

# Centre For Roma Studies and Cultural Relations (CRSCR)

Antar-Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad (ARSP)

Roma: Connecting with India

New Delhi  
5 March 2025

ROMA NEWSLETTER

Issue: 51



## 31 Romani Children Found in 'house of horrors', A Case of Human Trafficking in Bosnia and Herzegovina

The incident of Human trafficking was reported on 25<sup>th</sup> February, 2025 when a 12-year-old Romani girl with two young children approached a passer-by in the street for help and explaining situation of their confinement. Police and social welfare officers were immediately informed, who raided the house and rescued 31 Romani children, ranging in age from a few months to twelve years. The preliminary information revealed that six of the children possessed Croatian documents. Eight people, including a police officer, were arrested on charges including human trafficking and Europol was involved for the urgent investigation. The European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC) urged the authorities to provide comprehensive protection and support to the victims. It should be prioritized to trace the families for safe reunification of these minors rather than sending them to child-care institutions where they would be further harmed, abused or discriminated. ERRC also called for a robust institutional response from the authorities to protect the most vulnerable and the authorities must take measures to strengthen the criminal justice response to human trafficking.

Read More at

<https://www.errc.org/news/bosnia-31-romani-children-found-in-house-of-horrors-police-officer-among-eight-arrested-for-trafficking>

## Breaking the Cycle: Roma Families Trapped in Multidimensional Poverty

A research study, conducted between March and July 2024, and by Liliya Makaveeva, a member of European Roma Grassroots Organization Network (ERGO) in Bulgaria, highlights that poverty among Roma is multidimensional— it encompasses poor housing conditions, exclusion from social services, lack of access to quality healthcare, and systemic discrimination in education and employment. The study encompassed in-depth interviews with Roma families, local mediators, and municipal representatives with statistical data from the Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (SILC) 2023. The findings note that 65% of Roma in Bulgaria live below the poverty line, compared to 14.3% of ethnic Bulgarians. The children from low-income Roma families are regularly sanctioned with reduced social assistance when they miss school even due to extreme poverty—such as lacking shoes or winter coats. Many Roma settlements exist outside regulated urban areas because of lack of legal housing status that further exacerbates the crisis. Healthcare access is another major challenge. Many Roma lack health insurance due to irregular employment or the inability to pay the premium.

Read More at

<https://ergonetnetwork.org/2025/03/breaking-the-cycle-roma-families-trapped-in-multidimensional-poverty/>

## Tony Gatlif: From the Bottom to the Top, from an Algerian Roma to a French Film Director

Tony Gatlif was born into a very poor family in Algeria in 1948 to a Berber father and a Romani mother whose family had come to Africa from Andalusia, Spain. In 1960, when he was twelve years old, Tony moved to France, and ended up in a reform school. However, he was taken in by a tutor who recognized his talent and led him to an interest in composing music and acting, to which Tony later added film directing and screenwriting. And on top of that, he became a producer of his own films. Gatlif, who studied at L'Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris, grew into a celebrated composer and one of the most respected film directors and received many awards for his works. He became interested in his Romani origin in the 1980s. He travelled through Andalusia (part of southern Spain) and then France, where he became interested in the Romani culture. He made a feature film about the life of French Romani people, *Les princes*. His excellent film *Lačho drom* is about the journey of Roma from India to Spain via Egypt, Turkey, Romania, Hungary, Slovakia and France,

Read More at

<https://romea.cz/cz/kultura/tony-gatlif-z-uplneho-dna-na-vrchol-z-alzirskeho-roma-francouzskym-reziserem>

## **Irena Bihariova: Roma Woman Leading a Political Party**

Irena Bihariova was the former chairwoman of the Progressive Slovakia party and the first Romani woman to lead a Parliamentary Party in Slovakia and the Czech Republic. Her journey started at high school, when she saw injustice meted out to Roma and growing extremism in Slovakia. She entered into NGO sector and began working for the organization People Against Racism, where she focused on criminal law and extremism. Irena Bihariova emphasizes that it is crucial for society to consider Roma as a natural part of the society and points out that We, Roma have abilities for being successful in various fields – be it in politics, academia or state administration. She believes, if Roma men and women are given opportunities, they will be as successful as anyone from the majority. Bihariova also notes that if society does not give Roma men and women opportunities, they cannot be expected to reach leadership positions.

Read More at  
<https://shorturl.at/oJdjG>

## **Proposal for an Amendment to the Roma Community Act in Slovenia**

The primary goal of the proposed amendment to the Act on the Roma Community in the Republic of Slovenia is to eliminate the main shortcomings of the current law, which was adopted in 2007 and has not been amended or supplemented since then. The proposal envisages the introduction of a new institute of municipal coordinator to improve the situation of the Roma community. The amendment has proposed a change in the composition of the Roma community council and regulation of its status. The council would be reconstituted no later than three months after each regular municipal council election. The council's president would be elected by the members from among themselves in a secret ballot with a two-thirds majority. The seat of the council would be moved from Murska Sobota to Ljubljana. The amendment aims at ensuring political representativeness of the community and effective functioning of the council. One of the goals of the amendment is to regulate improvement of living conditions of the Roma community.

Read More at  
<https://shorturl.at/s7IO2>

### **Activists Prevent Misuse of European Funds for Roma Segregation in Italy**

After the intervention of Roma activists and the European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC), the Calabria region in Southern Italy was forced to change a plan for construction of segregated housing for Roma families with European money. The project was changed because of the intervention of European Commission, now Roma families are to be integrated into regular municipal housing. However, spokesperson of ERRC, Jonathan Lee cautioned that communal housing must not be used as a tool for further segregation of the community. He further added that the Italian authorities still did not learn their lesson on the issue of ethnic segregation. At the instigation of the ERRC and the Stop Ghettos Committee, European Commission called on the Calabria region to explain the situation. Consequently, in January 2025, the region adopted a new resolution, overturning the previous decision and abandoning the construction of the ghetto. Instead, it committed to implementing a model of so-called dispersed housing.

Read More at

<https://shorturl.at/oET2H>

### **Sinti and Roma Children Suffer Discrimination in German Schools**

The Reporting and Information Center for Antiziganism in Germany has recently published the study on Antiziganism in the educational sector that report Sinti and Roma experience hostility from teachers and other children. A report on elementary school students bullying their Roma/Sinti classmate to the point where he was too afraid to go to school. Teachers also threatened their parents with reporting their children's frequent absence to the youth welfare office. Another study points out that a daycare center wanted to send a five-year-old, trilingual Sinti child to a special-needs kindergarten because of developmental delay even though a paediatrician could not detect any developmental issue with a child. Several reports suggest that schools refuse admission to Sinti and Roma children or want to move them to special schools because they believe that Sinti and Roma families cause problems in general. Guillermo Ruiz, Managing Director of the Reporting and Information Center for Antiziganism in Germany, stated that there were several reports of assaults and attacks against Sinti and Roma in kindergartens and schools in all German states. The study presents a frightening picture of racism against Sinti and Roma who are victims of not only verbal bullying but also physical attacks.

Read More at

<https://shorturl.at/ZzK1S>

## **Gypsy Genocide: The Stark Reality of a Mass Execution**

The documentary movie "Gypsy Memories, the Other Genocide" narrates a story that intertwines humiliations and censuses before executions. A film, made by Juliette Jourdan and Idit Bloch, documents the painful escalation from suspicion to execution of Roma/Sinti as well as presents their massacre and piles of bodies. It is estimated that 40 to 90% of the Gypsies, depending on the region, were gassed, executed. The Gypsies have long been known by different ethnonyms like Bohemians, Manouches or Gipsies, but this has forgotten their ethnographic diversity. The documentary starts with the portrait of an artist, an Austrian Roma, a survivor of the Concentration camps, whose images haunt the mind of a film maker who has not managed to rid herself of the anger that causes to her.

Read More at

<https://shorturl.at/UDnOs>

## **Roma Shield - Disinformation and Contemporary Threats against the Roma Community in Eastern Europe**

Centre for Roma Studies and Cultural Relations (CRSCR), New Delhi hosted the Thirty-Nine Virtual Lecture of the Lecture Series, delivered by Ms. Agnieszka Caban (Poland), PhD. Scholar in the University of Warsaw on 26th March 2025. The lecture explores false and misleading information targeting Roma communities as well as gender and identity-based disinformation which cause stereotyping of Roma minority in Europe. She presented a report based on the analysis of the contents of 150 press reports as well as comments of editorial pages and social media for the last 5 years. Ms. Caban pointed out that almost all authors were non-Roma who were neither familiar with Romani people nor knew their customs and culture. How editors are misusing the anonymization of authors in newspaper articles about the communities? She stated that negative framing is serious problem because Roma were negatively shown in the society and they were framed as criminals.

Watch Full Lecture at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qvde3HIF2b4>

**Patron**

**Shri Shyam Parande**  
**Secretary General- ARSP**

**Chief Editor**

**Amb. Rajesh Sachdeva**  
**Chairperson-CRSCR**

**Editor**

**Zameer Anwar**  
**Research Fellow- CRSCR**