



**5<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE  
DIALOGUE WITH ROMA AND TRAVELLER CIVIL SOCIETY**

*Strasbourg, 20-21 June 2018  
Room 3, Palais de l'Europe*

**ROMA AND TRAVELLER POLITICAL PARTICIPATION**  
*Presence, Empowerment and Influence in Political and Public Life*

**DRAFT AGENDA**

**Wednesday, 20 June 2018**

**08.45 - 09.15**



**Registration of participants**

**09.15-09.45**

**Welcome and Opening Addresses**

Chair: **Tatjana Andjelić**, Chair of the Ad hoc Committee of Experts on Roma and Traveller Issues (CAHROM)

- **Snežana Samardžić-Marković**, Director General of Democracy, Council of Europe
- **Ambassador Božidarka Krunić**, Permanent Representative of Montenegro to the Council of Europe, Chair of the Committee of Ministers' Rapporteur Group on Social and Health Questions (GR-SOC)
- **Alen Tahiri**, Director of the Government Office for Human Rights and Rights of Minorities in Croatia on behalf of the Croatian chairmanship of the CoE Committee of Ministers

**09.45 – 10.15**

**PLENARY SESSION 1: Setting the scene**

*Effective participation of Roma and Travellers in political and public life is an essential component of a peaceful and democratic society. Experience in Europe and elsewhere has shown that, in order to secure the right to effective participation, governments often need to establish specific arrangements for national minorities. This session will identify the opportunities for Roma to have an effective voice at the local, national and international level.*

Chair: **Hallvard Gorseth**, Head of Anti-discrimination Department, Directorate General of Democracy, Council of Europe

- **Introduction: "Solving the Roma Participation Puzzle: Between Presence and Influence"** by **Dr Aidan McGarry**, Loughborough University, London
- **Dan Doghi**, Senior Adviser ODIHR Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues: **Participation of Roma and Sinti, including women and youth, in public and political life**

*Discussion*

10.15 – 10.30



Tea/Coffee break

10.30 – 11.30

Topics to be discussed:

- What are the international standards for minority political participation?
- To what extent are national authorities subscribing to these standards in their design and implementation of political processes, in particular Roma involvement in decision-making at all levels?
- Beyond standard setting, what practical steps can authorities/political parties take to promote Roma political participation.

11.30 – 13.00

Topics to be discussed:

- Is it enough to give people formal equalities or whether we need to address the structural barriers which prevent minority groups from making full use of their equal rights?
- Should Roma and Travellers be content with physical presence in a parliament or a consultative body, based on the assumption that representation is meaningful or effective? Does it mean that their voice will be heard?

**PLENARY SESSION 2: Securing political presence and representation for Roma and Travellers in politics, public life and decision making mechanisms.**

**Plenary Session Outcomes:** Roma and Travellers lack adequate representation and participation in national and local public administration institutions and in political life. Ensuring their effective participation not only ensures their participation in decision-making on issues directly affecting them, but also helps to ensure that society as a whole benefits from their contribution and truly reflects its diversity. This session will provide an overview of key policy initiatives of the Council of Europe on achieving better Romani participation in decision making mechanisms at all levels.

**Facilitator:** Thorsten Afflerbach, Head of the Division of Roma and Travellers Team, Council of Europe

Speakers:

- **Jutta Gützkow**, Head of the Good Governance Division: **Civil Participation in Decision-Making and Democratic Governance**
- **John Warmisham**, Congress Spokesperson on Roma and Traveller Issues: **European Alliance of Cities and Regions for the inclusion of Roma and Travellers**
- **Hedina Sijercic**, Member of the Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages of the Council of Europe
- **Mary-Ann Hennessey**, Head of the Civil Society Division, Council of Europe
- **Carolina Lasen Diaz**, Head of Gender Equality Unit: **Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023: Achieving balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making**

*Discussion*

**PANEL DISCUSSION: Roma and Travellers in the local, national and European political and public life sphere. *The Odyssey from right to influence***

**Session Outcomes:** Although the engagement of Roma and Travellers in political and public life has noticeably increased over the past decade, marginalised citizens still face considerable obstacles in securing political presence, sustaining representation and achieving empowerment and influence. This session will provide the opportunity to identifying appropriate long-term strategies and tools of political participation and representation in local and national political and decision-making bodies.

**Facilitator:** Tatjana Andjelić, Chair of the Ad hoc Committee of Experts on Roma and Traveller Issues (CAHROM)

Speakers:

- **Cristina Milagre**, Advisor of the Secretary of State for Citizenship and Equality, Portugal
- **Samka Ibraimoski**, Member of the Parliament, “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”
- **Ondřej Poduška**, Program Manager, National Democratic Institute, Slovakia : **Evaluation of Roma Political Voice, Space and Accountability in Slovakia**

- **Sara Gimenez**, Director of the Department of Equality and Fight against Discrimination, FSG, Member of the European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) : **Initiatives taken in Spain**
- **Gheorghe Raducanu**, former Member of Parliament, Romania

Discussion

13.00 – 14.30



Lunch break

14.30 – 16.00

Topics to be discussed:

- *What practical steps can authorities /political parties take to promote Roma political participation*

### PLENARY SESSION 3: Enhancing equality of opportunities and outcomes for Roma and Traveller participation in politics, public life and decision making mechanisms

**Plenary Session Outcomes:** Various European and international organisations conduct a range of activities aimed at increasing the participation of citizens - especially women and youth - in the democratic process, while also paying particular attention to under-represented groups such as Roma and Travellers. This session will present activities implemented at local, national and international level aiming in assisting governments become more responsive, responsible, and representative.

**Moderator:** **Chrisoula Arcoudis**, Roma and Travellers Team, Council of Europe

Speakers:

- **Ivan Ivanov**, Director of the European Roma Information Office (ERIO): **Barriers to access political participation and the consequences of the absent of the political arena**
- **Orhan Galjus**, European Romani Union: **Lobbying and success of Roma political "leaders": The future battle for pan-European Roma movement**
- **Michael Remmert**, Directorate of Democratic Participation, Coordinator of the Schools of Political Studies: **Schools of Political Studies**
- **Tommaso Vitale**, Centre for European Studies and Policy (Sciences Po): **RONEPP - Roma Networks and Political Participation**

Discussion

### PANEL DISCUSSION: Civil Society Actors in Policy and Public decision making mechanisms

**Session Outcomes:** Increasing the capacity of NGOs involved in the process of improving Roma situation and identify key parameters that strengthen Roma interests in the political and public sphere.

### Presentations by participating NGOs and Experts in the Roma Civil Monitoring Project

- **Marie Pichault**, Centre de Médiation des Gens du Voyage et des Roms en Wallonie (CMGVRW), Belgium: **Mainstreaming Roma inclusion in public authorities**
- **Manolis Rantis**, ROMNET & HEROMACT, Greece: **Mainstreaming Roma inclusion across local authorities**

Discussion

16.00 – 16.30



Tea/coffee break

16.30 – 18.00

Topics to be discussed:

- How is youth political participation different from political participation in general?
- Why is it important to foster youth political participation?
- What characterizes effective and meaningful youth political participation?
- What prevents meaningful and effective youth political participation?
  
- Review and discuss the legal framework for youth participation;
- Consider proposals for a youth-friendly legal framework;
- Campaign for changes.

**PLENARY SESSION 4: Roma and Travellers youth political participation**

**Introduction:** Opportunities for youth to participate in political processes depend largely on the political and cultural context. A democratic environment can be more favourable to participation in general. For the most part, promoting youth participation needs to be geared towards achieving levels relative to those of the rest of the population.

**Facilitator:** Rui Gomes, Head of Education and training Division, Youth Department, Council of Europe

**Supporting young Roma and Travellers to increase their participation in public and political life creates prospects for a better and more inclusive future for all citizens.**

Key - Speakers:

- **Olivia Montgomery**, Former member of the Liverpool schools' Parliament: **Enhancing Youth citizenship across Europe**

Speakers:

- **Panagiotis Charitos**, Vice Mayor of Karditsa, Greece
- **Atanas Stoyanov**, former Municipal Councillor, Bulgaria

**Meaningful youth participation and leadership require young people-led organizations have opportunities, capacities, and benefit from an enabling environment and relevant evidence based programmes and policies at all levels.**

Speakers:

- **Daniel Grebeldinger**, Nevo Parudmos (ternYpe), Romania: **Participation and mobilization of young Roma as active European citizens – a Wish**
- **Dragan Radosavljevic**, Institute for political participation of Roma: **capacity building of future young Roma politician**

**Short Presentations by participating NGOs and Experts on promoting Roma Youth participation**

- **Elli Christoula**, KEMEA - Greece **"I-do: a youth-led alliance, building @ctive Roma citizens"**
- **Loredana Dinu**, Group of the European Youth for Change – Romania: **Young Roma Women leadership**

Discussion

18.00

**End of the First Working Day**

09.30 - 11.00

Topics to be discussed:

- What factors are promoting or undermining the full and effective inclusion of Roma women in political participation processes?
- How political parties can design programmes that can accommodate the participation of Roma and Traveller women in securing their participation?

**PLENARY SESSION 5: Pathways for Women Groups in Political participation**

**Plenary Session Outcomes:** Roma and Traveller women, still play minimal roles in general political governance and decision-making processes, despite evidence of improved quality of democratic processes from mainstream women political participation. As seen in some member States they continue to struggle for political voice in processes that are fundamental to state democracy. Furthermore they face discrimination and exclusion on multiple levels. This session will identify the factors to full and effective inclusion of women in political participation processes and how to transform those challenges into concrete actions.

**Facilitator:** Robert Rustem, Outreach officer, Roma and Travellers Team

Speakers:

- **François Friedrich**, Electoral Assistance Division: **Regional study on Women's Political representation**
- **Valerie Poppe-Muess**, Project Manager, Roma and Travellers Team: **Presentation of the outcomes and recommendations of the 6<sup>th</sup> International Roma Women's Conference**
- **Christina Chalilopoulou**, KEDE Greece: **Understanding the issues of Roma and Traveller Women's participation and leadership at European level**
- **Sonja Barbul**, Member of the Management Board of the Democratic Party (Kovin-Serbia): **Understanding the issues of Roma and Traveller Women's participation and leadership at the local and national level**

**Short Presentations by participating NGOs and Experts**

- **Christina Raducan**, Roma Women Network, Republic of Moldova
- **Manjola Veizi**, Roma Women Rights Centre, Albania
- **Zemfira Kondur**, Roma Women Fund "Chiricli", Ukraine

Discussion

11.00 -11.30



**Tea/coffee break**

11.30 – 13.00

**PLENARY SESSION 6: Taking stock of issues discussed during the 5<sup>th</sup> Dialogue Meeting: Preliminary Conclusions and Commitments to moving forward**

**Outcomes:** Participants will take stock of issues discussed during the meeting and identify key action priorities for further development in the area of Roma and Traveller political participation. The session has the aim of interpreting the outcomes of the 5<sup>th</sup> Dialogue meeting into concerted further efforts between the Council of Europe and Civil Society.

**Moderator:** Michael Guet, Head of the I-Care Unit of the Roma and Travellers Team, Council of Europe

- Presentation of the outcomes of the meeting. Prioritising key follow up activities

**Discussion**

- **Closing Remarks:** **Thorsten Afflerbach**, Head of Division for the Roma and Travellers Team, Council of Europe

13.00

**End of the meeting**