

Meeting of the Alliance against Antigypsyism

18th – 21st March 2019

Agenda

Monday, March 18 th , 2019	
	arrival
16:00 – 18:30 Venue: <i>Mundo B</i>	Briefing of the Alliance against Antigypsyism Prepare discussions and civil society expectations on the initiative “Creating trust through uncovering and recognising the Truth - advancing recognition and remedy for anti-Gypsyism”
18:30 Venue: Baden-Württemberg Rep	Opening of the EU Roma Week <i>organized by MEP Romeo Franz</i>
Tuesday, March 19 th , 2019	
09:00 – 14:45 Venue: <i>ASP 1G3</i>	Evaluating the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies (NRIS) <i>Organized by DG Justice and the Roma Civil Monitor (CEU)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall evaluation of the EU Framework • Evaluation of Italy and Germany • Evaluation of Romania, Bulgaria, Slovakia, Hungary
17:15 – 18:15 Venue: <i>House of European History</i>	European Civil Rights Prize of Sinti and Roma (invitation card) <i>Organized by the Central Council, and the Documentation and Cultural Center of German Sinti and Roma</i>
18:00 – 22:00 Venue: <i>Concert Noble</i>	EU Award for Roma Integration 2019 in the Western Balkans and Turkey for Women Grassroots Activists <i>Organized by DG Near implemented by Roma Active Albania</i> https://www.facebook.com/EuAwardforRomaIntegration/
Wednesday, March 20 th , 2019	
08:00 – 10:00 Venue: <i>MEP Restaur.</i>	Informal Working Breakfast of MEPs with (young) Roma activists <i>Organized by ternype International Roma Youth Network</i>
11:00 - 13:00 Venue: <i>ASP 3G2</i>	Roma and the UN Sustainable Development Goals <i>Organized by ERGO Network, MEP Cornelia Ernst</i>
13.00 - 15.00 Venue: <i>ASP 3G3</i>	Combatting racism/discrimination: Evaluating 2014-2019 and recommendations for 2019-2024 <i>Organized by the ARDI Intergroup (Anti-Racism and Diversity Intergroup in the European Parliament 2014-2019)</i>
14:45 – 18:00 Venue: <i>ASP 3G2</i>	Creating trust through uncovering and recognising the Truth: advancing recognition and remedy for anti-Gypsyism Part I <i>Organized by MEP Soraya Post with UN OHCHR and civil society</i>
18:00	Reception dinner by MEP Soraya Post in the European Parliament
18:30 at Bozar	BOZAR lecture on anti-racism and discrimination with David Lammy MP
Thursday, March 21 st , 2019	
09:00 – 12:00 Venue: <i>ASP 5E2</i>	Creating trust through uncovering and recognising the Truth: advancing recognition and remedy for anti-Gypsyism Part II <i>Organized by MEP Soraya Post with UN OHCHR and civil society</i>
13:00 – 15:00 Venue: <i>ASP 1G3</i>	Supporting the effective reintegration of Roma Returnees in the Western Balkans <i>Organized by DG Near</i>

1. EU Roma Framework Post-2020

On December 6, 2018 a coalition of more than fifteen Romani and anti-racism civil society organisations from across Europe called for the Council of the European Union, and governments of European countries, to make a clear commitment to the new proposals for post-2020 Roma Inclusion plans made by the European Commission in its communication to the European Parliament and Council.

The [new communication from the Commission](#) highlighted key elements to improve the EU Roma Framework including: the need for inclusion of Roma in mainstream policies, fighting antigypsyism, improving Roma participation, addressing the diversity amongst Roma, and better data collection, target indicators and reporting in integration strategies.

The debates on the evaluation of the European Framework and the National Integration Strategies shall build the ground for the preparation of a post-2020 strategy, which will be decided by a new European Commission and European Parliament after fall 2019.

Developments in the context of different institutions

- **European Commission:** [EC published in December 2018 an internal and external evaluation](#) of the current framework, Roma Platform in October focused on housing and health, current EU negotiation of the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027
- **EC High-Level Group on Racism and Xenophobia:** in November 2018 the High-Level-Group on Racism and Xenophobia published a [“Conclusions paper on antigypsyism”](#)
- **European Parliament:** [European Parliament resolution on addressing antigypsyism](#) with recommendations for post-2020 (Oct 2017), [Roma Week](#) (April 2018), [Interparliamentary Committee Meeting](#) (Oct 2018), publications on antigypsyism by political groups [S&D](#) and [Greens](#)
- **EU Presidencies:** [Austrian Presidency event focused on 27 Nov 2018 on addressing antigypsyism](#) in the post-2020, upcoming Romanian EU Presidency event (March 4-5, 2019 in Bucharest), decision on new framework might happen after the establishment of a new EC under the presidencies (Finland 2019, Croatia 2020, Germany 2020)
- **Fundamental Rights Agency:** report (April 2018) [“A persisting concern: anti-Gypsyism as a barrier to Roma inclusion”](#), FRA Forum session on antigypsyism (Sept 2018), report release on 16 Nov 2018 “Working with Roma: Participation and empowerment of local communities”, current data collection in most EU member states ([following EU-MIDIS II](#))
- **Roma Civil Monitor:** [about the RCM](#), [press release on 30 Oct 2018](#) on CZ, SK, HU, RO, BG + [synthesis report](#) with key findings and recommendations; [national monitoring reports on structural preconditions](#) (governance, anti-discrimination, addressing antigypsyism)

Other background documents:

- **OHCHR:** [Views in the Context of Mid-Term Review of Implementation of the EU Framework](#)
- **CEPS:** [Combating Institutional Anti-Gypsyism: Responses and promising practices in the EU and selected Member States](#)

2. Roma Included: Can the Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals contribute to combatting antigypsyism?

Hosted by Cornelia Ernst MEP, the European Roma Grassroots Organisations (ERGO) Network and Global Call to Action against Poverty (GCAP) will be discussing important linkages between combatting antigypsyism and the Sustainable Development Goals. The discussion will be part of the annual EU Roma Week in the European Parliament, where ERGO Network will launch its new report “Roma Included: Can the SDGs contribute to combatting antigypsyism?”

The Agenda 2030 and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in its three categories of political, social and environmental goals are to a large extent relevant for Roma inclusion and can provide opportunities for advancing inclusion as well as countering antigypsyism. At the same time, as a truly global development agenda, they need to be taken into account in all future policies for EU member states as well as the enlargement region.

For (pro-) Roma advocates and the EU institutions it is therefore important to know how to use the Agenda 2030 when working towards the Post-2020 EU Roma Framework for the National Roma Integration Strategies. (Pro-) Roma advocates should participate in the civil society engagement within the Agenda 2030, so that the perspectives and needs of Roma are not left out of reporting mechanisms.

European policy-makers and civil society also face challenges when bringing policy processes at the EU such as the Agenda 2020 or the European Pillar of Social Rights under the roof of the Agenda 2030. Civil society engagement, in particular at local level, might suffer fatigue if too many consultations for multiple frameworks are being held. Therefore a discussion is needed how to align these frameworks and indicators.

Objectives of the panel discussion

1. Present core findings on the linkages between the Agenda 2030 and the Roma rights agenda in Europe
2. Enable exchange, learning and networking between Members of the European Parliament, representatives of the European Commission and civil society working in the respective frameworks of the Agenda 2030 and the human rights of Roma
3. Discuss strategic entry points for (pro-) Roma civil society on local, national, European and global level to engage with the Sustainable Development Goals
4. Consider how the Sustainable Development Goals can be taken into account in a Post-2020 EU Roma Framework

3. Stocktaking Conference: Creating Trust through Uncovering and Recognising the Truth: Advancing Recognition and Remedy for Anti-Gypsyism

❖ The Initiative

This initiative aims to combat anti-Gypsyism¹ and to advocate for equality and inclusive, democratic societies by advancing truth, recognition, remedy, trust and reconciliation processes at national and European levels. The initiative is a follow-up to the call of the European Parliament resolution of Oct 2017 to establish truth and reconciliation processes to analyse the roots, manifestations and impact of anti-Gypsyism in the past and present, to advance the recognition of and remedy for anti-Gypsyism, and to build new trust between Roma, institutions and the public-at-large. The initiative builds on experiences with Truth and Reconciliation processes world-wide, as well as on previous structural approaches to recognize anti-Gypsyism.

❖ Objectives

- a. Combatting anti-Gypsyism by advancing truth, recognition, remedy, trust and reconciliation processes.
- b. Promoting awareness and recognition of anti-Gypsyism as a specific form of racism against Roma, Sinti, Travellers and others stigmatized as “Gypsies” in the public imagination, and as a root cause impeding sustainable Roma inclusion;
- c. Promoting effective policies and strengthening structures to analyse, monitor and combat anti-Gypsyism, in particular through specific ‘vehicles’ such as truth and reconciliation processes on anti-Gypsyism;
- d. Advocating the recognition and remembrance of the Roma Holocaust, including commemorating annually August 2nd as Roma Holocaust Memorial Day;

❖ Stocktaking conference on March 20-21, 2019

In the context of the 2019 EU Roma Week in the European Parliament, and the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the partners will hold a stocktaking event in the European Parliament on 20-21 March 2019, focussing on state-of-play and efforts to advance at EU- and State-level the fight against anti-Gypsyism through truth, recognition, remedy, trust and reconciliation processes. The March 2019 event will create a space to bring all relevant stakeholders together, including UN, EU, OSCE, Council of Europe, national governments and parliaments, as well as grassroots voices, civil society and academia.

❖ Partnership

The UN Human Rights Office (OHCHR) joins with the Office of MEP Soraya Post, the European Roma Grassroots Organisations (ERGO) Network, the Central Council of German Sinti and Roma, and the Fundacion Secretariado Gitano (FSG) to undertake a Europe-wide stocktaking event on 20-21 March 2019 in the context of the 2019 International Day Against Racial Discrimination and the EU Roma Week in the European Parliament. The partnership aims to advance truth, recognition, remedy, trust and reconciliation processes to address past and present anti-Gypsyism at national and European levels. The March 2019 event aims to take stock of the state-of-play, and to identify next steps in this regard. The partnership described here is a preliminary group committed to advancing this discussion. In the run-up to and following up the March 2019 meeting, it is hoped that this partnership expands to become a broad coalition.

¹ This paper uses the spelling generally recognised by international institutions, including the UN Human Rights Council and the Council of Europe’s European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance (<https://rm.coe.int/ecri-general-policy-recommendation-no-13-on-combating-anti-gypsyism-an/16808b5aee>). The paper also recognises that a number of Romani grassroots voices, prefer the spelling used by the Alliance against Antigypsyism (<http://antigypsyism.eu/>): “antigypsyism”.

Background information: the recognition of the fight against antigypsyism

In recent years, the international community, national stakeholders and civil society have increasingly called for firm measures to combat antigypsyism in order to overcome deeply rooted racism and discrimination against Roma and the denial of their fundamental rights.

In June 2011, the European Council adopted an EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies (NRIS) promoting social and economic inclusion of Roma by at the same time addressing discrimination and racism against Roma communities. Yet, sustainable progress on the ground is missing while racism and discrimination against Roma remain persistent and unchallenged ([Commission Communication: Midterm review of the EU framework for national Roma integration strategies, COM/2017/0458 final](#)).

Responding to this, the '[European Parliament resolution of 15 April 2015 on the occasion of International Roma Day – Anti-Gypsyism in Europe and EU recognition of the memorial day of the Roma genocide during World War II](#)' recognised anti-Gypsyism as a special form of racism and expressed “deep concern at the rise of anti-Gypsyism, as manifested inter alia through anti-Roma rhetoric and violent attacks against Roma in Europe”. The resolution recognized “the historical fact of the genocide of Roma that took place during World War II” and concludes “that a European day should be dedicated to commemorating the victims of the genocide of the Roma during World War II.” – the Roma Holocaust Memorial Day on 2 August.

The '[European Parliament resolution of 25 October 2017 on fundamental rights aspects in Roma integration in the EU: fighting anti-Gypsyism](#)' called upon the Commission to “place anti-Gypsyism in the focus of the post-2020 EU Framework in addition to social inclusion (...), as anti-Gypsyism undermines the successful implementation of National Roma Integration Strategies”. The resolution “calls on the Commission and Member States to apply and actively disseminate the working definition of anti-Gypsyism by the ECRI in order to provide clear guidance to state authorities”, as well it “calls on all political groups in Parliament and political parties in the Member States to respect the revised charter of European political parties for a non-racist society, and asks them to regularly renew their commitment and to condemn and sanction hate speech”.

The EP resolution calls for the establishment of “Truth and Reconciliation Commissions”:

3. Urges the Commission, for the sake of creating essential mutual trust, to set up a truth and reconciliation commission at EU level (either within existing structures or as a separate body) to acknowledge the persecution, exclusion and disownment of Roma throughout the centuries, to document these in an official white paper and to engage with European Parliament and Roma experts in carrying out these tasks;

4. Calls on Member States to create (either within existing structures or as a separate body) national truth and reconciliation commissions in order to acknowledge the persecution, exclusion and disownment of Roma through the centuries while involving members of parliament, government officials, lawyers, Roma representatives, NGOs and grassroots organisations, to document these issues in an official white paper, and encourages Member States to make the history of Roma part of the curricula in schools;

The [EU's High-Level Group on combating racism, xenophobia and other forms](#) of intolerance, bringing together representatives of EU Member States and civil society representatives, put special emphasis on discussing antigypsyism at their 4th High-Level Meeting in December 2017 and published a conclusions paper on antigypsyism in Dec 2018. In April 2018, the EU [Fundamental Rights Agency \(FRA\) released their first report on antigypsyism](#) that reviews data on specific areas of life, such as education, employment, healthcare and housing – all areas in which prejudice and racism against Sinti and Roma continue to undermine true progress.

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The international community (EU, UN, OSCE, CoE) have increasingly called on political leaders for a responsible role and leadership in promoting Roma inclusion and addressing all forms of racism and discrimination, including antigypsyism. At the same time, politicians at national level and European parliamentary bodies took initiatives to counter hate speech and firmly called for all-inclusive societies.

The responsibility of mainstream society in countering antigypsyism and the crucial role in this regard of political leadership were addressed during a [high-level event in September 2016](#) with Members of the European Parliament (EP), of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) and OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA), as well as representatives of national parliaments, which was hosted by the German OSCE Chairperson-in-Office in co-operation with OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), the Council of Europe (CoE) and the Central Council of German Sinti and Roma.

The [Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe \(PACE\) adopted in 2017 a](#) resolution calling on national parliaments “to mobilise against anti-Gypsyism and all forms of racism and intolerance, in particular through participating in networks such as the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance”.

The ‘Alliance against Antigypsyism’ recently published a “[Reference Paper on Antigypsyism](#)” which proposes a working definition of antigypsyism that reflects a deeper, systematic understanding of this phenomenon. The paper explores characteristics and background of antigypsyism, as well as dimensions of its manifestation. The rationale behind this paper is that the current lack of a common understanding of the scope, depth and implications of antigypsyism hinders the formulation of effective answers to tackle it.