

## ROMA YOUTH TOGETHER 2022

A seminar on Roma youth participation and empowerment  
- on the occasion of the International Roma Day –

6-7-8 April 2022, European Youth Centre, Strasbourg



# Programme



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



# PROGRAMME

## Tuesday, 5 April

Arrival of participants

19:00 Dinner

20:30 Welcome evening at Belgian Bar

## Wednesday, 6 April - RECONNECTION

### 09:30 **Opening and introductions**

Welcome statements by:

- Rui Gomes, Youth Department of the Council of Europe
- Timea Junghaus, European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture
- Semran Sulejman, Phiren Amenca
- Marcos Andrade, Roma and Travellers Team of the Council of Europe

Expectations of participants and partners

Programme of the seminar

11:00 *Coffee break*

11:30 **Exploring identify and diversity** of Roma youth in the group

13:00 *Lunch break*

14:30 **Sharing experiences on the impact of the crises**

16:00 *Coffee break*

16:30 **Priorities for action** – identifying and discussing measures and proposals to work with Roma youth for participation and resilience

18:00 *Reflection Group*

19:00 Dinner

## Thursday, 7 April – REFLECTION

09:30 Opening and programme of the day

09:40 **Youth Participation** – exploration of the concept from theory to action

11:00 *Coffee break*

11:30 **Roma Youth Participation:** resources and good practices, with:

- ERGO Network and EU perspective– Carmen Tanasie
- Phiren Amenca – Semran Sulejman
- ERIAC – Aleksandra Aleksandrović
- Advisory Council on Youth – Georgina Laboda
- National level - by participants

13:00 *Lunch break*

14:30 **Roma Youth Participation in the Council of Europe**

15:30 *Coffee break*

16:00 **Content of the future Recommendation** on Roma youth participation

18:00 *Reflection Group*

19:00 Dinner

21:00 Evening activity: Film screening: "Roma Pride"

### **Friday, 8 April– ACTION**

09:30 Opening and programme of the day

09:40 **Upcoming projects and initiatives in the Council of Europe:**

- European Youth Foundation, with Mara Georgescu, Senior educational support officer,
- The youth campaign for revitalising democracy, with Anca-Ruxandra Pandea

10:45 *Coffee break*

**11:15 International Roma Day:** what and how to celebrate

Presentation and exchange of the programme and purpose of the celebrations

12:00 Meeting and exchange with Bjørn Berge, Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe

12:30 Casting of flowers, in the presence of Council of Europe officials and Roma activists

13:00 *Lunch break*

14:30 Reflection on the **celebration of International Roma Day:** ideas for future celebrations and actions for Roma youth participation

16:00 *Break*

16:30 *Evaluation and Closing*

19:30 Festive dinner

With musical performance of the group *Di Mauro Swing Jazz*

## CONTEXT

The Youth Sector Strategy 2030 of the Council of Europe aims to create spaces for young people to live together in peaceful and inclusive societies, with special emphasis on allowing young people, including those experiencing any form of discrimination and exclusion, to benefit from opportunities that develop their commitment to and exercise of democratic citizenship. This aim is inter alia implemented by capacity building educational programmes of young multipliers (youth leaders and youth workers).

The Council of Europe Strategic Action Plan for Roma and Traveller Inclusion (2020-2025) concludes that:

*Despite many efforts and some progress made, there is still ample evidence showing that Roma and Travellers in Europe continue to suffer from widespread and persistent anti-Gypsyism, which is recognised as a specific form of racism fuelled by prejudice and stereotypes. In addition, Roma and Travellers remain victims of various forms of discrimination, including school segregation and a forced sedentary lifestyle, as well as hate speech and hate-motivated violence in many member States.*

Deep concern about the rise of antigypsyism, anti-Roma rhetoric and violent attacks against Roma in Europe, as well as challenges related to racism and discrimination together with access to education, training and schooling was also expressed in the Youth Statement created on the occasion of April 8 - International Roma Day 2021 at the conference *Roma Youth Together* organised by the Youth Department and the Roma and Travellers Team of the Council in the framework of the German Presidency of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe and in cooperation with the European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture (ERAC) and in close association with Ternype, the European Roma Grass Roots Organisations Network, Phiren Amenca and the Central Council of German Sinti and Roma.

The study on the results and impact of the Roma Youth Action Plan (2016-2019) has also recognised the importance of double mainstreaming focusing on one side on the inclusion of youth issues in Roma policies and programmes, and on the other side on the inclusion of Roma youth issues in youth policies and programmes. Such inclusion is indispensable to ensure inclusive policies, peaceful societies and to address the concerns of Roma youth. Moreover, to be effective and trustworthy, policies, including youth policy on Roma youth participation need to be based on the involvement of young people in their design and further implementation.

The involvement of Roma young people in all processes that impact their lives through multi-level support in engagement as active citizens were also made central in the Roma youth field by the preparation of the Committee of Ministers' Recommendation on Roma youth.

The Joint Council on Youth intends to further support the participation and inclusion of Roma young people in shaping policies and programmes which address them. The seminar Roma Youth Together 2022 remediates this by connecting stakeholders in the youth and human rights fields to the task of addressing persisting challenges to the participation of Roma young people in decision-making processes. It will have a special focus on as the capacity building of Roma youth and their involvement in setting thematic priorities and guidelines in the area of Roma youth participation in the present and future programming period.

In 2021, due to a pandemic, the activities with the participation of the Roma youth could not be held in person. Instead, an online conference *ROMA YOUTH: Together for Emancipation and Empowerment* was held with a high level of engagement of the partner organisations

working in the Roma youth participation field. After two years of ongoing restrictions related to the Covid-19 pandemic, young people have a deep longing to learn together, exchange challenges, and communicate in person after long months of virtual gathering, with no presential meetings.

## **ABOUT THE 2022 SEMINAR**

The seminar *Roma Youth Together 2022* will bring together 30 young people who are youth leaders or youth workers in Roma and Travellers communities. The seminar will take place in the European Youth Centre Strasbourg on 6-8 April 2022. All participants are expected to attend in person, subject to the evolution of the covid-related protocols on travel and meetings. The seminar is organised by the Youth Department and Roma and Travellers Team of the Council of Europe in cooperation with Phiren Amenca International, ERGO Network and the European Roma Institute of Arts and Culture.

## **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

The seminar aims to re-connect Roma youth leaders with European youth policy processes and exchanges on strategies and priorities for youth empowerment and participation.

Its specific objectives are:

- to reconnect and share recent experiences and challenges that emerged during the recent crisis (in particular Covid-19 pandemic and war in Ukraine) and their impact on Roma youth;
- to collect the input and feedback on the draft of the Recommendation on Roma youth participation including the thematic priorities in this field;
- to identify strategies for empowerment of Roma youth and Roma communities beyond the work on Roma youth participation;
- to reconnect and to strengthen partnerships with European youth organisations and networks working in the field of Roma participation.
- to associate young people with the celebration of the International Roma Day in the Council of Europe;
- to engage participants in the preparation of the youth campaign on revitalising democracy, in particular on the theme of meaningful youth participation;

## **PROGRAMME AND METHODOLOGY**

The methodology of the seminar will be based on the principles of human rights education, peer to peer learning, exchange of practices and dialogue among participants by using the participatory methods of learning, such as working groups and facilitated discussions. It will be structured in connection to the previous work done by the Council of Europe in the area of Roma youth participation.

The activity will ensure space to explore the wider perspectives on Roma youth participation and its challenges in connection to the themes such as democracy, non-discrimination, equality and meaningful youth participation.

The programme will be built on participants' experience, needs and inputs to the draft of the Recommendation on Roma Youth Participation.

There will be three main pillars of the programme:

1. **Reconnection:** aiming to build a safe space of working together and to map challenges faced by young Roma and translate them into priorities of action;
2. **Reflection:** putting together, needs, expectation and resources for strengthening Roma youth participation, notably about youth, human rights and inclusion policies;
3. **Action:** Celebrate International Roma Day and establishing working groups focussing on input on Recommendation and connection with the youth campaign.

### **Working language**

The working language of the programme will be English. Participants must have a sufficient understanding of English to comprehend and complete the application form without assistance from another person and to take part fully and actively in the programme.

### **PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS**

The seminar is designed for Roma young people, Roma youth leaders, trainers or youth workers in Roma communities, representatives of organisations and networks working with Roma communities from all across Europe, who are also:

- Motivated to share experiences and engage in dialogue and cooperation with other participants;
- Active within a Roma organisation or a (Roma) youth organisation;
- Motivated to participate in the seminar and contribute to its objectives;
- Motivated to engage in the working groups established as a follow-up of the seminar in cooperation with other participants of the seminar;
- Able to attend the whole seminar and all its programme elements;
- Able to work/communicate in English.

Priority will be given to participants under 30 years of age. The Council of Europe welcomes applications from all candidates who fulfil the profile above, irrespective of gender, disability, marital or parental status, racial, ethnic or social origin, colour, religion, belief or sexual orientation.

The training seminar will bring together 30 participants from state parties to the European Cultural Convention.