



# CENTRE FOR ROMA STUDIE AND CULTURAL RELATIONS

**Antar Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad**



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**Roma Connecting with Indians**

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## **The Roma Ghetto in the Middle of Europe**

Lunik IX sits on the outskirts of Kosice, Slovakia's second-largest city, Fratela and just a 90-minute drive from the Ukrainian border. At present, 99 percent of Lunik IX's population is composed of Roma including the Mayor Marcel Sana. Romani people have been struggling with rising unemployment with more than half of the population being unemployed and in general, 87 percent Slovakia's Romani population lives below the poverty line according to local authorities. Many of them live in dilapidated, overcrowded apartments, and in blocks of flats next to a giant open garbage dump, separated from the rest of city Kosice by a highway. As the elections of European Parliament are approaching, Peter Pollak of Romani origin is the sitting member of European Parliament will run for re-election in June. Mr. Pollak said that he would motivate even poor Roma to go to the polls, as Lunik IX, being the poor Roma district, has one of the lowest turnout in European elections, recorded 3.1% in 2019. Residents also claim that there have been some positive changes in recent years, thanks to a new Romani Mayor, Marcel Sana and non-governmental organizations.

**Read Full Article at**

<https://shorturl.at/dknY7>

## **Roma Week in Brussels: The Fight for Equality and Inclusion of Roma in Europe**

Brussels hosted a meeting called Roma Week from 9 to 11 April just before the upcoming elections to the European Parliament. The central theme of Roma Week 2024 covered the civic monitoring, the rights of Romani children and the effective participation of Romani civil society in the formation of national policies. Representatives of non-profit organizations and civil society, representatives of European institutions and international organizations met during Roma Week. The event, organized by the European Roma Grassroots Organization (ERGO) Network, aimed at raising awareness of the reality and challenges faced by Roma, Sinti and Travellers across Europe. The event occurred at a time when Europe is facing complex socio-political situations characterized by anti-racist movements. Resultantly Roma, Sinti are categorically at risk of xenophobic and hyper nationalist views, which perplex their inclusion, participation and social justice.

**Read Full Article at**

<https://shorturl.at/zHUZ4>

## **Bridging Borders: Roma NGOs Unite for Peace**

As the 25th anniversary of the cessation of hostilities in Kosovo approaches on June 11, so the Romani NGOs on both sides of the border are navigating the corridors of post Kosovo conflict in order to find the solutions for the marginalised Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities of Kosovo. Podujeva city in Kosovo

where Romani people desire for the brighter tomorrow, but a majority of them do not have access to employment because of lack of opportunities. Many of them try to find work outside of the country and some left for Germany, the Netherlands and Austria for better prospect. A Romani NGO, Forum Roma Serbia has been striving for the integration of the Roma community and the dissemination of progressive ideas for a democratic society. The NGO is fighting against racism, xenophobia and anti-Gypsyism as well as working for inclusivity, equality, social justice and the rights of Roma returnees. NGOs stand as beacons of hope for Roma people whose enduring resilience and unbroken spirit despite their painful and hard journey embodies a sense of admiration.

**Read Full Article at**

<https://shorturl.at/cefnv>

### **Romani Artist Delaine Le Bas Nominated for the Turner Prize**

Turner Prize is one of the world's best-known prizes for the visual arts with an aim to promoting the public debate about new developments in contemporary British art. Established in 1984, the prize is named after the renowned painter JMW Turner (1775-1851) and is awarded each year to a British artist for an outstanding exhibition or presentation of their artistic works. Tate Britain announced that Romani artist Delaine Le Bas is one of the four artists who have been shortlisted for the prestigious Turner Prize in 2024. She has been nominated for her presentation "Incipit Vita Nova", "Here Begins The New Life/A New Life Is Beginning". In her works while drawing on the rich cultural history of the Roma people and Romani mythologies, she addresses the myriad esoteric themes like death, loss and revival. Delaine points out that her art is about identity and politics in addition to feminism and racism. Alex Farquharson, Director of Tate Britain and chair of the Turner Prize jury said, all four shortlisted artists prove how rich and vibrant British artistic talent is.

**Read Full Article at**

<https://shorturl.at/ipIWZ>

### **Roma Fighting for Place in Postwar Ukraine**

The exact number of Ukrainian Roma fighting on the frontlines of the war is hard to come by but, Stephan Müller, an adviser on the international affairs with the Central Council of German Sinti and Roma, estimated the number to be in thousands. Muller further said that Roma who are not on the frontlines are contributing in different ways: raising funds to buy army equipment and Romani artists performing in the concerts to provide meals to needy non-Roma. Nataliia Tomenko, Youth Agency for the Advocacy of Roma Culture "ARCA", stated that it was important to highlight the Roma's contributions during the war that would also mete out the tool against stereotype-filled coverage of Roma in mainstream media. The total population of Roma in Ukraine is over 400,000 and their presence in the country can be traced centuries

back. The concern is raised about the exclusion of Roma in the reconstruction process aftermath of war and they must be properly rewarded in a post-war period.

**Read Full Article at**

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/apr/29/roma-postwar-ukraine>

### **The political Participation of Roma and Sinti is Crucial for an Inclusive Society**

The elections are going to take place this year in around half of OSCE (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe) countries. Hence, Roma and Sinti across the OSCE must have equal opportunities to participate in elections as voters and as candidates. According to the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), Roma and Sinti are still politically marginal and underrepresented. Governments must work with Romani organizations and civil societies to clamp down on anti-Roma rhetoric and promote democratic values and tolerance. ODIHR points out that it is important to implement voter education programs to help Roma voters overcome the difficulties like missing identity documents or not appearing on the electoral rolls.

**Read Full Article at**

<https://shorturl.at/vzBQW>

### **For Roma, Justice Truly is Blind**

Europe's courts fail to deliver justice to Roma abused by police despite the presentation of overwhelming video evidence. The City Court in the eastern Slovakian town of Kosice acquitted 10 police officers accused of forcing six Romani children to beat each other up on camera in a police station in March 2009. The Kosice City Court dismissed the case involving police brutality against Slovak Roma in spite of video evidences twice in less than six months even after the Constitutional Court of Slovakia ordered the 15-year-old case to be re-examined last year. A number of video recordings of the incident showed the police officers shouting racial slurs at the Romani children, aged between 11 and 17, and forcing them to strip naked and stand with their hands behind their heads. One video clip revealed an officer put his gun to the head of one of the Romani boys and forced him to kiss his shoe.

**Read More at**

<https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2024/4/10/for-roma-justice-truly-is-blind>

## **Celebration of International Roma Day in New Delhi**

Centre for Roma Studies and Cultural Relations (CRSCR)-Antar Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad (ARSP) hosted International Roma Conference to mark 53<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary of the First World Roma Congress and celebration of International Roma Day on 12<sup>th</sup> April, 2024. The speakers included Grattan Puxon (London), Stevan Nikolic (Serbia), Prof. Dr. Hristo Kyuchukov (Germany), Gruia Bumbu (Romania) along with Indian speakers like Dr. Shyam Singh Shashi, Shri Shyam Parande, Amb. Rajesh Sachdeva, Dr. Rajni Sarin and Zameer Anwar. Mr. Puxon pointed out that European Union has no statistics on the condition of Roma children across Europe besides informing about 40,000 Roma refugees who fled from Syria as well as brutality and attack on Roma in Ukraine. Stevan Nikolic said that it was important to make Roma aware of the existing laws and its application for their national identity and for the respect of their rights. Prof. Dr. Hristo Kyuchukov referred to the neglect of Roma Holocaust till 1971 and absence of oral history, music and songs which Roma developed during their incarceration in concentration camps. Mr. Gruia Bumbu told that Roma need to step forward to fight for their rights through the recognition of Roma nation in the United Nations.

**Watch Full Speech at**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bj4n5M\\_k8As&t=985s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bj4n5M_k8As&t=985s)

## **The Spaniards Teach Czech not to Discriminate Against Roma**

According to a study by the Romno Kher, discrimination against Roma in Germany is decreasing to some extent. It can be found out through providing the desired level of education to the younger generation of Roma community. However, the offensive attitude towards the Roma, referred to as gypsies, continues. And 80 percent of Roma feel discriminated against in the German education system. The arrival of Ukrainian Roma refugee in the Czech Republic was motivated by social support but prejudice against them reigned supreme and gave rise to latent anti-gypsyism. The inability to place the Roma minority on an equal footing with the majority society and still holding them up in partial or complete social exclusion is not only a German or Czech problem but is pan-European. Though, European Commission drew up the strategic framework for the equal rights of Roma with intent to achieve it by 2030. Spain can serve as a model country, where the younger generation of Roma is approaching mainstream society in terms of their educational level.

**Read Full Article at**

<https://shorturl.at/dexJS>