

What is the Mishto Campaign?

We are launching the Mishto Campaign for more accessible and fairer services for Roma in the UK, in response to inequalities experienced by our communities.

Roma people around the world use the Romanes (Roma language) word “mishto” to describe things as good, positive, inclusive or of good quality.

Our Mishto Vision is that:

- X** Roma people are connected with the services they need and have the confidence to access them.
- X** Roma people are empowered and supported to contribute to their local community.
- X** Roma people have fair access to opportunities.
- X** Roma people are represented in their local institutions and services.

As part of the Mishto Campaign we invite local authorities to join in, sign the Mishto Pledges and commit to becoming a “mishto” local authority. By doing so, the Roma Rights Forum, would award local authorities the Mishto Quality Mark and promote them as a positive example of inclusive practice. We will also share resources that can help local authorities achieve their Mishto commitments, and work with you to enable effective engagement with local Roma communities.

¹ The Roma Rights Forum is a Roma led, learning and networking platform bringing together Roma professionals, activists and leaders from across the UK

² Department for Education - [Children looked after in England including adoptions, Reporting year 2023](#)

³ Office for National Statistics - [Roma Populations England and Wales: 2021 Census, 2023.](#)

Local
Authorities

Why the Mishto Campaign Matters

We, [the Roma Rights Forum](#), a group of Roma professionals, activists, and leaders who made the UK our home, have come together to address the issues concerning our communities and work for a better future for our children.¹

We commend local authorities’ efforts to provide inclusive services and recognise the complexity of this task.

Inequalities experienced by Roma people in children’s services and housing include:

- X** The number of Gypsy/Roma children in care increased by 22.44%, while the total number of all children in care increased by 7.29% between 2019 and 2023.²
- X** 26.5% of Roma people in England and Wales live in overcrowded conditions, compared to 8.4% of the overall population.³



Mishto

Fair services
for Roma people

**Empower. Support. Commit.
Together, we thrive.**

The Mishto Pledges for local authorities

Local authorities play an essential role in improving the situation of all local communities, including Roma, especially in areas such as housing and children's services. This is why we are inviting local authorities across the UK to sign the Mishto Pledges and commit to becoming a Mishto local authority.

Becoming a Mishto local authority could be achieved if your local authority commits to:

- Supports events during the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller History Month
- Ensures Roma are included in annual Holocaust commemoration events or supports the commemoration of Roma Genocide Remembrance Day
- Supports events during the International Roma Day

And if children's services and housing departments commit to the following pledges:

Children's Services

Ensure services are accessible and inclusive for Roma residents

- Encourage your language provider to source interpreters that speak relevant dialects of Romanes (the first language of many Roma people).
- Work with Roma bi-lingual advocates when supporting Roma families in a children's social care context.
- Ensure that engagement with Roma families is culturally sensitive and well-informed.
- When communicating with Roma families in child protection proceedings, consider their main language, English proficiency, literacy level and digital exclusion.

Adopt an inclusive communication strategy:

- When communicating about your services/projects/activities, work with your local Roma communities to put in place the best method of communication considering Roma culture, and socio-economic barriers.
- Work with Roma organisations, community leaders, professionals or activists to create accessible communication materials and share them with your local Roma communities.

Adapt your recruitment policy to enable employment of Roma staff:

- Promote job opportunities in a more inclusive way, through community channels (e.g. community organisations, Roma churches, professionals or leaders).
- Make your recruitment process more accessible, by making the application process less complicated and providing support with applications.

Increase cultural competency of staff:

- Ensuring that your staff have knowledge of Roma culture and history will help them understand Roma communities they work with and improve engagement, resulting in more effective service delivery.

Implement inclusive child protection conferences:

- Professionals engaged in child protection conferences involving Roma families should use a strength-based approach to enable families to understand their strengths, leading to more positive engagement.
- Use capacity assessments to ensure Roma parents have everything they need to understand their situation and the wider context of their engagement with children's services.

Protect cultural identity of Roma children in care

- Improve access to kinship care or fostering amongst Roma.
- Ensure foster parents of Roma children have adequate support to maintain Roma children's cultural identity.

Housing

Ensure services are accessible and inclusive for Roma residents

- Encourage your language provider to source interpreters that speak relevant dialects of Romanes (the first language of many Roma people).
- Work with Roma bi-lingual advocates to support Roma families in housing crisis.
- Publicise routes to social housing, emergency accommodation and affordable homes through community channels (e.g. community organisations, Roma churches, professionals or leaders) in relevant languages/dialects.
- Ensure service accessibility is not digital by default and alternatives are available for those who are digitally excluded, illiterate or do not speak English.

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