



## First International Roma LGBTIQ Conference

# PRAGUE DECLARATION

13 - 14 August 2015

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We, the 28 representatives of Romani LGBTIQ professional associations, civil society and academia from 12 countries (Czech Republic, Canada/France/United States, Germany, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Spain and United Kingdom) assembled at the First International Roma LGBTIQ Conference in Prague, Czech Republic, 13 - 14 August 2015, to address the realities of the lives of LGBTIQ Roma, Gypsy, Sinti and Travellers across Europe, and the impacts of the national legislation on our everyday lives. We have concluded that we

1. **recognise** that LGBTIQ Roma, Gypsy, Sinti and Travellers across Europe face multiple marginalisation and discrimination at the intersection of ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and/or gender identity, an issue that has not been recognised and/or addressed yet by the international human/Roma/LGBTIQ rights community;
2. **acknowledge** that there is an urgent need to address the situation of LGBTIQ Roma, Gypsy, Sinti and Travellers facing violence and ostracism by families/Romani community members, discrimination from majority society, as well as exclusion from mainstream LGBTIQ organisations.
3. **agree** to set up the first joint LGBTIQ Roma, Gypsy, Sinti and Travellers European platform. To this effect, we will seek the support of the Council of Europe (specifically The Support Team of the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Roma Issues; The Youth Department; and the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Unit, all of which have previously supported and implemented work with/for LGBTIQ Roma) and the nascent European Roma Institute. The platform will promote and foster cooperation on the international level so as to promote and secure the human rights of LGBTIQ Roma, Gypsy, Sinti and Travellers, raise awareness and enhance acceptance by majority societies of people of non-heterosexual sexual orientations and/or gender identities within Roma communities, as well as within the broader social fabric;



4. **agree** that there is an urgent need to create a transnational mechanism/ assistance programme that would provide legal and other forms of assistance and support in order to effectively report hate crime targeting LGBTIQ Roma, Gypsy, Sinti and Travellers. This would include creating training new, as well as strengthening the capacity of existing, local Romani LGBTIQ mediators to raise awareness of issues facing LGBTIQ Roma, Gypsy, Sinti and Travellers, mediate communication and resolve situations potentially leading to conflict<sup>1</sup>;
5. **note** that there is an urgent need for training for the police and other law enforcement agencies, including the criminal justice system, to improve practice when dealing with persons/citizens of Romani heritage, as well as the reporting system for tackling multiple discrimination and hate crime against LGBTIQ Roma, Gypsy, Sinti and Travellers (particularly transphobic hate crime);
6. **commit** to sharing information and expertise on the situation of LGBTIQ Roma, Gypsy, Sinti and Travellers across Europe as part of the envisaged international cooperation that will aim to further provide the responsible authorities and other relevant stakeholders at local, regional, national and international level, such as the Council of Europe, the European Commission, the European Parliament LGBT group, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the United Nations based on our recommendations;
7. **call** on the European Commission to ensure that the needs of LGBTIQ Roma, Gypsy, Sinti and Travellers are incorporated into EU law, as well as national and local integration Roma policies, specifically the National Roma Integration Strategies (NRIS) with explicit (and measurable) provisions and measures to prevent, combat and remedy the multiple marginalisations, discrimination and disadvantages they face, particularly in light of its recent announcement to effectively tackle and punish anti-Gypsyism and Romaphobia<sup>2</sup>;
8. **call** on international Romani and non-Romani human rights initiatives such as ERGO, ERI, ERRC, FERYP, ILGA-Europe, OSI, Ternype for closer cooperation with the aim of addressing and bringing to the foreground the visibility and the specific issues faced by LGBTIQ Roma, Gypsy, Sinti and Travellers by means of proactive advocacy work towards policy makers.

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<sup>1</sup> The programme would also provide emergency funds, advocacy support, and security assistance to Roma, Gypsy, Sinti and Traveller human rights defenders and civil society organisations under threat or attack due to their work for LGBTIQ human rights

<sup>2</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/rep/1/2015/EN/1-2015-299-EN-F1-1.PDF>