

HIGH-LEVEL CONFERENCE

8 APRIL 2021

#INTERNATIONALROMANIDAY

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS SINCE THE FIRST ROMANI CONGRESS



Context

International Romani Day (8 April) is a day to celebrate Romani culture, history and language, and to raise awareness of the issues Romani people still face. It was officially declared in 1990 during the 4th World Romani Congress, in honour of the first major international meeting of Romani representatives, 7-12 April 1971, in Orpington near London, UK.

This day should serve as a reminder that Romani people – as the largest European ethnic minority – have contributed to Europe's diversity and enriched our heritage for centuries. However, many of the 10-12 million Romani people in Europe still suffer from poverty and exclusion. The existence of widespread antigypsyism reinforces and aggravates their economic and social deprivation. These inequalities persist despite ongoing efforts at national, European, and international level to tackle prejudice and discrimination.

Experience with Romani inclusion actions shows that long-term change in any of the policy areas requires tackling antigypsyism and discrimination towards Romani people. To succeed, Romani inclusion actions in all policy areas must be linked to common values and include awareness raising among the public. To fight stereotypes, hate speech, and hate crime it is necessary to develop and implement legislation, but also to build positive narratives among mainstream society and strengthen Romani identity, via specific targeted and binding measures to ensure equality and inclusion, to fight antigypsyism and promote recognition of Romani history (including the Holocaust). The conference brings together EU leaders, representatives of European and national institutions, Romani politicians and civil society, grassroots, youth, men and women. A diversity of skills and experiences that will make the Equality, Inclusion and Participation of Romani people more possible and will stay united against antigypsyism.

We are European Romani People! Equal and Diverse!

AGENDA

- 12:00 - 12:05** **Opening Ceremony**
Romani Anthem “Gelem, Gelem”
Sunny Franz & Sascha Reinhardt
- 12:05 - 12:10** **Welcoming Remarks**
Romeo Franz, Member of the European Parliament, Greens/EFA
- 12:10 - 12:30** **Keynote Speech from the Leaders of EU Institutions**
Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission
David Sassoli, President of the European Parliament
Charles Michel, President of the European Council (tbc)
Cláudia Pereira, Secretary of State for Integration and Migration, Portuguese Presidency of the Council of the European Union
- 12:30 - 12:40** **50 Years after the First Romani Congress. What must be done?**
Grattan Puxon, Romani activist, participant at the First Romani Congress
Soraya Post, former Member of the European Parliament
Juan de Dios Ramírez Heredia, former Member of the European Parliament (tbc)
Miranda Vuolasranta, European Roma and Travellers Forum
- 12:40 - 12:45** **Break - Romani Musician Performance**
Rodica Elena Tudor, Center of Resources for Social Inclusion CRIS, Romania
- Making Romani Equality, Inclusion and Participation a Reality. The way forward to fight against antigypsyism. Who, what and how?**
- 12:45 - 13:15** **EU Policy Making and Support**
Helena Dalli, European Commissioner for Equality
Juan Fernando López Aguilar, Chair of the European Parliament Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs, S&D
Ioan-Rareş Bogdan, Member of the European Parliament, EPP (tbc)
Peter Pollák, Member of the European Parliament, EPP
Dacian Cioloş, Member of the European Parliament, Chair of RE (tbc)
Anna Júlia Donáth, Member of the European Parliament, RE
Cornelia Ernst, Member of the European Parliament, The Left GUE/NGL
Terry Reintke, Member of the European Parliament, Greens/EFA
Sergey Lagodinsky, Member of the European Parliament, Greens/EFA
Carmen Avram, Member of the European Parliament, S&D
- 13:15 - 13:30** **The way forward to combat negative attitudes against Romani People**
Margareta Matache, Director of the Roma Program at Harvard FXB Center for Health and Human Rights, U.S.
Dan Pavel Doghi, Chief of the Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues, OSCE/ODIHR, Poland
Jelena Jovanović, Coordinator of the Anti-Racism and Diversity Intergroup in the European Parliament, Belgium

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Frank Reuter, Scientific Director of the Research Center on Antigypsyism
Heidelberg University, Germany

Eva Rizzini, Scientific Coordinator of the National Antigypsyism Observatory,
University of Verona, Italy

Marian Mandache, Human Rights Lawyer, Romania

Đorđe Jovanović, President of the European Roma Rights Centre, Belgium

13:30 - 13:50

**Making Romani Equality, Inclusion and Participation a Reality –
Intersectional Perspectives**

Maria Atanasova, 2020 Young European of the Year, Bulgaria

Norbert Iuonas, Civic Union of Romanian Roma Youth, Romania

Irina Spătaru, Romano Centro, Austria

Atanas Stoyanov, Phiren Amenca, Belgium

Maria Dumitru, Youth and Gender Equality Activist, Spain

Senad Sakipovski, Institute for Roma and Minorities Integration
Wuppertal, Germany

Adriana Lamačková, Center for Reproductive Rights, Switzerland

Terezia Rostas, Kaskosan, UK

Monika Ajvazović, Association of Young Volunteers, Serbia

Shimano Petermann, Youth Activist, Germany

Natasa Tasic Knezevic, Opera Singer at the Serbian National Theatre

13:50 - 14:00

Break - Romani Musician Performance

Sunny Franz & Sascha Reinhardt

14:00 - 14:20

**The Role of Civil Society in making Romani Equality, Inclusion and
Participation a Reality**

Gabriela Hrabanova, European Roma Grassroots Organizations Network,
Belgium

Daniel Strauss, Romno Kher, Germany

Maja Saitović, Public Health Program, Open Society Foundations, Germany

Gabor Iancu, Romani CRISS, Romania

Belen Sánchez Rubio, Fundación Secretariado Gitano, Spain

Ivan Ivanov, European Roma Information Office, Belgium

Radost Zaharieva, European Public Health Alliance, Belgium

Adem Ademi, European Roma Equality Network, Belgium

Tanja Đorđević, Association of Roma Coordinators, Serbia

Aluna Lepadatu, Luton Roma Trust, UK

14:20 - 14:30

**The power of political representation in making Romani Equality, Inclusion
and Participation a Reality**

Liliana Hristache, Local Councillor, Montreuil - Paris, France

Ismael Cortés Gómez, Member of Parliament, Spain

Catalin Manea, Member of the Parliament, Romania

Arabela Iljaz, Senior Associate for Implementation of Romani Education Policies
Ministry of Education and Science, North Macedonia

Rafael Saavedra, Fundación Secretariado Gitano, Spain

Tefik Mahmut, Human Rights Lawyer, North Macedonia

Orhan Galjus, President EuroAsian Roma Academic Network, Kosovo

14:30 - 14:50

**The role of grassroots activism in making Romani Equality, Inclusion and
Participation a Reality**

Andren Bejta, Council of European Romani People, Germany

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Michelle Mila van Burik, Roma Association Utrecht, the Netherlands
Sebihan Demirovski, Roma Resource Centre, North Macedonia
Marina Horvat, Roma Youth Organization, Croatia
Bruno Gomes, Letras Nomadas, Portugal
Orhan Tahir, Citizens for Democracy and Rule of Law, Bulgaria
Verana Lehmann, Association of German Sinti & Roma, Mannheim
Robert Brisenstam, Lawyer and Grassroots Activist, Sweden
Emiliano Aliu, Roma Versitas, Albania
Serkan Baysak, Roma Education Fund, Turkey

14:50 - 14:55

Conclusions by MEP Romeo Franz

14:55: 15:00

Closing of the High-level Conference, Romani Musician Performance
Rodica Elena Tudor

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