



Introduction and welcome

We are really proud of securing a grant from Heritage Lottery Fund to document the histories of Roma women and men and their families who now live in the UK. We worked with the Oral History Society and the London Metropolitan archive to record and store an extensive archive, that covers the experience of the Roma Holocaust in the second world war, through the post-war years and 'post communism' to migration and settlement in London. We have developed an exhibition which brings this archive and histories to the visual gaze. Come and see it.

We are also pleased to start holding our mental health peer support drop-in sessions, and the continuing growth of viewers for our video news channel, Roma News.

Of course, Brexit and the government are still with us. Nothing is getting any easier; the consequences of having a *registration* scheme for EU nationals, rather than our presence being *confirmed* by the authorities, is particularly affecting Roma communities.

It is the same government that wants to develop a "national strategy" for Roma, as well as Gypsies and Travellers. We are very sceptical.

Despite this however, we show how Roma staff are providing vital help in schools, and a wonderful video of Roma mums talking about breastfeeding. There is hope for the future too!

For more information about Roma Support Group, go to our website here and look at the [‘projects’ pages](#).

Contact us via:

andy@romasupportgroup.org.uk

 [@The Roma Support Group](#)

 [@RomaSupport](#)

News from Roma Support Group

Roma Stories: Oral Histories project exhibition

Official launch: Friday 20 September Stratford Library, E15 1EL

We are holding a series of exhibitions, from 6 September until the end of November, to share the work of the ‘Roma Stories’ Oral History Project. The project explores the experiences and stories of Roma people from Eastern and Central Europe who live in London. It focuses on the key themes of;

- Roma persecution during the Second World War (Roma Holocaust),
- life in post-war communist countries,
- migration to the UK,
- Roma identity,
- and feelings of belonging in the UK.

The project has been produced through cooperation between Roma researchers, local community members, volunteers, the London Metropolitan Archives, museums and academic institutions in order to explore, archive and share the unrecorded stories of Roma refugees and migrants in London.

The exhibition will include extracts from interviews, rarely seen archive photographs (courtesy of the Robert Dawson Collection), a video, and artwork

by Roma artist Robert Czibi.

The Roma 'voice' has often been marginalised, 'hidden' or written out of mainstream historical narratives due to discrimination and racism. Made possible by funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, this project has presented a rare opportunity to record Roma history, which has been passed down across generations orally, before it is lost.

The exhibition can be seen in these locations:

<http://rsg2016.weebly.com/uploads/9/3/6/8/93687016/roma-stories-exhibition-poster.pdf>

Stratford Library, London E15 1EL

13 September – 11 October 2019

(Launch: Friday 20 September, 6.30pm)

London Metropolitan Archives, London EC1R 0HB

28 October - 2 November 2019

18 November - 20 November 2019

(Launch: Monday 18 November, 3pm)

The Wiener Library, London WC1B 5DP

26 November - 2 December 2019

(Launch: Tuesday 26 November, 2pm)

Brexit

Roma Support Group EUSS team – up and running

<p>If you want to live in UK and have the same rights after BREXIT you have to apply for Settled or Pre-Settled Status</p>
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Book an appointment today by calling:

07440743866

07459319706

Monday to Friday, 11am until 5pm

Talk to us as we are here to help!

Brexit

How is the Settlement Scheme working?

There was much celebration from the government about the magical one million EU nationals having applied for settled status – but what lies behind these figures and what is unsaid? Our friends at Free Movement provide this essential commentary.

https://www.freemovement.org.uk/eu-settled-status-story-so-far/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=eu-settled-status-story-so-far&utm_source=Free+Movement&utm_campaign=8fd6e3c3e6-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_WEEKLY&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_792133aa40-8fd6e3c3e6-116231393&mc_cid=8fd6e3c3e6&mc_eid=1ce38ae791

Brexit

Home Office: EUSS caseworkers application guide

We don't often advertise the Home Office's information. But here is the Home Office's own guide to completing the EUSS on-line application. [Click here](#). It is a 105 page/frame caseworkers application handbook. It is both detailed and (we think), clear.

Brexit

Meeting of Roma Refugee and Migrant Forum

Friday 13 September 2019; 10am – 12 noon

City Hall; Committee Room 4; The Queen's Walk; London SE1 2AA.

The next meeting of the Forum (open to all) will be considering how RSG and other voluntary and specialist agencies can best support Roma families and individuals applying for EU Settled Status. We will also hear from Sue Wilman (senior solicitor, Deighton Pierce Glynn) who will talk about the impact of the accession of Central & Eastern European countries to the EU which massively affecting many Roma refugees in London in 2004.

Mental Health peer support groups

At Roma Support Group offices, 318 Barking Road, E13 8HL

Friday 27 September @ 12pm session on anxiety and stress (diagnosis, coping strategies and support available) delivered by Elaine Williamson from CAMHS Newham.

Friday 25 October @ 12pm session on Alzheimer's and dementia delivered by Robbie Barnard-Clare from Alzheimer's Society.

More info:

Daria Ferranti

Mental Health Advocacy Coordinator

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Email: daria@romasupportgroup.org.uk

Latest Roma News – our own video news channel

(10 minutes long)

Click here

<https://www.youtube.com/user/RomaSupportGroup>

And subscribe

2 August: Roma Holocaust Memorial Day

“Can UK be the safe haven that we’re all looking for? These days, it would help us all to be more open, tolerant and think of each other. Life today for Roma in London.....”

This short Roma Support Group film reflects on this question. Made with Akeesh Meeda, and featuring Josef Sadowski (one of the few Roma survivor living in the UK), and our own Szymon and Robert. (3 minutes)

<https://www.facebook.com/RomaSupportGroup/videos/586235635172352/?v=586235635172352>

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=586235635172352>

If you want to see another feature on Josef, see here for the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust video from 2018 (5 minutes)

<https://www.hmd.org.uk/resource/jozef-sadowskis-story/>

Why are so many Roma young people excluded from school?

The last government’s enquiry into why so many Gypsy Roma Traveller children and young people are excluded from school made no recommendations. And the early signs are that this government want to allow schools to make it even easier to exclude pupils, especially short-term (“fixed”) exclusions. Coram – the educational charity – invited Roma Support Group to contribute to their blog; read our blogpost here.

<https://coram-i.org.uk/why-are-so-many-roma-young-people-excluded-from-school/>

GRT History Month celebration – City Hall, London, 14 June 2019

A ten-minute video record of the event earlier in the summer, including the speech from Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan.

<https://vimeo.com/350580586>

UK government and Roma – an assessment of what the absence of policy means

The European Commission decided two years ago that they would act civil society/charities and NGOs to comment on how successfully national governments were meeting the challenges of 'Roma inclusion'. Despite Brexit, the UK was asked to participate. The National Federation of Gypsy Liaison Groups, Friends, Families & Travellers, Roma Community Care and Roma Support Group have produced this monitoring report on the record of the UK government. Since 2011, successive UK governments have rejected having any explicit policy for Roma/GRT integration. We think that this report (73pp) documents the consequences. It also carries recommendations in each of the four major policy area of employment, education, housing and health.

<https://cps.ceu.edu/sites/cps.ceu.edu/files/attachment/basicpage/3034/rcm-civil-society-monitoring-report-2-uk-2018-eprint.pdf>

Is the UK government really going to develop a national strategy for Roma?

The Roma Support Group, other Gypsy and Traveller organisations and individuals have been saying for at least seven years that the government needs to adopt a strategy to support the inclusion of GRT people, families and communities. There has been a deafening silence. Last spring, the parliamentary Women & Equalities select committee delivered a stinging report after two years of investigation, saying:

Leadership from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government on tackling inequalities in Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities has been lacking. The situation is made worse by the Government's ongoing resistance to cross-departmental strategies on race equality issues including for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities. The Government must have a clear and effective plan to support these communities that is equal to the level of the challenges they face.

Theresa May's government announced in June that they would develop a "national strategy". See this link. There are few other details that have been released since. No timescale, no more detailed remit, no question about what resources or funding is available or might be used. Will Boris Johnson's government be prepared to continue this work? Will civil servants be hijacked to work on Brexit?

We remain sceptical.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-national-strategy-to-tackle-gypsy-roma-and-traveller-inequalities>

Roma Mothers Talking about Breastfeeding

An uplifting film of Roma mums talking about breast feeding their babies. What they thought and what they did....

The film:

(10 minutes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Edn6Dy5ZLHk&t=9s>

And an accompanying article from Philippa Burden, the midwife who co-ordinated the whole project in Kent, about why and how they made the film.....

Institute of Health Visiting

"Why we made the film":

<https://ihv.org.uk/news-and-views/voices/roma-mothers-talk-about-breastfeeding/>

Roma translator boosts pupils' learning and health at 38-language school

Another inspiring news item about one – of many – unsung Roma heroes working in the service of the whole local community in Ipswich.

BBC 13 June 2019

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-suffolk-48597249>

Italy again

Salvini demands eviction plans for all Roma camps

Daily Telegraph (16 July 2019)

Italy's hard-line Interior minister Matteo Salvini has sent a letter to provincial representatives requesting "a report on the presence of Roma, Sinti and Camminanti settlements" in their territories within two weeks.

The ministry said on Tuesday that the aim is to have a clear outline of how many illegal camps there are on the Italian territory and where they are located in order to "draw up an eviction plan."

The head of the far-right League has made of a tough stance against illegal immigration his top political priority since he became a leader of the government coalition formed with the populist Five Star Movement a year ago.

Roma, Sinti and Caminanti are traditionally nomadic ethnic groups that have been living in European countries for decades.

According to the Council of Europe, there are between 120,000 and 180,000 Roma, Sinti and Caminanti in Italy, one of the lowest concentrations in Europe. Many of them have regular residents permits or acquired the Italian citizenship.

A 2017 report from the anti-discrimination group Association of 21 July noted, however, that Italy has been dubbed “the country of camps,” because in the last two decades it has been the most active in planning and creating outdoor camps where the Roma communities have been “segregated on ethnic grounds.”

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2019/07/16/matteo-salvini-demands-report-roma-settlements-eviction-plan/>

.....and finally

BBC (29 August 2019)

And Salvini’s gone...

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-49510582>

Views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily suggest that they are in accordance with the trustees of the Roma Support Group.

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