

WHICH STEPS TOWARDS EUROPEAN POLICIES AGAINST ANTI-GYPSYISM?

*15 November 2016
10.00-17.00*

Thon Hotel EU – Rue de la Loi 75, Brussels
Room: The Netherlands III

Rationale

Anti-Gypsyism remains the most widespread and least challenged form of intolerance in Europe, violating European principles and creating obstacles to Romani individuals in their daily lives. The prejudice against Roma is reflected in public discourse and in the failure to address incidents of hate and intolerance. Particularly troubling is the persistence of biased opinions among officials in public institutions, which can lead them to treat Roma less favourably than other citizens.

Roma today benefit less than other citizens from public policies or investments in local infrastructure such as schools or social housing. They become victim of political campaigns and measures that explicitly aim at harming the minority. The experience of discrimination, deepened by the exclusion from political life, can create mistrust in public institutions, creating barriers for the successful dialogue between the state and its citizens.

Fortunately, more and more European governments recognize that discrimination against Roma threatens social cohesion and that it hampers the social advancement, education and employment of their citizens. Understanding also that lifting Roma from poverty alone will not overcome hostile attitudes shared by a majority of Europeans, governments have adopted proactive measures promoting a culture of diversity, respect, and mutual dialogue—both in state institutions and in society at large.

Still, the lack of established structures and experience creates obstacles and at times policy-makers struggle to convince voters and the media of the benefits of fighting prejudice and fostering equality. Against this background, the seminar shall present success stories of education and reconciliation and explore how they can be systematized and widened throughout Europe.

Objective

The seminar aims to encourage policy-makers to significantly step up their efforts in combatting anti-Gypsyism in the short and mid-term.

It will explore promising practices throughout the EU and promote the benefits of governmental coordination, trainings of civil servants and multipliers, funds for cultural and dialogue programmes, media initiatives, and monitoring mechanisms.

Organisers

The seminar is hosted by the Open Society Foundations and Michael Roth, Minister of State for Europe at the German Federal Foreign Office. It takes place under the auspices of the European Commission High Level Group on combating racism, xenophobia and other forms of intolerance.

Agenda

10.00 – 10.30	Registration and breakfast
	Welcome and setting the scene
10.30 – 11.00	Andrzej Mirga – Senior Fellow, Open Society Roma Initiatives Office Nicola Gilhoff – Deputy Special Representative for international aspects of matters of Sinti and Roma, German Federal Foreign Office Dijana Pavlovic – Vice-President, Upre Roma, Italy
	Opening panel: Joint steps towards European policies against anti-Gypsyism – Examples and potentials of member state efforts
11.00 – 12.00	Moderator: Zeljko Jovanovic – Director, Open Society Roma Initiatives Office Interventions by: Michael Roth – Minister of State for Europe, Federal Foreign Office, Germany Sandro Gozi – Secretary of State for European Affairs in the Prime Minister's Office, Italy Francisco Fonseca Morillo – Deputy Director-General, Directorate-General Justice and Consumers, European Commission

	Discussion: How can coordinating and advisory bodies consolidate the fight against anti-Gypsyism?
12.00 – 13.15	Moderator: Nicoleta Bitu – Executive Director Romano Butiq Interventions by: Thomas Hammarberg – President, Swedish Commission against Anti-Gypsyism Soraya Post – Member of the European Parliament, Co-president of the Anti-Racism and Diversity Intergroup (ARDI) Romani Rose – Chairperson, Central Council of German Sinti and Roma
13.15 – 14.00	Lunch break
	Parallel Roundtables
14.00 – 15.30	I Promising strategies against prejudice and hate in the media Moderator: Jake Bowers – Editor, Traveller Times, UK Interventions by: Christel Mercadé Piqueras – Legal Officer, DG JUST, European Commission Dani de Torres – Project Manager, Anti-Rumor Strategy to prevent Racism, Spain Jonathan Mack – Political Advisor, Central Council of German Sinti and Roma Cvetomir Nenov – Integro Association, Bulgaria II Promising practices in anti-bias education for state employees and multipliers Moderator: Miriam Karoly – Chief of the Contact Point for Sinti and Roma, OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights Interventions by: Robin Sclafani – Director, CEJI – A Jewish contribution to an inclusive Europe Andrea Frydrychova – Police Education and Training unit, Police of the Czech Republic

	Presentations
16.00 – 16.30	Moderator: Iulius Rostas – Chair in Romani Studies, Central European University Reference paper by the Alliance against anti-Gypsyism Study on promising policies and funds against anti-Gypsyism Presenters: Gabriela Hrabanova – Policy Coordinator, European Roma Grassroots Organisations Network Sergio Carrera – Head of Justice and Home Affairs Program, Centre for European Policy Studies
	Conclusions and steps forwards
16.30 – 17.00	Ethel Brooks – Associate Professor, Rutgers University, USA Jan Balaz – Social Attaché, Permanent Representation of the Slovak Republic to the EU Iulian Stoian – Adviser, National Agency for Roma, Government of Romania