



European Roma Information Office

ERIO Newsletter

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NEWS

Term of Affection? Ethnic Slur? Theater Union Decides That ‘Gypsy’ Must Go.



By The New York Times

They are itinerant singers and dancers. Chorus members. The names below the title. But should they still be called gypsies?

Actors’ Equity Association doesn’t think so. The union that represents stage performers announced this week that it would cease using the title “Gypsy Robe” to describe one of its most cherished insider rituals — the passing of a colorful patchwork garment from one chorus to another on a Broadway show’s opening night — citing the potential offense to Roma people. The action is prompting a combination of reflection and head-scratching in the tight-knit theater world.

Read more [here](#)

Italian Minister Moves to Count and Expel Roma, Drawing Outrage



By The New York Times

He has compared the European Union to the Titanic, accused the left of supporting immigration to supply slave labor, and insulted migrants using any number of disparaging epithets. But Italy’s new interior minister, Matteo Salvini, went too far even for his allies this week when he announced that he would conduct a census of Roma people in Italy, a prelude to expelling those without valid residence permits. “And Italian Roma? Unfortunately, we have to keep them,” Mr. Salvini said during an interview on a regional television station.

Read more [here](#)

European Jews Watch on in Fear as Italy Targets Roma People



By Haaretz

When Italy's interior minister recommended creating a "registry" of Roma, his remark was merely the latest addition to a long list of anti-Roma statements by senior European leaders.

In March, Janos Lazar, the right-hand man for Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban, said: "Once we let them in, they will take over." In 2010, Traian Basescu, the president of Romania at the time, said at a news conference about the nomadic ethnic group also known as Gypsies that "very few of them want to work" and "traditionally many of them live off stealing."

Read more [here](#)

Wetherspoon backs campaign against Traveller and Gypsy discrimination



By the Guardian

The pub chain Wetherspoon is backing a campaign to raise awareness of discrimination that Gypsies and Travellers face in accessing bars and restaurants. The company previously admitted that Travellers had been racially stereotyped by staff in its pubs.

In 2015, Wetherspoon paid out £3,500 each to three people after staff at its Cambridge pub the Tivoli barred them from entering because of their ethnicity. The same year, the pub was ordered to pay £24,000 damages after being found guilty of racially discriminating against a group of Travellers in November 2011, when they were prevented from entering the Coronet pub in north London.

Read more [here](#)

Roma communities fear deportation in post-Brexit Britain



By the Guardian

Roma living in the UK are at risk of deportation following Brexit, charities have said, as they warn that many will be unable to provide the necessary documentation to be granted settled status.

Last month, the home secretary, Sajid Javid, said that EU nationals would be asked to answer “three simple questions” in an online form to continue living in the UK once it has left the EU. Applicants will be asked to prove their identity, that they have no convictions and that they currently live in the UK. Charities working with Roma communities across the UK have said that although most Roma are EU citizens and have the right to be in the UK, many are illiterate, would struggle to provide paperwork and do not have access to computers or smartphones.

Read more [here](#)

Catalonia's Roma: Fighting stereotypes 600 years after migration



By Aljazeera

Spain's Roma are famous for flamenco, but Catalonia has its own community and it's determined to save cultural heritage.

As a child, Susana Martinez Heredia wanted to invite friends home for her birthday. But she lived in Mina - one of Barcelona's Roma neighbourhoods, and her classmates' parents did not allow them to visit. "I was studying in the areas surrounding La Mina. So, when you said to your classmates to come [visit your] home, they never wanted to come. I grew up between these two worlds," she tells Al Jazeera. La Mina is in the San Adria de Besos district, full of huge tower blocks built during Francoist Spain, and has a reputation as dangerous and hostile. To Susana, it's just where she grew up.

Read more [here](#)

Timisoara welcomes critical friendly review from peer cities on their Roma inclusion action plan



By Eurocities

From 12 to 14 June, a delegation of cities from EUROCITIES visited Timisoara to offer peer support to further improve the city's action plan for Roma inclusion. The three days of site visits, workshops and fruitful discussions led to a constructive feedback to Timisoara, which in turn, committed to take on board a set of actions to improve its Roma inclusion action plan for 2019.

Read more [here](#)

Harvard FXB to explore Romani realities in the US



By Harvard

Thanks to a grant from the Cummings Foundation, the François-Xavier Bagnoud Center for Health and Human Rights at Harvard University (Harvard FXB) is launching a new research project focused on the situation of Roma in the United States.

Since 2012, Harvard FXB has implemented an innovative research and capacity-strengthening program related to the Roma, who have long been an ill-treated minority, facing persecution and, in the past, even slavery. Up until now, the Harvard FXB Roma Program has worked with Roma living in Europe where they form the largest ethnic minority group. *Romani Realities in the United States: Breaking the Silence, Challenging the Stereotype* will enable us to contribute much-needed quantitative research designed to understand the struggles of Roma in this country.

Read more [here](#)

Attacks on Roma force Ukraine to confront an old ethnic enmity



By The New York Times

The Roma who live in tarpaulin camps and abandoned buildings in and around Kiev, the Ukrainian capital, say they make their money harmlessly by picking wildflowers and selling the bouquets to lovers on the city's streets.

But members of Ukrainian nationalist groups say that, instead, the Roma pick pockets, steal scrap metal and foul the city with their presence, often dressed in rags or hand-me-downs while begging. Tensions over the Roma are as old as Ukraine, and run as deep here as anywhere in Eastern Europe, but the ancient enmity has taken a twist recently. Beginning in April, Ukrainian nationalist groups that were given free rein four years ago to fight the Russian military incursion have taken instead to attacking the softer targets of Roma camps, saying they are “cleaning” Ukraine’s cities.

Read more [here](#)

Italy's treatment of Roma people rooted in centuries-old prejudice



By The Guardian

When Italy’s new government attacked the country’s Roma population, threatening to expel thousands from the country, they were tapping into centuries-old prejudices against the group.

Persecution of the Roma in Europe dates back at least several hundred years. The Council of Europe details a history of extreme persecution including enslavement, forced sterilisation, separation from children and massacres. Roma have Indian roots, and migrated slowly westwards over hundreds of years, appearing in historical records from Europe by the 14th century. Originally nomadic, though now settled in many areas, they were first targeted by European officials over 500 years ago.

Read more [here](#)

'Come and see how we live', Italy's Roma tell government



By The Local

In a dusty Roma camp on the outskirts of Rome, life goes on despite threats of an ethnically-targeted census and deportation by Italy's new hardline Interior Minister Matteo Salvini.

Salvini, already under fire for refusing to take in a rescue ship carrying 630 migrants, sparked outrage on Monday when he promised a head count of Italy's Roma community and to throw out those without legal status. His call was blasted as unconstitutional by rights groups and even criticized by members of his own coalition government, with some in Italy drawing parallels with measures targeting Jews under fascist wartime leader Benito Mussolini.

Read more [here](#)

Travellers 'assumed by police to be criminals rather than victims'



By the Guardian

Police forces routinely presume Traveller communities are more likely to be the perpetrators of crime than its victims, a report by a community campaign group has found.

In a new report based on freedom of information requests and a survey of 43 police forces, the Traveller Movement says police forces may be in breach of the law by employing traveller community liaison officers whose job descriptions focus on enforcement and detection of crime rather than being points of contact for Gypsy, Romany and Irish Traveller people needing the police's help.

Read more [here](#)

Wiltshire councillor slapped down after “racist joke” about Travellers in council cabinet meeting



By Travellers Time

A Wiltshire councillor has been criticised by other councillors, the Council Leader and a chaplain, after making a racist comment about Travellers during a council cabinet meeting intended to tackle solutions for unauthorised Traveller camps.

Councillor Matthew Dean was speaking about the proposed emergency stopping places for Travellers, at the cabinet meeting in Trowbridge Town Hall on July 3rd, when he added that; “we are all of course praying fervently that these places are not in our own divisions”. Stunned councillors immediately distanced themselves from the remark.

Read more [here](#)

UK Government fails to meet the needs of its Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities



By Traveller Times

A new -report - (“Civil society monitoring report on implementation of the national Roma integration strategies in the United Kingdom”) has highlighted the failure of successive governments to integrate the UK’s Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities.

The report (prepared by the National Federation of Gypsy Liaison Groups; Friends Families and Travellers; Roma Support Group and Roma Community Care Derby) was prepared as part of the Roma Civil Monitor pilot project, ‘Capacity-building for Roma civil society and strengthening its involvement in the monitoring of National Roma Integration Strategies’.

Read more [here](#)