

# International Conference

## Roma as Integral Part of Society of Ukraine

Berlin, 14. June 2023, 9:00 – 16:00

Evangelische Akademie Berlin

Hybrid Meeting, with the possibility of online participation

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## Background Note

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 stand with ethnic Ukrainians and 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 plans 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 also the revision of the [Strategy to Promote the Rights and Opportunities of Persons](#)

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[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 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.

Conference languages: Ukrainian and English with simultaneous interpretation.

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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**, Head Documentation and Cultural Centre of the German Sinti and Roma

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

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

**H.E. Woodward Clark Price**, Deputy Chief of Mission of the United States of America to Germany (tbc)

**Ms Yulia Kondur**, Chirikli Ukraine

**Dr Friederike Krippner**, Director Evangelische Akademie Berlin

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

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10.00 – 10.15 Break

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### 10.15 – 10.25 Setting the Scene: Roma in Ukraine and their Needs:

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

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

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

**N.N.**, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Germany (tbc)

**Ms Valentyna Zolotarenko**, Roma civil society: Needs of Romani women and children

**Ms Eleonora Kulcsar**, Roma civil society: Roma IDP and their needs

**Ms Evhinia Sadovska**, Council of Europe, CoE activities for and with Roma during the Russian aggression (online)

**Moderator: Martin Mühleck, DG NEAR, European Commission**

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11.30 – 11.45 Coffee Break

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

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

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

**Mr. Yulian Kondur (Chirikli)**: Priorities of Roma in the accession process (online)

**Ms. Gabriela Hrabanova**, ERGO Network: the EU Framework and the fight against antigypsyism and its importance for Ukraine (online)

**Mr. Isak Skenderi**, Voice of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians Kosovo: Roma in post-war situation and in the accession process to European Union: the experiences of Kosovo

**Mr. Myroslav Horvat**, City Counsellor Uzhhorod, the perspective from the local level

**Ms Valerie Morrica**, World Bank, Senior Social Development Specialist: World Bank and its activities with regard to Roma in Ukraine

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

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13.00 – 14.15 Lunch Break

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## 14.15 – 15.30 Panel discussion 3: Contribution of Civil Society

**Ms Natalie Tomenko**, ARCA: Expectations of the Roma civil society

**N.N.**, Ukrainian Government: Expectations of the Government of Ukraine

**Ms Marieluise Beck**, Liberale Moderne: the need for the non-material recovery of Ukraine and the role of civil society (tbc)

**Ms Kateryna Rietz-Rakul**, Ukraine Institute Berlin

**Dr Andrea Despot**, Director Foundation EVZ: contribution of EVZ to Roma in Ukraine

**N.N., representative of a German organisation**: contributions of German foundations and organisations in the recovery process of Ukraine

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

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## 15.30 Closing remarks

**Jonathan Mack**, Central Council of German Sinti and Roma

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