

International Conference

Roma as Integral Part of Society of Ukraine

Berlin, 14. June 2023, 9:00 – 16:15

Evangelische Akademie Berlin

With the possibility of online participation

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Introduction

Approximately 400.000 Roma lived in Ukraine before the full-scale invasion of Russia. It is estimated that 100.000, primarily women and children fled the country. An unknown number lives as Internally Displaced Persons in Ukraine.

Since the beginning of the full-scale invasion, Roma as integral part of the Ukrainian society stand with the Ukrainian Government against the aggressor. Roma are defending the country as members of the Ukrainian Armed Forces (UAF) while others support the fight with different means such as organising and delivering humanitarian aid, collecting donations for UAF or promoting the Ukrainian cause at international level.

The contribution of Roma to the fight against the Russian aggression has been appreciated by authorities such as the Ukrainian Ministry of Defence or by media outlets in Ukraine.

The alliance of Roma in Ukraine with the government and the overall Ukrainian society is strong, despite the fact that Roma experienced discrimination and antigypsyism before the war and also since the war started, incidents of discrimination and antigypsyism became known.

In a war situation, minorities are at particular risk and are often discriminated in access to assistance or neglected in plannings for post-war situations. Therefore, it is important to promote in time the equal participation of Roma and to take measures to prevent (further) exclusion after the war.

Currently ongoing policy processes in Ukraine – either in the framework of the envisaged accession process to the European Union or in the framework of (planning) the reconstruction and recovery of Ukraine – provide for opportunities to ensure the equal participation of Roma and that they are considered an integral part of the society of Ukraine.

In particular the [Recovery Plan of Ukraine](#) and the [Concept of the State Targeted National and Cultural Program "Unity in Diversity" for the period up to 2034](#) are of relevance, but

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also the revision of the [Strategy to Promote the Rights and Opportunities of Persons Belonging to the Roma National Minority in Ukrainian Society Until 2030](#) “.

Roma civil society organisations appreciate the steps taken by the Ukrainian authorities and international community to address and improve the situation of Roma in Ukraine. They welcome that Ukrainian authorities also appreciate the contribution of Roma and other minorities in defending the country against Russian aggression.

Roma civil society organisations identify these policy processes as opportunities to address the needs of Roma in Ukraine, but they identify shortcomings too. Therefore, several civil society organisations developed in a common effort a position paper and policy recommendations on the needs and concerns of Roma in Ukraine.

Objectives of the Conference

The conference brings together government representatives, representative of the Roma civil society and of intergovernmental and civil society organisations in order to discuss pathways how to achieve the inclusion of the needs and concerns of Roma in all relevant short-term and long-term policies.

Roma from Ukraine present their position and recommendations, but only the common effort of the Government of Ukraine, the Roma in Ukraine and of the international partners can achieve the equal participation of Roma.

Please register with [link](#) in order to participate in the conference. Online participation is possible. Conference languages: Ukrainian and English with simultaneous interpretation.

Conference venue: Evangelische Akademie, Charlottenstrasse 54/54, 10117 Berlin

- Agenda

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Agenda

09.00 Arrival of participants

09.30 – 10.00 Opening Remarks: Roma As Integral Part of the Society of Ukraine

Mr Emran Elmazi, Director, Documentation and Cultural Centre of German Sinti and Roma

Dr Tobias Lindner, Minister of State, Federal Foreign Office Germany

H.E. Oleksii Makeiev, Ambassador of Ukraine to Germany

Ms Yulia Kondur, President of the International Charitable Organization "Roma women fund Chiricli" Ukraine

Dr Friederike Krippner, Director Evangelische Akademie Berlin

Moderator: Jonathan Mack, Central Council of German Sinti and Roma

10.00 – 10.15 Break

10.15 – 10.25 Setting the Scene: Roma as Integral Part of Ukraine:

Mr. Volodomyr Yakovenko, ARCA: Presentation of Position of Roma Civil Society

Roma civil society advocate a set of recommendations in order to improve Roma equality, inclusion and participation of Roma in Ukraine, including the priority to address the fight against antigypsyism on all levels. These recommendations shall contribute in particular to current policy developments such as the envisaged State Programme "Unity in Diversity", the Recovery Plan, the new Roma Strategy and programmes in the framework of the accession process.

10.25 – 11.30 Panel discussion 1: National Policies of Ukraine and Strengthening the Position of Roma in Ukraine

Panel 1 is dedicated to the current situation in Ukraine and the policy developments intended to improve the situation of Roma, in particular the State Programme "Unity in Diversity", the Recovery Plan, the new Roma Strategy.

The keynote will set the framework and outline the state of affairs of these developments. The panel will highlight in addition what are the needs and requests of

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the Roma civil society and what institutions can contribute to realise to strengthen the position of Roma in Ukraine

Keynote: Dr Ihor Lossovskiy, Deputy Head of the State Service of Ukraine for Ethnopolitics and Freedom of Conscience

Mr Mykhailo Spasov, Representative of the Commissioner for Equal Rights and Freedoms of the Rights of National Minorities of Political and Religious Views (**online**)

Ms Valentyna Zolotarenko, Roma mediator

Ms Eleonora Kulcsar, Head of the Charitable Fund "Blago"

Ms Evhinia Sadovska, Council of Europe (**online**)

Moderator: Martin Mühleck, DG NEAR, European Commission

11.30 – 11.45 Coffee Break

11.45 – 13.00 Panel discussion 2: Roma, Ukraine and the European Union

International institutions and organisations as well as individual countries support Ukraine in its fight against the full-scale invasion of Russia. European Union, World Bank or individual countries such as Germany are important actors when it comes to promote the equality, inclusion and participation of Roma.

The panel will discuss the possibilities of supporting Roma in Ukraine and their needs, also taking into account the importance of fighting antigypsyism as highlighted in the EU Roma Strategic Framework for Equality, Inclusion and Participation and experiences of Roma in other war or post-war societies such as Kosovo.

Keynote: Ms Katarína Mathernová, Deputy Director General European Commission DG (**online**)

Ms Tetyana Stefiuk, Head of the Ukrainian Parliament Deputy Speaker's Office (**online**)

Ms Yasmin Raya, Deputy Head of Unit Ukraine, Moldova, Black Sea cooperation, German Federal Foreign Office

Ms Gabriela Hrabanova, Director ERGO Network (**online**)

Mr Isak Skenderi, Director Voice of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians Kosovo

Mr Yulian Kondur, International Charitable Organization "Roma women fund Chiricli" Ukraine: (**online**)

Mr Myroslav Horvat, City Counsellor Uzhhorod

Moderator: Stephan Müller, Central Council of German Sinti and Roma

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13.00 – 14.15 Lunch Break

14.15 – 15.30 Panel discussion 3: Cooperation with Civil Society

Civil society is an important actor which should always understand Roma as integral part of Ukraine and include them in their activities. Civil society should contribute in different ways to promote Roma as integral part of Ukraine.

Such contributions can cover a variety of fields and should go beyond the provision of humanitarian assistance or technical assistance – as much as this is necessary.

Keynote: Ms Natali Tomenko, ARCA: Expectations of the Roma civil society

N.N., Ukrainian Government (**online**)

Ms Kateryna Rietz-Rakul, Head of the Representative Office of the Ukrainian Institute in Germany

Ms Anzhelika Bielova, Director Voice of Romni, Ukraine

Dr Andrea Despot, Chief Executive Officer Foundation EVZ

Ms Anna Goos, Managing Director SODI International

Moderator: Jonathan Mack, Central Council of German Sinti and Roma

15.30 Closing remarks

Stephan Müller, Central Council of German Sinti and Roma

15.45 – 16:15 Informal conversations over coffee

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