The European Roma Information Office (ERIO) is a European anti-discrimination and advocacy organisation which promotes political and public discussion on Roma issues by providing information to the EU institutions, civil society and governments. Through its wide network, it aims to combat racist discrimination against Roma through awareness raising, lobbying and policy development.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements ........................................................................................................... 3
Aims .................................................................................................................................. 4
Introduction ........................................................................................................................ 5
Conference on Roma culture ............................................................................................... 6
Roma culture and identity ................................................................................................... 7
Food .................................................................................................................................... 8
Art ....................................................................................................................................... 9
Music ................................................................................................................................... 10
Silver .................................................................................................................................. 11
Family ................................................................................................................................ 12
Respect for the elderly ......................................................................................................... 13
Flyers ................................................................................................................................. 14
Video ................................................................................................................................. 16
Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the European Union Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme (2014-2020) for funding this publication. Our appreciation goes also to those who assisted in the preparation of this publication and campaign: Jihan Bout, Julia Corradini, Daniela Novac, Angelica Porru, Kitti Atyimov, Marius Tudor, Xhekson Cela, Miguel Pinto and our network members.
Aims

The **We Are Roma** campaign was made with the main objective of changing the stereotypical view society has about the Roma community and their culture. Using facts, positive images and bringing important information usually unknown, we want to help fight the discrimination often felt by Roma in regards to their culture and traditions.

Other objectives of the campaign include:

- Break **stereotypes** about Roma
- Raise **awareness** about and promote Roma culture, traditions and identity
- **Include the Roma** perspective and culture as part of the 2018 European Year of Cultural Heritage

For more information, visit the campaign website:

[www.erionet.eu/campaign-we-are-roma](http://www.erionet.eu/campaign-we-are-roma)
Introduction

The following booklet includes material from the We Are Roma social media campaign. With the occasion of the 2018 European Year of Cultural Heritage theme being European culture and tradition, we wanted to promote Roma culture and identity, a rich and often overlooked culture that faces discrimination as a consequence of prejudices and stereotypical images that non-Roma have about it.

As it is a social media campaign, hashtags were a vital element to share the content in different platforms online and to attract a bigger spectrum of viewers. The hashtags used were #WeAreRoma, #ProudAndRoma and #WeHaveTheRight.

The first part of the Booklet includes our conference “Promoting Roma culture and identity through participation” held on the 29 of June 2018.

The second part includes the views of some Roma who we informally approached to ask them to describe Roma Identity and Culture in three words. The compilation of responses we got was very helpful to include an internal opinion and served as inspiration to create the images and flyers.

The third part holds the Roma Cultures and Traditions images, a compilation of images taken voluntarily by Roma, portraying important aspects of their culture such as food, art, respect for elderly, music, silver and family. This part of the campaign had the aim of including a personal Roma perspective when trying to define aspects about culture. Following this, flyers were created around the topic of Roma culture on important dates like the International Human Rights Day and the International Romani language Day.

Finally, the campaign was concluded with the creation of a short compilation video that summarises all the material created during the campaign.
Conference on Roma culture

On 29 June 2018, ERIO, in cooperation with the European Economic Social Committee and with the support of DG Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality of the European Commission, organised a conference called “Promoting Roma culture and identity through participation”.

The aim of this conference was to explore to what extent non-discrimination provisions are sufficient to protect the cultural identity of Roma. The main objectives were to promote positive views of Roma to combat negative stereotypes and overcome discrimination, empower Roma by promoting the development of a proud sense of their identity and improve their self-esteem and to call for the direct involvement of Roma in decision-making and policy development at local, national and EU levels as well as in the NGO/civil society sector as a key success factor. More information can be found here: http://erionet.snappages.com/event-29062018.htm.
Roma culture and identity

We informally approached Roma through phone, email and social media to ask them what Roma culture and being Roma means for them. Below you can read their views.

For me, Roma culture is:

![Image of Gelem Gelem]

For me, being Roma is:

![Image of Family, Racism, Challenge]

For me, being Roma means:  
- Family  
- Racism  
- Challenge  
- Seeing the world differently  
- Special  
- Strength  
- Commitment  
- Inclusiveness
Food

ROMA CULTURES & TRADITIONS

http://www.erionet.eu/campaign-we-are-roma

Design by Julia Corradini, ERIO

FOOD REPRESENTS A CODE OF RESPECT AND IS ALWAYS OFFERED TO GUESTS AND PEOPLE ENTERING YOUR HOME.

"If you really want to make a friend, go to someone's house and eat with him... the people who give you their food give you their heart."

Cesar Chavez

#WeAreRoma #ProudAndRoma #EuropeForCulture

Co-funded by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Union (2014-2020)
TRADITIONAL CRAFT WORK IS A SYMBOL OF SPECIFIC GROUPS. IT IS TRANSMITTED ACROSS GENERATIONS.

"Art is a human activity having for its purpose the transmission to others of the highest and best feelings to which men have risen."

Leo Tolstoy

http://www.erinnet.eu/campaign-we-are-roma

Design by Jihan Bout, ERIO
Music plays an important role in the social life of Roma communities. Over decades, music has been a way to secure existence and acceptance for members of this community.

“Music expresses that which cannot be said and on which it is impossible to be silent.”

Victor Hugo

#WeAreRoma  #ProudAndRoma  #EuropeForCulture

Co-funded by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Union (2014-2020)
Roma Cultures & Traditions

Silver work is a tradition transmitted across Roma generations. Symbolically, silver represents a heritage, wealth, a lifestyle to be preserved for future descendants.

“Art is not what you see, but what you make others see.” — Edgar Degas

http://www.erionet.eu/campaign-we-are-roma

Design by Julia Corradini, ERiO

#WeAreRoma  #ProudAndRoma  #EuropeForCulture

Co-funded by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Union (2014-2020)
ROMA CULTURES
& TRADITIONS

ROMA CULTURE IS ABOUT THE FAMILY. ONE'S IDENTITY IS CONSTRUCTED THROUGH THE FAMILY. LIFE'S GOAL IS THE FAMILY: BEING WITH THE FAMILY, CREATING YOUR OWN FAMILY. FAMILY IS ABOUT HOPE AND ABOUT PROJECTS. IT'S THE MOST PRECIOUS THING IN LIFE.

"The most important thing in the world is family and love"
John Wooden

#WeAreRoma #EuropeForCulture
#ProudAndRoma
Respect for the elderly

Respect for the elderly is a value of Roma culture. Elderly are consulted when important decisions need to be taken. They provide balance for the community and ensure that traditions and culture are not lost.

"To care for those who once cared for us is the highest of honours"

Tia Walker
CULTURE AND TRADITION...

ARE IMPORTANT ELEMENTS IN THE ROMA COMMUNITY PROTECTED BY THE "UN DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS BELONGING TO NATIONAL, ETHNIC, RELIGIOUS AND LINGUISTIC MINORITIES"

ARTICLE 2 - [...] MINORITIES HAVE THE RIGHT TO ENJOY THEIR OWN CULTURE, TO PROFESS AND PRACTISE THEIR OWN RELIGION, AND TO USE THEIR OWN LANGUAGE, IN PRIVATE AND IN PUBLIC, FREELY AND WITHOUT INTERFERENCE OR ANY FORM OF DISCRIMINATION.

#WeAreRoma
#WeHaveTheRight

Co-funded by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Union (2014-2020)
Did you know that ... 

... you have the right to speak Romani?

The Romani language, as a minority language, belongs to the Indian languages and is close related to languages spoken in northern India and Pakistan. It contains about 33,000 words and 17 different dialects. Since Romani nowadays is always less spoken it is important that Romani gets practiced, in order to preserve the Roma identity and culture.

The right for persons belonging to national, ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities to use their own language in private and public, freely without getting discriminated is grounded in Article 2 of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities.

Sources:
http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002345/234597e.pdf

#WeHaveTheRight #WeAreRoma #EuropeforCulture
Video

Our campaign video aims to raise awareness about the Roma culture(s). It gathers the material created as part of the campaign WeAreRoma.

The video can be found here:

- [http://www.erionet.eu/videos.htm#WeAreRoma](http://www.erionet.eu/videos.htm#WeAreRoma)
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qut2r-DsPcg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qut2r-DsPcg)
- [https://twitter.com/ERIO_EU](https://twitter.com/ERIO_EU)