

 *phiren amenca volunteer seminar*
on human rights education



october 26 - november 1, 2014
mulhouse/strasbourg, france

#roma
#migration
#human rights



#roma #migration #human rights - Phiren Amenca Seminar on Human Rights Education

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www.phirenamenca.eu



Partner organizations:

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I. Introduction

Aims and objectives of the seminar

The seminar organized by Phiren Amenca, VISA L'Année Diaconale and the partner organizations of the Phiren Amenca Network of Roma and non-Roma volunteering organizations brought together 40 Roma and non-Roma youth leaders and youth activists from around Europe for five days in Strasbourg in France. The seminar enabled multipliers and youth activists to create a platform of exchange of experiences, practices and methods for young people and youth organizations how to address migration, antigypsyism and human rights issues in grassroots, national and international youth actions, and how to strengthen the awareness and mobilization of young people for these issues. The aim of the seminar was to share experiences between the participating organizations, to increase the knowledge and awareness of participants on migration, to reflect about the effects of migration on the human rights of young Roma, and to understand the challenges and potentials of youth work and non-formal education with young migrants. The seminar strengthened the efforts to build joint initiatives on grassroots level, as well as on international level towards recognizing and ensuring the human rights of young migrants, and to challenge antigypsyism and racism in Europe.

Programme and methodology

The methodology was based on an inclusive, empowering and participatory approach, taking the needs and interests of young Roma and non-Roma strongly into account, and building strong partnerships on all levels to transfer, disseminate and exploit successful practices within and outside the network in the Roma, educational, Human Rights and youth policy context. The work methodology focused non-formal education. Further the seminar used different working groups, sharing and discussions in the plenum, a role game, thematic workshops with experts, plenum sessions with stakeholders (and facilitators), an exchange of experiences with the representative of La Voix des Roms, a Romani organisation from France, and an encounter with the responsible person of the ROMED Program of the Council of Europe, reflections and intercultural learning exercises. The following structure will give an overview of the sessions of the seminar:

Mapping and sharing

Roma History

- Using the method of a time line, to get an overview over Roma history, and using biographies of important Roma to get an insight into Roma culture;

Travelogue

- Sharing good and bad experiences concerning migration, personal narratives of movement. This session challenged the concepts of stereotypes and antigypsyism concentrating on stereotypes about Roma as migrants;
- Input lecture on the critical approach of the *Movements of Romani Groups* on academic level, e.g. reflecting on the use of terms like, traveller, nomads and diaspora;
- Reflection on personal intention: getting to know the individuals, their experience, motivation; raising the self-awareness;

Migration and Antigypsyism

LARP - Life action play on Human Rights, Migration and Antidiscrimination

- Evaluation of role game, discussion about the relevant lines of argumentation;

Human Rights

- Young people and human rights: reflection on the relevance, visibility and, implementation of human rights in Europe and their impact on young peoples' lives;
- Roma people and human rights: discussions on the situation of Roma from a human rights perspective and getting into different perspectives (role game);
- Methods used to perceive migration as a human right: Based on creative tools of non-formal education, the seminar taught, created and developed methods to promote active citizenship between Roma and non-Roma young people, putting their situations into a human rights frame, which will be documented in a small toolkit book after the seminar for all the participating organizations;

Political Level

Visit of the European Parliament of Europe;

- Meeting with representative of ROMED/Roma Unit in the Council of Europe. Discussion about the human rights situation of Roma in France and the measures of the European Union to improve the situation and to ensure human rights;

Activism

- In work groups exchange of activism and current realities to real action. Participants sharing their work in their local communities and organisations;

Voluntourism

- Role play on voluntourism, reflection on voluntary service considering Post-Colonialism and Critical Whiteness;

La Voix de Roms

- Example of Roma Activism: A representative of the NGO La Voix the Roms from France was sharing information about the current situation of Roma in France that led to a discussion about the human rights situation and political actions the NGO uses on national and European level.

How to respond

Follow-ups

- Presentation of Youth in Action program: In a presentation with practical examples of best practices of participants and facilitators, the Youth in Action program was presented (aims, priorities, actions), as well as the current discussion or plans of a future EU youth program (Erasmus+ program);

Future project market

- The participants presented their developed ideas, as well as other ongoing initiatives in their organizations and networks to encourage cooperation and joint actions. A key project that was developed is a program for the action days in the youth capital in Cluj, Romania in summer 2015.

Participants

The participants were Roma and non-Roma volunteers, volunteer candidates, former volunteers and youth leaders from Europe and North America. The age distribution was between 19 and 30 years. Most of them had experience working in Roma-related contexts, but for some of them this was the first occasion to reflect on the question of Roma, Migration and Human Rights.

Conclusions and outcomes

The seminar achieved the envisioned aims and objectives. Participants were able to increase their knowledge and awareness on migration, to reflect in a safe space about the effects of migration on the human rights of young Roma, and to understand the challenges and potentials of youth work and non-formal education with young migrants. In discussions and working groups, they could develop their critical thinking about dominant narratives on minorities and migrants and their own position in their communities and Europe. As a result of the work in the seminar, dialogue, networking and joint engagement of young Roma and non-Roma were strengthened through the development of initiatives which were to be implemented in follow-up initiatives and projects in 2015, partly supervised by Phiren Amenca.

The session developed new methods and approaches, which can be applied in other seminars, many of them based on life stories, interviews and other testimonies. Specifically, we want to point out a resource-based workshop on Roma history, the “travelogues” – on narratives, terminology on migration of Roma, followed by a mapping, LARP – a live action role play, and a role play on voluntourism and Critical Whiteness. Participants highlighted in their evaluation that they appreciated the trustful atmosphere, which enabled them to share personal experiences and the space for dialogue and exchange.

The Phiren Amenca team would like to thank its member organization VISA for the support hosting this seminar, Rimlishof for the positive atmosphere and the support related to logistics, and the seminar team for its creativity and commitment.



About Phiren Amenca - Principles

Volunteering & voluntary service

We believe that volunteering is a powerful tool of social change, as volunteers dedicate their time and energy to contribute to society. Based on national and international voluntary service programs, the Phiren Amenca network creates opportunities for young Roma and non-Roma to live and engage in local communities and projects for up to one year. Placement themes may include youth and sport activities, social inclusion, arts and culture, environment and human rights. In exchange for their engagement, the volunteers can benefit from an unforgettable life experience, intercultural learning, non-formal education, and new language skills.

Voluntary service organizations in the Phiren Amenca network are European and North American non-profit bodies sending and/or hosting these young adults, and providing support such as mentoring, on-arrival, mid-term and pre-departure seminars, pocket money, room, board and insurance.

Non-formal education

The experience of voluntary service can both stimulate & challenge young people through meeting new cultures, languages, people and ideas. This opportunity can enable the volunteers to develop new skills and talents, discover new interests, and make new relationships. Phiren Amenca network wants to support and encourage volunteers in this learning experience through seminars on intercultural learning, conflict-management, Roma history and cultures, civil rights activism, as well as discrimination, mechanisms of exclusion, antigypsyism and extremist movements today.

Dialogue and engagement

We believe that we need an active dialogue and engagement in society to strengthen trust, mutual understanding and respect between Roma and non-Roma. Phiren Amenca volunteers share a passion to learn and engage for our common mission to challenge stereotypes and racism. Phiren Amenca encourages an open and safe community to share experiences in the dialogue among volunteers, hosting placements, local communities, and network members.

Challenging stereotypes and racism

Stereotypes and racism are the root causes of social exclusion and marginalization of Roma. As Roma and non-Roma we want to create equal opportunities for all young people in our societies, especially through giving equal access to voluntary service.

2. Toolkit: Collection of Methods

Roma History

by Vicente Rodriguez Fernandez

Themes: Basic introduction to Roma history through a living time line and identity by getting to know important dates and facts of Roma history and information of historical important characters and episodes in Roma history

Duration: 90-120 min

Number of people:

Issue / Competences addressed:

Objectives:

- Sharing basic knowledge about Roma history and giving background for further work
- Fighting prejudices and misunderstandings
- Clarifying the role of the majority society in the historical exclusion of Roma
- Visibility and empowerment of Roma identity

Preparation of the activity:

- Cutting the timeline into pieces
- Printing the Biographies for the five groups

The activity step-by-step:

Step 1	Roma history timeline	20 min
Step 2	Discover Roma biographies throughout history	45 min
Step 3	Debrief and evaluation	20min

Step 1: Roma History Timeline

We will create a living chronology of the Roma history. Every participant receives one piece of paper with a historical event. They have to position themselves in a living timeline. After that, they have to present their part of the history. If necessary, the facilitator has to correct it and explain and discuss the happenings. After that, a short video with an overview of the history could be screened (see: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q6wSLfGBVGY>).

Step 2: Discover Roma biographies throughout history

The second part of the workshop discusses five different biographies of important Roma characters or happenings. The participants have to be divided into five groups. Each group will analyse the material they will receive and prepare a presentation. The material consists of a biography connected to a historical episode of relevance in his context for each group:

- -Lole Montoya - Flamenco History
- -Magneto - Roma in Pop Culture
- -Rodney Smith - Evangelical Roma Church
- -Yul Brynner - XX Century Roma movement
- -Johann Trollman - Roma Genocide during WWII

Step 3: Debrief and evaluation:

After the presentation the results are shared and discussed in the plenary.
Afterwards the participants will discuss a series of questions in the plenary:

- 1 What did you learn through these materials? What was new?
- 2 Why is it important for us? Why should it be taught?
- 3 What lessons can we learn? Why should be we aware?

Tips for facilitators:

The facilitator should refer to the process of how personal narratives and biographies of Roma can challenge the mainstream idea of history represented in media and thought in majority society. (See article: History and narratives about Roma in Europe. In: The European Boogie Man Complex – Challenging antigypsyism through non-formal education. An educational toolkit.)

Further information:

Council of Europe Factsheets about Roma history:

http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/education/roma/histoculture_EN.asp

Travelogue I:

Testimonies and Personal Narratives of Movements Across the Ocean

By Esteban Acuña C.

Themes: Travel stories, Migration, movement

Duration: 90 min

Issue / Competences addressed:

- Reflect on the participant's own travel stories and experiences of movement. Describe and analyse how travel stories are put together and how they remain entangled in biographical narratives.
- Analyse how these stories help us understand the ways in which we remember, retell, analyse, label, experience and practice movement.
- The session served as an introduction to the possibility of seeing migration and other concepts in a different light.
- It allowed an approximation to trans-Atlantic movements of Romani people (as opposed to usual conceptions of Romani Groups as only European)

Objectives:

The session will introduce three stories of trans-Atlantic travel by Romani people. It will ask the participants to pay attention closely how we see stories of travel. That way the next session can bring some reflections and conceptualizations on migration, movement, and other terms that will be necessary for the rest of the seminar

The activity step-by-step:

Step 1	Introduction	10min
Step 2	Case study	20 min
Step 3	Biographical approach	45 min
Step 4	Debrief and evaluation	20 min

Step 1: Questions to the participants

I. Introduction to the session: How did we get here to the seminar? Self-examination of our personal travel stories.

Step 2: Case study

“Case Study: A Family from Romania”, presentation of sample case. Questions for discussion:

- How is it to spend part of your life trying to reach 'a better place' by moving across the Atlantic?
- Why do people embark in these travels?
- Which materialities and media are involved?
- Which consequences do they have for: bodies, families, groups, and lives?
- How do we define each type of travel/movement?
- Why do we focus/privilege some types over others?
- Are these stories uncommon? (What is a 'normal' life when it comes to movement?)
- How do we get know the experience and practices of movement?

Step 3: Biographical approach

Close reading of three biographical excerpts of travel journeys of Romani groups. Analysis: In groups, participants go through each protagonist route and their travel story. Participants will create a poster displaying the movements of the stories' protagonists, socializing it with the group. The presentation of the chart to other seminar participants, which outlined important aspects of each story and the importance of history for population movements.

Step 4: Debrief and evaluation

Questions asked in the plenary:

How can we link the stories with what we have learned before?

Reflection: How do we get to know experiences and practices of movement?

Materials:

Space: A room(s) wide enough to fit all the participants.

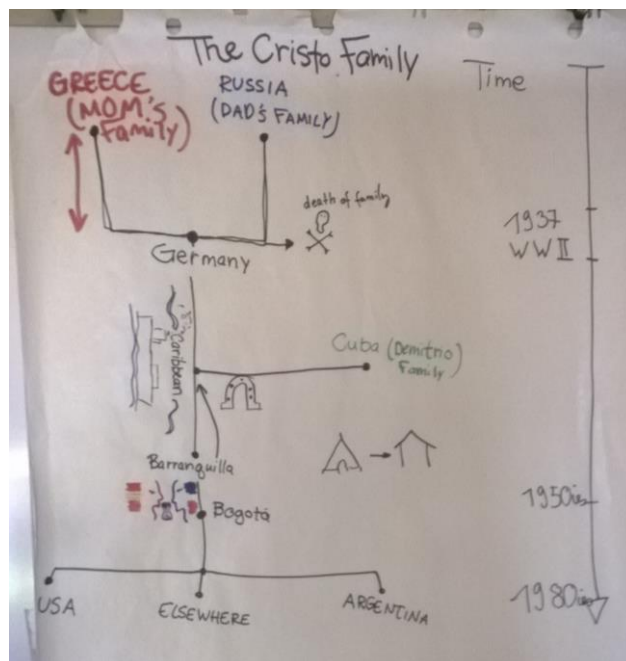
Materials: Pen, paper, previously formatted pages for analysis, internet access, computer and projector.

Prezi about Travelogue: <https://prezi.com/3dxzcfpqjqrn/travelogue/>

Sources:

The sources were personal testimonies of families, which were collected by Esteban Acuña in Colombia, Canada and Hungary in the context of his ongoing doctorate. On the next page, you find three testimonies to work with. For an elaboration and contextualization, which might be helpful in the preparation of the session, please check the author's text in the publication of the event *Simpósio 27, Migraciones Romaníes hacia Europa Occidental: Enfoques Explicativos desde las Teorías de las Migraciones y su Aplicación en la Investigación Etno-Antropológica, VIII Congreso Migraciones Internacionales en España, Granada 16-18 Septiembre 2015*, p. 56. In case of questions, you may contact the author through the Phiren Amencia office.

Other useful testimonies about the migration of Roma to Canada have been published by the Central European University: <https://cps.ceu.edu/publications/books/roma-migration>



3. From Hungary to Canada: the beginning of the XXIst century

A. and his family all joined the conversation around the table. His life started in the late seventies in a small Hungarian village. His father's family used to peddle from market to market. Eight years later his mother claimed custody and he moved to the city. "[...] a world just opened up and I knew a lot of different things [...]" His mother worked in factories in socialist times, "she was the one that encouraged us, me and my brothers, that we need to learn, that we need to be educated." Still, even though his fondness of reading, school was not an easy place. "[...] I didn't know what is racism. My mother didn't want to tell me these things. I felt they didn't like me somehow, and I didn't know the reason [chuckle]". "Socialism ended when I was fourteen".

"I met my wife" he said later; "Junior happened", said her with a refreshing laugh. A. stepped out of school to be responsible, and joined the factories: "[...] it was always a short time. [...] I was sure at that time because I am a Roma [...] as soon as they had to fire somebody, I was the first." "[...]we had to move all the time.[...] We were always trying to find a better place to live, because most of the times we had these racist neighbors that just cannot stand Roma." A. later worked in retail and even in fast food chains. Finally he found a niche in the Roma self-government but "I had to stop working there because of serious attacks [...] it happened three times [...] my family was near, they saw everything." The situation became unbearable. After his brother left for Belgium, another attack happened, "[...] they just beat us, even my children". The family did not think twice, and followed him to Brussels. It took almost a day by car. Not being eligible for asylum inside the EU, several months later A. decided they will follow his brother, again, to Canada. After the long flight they were questioned by an immigration officer, "[...] I remembered him saying 'damn it, one more refugee family'". A.'s fortune smiled later, he was able to get help from lawyers provided by Toronto's Roma Community Center, where he became an active member. A couple of months later, one of his messages greeted us on Facebook, "Our family was accepted on Humanitarian ground just this morning!"

Travelogue II:

“A Critical Approach to the Movements of Romani Groups”

By Esteban Acuña C.

Themes: Migration, movement, terminology

Duration: 90 min

Issue / Competences addressed:

The session is planned as a continuation of the Travelogue session. It will use the stories and materials product of that reflection, plus additional visual and digital images, to introduce important concepts that will serve the participants for the rest of the seminar.

Objectives:

- Think critically about how the movement of Romani groups is represented in daily life
- Use empirical material (provided in an earlier session) to discuss current terminology used to describe these movements.
- Introduce the participants to academic definitions and reflections on human movement (concretely: nomadism/sedentarism; migration; diaspora; displacement; mobilities.)

Preparation of the activity:

The session will be based on a collective plenary presentation of the terms and active discussion based on both a) empirical materials presented in the session before, b) media portrayals that will be shown to the auditory.

The activity step-by-step:

Step 1	Romani movement in media	10 min
Step 2	Case study	20 min
Step 3	Gadje interest	20 min
Step 4	Reflection on definitions	20 min
Step 5	Debrief and evaluation	20 min

Step 1: Romani movement in media

Introduction of the session: Analysing the portrayal of Romani movement in two distinct online sources, media as reflection on current trends in thought

1) <http://magazine.good.is/articles/the-last-of-the-famous-international-nomads>

2) <http://www.euractiv.com/sections/roma-inclusion/roma-integration-through-social-housing-309066>

To which degree are these statements true? Further information is mentioned in the Prezi.

Step 2: Case study

Display of pictures: the case of the Yancovich *vitsa* in Colombia.

Step 3: gadyé interest in Romani movements

Short historical grounding on *gadyé* interest in Romani movements. Agreeing on what terms mean and how have they been used: (in order) nomadism; migration; diaspora; displacement; mobilities.

A few examples:

- XVIIIth Century Habsburg Empire - Assimilation programs: "turning, supposedly, wild, lawless, and uncivilized pagans into the desired good, productive, obedient and civilized Christians"
- 1930-1940's - Racial Theories- Eugenics – Holocaust
- 'resettlement' and 'anti-nomadism' programs in various communist regimes.
References: Van Baar, H. (2011). The European Roma: Minority Representation, Memory and the Limits of Transnational Governmentality (PhD Thesis). Amsterdam: University of Amsterdam.
- Why the sudden interest from the 90's on?
"an image in the western media [...] of western/northern immigration policy acting like a dam, blocking a great pent-up flow of would be migrants eager to flee from poverty to wealth." (Kovats, 2002)
"[...]two interrelated phenomena: the raising intolerance toward Roma all over Europe, and the fear for Roma westward mobility" (Sigona and Setter, 2010)

Step 4: Reflection on terms and definitions

Discussion: Which terms fit the stories revised? Which terms fit our story? Why not think outside of the box? (see source: Definition and discussion of terms).

Step 5: Debrief and evaluation

Create a critical atmosphere about ideas about migration and movement as concepts used in everyday life, policy making and academia.

Analyse the common tropes around the movements of Romani groups.

Materials:

Projector and computer with an internet connection

A room big enough so participants can have a round table conversation

Prezi of Critical Approach:

<https://prezi.com/bigmjnf56nyv/a-critical-approach-to-the-movement-of-romani-groups/>



Further information:

Side note on the current discourse about migration of Romani people:

<http://europeandcis.undp.org/blog/2014/01/14/roma-migration-an-option-of-last-resort/>

Source I: Definitions and reflection of Terms

Nomadism

Why not nomadism? - A theory: The 'civilizational project' must create 'others'

'Nomads' - the 'non-sedentary': traveling or 'wandering' by 'others' becomes frozen in time: 'traditional' and later... backward: 'primitive' (non-civilized)

It is taken as an (essential) part of being 'Gypsy', before the Romani movement (1970's-1980's) forced academia and later policy makers to rethink the use of the 'G' word...

Migration

Mobile economic practices and patterns + ethnic community formation. - Why put them together?

What about migration?

First: A word to describe (seasonal) movements of animals and humans ... [Who is thought as a migrant? a traveller? an expatriate?]

Now, IOM: "The movement of a person or group of persons from one geographical unit to another across an administrative or political border, who wish to settle definitively or temporarily in a place other than their place of origin"

Is this definition enough to account for the stories of movement we have gone through? Our own stories?

Additional descriptions according to:

time: temporary/permanent

national borders: internal/external [immigrant/emigrant]

economic purpose: leisure/labor

agency: forced/voluntary

distance: short/long

S. Castles (2002) - The need for a processual approach:

'migration is too diverse and multifaceted to be explained by a single theory'

'a collective process based on the needs and strategies of families and communities.'

Are there other options? What about other types of movement?

Diaspora

IOM: "Communities of migrants settled permanently in countries other than where they were born, but aware of their country of origin and continuing to maintain links with their country of origin. A diaspora is defined as both a dispersion of people from their original homeland, and as the community formed by such a people in other countries."

Lack of awareness: Where does the term come from?

Displacement

" [a] multifaceted 'package of losses' – of social networks and capital [...], of economic and material goods and power [...], of political and legal rights [...], of agency [...], and even of cultural moorings." (Lubkemann, 2008: 455)

"both displacement and emplacement are seen as historical products, ever-unfinished projects" (Malkki 1995: 516-517)

Is displacement the same as migration?

Mobility(ies)

The 'mobility turn' or 'paradigm', later referred to as 'mobility studies', "emerged as a critique of the academic tendency to ignore either past or present histories of human movement and interconnection" (Glick Schiller and Salazar, 2013: 185)

Mobility(ies) as a concept allows to focus on experiences, practices and connections, including constructions of meaning around them. (Cresswell, 2006)

The privileged are 'mobile', the unprivileged 'migrants'

Thinking about all dimensions of human movement:

networks, connections, decisions, impositions, blockages, historicities, relations

LARP Life Action Role Play

by Vicente Rodriguez Fernandez¹

Themes: role play about discrimination; The Case of the “Vegetarian Refugees”

Duration: one 3-hour session

Issue / Competences addressed:

This is a basic introduction to the topic of structural and systemic discrimination and is based on a Living Action Role Game: LARP. The methodology is especially useful to help the participants to understand the complexity of the processes that Roma and migrants face as part of an endangered community, and empathizes the risk of the single story and the common misunderstandings between two or more groups.

Objectives:

- To raise awareness on the incompetence of hierarchical structures, to denounce the lack of responses of the majority systems for the minorities.
- To create a common bond between the participants and empathy between different realities during the game that will help them to reflect on the current situation of Romani migrants and other minorities.
- To create a personal and visceral reaction in the participants.

Preparation of the activity:

Prepare an adequate setting and prepare the role cards for the participants.

The activity step-by-step:

Step 1	Introduction to the LARP	15 min
Step 2	Distribution of the roles, preparation by participants	30 min
Step 3	Role Play	60 min
Step 4	Debriefing, evaluation	45 min

Step 1: Introduction

We will share first an introduction to the LARP. It is very important to focus on creating the right atmosphere and very clear rules, the Game Masters in this sense are essential, they need to be aware of the roles and different dynamics of the game and have previous experience on LARP, if possible.

All different methodologies are attached.

Step 2: Distribution of roles

After choosing the supporting roles and the Game Master, we will divide the group according to the needs of the participants. This LARP is usually good for 12 persons, so we can make a single game with 10-20 or several smaller groups, which is up to the organizers. They are also free to cut down

¹ LARPs exist since the 1970s. This one has been developed specifically for this seminar.

the storyline if needed or add any element. The LARP is an exercise of improvisation. After deciding the groups according categories, they will receive their characters.

Step 3: The Role Play

The supporting roles as the guards and the journalist are very important and they are the vehicle of a lot of the action during the game. The Game Master should use stickers and papers to bring information to the game.

Step 4: Debriefing, Evaluation

A debriefing shall allow the participants to leave their roles, to reflect about what happened, how they felt in their roles, interactions and positions during the game, as well as to allow a transfer of the game to reality.

Materials:

Flipchart, pencils, papers, etc,

Mapping of Roma realities related to “migration”

by Vicente Rodriguez Fernandez

Themes: Migration, Stereotypes

Duration: 90 -120min

Number of people: 20-30

Issue / Competences addressed:

This is a basic introduction to the topic of Roma reality and migration from a purely European perspective. We want to offer some basic facts as well as valuable life histories to the participants, for that matter we will offer a series of testimonies of Roma migrants in modern Europe, focused on the daily struggle and on the phenomenon of xenophobia.

Objectives:

- To clarify some basic points about Roma migration reality
- To answer the questions of the participants
- To create empathy and build bridges between the human reality of Roma migrants and the participants' own struggle.



Preparation of the activity:

Prepare a big EUROPEAN map

The activity step-by-step:

Step 1	Testimonies	30 min
Step 2	Discussion	20min
Step 3	Sharing testimonies	30 min
Step 4	Debrief and evaluation	20 min

Step 1: Mapping Testimonies

Share 5 different short disturbing testimonies to 5 working groups; they will discuss and talk about them and prepare to represent them to the rest of participants, in parallel they will receive a sheet where they will choose a symbol and a title for the history they discuss, which will help them in the debate. After this, they will go to the plenary and locate the testimonies sheets on the map.

Step 2: Discussion

We will discuss then about several issues on the testimonies in the plenary as:

- 1) What were the common problems this people talk about it? How do they define their struggle?
- 2) What do you think is the cause of their struggle?

Step 3: Sharing testimonies

Later on, we will call the groups to have a small break and to reflect on their own struggle, and the cases of racism and migration-related hate they suffered or know about it.

The last exercise will be to invite them to share with each other in the plenary their own testimony.

Tips for facilitators:

Sharing of personal stories requires a lot of attention and care of the facilitator as it can cause and bring up a lot of and strong emotions of participants that went through difficult experiences of racism and discrimination. Take care of creating a safe environment for the participants, and consider the group dynamic. A debriefing session can be useful after sharing the personal stories.

Materials:

Flipchart, pencils, papers, etc.

Further information:



Voluntourism - Post-Colonialism and Critical Whiteness

by Astrid Oelpenich and Jonathan Mack

Themes: Volunteering, Mobility

Duration: 90 -120min

Number of people: 20-30

Issue Competences addressed:

This session relates to the addressed topics of migration and mobilities in the voluntary service context. It involves topics such as (post)colonialism and critical whiteness in order to stimulate a critical evaluation of power inequalities in voluntary service programs and of the role of the volunteers. After this session, we will plan follow-up initiatives some of which will relate to mobilities of and for young Roma and non-Roma.

Objectives:

- introducing the historical consequences of colonialism until today and its connection to migration and mobility
- raising awareness of power inequalities in VS contexts, affecting the participation of Roma and non-Roma people in voluntary service programs
- reflect the own position: whiteness and privilege
- reflect the personal position and role during voluntary service programs in the context of majority-minority power relations, e.g. regarding racism and antigypsyism
- raising a critical thinking to reflect the own behaviour, the traps of “solidarity” and structural failures of mainstream mobility/educational programs

The activity step-by-step:

Step 1	introduction	5 min
Step 2	role play	30 min
Step 3	plenary: debriefing, post-colonialism, critical whiteness, privileges, voluntourism	40 min
Step 4	plenary: summary and relating to volunteering in Roma communities	15 min

Step 1: Introduce the topic of the session

Step 2: Role play on Volunteering

A group of ten volunteers goes outside and they get role cards (volunteers, employees of the German sending organization, employees of the Kenyan coordination office, teachers of the local school in Kenya, and representatives of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development which finances the program) and the information on the setting (both attached). They have 15 minutes time to prepare the role-play, to find arguments for/against VS programs in the development context in order to strengthen the position of their role while the rest of the group does the energizer. Then the chairs are arranged with a panel and a public in front of them. The facilitator explains the situation of the round table discussion and asks each participant to present themselves and their position in the conflict. Then the round table discussion starts, if needed moderated by the facilitator. The panellists have up to 30 minutes moderated discussion to exchange the arguments and find if there is a compromise which satisfies all parties.

Alternative for more time:

Split participants in 3 groups. In each group, they get information on the role-play (attached) and separate into different subgroups who share one of the following roles (role cards attached): volunteers, employees of the German sending organization, employees of the Kenyan coordination office, teachers of the local school in Kenya, and representatives of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development which finances the program. They get 20 minutes to find arguments for/against VS programs in the development context in order to strengthen the position of their role. Afterwards there is a 30 minutes moderated discussion to exchange the arguments and find if there is a compromise which satisfies all parties.

Step 3: Debrief and evaluation

Debriefing of 30 minutes in the plenary, analysing the discussion, arguments and bringing in information on post-colonialism, critical whiteness and privilege/power structures.

Questions:

Was there a new aspect you learned about volunteering in the discussion?

Which argument caught your attention?

What do the critics mean when they argue with “the effects of colonialism”?

What are the dangers of white Western volunteers going to Africa?

What should be considered when organizing VS programs in a so-called development country?

How can we take power inequalities into consideration?

After the debriefing, the facilitators summarize the results of the discussion and give a short overview on the relevance of colonial history, post colonialism, and critical whiteness in this context. After that, they draw a connection to the context of Roma, paternalism and volunteering in Roma communities.

Alternative for more time:

After this debriefing, we go back into the groups and discuss in what way the discussed aspects are important in the context of Roma, migration/mobility and voluntary services in Roma communities.

Questions:

Do you see any connection between the role play situation and your own situation/voluntary service? Which ones?

How can you react when your boss at the school where you volunteer says something racist? How to not to betray your ideals without getting into a position of “I know better”?

How do you (re)act in this situation?

Do you think it is good to send non-Roma volunteers into Roma communities? Under which circumstances? Explain.

How can we create opportunities for mobility with equal access and partnership?

Step 4: Exchange about volunteering in Roma communities

Plenary discussion: summary and relating to volunteering in Roma communities

Tips for facilitators:

We were short on time; therefore we used the shorter version, which fit well in 90 minutes. It is important to be available for those who play a role in the role play for possible questions and advice. Facilitators should be aware that especially the independent activist and expert should be persons who have already basic knowledge about the topics. We recommend to prepare the end of the debriefing and think about how to connect the different topics, as well as how to apply them to the context of volunteering in Roma communities. The activity was evaluated positively by participants, especially the connection to their contexts. Maybe it is also possible to connect the topics earlier to give more time to also discuss this application among participants.

Ideas for follow-up actions:

There is no physical outcome to this activity. An idea for documentation could be to film part of the role play and discussion and create a short film about the topic. This or other awareness-raising materials could be made either as a follow-up after the seminar or as part of the program as the next activity to keep working on the topic.

Materials:

Role cards and setting
Flipchart
Markers
Paper and pens

Further information:

<http://ir.brandeis.edu/bitstream/handle/10192/25162/KassThesis2013.pdf?sequence=1>

The #GlobalPOV Project: "Is Privilege Poverty?" With Clare Talwalke
The #GlobalPOV Project: "Is Privilege Poverty?" With Clare Talwalker:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IRCrvChWDsM&feature=youtu.be>

General introduction to the topic: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Volunteer_travel

A former volunteer's reflection: <https://medium.com/culture-club/the-problem-with-little-white-girls-and-boys-b84d4011d17e>

Publications in German:

Publications of BER e.V. <http://ber-ev.de/infopool-publikationen>

Publication on the experiences of volunteers in a development context:

<http://www.weltwaerts.de/publikation-detail.html?id=84>

Source I: Role-play

SETTING

You attend the annual “Conference on volunteering and development aid” of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development in which the new volunteering program “I contribute” will be opened. In the first day, a conflict between supporters and opponents of the program made it necessary to come together to a mediated discussion in order to not have the program fail before it starts. The discussion includes volunteers, employees of the German sending organization, employees of the Kenyan coordination office, teachers of the local school in Kenya, representatives of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development which finances the program. They defend different approaches towards the topic. The discussion is a space to exchange arguments and see if there is a compromise, which includes all positions and interests.

ROLE CARDS

Volunteers

You have just finished school and are selected to be a volunteer in a local school in Kenya. You are excited to help the local population by teaching English to the children and supporting the afternoon school program. You think volunteering is a great experience and support the program.

Employees of the German sending organization

You have a good contact to colleagues in Kenya and together you have prepared the program for an entire year already. You defend mostly the interests of the volunteers and argue with the great learning experience and the positive impact of intercultural exchange on all participating parties.

Employee of the Kenyan coordination office

You are torn between understanding your colleagues from the host project, wanting to keep your job, which is financed by the German ministry and the belief in the positive aspects of an exchange. Therefore, you argue mainly for the implementation of the program but try to find ways to ensure the volunteers really contribute to the situation at the school and have some practical ideas how you can ensure this.

Teacher of the local school in Kenya

You are against hosting volunteers at your school. Volunteers are too young and not skilled; they do more harm than good in your opinion. You made the experience before that volunteers arrive and think they know everything better than the teachers and try to impose their ideas without learning about the local context. Instead, you ask the ministry to directly invest the money in the education of local experts and giving scholarships to Kenyan students.

Representative of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development

The new voluntary service program “I contribute” is one of the main new prestige projects of the ministry. Therefore, you strongly argue for its implementation. Still, you are open to consider changing certain strategies in its implementation in order to reach the best impact on the local community in Kenya. After all, the program aims at development!

Independent activist and expert

You are very critical towards the new program, because you fear it does not consider historical power inequalities. You remind the participants of the discussion not to reinforce colonial patterns and power inequalities. You propose concrete ideas how a Critical Whiteness perspective and other concrete measures can contribute to creating a program from which all sides can benefit.

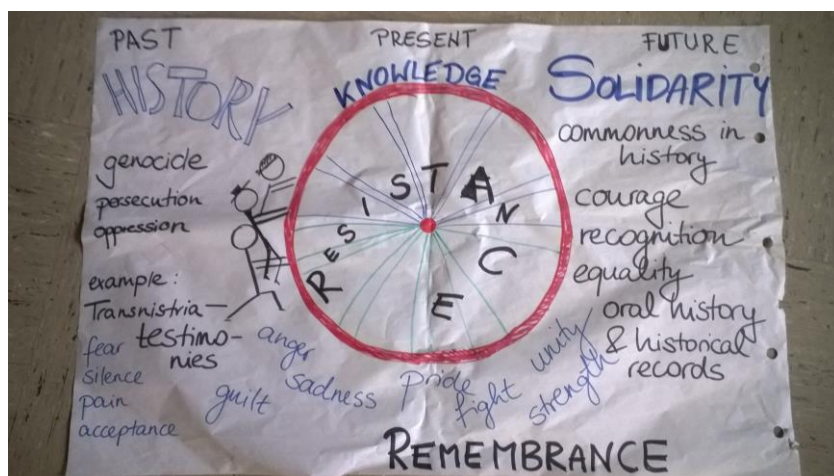
3. Roma Activism and Initiatives

Workshops on Activism

Five working groups were formed to work on topics related to activism. After that, the working groups shared their experiences on the topics and presented their ideas on posters, through performances and in discussions.

1) Romani Resistance (Holocaust, history, recognition)

According to this group, the Roma resistance work is important to overcome fear and silence. Sharing experiences is one way to do so and to be proud of how Roma people survived the Holocaust. History is a powerful tool to raise awareness of the reality and lead the masses to solidarity.



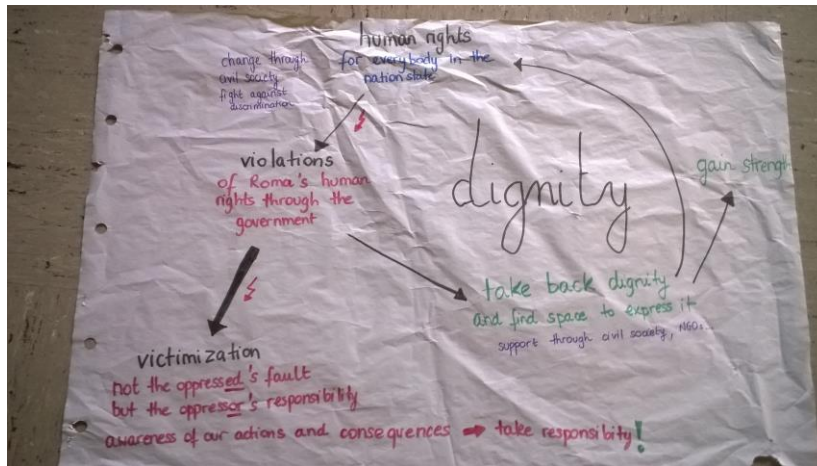
2) Activism and Grassroots, Self-Organisation

This group wanted to show that activists have to work on the local level with the existing network within Roma communities. If there is a lack of communication and listening to Roma then effectiveness is lost in the field. The impact of activist work relies heavily on the local aspect as this is what will give the most important feature of the action: its legitimacy.



3) Roma Dignity and Victimization

Whether the housing situation, access to employment, schooling for children, etc. – many aspects of daily life become complicated when you belong to a minority group that is discriminated against. The debate continued: Is it possible that individuals can lose their dignity or can it be taken away? And how can Roma be not victimized, but their agency acknowledged? Whose responsibility is it to guarantee this dignity?



4) Romani Revolution

For this group "Roma revolution" meant to create visibility to everyone, especially to the governments (showed through a performance of the group). Other participants argued that in some cases Roma are already visible, but only in a negative way. Others think that some Roma decide themselves to adopt this "invisibility" because to hide the own identity is the only way to avoid discrimination.



5) Racism, Xenophobia, Human Rights

This group helped to focus on the terminology of racism, xenophobia, stereotypes against Roma, human rights etc.

Erasmus + and Youth in Action

In this part of the seminar, a presentation of the Youth in Action program was given with practical examples of best practices of participants and facilitators, the Youth in Action program was presented (aims, priorities, actions), as well as the current discussion or plans of a future EU youth program (Youth on the Move/ERASMUS for ALL) were shared. For further information see:

EU youth portal: <http://europa.eu/youth/en>

Youth: <http://ec.europa.eu/youth/>

the Agency: <http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/youth/>

European Parliament, ROMED Roma Unit (Council of Europe)

Mediation is one of the measures used across Europe to tackle the inequalities Roma face in terms of access to employment, healthcare services and quality education. It consists of employing people with a Roma background, from local Roma communities, or with a good knowledge of Roma issues, to act as mediators between the Roma and the public institutions.

After two years of implementation in 22 countries, and over 1000 mediators trained, the ROMED Programme is moving on to another level.

Its second phase, ROMED2, together with a new Council of Europe and European Commission joint initiative – [ROMACT](http://romed.coe-romact.org/tags/romact), aim to support local partners in 40 municipalities across 10 countries. The action of the two programmes is complementary - while the ROMED2 Programme focuses on the community and their participation in democratic governance through mediation, the ROMACT Programme works on building local level political commitment and the capacity of policy development. The second phase of the ROMED programme will thus work simultaneously on both Roma citizens' ability to participate and the authority's ability to respond (See: <http://romed.coe-romact.org/tags/romact>).



La Voix des Rroms

Since its creation in 2005, by Rromani and non Rromani students and activists, La Voix des Rroms/The Voice of the Rroma aims to tackle intolerance, mechanism of racism, antigypsyism and social exclusion in order to promote the former, structural and participatory belonging of Rromani people to French society and European space. It promotes equal treatment, justice and common understanding. More widely, the organization intends to contribute in changing French and European societies into soft spheres able to make space for any social and cultural singularities, in harmonious and creative cooperation and coexistence. The organization has, as well, led, since years, a wide social grass-root emergency action targeting marginalized rromani migrants.

See: <http://la-voix-des-rroms.agence-presse.net/>

4. Follow-ups

Seminar for Volunteers in Hungary

Volunteering abroad is a fascinating experience, where one can learn new skills and knowledge by being in an unfamiliar environment, meet people from different cultures and see new places of the world. However, there are those sides of international volunteering that we also need to be prepared for: it can be challenging, tiring and difficult at times. Volunteers of Phiren Amenca therefore rightly felt the need of a seminar where international volunteers from the Eastern European region could discuss their struggles at their placements and reflect about the idea of “helping”.



From March 13 to 15, volunteers from all over Europe and the United States gathered in the office of Phiren Amenca. After the introductory activities, on the first day we focused on the history of Roma, discrimination and bias in Europe. In the evening, we visited the opening of the exhibition *Roma Body Politics I – No Innocent Picture* in Gallery8, where the historical prejudices of Roma people are presented by portraits of famous Roma scholars, public figures and intellectuals. As most of the participants were non-Roma who are working with Roma communities, on the second day we focused on the topic of *becoming an ally*. It was an important part of the seminar, because in order to help effectively we need to understand how to build up a relationship and unite with a group. Besides these subjects, we took time to talk about specific challenges in our placements, which was important in order to feel less alone in our problems but also to find solutions together. On the last day we created a network between each other for future cooperation and evaluated the seminar.

This meeting gave us an insight into the current situation of Roma in the region and we gained skills to react on discrimination. Besides the informative parts, the seminar aimed to help volunteers to make the most out of their voluntary services. Even if it seems easy, it is important to learn how to help rightly and to discuss the difficulties of volunteering as well, and therefore I am glad that Phiren Amenca organized a seminar on this subject.

The seminar was organized by the Phiren Amenca volunteers Kristell Caballero-Saucedo and Tina Heise. Article by: Orsolya Szabó

X-CHAVALEM Youth Exchange on pop culture and Scy fi

The Uncanny X-Chavalem (Ultimate Roma Youth Exchange on Pop Culture and Scy Fi) is a project that aims to set a precedent, in the area of creative mobilization and empowerment of Roma youth. More than 40 Roma and non-Roma youngsters from Czech Republic, Romania, Spain, France, Germany, Austria and Hungary will have the opportunity to participate in the exchange that will take place in Budapest, Hungary.

From the 10th - 17th of May 2015, for a whole week, the youngsters will have a unique opportunity to study the history of the Roma community in the world of popular culture, comic books, books and science fiction films. They will be able to develop a critical understanding on the history and the impact of the Roma people on the mainstream mass culture. Through debates, Living Role games, films, literary analysis and various activities we will encourage young people to develop complex thoughts about their own situation, we will also aim to develop creative responses to our common problems and needs. We hope in this way to promote their individual empowerment and through this experience to contribute to the process of emancipation of the Roma communities in Europe.

Roma Youth in Cluj-Napoca, European Youth Capital 2015

International Roma Youth Social Forum

This project brings together 300 young Roma and non-Roma youth activists and youth leaders from 15 European countries for a “Social Forum of the Roma Youth Movement” in the context of the European Youth Capital 2015 – Cluj-Napoca. The project aims to raise the voice of Roma youth on a European level, to create debate, reflection and common engagement of Roma and non-Roma youth activists, to strengthen an international structure of volunteers, and to raise the visibility of Roma youth self-organization among youth organizations. The members and partners of Phiren Amenca follow a strong mission to create opportunities for non-formal education, dialogue and engagement in order to challenge stereotypes and racism. The Social Forum of the Roma Youth Movement will be a unique and outstanding event during the European Youth Capital, raising the positive engagement, dialogue and solidarity of Roma and non-Roma youth.

For more information:

<http://www.youthforum.org/latest-news/cluj-napoca-the-youth-heart-of-europe-in-2015/>

<http://europeanyouthcapital.org/>

<http://www.cluj2015.eu/>

5. Appendices

Evaluation

Phiren Amenca Volunteer Seminar on Human Rights Education Evaluation Results

October 26 - November 1, 2014

Mulhouse/Strasbourg, France

Number of evaluation respondents: 19

Number of seminar participants: 40

In your opinion, in how far do you feel the aims and objective of this Study Session were achieved?

Raising awareness and strengthening youth initiatives towards recognizing the human rights of young migrants, and to challenge antigypsyism and racism in Europe.							
no response	1	2	3	4	5	6	average
0	0	0	0	3	10	6	5.15
Encouraging dialogue and exchange of experience;							
no response	1	2	3	4	5	6	average
0	0	0	1	1	6	11	5.42
Rising awareness an reflection about migration and mobility, and mapping realities in Europe;							
no response	1	2	3	4	5	6	average
0	0	0	2	4	4	9	5.05
Strengthening the development of critical thinking of the participants regarding antigypsyism and the situation of Roma in Europe, with a special focus on the modern context and through historical exploration, as well as with a particular focus on France;							
no response	1	2	3	4	5	6	average
1	0	0	2	5	6	5	4.72

Offering resources, information, and rising awareness of issues related to youth voluntary service as a powerful response to xenophobia, stereotypes, and racism;							
no response	1	2	3	4	5	6	average
2	0	0	3	6	6	1	4.23
Acting as a powerful international networking tool to support these young activists through a sense of encouragement, strength of community, and introducing them to the support of the Phiren Amenca network;							
no response	1	2	3	4	5	6	average
2	0	0	2	2	5	8	5.05
Promoting engagement, mobilization, and local initiatives to challenge stereotypes and racism beyond the period of voluntary service abroad							
no response	1	2	3	4	5	6	average
1	0	0	4	6	3	5	4.66
Sharing information on different organizations, stakeholders and actors relevant in the field, including opportunities in the Erasmus+ program of the European Commission, and the Roma Youth Action Plan of the Council of Europe.							
no response	1	2	3	4	5	6	average
0	0	1	1	6	7	4	4.47

Evaluation respondents expressed to have a pleasant feeling at the end of the seminar, as they felt motivated and better prepared to work on Roma, Migration and Human Rights, because of the experiences they had in the seminar. Additionally, the participants stated that the seminar met their expectations; some even stated that it exceeded their expectations for the seminar. It was continuously motioned that they believe the study sessions were diverse and useful. Further, respondents stated that the methodology was well balanced between theoretical and practical study sessions and that the time was well divided.

However, a number of participants stated that the time dedicated to creating youth initiatives and follow-ups was not sufficient and see this as a weakness of the seminar. Additionally, within the improvements suggested, punctuality and participation of introvert people were the most mentioned. It was also suggested to have a Glossary with useful concepts available for the participants. The voluntourism study session was also named by many respondents as one of the least valuable. It is also important to state that some participants expressed dislike for the high level of poster presentations. Moreover, some also stated that the Phiren Amenca Café was not as valuable because the participants were tired, and not all participated.

The top 5 most valuable sessions that were mentioned were: 1) Sharing of Personal Stories because of the high level of impact that hearing life stories from people who are physically present had on the participants, 2) The LARP, 3) The European Council Discussion because of the content of the debate that occurred during the visit, 4) The Youth Initiatives and Follow-ups, and 5) The Transatlantic Roma Migration.

There was a positive reaction to the group dynamics. In fact, the group dynamics was the most valuable part of the seminar for the participants. Moreover, it was expressed that the high level of interest and participation of the seminar participants was helpful for the respondent's learning. Furthermore, it was continually mentioned that the participants' openness and honesty was very important for the success and learning experience of all the participants.

It was pointed out that not differentiating between participants and facilitators was positive for the seminar. One respondent asked for the facilitators "to be more conscientious and realistic about what they want to transmit to the participants" and not to use wrong information.

There was a high level of satisfaction with the venue, except for the poor Wi-Fi access and the lack of coffee in the study room.

In terms of sharing and transferring information, a high number of respondents stated that they would share the information they learned in the seminar through conversations. In addition, some stated that they plan to use the material from the seminar and add it to projects in their communities. Others stated that they would include the information in their academic work or reflections and presentations for their sending organizations. In addition, one respondent stated that he_she would share the information with a local newspaper.

Overall, the responses from the participants were positive, as they expressed a high level of satisfaction from the venue, the content of study session, the group dynamics and the facilitators.

Program of study session

#roma #migration #human rights - Phiren Amenca Seminar on Human Rights Education

Time	26/10/2014 Sunday	27/10/2014 Monday	28/10/2014 Tuesday	29/10/2014 Wednesday	30/10/2014 Thursday	31/10/2014 Friday
		Mapping & Sharing	Migration & Antigypsyism	Political Level	Activism	How to respond
08:00	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast
09:00	Arrival	Expectations Phiren Amenca "Le Rimlishof"	Life Action Role Play	European Parliament	Activism & Campaigning: From current realities to real action	Erasmus+
		Roma History	Mapping of Roma realities related to "migration"	Meeting with ROMED/Roma Unit (Council of Europe)		Initiatives and Follow-up
12:30	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
15:00		Travelogue - Testimonies and personal narratives of movement	Migration & antigypsyism / racism	Free time in Strasbourg	Voluntourism Post-Colonialism Critical Whiteness	Initiatives and Follow-up
		Critical Approach to the Movements of Romani Groups	Human Rights & Human Rights Education	17:30 departure return to Rimlishof	Examples of Roma Activism & Initiatives	Evaluation
18:30	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner
21:00		Phiren Amenca Volunteer Café	tbc	tbc	Halloween	Goodbye evening

#roma #migration #human rights - Phiren Amenca Seminar on Human Rights Education

The seminar organized by Phiren Amenca, VISA L'Année Diaconale and the partner organizations of the Phiren Amenca Network of Roma and non-Roma volunteering organizations brought together 40 Roma and non-Roma youth leaders and youth activists from around Europe for 5 days in Strasbourg in France. The seminar enabled multipliers and youth activists to create a platform of exchange of experiences, practices and methods for young people and youth organizations how to address migration, antigypsyism and human rights issues in grassroots, national and international youth actions, and how to strengthen the awareness and mobilization of young people for these issues. The aim of the seminar was to share experiences between the participating organizations, to increase the knowledge and awareness of participants on migration, to reflect about the effects of migration on the human rights of young Roma, and to understand the challenges and potentials of youth work and non-formal education with young migrants. The seminar strengthened the efforts to build joint initiatives on grassroots level, as well as on international level towards recognizing and ensuring the human rights of young migrants, and to challenge antigypsyism and racism in Europe.

Phiren Amenca

Is a network of Roma and non-Roma volunteers and voluntary service organizations creating opportunities for non-formal education, dialogue and engagement, in order to challenge stereotypes and racism.

Visit: <http://phirenamenca.eu/>

