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# ROMA YOUTH TOGETHER 2024

A seminar on Roma youth empowerment and expression for  
the celebration of the International Roma Day

**5 – 8 April 2024**  
European Youth Centre, Strasbourg



**Report**

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EUROPEAN ROMA  
INSTITUTE FOR ARTS  
AND CULTURE

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2024 edition of Roma Youth Together, jointly organised by the [Youth Department](#) and the [Roma and Travellers Team](#) of the Council of Europe, aimed to bring together 28 youth leaders and/or youth workers from Roma and Travellers communities and organisations at the European Youth Centre Strasbourg. The event was designed to foster an environment of sharing and creativity, focusing on empowering participants and involving them on local, regional, and international fronts. It also aimed to provide deeper insights into the work of the Council of Europe in this area and how participants can continue to engage with it post-seminar.

For four days, various activities were co-organised with the European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture ([ERCIAC](#)), [TernYpe](#) - International Roma Youth Network, the European Roma Grassroots Organisations Network ([ERGO](#)) and [Phiren Amenca](#). These activities sought to celebrate Roma culture, with a particular focus on the celebration of International Roma Day. Michael O'Flaherty, the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe, joined the festivities, which included anthems, flowers, and the participation of other authorities and activists.

In addition to the festivities, the 2024 Roma Youth Together focused on the creative engagement of young participants. Through various Creative Workshops, they were able to learn in-depth about tools for expression that would be useful in advocating for their rights. These workshops covered topics such as Media Campaigns, Public Speaking and Speech Writing, Remembrance, Advocacy, Acting and Expression, Music and Singing, and Human Rights Education. This practical approach was a distinguishing feature of this edition of Roma Youth Together, and it was appreciated by participants for its practical application post-seminar.

Through this approach, Roma Youth Together aimed to understand the current issues faced by young Roma, particularly highlighting the need for access to education and training. This need directly impacts other areas, such as representation and active participation of the Roma population at professional and community levels. The program also emphasised the importance of promoting their cultural heritage to combat discrimination and antigypsyism still experienced by young Roma today.

In terms of outcomes, participants noted that the safe space fostered within the group from the outset of the activities positively contributed to their experience. This led to the creation of a network of contacts and future partners in various initiatives aimed at empowering the Roma population with whom the young participants are involved.



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## 1. BACKGROUND

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

The Council of Europe [Strategic Action Plan for Roma and Traveller Inclusion \(2020-2025\)](#) concurs in this priority by noting that:

Roma and Travellers, particularly women and youth encounter a variety of social barriers and prejudices that severely impede their capacity to effectively participate in public and political life. They are consequently largely absent from the local or national political arenas and decision-making processes affecting them. This invisibility undermines their potential to reverse embedded marginalisation and discrimination.

The Action Plan also recognises that there can be several – intersecting - grounds for discrimination at play in a given case and that unfortunately, neither the concept of multiple discrimination nor intersectionality have yet been integrated into legal remedies, policy making or data collection.

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

On 5 April 2023, the Committee of Ministers adopted the [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2023\)4 on Roma Youth Participation](#), urging member states of the Council of Europe to prioritise the substantive, fair, and systematic involvement of young Roma individuals in various societal aspects and decision-making processes. The recommendation emphasises the need to integrate the expressed needs and priorities of young Roma people into all relevant policies and programs, assess existing policies for potential redesigning to enhance Roma youth participation, combat structural anti-Roma racism, ensure the full realisation of fundamental human rights for young Roma, support Roma youth-led organisations and initiatives, and more. The Recommendation was adopted because young Roma people face systematic discrimination in their access to social, economic, cultural, political and civil rights, and that structural racism negatively impacts Roma youth's participation in civic and political processes and structures, self-esteem, pride and well-being, their transition to adulthood, their trust in the fairness of institutions, and their readiness to embrace their roots and cultures.

## 2. ROMA YOUTH TOGETHER – 8 APRIL

The Council of Europe ([Youth Department](#) and [Roma and Travellers Team](#)) has been marking the International Roma Day by, inter alia, bringing together Roma youth organisations and young people at the European Youth Centre to celebrate and put together their concerns and aspirations. This took the form of an online conference in [2021](#), Roma Youth: Together for Emancipation and Empowerment, and two residential seminars in [2022](#) Roma Youth Together - seminar on Roma youth participation and empowerment, and [2023](#) Roma Youth Together - seminar on Roma youth participation and intersectional discrimination.

In 2024 this continued by focusing on youth participation and empowerment of Roma youth, including Roma girls and women, young Roma LGBT and Roma migrants. As in previous years, the activity was co-organised with the European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture ([ERIAN](#)), [TernYpe](#) - International Roma Youth Network, the European Roma Grassroots Organisations ([ERGO](#)) Network and [Phiren Amenca](#).

The seminar Roma Youth Together 2024 brought together young people who were youth leaders and/or youth workers in Roma and Travellers communities and organisations across Europe. The seminar took place in the European Youth Centre in Strasbourg, France, from 5 to 8 April.

### **3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

The seminar aimed at empowering Roma youth leaders from across Europe to realise their potential through positive actions and narratives celebrating Roma identity and cultural diversity on the International Roma Day. Its specific objectives were:

- to share experiences and realities of Roma youth across Europe, especially in relation to meaningful youth participation;
- to empower Roma youth and Roma civil society to act as agents of change and multipliers in their communities;
- to support participants' potential for cultural expression, action, and visibility, both online and offline;
- to associate young Roma with the Council of Europe's work in the field of Roma youth participation, namely in the light of the 75th anniversary of the Council of Europe;
- to celebrate International Roma Day with Roma youth as front-runners in shaping it;
- to strengthen the sense of Roma youth community and connect with European youth organisations and networks in the field of Roma participation.

#### 4. PROGRAMME AND METHODOLOGY

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

Specifically, the 2024 event focused on celebrating creativity, co-creation, and expression as a form of commemorating the International Roma Day. This took the form of workshops during which participants shared talents and put their creativity and aspirations into forms of cultural expressions such as music, dance, or visual arts. The program was built on participants' experiences, interests, and inputs with an emphasis on sharing and co-creation.

The program consisted of three main and interconnected phases:

1. **Share:** Participants discussed achievements and good practices from Roma youth communities across Europe and related approaches of the Council of Europe, as well as priorities of Roma youth organisations supporting Roma youth participation.
2. **Create:** Participants pooled together resources, skills, and knowledge to co-create narratives and content that promoted Roma identity, heritage, and culture. Working groups were established focusing on strategies to address discrimination both online and offline, and connections with youth policies and programs were explored.
3. **Celebrate:** Participants prepared for and engaged in the program for the celebration of the International Roma Day.



## 5. PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS

The profile of the initially requested participants focused on targeting the intended audience for which this project was designed, namely Roma and non-Roma young people, youth leaders, or youth workers in Roma communities, representatives of organisations, and networks working with Roma communities from across Europe. In addition to prioritising participants with no previous experience in Roma Youth Together seminar or similar activities of the Youth Department of the Council of Europe, it was also requested that participants adhere to the following rules:

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

It was further emphasised that the Council of Europe (and partners) would welcome applications from all candidates who fulfilled the above-mentioned competencies profile, regardless of gender, disability, marital or parental status, racial, ethnic, or social origin, colour, religion, belief, or sexual orientation.

Applications were collected until February 25, 2024. A total of 129 applications were received, out of which 35 were accepted and confirmed, 29 were placed on a waiting list, 62 were rejected. The final group of 28 participants had the following characteristics:

- 18 sending countries: Albania, Bulgaria, Denmark, Hungary, Kosovo\*, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Poland, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Spain, Türkiye, Ukraine, United Kingdom;
- 22 Roma young persons;
- 4 non-Roma young people working with Roma youth;
- 12 Romanes speakers;

The detailed participants list can be found in Annex A.

Despite the diverse profiles selected – ranging from volunteers in non-profit organisations focused on remembrance and commemorating victims of past massacres to creators of spaces for Roma artists to express their art, broadly encompassing activists associated with the empowerment of these communities – all selected participants shared a common interest in promoting education, inclusion, and respect for human rights and democracy given the various challenges encountered and identified by the participants, such as poverty and discrimination.

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*\*All reference to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population, in this text shall be understood in full compliance with the United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.*

## 6. MOTIVATIONS AND EXPECTATIONS OF THE PARTICIPANTS

Regarding the motivations gathered in the pre-event phase, all participants recognised the importance of initiatives like Roma Youth Together seminar in promoting and empowering young Roma, with a focus on celebrating their ethnicity and promoting collaboration among participants towards creating new initiatives beyond borders in a post-event phase.

The following quotes from the participants, taken from their applications, succinctly express the ambitions of the participants regarding Roma Youth Together:

*"I see this seminar as a platform to explore new approaches and strategies for addressing complex issues facing our communities." - Baran Çağlar Çetinkaya, 29, from Turkey*

*"(...) we can send a message to the world that the Roma community has educated people, who are young, brave, very motivated, and enthusiastic for improvement of Roma position in the society." - Mirjana Sulejmanović, 25, from Serbia*

*"Participating in this seminar provides a unique chance to deeply engage with Roma youth leadership, cultural identity, and community empowerment in Europe. Through involvement, I anticipate gaining valuable insights into meaningful youth participation, equipping myself to drive positive change in my community." - Tetiana Storozhko, 31, from Ukraine*

*" (...) it offers a vital platform for me to showcase and expand upon the impactful work I've been doing, nurturing and empowering these [Roma] girls to fully embrace their identity, pursue their dreams, and become catalysts for positive change within our community (...)" - Rubija Redzepe, 19, from Kosovo*

## 7. INFORMATION OF THE PARTNER ORGANISATIONS AND THE TEAM

As in previous years, the activity was co-organised with the European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture (ERiac), TernYpe - International Roma Youth Network, the European Roma Grassroots Organisations (ERGO) Network and Phiren Amenca. Representatives from each organisation presented their work, mission and vision of the organisation, its impact and possibilities for the youth. The main retrospective from the workshops is presented below:

**The European Roma Grassroots Organisations (ERGO) Network** is a grassroots organisation that is focused on the everyday reality and injustices. It aims to eradicate Roma poverty and to fight antigypsyism. The organisation is focused on active citizenship and shared responsibilities. Also, the organisation monitoring and reporting policies concerning Roma and creates recommendations for more efficient implementation of them on the European level. The organisation is the Part of Roma Civil Monitor that is the body of the European Commission that monitors strategies and policies regarding Roma. It has active campaign about antigypsyism in the South and East Europe. Further, it has focus on Roma youth and in September 2024 has a study session with the Youth Department of the Council of Europe in Budapest. One of the many successful projects and initiatives is the First Roma Post Office 'Tunde' in Hungary which was opened under the campaign 'Place for All' – pro Roma campaign currently active.

**TernYpe** - International Roma Youth Network, is a dynamic coalition of youth and youth associations dedicated to empowering young Roma through self-organization, participation, and active citizenship. The network creates spaces for Roma and non-Roma youth to engage in intercultural dialogue, fostering mutual respect and cooperation. A key aspect of ternYpe's work is its commitment to building inclusive societies, free from prejudice, racism, and discrimination. By empowering youth to take leadership roles in their communities, ternYpe helps strengthen their identities and enables them to shape their futures. One of ternYpe's main initiatives is "Dikh He Na Bister - Look and don't forget" - the Roma Genocide Remembrance Initiative, launched in 2010. Every year, around August 2nd, the initiative brings together thousands of Roma and non-Roma youth from across Europe to commemorate the victims of the Roma Holocaust. This event, which promotes solidarity and historical awareness, provides a platform for young people to engage with history as a tool for fostering social change. The initiative also builds partnerships with historians, educators, and political stakeholders to advocate for the recognition of the Roma Genocide and to ensure that the lessons of the past inform contemporary struggles against discrimination. Through these efforts, ternYpe emphasises the vital role youth play in constructing inclusive societies based on understanding, dialogue, and shared responsibility. Another significant event ternYpe is focusing on is the commemoration of May 16, Roma Resistance Day, which honors the courageous uprising of Roma prisoners against the Nazis in Auschwitz-Birkenau in 1944. This day is a powerful reminder of the resilience and strength of the Roma community in the face of oppression.

**European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture (ERiac)** presets joint initiative with the CoE and the Open Society Foundation. Its mission is fighting discrimination through art and culture. It is based in Berlin in Belgrade. Further, it has individual and institutional

memberships. Open call for the membership is open during the April on their webpage. They are also part of the EU grants.

**Phiren Amenca** is the largest European Youth Network: its work is focused on the advocacy against hate speech, antigypsyism, and the like. It challenges stereotypes and racism through non-formal education, dialogue and engagement. The recent research 'Roma youth participation in Europe: Challenges, needs and opportunities,' is highly significant for the Roma Youth. The organisation partakes in the Erasmus+ Programme: it offers internships, traineeships, voluntary services etc. It organises each year events, such as '*So Keres Europa.*' The organisation is co-organiser of the 'EU Roma Week' in the European Parliament in Brussels. Phiren Amenca organises meetings for young Roma advocates in order to strengthen the dialogue between young Roma and different institutions that shape EU policies. This year, one of the main objectives is empowering stories of Romani women: *Roma Heroines*.

## 8. VISIBILITY

With the aim of taking the message of Roma Youth Together further, the seminar's coordinating team established certain approaches that allowed to make the seminar and its values known to a larger number of people. Thus, its impact went beyond its participants, spreading the message to the local community and other stakeholders who engaged with the implementation of Roma Youth Together.

The Roma Youth Together seminar had, thus, part of its agenda open to the public, specifically the session "Celebrating International Roma Day," with public interventions by Michael O'FLAHERTY, the newly elected Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe, Manuel DEMOUGEOT, the Chair of the Committee of Experts on Roma and Traveller Issues (ADI-ROM), and Roxana PETRACHE a young Roma woman, as a participant of the Roma Youth Together seminar.

After their interventions, the seminar participants joined the flower casting ceremony, with officials and staff members of the Council of Europe, local authorities in Strasbourg, and young Roma activists.

### 8.1 YOUTH DEPARTMENT'S WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Regarding the communication strategy adopted, a [dedicated website](#) for this edition of Roma Youth Together seminar was created, where all general information, such as the call for participants, the program, and the list of participants, was published.

When it comes to the event's presence on social media, posts were also made on the [official Youth Department account of the Council of Europe on Instagram](#), sharing the call for participants to reach as many people as possible. Additionally, sharing about the implementation and results of Roma Youth Together was ensured through photos and videos that aimed to depict participants' experiences in various phases of the programme's implementation.

### 8.2 COORDINATION WITH THE EUROPEAN YOUTH CENTER BUDAPEST

During the implementation of Roma Youth Together, the European Youth Centres in Strasbourg and Budapest marked the celebration of International Roma Day with parallel events that were interlinked in a moment of online sharing between the two activities.

In Budapest, a workshop was held on April 5th to celebrate the first anniversary of the [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2023\)4 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on Roma youth participation](#). This meeting, which included the participation of representatives from the Hungarian Government, was also marked by the official translation of the recommendation into Hungarian, allowing the involved stakeholders to implement it more successfully. Additionally, this event provided the opportunity to begin creating a roadmap on how to implement this recommendation at the national level, with the support of Roma-led organisations that also had the chance to participate in this event.

In this context, the activities of both Youth Centres promoted a joint moment through an online connection where they shared their activities and results, bringing both Centres and their initiatives closer together.

## 9. SUMMARY OF THE PROGRAMME

As detailed in Annex B, the Roma Youth Together seminar program encompasses various themes over the course of the four days.

**Friday, 5 April – SHARE:** The agenda for this day was designed to foster connections among participants, providing them with the opportunity to get to know each other, share their expectations and contributions to Roma Youth Together, as well as their experiences as young Roma individuals. Additionally, it aimed to highlight the Council of Europe's involvement in this regard, showcasing the work of various departments mentioned later on. To cap it off, reflection groups were established and implemented, and the evening was dedicated to a storytelling session, keeping the theme of the day alive.

**Saturday, 6 April – CREATE:** The day kicked off with the presentation of Recommendations on Roma Youth Participation, allowing space for discussions on Roma youth involvement in networks, including those co-organising this event. Creativity took centre stage for the rest of the day, with a variety of creative workshops running until late afternoon. The evening continued to celebrate creativity with a film session focusing on the seminar's theme, with a Q&A where the director of the movie was present to respond to any curiosities of the participants regarding the process related to its creation.

**Sunday, 7 April – CREATE:** This day focused primarily on continuing the creative workshops from the previous day and preparing for the celebration of International Roma Day, scheduled for the following day.

**Monday, 8 April – CELEBRATE:** On International Roma Day, participants had the chance to learn about opportunities offered by the European Youth Foundation and finalise preparations for the day's celebrations. Michael O'Flaherty, the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe, joined the festivities, which included anthems, flowers, and the participation of other authorities and activists. Following this, time was allocated to discuss the next steps towards empowering these participants, followed by program evaluation and closure.

## 10.DETAILED IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME

### 10.1. GENERAL PROGRAMME

#### Opening and Introductions

To welcome the participants of Roma Youth Together seminar, greetings were given by the representatives from the various parties involved in the organisation and implementation of the seminar. Initially, Rui GOMES, Head of the Education and Training Division, introduced the panel and asked participants to briefly introduce themselves, urging them to celebrate their identity and the remaining days of the program "(...) with dignity, pride, and joy (...)."



After the presentation of all participants, which demonstrated the diversity in terms of nationality and relationship with Roma culture among them, Tobias FLESSENKEMPER, Head of the Youth Department of the Council of Europe, provided context to the participants regarding the youth-focused activities implemented within the context of the Council of Europe and its work regarding their identity. He emphasised that nowadays, their empowerment is promoted through tools

such as the European Youth Centres and the Advisory Council on Youth, represented in the room by one of the participants, Petr BANDA. Finally, the Head of the Youth Department stated that Roma Youth Together seminar is a way to bring the youth perspective of young Roma to the Council of Europe.

Eleni TSETSEKOU, Head of the Roma and Travellers Division highlighted the approach taken towards the theme of the seminar in 2024, which adopts a stance of celebrating the identity of the participants for their empowerment, contextualising it with the mission of the Council of Europe and its role in this process. Within the context of celebrating Roma identity, the Head of the Roma and Travellers Division also appealed to the "(...) limitless creativity (...)" of the Roma community, inviting young participants to initially recognise the relevance of their voice for transformation and their visibility, promoting their involvement in platforms that allow them to share their challenges with the world on one hand, and to be agents of change on the other.



Finally, it was Petr BANDA's turn, on behalf of the Advisory Council on Youth of the Council of Europe, and Carmen TANASIE, on behalf of partner Roma youth networks, to emphasise the importance of promoting shared identity among participants and urging young people to see Roma Youth Together as both a celebration and an opportunity to develop networks and projects among themselves.

## Programme and Objectives of the Seminar

The participants had the opportunity to delve into the Roma Youth Together seminar program in greater detail, highlighting the opportunity they would have to meet and interact with Michael O'FLAHERTY, the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe, as part of the International Roma Day celebrations included in the program.



Following, the participants were invited to reflect on their motivations, expectations, and contributions regarding this seminar. Regarding their motivations, issues such as knowledge sharing among individuals and organisations to network and create future joint projects were mentioned. There was also a need to discuss issues related to young Roma, and their

empowerment, in order to implement best practices locally.

Regarding the participants' expectations, they highlighted aspects such as getting to know more people working with young Roma, learning to advocate for their community, and gaining greater comfort with the Romani language. Additionally, there was the possibility of gaining a deeper understanding of the Council of Europe's work regarding this community. In terms of their contributions, participants expressed openness to developing future networks among themselves, sharing their personal and professional stories, and fostering conversation in Romanes. Some participants with experience in teaching the language expressed their willingness to contribute to that regard.



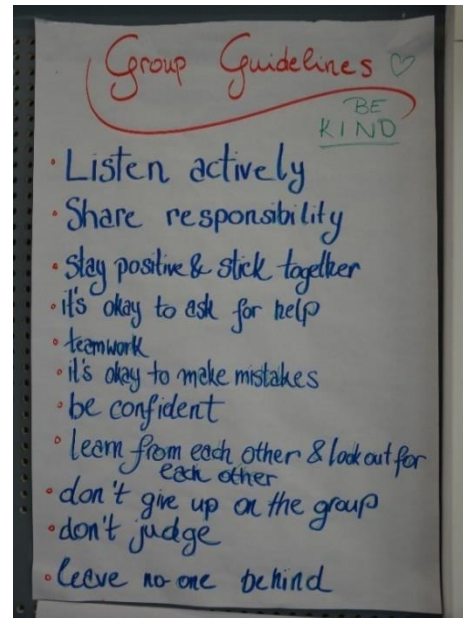


## Getting to Know Each Other



Several dynamics were implemented with the aim of giving participants the opportunity to get to know each other and collectively define rules to follow during Roma Youth Together regarding the group's well-being.

The activity led participants to develop a set of rules they would respect throughout the activity. Despite facing various communication challenges, they inevitably fostered collaboration among them. While reflecting, participants stated that they "started as a group, ended as a team." Finally, the participants could contribute to the creation of group guidelines to follow during the implementation of Roma Youth Together (see picture on the right).



## Sharing Realities – Strengthening Roma Identity/ies, Culture and Experiences

In this activity, participants had the opportunity to learn more about the history of the Roma community, namely its celebrations and traditions; on the other hand, it also allowed them to reflect on the issues and challenges most relevant to the reality of young Roma today, where



issues such as housing, employment, prejudice and Romanophobia were highlighted.

This activity was developed with the purpose of creating stronger bonds among the participants, initiating their process of exchanging ideas and realities, both from organisational and personal backgrounds, motivations, and knowledge about the topic.

Therefore, in this activity, participants visited a mysterious island, where they had to face different missions together. These missions intersected with the following themes:

- Learning about personal motivation;
- Identifying similarities between Roma cultures and countries;
- Sharing about NGO background and work experiences;
- Addressing contemporary concerns of young people;
- The Cave Network: Generating ideas for future collaborations;
- Exploring the situation of Roma Cultures in Europe.

## **Exploring The Council of Europe's Work in Relation to Empowering and Supporting Roma Youth Participation in Democratic Life**

Through a dynamic Bingo game, the participants had the opportunity to visit four stations - the Education and Training Division, the Observatory on History Education and Teaching, the Advisory Council on Youth and the Roma and Travellers Division - where they were given highly interesting information about the work that the Council of Europe is doing together for and with young Roma people.

### **Education, Training and Cooperation Division (presented by Rui GOMES)**

In this station, participants had the opportunity to delve deeper into the purpose and mission of the European Youth Centres in Strasbourg and Budapest, as well as the nature of the activities implemented there. The different missions and approaches of the Education, Training and Cooperation Division were explored in order to make Roma Youth Together participants aware of the initiatives they could take part in and involve their organisations in.



### **Advisory Council on Youth (presented by Petr BANDA)**

Petr Banda, member of the Advisory Council on Youth and the current Rapporteur on Roma and Traveller Issues, introduced the participants to the constitution of the Advisory Council, as well as to the different types of rapporteurs whose mission is to report on the state of the topics, they work on in the Member States of the Council of Europe, including dates and possible criticisms of the approaches adopted by each country.



The constitution and approach of the Joint Council of Youth were also explored. This council serves as a co-decision-making body that brings together the European Steering Committee for Youth (CDEJ) and the Advisory Council on Youth (CCJ) to establish priorities, objectives, and budget envelopes for the youth sector, within the framework outlined by the Committee of Ministers.

### Roma and Travellers Division (presented by Marina VASIĆ)

As a representative of the Roma and Travellers Division, Marina Vasić introduced the participants to the work of this division, which focuses on supporting Member States of the Council of Europe regarding Roma and Travellers issues, policy documents and programmes.



Marina also introduced the supporting documents upon which this work is based. Future projects of the Roma and Travellers Division were also explored, such as the project related to Holocaust Education. Additionally, other projects in which young participants can directly participate were mentioned, such as [Inschool](#), [Romact](#), [Romacted](#) and [Equirom](#).

### Observatory on History Education (presented by Fynn HECKERT)



Regarding the Observatory on History Education and Teaching, participants learned about the post-World War II context in which this Observatory was created, with the aim of analysing different perspectives on history and how history should be taught in Europe. This work involves the analysis of curricula and their design, encouraging Member States to include minorities in this process, notably Roma people, and to implement

measures to ensure that the misrepresentation of Roma history is tackled. Finally, participants were introduced to [HISTOLAB](#), also learning how to access its [resources](#) so that they can, within their communities, promote the proper teaching of Roma history.

### Reflection Groups

At the end of each working day, the participants had the opportunity to reflect on the lessons learnt during each of the days, using different approaches associated with non-formal education, and to express their feelings and notions about them. In general, the participants highlighted the amount of new information they acquired during the seminar and how it generated motivation to create new projects between them. Some of the reflections had throughout the days of Roma Youth Together, the young participants admitted to feeling inspired by the creative aspect of the workshops, which was a positive complement to the informative sessions.

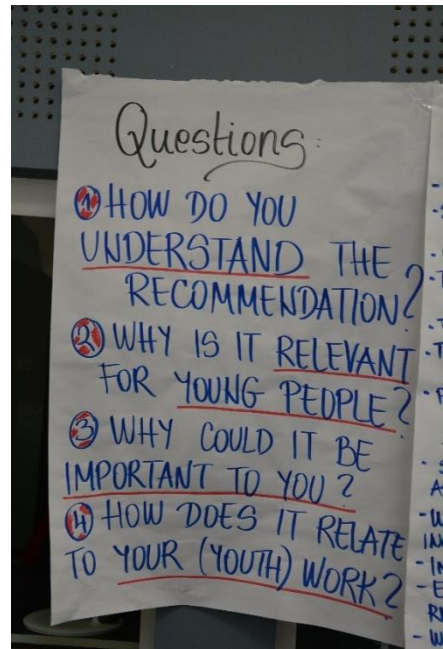
## Exploring the Recommendation on Roma Youth Participation

Rui GOMES, Head of the Education and Training Division, began the session by giving participants a background on how the Council of Europe works and on the definition, structure and nature of recommendations. Regarding Roma rights, he mentioned the work done by the Council of Europe on different fronts, such as training courses, which paved the way for the creation of this Recommendation, in which experts from governments, representatives of organisations and the Advisory Council on Youth participated, allowing the Recommendation to reflect the needs and voices of young Roma.



Afterwards, the participants had the opportunity, in groups, to work together in more depth on 10 of the 12 existing recommendations, adopting a user-friendly approach, and giving answers to the following questions (see picture on the right).

In this context, the youth expressed their views on the recommendations, where, in essence, they acknowledged aspects such as the **need to adapt institutions to their interests and principles, promoting their representation within them, and the relevance of empowering the work of NGOs dedicated to Roma youth**. The importance of combating anti-Roma racism and antigypsyism was also emphasised, as this is a fundamental aspect for the participation of Roma youth without which none of the other recommendations can be properly implemented.



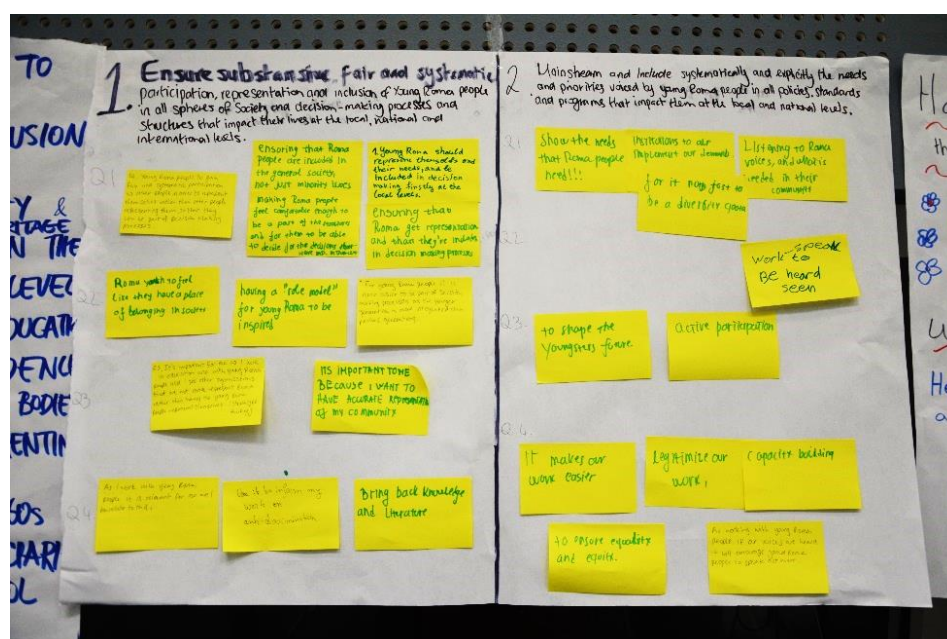
Additionally, essential issues such as equal access to education were highlighted, promoting **access to fair opportunities for education and training** that consider the celebration of their identity on one hand, and combating discrimination and prejudice on the other.

Specifically, these were the participants' inputs on the Recommendations:

**Recommendation 1 – “Ensure substantive, fair and systematic participation, representation and inclusion of young Roma people in all spheres of society and decision-making processes and structures that impact their lives at the local, national and international levels”**



- Participants understood that this recommendation is not only about integrating Roma people as a minority, but rather as members of society;
- They recognised the relevance of this recommendation for Roma people given the need for a sense of belonging, their active participation, and, in short, giving them a voice, with these aspects being fundamental to be implemented in the Member States of the Council of Europe;
- Its relevance for youth work focuses on the context that this recommendation provides in that regard, enabling them to promote the inclusion of young Roma.



**Recommendation 2 – “Mainstream and include systematically and explicitly the needs and priorities voiced by young Roma people in all policies, standards and programmes that impact them at the local and national levels”**

- Regarding this recommendation, it was argued that Roma inclusion should not be seen as a privilege but rather as something intrinsic to their population;
- Its relevance concerning the youth population focuses on ensuring representativeness, equality, and adapting institutions to their interests and principles;
- Regarding youth work, this recommendation facilitates the work of organisations as it provides them with access to more information on this topic, on how the population can express their voice, and on how organisations can work towards the interests of the Roma population.

**Recommendation 3** – “Assess relevant mainstream and targeted policies, as well as democratic structures, in view of mapping and redesigning them to ensure Roma youth’s effective participation, representation and inclusion”

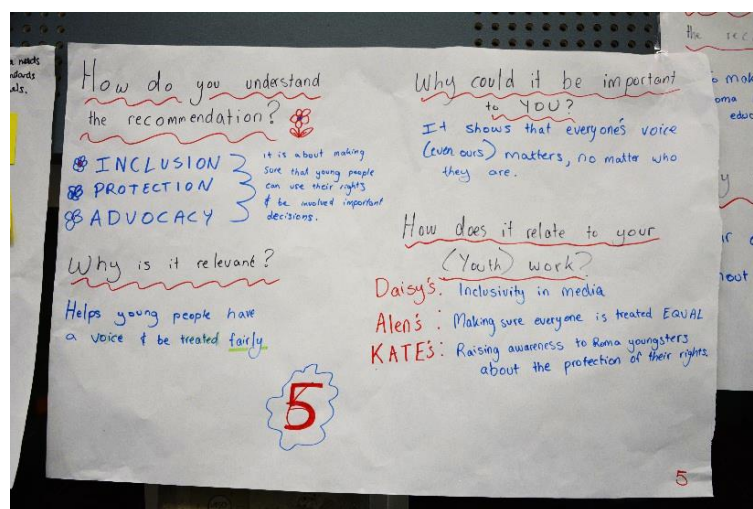
- This recommendation prompted young participants to reflect on the process of creating inclusive systems for Roma youth.
- Implementing this recommendation becomes relevant due to the need to ensure the presence of Roma people in decision-making processes, as it is the only existing way to guarantee the representation of their difficulties and perspectives.
- Education was highlighted as a particularly relevant issue in the inclusion of young Roma, as it ultimately affects other issues relevant to this community, such as housing and the job market. There was emphasised the need for the creation of more and better scholarships that allow young Roma to integrate various levels of education, as well as the establishment of youth centres to assist young Roma in their development.

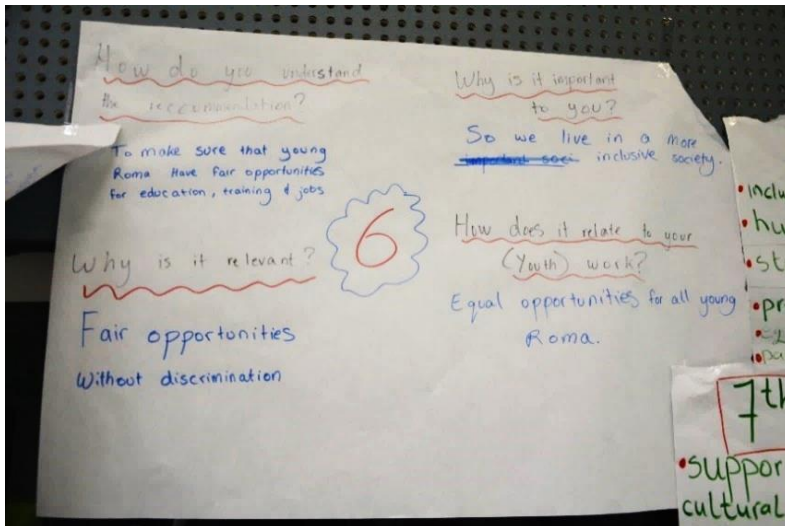
**Recommendation 4** – “Combat all forms and manifestations of structural anti-Roma racism and antigypsyism and their impact on Roma youth participation”

- Young participants sought to understand, in light of this recommendation, how they could actively participate in combating all forms of structural anti-Roma racism and antigypsyism, as it would be impossible to talk about inclusion without addressing this issue properly.
- In this matter, ensuring the representation of Roma people becomes relevant as part of the decision-making process and as an active focus in the field of youth work, as this ensures that young people can speak for themselves without others shaping their own future.

**Recommendation 5** – “Ensure young Roma people’s full and effective access to and fulfilment of all fundamental human rights and freedoms”

- Participants reflected on access to fundamental rights and freedoms and the need to involve young people in this process, as all voices matter, and all young people deserve to be treated fairly.
- Young people also reflected on the different aspects that ensuring these rights can take, such as inclusion in the media and the need to raise awareness among young Roma about these rights and how they should protect them.





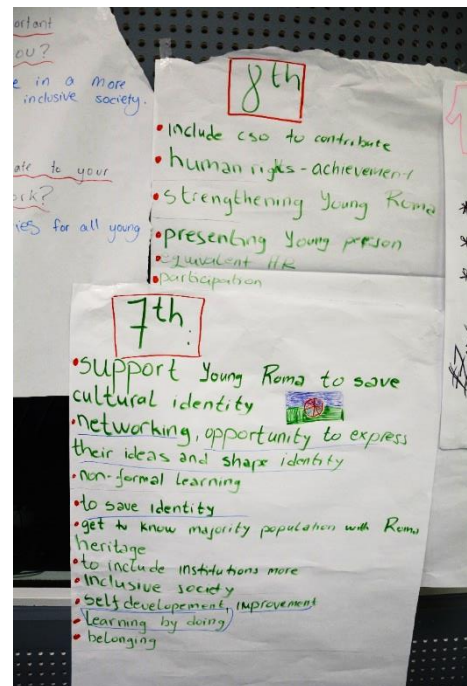
**Recommendation 6** – “Ensure free and non-discriminatory access to quality education, training and employment opportunities for all young Roma people”

- For the participants, this recommendation is based on ensuring fair opportunities regarding education and training for young Roma.
- The implementation of this recommendation plays a

particularly relevant role in creating a more inclusive society, where young Roma see more and better opportunities in their future.

**Recommendation 7** – “Support and strengthen the capacity of Roma youth-led organisations, groups and initiatives and Roma youth-focused organisations and youth centres as spaces for exercising citizenship, promoting youth work and non-formal education/learning and for expressing and fostering their cultural identity, language and history”

- Ensuring support for young Roma is, for the participants, the essential point of this recommendation, as a whole, it would contribute to celebrating Roma identity on one hand, and combating all forms of structural anti-Roma racism and antigypsyism on the other.
- Participants emphasised the importance of ensuring channels and networking opportunities so that they can share ideas and develop them together, as this process is also essential for promoting closeness of these young people with their identity and history, minimising the prejudice associated with them.
- Young people also consider that promoting opportunities associated with non-formal education is particularly relevant, as formal education often fails to cover many of the subjects that are relevant to them regarding the implementation of this recommendation.
- The implementation of this Recommendation can contribute to the self-development of young Roma and to their sense of belonging in society.

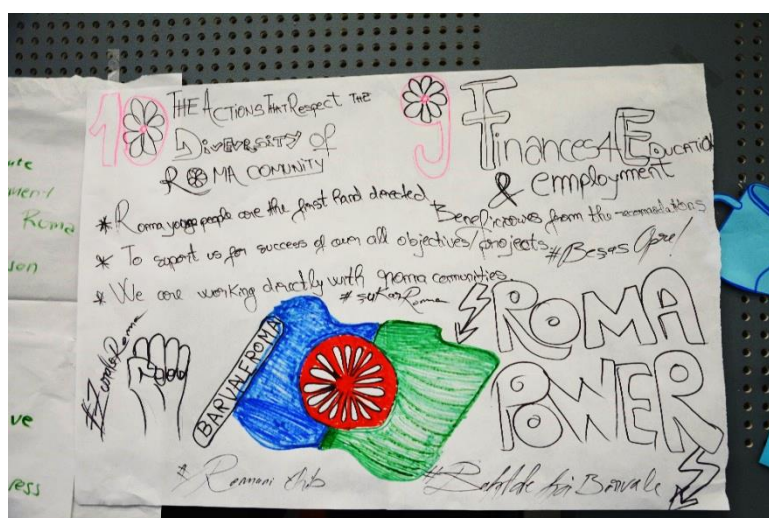


**Recommendation 8** – “Invite civil society, including mainstream youth councils and organisations, and other relevant stakeholders, to contribute to the implementation and evaluation of this recommendation”

- Empowering young people so they feel they can be part of implementing this recommendation and others is essential for its success, taking it further.
- Aspects such as the awareness that needs to be promoted among human resources of institutions and other places were also mentioned, leading them to work more directly with and for Roma people.

**Recommendation 9** – “Adopt policies, measures and programmes and allocate adequate funding to implement the guidelines set out in the appendix to this recommendation”

- It is important to ensure that, regarding financial support for Roma youth, these young people are effectively its greatest beneficiaries;
- It becomes necessary to ensure conditions for Roma youth to work directly with funding issues, gaining experience and adapting their application to the needs felt in their reality;
- This recommendation was seen by the young participants as one of the most relevant recommendations, since it mentions specific support mechanisms about which they seek to acquire more knowledge so that, at a later stage, they can share their knowledge in their country for the improvement of living conditions of Roma youth.



**Recommendation 10** – “Ensure that all policies, measures and programmes related to this recommendation respect the diversity of Roma communities addressing, in particular, the intersectional discrimination faced by Roma girls, Roma women, LGBTI+ Roma, Muslim Roma and young Roma people living in isolated and rural communities”

- Participants recognised the relevance of the interdependence of the recommendations, as the implementation of initiatives focused on issues such as the intersectional discrimination faced by Roma girls, Roma women, LGBTI+ Roma, Muslim Roma, and young Roma people living in isolated and rural communities require proper sources of funding;
- The proper implementation of the aforementioned topics needs to involve Roma youth throughout its process, as they are the direct beneficiaries, and the implementation of the recommendations should stem from a privileged position in terms of knowledge about the Roma reality.



### **Youth Participation in Roma Youth Networks (with ternYpe, ERGO, Phiren Amenca and ERIAC)**

During this session, the four partner Roma networks - ternYpe, ERGO, Phiren Amenca and ERIAC - had the opportunity to present their work and activities to the participants, in order to promote their involvement and participation in future initiatives by these organisations.



### **Actions and Messages to Strengthen Roma Youth Participation and Empowerment**

During this session, five stations were set up to promote different themes of reflection among participants regarding what they can do to put ideas into practice. The five stations and their respective reflections were as follows:

#### **Access to Education and Training:**

- Participants unanimously emphasised the importance of free education and training, as well as the creation of scholarships, affordable housing, mentorship programs, and after-school classes, providing extra support to the Roma community;
- The need to update textbooks and to empower teachers and educators regarding the teaching of Roma history was also emphasised;
- Participants also stressed the need to invest more in non-formal education with Roma youth, recognizing its impact at the local level in a post-activity phase.

#### **Cultural Heritage and Creative Expression:**

- Participants highlighted the need to fund cultural activities, such as creating a Moving Cultural Centre, which would visit remote locations to educate their populations about cultural diversity and Roma heritage;
- The need to organise and promote commemorative events at the local, national, and international levels was also emphasised;
- Focusing on creating content for social media, such as campaigns and promotional materials related to Roma culture, is relevant for raising awareness;

- Gamification of the learning process was suggested through the creation of board games about Roma culture and history, educational platforms on the internet, and venues like summer camps where they can be utilised;
- The need to create films, theatres, and exhibitions with and for the Roma population was stressed.

### **Employment and Professional Development**

- The need to build an action plan for employing young Roma people covering local, national, regional, and international levels was highlighted;
- It is necessary to provide training focused on soft skills needed for the job market through formal and non-formal education;
- The importance of lifelong learning was emphasised, focusing on the fact that it is not enough to guarantee employment for the Roma population but also to continually invest in their education;
- The creation of a Leadership Skills Academy, as well as an Entrepreneurship Program, with the latter being particularly relevant for the Roma community considering their entrepreneurial history;
- Developing a forum/medium where young Roma can find paid internships in partnerships with networks, governments, among others.

### **Active Participation and Decision Making**

- Facilitating dialogue between the Roma population and their municipalities, bringing them closer to their community and understanding their needs on the ground in order to provide a visual representation of their reality;
- Creating a clear agenda with ideas properly organised and reviewed periodically to ensure their relevance in current times;
- The need to promote political education, encouraging the participation of the Roma population in creating public policies at the local and national levels by promoting collaboration between the Roma, especially Roma youth, NGOs, and policymakers.

### **Intersectional Discrimination and Antigypsyism**

- Participants emphasised the importance of investing in training sessions to introduce concepts to the young population on one hand, and policymakers on the other. It is also relevant to train media representatives regarding their approach and use of certain expressions commonly adopted to describe the Roma population;
- The use of social media and the creation of awareness campaigns to tackle antigypsyism were also mentioned;
- Creating a comprehensive online course focused on capacity-building for (young) Roma people was suggested, and both this course and the previously mentioned topics would undoubtedly require funding to enable their implementation.

## Preparing for the Celebration of the International Roma Day

In preparation for the Celebration of the International Roma Day, taking place on 8 April, participants were briefed on the dynamics of that ceremony, also discussing the Meeting and Exchange with Michael O’Flaherty, the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe. In this context, Mila Lukić, Educational Advisor at the European Youth Centre of Strasbourg, facilitated a session in which participants explored the role and mandate of the Commissioner for human rights. It was important in this context to understand the functions of the Commissioner so that the messages conveyed by the young people could be input for his mandate.

Therefore, three areas of intervention were created on which the young people were invited to reflect on, so that they could construct targeted questions for the Commissioner:

- **Views of the Commissioner about the state of play on human rights with a focus on Roma youth:** focusing on the state of Roma youth in specific contexts at the local, national, and international levels;
- **Expectation of the Roma youth in his mandate:** what is expected from the Commissioner regarding his work with Roma youth representatives and Roma youth organisations;
- **Potential action(s) for the Commissioner to support Roma youth participation:** how the Commissioner could play an active role in improving the living conditions and opportunities for Roma youth.



In this session, participants, based on the inputs received in the three intervention areas subsequently developed—namely, "Views of the Commissioner about the state of play on human rights with a focus on Roma youth," "Expectation of the Roma youth in his mandate," and "Potential action for the Commissioner to support Roma youth participation"—put them into direct and properly formulated questions for the Meeting

and Exchange with Michael O’Flaherty, which would happen next. Some of the questions resulting from the brainstorming were:

- Do you plan to meet with you Roma-led civil society during your country visits?
- Is there a plan to recommend having quota for Roma to participate in decision bodies?
- How can we as Roma youth organisation stay in touch with the Commissioner’s office and raise awareness to some topics?

## Meeting and Exchange with Michael O'FLAHERTY

Michael O'FLAHERTY acknowledged, in the initial moments of his exchange with the participants of Roma Youth Together, that the Roma community is the largest minority present in the Member States of the Council of Europe and that they are never provided with the necessary opportunities. He emphasised the need to understand the role and position of the Roma community within each of these states by visiting them and spending time in their homes to better understand their reality.



He then highlighted the importance of promoting roundtables with the Roma population during his visits to the Member States, ensuring the representation of young people and Roma women. Regarding the topic of the Roma Holocaust, the Commissioner highlighted its under-awareness and plans to meet with the only Member States that recognise it to understand what can be done in this regard, with the aim of avoiding mistakes made in the past.

Throughout his intervention, Michael O'FLAHERTY referred to several fronts that he deemed important to develop during his mandate—examples may include the representation of young people without citizenship and segregation in schools—showing himself above all willing to listen and promote structured dialogue between his Office and young people.



## Celebrating International Roma Day



The celebration began with an intervention by Michael O'FLAHERTY, the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe, followed by the Chair of the Committee of Experts on Roma and Traveller Issues, Manuel DEMOUGEOT, and finally, Roxana PETRACHE, a young participant in Roma Youth Together, who highlighted Roma pride as something essential to be promoted. It is worth highlighting the intervention of the Commissioner, who emphasised that he would make the Roma population, especially its young people and women, a priority during his mandate:

*"(...) my efforts will pay special attention to engaging with young people, many of whom are present today. The vibrancy, energy and perspective of youth are invaluable. By working alongside young individuals, including Romani youth, we maintain our focus, efficacy and authenticity in our human rights endeavours. It is essential to collaborate 'with' rather than 'for' young people, recognising the intergenerational effort required to secure the respect for human rights of the Romani people (...)"*

Next, after a musical moment where the Romani anthem, "Djelem Djelem," was sung, the ceremony moved to the nearest river, where the traditional flower casting took place and where, finally, participants who attended the "Music and Singing" workshop were able to perform for those who joined this public ceremony.

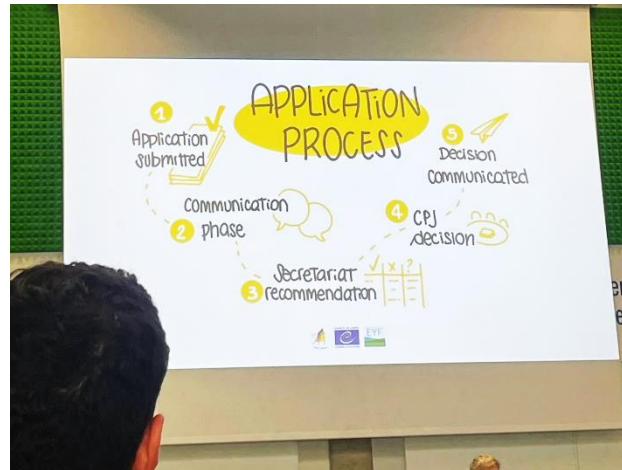


After the ceremony, participants expressed satisfaction with the experience, highlighting the relevance of the prior preparation for their confidence in their participation in the session with the Commissioner. The success of the intervention of the Roma Youth Together participant in the ceremony was also highlighted, as her message conveyed the pride and perspective of all the participants in this event.



## Opportunities of the European Youth Foundation

The European Youth Foundation was presented to the young participants, outlining all the funding plans that the Foundation provides. This funding instrument is relevant for participants to finance their projects, as funding was mentioned throughout Roma Youth Together seminar as an obstacle to their goals within their community.



## Follow-Up and Next Steps to Support Roma Youth Empowerment and Expression

In this session, participants were invited, on one hand, to present what their organisations currently do, and on the other hand, what their organisations aim to do in the future, considering all the knowledge gained during the seminar. Thus, in a speed dating logic, participants had the opportunity to get to know the organisations to which they belong, exchanging ideas and synergies for future collaborations among themselves.

## Evaluation and Closing of the Programme

This session was held to understand if the participants' expectations regarding various aspects of the implementation of Roma Youth Together matched their expectations. Overall, the participants seemed quite satisfied with the entire group dynamics, where a safe sharing space was promoted among them. However, they highlighted aspects to improve in future editions, such as the more informal and festive aspect that, in their opinion, the Ceremony could have adopted. An online anonymous form was also implemented, which the participants filled in while still at the European Youth Centre, to collect information about their experience in terms of achieved outcomes, lessons learnt and logistical aspects of the seminar. Some of the comments made by the participants were as follows:

- *"The seminar met my expectations since I managed to get to know people with the same values as me, and working in the same field as me, networking and meantime learning about social media campaign and advocacy, which are subjects that are connected to my day-to-day work."*
- *"I would have liked to share more on how we Roma youth can work with different organisations and possibly exchange contact details to collaborate more in future."*
- *"The courses and workshops were very knowledgeable, which definitely helped me with lots of subjects also the people were very intelligent and empathetic which motivates me to continue networking with them."*

- "(...) it would be great maybe for the next year to consider having one person giving speech in Romani language with provided translation in English, so guests get curious to hear it (probably most of them for the first time)."

### **Next Steps with the Recommendation on Roma Youth Participation**

During this activity, participants were inspired to see Roma Youth Together as a first step toward potentially developing work in their community using the European Youth Foundation, which would be presented next. They were also introduced to other ways on how to keep engaging with the Council of Europe, particularly in adopting a more youth-friendly approach regarding recommendations on Roma youth participation, so that these recommendations could reach more young people.

## **10.2. CREATIVE WORKSHOPS**

The Creative Workshops were designed to foster the creative and expressive sense of the participants. In this edition of Roma Youth Together seminar, participants were able to pre-register for two workshops. After attending to these workshops, participants were invited to share their results with the rest of the group.

The themes and trainers of the workshops were as follows:

### **Public Speaking and Speech Writing** **(held by Ronni GURWICZ and Ioana SPATARU)**

Initially, participants recognised the need to develop their public speaking skills, which are necessary in their personal, professional, and academic contexts. Next, participants had the opportunity to explore the various aspects of speech construction, including body language and vocal expression, to build a bridge between the speaker and their audience. Additionally, topics such as timing and space, vision, and mission were developed in collaboration with the participants. The objective of this workshop



was to develop an elevator pitch focused on the significance of celebrating the International Roma Day, where participants had the opportunity to subsequently receive feedback from the trainers to improve their skills and public appearance. Finally, the participants delivered their speeches to their peers, emphasizing the role of young Roma people in celebrating the International Roma Day and recognising Roma cultural heritage. It was also through this workshop that one of the Roma Youth Together participants was chosen to deliver a speech as part of the official celebration of the International Roma Day on 8 April, in presence of the Council of Europe officials and Strasbourg city members.

### Music and Singing (held by Esther WRATSCHKO)



This group dedicated itself to preparing a joint performance of the songs "Amari Szi Amari" and "Djelem Djelem," putting the participants in contact with Roma culture and its language. In addition to the vocal preparation provided by the trainer, participants also had the opportunity to learn about other Roma songs and their different dialects, increasing their knowledge of the complexity of Romanes. The

rehearsed songs were sung in front of the other seminar participants and officials, as part of the official celebrations, where the personal touch given to this interpretation by the participants of this workshop was noticeable.

### Media Campaign – Roma Heroes (held by Desdemona KOVACS)

Participants in this workshop showed interest in exploring different ways to energise their campaigns across various platforms, emphasizing the importance of dismantling the negative narrative associated with the Roma community in different media outlets. The concept of a "hero" was also discussed, and an activity was developed in which the young people shared stories with each other about individuals who are their heroes or moments when they were heroes for someone else, in order to contextualise the following activity. This subsequent activity involved choosing one of their local heroes and creating a social media campaign about their story. This exercise motivated the participants to find a topic, a target group, and to conduct research on a theme, for example, with these steps being crucial in the creation of a social media campaign. As a final result, these participants collectively created a campaign (online and offline) and an offline event; this campaign was called "Proud Roma," complemented by a video presented to the group with the aim of raising awareness about the importance of recognizing Roma culture.



### Remembrance (held by Klaudia VEIZAJ)



In this workshop, various concepts such as "discrimination," "racism," and "genocide" were explored, contextualising them within the Pyramid of Hate, which presents different levels of hate, from stereotypes and prejudice to violence and genocide. Participants also had the opportunity to learn more about the history of the Roma genocide and the importance of recognising 2 August (2 August as (European) Holocaust Memorial Day for



Sinti and Roma by the national parliament. The workshop highlighted how the recognition of this day serves not only to honor the victims but also to address the historical exclusion of Roma from mainstream Holocaust narratives. Participants emphasized that remembrance strengthens Roma identity, particularly for younger generations, by connecting them to their history and empowering them to advocate for justice and equality. Participants developed a plan to promote recognition of the Roma Holocaust, bringing together NGOs working with the Roma community, the government, and other entities that could finance the initiative.

### **Acting and Expression (held by Petro RUSANIENKO)**

In this workshop, several team building and body expression exercises were organised, ranging from facial expression to trust-building among peers. This workshop specifically focused on learning about facial expressions and body language, exploring different modes of communication and maximising the power of their messages in future activities.

### **How to Advocate (held by Carmen TANASIE)**

During this workshop, essential issues in the field of advocacy were explored, such as the need to understand the cause, identify the target audience, and determine the available and necessary resources to achieve the desired outcome. The objective of this session was to advocate for 2 August in support of the implementation of a commemorative day, with different groups developing the local, national, and international levels of this celebration. One of the advocacy campaigns developed in this workshop was presented to the other participants, mentioning aspects such as its name, objectives, and potential partners who could collaborate actively and positively in support of the success of this movement.



### **Human Rights Education with Roma Youth (held by Mila LUKIĆ)**



In this session, participants had the opportunity to reflect on Roma identity, considering the importance of human rights education in promoting the Roma culture. It was also an opportunity for participants to gain a more detailed understanding of the concept of "human rights education with and for young people" and its framework of participatory and interactive learning, as well as the role of the Council of Europe in this process

and its foundational manuals, such as the Compass.

## 11. REFLECTIONS OF THE PARTICIPANTS

During the event, participants' responses to a set of questions were gathered, aimed at reflecting their overall experience before, during, and after their involvement in Roma Youth Together:

- **Before ROMA YOUTH TOGETHER:** What are your expectations regarding the Roma Youth Together? What do you hope to gain from your participation in this event?
- **During ROMA YOUTH TOGETHER:** How do you feel with the opportunity of celebrating International Roma Day as a participant in this seminar?
- **After ROMA YOUTH TOGETHER:** If you had to describe your experience in one word, which one would it be and why?

The collected responses and their authors were as follows:

| Before ROMA YOUTH TOGETHER  | During ROMA YOUTH TOGETHER  | After ROMA YOUTH TOGETHER   |
|---|---|---|
| <p>"(...) I expect to gain new knowledge about the Council of Europe – the Youth Department especially -, I expect to connect with other young Roma people and to build a network across Europe so that we can work together in future projects and ideas."</p> <p>(Mirjana Sulejmanovic, Serbia)</p> | <p>"(...) I am part of the generation that can be the voice of millions of Roma. As said George Santayana, "those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it" – many want to end our existence and ethnic, but we are not going to let that happen."</p> <p>(Mevlana Sahiti, Luxembourg)</p> | <p>"Throughout this whole week I got to meet so many people that I wouldn't meet otherwise, I got to hear their stories and how they are working with their communities, and I am so glad to have these new-found connections, and I am looking forward to more study sessions like this in the future (...)"</p> <p>(Roxana Petrache, Denmark)</p> |

## 12. REFLECTIONS OF TRAINERS

**Esther Wratschko** "(...) *The group learned and performed two songs in Romanes, found joy in making music together, overcame fears in performing in public- and found much joy in performing in public, with amazing response from the audience. Also, a video was made for remembering the song, the group and the experience. To my feeling, the group felt empowered and hyped by the performance and the response of the audience (...)*"

**Ronni Gurwicz** "(...) *I was impressed by the general level of studiousness and participation. I would definitely regard them as one of the more attentive groups I have worked with in the past while. A particular example of that was lateness and phone use during sessions, which were both very low. Kudos! (...)*"

**Dezdemona Kovacs** "(...) *they [the participants] have gained the knowledge they aimed to gather with their application to the seminar. I have also noticed the shared widened point of view and reflections, critical opinions from day to day, regarding the recommendation, and creative workshops the participants have attended.*"

**Carmen Tanasie** "(...)" *The composition of the group was diverse and the profile it was matched with the event. It was very crucial that we had a range of participants who were*

knowledgeable and some very new to the topic. That in my opinion it was the strongest asset that made the seminar successful. (...)"

**Petro Rusanienko** "(...) One of the achievements in my opinion is that we were able to see a lot of new young Roma people who learned about the Council of Europe, their activities, the recommendations we have been working on recently, and also learned more about the Roma organisations that were partners of this seminar. We were also able to inspire young people to take action, as we can see from their responses and reflections after each day, as well as after individual sessions and workshops. (...)"

**Ioana Spataru** "(...) we managed to create a space, in which meaningful connection and personal growth could take place. Many participants shared personal stories, either during the breaks or in debriefing settings, in which they expressed gratitude for each other, and for the opportunity to come together in a setting that is somewhat designed to their own needs. (...) I believe the aim to **familiarise the participants with the Recommendation** was successful, mainly through the process of spreading the sessions on the Recommendation over the course of multiple days (...) the participants could reflect on the Recommendation and evaluate **in which way it may serve their own work or activism, back in their local realities**. Participants have also voiced multiple times, that **they feel comfortable using the Recommendation after this seminar**, and that they would be interested in further translations of the document. (...) Staying with the same group over the course of two days in the creative workshops, while switching the groups for the other activities of the day, fostered a sense of community within the workshop groups, where deeper connections could be made, without losing the ties and dynamic of the group at large (...) I was very glad to see how – for lack of a better word - "human" or humane interactions went among participants and between participants and facilitators. For the most part, it truly felt like a place of coming together and seeing eye to eye on things, learning from each other's experiences and valuing each other's opinions. (...) this seminar brings us together, and it is a great opportunity not only for the participants but also for the facilitators to work together and train the next generation of Roma change-makers. (...)"



## 13.ANEX A – LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

### Albania / Albanie

Ledi XHAMBAZI Roma Active Albania

### Bulgaria / Bulgarie

Tanya HRISTOVA N/A  
Gabriella TOSUNOVA Foundation "Trust for social achievement"

### Denmark / Danemark

Roxana Daniela PETRACHE ActionAid Denmark

### Hungary / Hongrie

Kateryna KULYOKOVSKA N/A

### Kosovo<sup>†</sup>

Rubija REDZEPI VORAE (Voice of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians)

### Luxemburg / Luxembourg

Ilana SALJIHI Roms Sans Frontières  
Mevlana SAHITI Roms Sans Frontières

### Malta / Malte

Daisy MILNE European Youth Press / Orange Magazine

### Montenegro / Monténégro

Anja KECALOVIC Ministry of Sports and Youth

### North Macedonia / Macédoine du Nord

Ragmi ASANOVSKI National Roma Centrum  
Edis EMINOSKI RROMA  
Alen UMER Local Youth Council of Shuto Orizari Municipality

### Poland / Pologne

Nico ANDERSEN International Romani Union and Central Roma Council in Poland  
Milan KWIATKOWSKI Central Roma Council in Poland

### Republic of Moldova / République de Moldova

Gloria MERIUTA REDI - Roma Entrepreneurship Development Initiative

### Romania / Roumanie

Denis DUMITRU GEYC  
Kuna Valentin GABOR Nevo Parudimos

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<sup>†</sup> All reference to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population, in this text shall be understood in full compliance with the United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.

### **Serbia / Serbie**

Mirjana SULEJMANOVIC  
Karolina RANKOVIC  
Marijana RAKIC

Xtractteam, Faculty of Technology Novi Sad  
Association of Roma Prosperity  
Roma Education Fund

### **Slovak Republic / République Slovaque**

Ferdinand DANIEL

Ravs Rómske Advokačne A Výskumné Stredisko Skalica

### **Spain / Espagne**

Juan CASTELLON SANTIAGO  
Luis Adolfo CORTES SANTIAGO

Fundación Secretariado Gitano (FSG)  
Fundación Secretariado Gitano (FSG)

### **Türkiye / Turquie**

Baran Çağlar ÇETINKAYA

Zero Discrimination Association

### **Ukraine**

Tetiana STOROZHKO

TENET - Center for Social Transformations

### **United Kingdom / Royaume-Uni**

Francesca NICOLODI  
David HORVATH

London School of Economics and Political Science  
Co-op Academy Grange/Leeds and Davren Community  
Solutions

### **PREPARATORY TEAM / EQUIPE PREPARATOIRE**

Klaudia VEIZAJ  
Carmen TANASIE  
Petro RUSANIENKO  
Dezdemonia KOVACS  
Ioana SPATARU

Ternype – Roma Youth Network  
European Roma Grass Roots Organisations network  
European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture  
Phiren Amenca  
Trainer/consultant with the Council of Europe

### **LECTURERS / CONFÉRENCIERS**

Esther WRATSCHKO  
Ronni GURWICZ

### **COUNCIL OF EUROPE / CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE**

#### **ADVISORY COUNCIL ON YOUTH**

Petr BANDA

IQ Roma Servis

#### **COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS ON ROMA AND TRAVELLERS ISSUES (ADI-ROM)**

Manuel DEMOUGEOT, Chair

#### **OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS**

Michael O'FLAHERTY, Commissioner

## ROMA AND TRAVELLERS DIVISION

Eleni TSETSEKOU, Head of Division  
Marina VASIC, Senior Programme Manager  
Oana TABA, Senior Project Officer  
Mimoza TIELIDZE, Trainee

## YOUTH DEPARTMENT

Tobias FLESSENKEMPER, Head of Department  
Rui GOMES, Head of the Education, Training and Cooperation Division  
Mila LUKIC, Educational Advisor  
Margit BARNÁ, Project Officer, European Youth Foundation  
Patrick NORLAIN, Programme Assistant  
Joana AZEITEIRO, Trainee/Rapporteur

## 14.ANNEX B – DETAILED PROGRAMME

### Thursday, 4 April

Arrival of the participants

19:00 Dinner

20:00 Welcome evening

### Friday, 5 April - SHARE

09:30 Opening and introductions

- Tobias FLESSENKEMPER, Head of the Youth Department
- Eleni TSETSEKOU, Head of the Roma and Travellers Division
- Petr BANDA, Advisory Council on Youth of the Council of Europe
- Carmen TANASIE, European Roma Grass Roots Organisations network

Programme and objectives of the seminar

Expectations and contributions

11:00 Break

11:30 Getting to know each other

13:00 Lunch

14:30 Sharing realities – strengthening Roma identities, culture and experiences

16:00 Break

16:30 Exploring the Council of Europe's work in relation to empowering and supporting Roma youth participation in democratic life:

- Rui GOMES, Education, Training and Cooperation Division, Youth Department
- Marina VASIC, Roma and Travellers Division
- Petr BANDA, Advisory Council on Youth of the Council of Europe

18:00 Reflection groups

19:00 Dinner

20:00 Storytelling evening

### **Saturday, 6 April - CREATE**

- 09:30 Opening and programme of the day  
Exploring the Recommendation on Roma youth participation
- 11:00 Break
- 11:30 Youth participation in Roma youth networks (with Ternype – Roma Youth Network, ERGO Network, Phiren Amenca and European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture)
- 13:00 Lunch
- 14:30 Creative workshops:
- Workshop 'Acting and expression', with Petro RUSANIENKO
  - Workshop 'Music and singing', with Esther WRATSCHKO
  - Workshop 'Media campaign - Roma Heroes', with Dezdemona KOVACS
  - Workshop 'Public speaking and speech writing', with Ioana SPATARU and Ronni GURWICZ
  - Workshop 'Remembrance', with Klaudia VEIZAJ
  - Workshop 'How to advocate', with Carmen TANASIE
  - Workshop 'Human rights education with Roma youth', with Mila LUKIC
- 16:00 Break
- 16:30 Creative workshops - *continued*
- 18:00 Reflection groups
- 19:00 Dinner
- 20:30 Movie evening

### **Sunday, 7 April - CREATE**

- 09:30 Opening and programme of the day  
Actions and messages to strengthen Roma youth participation and empowerment
- 11:00 Break
- 11:30 Creative workshops – *continued*
- 13:00 Lunch
- 14:30 Sharing and celebrating results  
Preparing for the celebration of the International Roma Day
- 16:00 Free time  
Dinner out  
Free evening

### **Monday, 8 April - CELEBRATE**

- 09:30 Opening and programme of the day  
Opportunities of the European Youth Foundation, with Margit BARNA, Project officer  
Next steps with the Recommendation on Roma youth participation, with Rui GOMES  
Final preparations to celebrate the International Roma Day together
- 11:30 Break

- 12:30 Meeting and exchange with Michael O'FLAHERTY, Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe
- 13:00 Celebrating International Roma Day:  
Official addresses by:
- Michael O'FLAHERTY, Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe
  - Jeanne BARSEGHIAN, Mayor of Strasbourg (tbc)
  - Manuel DEMOUGEOT, Chair of the Committee of Experts on Roma and Travellers Issues (ADI-ROM)
  - A representative of the seminar participants
- Flower casting ceremony, with officials of the Council of Europe, local authorities in Strasbourg and Roma activists
- 14:00 Lunch
- 15:30 Debriefing of the ceremony
- 16:00 Follow up and next steps to support Roma youth empowerment and expression
- 16:45 Evaluation and closing of the programme
- 17:30 Free time
- 19:00 Reception dinner
- 20:00 Farewell party

### **Tuesday, 9 April**

Departure of the participants