

Roma – a European Minority

**EU Member States & European Minority Ethnic
citizens organisations**

**Meeting organised by the EU Delegation in the
UK**



Europe House, 24th of July, 2024



History & Culture

The Roma people (also known as Romany or Rromani), are an Indo-Aryan ethnic group and traditionally nomadic itinerants. They live predominantly in Europe and Anatolia but have diaspora populations located worldwide with significant concentrations in the Americas.

Linguistic and genetic evidence suggests that the Roma originated in the Indian subcontinent; in particular, the regions of Rajasthan and Punjab. It is believed that the biggest Roma migration began from India about 1,000 years ago, most likely to escape the invasion of Afghan general Mahmud of Ghazni early in the 11th century.

Mahmud's troops probably pushed the Romani out of northern India and into the area that is now Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Iran. Some historians and anthropologists say that Roma arrived in Europe around the 14th century.

History & Culture

Although they are dispersed, their most concentrated populations are located in Europe, especially central, eastern and southern Europe, as well as western Asia (mainly Turkey).

Roma, after a short period from their arrival in Europe, have been enslaved. The Roma slavery is the longest slavery period known in human history, with over 500 years.

Roma is the second largest group victim of the Holocaust. It is estimated that between 500.000 and 2.000.000 Roma died as victims of the Holocaust.

Romani language is an Indo-Aryan macrolanguage of the Romani communities. There are several Romani language dialects as they developed differently, according to the migration routes and the social, geographical, political influences of the places they settled.

History & Culture

Although, the Roma communities across the world have common origin and being very similar, these developed during centuries different cultural elements influenced by geographical, political, social and economic aspects. This is the reason Roma is one of the most diverse populations in the world having numerous sub-groups. Most of these sub-groups are self-identified due to the traditional craft activity of the group, but not limited to this criteria.

The most known Roma groups in Europe are:

- Gypsies (UK)
- Sinties (Germany, Austria, Italy)
- Manoush (France)
- Cale (Spain)
- Ashkali (Albania, North Macedonia)
- Kalderasha, Lovari, Ursari, Lautari, Fierari, Horahai, Gabori, etc (Central and Eastern Europe)



Today's Roma in Europe

Roma is the largest minority group in Europe, with an estimated 12 mil. people and is the fastest growing population with the highest natality rate in Europe.

Roma population represent the most discriminated group in each of the European countries, antigypsyism being the most tolerated hate crime.

Roma have the lowest level of access to the public services, with 80% living below their county's at-risk-of-poverty threshold and 33% living in housing without tap water.

Roma represent the least represented population at the decision making and executive levels.

Resources:

European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, *Second European Union minorities and discrimination survey – Roma – Selected findings*, Publications Office, 2018, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2811/469>

Council of Europe, EU Roma Strategic Framework – for equality, inclusion and participation for 2020-2030, [eu_roma_strategic_framework_for_equality_inclusion_and_participation_for_2020_-_2030\[1\].pdf](#)



Today's Roma in UK

In UK Roma is referred to the Roma migrants, coming from European countries in the last 20-30 years, mainly from Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Slovakia

The policies addressed to Roma are integral part of the Gypsies, Roma and Travellers policies, a segment of a population categorised by UK authorities on unreasonable grounds.

The Roma population is estimated over 700.000. There are no concluding figures as we can never rely on any findings of statistics, researches, surveys, not even the Census results. The estimation is made up to the Home Office EU Settlement Scheme statistics, which shows that by December 2023 have been made 7.723.880 application. Knowing that discrimination and socioeconomic situation are the main cause of immigration, with the most reserved estimate at least 10% of the EU migrants, are of Roma ethnicity.



Today's Roma in UK

Although the term “Gypsy” has a different etymology than the terms Tigan, Tzigoiner, Gitane, is still considered a racial slur, but has been more commonly accepted in UK because British Romani communities sense of self identification.

Now-a-days, the term “Gypsy”, doesn't refer any more to an ethnic group, but to a second-class citizens. Thus Gypsies are Roma, British Romanies, Irish, Welsh and Scottish Travellers, Show people, Boat dwellers, or other travelers.

The Antigypsyism is the most tolerated Hate crime in UK and the most commonly met in all aspects of the British society.

The most commonly form of Antigypsyism is trough ignorance, and lack of institutional engagement with GRT communities.



Today's Roma in UK

The Antigypsyism is the most tolerated hate crime in UK.

Lowest access to public services due to the lack of capacity and skills.

Although is a population with high birth rate, Gypsies, Roma and Travellers have the lowest life expectancy and highest suicide rate.

The GRT children taken into fostering by UK Child Protection Services , grew 1000% in the last 10 years, mainly because of cultural differences and commonly accepted social practices.

GRT representation is at its lowest level compared with other European countries.

Resources:

Office for National Statistics, Ethnic Groups England and Wales: Census 2021, [Ethnic group, England and Wales - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/ethnicity/articles/ethnic-groups-england-and-wales-census-2021)

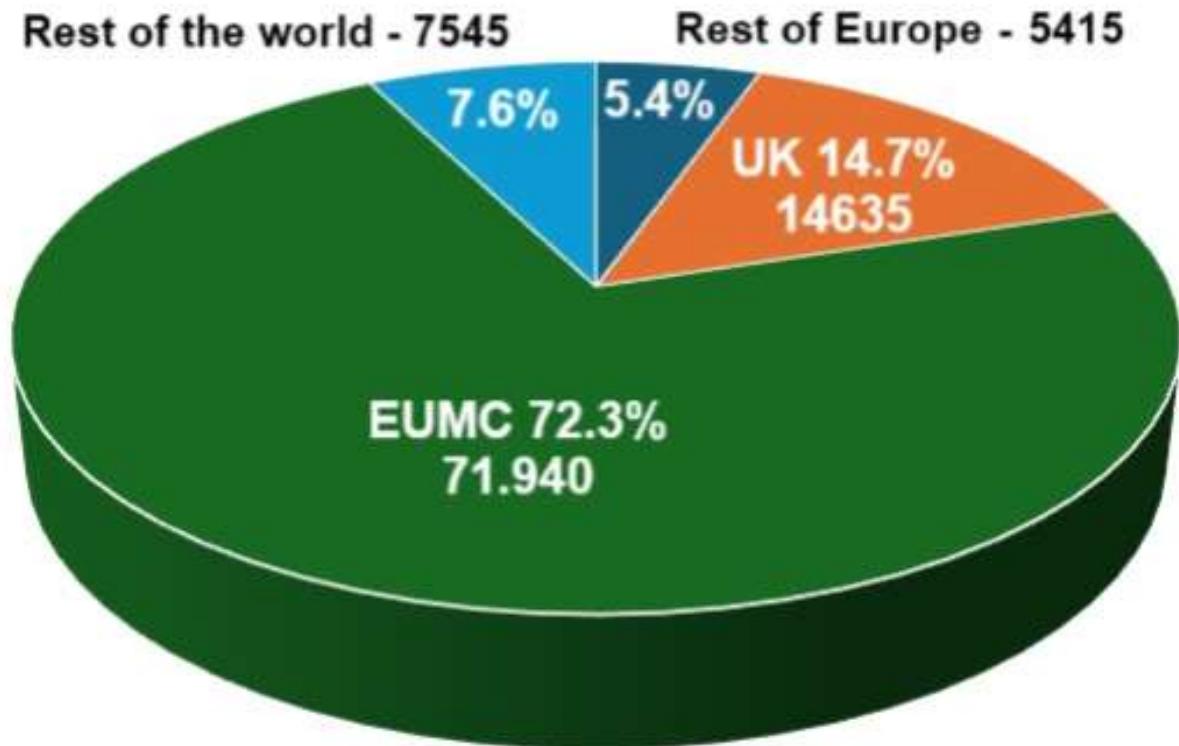
Home Office, EU Settlement Scheme quarterly statistics tables December 2023, [eu-settlement-scheme-quarterly-statistics-tables-28-august-2018-31-december-2023_UPDATED_NOTES.ods \(live.com\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/118888/eu-settlement-scheme-quarterly-statistics-tables-28-august-2018-31-december-2023_UPDATED_NOTES.ods)

Roma in UK - in numbers

Country	Census	Roma	Roma %	EUSS in England and Wales	Census/EUSS in England and Wales	EUSS in United Kingdom	Estimated Roma in UK due to EUSS
Bulgaria	146515	1265	0.86	390400	3371	451190	3896
Czech Republic	46170	2325	5.04	79010	3979	87520	4407
France	155330	955	0.61	246880	1518	263150	1618
Germany	263370	205	0.08	165160	129	184630	144
Greece	80115	270	0.34	148520	501	164910	556
Hungary	95400	830	0.87	164100	1428	181720	1581
Italy	276680	26855	9.71	619160	60097	664620	64509
Poland	743085	2070	0.28	1049620	2924	1215430	3386
Portugal	156280	2095	1.34	470100	6302	506440	6789
Romania	538840	24230	4.50	1503160	67593	1614510	72600
Slovakia	73940	6740	9.12	145790	13289	160300	14612
EU MC	3629670	71940	1.98	6241290	123702	6906910	136895

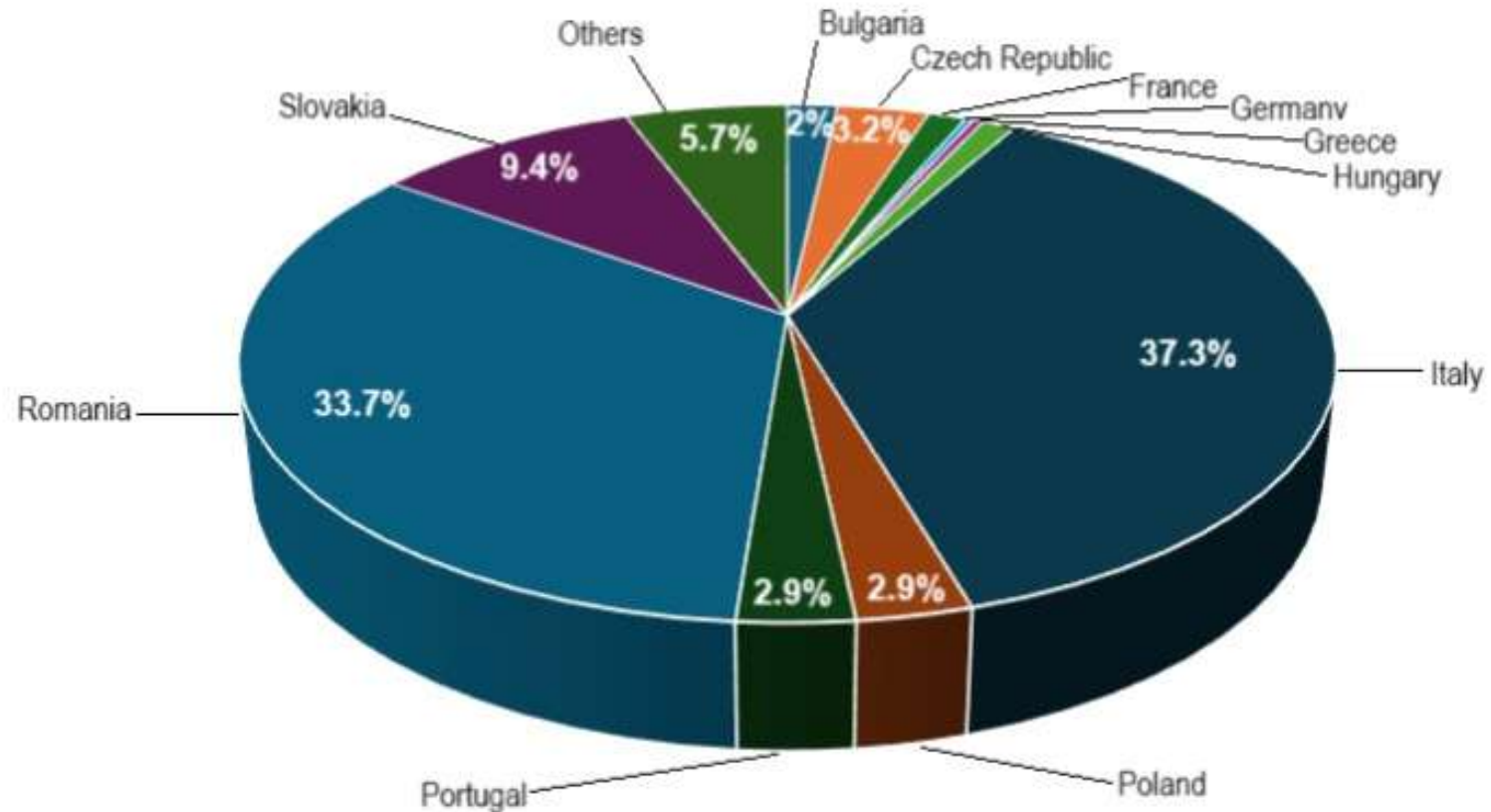
Roma in UK - place of origin

99.535 Roma (2021 Census)



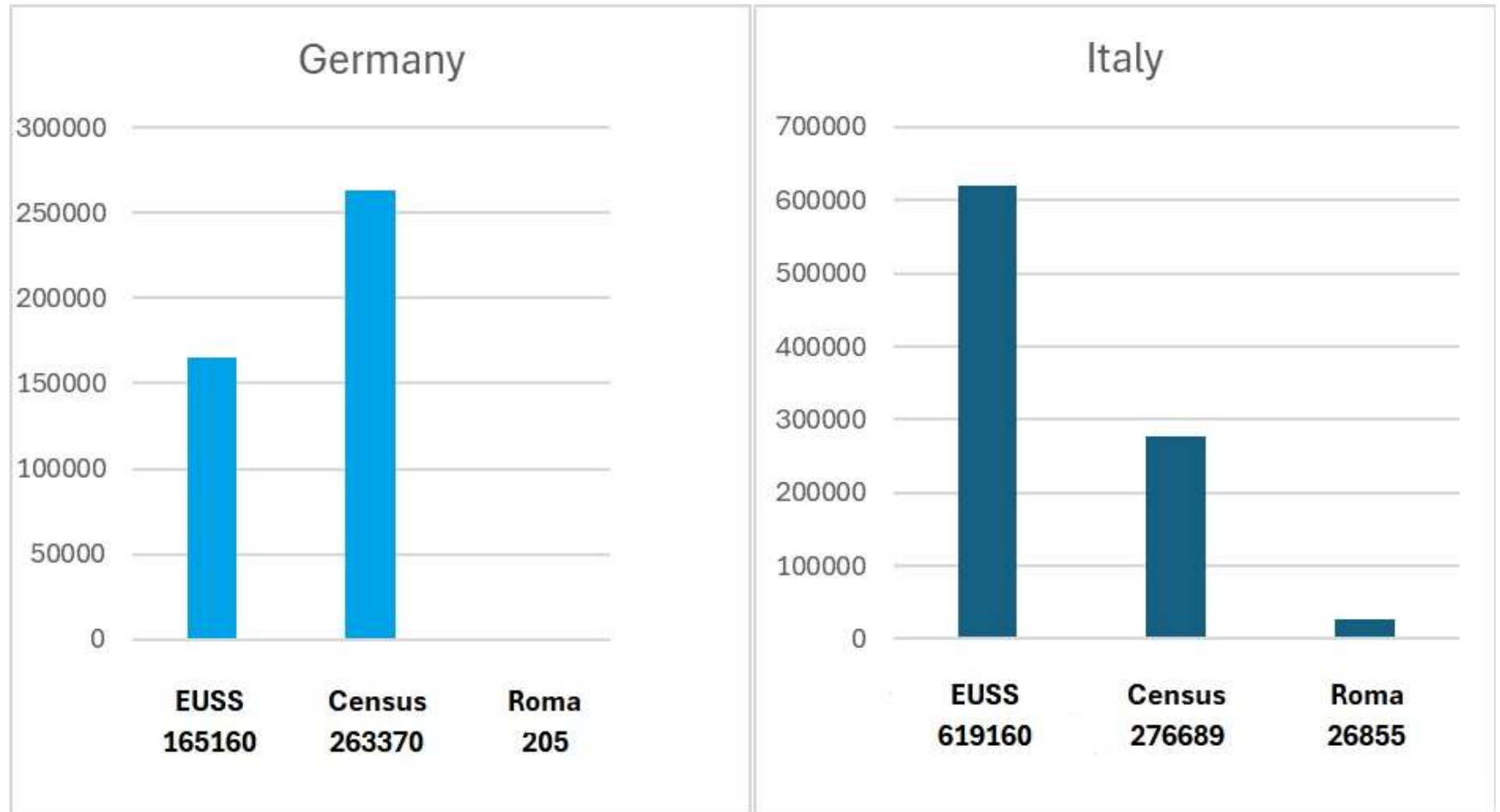
Roma in UK - EU Member Countries

71.940 Roma (2021 Census)



Roma in UK - Findings

Germany vs. Italy





Roma in UK - Findings

Case Studies

Italy

Due to the 2021 Census there are 276.680 Italians living in UK, out of which 26.855 are Roma, representing 9.71%.

We know that usually Roma individuals do not participate to the census processes, and most of those who are doing it, do not declare their true ethnicity.

The big number of the Italian citizens of Roma origin is a clear mistake, following of the confusion between "Roma" as a minority group, and Rome the capital city of Italy, which in Italian is written and spelled "Roma".



Roma in UK - Findings

Case Studies

Roma access to NHS services

The Office for National Statistics may release specific information upon request, based on the Census findings.

On 17th of November, 2023, during the Roma Political School Local Workshop in Sheffield, a participant presented some Census statistics on Roma. One of the information provided was that the Roma population between 0 and 44 years of age, is the healthiest segment of population in UK. Other statistics say that GRT population (including Roma) have the lowest life expectancy rate.

Conclusion:

Roma between 0-44 are the healthiest people in UK, after 45, they die!

Roma in UK - Findings

Case Studies

Bradford

We learn from the Census 2021 that 1.8% from Bradford population are Roma. The EUSS statistics shows that there are 47.180 applications from EU citizens living in Bradford, of which 2.460 are from Czech nationals and 12.500 from Slovak nationals.

In Bradford is a large Roma community most of them coming from the two countries mentioned above. Bradford District is the only authority in UK who adopted a Strategy for Roma ([Roma Strategy | CNet Bradford](#)). Here we find interesting figures as: 95% of the Slovak nationals are of Roma ethnic background; a conservative estimate of Roma in the District of Bradford is in the range of 13.000 – 20.000

In Bradford Roma represent between 28.5% and 42.4% of the EU nationals, which show big discrepancies between the data on Roma.



Roma in UK - Conclusion

ROTA estimate of over 700.000 Roma in UK, based on EUSS statistics, Census 2021 and analyse of other data, proves it is very close to reality.

ROTA intends to initiate a comprehensive research that will help us to understand better the structure of the Roma communities in UK.

Thank you!

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