

ROMA WEEK

CELEBRATING THE 45TH ANNIVERSARY OF
INTERNATIONAL ROMA DAY 8TH APRIL

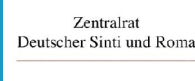
IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT
5TH-7TH APRIL 2016

HELD UNDER THE HIGH PATRONAGE OF THE
EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT



PROGRAM

#EURomaweeK



Objective

On the occasion of the International Roma Day, a number of events will be organised under the umbrella of the "Roma Week" in Brussels. The main objective of the week is to consolidate the commitment of the European Parliament and other institutions to fight against antigypsyism and to formulate this commitment into action. It will be an occasion to pursue the work to establish 2nd August as the European Roma Holocaust Memorial Day in line with the European Parliament resolution of April 2015. The Roma week will promote positive images and narratives of Roma and their role in the European society at large and it will celebrate the contribution of Roma to the European history, arts and culture.

Background

Antigypsyism is "incompatible with the norms and values of the European Union" and "constitutes a major obstacle to the successful social integration of Roma," as stressed in the Resolution on the occasion of International Roma Day that was adopted by the European Parliament in April 2015. Without systematic and long-term efforts of public institutions to address anti-Gypsyism, EU and governmental policies on Roma inclusion will remain without impact.

This year's International Roma day commemorates the 45th anniversary of the first World Romani World Congress that was organised on 8th April in 1971. At this congress the Roma flag and the anthem "Gelem, Gelem" were established to represent the Roma people and the terms "Rom" and "Romani" were agreed on as official designations of the Roma people. This first congress was a major event for Roma and it manifested a need for unity and joined forces against marginalization and for equal rights of the Roma people. Over the years, more achievements have been made where the Roma have commemorated their past and celebrated their culture, language, origins, unity, work and, primarily, "*romanipe*" ("Romani-ness").

Antigypsyism is still the root-cause of the exclusion and marginalisation of Roma in Europe. The first step towards a new generation of more efficient policies and programmes that will make a real change in the situation of the Roma in Europe is to recognise antigypsyism as a specific form of racism in its various forms and to fight it at all levels of our societies.

Hosts

Members of European Parliament:

Soraya Post (S&D), Brando Benifei (S&D), Fabio Massimo Castaldo (EFDD), Bodil Ceballos (Greens/EFA), Damian Draghici (S&D), Cornelia Ernst (GUE/NGL), Fredrick Federley (ALDE), Laura Ferrara (EFDD), Marina Albiol Guzmán (GUE/NGL), Benedek Javor (Greens/EFA), Sajjad Karim (ECR), Barbara Lochbihler (Greens/EFA), Claude Moraes (S&D), Peter Niedermuller (S&D), Tania González Peñas (GUE/NGL), Iratxe García Pérez (S&D), Sirpa Pietikainen (EPP), Terry Reintke (Greens/EFA), Barbara Spinelli (GUE/NGL) and Tomáš Zdechovský (EPP)

The European Parliament Anti-Racism and Diversity Intergroup (ARDI)

NGOs:

Open Society European Policy Institute (OSEPI), European Roma Grassroots Organization (ERGO) Network, European Network Against Racism (ENAR), ternYpe International Roma Youth Network, Fundación Secretariado Gitano (FSG), European Union of Jewish Students (EUJS), Central Council of German Sinti and Roma, European Youth Forum (YFJ) and Roma Press Center

Tuesday 5th April 2016

10:00-11.30 Employment opportunities for young Roma, in P1C051

Hosted by Tomáš Zdechovský MEP, Brando Benifei MEP, Terry Reintke MEP, Tania González MEP, Fredrick Federley MEP, European Parliament Anti-Racism and Diversity Intergroup (ARDI), European Parliament Youth Intergroup, ERGO Network, FSG and ENAR

This event aims to underline the urgency to remove structural barriers and create opportunities for young Roma to access the labour market across the European Union (EU). While mainstream policy frameworks with significant budget allocations exist for promoting youth employment, reality shows Roma youth hardly benefit from such opportunities. The different panellists in this event will illustrate the difficulties young Roma face when trying to access the labour market and to present successful interventions with a view to identify the elements needed to make mainstream employment policies and programmes effective in reaching and benefiting young Roma across Europe.

Panel participants include Jan Jařab Special Representative OHCHR, Ioannis N. Dimitrakopoulos FRA, Ulrike Storost and Resa Koleva-Demonty European Commission, Peter Pollak Plenipotentiary of the Slovak Government for Roma Communities and NGO representatives

Moderated by Gabriela Hrabanova, Deputy Director ERGO Network

13:00-14:00 Group Leaders debate - A Commitment Against Antigypsyism, in JAN 4Q2

Hosted by Soraya Post MEP and European Parliament Anti-Racism and Diversity Intergroup (ARDI)

On the occasion of the International Roma Day, the chairs of the political groups in the European Parliament will gather to discuss how to take forward the fight against antigypsyism in the EU. Nearly one year has passed since 15 April 2015 when the European Parliament adopted the resolution on antigypsyism and the Roma holocaust. In this resolution, the European Parliament took a clear stance against antigypsyism and established a European Roma Holocaust Memorial Day.

The discussion will focus on how to proceed in the work to fight antigypsyism in the EU. It will particularly focus in the commitments of the political groups in the European Parliament and how the groups can join up in order to achieve an EU policy that makes a real change for the Roma in the EU.

Panel participants include Esteban Gonzalez-Pons (EPP), Tanja Fajon (S&D), Helga Stevens (ECR), Rebecca Harms (Greens/EFA), Gabriele Zimmer (GUE/NGL)

Moderated by Torbjørn Frøysnes, Council of Europe Special Representative to the EU

...Tuesday 5th April 2016

17:30-18:45 Official Opening of Roma week, in 3D - bar area

Hosted by Soraya Post MEP (S&D), Barbara Spinelli MEP (GUE), Fredrick Federley MEP (ALDE), Sirpa Pietikainen MEP (EPP), Benedek Javor MEP (Greens), European Parliament Anti-Racism and Diversity Intergroup (ARDI) and the Open Society European Policy Institute (OSEPI)

17:30-17:55 Welcome and introduction by MEPs Soraya Post (S&D), Barbara Spinelli (GUE), Benedek Javor (Greens/EFA) and Laura Ferrara (EFDD)

17:55-18:00 Monika Ladmanova, Member of the Cabinet of Commissioner Vera Jourová

18:00-18:05 Akos Topolanski, European Economic and Social Committee

18:05-18:10 Ioannis Dimitrakopoulos, Head of Equality and Citizens' rights Department Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA)

18:10-18:15 Violeta Naydenova, Policy Analyst OSEPI

18:15-18:20 Opening of art exhibition "Roma Culture and Heritage" and unveiling of statue by artist Sead Kazanxhiu

18:20-18:25 Presentation of photo exhibition "Roma everyday heroes" by Roma Press Center representative

18:25-18:35 Speeches by co-hosting MEPs Sirpa Pietikainen (EPP) and Fredrick Federley (ALDE)

18:35-18:40 Singing of Roma anthem Gelem Gelem by singer Rodica Tudor (Romania)

Moderated by Alfiaz Vaiya, Coordinator of the European Parliament Antiracism and Diversity Intergroup

19:00-20:45 Movie screening of "Dui Roma: About a Roma survivor of the Holocaust" followed by discussion, in ASP1G3

Hosted by Barbara Lochbihler MEP

Dui Roma is a documentary by Iovanca Gaspar about the late Hugo Höllenreiner, a Sinto from Germany, who survived the Holocaust. Höllenreiner who had also been a victim of Josef Mengele travels with the composer Adrian Gaspar to Auschwitz telling his memories. Based on Höllenreiner's account the composer creates the Symphonia Romani – Bari Duk (Great Pain) – an oratorium for choir and orchestra.

19:00-19:45 Movie screening

19:45-20:45 Discussion

Panel participants include movie director Iovanca Gaspar and composer Adrian Gaspar

Events in other institutions 5th April 2016

09:30-13:00 Antigypsyism - possible responses, in EESC meeting room VMA 3
Hosted by European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)

Close to the international Roma Day on 8 April, the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) will hold a hearing on "Anti-gypsyism - possible responses", which will feed into the work of the EESC permanent study group on Roma inclusion monitoring the implementation the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies.

Anti-gypsyism is an important barrier to the effective implementation of the framework and national integration strategies, and the hearing wants to shed light on possible responses to this cross-cutting problem. The European refugee crisis acerbates problems with general racism, xenophobia which also affects Roma. A hearing on anti-gypsyism and other forms of racism and xenophobia will allow exchanging best practices on how to combat these phenomena.

09:30 Welcome and opening session

Pavel Trantina, European economic and Social Committee

Ákos Topolánszky, European economic and Social Committee

09:45 - Panel 1

Cristian Pîrvulescu, EESC permanent study group on Immigration and Integration (IMI)

Julie Pascoet, European Network Against Racism (ENAR)

Ilvia Bajrami, European Roma Grassroots org. network (ERGO Network)

Marta Pinto, European Roma Information Office (Erio)

11:45 - Panel 2

Christel Mercade Piqueras and Pia Lindholm, European Commission, DG Justice

Miranda Vuolasranta, Roma Expert

Anna Striethorst, Open Society Foundations

Isabela Mihalache, CoE

12:30 - Concluding remarks

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Venue:

European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), building van Maerlant, salle VMA 3, rue Belliard 99 - 1040 Brussels

Interpreting:

Participants can

- **speak in** French, English, Italian, Spanish, Swedish, Hungarian, Lithuanian, Bulgarian
- **listen to** French, English, Hungarian, Lithuanian, Bulgarian

Coffee/tea at disposal

Wednesday 6th April 2016

09:00-13:30 Breakfast, debate and exhibition with 60 young Roma from across Europe

Location: Esplanade in front of European Parliament

Hosted by ERGO network, ternYpe, Phiren Amenca and Foyer

Young Roma invite Director-General Astola and Members of European Parliament (MEPS) for a breakfast to discuss the situation for young Roma in Europe. What are the challenges for young Roma today and how can local organisations work together with EU politicians to achieve better conditions for Young Roma and fight against antigypsyism in the EU?"

Panel participants include Soraya Post MEP, Barbara Spinelli MEP, Damian Draghici MEP, Tiina Astola DG JUST Director General European Commission, Professor Ian Hancock and 60 young Roma from across Europe

09:00 Official opening of "Roma Youth Week Exhibition" by DG JUST Director-General Tiina Astola

09:10 Photo session with Director-General, MEPs, young Roma and guests

09:15 Breakfast with Director-General Astola, MEPs and Young Roma from across Europe

10.00 Debate with Soraya Post MEP, Barbara Spinelli MEP and Damian Draghici MEP

12:00 Public action of Roma youth

12:30 Debate among the youth organizations and network (EUJS, FEMYSO, EYF and ternYpe)

14:30-17:00 45 years of International Roma Day - Taking forward the fight against antigypsyism, in ASP3G3

Hosted by S&D Group and Soraya Post MEP

On 15 April 2015 the European Parliament adopted a resolution on the occasion of the International Roma Day on antigypsyism in Europe and a Memorial Day of the Roma Holocaust. Through this resolution the parliament took a strong stance against antigypsyism and underlined the need to combat antigypsyism at every level and by every means. This message echoed the conclusions of a high level event that the S&D group hosted prior to the adoption of the resolution with the participation of the European Commission and the Council. The aim of this year's event is to discuss how the resolution should be put into practice. Antigypsyism is the main reason why Roma do not enjoy equal rights in the EU and why the Roma holocaust during WWII remains broadly unknown.

The first panel will describe the situation of the Roma in the EU today, and discuss policy options as well as practical examples on how antigypsyism can be dealt with on the national level and on the EU-level. In the second panel, politicians and decision makers will show the way forward.

14:30 - Opening of the event

Soraya Post MEP

14:40 - Panel 1

Ian Hancock, professor, University of Texas (TBC)

Thomas Hammarberg, Chair of the Swedish Commission against Antigypsyism

Torbjørn Frøysnes, Council of Europe Special Representative to the EU
Ioannis N. Dimitrakopoulos, Head of Equality and Citizens' rights Department Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA)
Moderator: Cecile Kashetu Kyenge MEP (TBC)

15:40 - Panel 2

Corinna Crețu, Commissioner for Regional Policy
Francisco Fonesca Morillo, Deputy Director General, DG JUST
Peter Pollak, Plenipotentiary of the Slovak Government for Roma Communities
Claude Moraes, Member of the European Parliament and Chair of the LIBE Committee
Moderator: Cecile Kashetu Kyenge MEP (TBC)

16:40 - Gabriela Hrabanova and Carmen Tanasie, ERGO Network

16:50 - Concluding remarks

Soraya Post MEP
Damian Draghici MEP

17:15-20:00 Movie screening of "Judgment in Hungary" followed by discussion, in ASP3G3 Hosted by Peter Niedermuller MEP, European Parliament Anti-Racism and Diversity Intergroup (ARDI) and organised by the Open Society European Policy Institute (OSEPI)

"In 2008 and 2009, a group of Hungarian right-wing extremists committed a series of attacks on random members of the Roma community. Six people were killed, including a five-year-old, and another five were injured. The trial of the four suspects lasted two-and-a-half years, and the verdict was passed in August 2013. Director Eszter Hajdú filmed the trial and condensed it to create an oppressive Kammerspielfilm starring the cold-blooded suspects, an irritable judge and the victims' families. Without any commentary, Hajdú recorded the drawn-out and sometimes chaotic trial from the cramped courtroom's public gallery. A small static camera shows the judge's point of view, while close-ups highlight the emotions of the people touched by the crime. Sometimes we see the protagonists outside the courtroom, for example during the reconstruction at the crime scene. At the start of the trial, the victims and next of kin assume there will be justice, and they have faith that the Hungarian authorities will protect them. But will the extremists be found guilty? The widespread anti-Roma sentiment in Hungarian society and the bungling (intentional or otherwise) on the part of the police give them reason to fear they will not." (quote from IDFA catalogue).

17:15-17:25 Introduction

17:25-19:15 Movie screening

19:15-20:00 Discussion

Panel participants include movie director Eszter Hajdú; Arpad Csonka, lawyer who represented several Roma victims during the trial; and Jeno Setet, a Roma activist/Civil Rights activist. The discussion will be moderated by Violeta Naydenova, Policy Analyst, OSEPI.

