authorities viewed internment of the “nomads” as a first step towards forcing them to settle. The authorities agreed to release the Roma unconditionally only in 1946.<sup>21</sup>

In the **Slovak Republic** the government set up a so-called “Gypsy Camp” at Dubnica nad Váhom where around 800 people were interned under terrible conditions and later killed or deported.<sup>22</sup>

Roma from **Romania** were brought across the river Dniester to Transnistria (present-day Ukraine). The deportations began on June 1, 1942, with itinerant Roma. They travelled on foot or with wagons from one precinct to the other, making their trip several weeks long. Upon arrival in Transnistria, some people were accommodated in huts, others in houses. A few villages on the Bug River were completely evacuated for this purpose, with the Ukrainian population being relocated to the central areas of the county. In the first winter, which was very harsh, many thousands of Roma died of cold, hunger and typhus. Out of the approximately 25 000 Roma deported to Transnistria, it is estimated that half survived and returned to Romania.

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<sup>20</sup> <https://rm.coe.int/the-nazi-period-in-italy-factsheets-on-romani-history/16808b1ac5>

<sup>21</sup> <https://rm.coe.int/holocaust-factsheets-on-romani-history/16808b1ab0>

<sup>22</sup> <https://rm.coe.int/concentration-camps-factsheets-on-romani-history/16808b1ab9>





### 3. Forced Labour

Forced labour was used by the Nazis and their collaborators to sustain war efforts. Roma men, women and children were subjected to forced labour, in inhumane conditions, inside and outside concentration camps erected in Germany, post-Anschluss Austria and in the German-occupied territories of Central and Eastern Europe. Initially, most of these camps were designed as punitive labour camps for working Roma men only. Some camps, for example Lety in Bohemia (present-day Czechia) or Belzec in Poland, were turned into camps for Roma men, women and children. Some camps were closed in 1943, and the inmates were either deported to death camps, to other labour camps or were killed on the spot. Camps like Lackenbach in Burgenland (present-day Austria), existed until the end of the war.

In spite of the unbelievable dreadful standards of living, hygiene and alimentation, the internees had to perform hard physical labour: they had to dig feeders, river regulations, or reservoirs, do roadworks, perform field work, and work in companies of all kinds.<sup>23</sup> They were rented out to various enterprises such as forest domains, agricultural manors, farms, brickyards, and a silkworm farm, or were ordered to work on public road building projects. Their wages were handed over to the camp administration and Roma themselves only received “pocket money”.<sup>24</sup> Mortality was high due to malnutrition, hard work, and diseases.

In France, Roma and Sinti interned in camps were in many cases recruited for forced labour. In addition to their usual duties in the camps, some prisoners worked for private companies inside the camp itself. Others worked outside the camp, in farms and forestry holdings but were always guarded by gendarmes. Part of their pay was withheld to meet the cost of their internment.<sup>25</sup>

In Auschwitz-Birkenau, Roma were used for clay-work and building work within the camp. In Transnistria, the Romanian authorities subjected Roma to forced labour, which included agricultural labour, repairing roads and railroads, chopping down willow trees on the bank of the Bug, chopping wood in forests, and military-related tasks in the Nikolaev region (on the opposite side of the Bug in German-occupied territory).

The situation of the Roma varied from county to county, district to district, and even farm to farm. It depended on many factors, including the Romanian official at the head of the administrative unit.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> <https://rm.coe.int/holocaust-factsheets-on-romani-history/16808b1ab0>

<sup>24</sup> <https://rm.coe.int/concentration-camps-factsheets-on-romani-history/16808b1ab9>

<sup>25</sup> <https://rm.coe.int/internment-in-france-1940-1946-factsheets-on-romani-history/16808b1c15>

<sup>26</sup> <https://rm.coe.int/deportations-from-romania-factsheets-on-romani-history/16808b1c27>

#### **4. Forced Sterilisation, Pseudo-Medical Experiments and Euthanasia**

Forced sterilisation was one of the ways in which the Nazis tried to extinguish the Roma. This inhumane action was carried out both within the camps and in hospitals outside the camps. Thousands of Roma, mostly women and girls, had to suffer this operation, often without anaesthesia. Many died during the operation.<sup>27</sup> Already in 1933, a law was passed to force Roma to undergo sterilisation.

In Auschwitz and other camps, so-called “medical experiments” were performed on Roma. The imagination of the doctors charged with this task, foremost Josef Mengele, knew no boundaries. He carried out his experiments, crippling and murdering hundreds of people and claiming he was doing it in the name of “science”. Roma were injected with saline solutions and typhus bacillus, colour pigments and received heart injections.<sup>28</sup> Experiments were also carried out in an attempt to find simple methods for mass sterilisation and even very young girls were abused for such experiments. Particularly infamous were Mengele’s experiments on twins, which included blood transfusion between twins, testing medicine on intentionally infected children and other experiments.<sup>29</sup>

Roma prisoners also fell victims of the Action 14f13, a Nazi campaign to murder concentration camp prisoners, which started in April 1941. A panel of doctors began visiting concentration camps to select sick and incapacitated prisoners for “elimination”. Prisoners were sometimes encouraged by the camp administration to come forward if they felt sick or unable to work. They were told they would be taken to “recovery camps” where they would perform lighter duties, when in fact they were taken to killing centres to be gassed. Many prisoners believed the lie and readily volunteered.

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<sup>27</sup> <https://rm.coe.int/holocaust-factsheets-on-romani-history/16808b1ab0>

<sup>28</sup> <https://rm.coe.int/holocaust-factsheets-on-romani-history/16808b1ab0>

<sup>29</sup> <https://www.roma-sinti-holocaust-memorial-day.eu/history/dr-mengele-and-experiments-on-prisoners/>

## 5. Mass Executions

Germany's invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941, which was waged as a "war of extermination", meant an escalation of violence against Jews and Roma. Thousands of Roma fell victim to mass executions by the SS "Einsatzgruppen" (paramilitary task forces) who, assisted by the army, murdered them behind the front. Hundreds of Roma were among the victims of the mass murder in Babyn Yar near Kyiv. From 1941 to 1943, in Latvia about half of the 3 800 Roma were massacred. In Estonia more than 90 percent of the 750-850 Roma were murdered. In Lithuania, historians estimate that most of the Roma population living there was shot.

In German-occupied Poland and other territories of Eastern Europe and the Balkans occupied by the Nazis, more Roma were killed through mass executions than in the extermination camps. In Serbia, occupied by the Germans since 1941, the so-called "revenge executions" (killing of hostages at a rate of 100 people per German soldier killed and 50 people per German soldier wounded) took place, to which Jews, Serbs and Roma fell victim. Harald Turner, head of the German military administration, declared in 1942 that Serbia was the only country in which the "Jewish and Gypsy question" had been "solved". The "Einsatzgruppen" and the armed forces were supported by local fascist organizations.

In Croatia, the Ustasha and in Hungary the "arrow cross" fascists carried out the mass executions, organised deportations and ran the camps.<sup>30</sup> Between 1944 and early 1945 thousands of Slovak and Hungarian Roma were killed or deported to concentration camps. Roma from Southern and Western Hungary were arrested by Hungarian fascists and taken on death marches to the central camp at Csilla near the city of Komárom in Northern Hungary, from where the survivors were deported by the German SS.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> <https://rm.coe.int/holocaust-factsheets-on-romani-history/16808b1ab0>

<sup>31</sup> <https://rm.coe.int/concentration-camps-factsheets-on-romani-history/16808b1ab9>

## Teaching with Testimonies

Teaching with testimonies can be a powerful educational approach for bringing history to life and fostering empathy and respect for human dignity.

Testimonies allow students to connect with the history of the Roma Holocaust on a personal level. Hearing the voices of survivors or their descendants makes history more relatable and memorable. The stories they hear stay with them, shaping their values and attitudes. As testimonies usually evoke emotional responses like empathy and outrage, they can instil in students a sense of responsibility, motivating them to learn more and take action against discrimination.

As first-hand accounts of historical events, testimonies provide a different perspective from textbooks or documentaries, which allows students to relate to the experiences of individuals and families affected by historical events. This in turn, can lead to more profound learning. However, the use of testimonies in the educational process requires careful planning.

Testimonies can be emotionally distressing, especially when dealing with traumatic events like genocides. Therefore, it is important to prepare students mentally and emotionally for the content they will encounter and to avoid overwhelming students with excessive graphic or distressing content. The teachers should foster a classroom environment where students feel safe to express their emotions and ask questions. Students' distress can be balanced by addressing acts of kindness from individuals and communities that made positive differences and resistance during the Roma Holocaust or by engaging students in present-day acts of kindness or change-making.

As memory is fallible, testimonies may contain inconsistencies or inaccuracies. Teachers must offer historical context to help students understand the broader picture and the significance of the testimonies in the context of learning about the Roma Holocaust. Combining testimonies with other teaching methods and resources is important in order to provide a well-rounded understanding of the Roma Holocaust.

More than 4 000 survivors' testimonies are available on the IWitness platform of the USC Shoah Foundation: <https://iewitness.usc.edu>. They can be accessed freely by creating an account on the platform. Using the filter Experience Groups and selecting Sinti and Roma Survivor results in a selection of 40 testimonies in nine languages<sup>32</sup> recorded with Sinti and Roma survivors. Multiple filters allow for a more refined search according to gender of the interviewee, language of the interview, availability of subtitles and/or transcript, country of the interview or country of birth and length of the interview. A complex filter helps the user narrow their search down according to topics that the interviewees addressed, using key words search, for example, "forced labour", "education", "family life". These topics are connected automatically to a certain fragment of the testimony. This way, even though the testimonies range from 30 minutes to over 8-hour-long videos, it is possible to find specific references and use them in accordance with the teachers' educational objectives.

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<sup>32</sup> As of April 2024.

Other curated selections of Roma testimonies are:

- The Fortunoff Video Archive for Holocaust Testimonies (FVAHT): <https://fortunoff.library.yale.edu>
- European Holocaust Memorial Day for Sinti and Roma: <https://www.roma-sinti-holocaust-memorial-day.eu/testimonies-of-holocaust-survivors/>
- Forced Labour 1939-1945 – Memory and History: <https://www.zwangsarbeit-archiv.de/en/index.html>

Starting from testimonies, different types of educational activities can be conducted:

- Students can watch/read the testimony of a Roma Holocaust survivor and then engage in research about the context in which that person lived and was persecuted. This approach<sup>33</sup> guides students in a process that begins with an individual story and then students learn more about the general historical context of the Roma Holocaust, starting from the information provided in the testimony. Questions like the ones below can guide the students in their research process:
  - How was life in [insert name of town or region where the survivor lived] before the Second World War?
  - Which historical events are relevant for this part of Europe in the 1930s and the beginning of 1940s?
  - What measures were taken against Roma in [area where survivor lived]?
  - How was [name of survivor] affected by these measures?
- Students can watch/read the testimony of a Roma Holocaust survivor and then write a letter to that person. In the letter they can share their personal feelings and thoughts, information about the progress of the society in the present, their commitment to be compassionate and stand up in front of injustice, etc.
- The teacher can guide discussions about certain topics (depending on what the survivor is addressing in his/her/their testimony) such as: resilience, the importance of being an upstander, valuing human dignity, overcoming loss, etc.
- The testimonies can be analysed together with information about the historical text, as in the case studies described next.

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<sup>33</sup> Inspired by the activity Individual Stories – A Starting Point for Understanding History described in Learning from the Past, Acting for the Future – An Interdisciplinary Approach to Holocaust, Human Rights and Intercultural Education (2022): <https://www.toli.us/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Handbook-Learning-from-the-Past-Acting-for-the-Future.pdf>

## **Case study: Romania**

### **Overview**

In this activity the students explore the Roma Holocaust in a specific part of Europe and engage with a survivor testimony.

### **Competences for democratic culture addressed:**

- Valuing human dignity and human rights
- Valuing cultural diversity
- Valuing democracy, justice, fairness, equality and the rule of law
- Analytical and critical thinking skills
- Skills of listening and observing
- Empathy
- Co-operation skills
- Respect
- Knowledge and critical understanding of the world

**Number of participants:** 10-30

**Resources and materials:** Handouts 1 and 2 – one copy of each per student.

**Duration:** one hour

### **Information for teachers:**

This activity is designed to combine macro and micro perspectives, namely, the students get an overview of the Roma Holocaust in Romania and a testimony of a survivor. Through a set of questions, they learn to put the personal story into the wider context and to look at the historical narrative through the lens of an individual experience.

The teachers can adapt this activity and create handouts for any country of interest. While learning about what happened in their own country might be more interesting for the students, learning about what Roma had to endure in other countries gives students a more nuanced understanding of the Roma Holocaust and a better grasp of the enormity of this atrocity. The teachers may use available testimony either in written format – as presented in Handout 2 – or in video format from one of the sources mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, or from another source.

### **Description of the activity:**

1. The teacher starts by telling the students that the Nazis were not solely responsible for the Roma Holocaust. Many other countries carried out genocidal actions, passed legislation against Roma, persecuted, deported and murdered them.
2. The teacher divides the class into two groups. One group receives Handout 1 – An Overview of the Roma Holocaust in Romania (one copy per student) and the other group

receives Handout 2 – Testimony of Saveta Clopotar (one copy per student). The students are invited to individually read the handouts they received and underline the aspects that they find most relevant.

1. After individually reading the handouts received, the students from the two groups are mixed. Groups of four students are formed (two students who read the overview and two students who read the testimony). In these groups, the students discuss the different texts they read, using the overview to put the testimony into context and the testimony to understand that, beyond numbers and statistics, there are always individuals who suffered terribly. The questions for the groups work are:
  - What were the conditions that made it possible for Saveta and her family to be deported to a concentration camp?
  - What were the conditions in the camp?
  - What do you think made Saveta not lose hope in the face of such inhuman actions?
  - Who were the perpetrators? What motivated their actions?
3. The teacher invites the students to a class discussion, based on the following questions:
  - How did you experience this activity?
  - What did you learn from this activity about the Roma Holocaust?
  - What did you learn from this activity about human beings?
  - What did you learn from this activity about human rights?
  - Were you surprised about some of the things you learnt?
  - Are there any aspects you did not understand? The teacher provides clarification, as needed.
  - What can we learn from personal stories that we cannot learn from texts written by historians? What can we learn from texts written by historians that we cannot learn from personal stories?



## Handout 1 – The Roma Holocaust in Romania<sup>34</sup>

In 1942, Marshal Antonescu, the Prime Minister of Romania and “Hitler’s second-most important Axis ally” and the Council of Ministers tasked the Ministry of Internal Affairs with deporting “undesirable” Roma to Transnistria. Consequently, in May 1942, a secret census was conducted to identify and keep track of all “undesirable” Roma living in Romania. A total of 40 909 persons were included on the list, of which 9 471 were classified as “nomads”, and 31 438 were classified as “sedentary”.

The deportations took place during the summer and fall of 1942. During the first stage (June 1-August 15, 1942), 11 441 Roma (men, women, and children) classified as “nomadic” were rounded up and deported to Transnistria using their own carts and horses. During the second stage (September 12-20, 1942), 13 176 Roma (men, women, and children) classified as “sedentary” were rounded up in several cities, forced to board freight trains, and transported in dreadful conditions to Transnistria. The deportees had their belongings and properties confiscated by the local authorities and were forced to leave their villages or home towns with barely enough food supplies and personal possessions they needed to survive.

The authorities in Transnistria routinely settled Roma in makeshift, ghetto-like settlements and delivered insufficient and irregular food rations. Two mass shootings took place in 1942 in Transnistria, but starvation and death by infection or infestation were also used as extermination methods. Between autumn 1942 and spring 1944, thousands of Roma deportees perished due to the rapid spread of typhus, cold weather, inadequate housing, food shortages, and starvation. As the International Commission on the Holocaust in Romania noted, “[t]he food rations established by the government were not observed; sometimes none would be distributed for weeks. Roma were also not provided with firewood; so, they could neither prepare their food nor warm themselves.”

Here is an excerpt from historian Jean Ancel’s portrayal of the fate of Roma women:

*“After being robbed by the Romanian Gendarmes and the representatives of the National Bank of Romania, after having been stripped of their gold, their carts, their horses, and their belongings amassed over hundreds of years, the Roma were left starving, naked, without the most basic means of subsistence. (...) But the most terrible situation in Transnistria was reserved for Roma women, considered a war bounty. Romanian gendarmes, like the Nazis, raped Roma women, who were deprived of their status as human beings and were eventually sentenced to death, and for these reasons, these “beasts with epaulets” could do with them whatever their heart desired.”*

According to official Romanian sources, approximately 11 000 Roma - a conservative estimate - perished in Transnistria. The means of extermination included deportations, internment, mass shootings, starvation, and death by infestation and disease.

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<sup>34</sup> This text is an excerpt from the study *The Roma Holocaust/Roma Genocide in Southeastern Europe. Between Oblivion, Acknowledgment, and Distortion* (2022): <https://fxb.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/2464/2022/11/The-Roma-Holocaust-Roma-Genocide-in-Southeastern-Europe-Report-1.pdf>



## Handout 2 – The Story of Saveta Clopotar<sup>35</sup>

Born in the picturesque village of Bârghiș in Sibiu county, Saveta Clopotar hailed from the proud lineage of the cortorari, a tribe of Romani nomads. When Saveta was merely 7 or 8 years old, she was ensnared in the first wave of deportations targeting nomadic Roma. Officers gave them a semblance of hope, telling them to “Move on! Don't stop! You'll soon be home”. But it was a lie, a mere mirage to keep them in line. She and a convoy of other Roma travelled from Agnita, journeying day and night, by horse and wagon, for three gruelling months until they reached Bug. Upon their arrival, their only means of transportation and livelihood – their animals and wagons – were taken away.

The Vradievka camp in Transnistria was nothing short of a living nightmare. People starved, diseases like typhus were rampant, and lice infestations were everywhere — to the extent that even the soil was teeming with them. The imminent warfront deprived them of essentials like soap, compelling women to wash their hair with oil. They lived in stables filled with smoke, often going a week without a morsel to eat. Saveta painfully recounted how, in utter desperation, some resorted to consuming raw meat from cats, rabbits, or horses. “We ate watermelons and fell sick with typhus. With typhus, you can't eat. People were dying of hunger, five, six, even ten a day... They were buried like dogs. In Bug, it was even worse; they shot us. Soldiers, too, died of hunger as they had nothing to eat.”

Saveta described a horrifying interaction with German soldiers, who often preyed on women. “Russians were alright, repentant. But the Germans were feeble-minded; they never spared the women. In fear, women would comply. Imagine facing a German with a gun... Some women smeared their faces with charcoal to deter them. Russians, on the other hand, were polite and didn't bother the women.”

One of the many tragedies Saveta bore was the loss of one of her brothers and both her parents to typhus. Even as a young girl, she toiled in the fields alongside her siblings. It was there she met the man who would become her husband. After the liberation, the Russians resettled them in nearby villages since they were left with nowhere else to go. For two and a half years they stayed, but as the warfront approached, they embarked on a daunting journey home. “We returned in January; the snow was deep. Children, scantily dressed in paper-like clothing. I couldn't walk any further from hunger... My grandmother carried me. We lost hope, thinking we'd never return.”

Returning to Răvășel, a village close to their native village of Bârghiș, they built a small shelter with logs and straw, initially taking daily wage jobs and later working in an agricultural cooperative farm. Yet, their living conditions remained dire. “Everyone in the village knew how we lived. We never stole or harmed anyone. Even during Ceaușescu's time, a woman trusted me to keep her money at my home while she worked.”

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<sup>35</sup> This text is based on an interview with Saveta Clopotar, conducted by Adrian-Nicolae Furtună and Oana Burcea in 2017 and published in the tri-lingual (English, Romani and Romanian) volume *Roma from Romania and the Holocaust: History, Theory, Culture*, 2018, by Dykhta Publishing House.

Saveta Clopotar's story is a testament to human resilience, the capacity to endure in the face of adversity, and the sheer will to survive against all odds.

## Case Study: Serbia

### Overview

In this activity the students explore the Roma Holocaust in a specific part of Europe and engage with a survivor testimony.

### Competences for democratic culture addressed:

- Valuing human dignity and human rights
- Valuing cultural diversity
- Valuing democracy, justice, fairness, equality and the rule of law
- Analytical and critical thinking skills
- Skills of listening and observing
- Empathy
- Co-operation skills
- Respect
- Knowledge and critical understanding of the world

**Number of participants:** 10-30

**Resources and materials:** Handouts 1 and 2 – one copy of each per student.

**Duration:** one hour

### Information for teachers:

This activity is designed to combine macro and micro perspectives. Namely, the students get an overview of the Roma Holocaust in Serbia and a testimony of a survivor. Through a set of questions, they learn to put the personal story into the wider context and to look at the historical narrative through the lens of an individual experience.

The teachers can adapt this activity and create handouts for any country of interest. While learning about what happened in their own country might be more interesting for the students, learning about what Roma had to endure in other countries gives students a more nuanced understanding of the Roma Holocaust and a better grasp of the enormity of this atrocity. The teachers may use available testimony either in written format – as presented in Handout 2 – or in video format from one of the sources mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, or from another source.

### Description of the activity:

1. The teacher starts by telling the students that the Nazis were not solely responsible for the Roma Holocaust. Many other countries carried out genocidal actions, passed legislation against Roma, persecuted, deported and murdered them.
2. The teacher divides the class into two groups. One group receives Handout 1 – An Overview of the Roma Holocaust in Serbia (one copy per student) and the other group receives Handout 2 – Testimony of Anka Vasić (one copy per student). The students are

invited to individually read the handouts they received and underline the aspects that they find most relevant.

3. After individually reading the handouts received, the students from the two groups are mixed. Groups of four students are formed (two students who read the overview and two students who read the testimony). In these groups, the students discuss the different texts they read, using the overview to put the testimony into context and the testimony to understand that, beyond numbers and statistics, there are always individuals who suffered terribly. The questions for the groups work are:
  - What were the conditions that made it possible for Anka and her family to be deported to a concentration camp?
  - What were the conditions that made it possible for her to escape the camp?
  - What do you think gave Anka the courage to defy the perpetrators?
  - Who were the perpetrators? What motivated their actions? What happened to them afterwards?
4. The teacher invites the students to a class discussion, based on the following questions:
  - How did you experience this activity?
  - What did you learn from this activity about the Roma Holocaust?
  - What did you learn from this activity about human beings?
  - What did you learn from this activity about human rights?
  - Were you surprised about some of the things you learnt?
  - Are there any aspects you did not understand? The teacher provides clarification, as needed.
  - What can we learn from personal stories that we cannot learn from texts written by historians? What can we learn from texts written by historians that we cannot learn from personal stories?

## Handout 1 – The Roma Holocaust in Serbia<sup>36</sup>

In 1941, the territory of today's Serbia was divided into different occupation zones. In the north, the region of Bačka was annexed by Hungary, while Srem fell under the rule of the Croatian fascists. The south-east fell under Bulgarian rule, while most of Kosovo became part of Greater Albania. The Nazis established a military occupation in the central region, called 'Territory of the Military Commander in Serbia', to which they incorporated Banat region (with its strong local ethnic German minority). It is estimated that around 60 000 Roma were living in the territory occupied by the Nazis.

In May 1941 the Nazis issued an order according to which Roma and Jews had to wear a yellow armband, were fired from their jobs and were forbidden to use public transport, go to public places or hospitals. Two months later, the same German authorities issued another order which stated that the racial laws were to be implemented only against the Roma individuals who could not prove that they had a stable job and a permanent residence. However, employment opportunities were scarce and prejudices against Roma limited their job opportunities.

In July 1941, the Gestapo opened Banjica concentration camp in Dedinje, Belgrade, primarily for communists. Roma, Jews and Serbs were also interned there, and many were soon killed. In Topovske Šupe, a camp established in August 1941 for Jewish men destined to be executed, about 1 500 Roma were detained in October, arrested by Serbian collaborationists on German orders. Many of them were shot, especially at the Jabuka killing site, not far from Belgrade. Roma women and children were interned in the Sajmište camp, along with Jewish women and children. However, most of them were released due to changing legislation which stated that Roma "who have honest jobs, lead proper lives and whose ancestors had been permanent residents at least since the year 1850" do not fall under the legislation passed in May 1941.

While Serbian Roma were interned and/or killed in concentration camps like Crveni Krst, Sajmište or Topovske Šupe, mass shootings of Roma took place in several other Serbian cities, such as Kragujevac, Šabac, Kruševac, Leskovac, and Niš. Roma also died in the October 1941 killings in Kragujevac and during the 1942 Novi Sad raid.

The decision to pass legislation against Roma and to kill Roma men, women and children was taken by the Nazis, but implemented with the contribution of Serbian forces. The collaborationists massacred Roma on several occasions. In Kragujevac, when the Nazis ordered the shooting of more than 2 500 civilians in retaliation for the killing and wounding of German soldiers, Serbian voluntary troops, known as Ljotićevci, identified about 250 Roma and delivered them to the Nazis in exchange for the Serbian hostages. Roma were also arrested or killed for helping the Partisans.

Due to limited research, there is no agreement regarding the number of Roma victims, estimates ranging from a few thousands to a few tens of thousands. Although the Yugoslav authorities

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<sup>36</sup> This text is based on excerpts from the study *The Roma Holocaust/Roma Genocide in Southeastern Europe. Between Oblivion, Acknowledgment, and Distortion* (2022): <https://fxb.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/2464/2022/11/The-Roma-Holocaust-Roma-Genocide-in-Southeastern-Europe-Report-1.pdf> and on *The Suffering of the Roma in Serbia during the Holocaust* (2014) by Milovan Pisarri.



recognised the racial persecution of Roma, nobody has been prosecuted for the crimes committed against them.

## Handout 2 – The story of Anka Vasić

Anka Vasić, nee. Tomić was born in 1921 in Belgrade, Serbia and lived with her parents and a brother in one of the Roma neighbourhoods in the city. Her mother died when Anka was eight years old and her father soon remarried, but his new wife did not get along with his children, especially Anka. Because of that, her aunt, who made Anka stop going to school and found her a job, adopted her. Like many Roma in her neighbourhood, Anka became a singer and she travelled around Serbia and the region with an orchestra.

When the Second World War began in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, on the 6th of April 1941, Anka was living with her brother and his family. She remembered the fear when Belgrade was bombed, and the bad living conditions during the war, with no food and jobs. On the 27th of October 1941, her brother, together with all the other men from their neighbourhood, were arrested by Germans and deported to the “Autokomanda” camp. Anka and her family never found out what happened to him.

Around a month later, the Nazis started also arresting Roma women and children. Local police knocked on the door of the apartment where Anka was living with her brother’s mother-in-law, wife, and six children, including a newborn. They were deported to Sajmište concentration camp, where the living conditions were horrible. They slept on wooden boards, with one hole in the ground, which served as a fireplace for heating. The pavilion was already crowded with previously deported Roma, and they needed to find their place.

She remembers the visit of Milan Nedić, at the time the main political leader of Serbia and Nazi collaborator, to the pavilion. He concluded that it was good and comfortable for them, and only gave orders to bring some straw on which they inmates could sleep. Anka felt humiliated, like they were animals in a barn, not human beings.

After a few days, they were moved to Pavilion 5, where the conditions were slightly better, with bunk beds – one for each family – and a big stove in the middle. However, the windows were broken and snow came inside the pavilion. They food they received was just soup with beans or cabbage and one small piece of bread for the whole family.

In January 1942, the relatives who were still free wrote a request with a guarantee, for them to be released. However, as these were relatives of Anka’s sister-in-law, her name was not mentioned. When other women were standing in a row waiting to be released, she stayed last in line, together with the youngest child. She hid the child under her clothes and used the child’s name to free herself from the camp. She managed to get out, together with the little girl and the rest of the family.

When they got back to their apartment, they took off all their clothes and burned them, as they were full of lice. After a few days, Anka went to Kruševac, to live there with her stepsister and her family. There, she was saved, because Roma were not being arrested in Kruševac.

After the war, she returned to Belgrade, where she lived in the small apartment they owned and started singing again and working to earn a living. Most of her family members managed to survive the camps and were still together in their neighbourhood.

## Human Rights and Roma Holocaust

### Overview

In this activity the students reflect upon different atrocities committed by the perpetrators of the Roma Holocaust through the lens of human rights<sup>37</sup>.

### Competences for democratic culture addressed:

- Valuing human dignity and human rights
- Valuing democracy, justice, fairness, equality and the rule of law
- Analytical and critical thinking skills
- Skills of listening and observing
- Empathy
- Linguistic, communicative and plurilingual skills
- Co-operation skills
- Knowledge and critical understanding of the world

**Number of participants:** 10-30

**Resources and materials:** Handout 1. The teacher selects for each group two examples of human rights violations during the Roma Holocaust.

**Duration:** one hour

### Information for teachers

The dynamic of this activity depends on the prior knowledge students have about human rights. The first part of the activity can be shortened (for students with more knowledge) or it can be expanded. If this is the first time that students learn about human rights, at least one lesson should be dedicated to ensuring that they grasp the concept, and understand human rights principles and values. The group task can be assigned in class or as homework.

### Description of the activity:

1. The teacher invites students to share what they know about human rights. The students are encouraged to say general things they know about human rights, as well as to mention specific rights of which they are aware. After students share what they know, the teacher makes sure that the following aspects are highlighted:
  - Human rights are internationally agreed standards, based on a set of universal values which have been agreed by every government around the world
  - Human rights are a set of *minimum standards* which define what is required for people to live a life of dignity.

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<sup>37</sup> This activity is inspired from Right to Remember – A Handbook for Education with Young People on the Roma Genocide: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/youth-roma/right-to-remember1> and Compass: Manual for Human Rights Education with Young People <https://www.coe.int/en/web/compass>

2. The teacher informs the students that Jews, Roma, people with disabilities, LGBTQI people and other groups deemed “unworthy” by the Nazi and their collaborators suffered severe human rights violations during the Holocaust, and invites them to analyse them. The students are divided into five groups. Each group receives two examples of human rights violations during the Roma Holocaust (from the handout) and is tasked to discuss the two examples and identify:
  - (a) who carried out those actions;
  - (b) what motivated them to carry out those actions;
  - (c) what must have Roma felt/thought in such situations.
3. Each group presents the main aspects they identified and the teacher invites the class to a debriefing discussion based on the following questions:
  - Has this activity helped you better understand the Roma Holocaust? In what way?
  - Why do you think it was possible for the perpetrators to take all these measures against Roma?
  - Why do you think almost no one (regular people, politicians, academics, etc.) reacted against these measures?
  - Do you think people would react more if something like this happened today?
4. The teacher concludes by reminding students that the system of international human rights was established immediately after Second World War, as a response to the crimes committed during the Holocaust. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted by the United Nations in 1948. Human rights were drafted to protect citizens from their own governments and to ensure that governments work towards guaranteeing that the basic needs of every individual are met, with the central aim of promoting respect for human dignity.

## **Handout<sup>38</sup> – Some examples of human rights violations during the Holocaust:**

**Violation of the right to life:** death in the gas chambers, starvation and disease in places of exile (including in the concentration camps), shootings by SS Einsatzgruppen, and murder or preventable death by any other form.

**Torture, inhuman and degrading treatment:** beatings, harsh medical experiments, forced sterilisation, severe humiliation and degradation – including the conditions in labour camps – and failure to provide adequate food and water or proper sanitation.

**Slavery and forced labour:** Roma prisoners of all ages, from young children to elderly people, were forced to work long hours, in unhealthy and degrading conditions, for no pay. Other labour rights, such as the right to free association and collective bargaining, were also ignored.

**Discrimination:** the different (and inhuman) treatment accorded to individuals simply because they were Roma were all examples of discrimination. Children, women, the disabled, sick and elderly were not given any provision for their specific needs.

**Violation of the right to liberty:** confinement in camps, prisons, ghettos, segregated regions, and so on.

**Violation of the right to fair trial and the presumption of innocence:** there were no trials to assess the “guilt” of members of the Roma population; all were “guilty” merely because they were Roma.

**Violation of the right to private life, family life and home:** families were split up, people were removed from their homes, and every element of privacy and dignity was violated.

**Violation of the right to adequate healthcare:** sickness, disease, and malnutrition were all inflicted on huge numbers of Roma as a result of the conditions they were forced to live in. Almost no medical care was provided.

**Violation of the right to property:** Roma property was confiscated – and never returned (only very few received it back). In many cases, when Roma tried to return to their homes after the war, they found their houses had been destroyed, and their possessions looted. No attempts were made to return them.

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<sup>38</sup> This handout was included in Right to Remember – A Handbook for Education with Young People on the Roma Genocide:  
<https://www.coe.int/en/web/youth-roma/right-to-remember1>

**Violation of the right to effective remedy:** even after the war ended, most Roma were given no compensation for crimes committed against them. The crimes were not even acknowledged for many years afterwards.



## Roma Resistance

### Overview

This activity helps students reflect upon their understanding of resistance and learn about various forms in which Roma resisted during the Holocaust.

### Competences for democratic culture addressed:

- Valuing human dignity and human rights
- Valuing cultural diversity
- Skills of listening and observing
- Empathy
- Linguistic, communicative and plurilingual skills
- Civic-mindedness
- Responsibility
- Knowledge and critical understanding of the world

**Number of participants:** 10-30

**Resources and materials:** Handout 1 – one example of resistance per student.

**Duration:** one hour

### Information for teachers:

When teaching about the Roma Holocaust, it is crucial to ensure that students gain a more nuanced understanding of the experiences of Roma communities. Some activities can help shift the perception that Roma were solely helpless victims during this period. It is important to convey that, similar to other groups affected by the Holocaust, Roma individuals also exhibited courage and employed various means of resistance. Additionally, it is worth noting that Roma, like many others, were initially unaware of the intentions of the Nazis and their collaborators and found it challenging to believe the rumours about extermination camps, especially considering the deceiving messages they received from the authorities (for example, that they would be relocated to Transnistria where they would receive land to work on). Moreover, the persecutions against Roma were very disorganised and incoherent (for example, many Roma were still fighting in the army in various countries while their families were being deported).

Teachers can freely access the resources on Roma resistance developed by ERIAC and available online at <https://eriac.org/re-thinking-roma-resistance/>. These resources include:

1. *Stories of resistance* – real life individual stories of Roma bravery and heroism, stories of over 40 women and men, organised by country;
2. *Sites of resistance* – an interactive map with places across Europe that commemorate events of Roma resistance;
3. *Rethinking Roma Resistance throughout History: Recounting Stories of Strength and Bravery* – a book edited by Anna Mirga-Kruszelnicka and Jekatyerina Dunajeva, with chapters written by a diverse group of researchers;

4. *Roma Heroes Game* – an educational board game featuring real-life stories of 24 Roma s/heroes.

### Description of the activities:

1. The teacher invites the students to a brainstorming session around the word “resistance”. The word is written on the board or a shared document and the teacher or a volunteer student writes around it the ideas expressed by the students.
2. The students are asked to work in four groups. Each group receives one example of resistance from Handout 1, with the task to read the example and discuss it, in order for each member of the group to understand it and be able to present it to another group that has not read it.
3. New groups are made, of four students each, with each student having received a different example of resistance. In the groups, the students share what they learnt, so that all members of the group become familiarised with all the forms of resistance presented in the handout.
4. All the groups come together and the teacher guides a discussion based on the following questions:
  - a. Were you aware of these forms of Roma resistance?
  - b. Did anything surprise you in these examples? What?
  - c. Why do you think motivated people to resist?
  - d. Are you aware of other forms/examples of resistance than the ones we discussed? Which ones?
  - e. What can we learn from Roma resisters?
  - f. How can we apply this learning into everyday life?
  - g. Going back to your initial understanding of resistance, would you add/change anything?
5. As a follow-up assignment, the students can individually choose one aspect of Roma resistance (for example, a specific uprising, escape attempt, partisan group, or rescuer) and research it further. They can then write a short essay or create a presentation that could be used as part of a commemoration event.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> A proposal about organising a commemoration event with the students is presented in the activity Remembrance.

## Handout 1 – Forms of Resistance

### 1. Uprisings

One of the most symbolic acts of Roma resistance is the uprising in the Auschwitz-Birkenau camp. According to survivors, the Nazis were planning to liquidate the Camp Section BIId, where Roma were incarcerated, on 16 May 1944 in a mass execution of all 6 000 Roma in the camp. Learning about the planned action, Roma prisoners refused to attend the daily roll call and instead fortified themselves in their barracks. They improvised weapons from any available material, signalling their intent to resist any attempt at extermination. Their brave resistance forced the Nazi guards to rethink their approach, preventing the death of any Roma in the gas chambers that day. The Nazi leadership, wary of a more extensive insurrection, subsequently relocated 3 000 Roma to different camps and murdered the other 3 000 on the night of 2-3 August 1944 in gas chambers.

This audacious act of resistance on 16 May 1944 is now commemorated as Romani Resistance Day, a poignant reminder of the Roma and Sinti communities' undying spirit and their fight for survival, dignity, and humanity against the backdrop of one of history's darkest periods.

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### 2. Escaping attempts

Attempts to escape from camps, ghettos, pogroms or transports to places of extermination show the profound resilience and determination of Roma to regain their freedom and act against the perpetrators. In the archives of Auschwitz-Birkenau camp, there is evidence of 38 Roma and Sinti who managed to escape. Many people who tried to escape were caught and either murdered or sent back to the camp. A higher frequency of escapes happened in Transnistria, but it was not just physical escapes that marked their resistance; many Roma sought refuge in written appeals, writing letters to authorities requesting a review of their families' deportation orders, emphasising their significant contributions to Romanian society and the war effort prior to their untimely and unjust deportations.

Moreover, organised large-scale escape attempts were plotted, several of which were successful. One of them was in France, where the camp at Arc-et-Senans had to be shut down in September 1943, as a vast number of Roma inmates skilfully managed to break free.

### 3. Partisans

During the Second World War, Roma men and women took part in the resistance movement and partisan units. Most Roma in the resistance movement had escaped from ghettos, camps, sites of pogroms, massacres, or from transport in transit to extermination sites.

The partisans fought in organised groups, often acting under the cover of darkness and with the help of the local population. They had little resources and weapons but were able to make a significant contribution to the fight against the Nazis. The partisans conducted systematic attacks on the Nazis' communication network and small-scale warfare operations, published underground newspapers, provided intelligence on the Nazi army, etc.

Roma partisans gained a reputation for being great, brave, courageous, loyal and disciplined soldiers. Roma women and youth acted mainly as lookouts, emissaries, messengers and couriers, as spies that supplied valuable information about the number of soldiers and their weapons.

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### 4. Rescuers

Roma men and women conducted rescue operations for Jewish and Roma children and adults. Here are a couple of examples of their bravery:

Alfreda Markowska, a Polish Roma woman, endured the tragic loss of her parents, siblings, and community members to the brutalities of the Nazis in 1941, and was the sole survivor. Evading capture, she took on the heroic mission of rescuing both Jewish and Roma children from the clutches of the Holocaust. Whenever she received news of a massacre, Alfreda would rush to the scene to search for any survivors. She would then secretly place these children into hiding, secure falsified documents for them, and tirelessly search for willing families or guardians to shelter them. In several cases, she even assumed the role of a guardian herself. It is estimated that through her valiant efforts, Markowska saved at least 50 children from certain death.

Iosif Teifel, a Roma man from Czechoslovakia skilfully orchestrated the hiding of vulnerable individuals from the Mukačevo ghetto, ensuring their temporary safety from the watchful eyes of the Nazis. In addition to this, he made significant strides in providing much-needed food aid to the starving residents of the ghetto. Teifel's bravery and dedication to the cause saw him extending his efforts beyond the ghetto walls, conducting resistance activities against the Nazis.

## Remembrance

### Overview

In this activity the students are engaged in a reflection process about the importance of remembrance and commemoration, as well as in the organisation of a commemorative event.

### Competences for democratic culture addressed:

- Valuing human dignity and human rights
- Valuing democracy, justice, fairness, equality and the rule of law
- Autonomous learning
- Analytical and critical thinking skills
- Empathy
- Flexibility and adaptability
- Linguistic, communicative and plurilingual skills
- Co-operation skills
- Conflict-resolution skills
- Respect
- Civic-mindedness
- Responsibility
- Self-efficacy
- Tolerance of ambiguity
- Knowledge and critical understanding of the world

**Number of participants:** 10-30

**Resources and materials:** Access to the internet; a venue for the event and other materials needed for the commemoration event.

**Duration:** one hour for the first part and 2-3 hours (as well as time to work at home) for the preparation of the event.

### Information for teachers:

Commemoration of historical persecutions is not merely a matter of historical acknowledgment; it is a profound and morally imperative act that honours the memory of the victims while confronting the injustices of the past. The persecution of Roma – and Roma history in general – has often been marginalised and forgotten, lacking the recognition it deserves. This lack of commemoration, coupled with the absence of adequate reparations, has perpetuated a painful legacy of neglect and invisibility.

Remembrance is a powerful countermeasure against this historical injustice. When done properly, remembrance can serve as a warning signal: it can show us the power of ideologies, of human action and inaction, of racism and intolerance, and it can teach us to be upstanders and to take action in order to promote and protect human rights. On the other hand, empty and meaningless commemorations can serve as a stark reminder of the insufficient attention paid to the suffering of Roma. Superficial observances devoid of substance can trivialise the immense suffering endured

by the Roma community. Therefore, genuine and meaningful commemorations must involve more than just symbolic gestures. They should encompass education, awareness, and advocacy for the rights and dignity of Roma.

It is essential to remember the persecution and genocide of Roma continually, transcending specific dates or occasions. Keeping the memory alive serves as a constant reminder of the enduring need to combat discrimination, hatred, and prejudice in all forms and to strive for a world where the atrocities of the past are never repeated, and where the dignity and rights of all individuals, regardless of their background, are safeguarded and celebrated.

The educational process described below is an example of a project-based learning activity focused on the commemoration of the Roma Holocaust. Based on the same structure, the teachers can organise activities commemorating other historical persecutions of Roma such as Roma slavery, round-ups, pogroms, etc.

### **Description of the activity:**

#### *Part I*

1. The teacher informs the students that recognition of the Roma Holocaust has come very late and there is still much work to be done to ensure acknowledgment of responsibility from the different governments and a dignified commemoration of the Roma Holocaust. An important figure in the process of receiving recognition for the crimes committed against Roma during the Holocaust was Romani Rose. His grandparents were both murdered by the Nazis. His grandfather, Anton Rose, was murdered in Auschwitz and his grandmother, Lisetta Rose, died of debilitation in Ravensbrück, a concentration camp exclusively for women. His father, Oskar Rose, was able to avoid arrest and even to help his brother Vinzenz escape from Neckarelz concentration camp. Romani Rose could not accept the fact that there was no official recognition of the crimes committed against Roma. In 1980, at age 30, he took part in a week-long hunger strike at the Dachau camp memorial together with Vinzenz and 10 other Roma from Germany, demanding full “moral rehabilitation”. Their action was successful, leading to acknowledgement from the German Chancellor that the crimes against Roma were racially founded and amounted to genocide.
2. The students are engaged in a discussion based on the following questions:
  - a. Why do you think it is important to officially acknowledge the Roma Holocaust?
  - b. Why do you think the German government – and other governments – did not want to do this?
  - c. What do you think motivated Romani Rose and the other Roma to risk their lives in a week-long hunger strike in order to obtain the official acknowledgment?
3. The teacher invites the students to work in groups of 4-5 people to research information regarding the steps that were taken to acknowledge and commemorate the Roma Holocaust. The following questions can guide the students’ research:
  - a. When was the first official acknowledgment of the Roma Holocaust in Germany? What about other countries?

- b. Find out what “reparations” mean in relation to the Roma Holocaust. What legislation was passed for reparations and when?
  - c. What memorials and museums exist to commemorate the Roma Holocaust?
  - d. Are there public events to commemorate the Roma Holocaust in our country?
4. The students can start this research in class and continue at home.
5. The students present the results of their research and teacher engages the class in a discussion based on the following questions:
  - a. How was the process of searching for information about the commemoration of the Roma Holocaust?
  - b. Were you surprised by the information you found?
  - c. Were people not aware of this legislation or was it very difficult to prove that they were victims of the Roma Holocaust?
  - d. There are very few memorials and mentions of Roma in the museums. What could be done to change this? Who should do it?

## Part II

1. In this part the students are invited to plan and organise a remembrance event. Using the project-based learning approach, the teacher can guide the students in the following process:

➤ *Selection of a type of commemorative event*

The students decide whether they want to organise a public event at school, outside of school, online, etc. They select a date that is meaningful.

➤ *Selection of the topics to address in the event*

The students discuss and decide what they want to include in the event: testimonies, presentations, posters, poems, music, etc.

➤ *Research and preparation*

The students work in groups to prepare for the event. They research the information they need and prepare the content of the event. In this phase, the teacher can help the students interact with a historian of the Roma Holocaust, a second or third generation survivor of the Roma Holocaust or a Roma activist. The students put together the different parts of the event and rehearse their roles. They invite other students and teachers from the school, parents, other members of the community.

➤ *Commemoration event*

The students organise the event and present their work.

• *Reflection*

Students are engaged in a reflection process that guides them to discuss:

- The way in which they organised the process
- The result of their work
- Lessons learnt and ideas for organising future similar events.





## Roma after the Second World War

### Overview

In this activity the students learn about the beginning of the Roma movement and about Roma culture<sup>40</sup>.

### Competences for democratic culture addressed:

- Valuing cultural diversity
- Analytical and critical thinking skills
- Skills of listening and observing
- Openness to cultural otherness and to other beliefs, world views and practices
- Respect
- Civic-mindedness
- Knowledge and critical understanding of the world

**Number of participants:** 10-30

**Resources and materials:** Handout 1; preparation of the meeting with a member of a Roma community or for the visit to a Roma art exhibition, performance, etc.;

**Duration:** 1 hour for the first part and 1 hour for the second part (possibly longer for the option of visiting an art exhibition or participating in a cultural event).

### Information for teachers:

This series of activities includes a meeting with a member of the Roma community or a visit to a Roma cultural event. The speaker can be invited to school, or the students can visit a Roma association and attend the presentation there. If the teacher chooses to take the students on a visit to a Roma cultural event, prior research about that event is needed. It is important to ensure that the event is indeed organised by Roma artists, and it is not a form of cultural appropriation. Cultural appropriation takes place when members of a dominant group adopt cultural elements of a non-dominant group in an exploitative, disrespectful, or stereotypical way. For example, when members of a dominant group are profiting financially or socially from the culture of a non-dominant group; when they are oversimplifying that culture or treat it like a joke; when they are separating a cultural element from its original meaning. In case a physical visit or event is not possible, teachers might consider online/virtual exhibitions or tools. ERIAC offers many online Roma exhibitions and cultural events such as musical events<sup>41</sup>.

Unfortunately, many people in Europe still hold various stereotypes and prejudices against Roma. These are preventing them from engaging in authentic dialogue with Roma. An encounter with Roma persons who can present and discuss aspects of their culture gives students the opportunity to engage in intercultural dialogue and develop their appreciation of cultural diversity and respect

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<sup>40</sup> This activity is used with permission and slight adaptations from *Learning from the Past, Acting for the Future – An Interdisciplinary Approach to Holocaust, Human Rights and Intercultural Education* (2022): <https://www.toli.us/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Handbook-Learning-from-the-Past-Acting-for-the-Future.pdf>

<sup>41</sup> Available on ERIAC YouTube Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCHezmRtxs8Ekxpg7J2T9RwQ>

for human dignity. It is also a good opportunity for Roma students to feel represented, to learn more about their own culture and community and, possibly, to have role-models.

Teachers may consult the following resources to learn more about organised actions of Roma to ensure respect for human rights:

- Beginnings and Growth of transnational Movements of Roma to achieve Civil Rights after the Holocaust, an article by Thomas Acton:  
<https://www.romarchive.eu/en/roma-civil-rights-movement/beginnings-and-growth-transnational-movements-roma/>
- World Roma Congress: <https://worldromacongressart.com>

## Description of the activities:

### Part I

1. The teacher informs the students that they are going to engage in a series of activities to learn about Roma after the Second World War.
2. The students are invited to work in groups of 4-5 people. Each group receives Handout 1 with the task to read the text and answer the questions. The students can search for the answers online if they do not know them already. After the students discuss the text and the questions in small groups, they are invited to share their answers with the entire class. If there are four groups, each group can share the answer to two of the eight questions, in order to cover all the questions and to not have students repeat what was already said.
3. The teacher engages the class in a discussion based on the following questions:
  - a. Were you previously aware of some of the things we discussed today? Which ones?
  - b. Did anything surprise you in what you learned today?
  - c. Is there something you did not understand? What?
  - d. What else would you like to know about Roma culture?
4. The task received by the students depends on what is being planned for the next part. If the next part consists of:
  - *a meeting with a member of a Roma community*, the teacher encourages the students to write down the things they would like to know about Roma culture, about the Roma community in their town/country or in Europe/the world and to formulate them as questions for the member of the Roma community they will meet.
  - *visiting an exhibition of Roma art, attending a Roma cultural event, etc.*, the teacher writes down what the students express they would like to know and prepares information to discuss with the students in the third part of the activity.

### Part II

- A. *Meeting with a member of a Roma community*
5. A meeting with a member of a Roma community is carefully planned by the teacher. The format of the meeting can be either a presentation followed by questions and answers, or it

can start directly with questions from the students, in which case the speaker can add things that were not brought into discussion by the students at the end or throughout the discussion.

6. After the meeting, the teacher engages the students in a reflection process based on the following questions:
  - a. What was the most interesting thing you learned from the discussion with [name of person]?
  - b. Did anything surprise you during our meeting?
  - c. Has your understanding of Roma communities changed after this meeting?
  - d. What else would you like to know about Roma communities? Where can you learn this information?
  - e. Who else do you think should learn about Roma communities? Can you help them learn?
  
- B. *Visiting an exhibition of Roma art or attending a Roma cultural event*
  - a. How did you feel during the visit/event?
  - b. What was the most interesting things you learnt from this experience?
  - c. What part(s) surprised you or made you think?
  - d. Has your understanding of the Roma communities changed after this experience?
  - e. What else would you like to know about Roma culture? Where can you learn this information?
  - f. Who else do you think should learn about Roma culture? Can you help them learn?

## Handout 1

### Roma Congress<sup>42</sup>

In the 1960s the Roma movement started to be more active at the international level. In 1971 the First World Roma Congress was held in Orpington, near London. It was attended by participants from 14 countries separated by the Iron Curtain, who travelled to this unique event to affirm their common ethnic identity. Tentative steps had been taken before the Second World War, at a 1931 Congress in Bucharest. The Roma flag was adopted at the 1971 Congress, as well as the Roma anthem, *Gelem, Gelem*. The flag consists of a blue and green background (representing heaven and earth) and a 16-spike red chakra (symbolizing the itinerant tradition of Roma and an homage to India). The motto *Opre Roma!* became the political credo of the Roma movement and its fight for social justice and equality. Among the aspects discussed at the Congress was the need to challenge the use of words like *cigani*, *Zigeuner*, *gipsy*, which have signified for centuries denigration, marginalisation, and exclusion. The usage of the word *Roma* was to replace these misnomers. To date, nine Roma Congresses have been organised in different parts of Europe.

1. What is a misnomer?
2. What does the word *Roma* mean in Romani language?
3. What words do you know in Romani language?
4. What does *Opre Roma* mean?
5. What are the words of the Roma anthem?
6. Why is there an homage to India on the Roma flag?
7. When is the Roma Nation Day celebrated? Why was this date chosen?
8. What was the Iron Curtain?

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<sup>42</sup> This text is based on the Council of Europe's Roma Factsheets: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/roma-and-travellers/roma-history-factsheets> and on the text written by Grattan Puxon as Harvard FXB Guest Writer: <https://fxb.harvard.edu/2019/04/25/london-1971-the-first-world-roma-congress/>

## Antigypsyism Today

### Overview

In this activity the students are engaged in a reflection process about present-day human rights violations and discrimination faced by Roma.

### Competences for democratic culture addressed:

- Valuing human dignity and human rights
- Valuing cultural diversity
- Valuing democracy, justice, fairness, equality and the rule of law
- Analytical and critical thinking skills
- Empathy
- Respect
- Civic-mindedness
- Knowledge and critical understanding of the world

**Number of participants:** 10-30

**Resources and materials:** Handout 1 – one copy per student; access to the internet

**Duration:** The duration of this activity varies depending on the amount of time allocated for the research part. It can run for two hours (one hour for each part of the activity - with the possibility of doing only the first part) or for 4-5 hours (if students are given more time to research information by engaging with various entities or by conducting interviews).

### Information for teachers:

This activity works better with students who already have basic knowledge about human rights. If the activity runs for a longer period of time, intermediary meetings (between the time when the task was assigned and when the presentation is done by the students) are used to discuss with the students their preliminary findings, to identify the obstacles they face in their research process, as well as ways to overcome those obstacles and to offer suggestions for further research areas.

There are many sources the students can access to find information, such as reports from the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, OSCE, country reports, shadow reports, studies carried out by universities and Roma organisations, the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights, etc.

Teachers can learn more about antigypsyism, as well as current attempts to combat this form of racism, at the following links:

- IHRA Working Definition of Antigypsyism/Anti-Roma Racism:  
<https://holocaustremembrance.com/resources/working-definition-antigypsyism-anti-roma-discrimination>
- Antigypsyism – A Reference Paper, published by Alliance Against Antigypsyism:  
<https://antigypsyism.eu/reference-paper/>

## Description of the activity:

### *Part I*

1. The teacher discusses with the students that antigypsyism did not disappear after the Second World War. Many people still harbour prejudices against Roma today, and the discrimination faced by Roma in education, employment, housing and other areas of life prevents them from fully enjoying their human rights.
2. The teacher asks the students to form groups of 4-5 people. Each group receives a handout with the abridged version of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Handout 1) and has the task to identify concrete situations in which Roma are facing human rights violations and discrimination nowadays. Each group can research information related to one or more rights.
3. For this activity, the students should have access to the internet, in order to search for articles, reports, etc. The students might also choose to call certain local/national institutions or to meet with experts and human rights activists. The students continue their research at home.

### *Part II*

4. Each group presents the results of their research and the teacher engages the class in a debriefing discussion based on the following questions:
  - a. Was it difficult to identify information about human rights violations and discrimination faced by Roma? Why?
  - b. Were you surprised by the information you found?
  - c. How has this activity contributed to shaping your understanding about human rights and about the discrimination faced by Roma?
  - d. Do you think that most people in our society are aware of their human rights? Do they know what to do when their rights are being violated?
  - e. What could be done to make people more aware of human rights?
5. The teacher concludes that we can all do something to combat the discrimination faced by Roma, from very small things like becoming informed and aware of our own stereotypes and prejudices, to bigger actions such as influencing national legislation. There are various activists for Roma rights, in each country. The teacher may choose to present the work of some of the Roma and non-Roma activists in order to inspire the students to become active citizens themselves.

## The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

(Summary)

<b>Article 1</b> Right to Equality	<b>Article 16</b> Right to Marriage and Family
<b>Article 2</b> Freedom from Discrimination	<b>Article 17</b> Right to Own Property
<b>Article 3</b> Right to Life, Liberty, Personal Security	<b>Article 18</b> Freedom of Belief and Religion
<b>Article 4</b> Freedom from Slavery	<b>Article 19</b> Freedom of Opinion and Information
<b>Article 5</b> Freedom from Torture and Degrading Treatment	<b>Article 20</b> Right of Peaceful Assembly and Association
<b>Article 6</b> Right to Recognition as a Person before the Law	<b>Article 21</b> Right to Participate in Government and in Free Elections
<b>Article 7</b> Right to Equality before the Law	<b>Article 22</b> Right to Social Security
<b>Article 8</b> Right to Remedy by Competent Tribunal	<b>Article 23</b> Right to Desirable Work and to Join Trade Unions
<b>Article 9</b> Freedom from Arbitrary Arrest and Exile	<b>Article 24</b> Right to Rest and Leisure
<b>Article 10</b> Right to Fair Public Hearing	<b>Article 25</b> Right to Adequate Living Standard
<b>Article 11</b> Right to be Considered Innocent until Proven Guilty	<b>Article 26</b> Right to Education
<b>Article 12</b> Freedom from Interference with Privacy, Family, Home and Correspondence	<b>Article 27</b> Right to Participate in the Cultural Life of the Community
<b>Article 13</b> Right to Free Movement in and out of the Country	<b>Article 28</b> Right to a Social Order that Articulates this Document
<b>Article 14</b> Right to Asylum in other Countries from Persecution	<b>Article 29</b> Community Duties Essential to Free and Full Development



<b>Article 15</b> Right to a Nationality and the Freedom to Change It	<b>Article 30</b> Freedom from State or Personal Interference in the above Rights
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## Additional Resources for Teachers

- Roma History Fact Sheets  
<https://www.coe.int/en/web/roma-and-travellers/roma-history-factsheets>
- Barvalipe Roma Online University - Courses and Masterclasses:  
<https://eriac.org/barvalipe-roma-online-university/>
- RomArchive - Digital Archive of Roma  
<https://www.romarchive.eu/en/>
- Encyclopedia of the Nazi Genocide of Sinti and Roma in Europe:  
<https://encyclopaedia-gsr.eu/eng/>
- Forgotten Genocide  
<https://romasinti.eu>
- The Fate of European Roma and Sinti During the Holocaust  
<https://www.romasintigenocide.eu/en/home>
- Compass: Manual for Human Rights Education with Young People  
<https://www.coe.int/en/web/compass>
- Mirrors - Manual on combating antigypsyism through human rights education  
<https://www.coe.int/en/web/youth-roma/mirrors-manual-on-combating-antigypsyism-through-human-rights-education>
- Right to Remember – A Handbook for Education with Young People on the Roma Genocide  
<https://www.coe.int/en/web/youth-roma/right-to-remember1>

- Learning from the Past, Acting for the Future – An Interdisciplinary approach to Holocaust and Human Rights Education

<https://www.intercultural.ro/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Handbook-Learning-from-the-Past-Acting-for-the-Future.pdf>

- Voices of Victims

<https://www.romarchive.eu/en/voices-of-the-victims/>

- United States Holocaust Memorial Museum – Genocide of European Roma (1939-1945)

<https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/genocide-of-european-roma-gypsies-1939-1945>

- The Roma Holocaust/Roma Genocide in Southeastern Europe (Between Oblivion, Acknowledgment, and Distortion)

<https://fxb.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/2464/2022/11/The-Roma-Holocaust-Roma-Genocide-in-Southeastern-Europe-Report-1.pdf>

- The Genocide and Persecution of Roma and Sinti. Bibliography and Historiographical Review

[https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/sites/default/files/bibliography\\_and\\_historiographical\\_review.pdf](https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/sites/default/files/bibliography_and_historiographical_review.pdf)

- European Holocaust Memorial Day for Sinti and Roma

<https://www.roma-sinti-holocaust-memorial-day.eu>

- Tutorials from the Histolab Tutorial Series, created in partnership with ERIAC

<https://histolab.coe.int/activities/tutorials>