



STATEMENT FROM THE FUNDACIÓN SECRETARIADO  
GITANO'S ROMA PARTICIPATION GROUP

# International Roma Day - 8 April 2024

## *Get to know us*

**Get to know us**, because today is the International Roma Day. A key date for Roma all over the world. A date on which we feel and show the symbols that identify us. Our blue flag, like the sky; green, like the meadows, symbols of freedom and hope, and the cartwheel that symbolises our movement, our permanent adaptation and resilience.

**Get to know us**, because today, 8 April, we want to remember that we are on the eve of the 600th anniversary of the first documented arrival of Roma to the Iberian Peninsula. Today, 8 April, we cannot forget our ancestors who have been victims of the most atrocious persecutions such as the Great Round-up, the attempted extermination of Spanish Roma in 1749, or the Samudaripen, the Roma holocaust on Europe in the 20th century, which this year commemorates its 80th anniversary.

**Get to know us** on this commemorative day, where we urge all governments, international organisations and civil society to join us in solidarity. We must work together to eradicate discrimination and promote social inclusion. We must create societies where every person, regardless of their ethnic or cultural background, has equal opportunities without fear of discrimination.

**Get to know us**, to prevent our society from making past mistakes, and do not allow political parties in Europe to blame us for the major crises that plague us and that we suffer in our daily lives. We have suffered a worrying setback in our neighbouring country, Portugal, with the rise of an openly anti-Roma ultra-right wing.

**Get to know us**, because we want to be seen beyond prejudices and false assumptions. We want you to see our faces, hear our stories and share our joys and struggles. We are an active part of society and we want to progress and live with dignity.

**Get to know us**, because this is the best way to combat stereotypes and prejudices and to fight against the discriminatory situations that still persist against Roma. The incorporation of Roma history and culture into the educational curriculum is insufficient. The steps that have been taken in this direction are few and there is no practical implementation of the provisions of the legislation in Spain. It is essential that schools, textbook publishers and educational authorities make a greater effort to make this a reality and that its implementation is much greater than it has been up to now.

**Get to know us**, because Roma are a fundamental part of Spanish culture. Because without the Roma contribution, our gastronomy, music, dance, language, painting and other artistic disciplines would not be understood in the same way. We have a new generation of writers, actors and actresses, sportsmen and sportswomen... This

recognition is vital for Roma children to feel proud of being an important part of this intercultural society that we must build together.

**Get to know us**, from the richness of our millenary history that has withstood the test of time. Our language, Romani, persecuted and mistreated in our country until its near disappearance, has been the source of numerous linguistic contributions to Spanish language, with words as common as “chaval” (boy), “camelar” (to court) or “currar” (work). Our values are rooted in family, respect and solidarity, which give value and attention to our elders, our *Tíos* and *Tías*, people who have been, are and will be the ones who illuminate our steps with their wisdom and advice.

**Get to know us**, because only together we can generate a more cohesive and intercultural society.

**Get to know us**, because it is our claim since 2004, 20 years ago, when we launched our first awareness campaign "Get to know them before judging them". We do not need you to judge us, but we do need you to get to know the real Roma People. Our cultural contribution and our rich history are far removed from the vision promoted by certain television shows, full of sensationalism and morbidity that perpetuate a distorted and very harmful image.

**Get to know us**, because to know is to share and to live together. Get to know us and share with us this day, when we proudly celebrate our *Romipen*, our Roma identity.

**Get to know us. *Sastipen thaj Mestipen.***

**Get to know us. *Health and Freedom!***

**#8April #InternationalRomaDay #Conócenos**